

Together we have the energy to transform our communities

## OUR CONSUMER VULNERABILITY OUTCOMES

Ofgem Stakeholder Engagement and  
Consumer Vulnerability Incentive 2018/19

Part Three



Electricity North West Limited  
Registered number 02366949

**electricity**  
**north west**

Bringing energy to your door

# Our consumer vulnerability outcomes

This document is the Electricity North West Part Three submission to Ofgem's Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability (SECV) Incentive for the regulatory year 2018/19

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## Key

	New
	Enhanced
	Embedded
	Outcomes
	Outputs
	Innovative
	Industry-leading
	Partnership
	Case study



# Section 01

## Introduction from our Customer Director

We transport energy to some of the most socially and economically deprived areas of the UK. Our company Purpose promises that 'Together we have the energy to transform our communities'. Ensuring that we have systems, services and partnerships in place which provide vulnerable consumers with protection from the risk of harm during power outages, that we help to build their energy resilience on a sustained basis and that we support them in the transition to a zero carbon future is central to delivering this Purpose.

This year, we've worked with partners to enhance our understanding of consumer vulnerability. This will enable us to fully develop our understanding of the role of that network companies can play in tackling the underlying social issues that are the causes of vulnerability.

We've formalised our approach to developing, managing and maintaining partnerships by introducing a partnership framework. We know that creating effective partnerships significantly assists us in providing support to our customers in the event of a loss of power and help them to build their own energy resilience. The strategic approach, informed by our partnership framework, enabled us to identify the most effective and appropriate partnerships for our consumer vulnerability activity.

We've built on previous fuel poverty research undertaken by the Energy Savings Trust and worked with the Centre for Sustainable Energy to complete comprehensive mapping of consumer vulnerability in the North West. This enhanced understanding will help us to ensure that we're doing what is right for the North West region in the decisions we make for the vulnerable customers we serve.

In response to feedback on last year's SECV submission, we undertook best practice visits with Western Power Distribution, Cadent and Rochdale Borough Housing Association and we've also partnered with the Money Advice Trust and the Centre for Sustainable Energy and asked them to review our strategy and our systems, processes and culture. As a result, we've updated our Consumer Vulnerability Strategy and commenced a programme of change to improve our social and cultural impact on North West communities.

Established in 2016, our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel continues to fulfil its valuable role of challenging our performance, setting stretching targets for our activity and helping us identify and respond to emerging issues and trends. This year, we've strengthened their voice through the appointment of an independent Chair, Jenny Willis and ensured that that needs of vulnerable customers are heard as we plan for the future by inviting Jenny to also join the Customer Engagement Group.

The Panel also selected the organisations that they felt would deliver outcomes most effectively and helped us connect with hard-to-reach customers through our Consumer Vulnerability Fund. This builds on the pilot work we undertook last year to launch fuel poverty support networks.

As with other elements of our Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability work, we're embedding a process that drives good decision-making and, through collaboration and our own company research, we now better understand how customers value the outcomes of our consumer vulnerability activity. We've also introduced a Benefits Identification and Measurement (BIM) model to ensure that we define and track the benefits that our activity delivers for our customers.

The energy sector is changing rapidly and our commitment is that 'everyone's included'. We'll continue to work with expert partners to protect consumers today from the risk of harm during power outages, help them to build their energy resilience on a sustained basis and ensure that their needs are front of mind as we transition to a zero carbon future.



Stephanie Trubshaw  
Customer Director

### Benefits delivered through our stakeholder engagement

844,000

Priority Services  
Register  
customers

91.6%

Priority Services  
satisfaction

60

Vulnerable  
consumer  
partnerships in  
place

Social  
mapping  
Completed

£190,000  
Consumer  
Vulnerability  
Funding agreed

Electricity North West has invested in research and leveraged existing and new partnerships to better understand the concept of vulnerability and to increase organisational understanding of specific groups of vulnerable customers."

Accountability, 2019



### Working with our Advisory Panel to set challenging targets

**What we heard** – Our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel proposed an initial set of challenging SMART (specific, measurable, actionable, relevant and time bound) objectives to drive improvements in our approach. The objectives have been regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain appropriate, relevant and stretching and progress against these targets is regularly discussed with the Panel. Our Panel provides oversight and scrutiny of our activity to support vulnerable customers.

Performance area agreed with the Advisory Panel	Target	Achieved	Red, amber, green (RAG) status	Information about our activity relating to this activity area can be found:
Data strategy	Contact all high vulnerability customers annually Contact a third of medium vulnerability customers annually	26,000 ahead of target	Green	Part Three, page 4
Welfare provision	Ensure sign language and subtitles are utilised in communications Stop welfare packs (too costly)	Achieved	Green	Part Three, page 7
Priority Services Register customer satisfaction - faults	Customer satisfaction score 87% target Customer satisfaction score 89% stretch target	89%	Green	Part Three, page 7
Promotion of the Priority Service Register	Increase in referrals from April 2018 to March 2019. Increase of 5,500 achieved	5,500	Amber	Part Three, page 5
Effective contact strategy	100% of high vulnerability Priority Services Register customers contacted (planned supply interruptions) 100% of high vulnerability Priority Services Register customers contacted (faults)	97.3% 95%	Amber	Part Three, page 5



## Our strategy

**What we heard** – After getting advice and learning from other best practice, we consulted with stakeholders representing 16 different organisations who provided us with their thoughts, expectations and suggestions to help us develop our approach. All these organisations have been involved with the company through our Advisory Panel. We listened to their feedback and agreed to make changes to the strategy at the meeting of our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel in February.

We had developed our Consumer Vulnerability Strategy in 2016 in partnership with our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel. The shared goal we developed was to ensure that our services are available and accessible to all our customers, regardless of their personal circumstances and to embed our strategy is to embed this goal throughout all aspects of our business.

We've demonstrated the our strategy is flexible and we adapt it to the changing needs of customers on our network means having in place systems, services and partnerships which provide customers with protection from the risk of harm during power outages and which help to build their energy resilience on a sustained basis.

We've also worked with the Centre for Sustainable Energy to develop social mapping of our region and to undertake a comprehensive review of our vulnerable customer activity. This work is described in Part Three, page 10 of this document.

## Here are the new strategy pillars

Strategy	To ensure no customer or community is left vulnerable by barriers to the service Electricity North West and their trusted partners provide during a loss of electricity now and in the future				
Stakeholder outcomes	Use data to ensure we understand the vulnerability challenges of the North West	Continuously improve and refresh customer contact data, first time, through accessible channels	Manage trusted services that deliver tailored support to our Priority Services Register customers	Build and maintain a resilient network across the North West, supporting vulnerable communities	Tackle poverty through working in partnership with various referral and fuel poverty schemes
Enhancing our processes	Social data mapping and Advisory Panel insights	Contact strategy and accessibility	Partnership tiers and data driven	Network data and consumer vulnerability data	Strategic partner hub relationship
Example in this document	Part Three Page 3	Part Three Page 4	Part Three Page 8	Part Three Pages 9 and 10	Part Three Pages 5 and 7



## Continuing to develop understanding of the Value of Lost Load

**What we heard** – Our focus this year has been on disseminating the findings of our Value of Lost Load research. Working with BEIS, Ofgem and Citizens Advice, we've developed the research into a practical approach that could underpin investment decisions for RIIO-ED2. If adopted by Ofgem, the approach would result in investment decisions which deliver more targeted benefits than our current industry approach.

Last year, we surveyed more than 3,000 customers from the North West and a further 3,000 from across the UK to gain an understanding of the value that different customers place on a loss of energy supply. Called the 'Value of Lost Load' (VOLL), this is a financial articulation of the impact of a power cut and is currently expressed as an average which is used to judge and compare the value of investment decisions and scale the marginal

incentives for example the Incentive on Interruptions Scheme.

The findings were striking. The research showed that there is huge difference in the way customers value their energy supply and the most affected customer groups included the fuel poor. The value of lost load for fuel poor customers is almost double the average amount. Detailed information about this project can be found on our website at [www.enwl.co.uk/voll](http://www.enwl.co.uk/voll).

The on-going VoLL2 project is exploring how to embed the findings within the regulatory mechanisms with stakeholders.

This will ensure that the wider social role of network companies is a key business driver underpinning the design, planning and delivery of services.

## Average Domestic VOLL

£17,478

## VOLL electric heat pump

14% above average

## VOLL electric vehicle

23% above average

## VOLL vulnerable customers

12% above average

## VOLL fuel poor

86% above average

## Decision Making Framework stage

## Option

Working with stakeholders to develop implementation options for this approach

## Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- Publication of two project reports.
- Meetings with BEIS, Ofgem and Citizens Advice
- Dissemination through industry forums

## Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Customers benefit as RIIO-ED2 investment decisions informed by customer need

NEW



## Leading the creation of a region-wide understanding of consumer vulnerability

**What we heard** – Through our participation in Call North West, a network for call centres in the region, we heard that there was a need to increase awareness of consumer vulnerability and increase awareness of best practice for serving this customer group well. We utilised the Call North West network to lead the creation of region-wide understanding of consumer vulnerability by convening a series of four regional workshops to share experiences of vulnerability, share data, insight and best practice and develop practical and shared approaches to better support the needs of this customer group.

Call North West was launched by the North West Regional Development Agency and the University of Central Lancashire to support the call and contact centre industry which spans across many sectors in the North West. It currently supports over 700 contact centres in the region and through our membership we participate in a range of specialist events.

One of the key outputs from this series of events was the delivery of cross skills training for a number of member organisations. We delivered nine training events, in partnership with Call North West, to organisations including the Cooperative Insurance Group, British Gas, Certas, Proxima and the Energy Ombudsman Service.



## Decision Making Framework stage

## Review

The workshops have been delivered and we're now working with Call North West to review the programme and agree next steps

## Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- 3 Call North West Consumer Vulnerability roundtables delivered
- 17 companies participated
- 9 Cross Skills Training events delivered
- 20 companies participated
- 2 best practice sharing events

## Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Shared understanding of consumer vulnerability created for North West
- Best practice training delivered – refreshing and upskilling 86 call centre colleagues



## What our data tells us about our vulnerable customers

### What our Priority Services Register tells us

It's essential that our Priority Services Register data is current, relevant, extensive and inclusive. The data is fundamental to us being able to identify customers who need our support when they are without power and also to develop new services to meet changing and emerging needs. We haven't included all needs code here, but we do use all of this data to inform the development of our services.

With the additional focussed promotion of the Priority Services Register, we are seeing significant increases in hard to reach customers registering under the following vulnerabilities. These are the headline shifts in the number of customers registered to a particular needs code in 2018/19.

Needs code	Change in overall numbers	% change
29 Families with young children (5 or under)	+60,326	+440%
30 Mental health	+31,107	+538%
31 Additional presence preferred	+1,613	+707%
32 Temporary – Life changes	+2,989	+1,003%
33 Temporary – Post hospital recovery	+2,231	+593%
34 Temporary – Young adult householder	+644	+434%

### What our vulnerable customer research tells us

We have an ongoing programme of research in place and each year we undertake tailored research into the needs of our vulnerable customers. In 2018/19, we surveyed 300 customers on four topics as follows:

Who	How many	What we heard
Customers with restricted mobility	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Losing the ability to use mobility aids is disempowering – customers feel stranded and unable to fulfil basic needs.</li> <li>Empathy is valued highly amongst restricted mobility customers.</li> </ul>
Customers who have medicine refrigeration	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a lack of awareness of how long their medicine will last outside of the fridge.</li> <li>Manufacturer's instructions are the most common source of information for those who know what temperature to keep their medicine.</li> <li>Customers expect the company to signpost to other providers for assistance.</li> </ul>
Families with young children	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent's top concerns are heating and hot water not working/getting cold, can't cook to feed kids or make up and sterilise bottles.</li> <li>Children might panic or be afraid.</li> <li>Information from us needs to focus on estimated restoration times and proactive updates.</li> </ul>
Customers who are deaf and hearing impaired	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 80% said they had another vulnerability within their household (in addition to deafness/hearing impairment).</li> <li>Customers did not feel that their experience of a power cut would be harder due to their hearing impairment.</li> </ul>

### What our website tracking tells us

In 2018/19, we implemented Hotjar and Feefo tracking to help us to understand how our customers use our website. This type of website tracking provides insight into which pages, and which parts of pages, are most used by our customers. This year we've found:

Customers access the Priority Services webpages through different devices - mobile is the most popular (45%), followed by desktops (37%) and tablets (18%).

The heat mapping tool shows that when customers access the pages the most interaction takes place across two pages - 'Why should I become a Priority Services Register customer' and 'Completion of the Priority Services Registration' form.

A review is taking place to enhance the overall customer experience when visiting the Priority Services webpage. This will continue during 2019/20 and we will use Hotjar analytics and feedback from customers through surveys.



### What analysis of customer complaints tell us

In 2018/19, we received 8,800 customer complaints and 2,300 related to the services we provide for vulnerable customers. This is a decrease of 22% from 2017/18.

We analyse each of our complaints in detail to ensure that we understand the causes of customer dissatisfaction and use this data to improve our services.



### Case study

During 2017, we received an increase in complaints in relation to the area of Scarisbrick, Lancashire regarding multiple interruptions. To better understand this concern, customer service and operational employees attended local community meetings to discuss this with residents.

Additional investment of £60,000 was allocated through the capital programme to strengthen the resilience of the network for 1,351 customers.

Since the work was completed in 2018 we have received no complaints from the residents.

This prompted the creation of a six-monthly review process in 2018 between the complaints manager and network investment manager. The process includes a review of the interruptions impact on the Priority Services Register customers in an area.

This regular review highlighted the West Lancashire area which has many small, rural communities and is affected by multiple interruptions. This review resulted in additional network protection being installed at seven key locations where the data clearly correlated to the volume of Priority Services Register customers, interruptions and complaints. Our investment was £291,000.

In July 2018 a complaint was escalated to Stephanie Trubshaw, Customer Director, from a Parish Councillor in Lathom stating that they had been experiencing regular interruptions to their supply and this was a priority as over 60% of their residents were eligible for the Priority Services Register.

At the time, we had 12 people on the Priority Services Register in the area so Phil Briggs the Regional Operational Manager and Stephanie Trubshaw met with Parish Council members to discuss the issue. The Parish Council clarified that they had promoted the Priority Services Register and they were surprised that the numbers were so low. As a result of the meeting, we agreed:

1. Additional investment in the overhead lines to reduce the impact when faults occur and fit automation for restoration – £55,000 investment
2. To print joint Priority Services Register leaflets with the Parish Council members being named and dropped off with self-addressed envelopes and a note from the parish council to encourage the uptake
3. To attend a Parish Council meeting and promote the services offered with registering and add a note in the parish newsletter

Following the combined work with the Parish Council the number of customers on the register is now 24 which is still low in the view of the councillors, but they believe many of the customers have not registered as they feel they can look after themselves in a power cut and being elderly they would prefer to not have people contact them.

844,000

Priority Services  
Register customersProactively  
checked 312,800Priority Services  
customers

383,000

Customers proactively  
contacted

Having robust, reliable and accessible information about our customers' needs is essential to achieve our goal of protecting consumers today from the risk of harm during power outages, helping them to build their energy resilience on a sustained basis and ensuring that their needs are front of mind as we transition to a zero carbon future. This is why we use data as the foundation of our strategy.

We manage our Priority Services Register data through our Customer Relationship Management system. This sophisticated database contains details of our customer interactions, our customers' needs codes and the nature or classification of their vulnerability. It provides a robust, auditable, secure place for this information to be stored and it provides us with significant functionality to utilise the data to inform business decision-making.

Classification of vulnerability supports the prioritisation, development and delivery of appropriate customer solutions aligned to the need and urgency of support required. Access is governed by processes which ensure compliance with General Data Protection Regulation requirements.

We started the year with 603,000 Priority Services Register customers and on 31 March 2019, we have increased this number by a net 241,000 to 844,000. This change is driven by a range of activities undertaken by the company to increase the number and range of customer needs captured on the register, to maintain the quality of the data on the register and to maximise the benefit for customers of joining this register and minimise any disbenefit to those who do not. These various strands of activity are described below.

## Social value research

Identify customers that are likely to be vulnerable during a power cut and sign them up to the Priority Services Register.

GB  
WTP  
£2.35ENWL  
WTP  
£2.27Annual  
spend level  
£0.13

## Customer insight

- Widening the Priority Services Register was considered to be the foundation of helping vulnerable customers and also the hardest nut to crack. Customers explored the link to suppliers' responsibilities
- Customers at all of our focus groups, including vulnerable customers, prioritised this service over other tested vulnerable customer service attributes

"It covers a large area. It's not just the elderly, it might be someone with a disability. Someone who might struggle if you have a power cut to even get to the phone for example...that's the reason I went for this one first."



## Partnering with energy suppliers

The majority of our new Priority Services Register customer records come from the transfer of information from energy suppliers. Suppliers collect the registrations at new customer acquisition and it is shared directly with the relevant DNO.

## Outputs (intermediate impact)

- Data received from suppliers through established routes
- Data sharing increases efficiency for customers

## Increase in Priority Services Customers from energy suppliers

+277,000



## Partnership with United Utilities

**What our research told us** – Our customers have experienced a 'one-stop-shop' service from local councils and told us they would welcome a seamless service by providing a single sign-up point to register for the support services available from utilities. Last year we teamed up with United Utilities, the North West's water and wastewater provider, for an innovative priority services data-sharing trial. During the trial 80% of customers agreed to have their data shared and qualitative research demonstrated high levels of endorsement and satisfaction with the approach.

During the pilot, we have shared data for 13,000 Priority Services Register customers with United Utilities. In turn, they have provided us with 5,500 records from which we've been able to complete 2,000 new registrations. This has now become business as usual between the two companies.

In October 2017, Ofgem, Ofwat and the UK Regulators' Network (UKRN) established 'Making better use of data: identifying customers in vulnerable situations.' The expectation of this initiative was that water and energy companies should:

- Explore cross-sector non-financial vulnerability data sharing; and
- Continue to work together and collaborate with third parties to support and identify customers in vulnerable situations.

Our data sharing pilot with United Utilities was cited as best practice in their November 2018 update report. This said **'The pilot is a great demonstration of what cross-sector utility companies can achieve by working together. Electricity North West and United Utilities have met regularly to share best practice, discuss challenges and how they have been overcome and feedback on the customer experience. These lessons will be taken forward and learned from as national data sharing is rolled out across England and Wales.'**

## Outputs (intermediate impact)

- 5,500 records shared from United Utilities, leading to an increase of 2,000 in the Priority Services Register numbers
- In return, we have increased United Utilities' records by 4,300

## Increase in Priorities Services Customers from United Utilities data share

+2,000



## Data cleanse strategy

**What we heard** – In line with the target agreed with our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel, we committed to use a diverse range of channels to contact all of our high vulnerability Priority Services Register customers annually and a third of our medium/low vulnerability customers. We've met our target and have proactively contacted 312,800 customers this year, which is 26,000 in excess of our target.

Through our other processes, including proactive communications for planned supply interruptions and weather events, we have contacted a total of 383,200 customers.

The purpose of the calls is to build a strong and trusting relationship with our customers through regular contacts, to ensure that the information we hold on the customers is still relevant and appropriate, to ensure that they are still comfortable with us holding this information about them and to remove customers where there is no longer a need to be on the register.

This includes numbers for transition vulnerabilities which change within the year, but have resulted this year of 8,000.

## Outputs (intermediate impact)

- 312,800 high and medium vulnerability customers contacted, 26,000 ahead of target

## Priority Services Customers removed as part of data cleansing

-60,000  
(98,000 removed, 38,000 added)

## Social value research

Contact all existing Priority Services Register customers every couple of years to update their details and offer advice and practical steps they can take to ensure they are more resilient in the event of a power cut.

GB  
WTP  
£0.86ENWL  
WTP  
£0.83Annual  
spend level  
£0.06

## Customer insight

- Customers understood the value of this activity and saw it as an administrative task. They perceived this as being the lowest priority of the vulnerable customer support areas we tested
- Focussed updating for the most vulnerable was favoured. Saw the benefit of partnerships working to improve data

"They should be doing that every 12 months, especially with vulnerables. People's circumstances could change."



new

## 'We're Switched On' - making every call a Priority Services Register call

We've implemented a 'We're Switched On' approach to call handling in our customer contact centre. This means that as part of every call we tell customers about our Priority Services Register and we ask whether anyone in their household, or anyone they know, would benefit from this service. **As a result of these conversations, we have added 16,500 customers to our Priority Services Register and updated 64,000 contacts.**

Specialist training has been given to all of our customer contact centre agents to give them the skills and confidence to conduct what can initially feel like a difficult call well. This training has included Dementia Friends training and After Thought training. We've also trained them to identify consumer vulnerability and sensitively

deal with those situations where customers may be reticent to share this information.

We also recognised that it would be helpful to provide colleagues with signposting information where customers require additional and expert help and support. To address this, we've provided our customer contact centre agents with an easy to use 'one click' onward referral service. Charities and other partners are listed alphabetically, alongside a brief description of the services they provide and their areas of expertise. Colleagues can access this information quickly and easily to provide it to customers. This information is also available on our website.

## Outputs (intermediate impact)

- 64,000 contact details updated

## 'We're switch on' Priority Services Register customers added

+16,500

&lt;&gt;

## Partnering with energy suppliers and other utility providers

We have continued to work with partners to promote the Priority Services Register. To support this we implemented a tracking service to improve our data on referrals. This year, we have received 5,500 referrals through our website and through our various promotional campaigns and partnerships. The next stage is to incorporate this learning into a telephony data-capture process. Some of the outputs associated with this activity is shown here.

## Outputs (intermediate impact)

- 10,000 leaflets issued by local authorities and housing associations
- 27,000 leaflets included in council tax bills
- 250 Parish Councils contacted
- 200 pharmacies in partnership
- 400,000 pharmacy bags and 50,000 leaflets issued

## Priority Services Register customers added through partnering

+5,500

## Developing our services and support for fuel poor customers - Section 4

&lt;&gt;

## Achieved 91.6% customer satisfaction score against a target of 87%

It's essential that we develop services to support the changing and emerging needs of vulnerable customers and to help them to build their energy resilience.

It is important to us that we give the right support to all our customers, particularly those living with physical, emotional or financial challenges. Many of the features of

our service are beneficial for a broad range of conditions. These include updates and information through tailored communication channels, our knock and wait service, bad weather early warning calls, proactive communication processes, providing home visits and warm food and drinks during a power cut and sharing our Priority Services Register data to create a 'tell us once' philosophy.

**What our data told us** – Mental health continues to increase in prominence in our Priority Services Register (**538% increase in 2018/19**) and we continued to grow our awareness and appreciation of cognitive and mental health challenges with e-learning packages and ongoing support from MIND and Dementia Friends. 850,000 people in the UK including 80,000 in the North West suffer with Dementia. This has now replaced heart disease as the largest killer. Both organisations have delivered awareness training for all front-line agents in our connections and customer contact centre teams. Our Executive and Senior Leadership Teams are also 'dementia friends' trained.

**What our customer research told us** – Our customer research confirmed the importance of text message updates and signposting to other services. Enhancements to processes and customer support this year are the introduction of interactive text messaging for immediate support, improved referral agency network by region and condition, and a one click facility for all agents to access all local agencies quickly and easily.

Our support and information for customers concerned about refrigerating medicines and operating stair lifts and hoists is also improved. We have extended our welfare operational hours to give more support on weekdays

from 7am – 10pm and from 8am – 8pm at weekends. We have increased the number of mobile food suppliers (from two to eight) with greater flexibility and speed to deliver, improved our processes to utilise food delivery services with Deliveroo and Just Eat, who deliver to over 95% of our region. It's also now quicker and easier for agents to book hotel accommodation for customers. We're working closely with Auriga Services to enhance our web support for customer resilience which can be used by colleagues who are supporting vulnerable customers or by customers directly through our website.

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## Performance of our referral networks for fuel poor customers

**What we heard** – A key recommendation from the work we commissioned from the Energy Saving Trust on fuel poverty was to fund partners to deliver fuel poverty services to some of the most vulnerable customers in the North West, including those on our Priority Services Register. This is a key contributor to enhancing the energy resilience of these customers. The approach we developed gave us the capacity to test the effectiveness of the different support services. We established each of these partnerships as pilot projects and included performance indicators regarding the benefit delivered to end users within the success measures for the schemes. Our fuel poverty referral networks were:

	2017/18		2018/19	
	Number of customers supported	Value of benefits delivered	Number of customers supported	Value of benefits delivered
Local Energy Action Programme (LEAP)	250	£237,000 (based on savings over 10 years)	250	£191,000
North Lancashire Citizens Advice	200	£48,000 (based on savings over 1 year)	124	£22,000
Energy Saving Trust	78	£72,000 (based on savings over 2 years)	524	£35,000

Local Energy Action Programme (LEAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to serve this area</li> <li>Company identify and refer customers to LEAP</li> <li>Carry out home visits to assess situation and provide range of support services</li> <li>Support included signposting to other GMCA services including grants of home energy efficiency interventions</li> </ul>	Working with 39 partners (including local authorities and 20 housing associations)
Energy Saving Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service delivered by Energy Saving Trust to whole Electricity North West region</li> <li>Company identify and refer customers</li> <li>Carry out over-the-phone assessments and provide energy efficiency and supplier switching advice</li> <li>Refer customer to welfare and debt advice services</li> </ul>	Working with 22 partners
North Lancashire Citizens Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly energy drop-in service, open to all customers</li> <li>Provide advice and support, energy efficiency tips, supplier switching advice, and welfare and debt advice</li> </ul>	Working with 7 partners

**Our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel believes that the Energy Saving Trust delivered important benefits to North West consumers. Through our Consumer Vulnerability Fund, we have now committed to continue to fund this scheme. The other programmes are no longer being funded, see Part Three, page 7.**

## Our standard service offering - support during a loss of supply (planned or unplanned)

**What we heard** – As part of our review of our Vulnerable Customer Strategy, we confirmed that its primary purpose is to ensure that we have systems, services and partnerships in place which provide vulnerable consumers protection from the risk of harm during power outages.

We have embedded systems and process in place to ensure that during a power cut or a planned supply interruption, customers on our Priority Services Register are contacted and we tailor our support to their individual needs.

### All interruptions

- Suitcase generation (small generators for individual properties)
- Signposting to other organisations or charities who would be able to offer support where we would not be able

### Planned supply interruptions

- Prevention of planned supply interruption depending on Priority Services Register volumes within the affected area through generator provision
- Advanced notification 6 and 1 day prior by phone plus the normal written notification at a minimum of 10 days before the planned supply interruption
- Provide other location for affected customer/ community - conference room, community hall etc.
- Welfare site presence to answer any queries and explain the purpose of the interruption
- Door knocking to support Priority Services Register customers
- If the PSI overruns the Priority Services Register customers are notified as soon as reasonably possible and action are taken as required
- Apply winter working rules to minimise impact on Priority Services Register customers (see below)

### Unplanned supply interruption (fault)

- £10 per vulnerable customer for food provisions
- Food van for more condensed areas of high vulnerability
- Order and pay for hot food deliveries for customers
- Hotel provision where a specific vulnerability prevents a customer from being at their property without electricity
- Welfare site visit accompanying engineers during faults
- Welfare home visits
- Supplying essential winter welfare items
- Contact next of kin with updates
- Provide regular updates throughout the full fault by preferred communication
- Priority telephony answering service

In line with the target agreed with our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel we have:

Contacted **97.3%** of high vulnerability Priority Services Register customers in advance of a planned supply interruption. This is **3,200** customers.

Contacted **95.0%** of high vulnerability Priority Services Register customers during fault situations. This is **3,100** customers.

## Social value research

Support domestic customers and wider communities to increase their resilience and ability to cope during power cuts by delivering proactive advice and support materials.

GB WTP  
£2.67

ENWL WTP  
£2.53

Annual spend level  
£0.19

### Customer insight

- Increasing resilience for domestic customers viewed as the highest priority; it was the most supported activity in this category. Some customers wanted to see this delivered in conjunction with support for the most vulnerable customers
- Customers favoured support being given in response to an event rather than pre-emptively

"My concern is for those who can't help themselves at times like that and they can't do it."

## Case study - Storm Freya

On 1 March, the Met Office issued a weather warning about Storm Freya and we sent a total of 30,041 texts with the following paragraph, which we also utilised for storms Ali and Erik. We also informed all relevant stakeholders that we are preparing for the storm event and advised them of the support we were putting in place to respond to the incident and to support vulnerable customers.

As the weather was expected to bring gusts up to 60mph, all rural areas within the South Lancashire, Peak District and Greater Manchester area were targeted as these are of greater risk due to the extent of the overhead network in these areas.

"Hello, we can see you are on our Priority Services Register. The Met Office has issued a weather warning for your region and we want to make sure you are aware of our support if needed. If you do experience a power cut please call us on 105 or visit our website at [www.enwl.co.uk/reportapowercut](http://www.enwl.co.uk/reportapowercut). If you no longer believe you should be on our Priority Services Register please reply with remove. Thanks ENWL."

## Application of winter rules to mitigate impact of outages

**What our research told us** - We have an ongoing programme of customer research and this has a strong focus on hearing customers' needs and expectations of our services. One of our key learnings from the research is the increased impact of a supply interruption in the cold winter months. As a result, we have implemented our Winter Rules to respond to our customers' feedback and mitigate this negative impact.

Our planned supply interruption Winter Working Guidance includes:

- Winter working applies from 1 December 2018 until 28 February 2019
- The hours of darkness must be avoided
- A standard planned supply interruption cannot be more than 6.5 hours and must occur between 9am and 3.30pm

- No customer can be impacted by more than one planned supply interruption during the winter period
- No customer shutdowns between 22 December and 2 January
- If 20% of the affected population are registered on the PSR we use a generator to prevent the interruption occurring

### Decision Making Framework stage

#### Review

We'll review the effectiveness and impact of this policy and update it if required before next winter

### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- 8,518 planned supply interruptions

### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- 89% planned supply interruptions CSAT

## Small business support

**What we heard** – Working with representatives from the Enterprise Group and the Chamber of Commerce at our Reliability Advisory Panel, we heard about the impact that power cuts can have to small businesses and to the communities they serve. To address this, we've developed a dedicated Business Priority Services Register to provide small and medium businesses with support should they ever experience a power cut. Through listening to our business customers, we've adapted our services to help reduce the impact and disruption a power cut can have on their business.

The promotion of the register will commence from April 2019. Customers can sign up online and will receive a welcome email with key links which include a brochure providing helpful information, how to update their details and information regarding generators.

### Decision Making Framework stage

#### Delivery

This service will be launched in April 2019

### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- A range of benefits to customers who join the Business Priority Services Register

### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Business customers benefit from enhanced service before and during a planned supply interruption





## Extension of inbound text for faults customers to other services

**What our research tells us** - Our vulnerable customer research demonstrates that text continues to be preferred route for many customers. In 2018, we introduced the facility for customers to register a loss of supply using text messaging. We've now extended our range of uses of text services.

### Social value research

Provide customers with access to information quickly and easily, in a wide range of formats to suit their preferences.

GB  
WTP  
£3.20

ENWL  
WTP  
£2.70

Annual  
spend level  
£0.30

### Customer insight

- Providing a choice of communication channels was seen as critical. Catering for a wider range of digital methods was thought to be increasingly important. It was also seen as helpful in reducing pressure on our call centre.
- Customers at all of our focus groups, including vulnerable customers, prioritised this service over other tested customer service attributes.

"If they use things like text messages and online updates so people can check within two minutes and save themselves money and the company money and time."

### Decision Making Framework stage

#### Delivery

This text service is currently in delivery stage and we are monitoring performance against the benefits identified

### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- 7,200 texts issued over five months
- 500 responses to outbound texts – this is a 7% response rate

### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Customer benefit from enhanced communication utilising their preferred channel



## Connecting with hard-to-reach customers through our Consumer Vulnerability Fund

**What we heard** - We invited our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel to judge which schemes that support vulnerable customers should be funded by the company. This was based on criteria which are aligned to our Vulnerable Customer strategy. We asked each of the existing partners, along with other service providers, to bid for funding. Nine organisations applied for support from our Consumer Vulnerability Fund and five organisations are now receiving funding under this new approach. We plan to invest £190,000 in 2019.

Who	How many	What we heard
Community Neighbours	£40,000 for 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carlisle has been identified through our social mapping work. Referrals for health, social care, charities and also vulnerable customers of Electricity North west who live in the Carlisle area.</li> </ul>
A Single Point of Contact service (SPOC), to be called "Warm Homes Eden"	£5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eden has been highlighted through our data as a significant fuel poor area with low Priority Services Register recruitment and this money will support the creation of a single-point-of-contact service to offer residents a direct referral route to support with energy issues.</li> </ul>
Energy Saving Support	£42,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of last year's successful scheme and will provide support to vulnerable customers across the North West region.</li> </ul>
Lancashire County Council - joint working with Cosy Homes	£62,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting three of the most deprived areas in the North West region which are in Lancashire, 1,000 residents will receive a home energy audit and associated advice and support.</li> </ul>
Volunteer Befriending Project	£40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 80% said they had another vulnerability within their household (in addition to deafness/hearing impairment).</li> <li>• Customers did not feel that their experience of a power cut would be harder due to their hearing impairment.</li> </ul>

### Social value research

Provide support to vulnerable customers who are also impacted by fuel poverty through a range of outreach support and advice services.

GB  
WTP  
£1.85

ENWL  
WTP  
£1.75

Annual  
spend level  
£0.11

### Customer insight

- Fuel poverty was considered a significant problem requiring intervention. Often more supported by people of lower incomes and those who work with the fuel poor
- Customers valued this and placed it as lower priority because has concerns about targeting our support and how this linked to suppliers' responsibilities

"I work teaching adults with learning disabilities and we're trying to get them eventually to be able to be more independent by themselves... so if they could just do something as simple as that (provide fuel poverty support) that would give them that independence without going into melt down or panic."



## No one gets left behind - enhancing our communications channels

**What our research tells us** - Our vulnerable customer research tells us that online information is important to some on this customer group. It is for example helpful for deaf customers. In 2017, we introduced a new website and designed it to better meet the needs of all customers. The Royal National Institute of Blind

People are members of our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel and they supported us in ensuring that the website complies with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 which caters for pan-disability access.

This year we've continued to enhance our approach with the addition of the cloud-based web accessibility solution 'recite' to our website, which includes text to speech functionality, dyslexia software, an interactive dictionary, a translation tool with over 100 languages and many other features. This functionality will go live in 2019.

### Social value research

Use innovative technology to enable customers with a range of communication needs to contact Electricity North West easily and effectively.

GB  
WTP  
£1.14

ENWL  
WTP  
£0.96

Annual  
spend level  
£0.10

### Customer insight

- Of the customer support service tested, this one was the lowest priority. Supporting customers with specific communication needs was considered important but as a subset of a wide variety of communication channels.

- Anecdotally, customers saw the benefit of channels developed to specifically meet the needs of customers with disabilities.

### Decision Making Framework stage

#### Option

Considering options to further enhance of online offering for vulnerable customers

### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- Recite to be delivered in 2019

### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Easier to use website for consumers with communications limitations

new



## Our partnership framework

**What we heard** – Our partners told us that it would be helpful to have more formal partnerships arrangements in place and to meet this need we've created our Partnership Framework. The four tiers of the Framework are shown below and for each of our partners we have a memorandum of understanding or contractual agreement in place that reflects the tier of the Framework most suitable for our relationship. This agreement outlines what each party can expect from the relationship and provides mechanisms for reporting and accountability.

It is key to delivering the right service at the right time to our vulnerable customers. This Framework reflects the maturity of our approach to partnership working which is significantly increasing the benefit we are securing for vulnerable customers by improving clarity of purpose and delivering the right services at the right time to our vulnerable customers. Throughout Part Three we provide examples of our partnerships in actions.

Partnership Framework Level	Description of purpose of partnership	Number of partnerships in place	Examples included in this document
<b>Level One:</b> Support Agency Specialists	Recognised experts in their professions who are working to improve the lives of customers in the North West and nationally. Able to provide specialist support and knowledge about segments of our customer base and a trusted agent in the North West	6	Centre for Sustainable Energy Money Advice Trust United Utilities Cadent
<b>Level Two:</b> Local authorities, housing associations, shelters and community groups	Broad touch support agents who can improve our understanding or provide support to a specific condition or vulnerability with a good knowledge of the North West and our services. Can refer their customers and clients to the Priority Services Register	7	Eden District Council Rochdale Boroughwide Housing
<b>Level Three:</b> Referral scheme	Two-way to raise awareness or provide specific support or services to customers impacted by Electricity North West. Specialists in their field but who have little knowledge of Electricity North West and our services	32	Rural England
<b>Level Four:</b> Feedback groups	Partners are not panel members and we use them to provide us with information, insight and feedback	15	The Brick Charity

Here are some examples of Level Two and Three partnerships we have in place to secure referrals to our Priority Services Register:

new



## Eden District Council

**What our data told us** - Our Value of Lost Load research demonstrated that the impact of a loss of supply has a greater negative impact on customers in fuel poverty than any other customer group. Our fuel poverty research identified fuel poverty 'hot spots' in our region and we overlaid our network reliability information to this research and identified those areas where customers were potentially most at risk from a supply interruption. The priority areas are Eden in Cumbria and Craven in North Yorkshire.

Eden District Council is now a level two partner in our Partnership Framework and they are promoting the Priority Services Register to residents by:

- Including information about the Priority Services Register in 27,000 council tax bills in March 2019.
- Leading a single-point-of-contact scheme for all support agencies for the district;
- Working with the local resilience forum.



## Partnering with local pharmacies

**What our data told us** – Our Priority Services Register data showed an increase in the number of customers who were experiencing vulnerability as a result of a hospital stay. Working with NHS services, we identified pharmacies as an effective route to raise awareness with this customer group. We first partnered with pharmacies in 2018 as we recognised that this gave us a route to target areas of high consumer vulnerability and customers who may be impacted by transient vulnerability as a result of illness. We work with United Utilities and both companies provide branded pharmacy bags to 200 pharmacies with information about our Priority Services Registers and these have a customer reach of 400,000 customers. Pharmacies are Level Three partners in our Partnership Framework.



## Rural England

**What our data told us** - Our fuel poverty research has demonstrated that the causes of vulnerability in rural areas are very different to urban areas. Larger, older homes and being off the gas grid can contribute to fuel poverty, and isolation can make it difficult to access services. We've developed a three-year programme with Rural England to understand which partnerships we need to have in place to better identify and serve the needs of this community. The next step is to focus research on how to increase engagement with local parish councils. This will be developed through 2019/20.



## Rochdale Boroughwide Housing

**What we heard** - We developed our relationship with Rochdale Boroughwide Housing through their participation in Call North West consumer vulnerability workshops and they asked us to partner with them in supporting vulnerable customers. Rochdale Boroughwide Housing is the UK's first tenant and employee co-owned mutual housing society, with over 13,000 homes in the Rochdale area. We've had a number of best practice meetings with them and they have agreed to include Priority Services Register information in their newsletters during 2019. They have also included information about the register on their website. Rochdale Boroughwide Housing is a Level Two partner in our Partnership Framework.

new



## Building the organisational resilience of a partner charity (Level Four partnership)

**What we heard** - Through collaboration with The Brick Charity, we were also made aware of some of the challenges they have in staff retention, particularly for their middle managers. To help address this, we delivered our full management training programme, called Into the Blue, to 16 of their colleagues. The training was delivered at our Blackburn Training Academy.

The Brick is a small charity project that delivers valued outcomes for the community it serves in Wigan; an area which is impacted by multiple drivers of vulnerability.

Wigan is an area of high deprivation and one where there is high incidence of multiple indicators of vulnerability. The Brick offers services to people who are homeless, in poverty or facing debt.

The feedback from both the charities and the trainees has been positive and the colleagues who completed the training are still with the charity and say they are now better placed support vulnerable consumers in the Wigan community.

## Social value research

Develop a range of partnerships to ensure that vulnerable customers receive holistic support and advice beyond power cuts.

GB  
WTP  
£1.09ENWL  
WTP  
£1.06Annual  
spend level  
£0.07

## Customer insight

- Providing support through partnership working often received a higher ranking when discussed qualitatively. Then there was considerable support
- Many customers saw this as a more effective route to reaching the most vulnerable, and a way of reaching them at an earlier stage. It was seen as maximising limited resources while also minimising the burden on vulnerable consumers

"If they (Electricity North West) worked with say hospitals in the area, if you work with people like that you'd have a list as long as your arm for people to put on the Priority Services Register."

## Decision Making Framework stage

## Review

We are currently working with The Brick to review the outcomes of this partnership and to develop proposals for further working

## Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- 16 staff at The Brick completed five Into the Blue management training modules
- £20,000 investment

## Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- More staff resilience for charity with particular expertise in meeting the needs of vulnerable consumers in an area of multiple incidence of vulnerability

Providing support to our vulnerable customers can only be effective if it is a whole company undertaking. We've worked hard to enhance and embed this culture within our business and have taken a structured approach to achieving this. Our approach is outlined in Part One, page 9 and 10. This section provides additional information about how this applies particularly to consumer vulnerability and where we have introduced new activity or enhanced existing delivery.

The guiding principle is that everyone is empowered to act on what they hear and we've taken a structured approach to achieving this. We're proud of the progress we've made in embedding consumer vulnerability into our structures, systems, processes, culture and our behaviours as we understand that the issue has to be supported across all of these areas of business activity to successfully serve our customers.

#### Executive-led engagement

- ▶ Executive Leadership Team undertaken Dementia Friendly Training (see below)

#### Embedding stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability structures, processes and governance

- ▶ Strengthening the welfare team and collaborating with operational teams (see below)
- ▶ Building Priority Services Register call recognition into 105 system and prompts on phone system (see below)

#### Giving our people the right skills and tools

- ▶ Training for all colleagues from induction to expert (Part Three, page 10)
- ▶ Development of the small and medium enterprises (SME) dashboard (Part Three, page 6)
- ▶ Application of Winter Rules to mitigate impact of outages (Part Three, page 6)
- ▶ Developing services to meet our customers' needs (Part Three, pages 6 and 7)

#### Strong principles guiding our approach

- ▶ Recognising colleague excellence (Part Three, page 9)

NEW

### Strong principles guiding our approach

Everyone is empowered to act in response to our vulnerable customers' needs. We collect these case studies and use them to recognise the outstanding efforts of our colleagues and to role model this behaviour to other colleagues through internal communication activity and training events.

E

### Case study

An engineer called to some reported concerns to our internal customer contact centre following a visit to a property. He said:

A customer had some quite severe damage to his property during high winds and an engineer attended site. Upon our arrival it became apparent very quickly that significant improvements were needed to a corroded cut out which would have meant the customer needed to be taken off supply.

The customer was elderly and although the engineer did explain in detail that it was now the customers own responsibility to get the supplier round and a private electrician to enable full power restoration, it was clear that this was beyond his capability.

Our engineer left a small generator for the customer so he was not off supply, and contacted his business partner to ask if there was anything we could in addition help with.

Our business partner made the customer welfare team aware, who liaised directly with the supplier on the customer's behalf. This was to ensure they were fully aware of the urgency of this matter. They stayed in touch with the customer to help him instruct a local electrician and to check his welfare and tracked the case through to completion with the supplier, until the customers' work was complete.

NEW

### Executive Leadership Team undertake Dementia Friendly Training

**What our data told us** – Analysis of needs code data clearly demonstrated the requirement for the company to enhance our capacity to serve customers with mental health issues, particularly dementia. There has been a significant increase in the number of customers on our register with this need. To address this, we've worked

with the Alzheimers' Society to better understand the nature, incidence and impact of dementia on our customers and how we can better serve these customers.

Our first step was to deliver Dementia Friendly Training to our frontline colleagues. To demonstrate the importance

of this, our Executive Leadership Team led by example and completed the training early in the rollout process. Our Chief Executive followed up the training by describing why the training was important to him and what he gained from it in his weekly update column to colleagues.

#### Decision Making Framework stage

##### Review

We will continue to develop colleague training that meets the needs of our Priority Services Register customers.

#### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- Executive Leadership Team completed training
- 100% of frontline colleagues completed training
- 50 mental wellbeing colleague champions

#### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Colleagues better able to identify and support customers and colleagues dealing with dementia and other mental wellbeing issues

&lt;&gt;

### Strengthening the welfare team and collaborating with operational teams

**What we heard** – Our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel set us challenging targets for our activity in this area. Last year, we created a new welfare team to deliver our strategy and targets and this year, we've increased the headcount by a third.

The purpose of the team is to lead the delivery of the Consumer Vulnerability strategy and this includes everything from directly interacting with vulnerable consumers on a daily basis to developing our partnership strategy to delivering Dementia Friendly Training to

colleagues. The team also attended events with partners to promote the Priority Services Register, including supporting the refurbishment works required as part of our protecting customers in multi-occupancy buildings investment programme (Part Two, page 8).

#### Decision Making Framework stage

##### Delivery

We are monitoring and managing the delivery of the benefits of increasing our welfare team

#### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- Increase in welfare team from six to eight colleagues

#### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- Delivery of consumer vulnerability strategy
- 60 new customers signed up to Priorities Services register in four buildings (25% of occupants)

&lt;&gt;

### Building Priority Services Register customer recognition into our call-answering system (including 105)

**What we heard** - In 2018, we discussed the idea of introducing a dedicated Priority Services Register telephone number with our Vulnerable Customer Advisory Panel. Their preference was to instead promote the 105 number for all customer contacts, but improve

our call answering systems so that if a number is matched to one held on the Priority Services Register it is immediately promoted to the welfare team.

By adopting this approach, we've made it easier for our Priority Services Register customers to contact us as they only have to remember one very simple phone number. Our matching rate is high and our call answer times are low.

#### Decision Making Framework stage

##### Delivery

We are monitoring and managing the delivery of the benefits of this change

#### Outputs (Intermediate impact)

- 42% of customers contact us through 105. This is a 6% increase on last year
- 54% of vulnerable customers use 105 which is a 12% increase compared to the other customer groups

#### Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)

- 91.6% Priority Services Register CSAT score achieved





## Giving our people the rights skills and tools

## Training for all colleagues from induction to expert

Providing support to our vulnerable customers can only be effective if it is a whole company undertaking. The guiding principle is that everyone is empowered to act on what they hear and we know that the right level of training is essential for them to have the confidence to do so this. We continuously add to our training as we learn about our vulnerable customers' needs. The work commissioned with our external reviewers will play a significant role in future development of this training. In the year we have reviewed our induction training and focused on rolling out the best practice of dementia training. As an organisation we have built an internal programme for understanding mental health and this is part of our wider view to increase awareness with our employees of the challenges our customers and employees face.



## Decision Making Framework stage

## Review

We continuously review and update our training and development programmes to ensure that they remain relevant and appropriate

## Outputs (Intermediate impact)



- 48 induction sessions delivered
- 167 in money matters and fuel poverty awareness training
- 56 experience-based awareness training
- 239 specialist needs based training, for example Dementia Friends Training

## Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)



- Colleagues able to identify and support vulnerable customers

## Section 7 - Developing our approach

## NEW

## Independent review of our social programme

**What we heard** – We were disappointed by our performance under the SECV incentive last year and in response to feedback we received from the assessment panel, we commissioned the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) to assist us in the development of our approach to consumer vulnerability. This decision was

informed by a best-practice meeting with Western Power Distribution.

The CSEs independent review of our social programme was completed in March 2019. The purpose of the review was to re-evaluate and develop our understanding of the role the company can play in tackling social issues

by creating a plan to deliver this role as effectively as possible.

Progress against these recommendations will be included in our 2019/20 Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability submission.

**Provide customers, particularly vulnerable customers, with appropriate protection from the risk of harm during power outages through:**

- Greater integration with operational teams to develop more efficient processes;
- Update our training and engagement with a focus on 'the case for doing better' in a language tailored to express the benefits; and
- A wholesale review of the services we provided and ensuring ease of access to these services internally.

**Help our vulnerable customers to build their energy resilience by:**

- Investing to deliver a range of services which meet the needs of vulnerable customers on our network; and
- Embedding the new Partnership Framework – which aligns capabilities to the services who need to deliver

**Ensure we know who our vulnerable customers are and have up-to-date information about their needs by:**

- Strengthening the reporting and metrics in this area to effectively evaluate the impact of services;
- Enhancing our systems to make reporting of data easy and accessible; and
- Using social-mapping data as a strategic influence on decision-making associated with our services and systems of delivery.

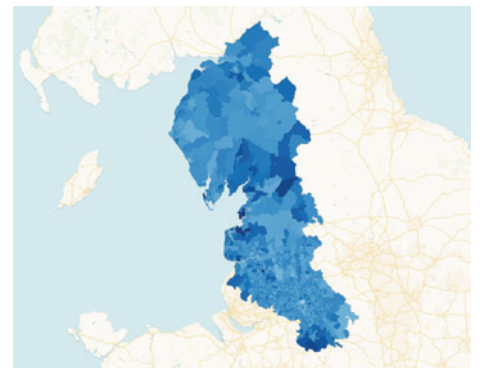
## NEW

## Developing our understanding of incidence of vulnerability through comprehensive social mapping

**What we heard** – Our Consumer Vulnerability Panel was concerned that we had an 'inside-out' approach to understanding vulnerability based on our dependence on our own Priority Services Register data. They encouraged us to build on this and take an 'outside-in' approach, informed by social mapping information and we worked with the Centre for Sustainable Energy to develop this.

To develop a better understanding of the nature, scale and distribution of different types of household vulnerability across our network area we commissioned additional social mapping from the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). This new analysis brings together a detailed understanding of vulnerability with a curated set of data sources that identify its type, location and prevalence.

Our Consumer Vulnerability Strategy has always been informed by our Priority Services Register data. We will now use this alongside the consumer vulnerability mapping information provided by CSE. The information will enable us to identify factors affecting vulnerability and geographically where we need to support the communities where vulnerability may occur. We will also use this data to identify which organisations we can partner with to most effectively reach these groups. The social vulnerability mapping data was received into our business in February 2019 and we will develop our approach to application of this data in 2019/20.



## Decision Making Framework stage

## Delivery

Social mapping data is being shared across strategic and operational teams to support the targeting of activities and investment to deliver biggest benefit to vulnerable consumers

## Outputs (Intermediate impact)



- Social vulnerability mapping model created for the North West region

## Outcomes (Stakeholder benefits)



- Will develop targeted support for households and communities to access support to improve their resilience
- Better targeted recruitment of customers to our Priority Services Register and associated services
- Adaptation of a differential service offering to better reflect and respond to the needs of the communities we serve
- Ability to target appropriate partners to support the needs of the community

Some of our consumer vulnerability partners





