



COLLABORATIVE ACTION ON CONSUMER VULNERABILITY

2021-22

OVERVIEW OF EVIDENCE
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
AND CONSUMER VULNERABILITY
SUBMISSION

PART
3



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

COLLABORATIVE ACTION ON CONSUMER VULNERABILITY

Welcome to our part 3 submission to Ofgem's Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive (SECV) for 2021-22.

Part 3 is wholly focused on our approach to improving our services, our reach, and ultimately our value to customers who are vulnerable or in vulnerable circumstances, no matter how temporary those circumstances might be. We describe our strategy and priorities, our adaptability to new challenges, and how our strong and evolving partnerships are delivering real benefit for our most in need customers. The examples of activity we have included show the critical role of stakeholders in guiding our actions, and the positive outcomes being achieved for this community.

PART 3

Part 3: Features the initiatives and outcomes we have delivered to support customers in vulnerable situations and fuel poverty during the 2021-22 regulatory year.

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HIGHLIGHTS

71.3%

of eligible households registered for our PSR. Up from 68.5% 2020-21.

First DNO

to launch an interactive energy efficiency tool.



8,762 ↑ 131.1%

households supported with fuel poverty and energy efficiency. Up by 131.1% from 2020-21.

SCOTTISH HYDRO ELECTRIC POWER DISTRIBUTION (SHEPD)

780,000

homes and businesses

160,000+

PSR customers registered

28.3%

average rate of fuel poverty*

SOUTHERN ELECTRIC POWER DISTRIBUTION (SEPD)

3,100,000

homes and businesses

607,000+

PSR customers registered

9.3%

average rate of fuel poverty*

* Different methods are used to calculate fuel poverty rates in Scotland and England.

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND CORE OBJECTIVES

We've targeted and delivered improvements in two key areas this year - increasing the reach of support for fuel poor households and closing gaps in our Priority Service Registrations (PSR), outperforming our stretch goals and delivering real benefit to those most in need.

Improved partnership collaboration has helped us support more customers to reduce their energy consumption and has enhanced the customer offer, and more detailed data analysis has improved the impact of our PSR related campaigns.

We have continued to deliver against our four embedded priorities, set out in the diagram below, having re-tested them with stakeholders early in 2021-22 to ensure they remained relevant. I worked with our Inclusive Service Panel, Distribution Executive Committee, and Board, to co-create and gain approval for a commitment to deliver a 30% year-on-year uplift in households supported with fuel poverty.

The emerging cost-of-living crisis has further sharpened stakeholders' and our focus and we have tuned our priorities to help us understand and adapt quickly to address the issues. Our swift response to the COVID-19 pandemic has set a useful precedent for our approach to managing the expected increase in customers struggling with rising energy prices.

Stakeholders fully support improved partnership collaboration and evolving

previous years' initiatives and innovations as the most effective way to reach an increased number of fuel poor households and PSR customers.

Our robust stakeholder engagement strategies and well-established partnership networks have provided strength and stability to support rapid action. We quickly reviewed all partnerships to make sure they were fully optimised for the cost-of-living crisis and included income maximisation and benefit entitlement checks where appropriate. This revised approach has led to a year-on-year increase of 131.1% more households supported with energy efficiency and fuel poverty measures.

One example of how our priorities interlink to deliver strong results is our pan-utility Home and Well project, which this year alone has supported 783 households. We were delighted to receive the Utility Week Customer Vulnerability Award in March 2022, which recognised the positive impact of this effective initiative.

This submission brings to life our customer vulnerability strategy and priorities and demonstrates the breadth and depth of our activity in response to stakeholder feedback and expectations. We are proud of the positive outcomes we are driving for those most in need and are resolute in our focus to overcome the challenges ahead.

Lyndsey Stainton,
Head of Stakeholder Engagement



Mission statement:

We will champion the individual needs of our customers and use effective partnerships to support them wherever they live, whenever they need us, and whatever their requirements might be.

Our embedded approach to consumer vulnerability is underpinned by the following principles:

- 1 Understanding the needs of customers
- 2 Using data to deliver tailored support
- 3 Partnership and collaborative working to help deliver services
- 4 Embedding knowledge and learnings and sharing best practice
- 5 Tracking performance against KPIs to ensure our efforts remain effective

OUR STAKEHOLDER-LED CORE PRIORITIES

During 2021-22, we re-tested our priorities and approach with stakeholders to ensure they continue to be holistic, impactful, and progressive. Stakeholders re-affirmed that the essence of our core priorities remain relevant and have helped shape the work undertaken for each one, including the setting of ambitious targets for the number of households supported with fuel poverty. This insight led to the

following targets being co-created with our Distribution Executive Committee (DEC) and agreed by our Board:

Improve the scale of delivery for our fuel poverty programme to ensure positive comparison to peers and alignment with the pathway to deliver support for 50,000 households in ED2

We will target a 30% year-on-year uplift in the number of households supported.

This will be achieved through sustained support for existing initiatives, as well as the commissioning of new projects.

Improve the depth and reach of our partnerships, targeting key areas of focus and linking to priorities

We will actively expand our partnerships to ensure we continue to increase the number of households supported whilst enhancing the offer for the consumers.

UNDERSTAND AND ADAPT TO THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

This year, all four stakeholder-led priorities were also viewed through a cost-of-living lens to ensure we provide consumers with additional support during this time of economic uncertainty.



EXPANDING OUR FUEL POVERTY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTIVITIES

- **8,762** homes helped with energy efficiency and fuel poverty, a **131.1% uplift** from last year
- **First DNO** to launch interactive **energy efficiency tool** with Energy Saving Trust (EST)



WIDENING OUR PARTNERSHIP NETWORK AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Enhanced partnership with SGN has led to **6 projects**, allowing us to reach **4,381 customers**
- **Winner** of Utility Week's **Customer Vulnerability Award** for Home and Well project



DRIVING FORWARD PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER PROVISION AND PROMOTION

- **71.3% eligible households** registered for PSR, a year-on-year increase of 2.8%
- Tactical 'hard-to-reach' campaign of translated PSR promotion across **31 Hindu temples** with over **1,000 visitors** per temple



ENSURING OUR SERVICES ARE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

- **24 refugees supported** with energy efficiency through the Empowered by Energy project
- **Improved customer journey** for BSL users when reporting a power cut

3.2 SMART USE OF DATA AND MEASUREMENT

As detailed in Part 1 page 3, we use triangulation to inform our decision making, ensuring we deliver the best outcomes for the widest range of stakeholders and customers.

Through this embedded process, we can effectively evaluate insight from all our engagement activity as well as from data and information from the wider operating environment. By using this approach, we ensure all views are considered, with any decisions made based on evidence, ensuring that they are robust, justifiable and deliver benefits to the broadest audiences.

We regularly refresh our data, most recently **improving the data used for network resilience oversight** and for fuel poverty forecasting.

Fuel Poverty Forecasting

To ensure our response to the emerging cost-of-living crisis was appropriate and effective we sought data that would indicate its likely impact in each of our seven regions. When we found that

no credible data was available, we commissioned Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) to forecast the impact of rising commodity costs in all seven of our regions for our customers at increments of 10%, 20%, 30% and 40% uplifts in costs. **These results have been used to inform our response which includes the upscaling of our referral and outreach programmes and the commissioning of new projects.** This insight also highlighted the need to focus on off gas grid areas where consumers often rely on heating sources not protected by the Price Cap.

New Vulnerability Impact Assessment tool

Working with Sirio Strategies and many of the GDNs, we have supported the creation of a robust and consistent methodology for assessing the impact of projects and initiatives on vulnerable consumers.

The tool uses ten key questions and a series of algorithms to predict positive or negative outcomes for any of the PSR needs codes, as well as potential financial impacts. The algorithms, weightings, scoring and calculations were developed with stakeholders. **Our Homeflex project was reviewed using this tool where it scored 10/10.** We will apply this assessment to future projects throughout 2022-23.

Engagement channels and processes

- Stakeholder Workshops – including PSR gaps and hard to reach communities
- Inclusive Service Panels
- PSR Customer survey
- Bilateral stakeholder meetings
- Joint Utilities Working Group
- COP26 Seminar and Expert roundtable
- Social media questions and feedback
- Political and elected member engagements

Data sources and tools

- Customer Mapping tool
- Energy Saving Trust data
- UK and Scottish Government data
- PSR gap analysis
- Network resilience data
- Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis
- Social needs forecasting
- Fuel poverty forecasting
- New Vulnerability Impact Assessment tool

3.3 DRIVING VALUE THROUGH SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Our approach to measuring impact is detailed in Part 1, page 8. Here you will find examples of the range of valuation tools we use to ensure that our actions deliver optimal value for our customers, wider society, and our business. The case studies below demonstrate how SROI has particularly influenced our decision-making.

Reshaping support for the Isle of Wight community

Decision to be made

What is the optimal mix of activities to increase reach and drive best value?

Alignment to strategic priorities

- Target to increase households supported by 30%
- Isle of Wight has highest proportion of fuel poverty in our SEPD area
- Increased demand on service due to cost-of-living crisis

Other considerations

- Ongoing COVID-19 restrictions

Forecast SROI **£4.56**

Actual SROI achieved **£10.35**

Outcome

- Whilst the combined SROI was relatively high, analysis identified activities within the programme with lower SROI. We re-shaped the programme to focus on high return activity such as telephone services.

Enabling Fund continuation

Decision to be made

Should we continue the enabling fund in SEPD post the Green Homes Grant initiative?

Considerations and strategic priorities

- Target to increase households supported with fuel poverty by 30%
- £2.17 SROI achieved in 2020-21, 77% less than our established enabling fund in SHEPD over the same period

Forecast SROI **£4.14**

Actual SROI achieved **£6.40**

Outcome

- Based on a healthy forecast SROI we committed to fund for a further 12 months, allowing the project to further establish through a widened network of partners. Activity focused on LAD scheme and ECO funding following the removal of Green Homes Grant.



As part of our embedded process, we reviewed all partnership proposals for 2020-21 using SROI. This really informed our decision making beyond the traditional metrics of households supported and expected client financial gain. We have also reviewed the actual outturn of these partnerships throughout the year to ensure we can clearly identify any deviations to expected returns and take corrective actions as appropriate."

Susan Duncan,
Stakeholder Engagement Manager
– Partnerships



- Financial benefits
- Social benefits
- Total benefits

Delivered in 2021-22

£0.81m **£0.27m**

£1.08m

Forecast over 5 years

£0.80m **£0.91m**

£1.71m

The SROI above shows the results of the nine initiatives measured against SROI through this document.



3.4 EXPANDING OUR FUEL POVERTY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTIVITIES

Tackling fuel poverty and securing sustained growth in the number of customers we help to stay warm, safe and healthy, is rooted in our core objectives. We have consistently increased our programme of activity, resulting in over 14,400 households supported throughout RIIO-ED1.

During 2021-22 the emerging cost-of-living crisis has led to unique challenges for our partners and customers alike.

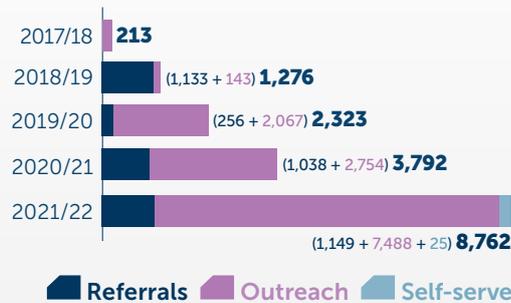
Listening to our stakeholders, we have worked with our existing partners, and secured new partnerships, to significantly increase our support. As a result, **over 8,762 households have been supported to stay warm for less, a 131.1% increase on last year.**

131.1% ↑
year-on-year increase in households helped with energy efficiency and fuel poverty

Expanding our strategic approach to fuel poverty support

Building on our embedded approach to fuel poverty support, we have complemented our established programme of referral and outreach projects with the introduction of an **interactive self-serve tool**, allowing customers to assess how they can make energy efficiency savings. Working in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust, we have delivered an **industry-first** by embedding the web app live on our inclusive website.

Households helped with energy efficiency and fuel poverty



New for 2022 our **interactive self-serve tool** – Developed with the Energy Saving Trust and based on their popular mobile app, we have launched our interactive online Energy Eddie self-serve tool for all of our customers to use.

Referrals for customers we already engage with

– We train our teams on fuel poverty, including how to spot signs someone may need help and how to refer people for specialist, independent advice and support. Customers are called back directly from Home Energy Scotland or YES Energy Solutions.

Outreach partnerships to support customers who are harder to reach

– We work with partners who undertake outreach initiatives in communities we identify as having high fuel poverty rates and lower engagement levels. We look to address wider social issues and add value to society as well as tackling fuel poverty and promoting the PSR in areas of lower take up.

* Launched in March 2022

Status: **New**

Ramping up support in the face of the cost-of-living crisis

WE LISTENED

Since COVID-19 restrictions began, cost-of-living has been a recurring theme for discussion for our Strategic Panels. In Autumn 2021, as the removal of the temporary uplift in Universal Credit was looming, coupled with rapidly rising wholesale energy costs, we engaged with partners, **1,600 consumers** through a survey, and highly informed stakeholders at a deliberative roundtable led by our MD, Chris Burchell. The purpose was twofold; to help us understand the challenge and emerging issues, and to identify ways to support consumers in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

Stakeholders told us:

- Continue to deliver our established fuel poverty programme whilst seeking opportunities to expand its reach
- Help customers identify, and successfully access, sustained increase in income through Benefit Entitlement Checks (BECs) and Income Maximisation
- Consider consumers not protected by the price cap, such as domestic customers who rely on unregulated fuels as a primary heating source
- Act upon any emerging safety concerns caused by the increased cost-of-living
- 82% of domestic customers surveyed were concerned or very concerned about increasing energy costs

- 50% of domestic respondents had changed behaviours due to increasing costs, the majority choosing to limit the number of rooms in which heating is used

WE ACTED

We reviewed:

- The impact of rising energy prices and cost-of-living in all seven of our regions through CSE
- Each of our current initiatives in conjunction with our partners to identify opportunities to expand and include BECs
- Our current rates of electricity theft to identify any trends and increases
- Our customer mapping tool (CMT) to identify off-gas-grid areas most at risk

We rolled out at pace:

- An instruction to all partners to include income maximisation and BECs
- New initiatives to support customers such as joining all GDNs on the Fuel Bank Foundation, and replacing unsafe electrical heaters through Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue (DWFRS) service
- Reshaped funding for fuel poverty projects on the Isle of Wight
- The Energy Eddie interactive tool with EST

We shared:

- Our CMT with Local Authorities and charities to help inform their activities

- Conversations and insights from the 2022 Energy Action Scotland (EAS) Conference, which we sponsored and included a presentation from our Director of Corporate Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement
- The EAS Essential Warmth campaign via our social media channels



During our engagements, it's clear the impact of the cost-of-living crisis will be both broad and deep and action is needed from all. We've looked to respond quickly, working in partnership to increase our support significantly."

Chris Burchell,
Managing Director



POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **Four new partnerships** focusing on supporting those impacted by the cost-of-living crisis
- Over **£80,000** client financial gain delivered through BEC and Income Maximisation
- We informed and linked together **46** current and potential partners through the sharing of vulnerability data through our CMT, **see Page 5**
- Enhanced safety for **46** homes by providing new electrical appliances

We also introduced new and enhanced initiatives in direct response to the cost-of-living crisis, delivering support at the point of need:

Case study

Status: **Enhanced**

CSE Energy Advisors

WE LISTENED

The need to 'put money in people's pockets' through established routes such as Government benefit schemes was identified in bilaterals with partners and at our November roundtable. It was the view of this group, along with our strategic Panels, that our role should be that of a facilitator.

WE ACTED

Introduced in March 2021, our **CSE Energy Advisor initiative** provides specialist energy efficiency advice regarding access to grants such as Warm Home Discount.

We worked with the CSE team to add Income Maximisation and BECs as standard from December.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **1,130 households** supported with specialist advice, 640 of which were off gas grid
- **£57,444 client financial gain achieved through benefits** such as Warm Home Discount and Surviving Winter Fund

SOCIAL VALUE CREATED

£3.77 per £1 spent over the next five years

Case study

Status: **New** DNO First

Fuel Bank Foundation

WE LISTENED

The Fuel Bank Foundation's 2021 Fuel Crisis Report reported a 23% like-for-like increase in demand since the start of COVID-19, with spikes of up to 300% in some areas. The same report found 96% of people receiving support had to make the choice between topping up prepayment meters or eating. Of these, 60% stated they had to make that choice daily or weekly.

WE ACTED

Joining forces with all GDNs, we committed to support the **Fuel Bank Foundation** for a period of 24 months, giving certainty of funding over this time.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **2,367 households** supported since January 2022

SOCIAL VALUE FORECAST

£5.95 per £1 spent over the next five years

Status: **Enhanced**

Supporting customers with the highest rates of fuel poverty

WE LISTENED

The average rate of fuel poverty on the Isle of Wight is 11%. This compares to an average rate of 7.4% for our central southern England region.

During a regular partner review, The Footprint Trust team noted demand for their service is currently the highest it's ever been since they launched in 2003. They expect this upward trend to continue.

WE ACTED

- We reviewed the SROI for each support service which informed our decision to divert funds from outreach activity to phone consultations
- Considering COVID-19 restrictions and increasing demand, home visits were removed in favour of telephone consultations.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **334** additional customers supported over the phone
- **598** customers received personalised guidance
- **268** customers signposted to additional, specialist support
- Over **£200,000** client financial gain achieved

SOCIAL VALUE CREATED

£10.35 per £1 spent over the next five years

Status: **New** DNO First

Industry-first interactive energy efficiency tool launched

WE LISTENED

Our original two-step approach to helping our customers out of fuel poverty was created with stakeholders to be a robust, simple, and strategic process and has delivered continually improving results. Recent engagement has told us two things; increase the number of households we support and make the help as inclusive as possible. Our Inclusive Service Panel urged us to go further and commit to an ambitious target for increased support.

WE ACTED

We have partnered with the Energy Saving Trust to become the first DNO to launch an interactive energy efficiency tool. The tool allows customers to virtually walk



around a home and click on electrical items. It guides customers through the saving they could make with small changes totalling up the financial benefits as they go. To increase the ease of use the tool is embedded on our website, removing the need for customers to download an app prior to use.

The partnership-working has been shared and replicated by the Energy Saving Trust with other utilities.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

In the short collection period after launch in March 2022:

- **£113.52 average saving** per customer identified for 25 customers
- **First DNO** to launch an interactive energy efficiency tool
- Additional value provided through a tailored report which is emailed to the customer following completion of the survey, allowing them to make changes in their own time, reinforcing the positives of why they should take action
- Social media and partnership communications campaigns underway to drive usage



3.5 WIDENING OUR PARTNERSHIP NETWORK AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

In a year where the significant expansion of cost-effective service provision became even more critical, improving the depth and reach of our partnerships was a key activity.

Informed by stakeholder insight, and using our partnership principles (Part 1, page 8), we enhanced existing partnerships and forged a number of new ones, leading to a 131.1% increase in households supported, a richer customer offering, and enhanced knowledge for ourselves and partners.

Status: **Enhanced**

Sharing our mapping data with Local Authorities

WE LISTENED

Our strategic panels and attendees at our November 2021 roundtable told us that sharing tools to aid decision making, targeting of programmes, investment and engagement when it comes to vulnerability should be a key area of focus for SSEN. Helping other organisations, such as Local Authorities, better understand the makeup of their regions and uncovering nuanced analysis of vulnerability where customers might be experiencing multiple difficulties with health, disability, age and financial capabilities, was identified as paramount.

WE ACTED

Working in partnership with CSE, we led the design and delivery of a webinar for our partners and wider stakeholder community, including Local Authorities, charities, and other utilities, to showcase the uses and benefits of our **Customer Mapping Tool** (CMT). Taking live examples from attendees, we were able to demonstrate how the tool worked to identify different demographics and target customer groups using the data markers. We also sought insights from attendees regarding the data sets held within the CMT itself to inform future enhancements to both data sets and functionality.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- Enhanced knowledge for 45 delegates who attended the session, including **representatives from 12 Local Authorities**
- 72% of attendees said the CMT would add value to their business, with **84% keen to trial the tool**
- Temporary access (3 months) was granted to all attendees to **enhance and embed learnings**
- **9 bespoke training sessions** were requested and delivered

Case study

Working in tandem with gas networks

Our effective collaboration with SGN has helped a greater number of vulnerable consumers and allowed SGN to optimise their Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Allowance.

SGN joined two of our flagship initiatives; **Home and Well**, a pan-utility project in our southern region providing hospital leavers with energy efficiency, fuel poverty advice and support around welfare benefits and income maximisation; and Citizens Advice Scotland's (CAS) **Energy Advisor programme**. As a result, customers received an enhanced service, including CO advice, and we increased the reach of the CAS Energy Advisor project by appointing a fifth specialist advisor in Dundee.

We expanded PSR Scotland (launched in 2020-21) to include SGN and increase its reach, and SGN joined our **NEA Empowered by Energy initiative**, resulting in funding for a two-year programme and improved financial certainty for our charity partners.

Partnership works both ways and we have joined several SGN-led initiatives, including **Highland Affordable Warmth**, where our insight and funding has helped the region's vulnerable customers access fuel and food poverty support. We partnered with SGN to join the framework of GDNs supporting the **Fuel Bank Foundation** to provide consumers with support, both immediately and through an onward network of specialist advisors. And we joined SGN and Age Scotland to deliver energy workshops for consumers receiving state pensions, advising on energy efficiency and financial support.



Collaborating with SSEN on regional and national partnerships has enabled us to reach more customers in a targeted way and offer much needed support. By openly sharing ideas, training and data tools it has strengthened our partnership and ultimately benefited the communities we serve."

Kerry Potter,
Group Social Impact and
Vulnerability Manager, SGN



Intervention triggers in action

As detailed in Part 1, page 8, we have a clear set of intervention triggers to ensure our partnerships deliver best value.

Concerned about the deviation between forecast and actual outturn, we reviewed the Warm and Safe Wiltshire project,

an initiative to promote PSR in partnership with Centre for Sustainability Energy. During the review we spoke with the partner, assessed previous performance and SROI as well as forecasts for 2022-23. The review showed the downward trend was expected to continue and as a result the decision was made to stop the project for 2022-23.

Case study

Collaborating to support customers in extreme storms

In February 2022 our south network area was severely impacted by Storms Dudley and Eunice. Due to the sheer scale of the challenge, we required additional support to provide welfare visits for the most vulnerable customers off supply. Alongside already established relationships with partners such as British Red Cross, a working relationship was forged with both Serve On, an international rescue charity, and RE:ACT, a humanitarian charity that provides direct action during the immediate onset of a crisis, to help support our most vulnerable customers.

Providing us with four teams, RE:ACT joined a team, led by our Regional Customer Relationship Managers (CRM) providing support across all of our regions.

In addition to welfare visits, which included the delivery of hot food and drinks, the teams supported on making proactive calls to our PSR customers, the setup of suitcase generators for medically dependent customers and provided professional support to our wider teams.

Moving forward, we have set up formal partnerships with both organisations to support in emergency situations and resilience training for our SSEN teams, **Part 2, page 7.**



Strategic expansion of outreach partnerships

WE LISTENED

Our stakeholders and Strategic Panels have consistently asked us to increase the reach of our fuel poverty work to support more households whilst ensuring there is alignment to key areas such as increased collaboration and PSR gap reduction.

WE ACTED

- We reviewed our current programme of activity, in conjunction with partners, to identify opportunities to expand either the geographic footprint, service offered or volume of households supported.
- We identified gaps in our offering and sought opportunities to partner with others to increase the number of households we supported.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED



	Project	Partners	Energy Efficiency Advice	Fuel Poverty Advice/ Benefits	Income Max/Off Gas Grid	Point of Crisis Help	PSR	Home Safety	Other Information	SROI (Actual for 2021-22)	Total Households Helped 2021-22
New	Energy Workshops	Age Scotland	✓	✓	✓		✓		Commenced March 2022	–	46
	Highland Affordable Warmth	SGN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Commenced Jan 2022 Forecast SROI £4.34	–	203
	Energy Eddie	Energy Saving Trust	✓						Commenced March 2022	–	25
	Fuel Bank Foundation	SGN, Cadent, Wales and West, Northern Gas Networks, Fuel Bank Foundation		✓	✓	✓			Commenced January 2022 Forecast SROI £5.95	–	2,367
	Safe and Well	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service	✓	✓			✓	✓	1,200 safety visits undertaken	–	46*
Enhanced	Home and Well	SGN, Citizens Advice Hampshire, Portsmouth Water, Southampton Water, SE Water, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Additional water partners joined, increasing the reach of water efficiency support	£13.43	783 ↑ 2%
	Energy Advisors	Citizens Advice Scotland	✓	✓	✓		✓		SGN joined, increasing reach and enhancing customer offer	£4.45	958 ↑ 32%
		CSE	✓	✓	✓		✓		First full year in operation	£3.77	1,130 ↑ 100%
	Empowered by Energy	National Energy Action	✓	✓			✓	✓	SGN joined, reduced volume due to COVID-19 restrictions	£3.38	24** ↓ 49%
Embedded	Enabling Fund	CSE	✓	✓	✓		✓		First full year of operation	£6.40	38 ↑ 375%
		Warmworks	✓	✓	✓		✓		Installer restrictions lifted	£8.23	69 ↑ 41%
	Warm and Well	The Footprint Trust	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Increased phone service	£10.35	1,200 ↑ 310%
	Action Hampshire/Community Action Surrey	Action Hampshire/Community Action Surrey	✓	✓			✓	✓	Recommended in-person support	–	465 ↑ 301%
	Referral Network	YES Energy Solutions Home Energy Scotland (HES)	✓	✓					Increased promotion on social channels	£24.03	1,149 ↑ 11%
	Warm and Safe Wiltshire	CSE	✓	✓			✓		Reduced opportunities identified	£2.67	305** ↓ 59%
Totals											8,762 ↑ 131.1% (2020–21: 3,792)

* Not included in total below as indirect support (safe appliances)

**Numbers lower due to COVID-19 restrictions and reduced opportunities



3.6 DRIVING FORWARD PSR PROVISION AND PROMOTION

The Priority Services Register (PSR) is the backbone of support for our customers who require adapted services, additional support, or just a little reassurance during power cuts.

We have a deep understanding of our regions, the communities we serve and what makes individuals or areas less resilient. We tailor our PSR services to safeguard and support the most at-risk households first. We also understand the nature and scale of vulnerability and in all our PSR promotional activities, **we highlight that temporary access to our services is available.** Our tactical campaigns and marketing use this knowledge, social data and our mapping tool to engage harder to reach communities, less resilient areas and neighbourhoods where we've identified under-representation on the PSR. Our teams work to keep everyone safe, connected and supported, particularly those who are vulnerable.

71.3%
of PSR eligible households registered

Up from 68.5% in 2020-21

Status: **Enhanced**

Driving greater PSR awareness

WE LISTENED

Understanding the changing needs of customers including transient needs, is critical. From our PSR gap analysis, both on a geographical and needs code basis, we were able to identify our key areas of focus. Throughout 2021-22, we also engaged directly with our Inclusive Service Panels to seek views which would inform our PSR campaign. Our panels were clear, in the wake of the pandemic, we should consider how best to identify those with transient needs i.e. hospital leavers as this PSR gap area had emerged more prominently since COVID-19. Further insight was generated from an online stakeholder workshop in July 2021 which focused on our key PSR gap areas. The workshop was attended by **27 stakeholders** from water, emergency response and charities. When looking at our mental health gap area, our stakeholders told us that digital promotion via websites, YouTube and social media were the best channels to utilise when promoting PSR to this focus area.



Status: **Embedded**

Targeted and strategic PSR promotion where and when it matters most

Operating regions	Population	PSR gap 2020-21 estimate	PSR gap 2021-22 estimate
Ridgeway	1,393,074	33.7%	31.9% ↓
Wessex	1,701,212	33.0%	32.3% ↓
Thames Valley	2,388,690	32.6%	28.0% ↓
South East	1,632,520	31.6%	29.3% ↓
South Caledonia	586,333	28.3%	23.7% ↓
North Caledonia	592,817	26.2%	23.8% ↓
Highlands and Islands	265,554	23.4%	23.5%* ↑
All regions	8,560,200	31.5%	28.7% ↓

* Reduction is due to an increased population in this region

Working with our partner, Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), we utilised our Customer Mapping Tool to analyse our PSR gap areas for 2021-22 and any movement in these areas. On average the overall PSR gap percentage has further reduced from 31.5% in 2021 to 28.7% in 2022. Notably, our Thames Valley region has seen a significant gap closure of 4.6% since last year. Our case study information in this section explains further how our **deliberate, tactical campaigns in this region have aided this gap reduction.** This has been achieved despite the lack of registrations from supplier data flows, a result of the significantly reduced liquidity in the supply market. We have seen an increase in registrations in some of our key PSR gap areas. The targeted, promotional activity denoted in our PSR Campaign section supports the increase in these specific areas.

Hospital leavers

2022 **2,334** +8.90% ↑

2021 **2,144**

Customers where language can be a barrier

2022 **6,504** +28.90% ↑

2021 **5,044**

WE ACTED

The campaign ran between 18 October 2021 and 31 March 2022 with the objective of:

- Increasing awareness of PSR, leading to an increase in eligible households registered and reduction in PSR gap areas
- Increasing awareness, and use, of both 105 and PowerTrack.

We reviewed and refreshed the channels used in our campaign, based on our PSR gap analysis and stakeholder feedback, focusing on the following four areas:

1. TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Seen as vital for reaching an older demographic; local and community radio especially due to stakeholder feedback

3. HEALTHCARE-RELATED MARKETING

Using LinkedIn marketing to healthcare professionals and hospital radio to patients and hospital leavers

2. ONLINE PROMOTION

To reach a significant number of customers efficiently, whilst being targeted

4. HARD-TO-REACH TARGETING

Including mail drops to underrepresented areas and translated materials

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

TRADITIONAL MEDIA



Radio

Over 1.2m people reached across 19 local and community radio stations, specifically selected to target their demographic audience

1.2m+
people reached



Newspaper

Over 770,000 people reached by newspaper advertising, this reaches a more elderly demographic and is delivered to their door, helping to reach people who are housebound or isolating

770,000+
people reached



Door drop

We mailed a PSR door drop out to 122,864 households split by 27% in the north and 73% in the south, using our customer mapping tool to identify areas with the highest proportion eligible to register for PSR

122,864
households mailed



Bespoke publications

We advertised in Enable magazine with a target audience reach of 110,000 and Disabled Motorist UK which has 18,000 members



Online

Online advertising including social media, YouTube, LinkedIn and FoneMedia +26,000,000 impacts, +850,000 video views, and +58,000 link clicks

CO-CREATED AND IMPROVED HEALTHCARE MARKETING



Hospital radio interviews, advertising, and sponsorship



LinkedIn marketing to healthcare professionals delivered
118,696 impressions
828 link clicks



An improved geo-targeted outreach campaign for healthcare professionals, inpatients, and carers



37,615
additional visits to the PSR web pages



71.3%
of eligible households registered for our PSR. Up from 68.5% last year.



Outdoor and bus advertising on routes passing large teaching hospitals and sites without hospital radio, with a combined reach of 662,706 and 1,455,229 impressions



Over 47,000 PowerTrack mobile app downloads and over 800,000 visits to our PowerTrack web page between 1 October 2021 – 28 February 2022

Case study

Closing our 'Language as a Barrier' PSR Gap

WE LISTENED

From our PSR gap analysis we know that promoting PSR for customers where language can be a barrier is a key focus area. Moreover, our Customer Vulnerability stakeholder workshop in 2021 identified a need to work with local communities to understand their individual needs and enable bespoke support and communications.

WE ACTED

Working with Hindu Council UK, we created information-based PSR posters in three languages commonly used in the Hindu community. The posters were created and produced for use inside temples as well as a digital version to enable sharing through partners' communications channels. The posters were distributed at the

end of October 2021, over Diwali, to 31 temples in our network area to promote the benefits of registering for PSR. During this time, each temple had over 1,000 visitors, ensuring optimal awareness of our translated posters.

We also worked closely with Slough Borough Council, in our Thames Valley region, promoting our PSR and fuel poverty support to this area as it was facing financial difficulty and had limited support for residents. The council shared links to our services on their website and our CRM team met with the Mayor of Slough to talk about the PSR register and how it could benefit his residents.



POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **8.1% reduction** in our "Language as a barrier" PSR gap from the previous year
- **19% increase** in PSR registrations in our Thames Valley region, since 2021, under PSR needs code "Customers where language can be a barrier"



SSEN places vulnerable customers at the heart of everything it does and is committed to working with other external agencies and organisations to tackle social issues, including fuel poverty. This latest initiative to encourage customers to sign up for its free PSR and energy advice is a good example of this commitment."

Rajnish Kashyap,
General Secretary,
Hindu Council UK





3.7 ENSURING OUR SERVICES ARE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

We pride ourselves on industry-leading service which is tailored, inclusive, and accessible. Our diverse communities have a wide range of considerations which mean that one size never fits all.

Our extensive consumer vulnerability stakeholder engagement programme, combined with robust data analysis, enables us to continually challenge and improve our service for customers and stakeholders alike. This approach identifies opportunities to improve service for customers and training for colleagues. This year, we have focused particularly on customers with hearing loss, those leaving hospital and those in diverse communities, especially where cultural differences or language have previously created barriers.

Our new training initiative, Empowered to Care, is tailored to these needs and is ensuring exceptionally high standards and quality of service throughout all our regions. Whilst much work is being done to ensure an inclusive and accessible service in the present, **we are clear the groundwork must be done now to ensure we continue to offer innovative, sector leading service in the future.**

Status: **Enhanced**

Empowered to Care

Our customer service training programme, Empowered to Care, has been developed to ensure our employees have the knowledge, comprehension and confidence to provide a valued and trusted service for our customers and communities across the north of Scotland and central southern England, regardless of job role.

See Part 2, page 9.

The training has three levels and is built up of six modules, co-created with, and accredited by, the Institute of Customer Service. The first level, **Service Excellence** is a basic programme that will be delivered to all 3,800 SSEN employees across the Distribution business by September 2022. This programme includes **Vulnerability** as a key module, ensuring all our staff will feel empowered to confidently support our vulnerable consumers, whether or not they are expert in this area.



The training has been a really positive experience and has given me additional knowledge and skills to identify customers who might need extra support. I have much more confidence in opening those conversations now."

Andrew Bailey,
Engineer, SSEN



Status: **Enhanced**

Empowered by Energy – supporting hard to reach communities

WE LISTENED

Analysis of PSR gaps identified we had more to do in engaging communities of differing cultures, faiths, languages and people new to the UK, including asylum seekers and refugees. In April 2021, the PSR gap in this area was 20.80%. This was echoed by our ISPs and stakeholders at our Consumer Vulnerability workshop.

WE ACTED

We partnered with National Energy Action (NEA) and SGN to deliver workshops in central southern England, and with the help of the Scottish Refugee Council in north east Scotland. These workshops were aimed at helping refugees and asylum seekers avoid fuel poverty and energy vulnerability.

Three workshops were created and delivered over a three-week period ensuring the sessions included engagement between participants, an NEA advisor and an interpreter. One session in particular was aimed at refugees under the age of 25. Vulnerable families were able to access energy efficiency advice and sign up to the PSR. All received an energy efficiency pack to supplement their learning.

Status: **Improved**

Improved ease of contact for BSL users

WE LISTENED

Our stakeholders advocated choice and access for the deaf community as being paramount. They noted that video relay is a key tool for the deaf community in the customer service arena.

WE ACTED

We worked with the three leading BSL organisations; Deaf Scotland, Dundee Deaf Links and Contact Scotland to investigate video relay service options for BSL users. We have now adopted the [contactsotland-bsl.org](https://www.contactsotland-bsl.org) platform, becoming the first DNO to offer video

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **24 participants** have increased confidence to take control and manage their home energy.
- Participants will support their communities as **Energy Champions**, allowing hard to reach communities to be accessed and supported.
- This work supported an **8.1% reduction** in our PSR Gap – language as a barrier

SOCIAL VALUE CREATED

£3.38 per £1 spent
over the next 5 years



It was great having a session for our young people which were friendly, approachable and knowledgeable. The session was very useful for the young people especially the areas regarding benefits and different ways of saving money. They all really appreciated the gifts especially the slow cooker and it was great that they were shown how to use it! We would very much welcome the opportunity to participate in future sessions for our young people."

Partner Agency

relay when reporting a power cut, allowing our BSL customers to contact us quickly and without hassle. We are the only service which sits alongside Police Scotland and NHS Scotland as an emergency service for our power cut reporting facility. Our service offers ease of access, a simple process and wider choice for the deaf community. We promoted this service to our customers through social media posts and direct communication with PSR users who have registered for adapted communications.

POSITIVE IMPACT DELIVERED

- **31 clicks** on BSL links since 1 March 2022 and launch of video relay shared via Twitter by Interpreter Now.
- This service is now available for all, offering a free, easy access alternative contact method.

Status: **Enhanced**

Leading the way for a fair and inclusive transition to net zero

For several years we have taken an industry-leading position in:

- Championing fairness in the transition to net zero.
- The inclusive uptake of low carbon technologies.

Our pioneering research and engagement work with Imperial College, the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and WPD has identified areas where people and communities are most likely to be left behind. The research has given evidence to our belief that, as CSE Chief Executive Simon Roberts puts it, "Left to its own devices the market for domestic smart energy offers will not become fair".

WE LISTENED

Stakeholders are clear that our role as a DNO is integral in driving fairness and inclusivity, leading the way through our partnerships, supply chain, projects, investments, and our own actions.

We have engaged across multiple stakeholder segments on topics covering low carbon technologies, the drive to net zero, our role in supporting customers with the change and how we can help to enable a fair and just transition.



Not leaving customers behind on the journey to net zero has been the industry mantra for years. We've moved beyond this passive approach and are actively embracing decarbonisation as a huge opportunity to find innovative ways of improving fairness and driving a more inclusive energy future.

Our industry leading work, with academic and charity partners, will find layered benefits, reduce unfairness, and create opportunities to deliver positive outcomes for all our customers."

Simon O'Loughlin,
SSEN, Innovation Project Manager



WE ACTED

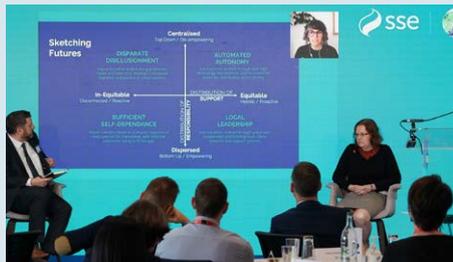
Recognising vulnerability is transient in nature, especially evident in the current cost-of-living crisis, we've developed strong partnerships with academics and experts to ensure our understanding of vulnerability characteristics and trends remains at the frontier. This foresighting is a vital tool as we seek to embed fairness in all we do.

Vulnerability Future Energy Scenarios (VFES) DNO First

In a **DNO-first** we are conducting Consumer Vulnerability Foresighting with Imperial College London. Currently investment decisions are guided by Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES) which are based on assumptions using engineering and asset-based predictions and lacks any human, societal or community-based elements. Outputs from VFES will include plausible societal trends we need to consider when planning our future networks. Dr Leila Sheldrick shared these findings with stakeholders at our hybrid COP26 event in Glasgow. Feedback was positive, with strong support we had hit the right note for assessing future consumer requirements.

Impact and next steps: We are taking this methodology to the next level by extending the foresighting work

and adding robust machine-learning provided by partnering with the Smith Institute. The **enhanced academic findings and machine learning outcomes will be triangulated, challenged, and validated by policy experts** at National Energy Action. Should the combined outcomes concur, we will embed the VFES process into network investment decisions alongside DFES.



Dr Leila Sheldrick presenting our COP26 event

INSIGHT DRIVING CHANGE: HOMEflex

Our Crowdflex programme (**Part 2, page 4**), demonstrated that domestic flexibility will be a powerful tool for the future. However, for all consumers to benefit this must be done responsibly and through a trusted process.

Following feedback from both expert and consumer forums, we approached Flex Assure who already set common standards for industrial and commercial flexibility services providers (aggregators)

to develop a domestic and small business equivalent. The result, HOMEflex, will allow aggregators to earn a HOMEflex 'trust-mark' so households and microbusinesses can benefit from flexibility with confidence that they will be financially rewarded.

Impact and next steps: HOMEflex will develop a governance structure, code of conduct, compliance scheme, and a redress and complaints process. The launch is planned for 2022-23.

Our aim is to embed fairness from the start of every net zero and low carbon technology project. We ensure vulnerable customers and communities are not left behind by embedding their needs from the earliest stages of planning.

Smart and Fair capability tool for LAEPs Collaboration

Our Smart and Fair project with the Centre for Sustainable Energy and WPD has proved to be **ground-breaking in setting standards for future fairness**. Following the impressive outputs from Phase 1 of the programme, including the development of the capability lens, Phase Two launched in May 2021 and is now extended to both our licence areas.



Alongside a focus on widening participation, particularly for those who are hard to reach, a key output of the second phase is taking theory into action with the development of a tool that overlays **the capability lens research and makes it applicable in a local area energy planning context**.

It takes both publicly available and specialist data, such as credit reference agency analysis, to help understand locations where certain vulnerabilities are more likely to be prevalent in the context of the energy transition. Framed against the co-created capability lens, it provides a solid evidence basis for decision makers to understand the implications of decarbonisation projects, such as heat zoning and chargepoint siting.

Impact and next steps: The tool has been made available to Local Authority partners to implement in LAEP development and is being used in our LAEP projects in Oxfordshire (LEO) and Dundee (RESOP).

"It is now even more important that vulnerable people can access the free schemes available through Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks at a time when they need it most during a disruption in the electricity supply, especially in the cold winter months."



Councillor Mohammed Nazir,
Mayor of Slough

"I was really struggling financially and hadn't put on the heating for the last three years. The support you gave me has made a tremendous difference to my overall comfort and wellbeing this winter; I was truly dreading another long cold period until the spring finally came around again. Thank you so very much!"

Participant feedback,
CSE Energy Advisor Project 2021-22

"Our partnership with SSEN, SGN, Southern Water, Portsmouth Water and NHS Hampshire Southampton and Isle of Wight CCG has helped over 1,300 vulnerable people to stay safely and independently in their homes and we are pleased to be continuing the Home and Well partnership to support even more people."



Jo Hillier,
CEO of Citizens Advice Hampshire

UtilityWeek
AWARDS
2021

**CUSTOMER
VULNERABILITY
AWARD**

WINNER

Home & Well -
SSEN Distribution
and partners



Our commitment to vulnerable customers was recognised at the 2021 Utility Week Awards. Our pan-utility project, Home and Well, won the Customer Vulnerability award, with the panel noting "The winner showed amazing determination to tackle vulnerability through collaboration – including involvement from the health sector which is an "untapped" area of potential."

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