

# Transforming our services through enhanced stakeholder engagement



# Part 2

## Introduction

We play a crucial role in maintaining, repairing and replacing gas pipes across four of the eight gas distribution networks (GDNs) in the UK. Our aim is to set a new standard on what it means for a utility taking care of an essential and vital public service.

We're responsible for ensuring the safe and reliable flow of energy, now and long into the future. We're proud to be at the heart of heat and work closely with our communities to keep them safe, warm and connected, providing extra care for those who might need it in a gas emergency. As part of this we also manage the National Gas Emergency Service telephone number on behalf of the gas industry.

### Summary of Part 1

In Part 1 of our submission, we provided a detailed overview of our enhanced stakeholder engagement, and customer and vulnerability strategies (which are summarised in Part 2 Page 01), demonstrating that we have met Ofgem's minimum requirements.

### Our approach to Part 2

This year we have undertaken an unprecedented level of stakeholder engagement, going further than ever to engage with hard-to-reach and more challenging stakeholder groups. In Part 2 we have outlined the key outcomes and benefits resulting from these extensive engagement activities, including how these projects align with Ofgem's assessment criteria and how we have gone above and beyond for our stakeholders, customers and communities.

### Measuring value

Following the panel's feedback from last year's submission, we have not included a table summarising the value of each project. Instead, we have included 'measuring value' panels alongside the initiatives, which highlight the key outcomes together with the costs (where applicable). In this way, we are illustrating the value and benefit of each project in a clearer format, as requested by the panel. A table summarising all of the projects and outcomes can be accessed online at [cadentgas.com/seis-table](https://cadentgas.com/seis-table)

We have structured Part 2 of our Stakeholder Engagement Incentive Submission so that it is completely aligned with our stakeholders' top priorities:

### Keeping the energy flowing reliably and providing excellent customer service

– Delivering a service our customers love

### Supporting customers in vulnerable situations by adapting our services

– Keeping people safe, warm and independent in their homes

### Ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible for all stakeholders

– Going further to be more inclusive and accessible

### Tackling climate change and contributing to the net zero commitment

– Committed to creating a better future

Each section includes an example of how we are continuously improving and we finalise the submission with details of how our initiatives are driving best practice across the industry.



### Welcome from our Director of Customer Strategy

Mark Belmega shares details of our core engagement strategies and how the outcomes included in our submission are completely aligned to our strategic objectives and stakeholders' priorities.

See page 01



### Delivering a service our customers love

We exist to keep the energy flowing in the communities we serve, striving to provide excellent service through listening to stakeholder feedback and tailoring our operations to meet local requirements.

See pages 02-03



### Keeping people safe, warm and independent

Supporting customers in vulnerable situations is of paramount importance to us. We have developed innovative solutions to help people to feel safe, warm and independent in their homes.

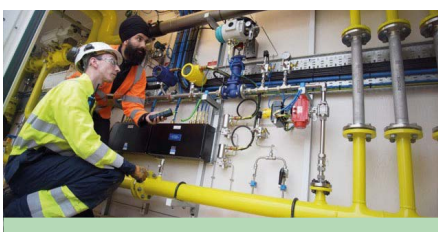
See pages 04-05



### Going further to be more inclusive and accessible

We have gone further than ever to engage hard-to-reach and challenging stakeholders, ensuring that we deliver tangible outcomes that make our services as inclusive and accessible as possible.

See pages 06-07



### Committed to creating a better future

Continuing to be at the forefront of engaging with current and future stakeholders to develop practical, cost-effective solutions to decarbonise our industry is a key priority and we've led the way in 2019/20.

See pages 08-09



### Collaborating to achieve better outcomes

We want to transform experiences and are ambitious in our aim to develop initiatives that are considered industry-leading and best practice; setting standards that all our customers love and others aspire to.

See page 10

# Welcome from Mark Belmega, our Director of Customer Strategy

**Our vision of 'setting standards all our customers love and others aspire to' is what gets me out of bed every day. I am extremely passionate about increasing standards through building trust and transforming experiences for stakeholders, customers and communities across our four networks.**

Customers expect more from their service providers than ever before, and our insight shows that they have even greater expectations of utility companies. We want to do much more than simply maintain and replace the gas pipes; our aim is to provide a service that our customers love, keeping them safe, warm and independent in their homes.

To achieve this, we have delivered unprecedented levels of engagement throughout 2019/20 and have gone further to engage with, and listen to, hard-to-reach groups and customers in vulnerable situations. These insights have helped increase understanding across our business, and enabled us to innovate and tailor services to better meet their needs.

As well as safeguarding customers, stakeholders expect us to take a leading role in the decarbonisation agenda. We have invested significantly in this area: working closely with local, regional and national government on their energy plans as well as demonstrating the potential of green gases, such as biomethane and hydrogen, as viable solutions to achieving net zero.

## Transforming experiences

This year, we have significantly transformed our business; moving to 28 local operating centres, bringing us closer to our communities; upgrading our IT systems, so that our data is more effective and accessible; and deeply embedding our engagement strategy, through robust governance and leadership, so all colleagues recognise that working with stakeholders is a core part of their role.

Our engagement strategy, which was developed with, and is regularly tested by, stakeholders to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose, is centrally defined and regionally delivered. This approach is essential to us providing better outcomes. Our engagement experts support colleagues

across our regions in establishing their plans, providing the necessary tools and skills to gather meaningful insights from their local communities. This feedback is reviewed by our Customer Insights Forum and shared with business leaders, who make data-driven decisions and turn analysis into action, using robust project management principles.

Collaboration and strategic partnerships have been a fundamental part of delivering our strategies, and we have taken a leading role in sharing smart practice across the industry.

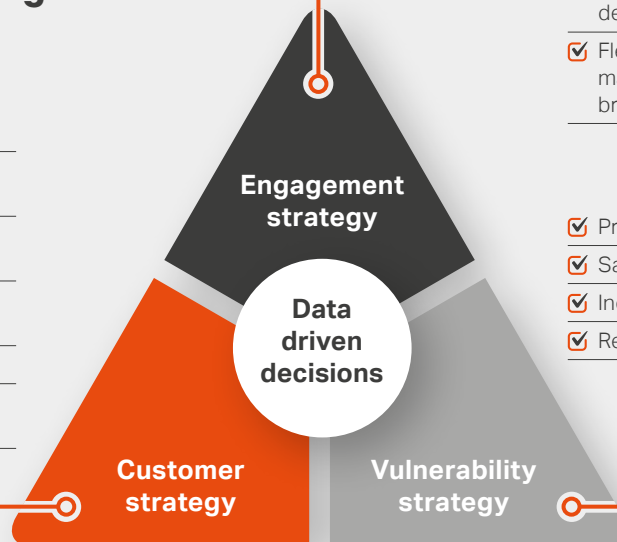
## Doing the right things

To ensure we are doing the right things, we assess the value of our initiatives, using the most appropriate measures. Our measures include social return on investment (SROI), stakeholder and colleague satisfaction scores, C-SAT ratings, complaints response times, impact and reach as well as any efficiencies achieved.

It will always be a priority for us to focus on individual needs and providing services for all, and the highlights included in this submission reflect the ways in which we have gone above and beyond to put our stakeholders at the heart of everything we do.

## Summary of our strategies

- ✓ Customer-centric operating model
- ✓ Multi-channel, inclusive communications
- ✓ Targets and incentives aligned to customer needs
- ✓ Quality engagement and real-time insights
- ✓ Big Data and analytics
- ✓ Technology-driven automation and efficiency



- ✓ Centrally defined and regionally delivered to meet local needs
- ✓ Flexible, accessible methods to maximise engagement with the broadest range of stakeholders

- ✓ Preventing CO poisoning
- ✓ Safeguarding communities
- ✓ Increasing PSR registrations
- ✓ Reducing fuel poverty

**Our stakeholder and customer strategies are intertwined with tailored and meaningful engagement activities which support our ambition to become truly customer-centric. For more information about our core strategies, read Part 1 pages 03-04.**

## Core strategies

Our enhanced engagement strategy is centrally defined and delivered regionally across our networks by local management teams. This comprehensive programme of activities is supported by a clear customer strategy, allowing us to gather real-time data from stakeholders and take immediate action.

## Safeguarding customers

Our customer vulnerability strategy applies a focused lens on engaging with those customers who need extra support from us and the organisations that support them. We engage on four priority areas, using insight to develop the best outcomes for customers.

## Information into action

Data is paramount to developing services that our customers and stakeholders love. We achieve this through our web-based Relational Database Management System, using AI to recognise themes and patterns across millions of data points sourced from stakeholder feedback and customer sentiment analysis.

# Delivering a service our customers love

We want to set a new standard for utilities and be an exemplar in providing excellent customer experiences, by getting closer to our communities, better understanding their needs and forming lasting relationships. Using stakeholder feedback, Big Data and customer insights, we have transformed our operations to deliver a more local service, empowering our people to engage more effectively and make informed decisions that provide tangible benefits for our stakeholders, customers and communities.

## Embedding our regional operations model

Our stakeholders told us we need to get closer to the communities we serve and understand their specific needs. To deliver on this promise, we have designed and delivered a new, local operating model structured around 28 locations. This has enabled us to get closer to our communities and tailor our services to customer needs.

We have directly employed over 600 of our contractor workforce, bringing their local expertise in-house. This has created a better customer experience, as our service is being delivered under one brand with a consistent, effective approach to customer engagement.

Having more control over the end-to-end customer journey means we can provide a more hands-on, personalised service for our customers and ensure the quality is maintained throughout.

This year we have invested in new systems to provide area-focused management information and reporting. As a result, we are more agile and our teams are finding innovative solutions for local issues. We now resolve 76% of all complaints within 24 hours, as these are managed by local teams.

Our supply chain has also been localised and their incentives are based on delivering excellent service at a local level.

### Improved customer satisfaction (C-SAT)

We have seen a significant improvement in our C-SAT scores for Emergency Response and Repair (ERR) and Planned Works (PLW) in the West Midlands and North West, and expect to see improvements in our other networks during 2020/21.

Our four gas distribution networks: East of England (EE), North London (NL), North West (NW) and West Midlands (WM).



### Measuring value

- ✓ ERR C-SAT scores improved from **9.35/10 to 9.49 in NW** and **9.39/10 to 9.47 in WM** (most improved networks)
- ✓ PLW C-SAT scores improved from **8.26/10 to 8.41 in NW** and **7.75/10 to 8.81 in WM** (most improved networks)
- ✓ C-SAT improvements in many metrics, including overall improvement from **8.28/10 to 8.59 in NL** (most improved network)
- ✓ **76%** of all complaints resolved within 24 hours

## Maximising efficiency through innovation

Our Customer Insights Forum reviews data and insights to identify trends in stakeholder feedback and customer sentiment. A prominent theme highlighted by the Forum was that stakeholders wanted us to do more to reduce the disruption caused by gas interruptions, and reduce the number of hand-offs between engineers and teams to create a smoother customer experience. To address this, we explored how we could be more innovative in our processes and procedures to better meet stakeholders' expectations and deliver better outcomes.

### Reducing time off gas

Our aim is to ensure we always have as many people on gas as possible, and we have adapted our ways of working to achieve this. We have used different repair techniques and technologies to keep customers on gas overnight and, following a successful trial of staggered shift patterns in our East of England network, we have changed engineers' working hours, so they can now work during the evenings when customers are more likely to be in.

### Two vans are better than one

Our previous approach to initiating repair works required engineers to wait on-site

for signage, lighting and guarding to arrive via a designated driver. After analysing feedback from our real-time SMS surveys and reviewing time-and-motion data, we instigated a new process in our East of England network to improve efficiency. Under our new two-van model, our emergency repair teams arrive at every job with a 'spare' van in tow containing the signage, lighting and guarding, so our engineers are fully equipped to complete the job as quickly as possible.

### Entrepreneurial engineers

With the support of expert behavioural management consultants, we trialled a new cross-skilling approach for our engineers via the 'entrepreneurial engineer' project, empowering them to assess problems and diagnose solutions that previously would have required calling for support. For instance, we trained repair engineers on how to lay internal pipework, move meters, test gas appliances and carry out small-scale reinstatement, and we trained our first call operatives (FCOs) on how to carry out excavations and offer other assistance during repair works.

Results from the trial have shown that this significantly increases our efficiency and customer satisfaction as the job gets completed with a single point of accountability and no avoidable delays.

Multi-skilling our engineers in this way is enabling us to more effectively meet customer needs and expectations.

### Lone worker training

Stakeholders told us that demonstrating that we protect our colleagues is an important aspect of developing a trusted brand. We have led the way on safety for frontline engineers, and this year we became the first GDN to have a public policy on operational lone working. To develop this, we engaged with experts and collaborated with SGN to discuss the best approaches to safeguarding frontline engineers. Over 1,000 FCOs across our organisation have now been trained, giving them the confidence to protect themselves on the job. We have shared our policy with stakeholders, so they are all aware of the steps we have taken.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **23%** reduction in customers' time off gas
- ✓ **20,000** hours saved per year from two-van model in EE
- ✓ **80%** of customers scored our service **10/10** in Q4 (via SMS feedback)
- ✓ Over **£2 million** invested

## Transforming experiences for connections customers

Over the past few years, our customer satisfaction scores for connections in North London have been lower than in other networks, and this year we set out to understand why, and crucially, what we could do to deliver lasting change. We analysed our complaints, enquiries and customer satisfaction data to understand what we needed to improve, and engaged with stakeholders and partners to review industry best practice and strategies for success.

This enabled us to identify and act upon the following four areas of improvement:

■ **Getting the first customer touchpoint right:** We have adjusted our back-end processes to ensure we can deliver a quotation for customers efficiently during first contact, giving them clarity and certainty on next steps and expected timelines

■ **Ensuring a site survey within three days:** We are now working towards a commitment that within three days of accepting a quotation, a Site Manager will visit the customer to discuss the details of their work

■ **Doorstep planning:** As part of the site survey, we now offer customers options on the dates for physical works completion, giving them the flexibility to adjust timescales

■ **Engineer incentivisation:** We have introduced new customer performance incentives for teams, giving them an opportunity to increase their earnings based on customer satisfaction returns scoring above 8 out of 10

As a result of these changes, we have seen significant improvements in our North

London network connections performance, including consecutive months of C-SAT scores of 9.30/10 and above. We have delivered 97% of quotes within three days and have substantially improved our complaints handling score. We are using the learnings from North London to improve connections performance across all of our regions.

### Measuring value

- ✓ NL was frequently the highest performing GDN in connections C-SAT scores in 2019/20, compared with the lowest in all months of 2018/19
- ✓ **97%** of connections quotations issued within 3 days in NL, compared to 95% in 2018/19
- ✓ NL connections complaints handling score improved from **4.80 to 3.64**

## Tailored engagement during a major incident

In line with our strategy to become more network-aligned, this year we have improved our ability to tailor our response to gas network incidents. A water main burst in the town of Wirksworth in Derbyshire in October 2019, damaging a gas main which resulted in over 10,000 litres of water flooding the local gas network. 900 homes and businesses – including 215 priority service customers – lost their gas supply, which we immediately responded to by mobilising over 200 colleagues for several days to restore supplies as safely and quickly as possible.

We reviewed previous stakeholder feedback and our own internal learnings from recent incidents, and created a plan to tailor our engagement to the needs of Wirksworth.

For the first time during an incident, we used online videos to create a real-time, personalised experience for stakeholders, giving them an insight into the extensive planning and dedication required to get them back on gas.



**Cadent staff handled the situation with exemplary skill and politeness and completed the task remarkably fast, whilst ensuring every member of the community was kept well informed."**

**Andy Jordan, Mayor of Wirksworth**

This was complemented by letter drops, proactive social media updates, dedicated website and Facebook pages, and a temporary local incident centre. Our team actively monitored social media to understand trends in customers' concerns, using this insight to tailor messaging accordingly. We received no complaints, with locals referring to our frontline engineers affectionately as their 'Angels in Orange'.

Wirksworth residents were so impressed with the level of service provided that they invited our engineers to their annual carnival.

### Measuring value

- ✓ Over **5,000** views of incident videos
- ✓ **Zero** complaints
- ✓ **26,600** reached on social media
- ✓ Specialist services for over **200** customers in vulnerable situations

## Innovative engagement on CISBOT

We started using ULC Robotics' Cast Iron Joint Sealing Robot (CISBOT) in 2018/19 to minimise disruption to customers and communities in busy locations during large-scale replacement and remediation work. An unintended consequence of this was that we received an increase in complaints and enquiries from stakeholders walking past CISBOT worksites that they thought were unoccupied. At our Innovative Technology Showcase in London, local stakeholders called on us to do more to tackle this challenge.

To address this, we developed a set of eye-catching, large-scale banners to adorn our worksites and explain the presence of the robot working underground. This was supported by a new dedicated online hub, signposted on the banners.

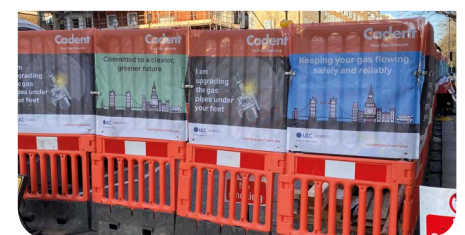
In December, we invited all local residents and stakeholders to a public drop-in event in Sloane Square, to promote our upcoming CISBOT works in the area. We received positive feedback about the event, and used the opportunity to invite stakeholders from the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Council to see CISBOT in action, addressing their concerns and further securing their support.

### Measuring value

- ✓ Over **50** businesses and local authorities engaged
- ✓ **Zero** complaints about CISBOT works in NW and NL in 2019/20
- ✓ CISBOT banners seen by approximately **1 million** people
- ✓ **£20,000** invested



Visit our online CISBOT hub:  
[cadentgas.com/cisbot](https://cadentgas.com/cisbot)



**Prior to starting major works in Sloane Street, one of the borough's most prestigious and sensitive streets, Cadent engaged with us at an early stage so we were able to quickly understand the impact the project would have on the local community. Throughout the planning process Cadent were open to working collaboratively with other work promoters and maintained a flexible approach."**

**Tony Pegrum, Network Manager**  
The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

# Keeping people safe, warm and independent in their homes

Anyone can be vulnerable if their circumstances change and rather than using labels, we prefer to focus on individual needs and what we can do to ensure customers stay safe, warm, connected and independent in their homes. Our customer vulnerability strategy forms the backbone of our approach and focuses on our stakeholders' top priorities: increasing PSR registrations, raising awareness of carbon monoxide (CO), tackling fuel poverty and providing services for all.

## Social indicator mapping to focus on those who need our support the most

Key to prioritising support and activity is our Social Indicator Mapping Tool (SIMT), which highlights areas within our networks where multiple vulnerabilities are prevalent, depicted by the deep red colours on the maps to the right. This enables us to predict where the largest Priority Services Register (PSR) enrolment gaps exist as well as map areas that are high risk CO hotspots and have high levels of deprivation and fuel poverty.

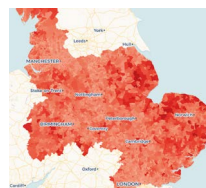
### Reaching carers to increase registrations

We have used the SIMT to ensure our engagement is targeting the right demographics and locations. Using the PSR filter (see Map 1), we were able to identify areas with large gaps in PSR registrations, and

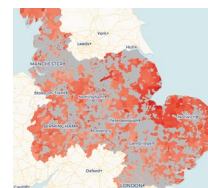
we used this insight to launch a social media campaign targeting NHS workers and carers of elderly people to increase registrations. The campaign reached over 60,000 people on social media and the number of registrations for the Pensionable Age PSR needs code tripled during the campaign.

### Low income areas

We also used the tool to identify areas where there was a high index (40% and above) of people in a low-income bracket and with poor Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings (see Map 2); indicating that there is a greater likelihood that they would benefit from support relating to fuel poverty. We then ran a series of initiatives targeting these areas. We have shared the SIMT with our partners, including Leicestershire Police and UK Men's Sheds Association, who are also using the tool to tailor their services.



Map 1 – Priority Services Register



Map 2 – Low income and poor EPC

### Measuring value

- ✓ **60,000** carers and NHS workers reached on social media
- ✓ **5,347** PSR registrations in 2019/20 (6% increase)
- ✓ **500%** increase in visits to PSR web pages
- ✓ **£39,000** invested

## Teaching children about CO safety saves lives

Stakeholder feedback and insights gathered from the past two years have emphasised the importance of engaging with children to amplify our gas safety messaging with their parents, siblings and grandparents. These audiences are often in vulnerable situations and harder to reach, especially if they are in a socially deprived area identified by our SIMT. For every child that we engage with, we estimate (conservatively) that 2.5 people are reached with those messages, but in reality it's more likely to be closer to 5.

### Safety Seymour soaring to another level

In 2019/20 we have built on the previous success of Safety Seymour and he has continued his mission by visiting a further 9,000 school children across our networks, an increase of 20% on last year. Safety Seymour is recognised by the industry as best practice, and has now been adopted by the other GDNs, who are promoting Safety Seymour in their networks.

We have partnered with Hazard Alley, a children's safety centre in Milton Keynes, to help deliver Safety Seymour sessions to over 8,000 children in our East Midlands area and have worked collaboratively on ensuring CO messaging is delivered as part

of their home safety sessions at the safety centre. We chose this location because it was an area with a high risk of CO.

Working with Queen Alexandra College in Birmingham, we have crafted Safety Seymour training for young adults with learning difficulties, which is especially important for those going into independent living.

### The launch of the CO Crew

Schools and local councils told us they wanted to educate older children about CO and find a solution where schools were not reliant on third parties delivering the training, as they were conscious that Safety Seymour sessions are very resource-intensive for GDNs.

We have used this insight to create another CO education programme, targeting children in their last two years of primary school through videos and interactive learning modules. This new approach is teacher-led so we can roll it out across all primary schools, enabling us to expand our reach to many more children, making more homes safer and freeing up Cadent colleagues' time so that they can serve customers elsewhere.

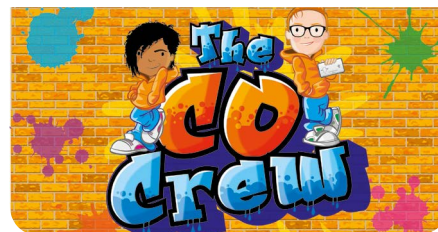
The CO Crew further consolidates children's awareness of CO and following a successful pilot earlier this year, will launch fully across our footprint in 2020/2021.

### Preventing gas incidents

Teaching children about gas safety is saving lives; after completing a Safety Seymour session, nine-year old Aoife Dean averted a major gas incident in the North West.



Read about how Aoife's quick thinking saved lives: [cadentgas.com/aoife](https://cadentgas.com/aoife)



### Measuring value

- ✓ **17,000** children trained on CO safety
- ✓ **10,000** CO alarms distributed
- ✓ **250** schools engaged across our networks
- ✓ Teacher-led approach expands reach to all primary schools
- ✓ **£170,000** invested

## Unleashing the power of partnerships

Partnerships are a core part of ensuring we provide services for all, as our partners often have a greater understanding of specific customer needs, greater reach and trust with those we need to engage with. We group our partnerships into three categories: strategic, programme and project, depending on the breadth and longevity of the relationship and activities, and use our partnership evaluation tool to assess success.

### Helping to warm customers in rural communities

We partnered with Suffolk County Council and the Rural Coffee Caravan to spread the word on PSR, CO awareness and fuel poverty whilst providing complimentary coffee and cake. The Rural Coffee Caravan targets communities in rural locations and people living in vulnerable situations and social isolation. This year the caravan has visited 118 locations and reached 2,800 people.

### Reaching more through the FRS

We are now working strategically with 22 of the 24 Fire & Rescue Services (FRS) in our four regions. Through our FRS partnerships, we are able to reach customers in the most vulnerable situations (who we would not have direct access to), and install CO alarms, share gas safety information, encourage PSR

registrations and raise awareness of other initiatives such as Locking Cooker Valves.

We have collaborated with Norfolk FRS and the local council to deliver gas safety messaging to over 1,000 children. The aim of this programme is to help children react more calmly in emergency situations, so they are not shocked and can deal with it more effectively. We have received feedback from schools, councils and parents, stating they had seen behavioural changes and the children could easily recall our gas safety messaging.

### Reducing fuel costs for the most vulnerable

We have formed programme partnerships with Groundwork Manchester (GM) and Marches Energy Action (MEA) based in Shropshire, who have access to the homes of people living in extreme vulnerability across both rural and urban areas in our networks. As part of their home safety visits, GM provide messaging about gas safety and distribute CO alarms and heated seat covers on our behalf. Our partnership with the MEA has enabled us to engage with, and provide funding for, over 30 households which are unable to afford appliance servicing, and consequently reduce the risk of CO poisoning. We also provide CO alarms, literature and heated seat covers.

See Part 1 pages 08-09 for details on our partnerships.

### Leading industry collaboration

We partially fund the All-Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group (APPCOG), which is the leading forum for Government to discuss and promote ways of tackling CO poisoning. This year, for the first time, we hosted the APPCOG outside of London at our offices in Coventry. This gave interested stakeholders a more central location to attend. We continue to lobby for change to legislation relating to mandating CO alarms in all private and public rental properties, for all fuel types, and share best practice.



### Measuring value

- ✓ **£39,092** SROI per year from appliance repairs
- ✓ **647** heated covers distributed and **£32,000** saved in energy bills
- ✓ Over **5 million** reached by CO and PSR billboard campaigns
- ✓ **£80,000** invested

## Cadent Foundation

In May 2019 we announced that we were creating a charitable fund, through which we would donate 1.25% of our post-tax profits (over £5 million per year) to fund core projects and initiatives within the communities we serve, with a particular focus on supporting customers in vulnerable situations. In order to create the best solution, we engaged extensively with stakeholders, including the Green Alliance, Energy Savings Trust, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), National Energy Action, Citizens Advice, LifeScape and Wildlife Trusts, to name but a few.

We also engaged with colleagues during our network roadshows to understand how they wanted to support local communities and tested our approach at customer forums.

Through these combined insights, we developed very specific funding criteria to ensure we delivered against our stakeholders' requirements. This included increasing the maximum amount that the Foundation would grant each local community group to £5,000 per application.

The Cadent Foundation is committed to creating a better future and provides funding for projects that help people in vulnerable

situations, enhance communities and protect the environment. It also funds partnership projects that support sustainable energy and eliminate harmful emissions.

During 2019/20 the Cadent Foundation provided over £2 million of funding to support customers in vulnerable situations through:

- Affordable Warmth Solutions
- The Trussell Trust food bank network
- The NEA Reactive Response Pilot

## Engaging in new ways to reduce fuel poverty

Our experience has shown us that people living in fuel poverty are often nervous of support schemes. To overcome misconceptions and potential barriers, we have worked creatively with our partners Affordable Warmth Solutions (AWS) to build trust in our communities and connect with more fuel poor customers.

### Connected for Warmth

A major challenge for low-income households is affording new gas heating systems. This year, we have supported AWS to launch Connected for Warmth, a new industry-wide scheme offering fully-funded gas central heating systems to over 1,000 low-income private sector homes.

To promote Connected for Warmth and support our broader engagement strategy, AWS has invested in a unique marketing

vehicle which introduces our services and expert advisors to communities in a relaxed, informal setting. This has proven to be much more engaging than using traditional methods such as direct mail and advertising, as it facilitates positive, potentially life-changing face-to-face conversations without the pressure of doorstep visits.

### Helping those that need it most

Analysis via our Customer Insights Forum revealed that areas in the North West and West Midlands tend to have the highest proportion of households in fuel poverty in the UK, and our engagement this year largely focused on these regions. We hosted 15 events across our networks, providing customers with blankets, thermal mugs, umbrellas, and information about our services.

## Continuous improvement

In support of the Government's strategy and to help address some of the challenges facing park homeowners, we have engaged with park home owners across our networks. This has led to the completion of 600 new gas connections, with residents benefitting from new gas heating systems (which can reduce annual energy bills by £400 per property), and greater access to energy advice and fuel poverty support.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **2,252** fuel poor connections completed delivering a SROI of £3 million per year
- ✓ **5** park home projects completed
- ✓ Customer satisfaction score of **9.61/10** for 2019/20
- ✓ **£150,000** invested

# Going further to be more inclusive and accessible

To set standards our customers love, we need to know what our customers want, recognising that their requirements are often unique and diverse. This year, we have interacted with more hard-to-reach groups than ever before, and this learning has enabled us to tailor our services to their needs, making them inclusive and accessible to as many people as possible.

## Compounded vulnerability research

Often it is those stakeholders who are impacted by multiple challenges such as fuel poverty, extra communication needs, or mental health issues that are less inclined to engage with us as they have more pressing priorities. In order to address this, we commissioned the London Sustainability Exchange to undertake compounded vulnerability research with under-represented groups in our communities. This included the elderly, those whose first language isn't English, and people with a diagnosed mental health condition.

### Targeting tenants

Through the forums and one-to-one interviews, we developed a deeper understanding of customers' needs. Our engagement unveiled that people with multiple vulnerabilities, such as a diagnosed mental health disorder, a disability, living in fuel poverty or with young children, were even more vulnerable if they lived in private rented accommodation. This was because they were not confident of where to go for help or whether their landlords would support them if there was a gas leak or loss

of gas. The research also revealed that these instances of compounded vulnerability were further exacerbated when English was not the customer's first language.

We have taken these invaluable insights and embarked on an extensive engagement programme with housing associations, letting agencies, landlords and third-sector partners to increase the promotion of our gas safety information and videos to these customers, distribute and fit CO alarms where needed, and raise awareness of and registrations to the PSR.

### Improved, accessible services

Following this research, we have extended our existing contract with Language Line to provide all colleagues with 24/7 – 365 days a year access to translation services.

In addition, we are also using SignLive, who provide a live British Sign Language (BSL) service on the doorstep – enabling us to use modern technology, like smart phones and tablets, to have three-way conversations with customers who cannot hear.

We have produced a new suite of customer videos which is available in the most prevalent languages in our networks. These have been shared with our partners and across social

media; using geotargeting, we have engaged over 200,000 hard-to-reach people.

To ensure our website is accessible for users who have impaired vision, learning disabilities and deafness/impaired hearing, we have worked with the Digital Accessibility Centre (DAC) to make improvements. This includes over 50 major adaptations overall and we were recently awarded DAC Accreditation, conforming to level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1).



Take a look at our translated information: [cadentgas.com/help-and-support](https://cadentgas.com/help-and-support)

### Measuring value

- ✓ Over **60** partnerships with charities and local authorities
- ✓ **11,000** views of our translated videos
- ✓ **Achieved DAC Accessibility Accreditation Level AA** of WCAG 2.1
- ✓ **845** calls to Language Line across 40 languages
- ✓ **£90,000** invested

## Developing a workforce that represents our communities

During our #Cadentvoices campaign in July 2019, our stakeholders told us it was vital for us to have a workforce which is representative of the communities we serve. Data across the sector shows that the gas industry is not typically diverse, and we have addressed this in a number of ways this year.

We recruited a new Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Manager to oversee the development of our strategy to ensure a representative workforce. Our D&I strategy sets out to increase diversity at all levels and create an environment that enables meaningful conversations about inclusion. Our new 'Employee Communities' encourage colleagues of all backgrounds to discuss these matters away from their day-to-day work environment, focusing on the needs of LGBTQ+, BAME and females in the workplace.

### Attracting diverse talent

Our EmployAbility programme continues to go from strength to strength, providing work opportunities for people with special educational needs or disabilities. Many of our interns have secured permanent work as a result of this scheme, and with support from the local council, this year we hired our first intern into an operational role in our North West network. We were also recognised as a Disability Confident Employer by the Government in 2019/20.

To ensure we continue to attract talented people from a range of diverse backgrounds, we have supported national campaigns such as National Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week 2020, showcasing diversity in our talent pool and inspiring potential applicants. We sought case studies from apprentices, graduates, engineers and senior managers alike,

## Continuous improvement

using rich social media content to bring their stories to life and direct potential applicants to our recruitment web pages.

### Inspiring female leaders

Network Directors Kate Jones and Jenny Moten have led the way for females in operations through their appointment to CBI Regional Councils, shaping local energy policy from the front and creating aspirations for the next generation of female leaders.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **50%** of graduate intake is female
- ✓ **40%** of Executive team members are female, compared to 10% in 2018/19
- ✓ **73%** of our EmployAbility interns go into employment
- ✓ **80,000** reached via social media

## Engaging during a pandemic

Following the UK's official COVID-19 restrictions, early feedback via complaints and enquiries told us that our stakeholders were confused as to why we were still out in the community working, with the rest of the nation in lockdown.

To quickly increase this understanding, we developed a new online hub about our COVID-19 response and launched a social media campaign. Through these channels, we spread the word about our essential gas safety work, our volunteering efforts, and our support in preparing the Nightingale hospitals in Birmingham and London.

Simultaneously, we carried out engagement with stakeholders and partners, including Age Concern, Citizens Advice and the RNIB to test our approach and identify other effective channels of communication. This highlighted the need to develop offline materials for our engineers out working in the community. We rolled out new bespoke signage to display

on worksites and in our vans, which was supported by complementary literature for our engineers and partners to hand out.

### Regional radio campaign

To further amplify our messaging, we launched our first radio campaign with Capital and Heart FM about who we are and what we do, which was broadcast across our four networks and reached 3.5 million people.

We have had very few complaints and engineers are able to do their jobs more effectively. We have seen a 50% surge in our Facebook page views and a 12% increase in website visits, showing that through these different channels we are able to share our gas safety messaging more effectively.

### Volunteering matters

At the request of our employees, we made a commitment to give everyone in the organisation two paid leave days a month to volunteer for local causes during lockdown. This has helped us build trust in our communities and safeguard the most vulnerable in isolation.



### Measuring value

- ✓ **3.5 million** people reached
- ✓ **£240,000** donated to food banks via the Trussell Trust
- ✓ Over **1,200** call centre colleagues and frontline engineers identifying, and supporting, transient vulnerabilities when dealing with gas emergencies
- ✓ **£115,000** invested

## Transforming services for people living in multiple occupancy buildings

Of all GDNs, we have the highest number of multiple occupancy buildings (MOBs), with the largest density being in our North London network (70% of all MOBs across all GDNs). People living within MOBs are often hard to reach and are often in vulnerable situations. Therefore, it was a priority for us and our stakeholders to do more to find smarter ways to engage with MOBs customers and respond to their needs.

In the summer, we identified experts across our organisation, and brought them together to form a new team of 18 people to review our areas for improvement based on data and stakeholder feedback, and develop new technologies, methods and processes that put customers at the heart of what we do.

### Using AI to improve our services

Since then, we have developed two new apps: Artificial Intelligence – an analytical app which assesses levels of corrosion on pipework – and AppCan, which our mains replacement

teams use when replacing pipeline isolation valves and carrying out on-site assessments.

These solutions are providing us with the high-quality, real-time data we need to work efficiently and with minimal disruption. As a result of the team's work, we have seen a 62% reduction in time off gas for MOBs customers in North London. We went into the Easter break with zero MOBs off gas, despite the challenges associated with social distancing due to COVID-19. Our other networks now look to the North London team for best practice, so we can ensure customers across all the communities we serve benefit from their innovations.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **62%** reduction in time off gas for MOB customers
- ✓ **Zero** MOBs off gas in NL during Easter
- ✓ C-SAT improved from **7.90/10 to 8.35** for MOB customers
- ✓ **2 new apps** created to improve service delivery

## Raising awareness of anosmia

Approximately 5% of people in the UK experience anosmia, which is the medical term for the loss or lack of a sense of smell. A near miss reported through our Customer Insights Forum highlighted that this was a potentially vulnerable group of people that we needed to support due to their inability to detect a gas leak. They are also hard to reach as most people who experience anosmia are not aware of it. This issue is particularly critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, as one of the early symptoms is a loss of smell, making infected people even more vulnerable if there is a gas leak.

To access this group, we partnered with Fifth Sense, a charity dedicated to supporting people with anosmia. Together, we have developed 'scratch and sniff cards', which

enable people to test whether they can detect the smell of gas. These are being distributed via our customer centre, engineers and Fifth Sense. We also ran a social media campaign in February 2020 to support National Anosmia Day and signpost people to our website for more detailed information. This is a national issue, so we have engaged other GDNs to raise awareness in their networks and save lives across the UK.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **1,000** scratch and sniff cards distributed
- ✓ Over **4,000** visits to safeguarding web pages
- ✓ **11,000** reached via social media
- ✓ **£10,000** invested

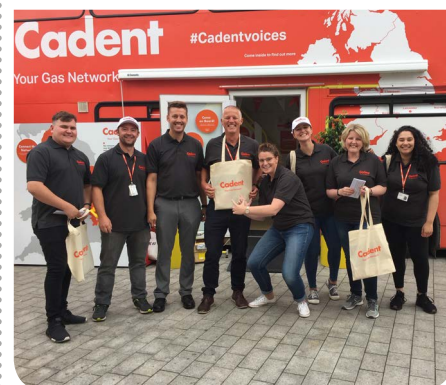
## #Cadentvoices – taking our engagement on the road

We trialled new roadshows in some of the most culturally diverse locations in our network, including Liverpool, Leicester, Birmingham, Norwich and London. With the help of gas-related family games, gas safety information, CO alarms and over 100 colleagues from across Cadent, we spoke with 300,000 stakeholders, informing them of who we are, what we do and asking them to undertake a short survey about our safeguarding work.

Our stakeholders told us that providing a safe and reliable network is by far the most important aspect of our business, followed by supporting the most vulnerable and developing a workforce that represents our communities.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **1,500** CO alarms distributed
- ✓ **300,000** people reached
- ✓ **3,000** stakeholders contributed to our safeguarding plan
- ✓ **£350,000** invested



# Committed to creating a better future

Climate change is a global issue and the decisions we make today will impact generations to come. To ensure that we are at the forefront of creating energy solutions for the future, we have accelerated our engagement on net zero; working closely with government on policy, reaching out to new audiences, experimenting in our communication methods and innovating with the support of partners and our supply chain to reduce our carbon footprint.

## Intense collaboration with public authorities to tackle climate change

Our enhanced programme of regional political engagement has been designed to support our strategic priorities. We are working with political stakeholders to develop a long-term vision and strategy for how we can help facilitate the UK's move towards net zero emissions.

Across our four regions, we have been appointed to many local authority boards and groups, led discussions on local authority climate emergency responses, presented to Combined Authorities and attended town and parish council forums. This has prompted real change, especially with local and regional government's strategic planning.

In a number of cities within our footprint, including the West Midlands Combined Authority area, Greater Manchester and Sheffield City Region, we have been working closely with the relevant Combined Authorities to inform the development of energy strategies and net zero transition strategies.

To support this engagement, we have seconded colleagues to work alongside stakeholders (e.g. in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority), which has significantly improved information sharing between us and our stakeholders – informing our future planning whilst facilitating greater government understanding of our operations and potential of the gas distribution networks.



**Cadent continue to be a valued partner and a key stakeholder within the West Midlands. Their expertise, combined with their collaborative approach to working, is helping us to shape our plans to make the West Midlands carbon neutral."**

**Andy Street CBE, West Midlands Metro Mayor**

### Measuring value

- ✓ Supported **8** regional authorities with climate emergency planning
- ✓ Over **50** future role of gas events hosted and attended
- ✓ Working with **44** strategic partners on tackling climate change
- ✓ **£800,000** invested

## Reaching future customers through science and technology

A key part of our strategy is to ensure we take on board the views of future customers in how we can achieve net zero.

To increase engagement with future generations, we were a principal sponsor at the British Science Festival, Europe's longest-established science festival. The Festival allowed us to raise awareness of the steps we are taking to tackle climate change with a new audience of 16-19 year olds interested in energy and engineering.

We presented a panel debate on the future of heat, hosted a roundtable with cross-industry experts, and delivered educational sessions to college pupils every day during the festival. This was supported by a digital and media strategy including social media posts, press releases and thought leadership blogs from senior leaders.

We built an online hub for attendees to learn about career opportunities in science and engineering and with Cadent, and to find out more about staying gas safe as they move towards independent adult life.

The success of our attendance at the Festival, and the level of engagement with our online channels, demonstrated the benefits of engaging audiences on net zero using digital platforms.

We used this approach to trial our first online pop-up communities in the summer, where we asked 53 stakeholders to share their opinions with us on decarbonisation, climate change and the future of gas, every day for a week. This provided us with rich insight and we have continued to engage with stakeholders digitally through webinars and podcasts.

### Measuring value

- ✓ **20%** increase in recruitment web page views
- ✓ **350** future customers engaged
- ✓ **20,000** reached via LinkedIn
- ✓ **£51,000** invested



View our British Science Festival online hub:  
[cadentgas.com/bsf19](https://cadentgas.com/bsf19)

## Reaching new heights with hydrogen

We have continued to lead the way in demonstrating the effectiveness of hydrogen as an alternative to natural gas, with our crucial HyDeploy and HyNet projects.

### HyDeploy

We launched HyDeploy at Keele University in November 2019 following a year of engagement with stakeholders and customers. HyDeploy has successfully blended around 15% hydrogen into the gas supply for the first time in the UK. With the support of Worcester Bosch, Valence, Ideal and Baxi, we have installed eight domestic boilers on-site to test the compatibility of the hydrogen blend.

Engagement for the second stage of HyDeploy (in the North West) began in September 2019, with blending due to start in September 2020.

### HyNet

Through consultation and partnership working on HyNet via the HyNet Consortium – of which we are a founding member – we have secured funding for two significant elements of the project: hydrogen production, and carbon capture and storage.

### Engaging new audiences on biomethane

Expanding the role of biomethane is a key part of our net zero engagement strategy. Our Customer Insights Forum identified a consistent theme in our net zero engagement activities: stakeholders wanted us to do more to raise the profile of biomethane at industry events, and to show a clear commitment to environmental sustainability by reducing the volume of printed materials and single use plastic giveaways we took to events.

#### Sustainable engagement

In response, we attended the Energy & Rural Business Show for the first time, putting us in front of a combined audience of renewable energy producers and rural

landowners. This allowed us to introduce new stakeholders to our services and our work on decarbonisation. To support this engagement, we developed a new online hub to host all our materials from the day in a digital form, and encouraged stakeholders to access the content here rather than taking away hard copies. This commitment to reducing waste was welcomed by attendees; the day after the event, we saw 51 new visits to the hub.

Next year, we will continue to raise the profile of biomethane, engaging with new audiences and using more environmentally-friendly ways to share information. Our recent online blogs on the use of green gas have received good engagement and driven more visits to the online hub.

#### Measuring value

- ✓ **80%** reduction in carbon footprint by moving to digital materials
- ✓ **6** biomethane connections completed (100% increase from 2018/19)
- ✓ **10,000** reached via social media
- ✓ **£6,000** invested

### Decarbonising through cleaner, greener transport

We have engaged extensively on the benefits of using green gases to fuel heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and buses, to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and achieve cleaner air in our cities.

After consulting with experts and key stakeholders, we published our HyMotion report in June 2019, which we launched at a major hydrogen showcase event in Runcorn, providing vital evidence on the effectiveness of using network-delivered hydrogen to fuel transport.

#### Increasing availability

Working with our partners CNG Fuels, we have connected even more compressed natural gas (CNG) refuelling stations to the gas grid, so fleet operators can benefit from the carbon reductions of using gas to power heavy transport.

We supported the development of Europe's largest refuelling station for low-carbon biomethane in trucks (in Warrington), and will also open a refuelling station at our own National Distribution Centre in Birmingham, once social distancing is lifted.

#### Leading by example

To increase confidence and demand in using greener gases to fuel transport, we have led by example by converting our own fleet of HGVs to be solely powered by renewable biomethane. To make this happen, we engaged with our logistics partners, DHL, and developed a bespoke branding strategy to promote the value of the biomethane fleet, including a supporting website which is promoted on all vehicles. This supports our introduction of several CNG-powered vans into our operational fleet, and continued incentives for employees to use lower emissions company cars. We are also exploring other ways to reduce the carbon footprint of our emergency response vehicles. In our North London network, we have five hydrogen cars and five electric vans as well as electric motorbikes in the North West.

Feedback from partners and customers has been very positive. We are using our experiences to engage with other stakeholders, through events and thought leadership activities, to demonstrate the benefits of lowering their impact on the environment by converting to cleaner, greener transport.



#### Measuring value

- ✓ **500** tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided per year by biomethane HGVs
- ✓ Refuelling station reduces greenhouse gas emissions by **100,000** tonnes per year
- ✓ **39%** of company car fleet is electric/hybrid
- ✓ **£520,000** invested



Find out more about how we're investing in cleaner, greener transport: [cadentgas.com/transport](https://cadentgas.com/transport)

### Powering our operations with renewable energy

We have shared our decarbonisation strategy across our business, empowering colleagues to innovate and share their ideas. One of our engineers, in the East of England identified an opportunity to minimise the environmental impact of one of our core operational sites.

The above ground installation (AGI), in Norfolk, would typically be powered via the electricity grid for its day-to-day operations. Our engineer proposed a new way of doing things, using a solar panel array to make the site self-sufficient. Research told him that the location of the site made it well-suited to a solar array, based on the amount of sunlight the region receives compared to other areas in our networks.

#### Giving back to the grid

We engaged with local landowners and authorities to gather support for the project, and arranged plans to ensure timely delivery. Our safety team provided additional assistance with the project's development, helping to secure the funding required to make it a reality. After liaising with UK Power Networks, it became clear that whole system value could be added by the project, supplying excess electricity back to the grid.

The site is now fully powered by solar panels, significantly reducing its carbon footprint. Electricity is being fed into the local electricity distribution network to provide a clean and renewable energy source for local homes, schools, businesses and community facilities.

We are continuing to encourage colleagues to identify innovative ways to reduce our carbon footprint through our annual sustainability challenge and net zero colleague forums.



#### Measuring value

- ✓ **120 MWh** generated per year
- ✓ **90 MWh** exported into electricity grid per year
- ✓ Over **77** tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> offset per year
- ✓ **£160,000** invested

# Collaborating to achieve better outcomes

Our aim is to transform experiences for all utility customers, and we are ambitious in our desire to develop effective and sustainable solutions that are considered as industry-leading and best practice for the gas industry and beyond – achieving our vision of ‘setting standards others aspire to.’

## Advancing the role of Dementia Friendly Utilities

We lead and chair the National Mental Capacity Forum (NMCf) Utilities Working Group, and this year we have used this platform to spearhead a series of cross-industry safeguarding initiatives. At the UK Energy Innovation Awards 2019, we launched a new cross-industry project to develop a pipeline of dementia-friendly utilities innovations, and fully funded and delivered a ‘Dementia – Call 4 Action’ workshop in collaboration with Energy Innovation Centre and Alzheimer’s Society. All attendees, including innovators, networks and charities, received Dementia Friends awareness and were asked to use this insight to collaborate on innovative ideas to support people living with dementia. We are reviewing the proposals and progressing the most appropriate ideas into production.

## Dementia awareness for school children and their parents

During our engagement sessions on being a Dementia Friendly Utility, it was suggested that we should apply the same rationale to teaching children about dementia as we currently do with CO.

Our Dementia Friends champions worked with the Alzheimer’s Society and used their bespoke, child-friendly materials to deliver awareness in schools within our North West region to 60 children. The schools and parents were so impressed with the awareness that it attracted media attention through BBC Radio Merseyside, who interviewed the children after the sessions.

We have confirmed sessions in other schools across our networks, for both pupils and parents, to provide this awareness, which will resume once social distancing has been lifted.



**Cadent has genuinely broken boundaries with their strategy for keeping their customers safe, warm and independent in their own homes.”**

**David Turner-Bennett EngTech AIGEM, Innovation Engineer, EIC Ltd**

## Leading initiatives to support customers in vulnerable situations

As an organisation with a visible presence in the community, we have a real responsibility to protect customers from the dangers of fraud. We led a partnership with six other utility organisations to launch Utilities Against Scams (UAS), a campaign to help customers spot, stop and prevent doorstep scams. By educating colleagues and customers on what to look out for and where to seek help, we’re making a positive difference with a view to eliminating the threat of scams.

## Developing a universal PSR for all utilities

We are also an industry project sponsor helping to lead the project which will result in the extension of the energy PSR into the

water industry. We have worked closely with electricity networks and water companies to develop needs codes that can be applied across all utilities with minimal change. We are also ensuring that the needs codes drive smarter actions, and have improved our systems and processes to reflect this approach. These changes benefit all GDNs, and this collaboration enables utilities to proactively design new procedures to provide a better experience for customers in vulnerable situations. Our ultimate aim is to make the PSR more tailored to customers’ needs and increase registrations.



**We were thrilled to work with Cadent, who led the development of the UAS project. The work that Cadent undertook with us on developing UAS means that all utility companies now have access to scams prevention training to support their customers as well as a range of advice materials.”**

**Louise Baxter, Head of the National Trading Standards Scams Team National Trading Standards**

## Improving streetworks accessibility

We have engaged extensively with Transport for London (TfL) to improve safety across London and to improve accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle owners. This involved attending workshops, navigating street walks and cycle routes, as well as engaging directly with campaign groups and organisations to better understand the risks posed by streetworks.

## Navigating additional needs

We participated in a TfL ‘Valuing People’ Workshop in which we developed our understanding of the challenges faced by adults with learning disabilities

when navigating streetworks in the capital. From this, we have improved the way we communicate about our works to the public, via online, social media and through on-site signage.

## Best practice planning

We also met with the London Cycling Campaign Group to hear more about how our works impact their members’ ability to travel around the city. This new relationship means we are now able to engage with the group at the planning stage of our works, using road closures and diversions, and taking on board any queries or concerns about our works in London. This is an approach that we are adopting across our networks as best practice.



**It is fantastic that Cadent is embracing an all-inclusive approach to work and it is hoped this will act as a catalyst for others to follow.”**

**Michael Barratt MBE, Development Impact Assessment Manager, Network Management, Transport for London**

# UTILITIES AGAINST SCAMS A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Supporting your customers and helping employees to spot, stop and prevent a scam.



View our Utilities Against Scams partner toolkit:  
[cadentgas.com/uas-toolkit](https://cadentgas.com/uas-toolkit)

# Notes

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This report is printed on 100% recycled paper made from post-consumer waste. Both the mill and printer are FSC accredited and follow ISO 14001 environmental procedures. Our printer is also elemental chlorine free, uses vegetable based inks and is carbon neutral.

The lamination on the cover comes from a sustainable resource and its main component is not derived from fossil fuels. It has attained the EN 13432 and ATM D 6400 standards for biodegradability and composability and also has accreditation to the Vincotte OK Compost Home programme.

## #Cadentvoices

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