



Delivering strong performance

Supporting vulnerable customers

Foreword

More customers need our support than ever before. The cost of living crisis has pushed customers to make difficult trade-offs between warming their homes and other essentials.

The transition to Net Zero also brings new and emerging vulnerabilities which we have a role in supporting so that everyone can take part. Over the last year, through continuous collaboration with organisations embedded in the communities we serve, we've been able to extend more support to more customers than ever before.

We have worked to ensure that our most vulnerable customers receive the highest quality services, by sharing our experience in industry-leading customer service with our partners.

Through these efforts we've supported 148,110 customers in fuel poverty and delivered £36.77m in social benefits, achieving 92.1% in customer satisfaction. We have also supported 100,000 customers in the transition to Net Zero through support such as digital skills training and providing tailored action plans to improve energy efficiency in homes, delivering £4.35m in social benefits.

We registered an additional 238,571 customers on the Priority Services Register (PSR), with 77% of eligible households across our regions now registered and getting access to the support services that they need.

This included 86,923 new registrations through collaborating with water companies to share historical registrations for the first time, ensuring that customers receive support from all their utilities whilst only needing to sign up once.

We're very proud of the difference we have been able to make this year, but there is much more to do. We remain dedicated to making a meaningful difference across the communities we serve.

Matthew White
Head of Customer Service and Innovation



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Our report at a glance

Our approach to supporting vulnerable customers is built on partnerships with charities, community energy groups, local authorities, and advocacy groups, ensuring we provide tailored support to those who need it most.

In the first year of RII0-ED2 we have; taken our collaboration with other utilities to a new level by sharing historical data to drive our PSR reach to new heights; applied our experience in leading customer service to deliver support that meets the needs and expectations of our vulnerable customers; and designed new support services that make a real difference to our customers' lives. We've also evolved our approach to work hand in hand with our partners to deliver a wide range of support across different channels, offering help never offered before to tackle the challenges our customers are facing..

In this report we will demonstrate the meaningful impact of our programme and our ongoing commitment to raise the bar on the support we deliver to vulnerable customers in the remaining years of RII0-ED2. We've set out our consumer vulnerability strategy as well as highlights of the support we have delivered through the programme working closely with our partners.

This first Annual Vulnerability Report outlines:

The support delivered to domestic customers in vulnerable circumstances and the impact it has had → p.6-19

How we've used the Social Value Framework → p.20

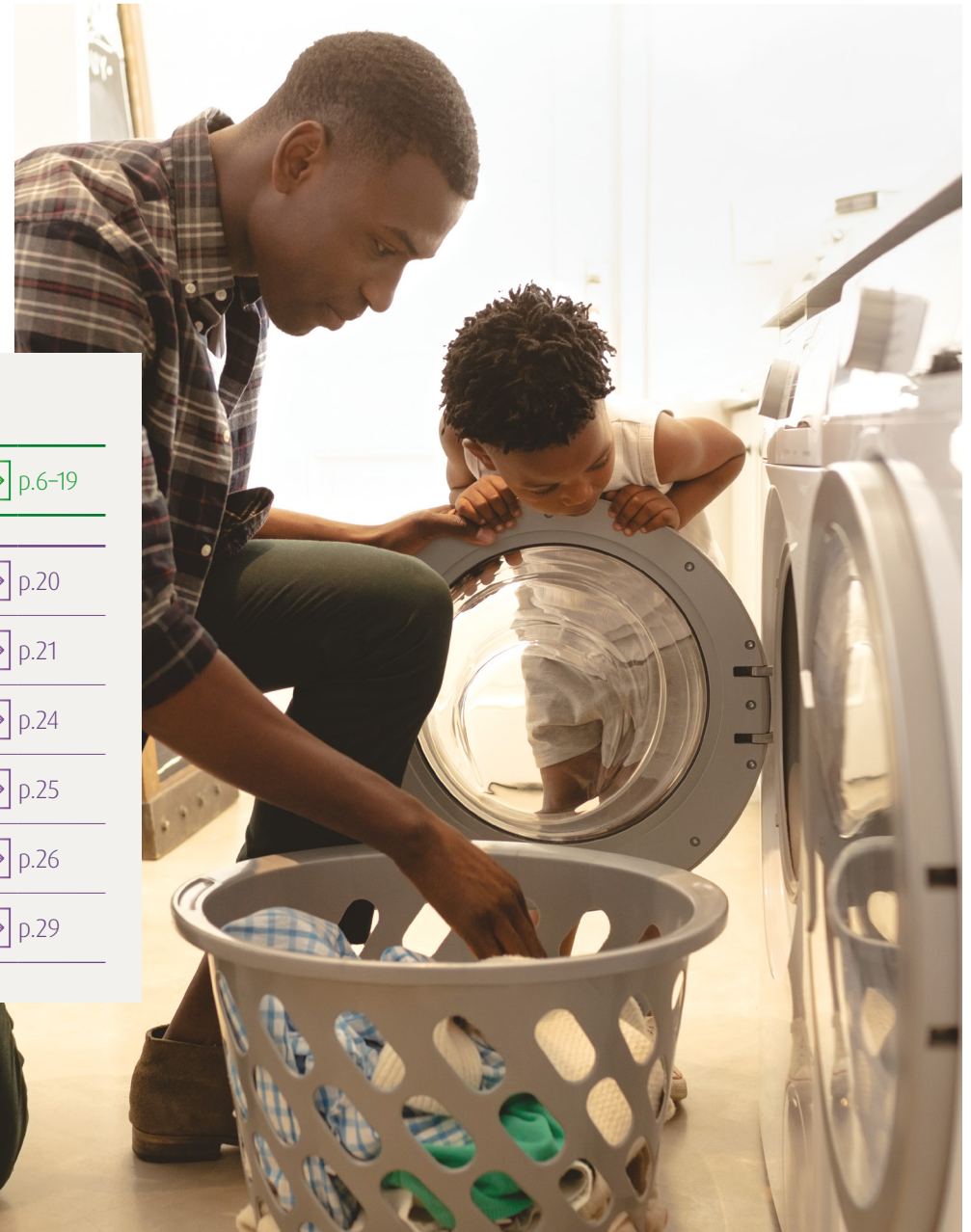
Plans for effectively supporting Domestic Customers in Vulnerable Situations during winter periods → p.21

Our performance against the targets as part of the Consumer Vulnerability Incentive → p.24

Our performance in relation to Regularly Reported Evidence → p.25

Progress in delivering our Vulnerability Strategy Commitments → p.26

The independent assurance report → p.29



Introduction

Over the last year, we've seen the cost-of-living crisis and high energy costs continue to impact our communities. National Energy Action's (NEA) latest estimate suggests 6 million households in the UK are in fuel poverty as of January 2024, up from 4.5 million in October 2021. It is estimated the typical energy bill remains 49% higher than it was before the energy crisis of 2021, leaving many customers facing the difficult decision between heating their homes and putting food on the table. Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found 3.4 million households reported not having enough money for food.

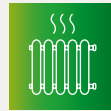
The cost-of-living crisis threatens to widen the gap between those who can afford to invest to decarbonise and reduce their energy bills, and those who cannot afford the upfront costs and so face continued higher energy costs. The financial impact of being left behind in the energy transition could compound the pressures customers are already under.

We estimate that, across our three networks, there are currently:



3.3m

households eligible for our Priority Services Register (PSR).



2m

customers estimated in or at risk of fuel poverty in the areas we serve.



1.58m

customers at risk of being left behind in the energy system by 2030.



Our role in protecting vulnerable customers

Electricity is vital to every aspect of modern life. Disruption can have a severe impact, particularly on the lives of those in vulnerable circumstances. At the same time, customers have been under pressure due to high energy costs, which disproportionately affect customers on lower incomes and those with disabilities. The Net Zero transition creates new opportunities for customers to save money on their energy bills, but barriers may exclude customers who would benefit most from taking part.

Driven by engagement with our stakeholders, our strategy focuses on areas where we can make a real difference:

- Enabling fair access to opportunities presented by engaging with the energy market, such as flexibility.
- Supporting energy bill affordability through income maximisation and energy efficiency measures.
- Providing extra support during power cuts to customers who may be affected more severely.
- Delivering wider social value through offering customers services such as scam awareness support, with benefits that extend beyond their interactions with utilities.

Our vulnerability strategy and key achievements

Our consumer vulnerability strategy focuses on three pillars: registering and supporting PSR customers; tackling fuel poverty; and ensuring no one is left behind in the energy system transition. These pillars are underpinned by key enablers: engagement, innovation, collaboration, and taking a joined-up approach to embed awareness of vulnerability across the business.

Our strategy aims to deliver tailored, targeted, high-quality support that makes a real and lasting difference to the lives of our customers. Our goal is to not only deliver more in terms of scale of support, but also to expand the range and maximise the value of support we offer.

The pillars of our strategy

Registering and supporting PSR customers

Our PSR helps us identify and provide extra care to those who need it most. We aim to ensure eligible customers are registered to receive the support to which they are entitled by increasing the volume of households registered. We also continually enhance our support to meet customers' changing needs.

THIS YEAR WE:

- **Increased the PSR to 2.55m (77% of eligible households)**
- Expanded our data sharing with utilities and other organisations to include the sharing of historical PSR registrations (Pg 8)
- Trialled the use of portable battery packs for medically dependent customers without power for over four hours (Pg 10)

Tackling fuel poverty

We've taken a more hands on approach with our partners this year to deliver higher quality, impactful support to our customers.

THIS YEAR WE:

- **Provided support to 148,110 customers**
- **Provided general advice on energy to 859,643 customers**
- **Delivered £36.77m in social value for our customers**
- **Achieved 92.1% customer satisfaction**
- Developed new ways of working to collaborate with partners to embed a service delivery culture and provide them with longer-term certainty (Pg 14-15)

Ensuring no one is left behind in the energy transition

We aim to provide information and help to customers to overcome barriers that prevent them from taking part in the changing energy system through innovative services and partnerships that offer new types of support to customers.

THIS YEAR WE:

- **Provided support to 100,000 customers**
- **Delivered £4.35m in social value for our customers**
- Launched the Green Home Support Service, an accessible self-serve tool (Pg 19)
- Trialled a social flexibility product for hard-to-reach customers (Pg 18)

Core enablers: engagement, innovation, collaboration, and taking a joined-up approach to embed awareness of vulnerability across the business

Understanding how vulnerability differs across the communities we serve

Over the last year, we worked with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) to reassess how PSR eligibility is determined across our networks, as is required of all DNOs.

We also went above and beyond this requirement to gain a more precise and up-to-date understanding of regional trends, as well as estimating eligibility by individual and grouped needs codes beyond what can be determined from census data.

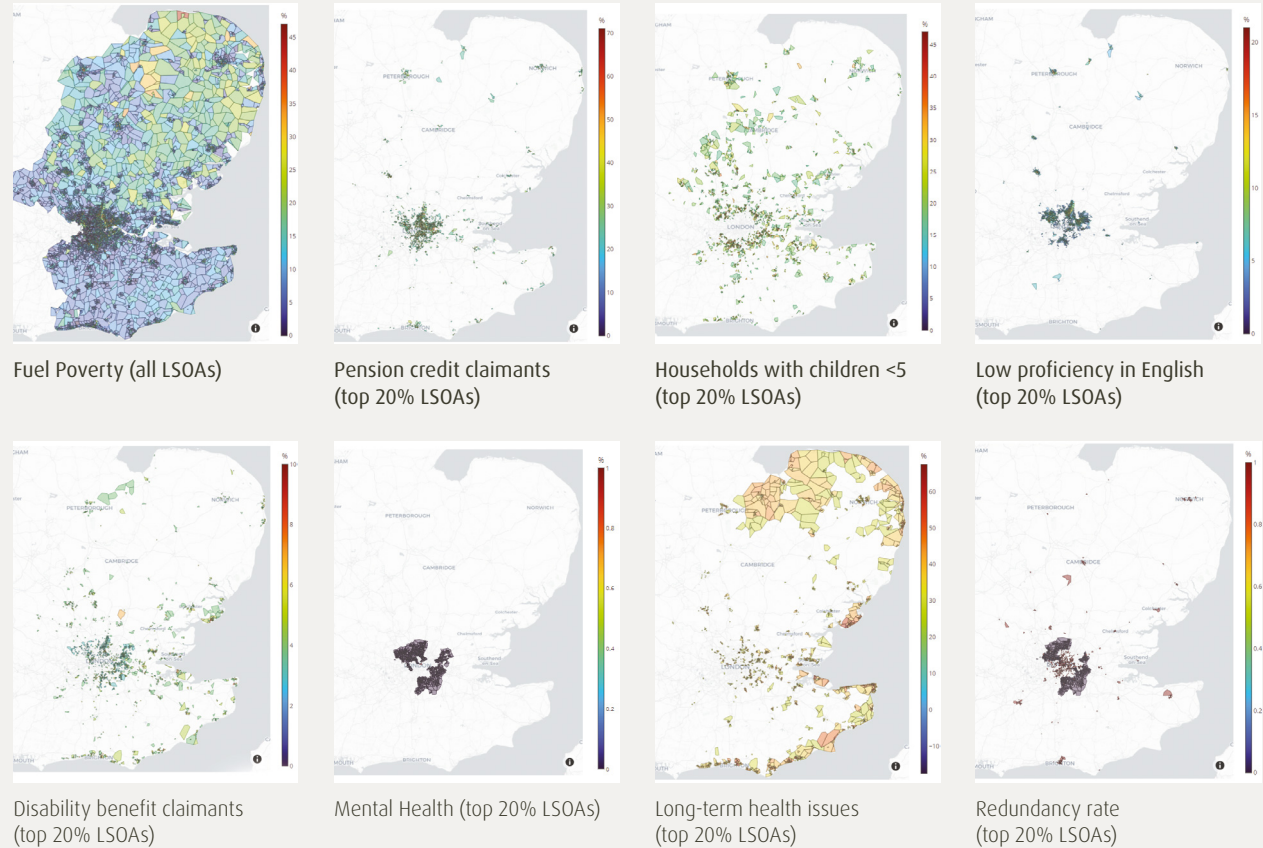
From this, we know that across both London and the East, 78% of those eligible are now registered to the PSR, compared to 73% registered in the South East.

Having this more precise analysis means we can target areas and needs codes at both network and district level for the rest of the R110-ED2 period.

We also use our vulnerability mapping tool, Socially Green, to understand the different vulnerabilities at play across different areas to help us direct support to areas where it will have the biggest impact. For example, our tools helped us understand that customers in the East are at greatest risk of being left behind in the transition to Net Zero due to factors such as customers not having the right knowledge, skills or financial support to take part. We also identified customers in the South East to be second highest at risk of being left behind, as they are less likely to have the knowledge needed to participate in the energy transition.

Lack of opportunity to take part in the Net Zero transition was also shown to affect customers the most in London; while customers there may want to take part, other factors could be preventing them, such as the type of accommodation they live in. For more information on how we have developed a new self-service tool to help customers overcome this barrier see page 19.

Figure 1: The maps below provide an overview of the key vulnerability issues prevalent in our licence area, projected for 2025, taken from our Socially Green tool. The fuel poverty indicator is mapped for all Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in our regions. For the other indicators, we have filtered the top 20% “most vulnerable LSOAs” to illustrate the geographical distribution of the most affected areas.



Enhancing our understanding of vulnerability across our network

To date, our tools have been based on broad trends across an area. To improve the support we provide and to be more targeted in our approach, we need greater visibility of vulnerability trends at a household level. To this end, we are developing a new, innovative solution that uses data and machine learning capabilities to provide a more granular, accurate and succinct overview to help us identify customers who need support, see page 9.



Registering and supporting PSR customers

We set an ambitious target to reach 3m customers on our PSR by the end of RII0-ED2, which is 86% of all eligible households in our area. The scale of our ambition presents unprecedented challenges, but we intend to push PSR growth to a new level and go beyond our target by leveraging data and innovation to ensure customers are not missing out on support for which they are eligible.

What we did

We have taken on board the feedback received on our Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability (SECV) submission in 2022/23 that we should accelerate growth in our PSR further. This year we ramped up our PSR recruitment efforts, increasing the number of households on our PSR to 2,548,664 (77.1% of eligible households (+9.44% on 2023/24). We have also contacted each one of the 2.3m customers already on the PSR to refresh their data. We are fully in line with our 2024/25 target and on track to deliver against our ambition.

Our PSR strategy and key achievements

Our PSR strategy focuses on three key levers: data-led innovation; expanded collaboration with partners and other utilities; and enhanced internal capabilities. This strategy has enabled us to drive forward our continuous programmes with communities and partners to sign up more people than ever before as we deliver industry leading service to support them.

Our targets and performance of the PSR strategy

RIIO-ED2 target: Expand the scope and reach of our PSR, delivering an overall 30% increase in registrations to 3 million households registered

RIIO-ED2 target: Deliver 18-month data cleanse and improve data quality and completeness by 100%

PERFORMANCE 2023/24

2.55m

77% eligible households registered (+9.44% on 2022/23)

93.3%

PSR customer satisfaction

The table below presents the overall number of customers signed up in 2023/24 and the percentage growth compared to the two previous years. This demonstrates our increased focus on ramping up our registration programme.

Our PSR growth over the years

		% added new	% reach across all our areas
2023/2024		9.37%	77%
2022/2023		11.10%	67%
2021/2022		6.48%	60%



Building blocks of our PSR strategy

WHAT WE DID

Identifying, reaching and recruiting PSR customers

Data-led Innovation

KEY ACTIONS

200,000+

eligible customers identified at household level by analysing data through new machine learning tool

Find out more



Expanded collaboration

KEY ACTIONS

25.8%

of new registrations due to collaboration with other utilities (+943% on 2022/23)

Find out more



Continued the development of a national cross-utility vulnerability hub in collaboration with Northumbrian Water, the London Fire Brigade and other critical services to trial Support4All

Enhanced internal capabilities

KEY ACTIONS

1,426

customer-facing employees trained on the PSR

Find out more



Reviewed customer touchpoints across the business to ensure we explicitly signpost to the PSR at key points in a customer journey

1.76m

customers engaged with through targeted data led marketing campaigns to raise awareness of the PSR

Find out more



Supporting customers on the PSR

KEY ACTIONS

100%

of customers on our PSR contacted to refresh their information

Find out more



93.3%

PSR customer satisfaction, highest scoring DNO

Trialled portable batteries for medically dependent customers during power cuts



Identifying, reaching and recruiting PSR customers

EXPANDING COLLABORATION WITH WATER COMPANIES TO DRIVE HISTORICAL DATA SHARING

We collaborate with other utilities that serve the same customers as we do, to share information about which customers need additional support. This makes it easier for customers to receive the support for which they are eligible across their utilities, while only needing to register for the PSR once. Over ED1, we worked to establish a legal basis for data sharing with water companies that operate in our regions, putting in place fully automated data sharing processes and bi-lateral PSR data sharing agreements with seven of the eight water companies in our area.

This year we've gone even further, we believe we are the first DNO to share historical data with two water companies in our region. This means we can now register customers who were already registered with other utilities, not just those who register for the first time.

This strategic collaboration to share historical data with Thames Water and Affinity Water, resulted in 86,923 more registrations to our PSR, 73% of all new registrations gained from working with water companies this year. This ensured customers who registered with suppliers before our data sharing agreement was in place are registered to receive support across all their utilities without having to register again.

We've also continued the development and trial of a national cross-utility vulnerability hub, Support4All, in collaboration with Northumbrian Water. This year we have shared data through this approach, going beyond the water industry to work with the fire brigade and other support services, resulting in over 6,000 additional new registrations. We will look to scale this data sharing approach further, to work with all the water suppliers and other organisations in our area.



I am delighted that we have been able to push the boundaries with UK Power Networks to share historical PSR data and drive greater support and value for our mutual customers. This is industry leading work and we know the difference being on the PSR can make to customers who may need additional support during a power cut or water supply interruption."

Liz Freitas

Inclusive Services Engagement Manager, at Affinity Water

26,123

new registrations through automated data sharing with water companies

86,923

new registrations through historical data sharing with Thames Water and Affinity Water

6,443

new registrations through collaborating with Northumbrian Water and other services via the Support4All project

119,489

additional eligible households are now able to receive support due to new PSR registrations received via data sharing with water companies (+943% on 2022/23) and 50,270 information updates (+214% on 2022/23), plus 74,062 records shared bi-directionally between water companies and UK Power Networks (+288% on 2022/23)

MAKING EVERY CUSTOMER COUNT

Across the business, many teams are interacting with customers, from our call centre staff helping customers deal with a fault, to our connections teams and contractors out in the community carrying out infrastructure work. We recognise that every interaction is an opportunity to identify and register an eligible customer.

What we did

Trained 1,426 customer-facing employees on the PSR (+113% on 2022/23) to help them understand what the PSR is, the services we offer and who is eligible. This includes colleagues who carry out work on the streets or in customers' homes, to help them signpost customers to the PSR.

Reviewed customer touchpoints across the business to ensure we explicitly signpost to the PSR where appropriate. We've also worked hard to forge strong connections across the business, such as capital programme, to make them part of the drive to build the PSR.

Continued senior level buy-in to drive PSR initiatives and engage the whole business. This buy-in reflects the importance we attach to holding teams accountable to drive initiatives forward quickly, supporting wider programmes and mobilising the whole company.



TAILORING MARKETING CAMPAIGNS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE PSR AMONGST UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

This year, we took our marketing efforts to another level by enlisting a dedicated marketing resource in the Consumer Vulnerability Team to implement a data-driven approach to PSR campaigns. We targeted the largest groups of customers identified as not registered on the PSR: those over 65, families with children under five, and those with mental health challenges.



What we did:

Expanded outreach to raise brand awareness using new methods like bus adverts and placing local news adverts as well as revisiting wide reaching campaigns such as radio ads.

Partnered with Mumsnet to run online adverts to reach those living with children under five. Through our data analysis we knew those living with children under five was one of the largest gaps on our PSR across our whole network.

Held community outreach events in shopping centres in London, to engage with harder-to-reach communities, particularly young parents out with their children and sign them up to the PSR.

Ran leaflet drops to reach digitally excluded customers who are over 65 in Buckinghamshire. We identified this area as having the largest population of over 65-year-olds not registered to the PSR.

Partnered with Mind in Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing, & Hounslow to promote the PSR through their winter support advice. We also trained their advisers on the PSR to highlight the support available and register customers who are referred to the charity. Our analysis showed Ealing had the largest population of customers facing mental health challenges who are not registered to the PSR.

Through this work we engaged approximately 1.76m customers to raise awareness among underrepresented groups on our PSR.

USING AI TO IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE CUSTOMERS AND PROVIDE TAILORED SUPPORT

To provide tailored support to our customers, we need accurate information about where and what our customers' needs are. The evolving and intersecting nature of vulnerability means it is increasingly difficult to identify those who need support. Our current tools enable us to identify trends in vulnerability across our areas, however, often fall short in providing a detailed picture.

Gaining a detailed view of who needs support and what services they require allows us to proactively engage with customers, ensuring they receive the help they need without relying on them to inform us. This year, we've developed a tool which combines new data from various sectors with existing data sets into a single secure platform. Applying advanced AI and machine learning techniques the tool is helping to identify vulnerable customers at a level of granularity never seen before.

We have identified over 200,000 customers at household level who we believe could be eligible for the PSR. To test and refine the accuracy of the model, we engaged with 6,000 customers identified as over 65, via different communication channels, to inform them of the support available to them. 30% of those contacted are now registered to the PSR and learnings such as the most effective communication channel are fed back into the machine learning model to enhance outputs.

We apply stringent data protection to how we handle all customer data to ensure customers trust us with their information while enabling us to deliver targeted support. We will continue to test different methods of direct engagement with customers to refine the tool over the next year. This work is helping us gain further insights based on customers' needs to reach as many customers as possible through the most effective communications, not just to offer support via the PSR but to identify those in fuel poverty, and support customers to ensure no one is left behind in the transition to Net Zero.

Supporting customers on the PSR

Ensuring the quality of our data

Recruitment to the PSR is only one aspect of building its numbers; data must be complete and up to date so we can get in touch with customers when they need our support. Recognising this, we committed to contacting each one of our PSR customers every 18 months to refresh our understanding of their needs as well as conducting data quality checks on all our PSR records every 12 months.

We attempt to contact everyone on the PSR and ask them to confirm or update the information we hold for them. We also take the opportunity to check the information whenever the customer contacts us for any reason, such as to ask for help during a power cut.

DELIVERING INDUSTRY-LEADING SERVICE LEVELS OF SUPPORT

Our commitment to delivering exceptional service to PSR customers is evident in our industry-leading satisfaction levels.

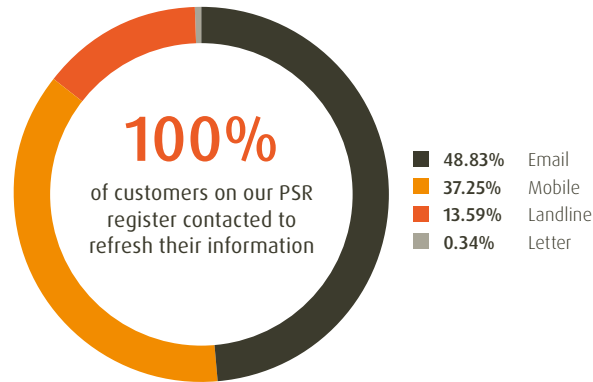
Over the past year, we have continued to deliver industry-leading satisfaction levels for our PSR customers, achieving 93.3%, which is the highest level of any DNO and in line with our commitment for the R110-ED2 period.



Amazing help and support from UK Power Networks. We are a family of five, with three disabled vulnerable children with a variety of complex health needs. They provided us with clear communication and swift help and support throughout our power cuts and made sure we were ok. Can't fault them!"

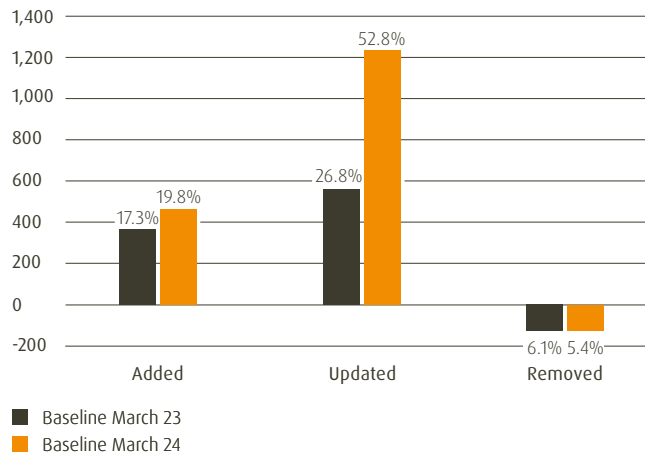
PSR customer quote

Channels used to contact PSR customers to refresh data



The diagram below shows the number of records added, removed and updated over the last year to ensure our PSR is kept up to date.

Number of PSR records added, removed and cleansed over 2023/24¹ ('000)



¹ Includes out of scope needs codes.

EXPANDING SUPPORT FOR MEDICALLY DEPENDENT CUSTOMERS IN A POWER CUT

For many customers who rely on vital medical equipment to go about their everyday lives, the thought of an unexpected power cut can be the source of anxiety. In R110-ED2, we committed to delivering increased support to these customers on the PSR by dispatching battery banks to customers who are at risk of being without power for more than four hours.

We carried out engagement and research with the Research Institute for Disabled Customers (RiDC) to understand customers' needs, challenges and expectations around support they receive during power cuts. Over 2023/24 we trialled the deployment of portable batteries for customers to power their medical equipment through our innovation project, Power Protect.

67% of customers who took part in the trial rated the service 10/10 and we have incorporated what we learnt into the service to make it even better for our customers.

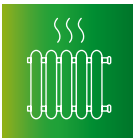
Given the success of the trial, we now have a dedicated process to offer battery packs to medically dependent customers. Over the next year, we will be rolling this out across our whole network to support the needs of our medically dependent customers on the PSR during power cuts that last longer than four hours.



Thank you for the battery pack for my sleep apnoea machine, this will be a great help in a power cut in the future."

Customer quote





Tackling fuel poverty

The rising cost of energy and the general cost-of-living crisis have pushed families deeper into fuel poverty and affected many more households.

Based on the latest sub-regional fuel poverty in England government statistics from 2021, it is estimated that there are 983,767 households experiencing fuel poverty in the communities we serve.

However, based on National Energy Action's estimate of fuel poverty across the UK as of January 2024, we anticipate that in reality those in fuel poverty in our regions could be as high as two million. Given the scale of this challenge, we aim to support 500,000 customers in fuel poverty during the RII0-ED2 period.

Building on our established fuel poverty approach and feedback from Ofgem regarding our SECV submission last year, which encouraged us to be more ambitious and impactful, we have gone above and beyond in 2023/24. Our efforts to support more customers and deliver greater value are highlighted in our fuel poverty strategy. For more information on how we've measured social value and used this to shape our programme, see page 20.

Our fuel poverty strategy

Our strategy has three main dimensions to provide direct support, indirect support and general advice. These three facets of support work together to achieve three goals:

- (i) reaching customers who are at risk, to prevent them from falling into fuel poverty
- (ii) helping customers get out of fuel poverty
- (iii) supporting customers over time to make sure they stay out of fuel poverty for good

Building blocks of our Fuel Poverty Strategy

RIIO-ED2 target: 500,000 fuel poor customers to receive targeted support over RII0-ED2

RIIO-ED2 target: 800,000 customers to receive fuel poverty information each year

WHAT WE DID

Provided personalised one-to-one support and in-depth advice.

PERFORMANCE 2023/24

£11.42m social value delivered	£8.74 SROI over and above every £1 spent this year	92.1% Customer satisfaction
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27,068
customers supported



148,110
customers supported in 2023/24

WHAT WE DID

Provided energy advice to vulnerable customers who are in or at risk of fuel poverty.

PERFORMANCE 2023/24

£25.34m social value delivered	£5.67 SROI over and above every £1 spent this year	925 energy champions trained
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121,042
customers supported

£261.36
average saving per customer, +421% on 2022/23

WHAT WE DID

Provided information and energy advice to UK Power Networks' customers to help them make savings on energy bills, sign-post them to essential services and provide guidance on smart meters.

PERFORMANCE 2023/24

859,643
customers received energy saving advice



Building our fuel poverty programme to address key challenges

We recognise that the best way to make a bigger difference, customised to what our customers really need, is by teaming up with a range of organisations who can reach different customers and provide different types of support. Due to the complexity of fuel poverty and the ever-changing landscape, we have worked with partners to provide a greater variety of in-depth services, from income maximisation, home energy audits and crisis support grants to support packs for customers, scam awareness and fuel poverty vouchers.

Learning from experience in previous years, we have refined the selection of partners with which we work. We aim to have a portfolio of partners across a variety of channels and different regions to ensure all customers can access support via their channel of choice. This year we have focused on setting up partnerships that can consistently deliver impactful support, working with them to adopt best practice and embed the service culture we have developed over many years at UK Power Networks.



Highlights of our support over the past year

Customers are under pressure from all angles, with high costs of energy, housing, food, and transport affecting their finances, health and wellbeing. Over the last year we have acted on engagement and insights we gained from those on the ground, as well as collaborated with our partners to deliver high quality, meaningful support to customers across a range of partnerships.

CREATING NEW PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER FACE-TO-FACE SUPPORT

Through engagement with Kent County Council, we identified pockets of high vulnerability in Medway, arising because of intersecting vulnerabilities including fuel poverty and low levels of literacy and numeracy skills. This engagement highlighted the vital need for face-to-face support to help vulnerable families as many residents find it difficult to follow written information.

We've worked with Swale Children and Families to help 1,085 customers over 2023/24 with in-person support to lower their energy bills and increase their income.

The charity has also provided additional easy-to-understand information raising awareness of scams.

Customer testimonial:

Peter¹ was referred to Children and Families as he is a single parent, and both he and his child have additional needs. They had fallen behind on their bills and were at risk of becoming homeless.

Peter, recently separated from his wife and was struggling to cover basic necessities due to a £650 shortfall between his housing costs benefit and rent. This situation was overwhelming and severely impacting his mental health.

Children and Families helped Peter access the Household Support Fund, draw up a budget, and create a sustainable repayment plan for his arrears. They also worked with the housing team to find more affordable housing for his family. The team ensured he was registered for the PSR and advised him on cost-efficient energy and water use.

Now, Peter's housing costs are half of what they were, and he is on a better tariff to manage his utility bills. Children and Families received some feedback from Peter thanking them for all their support.

“I've not got one bad thing to say, Children and Families saved my life. They've done things I never thought possible... They just listened to me, they've done so many other little things and helped me out with my housing and my health... They made me realise that I've got something worth living for.”

¹ Name changed to protect anonymity.



SUPPORTING THE MOST FINANCIALLY DISADVANTAGED PENSIONERS IN THE COUNTRY

Tower Hamlets has the country's highest levels of pensioner poverty at 44%, followed by Hackney at 40% and Newham at 37%. We estimate there are approximately 62,384 fuel-poor households across Tower Hamlets, Newham, Hackney and Waltham Forest. Many older people on fixed incomes face a choice between heating and eating, particularly over the winter months and many older people live alone and in poor health. Those in poor health often find themselves in a situation whereby their health conditions may not only increase their risk of fuel poverty but can also be exacerbated by it.

In partnership with Age UK East London, we have continued to support older customers who have been discharged home after being in hospital. The support includes home energy checks including small measures such as light bulbs, support with energy bills and advice on smart meters as well as food packages and welfare checks.

In 2023/24, we've expanded the support provided, helping 2,994 customers with in-depth support through our partnership with Age UK East London.

Highlights of our support over the past year continued



DEVELOPING NEW ONLINE SERVICES TO SUPPORT CUSTOMERS VIA THEIR CHANNEL OF CHOICE

Our insights showed that some customers, particularly those with learning disabilities, tend to favour online services allowing them to get support at their own pace, without being rushed. In addition, customers may want to seek support in privacy and keep their identity confidential.

We trialled a new partnership enabling customers to get financial support online, in private. The support includes an income maximisation assessment, the chance to create a personal budget to help manage their income and share financial information with other organisations they owe money to, helping reduce financial worries around paying bills. Customers are also advised to share their information with us so they can be added to the PSR and receive energy efficiency support.

Setting up partnerships for success

We've built on our partnerships over the years, working with both smaller partners who are engaged with harder-to-reach communities, and larger providers who offer the opportunity to scale up support to reach more customers. We're also developing new ways of working with our partners, to help set up for long term success.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER AT SCALE

We have maintained a long-standing relationship with various Citizens Advice branches over the years, working together on initiatives. We have continued to build on our collaboration with Citizens Advice across several regions over 2023/24 to create a model that can be expanded to help more and more customers. As a trusted third party, recognised nationally and universally available, we have worked with them to coordinate support services across regions and scaled up support.

Over the last year, we partnered with Citizens Advice Arun and Chichester to offer a range of fuel poverty support, including income maximisation, home energy audits and grant application support to customers. Through our engagement with them, we also found an opportunity to leverage the network of Citizens Advice branches throughout our area. Working together, we expanded the support service to work with Citizens Advice Essex as well, scaling up the support delivered through both branches of the organisation.

Taking this approach, Citizens Advice in Arun and Chichester, together with Essex, has delivered the most value for customers of all our partners, delivering £3.6 million in social value while also supporting 9,399 customers.

This shows their ability to step up and support large numbers of customers while delivering impact. Over the next few years, we plan to scale up the support provided in this way of working across our partnerships.



Customer testimonial:

Mercy¹ contacted Citizens Advice as she was struggling with the costs of keeping her home warm enough for her newborn baby.

Mercy and her partner were privately renting a property with their two children. As Mercy's husband was employed, she thought the family wouldn't be eligible for any kind of grants or support. They were gathering debts and were unsure how they could get back on top of their finances.

Citizens Advice identified a grant that would help with Mercy's energy bills. In the course of helping her apply for this, we made sure she was on the Priority Services Register as she had young children in the property. The support provided hints and tips to help Mercy reduce her energy usage on unnecessary appliances, while ensuring the family could stay warm enough over winter.

Mercy mentioned struggling with a water debt, so the charity provided information from her water company about social tariffs and debt repayment incentives. When the energy grant was paid to Mercy's energy supplier, Citizens Advice Arun and Chichester received some heartwarming feedback from her.



I can't believe this. I don't even know what to say I feel like crying right now thank you for your assistance... I've never got help like this before. I don't really know what to say I couldn't believe my eyes! Thank you again, this was literally life changing for me!"

¹ Name changed to protect anonymity.

Highlights of our support over the past year continued

ENABLING PARTNERS TO SCALE UP TRIED AND TESTED APPROACHES

We worked with Kent County Council to roll out more sound-proof kiosks in the community to provide greater accessibility to confidential debt advice and support, targeting areas with high levels of deprivation. Delivered by Citizens Advice North and West Kent, this approach enables customers to seek professional support and advice for which they may not approach their local council directly.

The Kent Advice Hub provides Kent residents with a central hub for specialist debt advice and solutions to reduce triage times and high-quality, standardised debt advice.

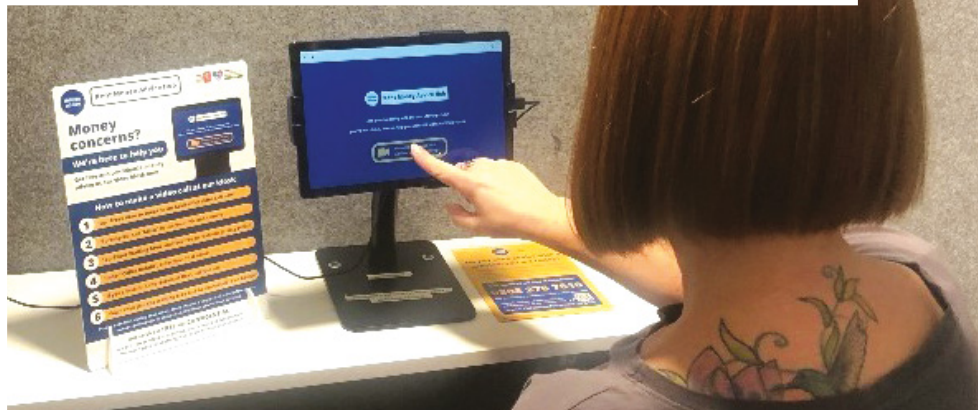
The partnership with UK Power Networks has enabled the service to increase their capacity to meet the needs of Kent residents with growing levels of debt. It has more than doubled the number of kiosks available in the community and supported 1,354 customers.

“

The Kent Money Advice Hub is a service that aims to provide high quality money advice to Kent residents. We are very grateful to have received funding from UK Power Networks for this service. This funding has allowed us to install additional video advice kiosks across Kent. It has enabled many more people to access our advice, particularly during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis that is still adversely impacting lots of families and individuals. Thank you very much for your support in helping us deliver much-needed advice and support to our local community.”

Helen Beckerson

Operations Manager at Citizens Advice in North & West Kent



PROVIDING LONGER-TERM CERTAINTY FOR THE THIRD SECTOR

Through close engagement with existing and new partners we determined that to meet the volume of support our programme sets out to deliver, partners need longer-term investment to be able to scale up. We have developed new ways of working to give our partners longer-term certainty as we begin to set up more enduring partnerships. We have designed an approach that both works for partners and delivers for more customers, while building flexibility into contracts to drive customer impact and retain the ability to focus on the most impactful services as more data becomes available.

Our enduring partnerships approach will enable partners to contract to work with us for up to five years, giving them stability and visibility of funding to which they will have access in the longer-term. This will help them plan more effectively across financial years, support them to scale up and efficiently manage multiple funding streams.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY FOR OUR PARTNERS TO ENSURE CUSTOMERS BENEFIT FROM ALL THE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THEM

To deal with the specific challenges of such a large-scale programme, we leveraged our partnership network to provide complete coverage of customer needs while keeping our approach flexible. Knowing that our partners offer different services across our network, we held a partners' forum, where we brought together our key partners to discuss the challenges and promote sharing of best practice across the services they provide.

These initiatives are leading to stronger partnerships and creating a community across our partnership network. This has allowed organisations to refer customers to other charities, helping customers get the most benefit from across the services available to them.

For example, through our partnership with Independent Age, we distributed over 7,000 Winter Guides to customers via our wide network of partners, delivering additional support to customers at no extra cost to our partners.

This approach is set to continue in the second year of R110-ED2, with partners coming together to optimise their impact by sharing knowledge and resources.

Delivering a robust programme of high-quality support

We have worked with partners to understand areas for improvement, providing insights and feedback to pinpoint where service improvements can be made to drive higher performance. We have a strong track record of leading customer satisfaction scores, and we aim to bring this experience to bear in our work on fuel poverty, to deliver a service that results in highly satisfied customers.

Holding regular sessions with partners we've helped them make data-led decision to improve service. We also ran a workshop to help develop understanding of the Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) survey process, enabling attendees to learn from each other's experiences.

Partners have praised our team for their supportive and hands-on approach throughout a challenging process of upskilling and helping them to learn a new way of working. We have seen this approach pay off across our partnerships and will continue to work with partners to identify customer service improvements in the future.

Thanks to the dedication of our partners, supported by this programme, we achieved an average customer satisfaction of 92.1%.

This is fully in line with our RIIO-ED2 targets and is expected to rise in the coming years as we see the fruits of our close collaboration with partners. We continue to work with partners to find ways to increase opt-ins and improve the customer journey for everyone.



Even though the CSAT requirement seemed challenging and demanding at the beginning, it was super beneficial to myself and NEF as it helped us better understand our impact on people's lives. Having UK Power Networks to call on and help us through this learning curve has been vital and we couldn't have done it without their support."

Kevin Habib

Project Manager at National Energy Foundation



The impact of our fuel poverty support

Understanding and tracking social impact guides our engagement with partners and shapes the initiatives we drive forward. Together with our partners, we scope services and design support to maximise our effectiveness in addressing fuel poverty. By establishing open feedback channels and implementing innovative reporting platforms, we have improved our understanding of the outcomes of our interventions.

We forecast, track, and measure the social impact of every element of fuel poverty support delivered to understand what works for our customers. We work closely with partners to help them recognise the impact of their work and to shape these services at an early stage. For more information on how we use the Social Value Framework to shape our programme, see page 20.

As a result of our efforts, the support we delivered this year equates to £36.77m in net present value, or £6.37 in SROI for every £1 spent in delivering the programme.

This surpasses our targets for the year and is in line with our target for the second year of RIIO-ED2. These measurements are consistent with the industry's social value framework and the associated rulebook and based on carefully collected outcomes from our partners to provide a comprehensive overview of the impact of our fuel poverty programme.



Leaving no-one behind in the energy transition to Net Zero

We want to ensure that all customers benefit equally from the energy system transition. The opportunities provided by new technologies and behaviours have the potential to lower bills or provide rewards from taking part in flexibility.

However, its reliance on digitally enabled, sophisticated and often expensive technology means we must address the potential for some members of society to be left behind.

In changing the way vulnerable customers engage with the energy market, the energy transition is adding new dimensions of vulnerability. Innovative solutions and new types of support are needed to help tackle customers' vulnerabilities.

We have an ambitious target: to work with 500,000 customers during RIIO-ED2 to address the obstacles they may face. We delivered immediate impact in the first year, reaching 100,000 customers with new support that targeted key barriers to the transition to Net Zero. This has delivered £4.35m in social value while we have established an innovative programme of support, tailored to customers' emerging needs.

Our 'Leave no-one behind' strategy

Factors such as the emerging nature of this area across the industry, overlaid with the scale of our ambition and the desire to offer tailored support, gives rise to significant challenges for our teams who face key questions:

- how can the risk of being left behind be recognised and defined?
- what support do customers require to avoid being left behind?
- how can these services be delivered at scale to make a significant impact?

Nevertheless, we must deliver immediate impact to achieve the scale of our ambition. To do so, our strategy is built in three stages:

1. Understanding barriers
2. Developing products and services
3. Scaling up support

Over the years we have carried out research and engagement to help us understand the challenges our customers face in this area. In 2023/24, we focused on setting up bespoke support services and leveraging our traditional partnerships to set us up for success to deliver impactful support over future years.

Building blocks of our Leaving no one behind strategy

RIIO-ED2 target: 500,000 customers supported to ensure no one is left behind in the transition to Net Zero

WHAT WE DID

Providing in-depth personalised one-to-one support to customers at risk of being left behind in the transition to Net Zero.

PERFORMANCE 2023/24

£1.34m
social value delivered

90%
Customer satisfaction

6,116
customers supported

WHAT WE DID

Providing Net Zero information and energy efficiency advice to UK Power Networks' customers.

PERFORMANCE 2023/24

£3.02m
social value delivered

£10.42
SROI over and above every £1 spent this year

93,884
customers supported



100,000
customers supported in 2023/24

£4.35m
social value delivered

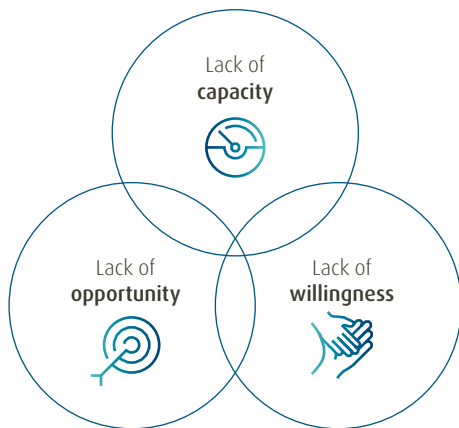
Understanding Barriers

Barriers to participating in the energy transition have been emerging and evolving over several years. During ED1, we identified the obstacles customers face in engaging with the energy transition. Our intersectionality framework, which highlights six key barriers, helps us understand how multiple overlapping vulnerabilities can amplify customers' overall levels of vulnerability. In addition, our customer segmentation framework reflects that the risk of exclusion is driven by energy system barriers as well as personal circumstances.

Our two-stage customer segmentation framework

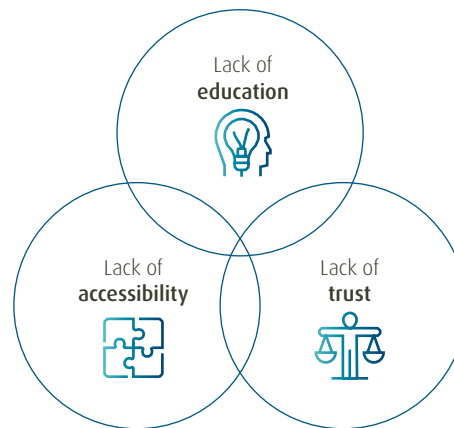
Stage 1: Consumer

What is driving the customer towards exclusion and disadvantage?



Stage 2: The energy system

What aspects of the energy system are driving the customer towards exclusion and disadvantage?



Extensive engagement with customers and stakeholders, research (e.g. with Energy Saving Trust, dating as far back as 2019) and the innovative use of data, have helped us understand the scale and nature of the problem. While we have made considerable progress, this is rapidly evolving issue that we must continue to monitor and respond to.

We mapped the services we developed against the barriers identified, designing new support that would focus on helping customers to overcome the challenges highlighted in our framework and drive the highest impact.

Developing products and services

Our understanding of barriers affecting customers led us to recognise that there are no or at most very few 'off-the-shelf' services that can effectively remove barriers. This shaped how we delivered our support this year.

We collaborated with partners to define the range of suitable services. The insights gained from triangulating data, research and insights, combined with the use of the social value framework, enabled us to set up innovative forms of support, looking beyond traditional partnerships that worked for us in ED1, to set up:

New forms of support such as flexibility trials and providing digital skills training to customers	→ p.19
New partnerships	→ p.20
New delivery models such as designing a new self-serve tool	→ p.20

Scaling up support

Because this is a ground-breaking programme of work which requires a mixture of bespoke services, it was essential that we developed the right types of support. This year, we have focused on leveraging existing channels to provide guidance and information to customers as well as setting up new partnerships and designing new tools that will enable us to provide more help to people in the future. In the coming years, we will build on the foundation we have laid, to scale up in-depth support sustainably.

Highlights of our support

TRIALLING NEW FLEXIBILITY OFFERINGS WITH HARD-TO-REACH CUSTOMERS

We collaborated with flexibility aggregators to actively seek out flexibility from customers who are typically harder to reach by offering an incentive to procure flexibility from customers on the PSR. We provided proactive top-up payments to help ensure that those who stand to benefit the most can access and participate in the flexibility market.

We also partnered with Camden Council and Utilita to trial energy-saving practices in 46 social housing homes.

We held a joint event with the Centre for Sustainable Energy and residents to address misunderstandings about ventilation systems and energy consumption. We found that attitudes towards smart meters and engaging hard-to-reach customers remain challenges in this area. Further engagement and better solutions for technical problems are essential for helping hard-to-reach customers get smart meters and benefit from flexible solutions in the future.



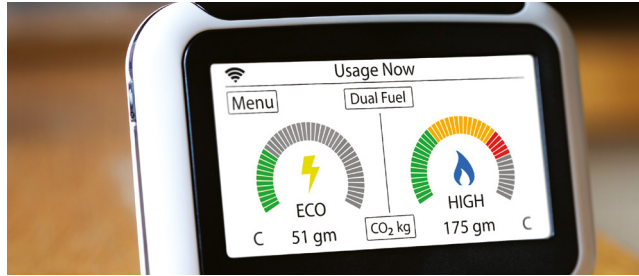
Lack of opportunity



Lack of education



Lack of trust



BUILDING ON OUR TRADITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER NEW SUPPORT BEYOND FUEL POVERTY

Over several years, our engagement with stakeholders such as Scope, the Energy Savings Trust and Centre for Sustainability has shaped our understanding and development of support we offer to overcome the wide range of challenges our customers face. This year we've made the most of the opportunity our long-standing relationships, working with key partners to set up support and drive immediate impact for customers.

Stakeholders have continuously highlighted the importance of education on the benefits of new technologies and noted the relative lack of awareness that prevents those in vulnerable situations from adopting them. We partnered with Citizens Advice to provide in-depth support such as Net Zero transition advice, help accessing online grants, recommending low carbon technology (LCT) grants and income maximisation.

Through this partnership we supported 5,672 customers to overcome barriers that are driving exclusion from the energy system transition.



Lack of capacity



Lack of education



Lack of capacity

DELIVERING NEW FORMS OF SUPPORT TO OVERCOME BARRIERS AND ENSURE NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND IN THE TRANSITION TO NET ZERO

Our insights told us that lack of digital skills acts as a barrier to customers participating in the Net Zero transition. Increasingly, customers need to engage with the energy market as well as know how to navigate online platforms and technology in order to participate and benefit.

We identified that vulnerability related to lack of use of the internet across the areas we serve is more prevalent in the South East and East of England. To help address this, we set up a partnership with Social Enterprise Kent, to design Digital Skills Training, with a focus on Net Zero.

The service supported 255 customers to develop the digital skills they need and increase the likelihood of them participating in the Net Zero Transition.

The support included referrals to Net Zero funding and advice on how to apply, as well as the provision of energy efficiency items such as smart plugs and LED lightbulbs.



Lack of capacity



Lack of capacity

Developing model to set up for success

ENHANCING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION THROUGH COLLABORATION TO EMBED CUSTOMER SERVICE ETHOS AMONG OUR PARTNERS

Our customers have come to expect the same outstanding levels of satisfaction from all services; this is no different for our no one left behind support. We recognise that we are at the beginning of our customer service journey for this new programme of support. Services are largely at an experimental stage and our customers' needs are not yet well formed and understood.

Notwithstanding these challenges, this year we achieved an average level of customer satisfaction of 90% in 2023/24.

This is undoubtedly an achievement in view of where we started, but we are not complacent. We plan to continue driving performance harder and further, with strong collaboration with our partners on service delivery.

We worked closely with all our partners to introduce them to the service-based culture here at UK Power Networks, aligning their practices with our own customer service approach. We are confident that close collaboration with our partners and our efforts to establish a service culture in the third sector will continue to drive customer satisfaction. For the first quarter of 2024/25, we plan to conduct service improvement exercises with all our partners, to keep pushing our customer satisfaction higher.



DESIGNING A NEW DELIVERY MODEL THAT ENABLED OUR BUSINESS TO SUPPORT CUSTOMERS WITH THEIR EVOLVING NEEDS

We identified the need for a self-serve tool that provided customers with knowledge and advice on what steps they could take to improve the energy efficiency and sustainability of their homes. This led us to develop the Green Homes Support Service, an accessible self-serve tool that provides customers with tailored, easy-to-understand information about steps they can take to create a more energy efficient home no matter their budget or circumstances.

The service was co-designed with accessibility experts Sopra Steria. Together, we set up an Inclusive Design Panel to test the platform throughout the development stage and used feedback to inform its design and functionality. We also engaged with a variety of accessibility experts and community organisations such as Scope and Community Energy South to learn and apply best practice, helping to ensure the low carbon journey is more accessible and easier to understand.

The tool gives customers a personalised action plan within minutes, including suggestions of how to save money and lower their carbon footprint, without compromising the warmth of their homes. We know that lack of digital skills can be an excluding factor, so we also offer a phone service. Customers who need extra help can request a call from our specially trained staff who support them through the process.



Scan the QR code to go to the Green Home Support Service



ESTABLISHING NEW PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER NEW FORMS OF SUPPORT

We built on our existing relationships to partner with different organisations to offer new forms of support that have not been offered before. Our aim was to support customers to overcome the barriers identified including lack of education and awareness. For example, we partnered with Yes Energy to offer advice to customers on the benefits of participating in flexibility as well as how to take part to help fill the knowledge gap and enable customers to benefit from the opportunities flexibility offers.



The impact of our no-one left behind programme

Through the support we have delivered, we generated a total of £4.35m in net present value, or £5.34 in SROI for every £1 spent in delivering support to 100,000 customers over 2023/24.

These measurements are in line with the industry's social value framework and the associated rulebook and based on carefully collected outcomes from our partners. For more information on how we are using the Social Value Framework to shape our programme, see page 20.

Social Value Framework utilisation

How we use the Social Value Framework in senior-level decision making

The social value framework is embedded in our decision making across UK Power Networks, helping us shape initiatives to prioritise how we deliver the greatest benefit to our customers. We use the social value framework in senior-level decision making in three keys ways:

Defining our partnership model across our network areas. Our Senior Leadership and Regulation teams reviewed the level of Net Present Value (NPV) being delivered across our DNO areas, which highlighted higher levels of support and value being delivered across our South East region. Challenging this difference led us to refine our approach to deliver more value for customers living in the East of England and London areas in future years. We developed our enduring partnerships programme, which will enable us to tailor services, review which partners we should work with as well as how many partnerships we need in different locations to ensure we are delivering high value services long term.

Deciding which organisations we should partner with to maximise value for our customers. When assessing a new partnership our team considers multiple factors including type of service, the number of customers a partner could support, customer service satisfaction, cost, location and the organisation's values, as well as social value. Following evaluation of these factors, proposals for new partnerships are presented to our senior management team to review, ensuring fair decisions are made that do not sacrifice quality of service or organisational values to achieve NPV targets.

Managing performance to ensure delivery of social value remains on track. PSR reach, NPV and customer satisfaction scores are reported monthly to our Regulatory Governance Committee (RGC). Through this process our Executive Management Team reviews, monitors, and tracks performance against targets. The RGC flags areas for improvement and senior leaders can escalate issues and put the right strategies and resolutions in place. With the support of senior management, using our social return on investment model and working closely with partners, we develop plans to overcome challenges to ensure the programme delivers against the business' targets and for our customers.



How we use the Social Value Framework to prioritise vulnerability support services

Use of the social value framework has helped shape our programme by scoping out new services that will make a significant on our customers' lives, as well as shape the services we already deliver to drive maximum value for our customers. It has helped guide our work with partners to understand what services they deliver that are of highest value. With this knowledge, we can focus on boosting efforts to reach customers and deliver services that are of the most value to them.

What we did:

Over the past year, we have rolled out a set of initiatives aimed at refining the accuracy of our social value measurement:

We have established a two-way open feedback channel with our partners and engaged an independent third-party organisation to give advice and validation on measuring social value. This process has helped our partners to adapt the support they're delivering based on value identified and what we have learnt from other partners too.

We have trained partners and provided the tools and support they need to go beyond reporting outputs (i.e. what they have done) to capture outcomes (i.e. the impact of the support they delivered). This process is new to most of our partners, and we are doing all we can to bring them on the journey with us, working to help them understand the process, and share our findings with them.

We have designed and implemented an innovative reporting and analytics platform. This provides a partner-friendly reporting capability that will streamline how we process and monitor high volumes of data while being able to make real-time decisions to drive service delivery improvements with partners.

Plans for effectively supporting vulnerable customers during the winter period

A review of our plans to support customers last winter

HELPING CUSTOMERS PREPARE FOR WINTER

Careful planning is key to the successful management of the winter storm season. Every year we send a Statement of Services communication to all our customers to make sure they know who we are and what our role is in their electricity supply.

Before the start of the 2023/24 winter, we reminded customers of the importance of keeping their contact details up to date, and highlighted the benefits of having a smart meter at home. We also sent a slightly different communication to our vulnerable customers, letting them know the additional services we provide for them, such as individual calls from our service centre to make sure they have what they need in the case of a power cut along with fuel poverty support should they require it.



Lessons learned and how we will support customers next winter

Our customers told us that we tried to do too much in our Statement of Service email in 2023/24; they would prefer us to send a separate communication to deal with the preparation for winter. That is why next year (2024/25) we will send our Statement of Service message in the spring, so we can dedicate the autumn message to winter preparations. As part of this communication as we go into the winter months, we will provide advice on preparing for potential power cuts.

PROACTIVE WARNINGS AHEAD OF ANY WEATHER EVENTS TO OUR VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS

Whenever the Met Office tells us that a named storm is expected, we use email and SMS to contact our most vulnerable customers as soon as we can, providing additional advice on what they can do to deal with the possible power cuts that may happen. Over 2023/24 we sent 95,328 emails and 69,203 messages via landline or text message to customers on our PSR ahead of weather events that could impact them.

These most vulnerable customers include those who are medically dependent on electrically powered equipment such as oxygen concentrators and sleep apnoea machines. These are the people who are, naturally, the most seriously affected by power cuts. Advice also includes general tips to help customers, such as making sure they have a torch nearby, and open their fridge as little as possible to keep its contents cooler for longer while the power is out.



A review of our plans to support customers last winter continued

WINTER WAYS OF WORKING

We review our ways of working over the winter to limit disruption and increase our customer service staff on duty by 25% through the night, making sure there is always someone on hand to help customers should a power outage occur.

Investment in our network is required all year round to ensure a safe and reliable supply of electricity. We recognise that planned power cuts can impact customers more over the winter. Before any work we notify customers, telling them when their power will be off and for how long, as well as highlighting the additional support available to vulnerable customers. We limit power outages to under eight hours during the winter, so as not to leave customers without power for long periods of time. If the weather forecast shows the temperature will drop below zero degrees, all planned work is reviewed to assess where large numbers of vulnerable customers will be affected. These jobs are then rescheduled for when the weather improves.

Lessons learned and how we will support customers next winter

Over the next winter, we are expanding our support for vulnerable customers ahead of planned power cuts. We will call all medically dependent customers in advanced of any planned work, offering them extra support including organising a battery pack should they require it in line with the business-as-usual rollout of our new scheme.

We've also reassessed the time limit we set for planned power cuts according to customer feedback, increasing it from six hours to eight hours in the winter. While this means power may be off for longer, customers told us that they would rather have a realistic timeframe to enable them to plan ahead. Over the next year we will maintain this way of working, continuing to review all planned works in line with weather forecasts.

Protecting customers during the winter

SUPPORTING CUSTOMERS DURING A STORM

We have dedicated 24/7 support for all our vulnerable customers and once a storm is underway our customer service advisors make proactive calls to everyone on the PSR, in order of priority according to the level of their vulnerability. We also have an extensive list of partners to deliver support right to the customer's home, including British Red Cross, Citizens Advice, Amazon and Deliveroo.

We offer our PSR customers extra support including, hot food sent via a delivery service, tea urns, cold pouches for medication, blankets and hot water bottles.

All of this is underpinned by the fundamental service we provide to our customers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including our dedicated priority phone line for PSR customers.

Scan the QR code to watch a video on our storm response



What we did:

Over 2023/24 we have provided:

730 times community support vans were sent out

9,343 items to support vulnerable customers including:
3,113 plug in torches
1,589 cool packs to keep medication refrigerated while power is off
2,304 power banks to recharge items such as mobile phones

1,527 meals to customers via delivery services Deliveroo and Uber Eats

Lessons learned and how we will support customers next winter

Across the support available to vulnerable customers, we realised there was a gap. For some of our most vulnerable customers, their main concern is to keep their medical equipment going which, in some cases, is lifesaving equipment.

Having successfully trialled the supply of portable battery packs to medically dependent customers through our innovation project in 2023/24, we are rolling this out as business-as-usual in time for the coming winter, as set out on page 10. Over the next year, every medically dependent customer will be able to receive this as part of our PSR offering, providing particularly valuable support during winter when storms are more prevalent.

Customer and Community Support Team

Supporting warm spaces over the winter period

Working with Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice and other water and gas companies, we delivered an enhanced winter support programme that builds awareness and skills for frontline workers in health care and voluntary care organisations, as well as supported a network of Warm Hubs to provide respite and advice to those in need during the colder months.

We also provided front-line training through our fuel poverty partners to give workers the skills and knowledge to help them identify households who would be best supported through the warm welcome hubs.

In 2023/24 we trained over 900 community champions to help tackle fuel poverty on the front lines over the autumn period.

Lessons learned and how we will support customers next winter

We plan to build on our work with Warm Welcome Hubs to increase both UK Power Networks' and our partners' presence in these spaces and raise awareness of the support available. Using our data, we will target areas with the highest PSR eligibility and wider vulnerabilities to engage and support hardest-to-reach customers through face-to-face community events during the winter.



Reviewing the effectiveness of our winter support

We routinely review our performance after every named storm to see how we can improve. We have the highest scores of any DNO for the support we provide for vulnerable customers during power cuts. Nevertheless, we recognise that there is always more we can do even better, such our learnings from Storm Henk that struck in the late evening. Our storm review process enables us to identify and implement these improvements.

Additional plans for the upcoming winter

We learned a valuable lesson in early 2024, when Storm Henk arrived in our South East region at about 10pm. Our automated messages went out saying that we expected to be able to restore power within six hours. However, because of the protocols around night working, we needed to wait until first thing in the morning to begin work to restore power. That meant that our communications were not accurate, and customers did not receive the service they had been promised. We have revised our communications protocol for storms that strike in the evening so we can manage the expectations of our customers more effectively over the next winter.

Summarising our performance over the first year of RII0-ED2

CVI metrics – ongoing performance





Metric	DNO	Actual figures						
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 2 target	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 5 target
PSR Reach	All 3 DNOs	2.55m 77%		90%				90%
	EPN	78%		90%				90%
	SPN	74%		90%				90%
	LPN	79%		90%				90%
Social value of fuel poverty services delivered (NPV)	All 3 DNOs	£11.42m		£8.97m				£37.52m
	EPN	£2.72m		£3.95m				£16.50m
	SPN	£6.81m		£2.51m				£10.50m
	LPN	£1.89m		£2.51m				£10.50m
Social value of Low Carbon Transition Services Delivered (NPV)	All 3 DNOs	£1.34m		£3.93m				£23.14m
	EPN	£0.41m		£1.73m				£10.18m
	SPN	£0.93m		£1.10m				£6.48m
	LPN	-£9.7k		£1.10m				£6.48m
Average Fuel Poverty Customer Satisfaction Survey score	All 3 DNOs	9.2		9				9
	EPN	8.9		9				9
	SPN	9.3		9				9
	LPN	9.1		9				9
Average Low Carbon Transition Customer Satisfaction Survey score	All 3 DNOs	9.0		9				9
	EPN	9.4		9				9
	SPN	9.2		9				9
	LPN	5.2		9				9

Summarising our performance over the first year of RII0-ED2 continued

Regularly Reported Evidence





RRE	Expectation	Actual figures				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Frequency of PSR Customer data cleanse (reported annually)	Licensee has attempted to contact all PSR Customers to verify their data	100% of registered PSR customers have had contact or attempts have been made to contact them to verify their data during the 2023/24 year				
CSS score for PSR Customers who have experienced a power cut (reported annually)	9.01 target	Overall: 9.33 EPN: 9.30 LPN: 9.51 SPN: 9.30				
The volume of Fuel Poverty Services Delivered (reported cumulatively)	Licensee forecast volume of Fuel Poverty Services Delivered for RII0-ED2	Total services delivered: 82,256 EPN: 27,517 LPN: 9,572 SPN: 45,167				
The volume of Low Carbon Transition Services Delivered (reported cumulatively)	Licensee forecast volume of Low Carbon Transition Services Delivered for RII0-ED2	Total services delivered: 26,802 EPN: 7,512 LPN: 217 SPN: 19,073				

Progress in delivering our vulnerability strategy commitments

Vulnerability strategy commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones for implementing commitment (if relevant)	RAG status	Status update
VS1	We will continue to improve satisfaction of our PSR registered customers over our RII0-ED1 baseline. We aim to be the #1 DNO Group as measured by PSR customer satisfaction or at least delivering 93% scores on average across our networks in each year of RII0-ED2 (vs. 91.5% average achieved in RII0-ED1) – whichever is higher.	93% customer satisfaction among PSR customers.	100% of customer-facing staff and contractors receiving in-depth vulnerability training 100% of all UK Power Networks staff (including the executive management team) provided with awareness training		93.3% customer satisfaction score for 2023/24.
VS2	We will expand the scope and reach of our Priority Services Register, delivering an overall 30% increase in registrations from the end of RII0-ED1 in those categories that are most impacted by our service by the end of RII0-ED2. We will target 3m households and 600,000 businesses registered.	3m customers on the PSR by 2028. 300,000 business PSR customers on the register by 2025 and 600,000 by 2028. 30% increase in the total number of 'medically dependent' customers registered on the PSR.			2.55m eligible customers registered on the PSR, an increase of +9.44% on 2022/23 103,000 Business PSR customers on our non-domestic PSR. Increased the number of customers in the medically dependent category by 12.16% on the PSR in year 1 of RII0-ED2.
VS3	We will keep our Priority Services Register (PSR) data up to date to maintain the relevance of our service, ensuring that we contact customers to update their PSR data and refresh our understanding of their needs every 18 months. In addition, we will conduct proactive data quality checks on all our PSR records every 12 months throughout RII0-ED2.	100% of customers with PSR data older than 18 months will be contacted to update their PSR records. 100% of PSR records will be assessed against proactive data quality checks every 12 months			Operate an 18-month cycle for refreshing customer data and annual data quality framework in place since Q2 2022.
VS4	Our customers will only need to register for the Priority Services Register once. By 2024 (at the latest) we will develop automated data links with other utility companies so customers will automatically receive enhanced service from us and other organisations providing essential services.	Establish automated data links to share and receive PSR data with all other regional network companies.			Bi-lateral data sharing with 7 of 8 water suppliers that operate in our regions.




■ Behind target ■ On track ■ Ahead of target

Progress in delivering our vulnerability strategy commitment continued

Vulnerability strategy commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones for implementing commitment (if relevant)	RAG status	Status update
VS5	We will help all medically dependent PSR customers realise the benefits of having a smart meter by sharing targeted advice every two years throughout R110-ED2. For example, we will utilise smart meters to establish new arrangements so that carers are automatically notified when a power cut occurs by 2024.	Reach 100% of all medically dependent PSR customers without a smart meter to share targeted advice on the benefit of smart meters every two years. By 2024, 100% of medically dependent PSR customers with registered carer's contact details and with smart meters will have their carers automatically notified when a power cut occurs by 2024.			Communication as part of our statement of service sent to all PSR customers through our annual campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of having a smart meter. Notifying carers for any HV and LV faults, planning to add Single Premise to this by the end of the 2024, where they have a smart meter.
VS6	By 2028, we will offer increased support for our medically dependent PSR customers by dispatching battery banks to customers who are at risk of being without power for more than four hours.	Continue to call all medically dependent PSR customers during a power cut. By 2028 we will go further than the base requirements by dispatching and installing battery banks at the premises of all medically dependent PSR customers who want one and are at risk of being without power for more than four hours.	Trialled since Sept 2023. BAU roll out Q1 of reg year 2.		Developed end-to-end process to deliver batteries to relevant customers. Trial of battery pack carried out in September 2023. Currently rolling out as business-as-usual deployment across all of UK Power Networks.
VS7	In collaboration with regional partners we aim to provide targeted support to a total of 500,000 fuel poor customers over R110-ED2, investing £18m to support over 200,000 directly and 300,000 through partnership programmes, delivering £67m of benefits by 2028. Additionally, we will provide fuel poverty information to 800,000 customers each year, working with trusted partners.	125,000 customers receive targeted support during 2023/24. 800,000 customers receive general advice during 2023/24.			Supported 148,110 fuel poor customers through direct and intermediate support, delivering £36.77m of benefits. We have provided 859,643 customers with fuel poverty information.
VS8	We will provide information and help to 500,000 customers over R110-ED2 to ensure no one is left behind in the changing energy system, at no cost to customers. As part of this, we will also co-fund grants towards the installation of low carbon technology systems via the UK Power Networks foundation.	100,000 customers receive information and help to ensure they are not left behind in the transition to Net Zero.			Information and help provided to 100,000 customers and delivered £4.35m of benefits.

■ Behind target ■ On track ■ Ahead of target

Progress in delivering our vulnerability strategy commitment continued

Vulnerability strategy commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones for implementing commitment (if relevant)	RAG status	Status update
VS9	We will establish an annual cycle of research and engagement, to shape our vulnerability plans as our understanding in this area develops and the priorities of our customers change. We will use this to inform the publication of an updated RIIO-ED2 Vulnerability strategy in 2025 and 2027.	<p>Research and engagement help us to continue to meet the evolving needs of our customers. It will address questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are vulnerability and disadvantage evolving, including intersectional impacts? • How can we maximise the impact of our support to customers in or at risk of fuel poverty? • How can we continue to increase overall PSR registrations while ensuring we achieve suitable representation in each district? • How can we support PSR customers better in high-impact events? • How can we ensure a fair and inclusive transition to Net Zero? 	Publish an updated RIIO-ED2 Vulnerability Strategy in 2025 and 2027 informed and shaped by stakeholder engagement.		We continuously review our ongoing engagement and research. A strategic plan of engagement and research activities is in place for the next year to inform and shape our vulnerability strategy.
VS10	We will deliver industry-leading innovations to improve support to disadvantaged and vulnerable customers, ringfencing £5m of our Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) investment over the RIIO-ED2 period to focus in these areas.	Explore different innovation solutions to support vulnerable customers in collaboration with other organisations.	£1m per year during RIIO-ED2		£1.185m of our NIA expenditure during the first year of RIIO-ED2 was on innovation projects focused on supporting consumers in vulnerable situations. This included projects Socially Green, Spotlight, Powercast, Power Protect, Low to no power heat alternatives and Right to Heat.
VS11	We will collaborate with other organisations to ensure at least 50% of our vulnerability innovation initiatives in RIIO-ED2 are delivered in partnership with other utilities and will attract £750,000 funding from these partnerships across the period.				<p>Four out of eight vulnerability innovation projects delivered in collaboration with other utilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIA Right to Heat with SGN • NIA Low to no power heat alternatives with NGN and SSEN Transmission • SIF Guidelight with SSEN • SIF VIVID with SSEN Distribution

■ Behind target ■ On track ■ Ahead of target

Independent assurance provider report

Metric	No.	Minimum requirement category	Minimum requirement criteria	Has the criteria been met (Y/N)
PSR Reach	1	PSR reach has been reported in line with the common methodology	The PSR reach actual performance is calculated in line with the agreed methodology and data provided by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)	Y
	2	Confirmation that the licensee has attempted to contact 100% of its registered PSR customers to verify their data every 24 months	Has the licensee attempted to contact 100% of its registered PSR customers to verify their data every 24 months?	Y
Value of FP services delivered	3	Assurance that performance against the targets has been calculated and reported in line with the common Social Value Framework methodology	The £NPV value calculated is in line with the common Social Value Framework Rulebook	Y
			The £NPV value calculated is attributed to the value of Fuel Poverty Services delivered and the scope of the metric set out within Chapter 2 of the RIIO-ED2 Consumer Vulnerability Guidance document	Y
			The values reported are accurate from the calculations in the relevant SROI model	Y
Value of LCT services delivered	4	Assurance that performance against the targets has been calculated and reported in line with the common Social Value Framework methodology	The £NPV value calculated is in line with the common Social Value Framework Rulebook	Y
			The £NPV value calculated is attributed to the value of Low Carbon Transition Services delivered and the scope of the metric set out within Chapter 2 of the RIIO-ED2 Consumer Vulnerability Guidance Document	Y
			The values reported are accurate from the calculations in the relevant SROI model	Y

Based on the above, the Independent Assurance Provider has confirmed alignment with the agreed upon reporting guidelines for Y1 of UK Power Network's RIIO-ED2 Vulnerability ODI.

For more information about how and why we engage with customers and other stakeholders, visit our website here.

If you would like to give us feedback or speak to our engagement team, contact us at stakeholder.engagement@ukpowernetworks.co.uk



A full list of our contact details can be found at:
www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk