

Electricity  
Distribution

# Annual Vulnerability Report

2024/25

nationalgrid





# 1. Welcome

I have been in my role as Director of Customer Excellence at National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) for nearly a year now. It's incredibly rewarding and enjoyable to work with such passionate and driven colleagues as we embed the customer transformation strategy and programme.

Over the last year, I have had the opportunity to speak to over 400 senior leaders at our biannual leadership conference, sit down with key stakeholders at Ofgem, spend time in the field understanding the day-to-day operations and meet with other Distribution Network Operators to share best practice and leverage expertise.

Most importantly, I have built a brand new customer excellence function with over 300 customer-driven colleagues who ensure we are bringing the voice of our customers into every decision we make.

Undoubtedly, 2024/25 has been an exceptional year. We have implemented innovative new technology in our Contact Centres, supported around 2.6 million Priority Services Register (PSR) customers and battled the worst storm our network has ever faced. The unrelenting commitment of NGED colleagues, from field teams working to get the lights back on in extreme conditions, to those supporting customers on the phones is hugely admirable.

In this Annual Vulnerability Report (AVR) you will learn how we have built on the great work delivered in 2023. We have reached more customers than ever before through the PSR - 76% of the eligible customers in our region are on the register now - meaning we can provide quality, tailored support should they be affected by a power cut.

You'll also read about our expanded fuel poverty programme, which, through trusted partnerships, supported more than 21,000 customers in fuel poverty to save a staggering £22 million - helping those most in need with debt, benefit applications and energy efficiency advice, for example.

The established partners we work with have expanded and evolved too. They have leveraged their expertise, knowledge and proven community networks to provide Low Carbon Transition support - helping customers with smart meters, time of use tariffs and grants for technology such as solar panels and heat pumps.

There's more to do though, we know some customers are still choosing between heating their homes and eating - and that's not good enough. We will continue to support as many customers as we can, not only during power cuts, but also through tough times as the cost-of-living crisis continues to impact our communities.

We will also continue to undertake research, collaborate with experts and grow our partnerships so customers in vulnerable circumstances don't get left behind as we transition to net zero. Our mission to ensure a clean, fair and affordable energy future for our customers remains at the heart of everything we do.

## **Emma Pamplin**

Director of Customer Excellence  
National Grid Electricity Distribution





# 2. Who we are and what we do

We are the nation’s largest Distribution Network Operator (DNO) by geography, powering homes and businesses across England and Wales.

With 220,000km of electricity network spanning the East and West Midlands, South West, and South Wales, we connect over 20 million people to the power they need via eight million meters.



Our network serves

**20 million**

customers via eight million meters



There are

**2.6 million**

customers on our Priority Services Register (PSR)



We cover a

**55,000km<sup>2</sup>**

service area and employ over **7,000** colleagues

## Our main responsibilities to our customers



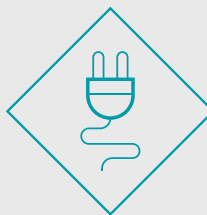
**Keep the power flowing**  
by operating and protecting our assets



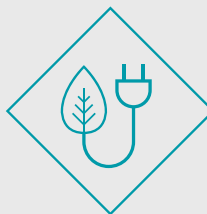
**Maintain equipment**  
to ensure our network remains reliable



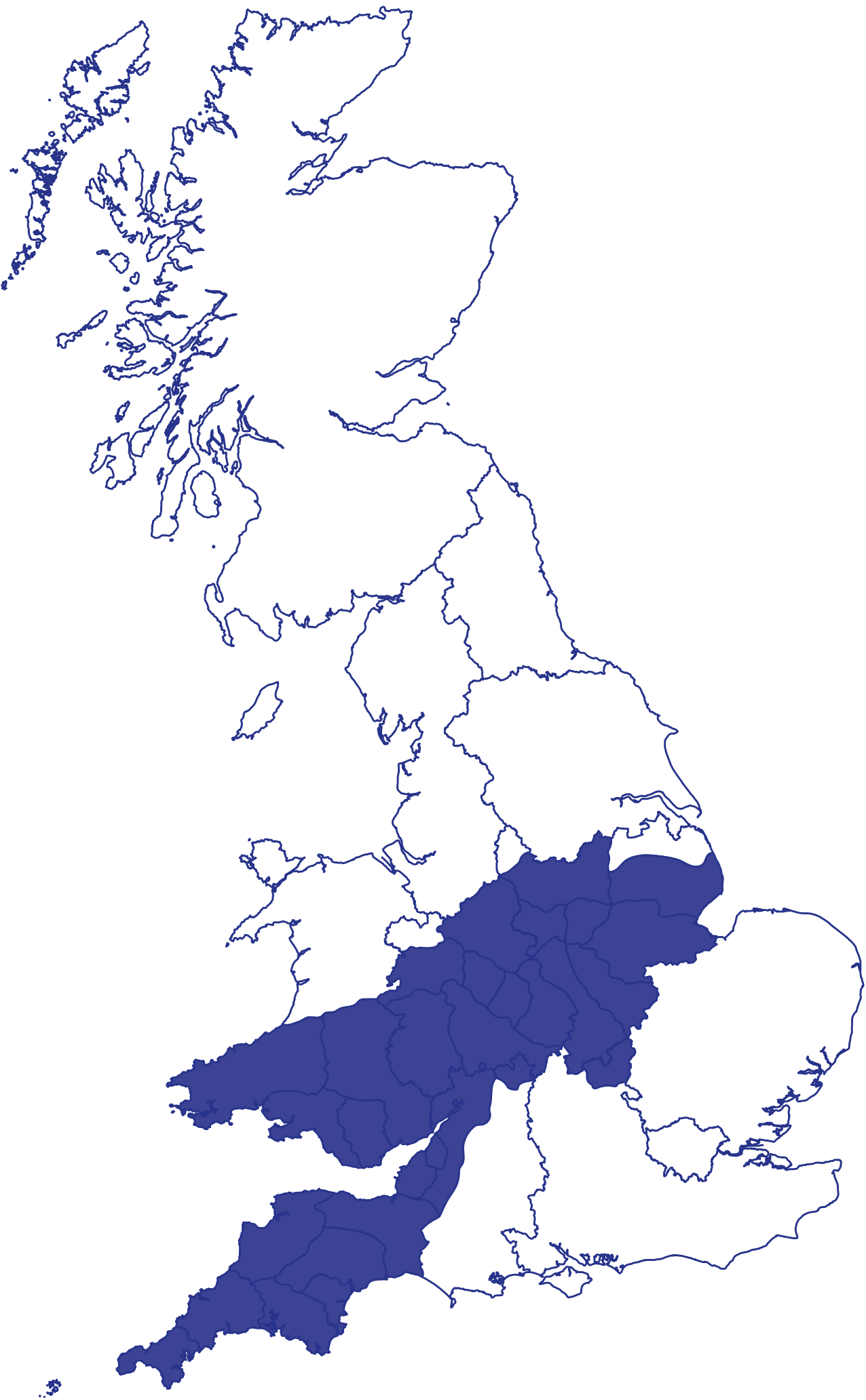
**Fix the network**  
if equipment becomes faulty or damaged



**Connect customers**  
by using existing capacity, upgrading or building new networks



**Operate a smart system**  
by managing two-way power flows and flexibility services



# 3. The Annual Vulnerability Report

In April 2023 our regulator, Ofgem, introduced the Consumer Vulnerability Incentive to ensure Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) deliver key vulnerability priorities to:


- **Protect those whose wellbeing is most at risk during a loss of supply.**
- **Help those in, or at risk of, fuel poverty.**
- **Support customers at risk of being left behind by the energy system transition to net zero.**

In accordance with the incentive, this Annual Vulnerability Report will provide stakeholders with an overview of the support services NGED has delivered for customers in vulnerable situations during the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

This report covers our four licences:

- **East Midlands**
- **West Midlands**
- **South West**
- **South Wales**

## 2024/25 at a glance





### Customer excellence directorate leads the way

Significant investment in our Contact Centre has delivered innovative digital pathways for customers and increased headcount to ensure they always get the best service possible.

76% of those eligible are now registered on our Priority Services Register allowing us to support them during power cuts (up from 67% last year).

**See page 23.**







### Core fuel poverty support hits record savings

Our established Fuel Poverty Services supported 21,372 customers to save £22.1m in the last 12 months.

New, expanded partnership model provides an extra level of support from specialist organisations.

**See page 26.**






### Core Low Carbon Transition Support sees healthy growth

Facilitating ongoing peer-to-peer engagement and best practice sharing has enabled partners to unlock valuable Low Carbon Transition (LCT) Services.

LCT Services supported 4,911 customers to save £4.8m in the last 12 months.

**See page 31.**






### Customers impacted by the worst storm we have ever faced

Over 5,800 customers joined the PSR online over three days when Storm Darragh first hit our region with 96 mph winds.

In total, 4,000 customers called our Contact Centre, averaging one call every five seconds. We also made 880,785 proactive calls over 12 days to our most vulnerable customers.

**See page 39.**





# 4. Our Customer Vulnerability Strategy

Our established Customer Vulnerability Strategy plays a key role in ensuring customers in vulnerable situations have access to reliable and affordable energy. Financial hardship, digital exclusion, health conditions and physical disabilities are just a few of the challenges customers may face in their bid to access essential energy services. All of these challenges can be exacerbated by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

Our strategy centres on the maintenance and accuracy of our PSR. This free, confidential service provides additional valuable support to over 2.6 million registered customers who could find a power cut difficult.

We have been collaborating with a number of key stakeholders, expanding our partnerships and analysing our end-to-end customer journeys.

This has enabled us to create customer personas which allow us to build greater understanding of our customers' individual needs and tailor our support (**see page 23**), in turn increasing the reach and success of our embedded programmes. We strive to further improve our holistic support and meet the evolving needs of our customers.



**This year, our strategy has been updated to include the expansion of our fuel poverty programme to allow us to link in grassroots organisations and achieve broader, more comprehensive support for customers.**

The strategy continues to align with Ofgem's consumer vulnerability framework and baseline expectations, which operate under four key principles:



**Principle 1:**  
Effectively support consumers in vulnerable situations, particularly those most vulnerable to a loss of supply, through a sophisticated approach to the management, promotion and maintenance of a PSR.



**Principle 2:**  
Maximise opportunities to identify, and deliver support to, consumers in vulnerable situations through smart use of data.



**Principle 3:**  
Understand new forms of vulnerability, in particular by identifying blockers to participating in a smart flexible energy system.



**Principle 4:**  
Embed the approach to protecting the interests of consumers in vulnerable situations throughout a company's operations to maximise the opportunities to deliver support.

A summary of our performance against wider Business Plan Commitments and how these directly support or contribute to these key principles can be found in **Appendix 2**.



# Our Customer Vulnerability Strategy at a glance

Core mission		
Maintain a high quality, accurate Priority Services Register (PSR) with the widest possible reach. Continuously work to identify and increase our understanding of vulnerability and deliver targeted, holistic support to those in fuel poverty. Help customers navigate the transition to a low carbon future.		
Key principles	Delivery approach	
<div></div> <div><b>Increase PSR reach and build powercut resilience</b></div>	<div><b>Deliver an effective PSR service with bespoke, proactive contact during power cuts providing tailored resilience advice, end-to-end help and welfare support. Ensure empathetic and informed interactions with customers in vulnerable situations.</b></div> <div>Enabled by<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continuously improving accuracy of customer records. Contacting PSR customers at least once every two years to validate information and offer advice/support.</li><li>Strategically expanding our referral partner network, targeting and increasing reach of underrepresented groups and locations.</li><li>Providing PSR promotion and advice across multiple channels, allowing customers to choose preferred methods of contact.</li><li>Driving towards a single PSR sign-up for customers through industry collaboration and data sharing.</li><li>Providing regular expert-led training, enabling colleagues to increase understanding of vulnerabilities and deliver tailored support.</li></ul></div>	<div><b>Delivery model centred around partnerships and collaboration</b></div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Work with external experts and trusted partners to leverage knowledge and expertise.</li><li>Foster strong industry relationships to ensure shared best practice and maximum reach and efficiency.</li><li>Data-led approach driving analysis to grow the PSR and inform the development and delivery of services with key partners to maximise benefits for customers.</li><li><b>New this year:</b> Introduction of smaller, grassroots organisations and charities to extend reach, access points and support for customers who need it most.</li></ul></div>
<div></div> <div><b>Tackle fuel poverty and cold homes</b></div>	<div><b>Deliver a holistic range of support for each customer via single, end-to-end touchpoints, using innovative methods to deliver new and improved services.</b></div> <div>Enabled by<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Established, enduring partnerships with trusted providers and continuing to identify innovative support tailored to customer needs.</li><li>Undertaking regular horizon scans to increase our understanding of the support sector landscape and root causes of fuel poverty.</li><li>Surveys, engagement and robust delivery reporting from partners to drive improvement with qualitative insights and quantitative data.</li><li>Using our comprehensive data mapping and expert research to target and support communities with the highest rates of fuel poverty.</li></ul></div>	
<div></div> <div><b>Ensure a fair energy transition for all</b></div>	<div><b>Deliver support so customers can benefit from the energy transition, building services capable of evolving and expanding to meet future needs.</b></div> <div>Enabled by<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Using bespoke research, data and practical trials to understand the capabilities needed to participate in a smart energy system, and the barriers that exist.</li><li>Leveraging expertise from our established fuel poverty model to upskill and expand partner ability to provide LCT Services – ensuring multiple interventions via single touchpoints.</li><li>Delivering innovative pilots to trial new support services for customers and identify effective approaches, tailored to their individual circumstances.</li></ul></div>	



# 5. Striving for improvement through external engagement

We regularly refresh our understanding of vulnerability through collaboration and engagement with expert stakeholders such as our Customer Panel members, trusted delivery partners and industry colleagues.

This regular, robust engagement ensures the evolving priorities of our key stakeholders inform our Customer Vulnerability Strategy and improve the outcomes we deliver for customers in vulnerable situations:



## Customer Panel

An enduring group of 24 expert members representing all customer and stakeholder segments has been in place for 15 years.

The Panel, attended by a member of the executive team, meets three times annually and provides essential customer insights, drives new initiatives and strategically steers us on key business issues.

Regular, topic-specific surgeries allow experts to challenge our business leads, examine proposals in more granular detail and add real value to NGED business decisions.



## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25

- Following Panel feedback, NGED published a new leaflet offering power cut advice for customers who own low carbon technologies.
- Reviewed and endorsed a proposal to include meaningful digital communication with customers in our target to carry out 60% of PSR record updates by telephone.
- Shaped our winter communication campaign ensuring valuable impact and a significant improvement on reach year-on-year (**see page 37**).



Our established Customer Panel at an in-person meeting in 2024.





### Social Obligations events

This year, we expanded the scope of our social obligations events to focus separately on fuel poverty and the low carbon transition – recognising the unique challenges and opportunities in each area. Combined insights from these events allow us to understand emerging barriers facing customers and organisations, and leverage our established fuel poverty programmes to ensure no-one is left behind in the smart energy transition.

We welcomed 151 attendees across two key events: our hybrid **‘Smart Energy Advice Forum’** in October 2024 and the remote fuel poverty workshop **‘Supporting our customers this winter and beyond’** in November 2024.

Delegates representing a range of stakeholder groups, including our partners, charities, community energy groups and utilities participated in roundtable discussions and voting after viewing presentations and case studies from delivery partners.

It was evident from both events that funding security is vital to support these services and that without consistent, long-term financial support, progress towards achieving energy transition goals could be hindered.



### Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25

- Expanded fuel poverty model connecting established partners to grassroots organisations, providing support tailored to key groups nationally to increase reach, access points and support for customers (**see page 28**).
- Partner best practice event held as a direct result of stakeholder feedback and partner desire to learn from those achieving results through delivering low carbon measures.
- Network of referral partners further increased to support sign up of hard-to-reach customers (**see page 18**).



### Partner Best Practice and Collaboration workshop

The annual event in February 2025 allowed us to share collective insights on both service delivery and improving customer satisfaction.

Following encouragement from partners at our Social Obligations events, this subsequent workshop allowed partners to share successful approaches to improve the reach and impact of services delivered.

The online workshop included short presentations and partner showcases, followed by facilitated group discussions in virtual breakout rooms where high-level feedback was recorded.

The 29 attendees were made up of NGED’s core fuel poverty and LCT partners and a number of charities who run bespoke outreach and fuel poverty support, including projects for customers with mental health issues or new-born babies.



### Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25

- Follow-up bilateral meetings between partners to exchange in-depth detail on how they help customers access grant funding for LCT measures such as heat pumps.
- Training provided for partners looking to improve their teams’ skillsets and knowledge on smart technologies.
- Increased value delivered year-on-year through LCT Services (**see page 31**).

Electricity  
Distribution





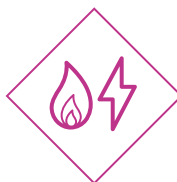
# 6. Consumer Vulnerability Incentive Metrics

## – our performance so far

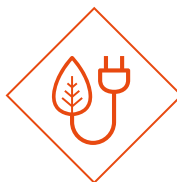
The Consumer Vulnerability Incentive (CVI), introduced by Ofgem in 2023, assesses our performance in five key areas:



**Priority Services Register reach**



**The social value of Fuel Poverty Services delivered**



**The social value of Low Carbon Transition Services delivered**



**Customer satisfaction with Fuel Poverty Services delivered**



**Customer satisfaction with Low Carbon Transition Services delivered**

The performance of all DNOs against these metrics will be assessed at the end of years 2024/25 and 2027/28 of our current price control period, RIIO-ED2. As part of the incentive, Ofgem also introduced a minimum requirements assessment which uses an independent assessor to provide Ofgem and wider stakeholders with assurance that our performance scores are comparable and reliable.

Our performance against the CVI targets is set out in Table 1 on page 11, and was assessed by the industry-appointed assessor in May 2025 (see **Appendix 1**).

### Priority Services Register reach

**Priority Services Register reach** means the total number of households registered on our PSR out of the total number of households in our area that are eligible to be registered.

Eligibility for the PSR is based on common, national datasets including data from the Office for National Statistics and Census data and is calculated for all DNOs by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) using the PSR household standard methodology agreed and set for the CVI.

We will continue to expand awareness of the PSR through active promotion, partnership working with trusted agencies and collaboration with other utilities (**see page 17**).



**Using this common methodology, across all four licence areas we have 76% of the eligible households registered on our PSR.**





### Fuel Poverty Services

**The social value of Fuel Poverty Services** is the total ‘Net Present Value’ (NPV) our programmes have achieved by alleviating the impacts of fuel poverty for customers.

The social value of fuel poverty is measured using a standard Social Value Framework which utilises a commonly followed ‘rulebook’ to ensure each licensee calculates value in a comparable and consistent way. It requires the input of the number of customers we have supported with Fuel Poverty Services, the benefits they have achieved and the cost of those services (to NGED).



**In total, our extensive fuel poverty programme supported 21,372 customers in 2024/25 (our model delivers additional benefits to those in scope of Ofgem’s incentive - see page 26). Using the agreed Social Value Framework, the Net Present Value of the Fuel Poverty Services delivered to customers this year was £13,572,448.**

All customers who receive these services must be invited to take part in a survey, carried out by an independent survey provider to assess customer satisfaction with the Fuel Poverty Services they have received.



**In 2024/25, our customers reported an overall satisfaction rate of 8.99/10 with the Fuel Poverty Services delivered by our partners.**

### Low Carbon Transition Services

**The social value of Low Carbon Transition (LCT) Services** is the total ‘Net Present Value’ (NPV) our programmes have achieved, benefitting customers by enabling participation in a net zero energy system.

The social value of LCT Services is also measured using a standard Social Value Framework which utilises a commonly followed ‘rulebook’ to ensure that each licensee calculates value in a comparable and consistent way. It requires the input of the number of customers we have supported, the benefits they have achieved and the cost of those services (to NGED).

LCT Services are still relatively new, so some benefits take time to be realised; this means in some cases the cost to develop schemes is occasionally greater than the value delivered. We continue to implement innovative new initiatives and support partners to expand support in this area (**see page 31**).



**In total, our Low Carbon Transition Services supported 4,911 customers in 2024/25. Using the agreed Social Value Framework, the Net Present Value of the service delivered to customers this year through LCT support was £1,145,295.**

All customers who receive this service must be invited to take part in a survey, carried out by an independent survey provider to assess customer satisfaction with the fuel poverty services they have received.



**In 2024/25, our customers reported an overall satisfaction rate of 9.14/10 with the Low Carbon Transition Services delivered by our partners.**



Table 1: CVI metrics – ongoing performance

Metric	Year 1*	Year 2	Years 1&2 combined**	Year 2 target	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 5 target
PSR reach								
East Midlands	67.4%	76.4%	76.4%	Combined for all licences  66%				Combined for all licences  75%
West Midlands	66.3%	74.7%	74.7%					
South Wales	70.2%	80.0%	80.0%					
South West	67.1%	74.9%	74.9%					
Social value of Fuel Poverty Services delivered (NPV)								
East Midlands	£4.27m	£3.92m	£8.54m	Total for all licences  £13.95m				Total for all licences  £36.28m
West Midlands	£3.75m	£5.22m	£9.18m					
South Wales	£2.88m	£1.93m	£4.84m					
South West	£2.19m	£2.50m	£4.99m					
Social value of Low Carbon Transition Services delivered (NPV)								
East Midlands	£34.77k	£470.00k	£514.13k	Total for all licences  £578k				Total for all licences  £1.98m
West Midlands	(£19.84k)	£222.33k	£205.21k					
South Wales	(£5.85k)	(£28.70k)	(£34.18k)					
South West	(£4.68k)	£481.66k	£478.29k					

Metric	Year 1*	Year 2	Years 1&2 combined**	Year 2 target	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 5 target
Average Fuel Poverty Customer Satisfaction Survey score								
East Midlands	9.05/10	8.83/10	8.94	9/10				9/10
West Midlands	9.30/10	8.82/10	8.98	9/10				9/10
South Wales	9.05/10	9.13/10	9.08	9/10				9/10
South West	9.13/10	9.19/10	9.16	9/10				9/10
Average LCT Customer Satisfaction Survey score								
East Midlands	9.13/10	8.82/10	8.87	9/10				9/10
West Midlands	8.67/10	9.67/10	9.27	9/10				9/10
South Wales	-	8.95/10	8.95	9/10				9/10
South West	9.25/10	9.12/10	9.13	9/10				9/10



\* Year 1 NPV values have been remodelled in line with the standard industry rulebook and so may differ slightly from data published previously.

\*\* Years 1 & 2 combined NPV values include benefits for customers supported in year 1 which continued in year 2 in line with the common social value framework.

Assurance provided by the independent assessor to confirm NGED has met the criteria for the incentive can be found in **Appendix 1**.



# 7. Regularly Reported Evidence (RRE)



As well as using the RRE in the table prescribed by Ofgem, we also committed in our Customer Vulnerability Strategy to report against our Business Plan wider commitments which can be found in **Appendix 2**.

The table opposite details our performance in relation to the Regularly Reported Evidence (RRE) which all DNOs are required to submit to Ofgem. The table shows our performance for the first two years of RIIO-ED2 and will be updated year-on-year for each of our licence areas.

- In line with Principle 1 of Ofgem’s vulnerability baseline expectations, we have attempted to contact all of our PSR customers once every two years to update their PSR records (see pages 21-22).
- The average Customer Satisfaction Score (CSS) out of 10 for PSR customers who have experienced a power cut is above target.
- The volumes of customers we have supported with both Fuel Poverty Services and LCT services (see pages 26-32) are expected to reach the targets of 113,000 and 8,384 customers respectively before the end of RIIO-ED2.

Table 2: RRE table

RRE	Expectation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Frequency of PSR Customer data cleanse (reported on an annual basis)		Customers attempted to contact to verify their data (% of registered PSR customers registered for 2+ years)				
East Midlands	Target: Attempt to contact all PSR Customers to verify data every two years	100%	100%			
West Midlands		100%	100%			
South Wales		100%	100%			
South West		100%	100%			
CSS score for PSR Customers who have experienced a power cut		Reported on an annual basis				
East Midlands	9/10	9.02/10	9.03/10			
West Midlands	9/10	9.03/10	9.06/10			
South Wales	9/10	9.32/10	9.05/10			
South West	9/10	9.01/10	9.00/10			
The volume of Fuel Poverty Services delivered		Reported on a cumulative basis				
East Midlands	Target: 113,000 fuel poor customers supported by 2028	5,388	11,573			
West Midlands		5,628	11,573			
South Wales		6,562	10,409			
South West		6,127	11,522			
Total		23,705	45,077			
The volume of Low Carbon Transition Services delivered		Reported on a cumulative basis				
East Midlands	Target: 8,384 customers supported by 2028	406	1,445			
West Midlands		1,120	2,416			
South Wales		184	1,478			
South West		389	1,671			
Total		2,099	7,010			



# 8. Using the Social Value Framework

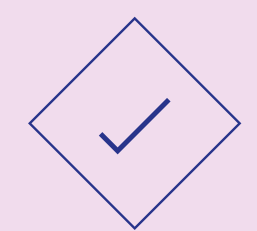
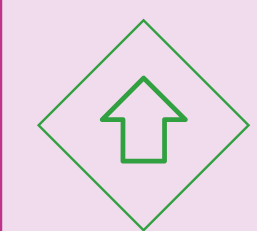
All of our Fuel Poverty and Low Carbon Transition Services are measured using a Social Value Framework, which evaluates the benefits achieved and the cost to achieve them.

Project costs and benefits are considered by our executive team and, in some cases, our expert Customer Panel, allowing us to select and prioritise the support services we wish to commission.

Using this tool provides valuable insights into what is working well, where improvements can be made to generate further value and where services are not delivering the expected value and should be discontinued or adapted.

“We are so grateful for the support provided by NGED allowing us to help the most vulnerable people living in Somerset. Funding has helped those in our communities get specialist in-person advice on their debts, so they can see light at the end of the tunnel and plan for the future with optimism.”

**Vicky Crandon**, Service Manager CASS

Project: Citizens Advice South Somerset (CASS) makes a difference			
<p>Stakeholders at our fuel poverty workshops told us many individuals with mental health conditions face additional barriers to seeking support and are often in lower-paid jobs, or struggle to work.</p> <p>Our continued work with CASS enables those with acute mental health issues to receive specialist support from people they trust. A variety of healthcare agencies including NHS Trusts, inpatient wards, community mental health teams and GPs refer customers for specialist support around mental wellbeing, debt and money issues.</p>	<p>58 customers supported to save £651k</p>	<p>Net Present value (NPV): £505k</p>	<p>Social Value: Positive</p> 
<p><b>Outcome:</b> Using expert, trusted partners encourages clients to disclose their, often difficult, circumstances. This allows the most impactful support to be delivered. Because of the complexity of customers’ needs and specialist support provided, cases often take far longer than our traditional fuel poverty projects and fewer clients are reached.</p> <p>However, the NPV per customers supported is significant. This, combined with the testimonials received from CASS and the customers they support, <b>confirms the project should continue and we should share learnings with wider partners where possible.</b></p>			
Project: Low Carbon Transition Services provided by Affordable Warmth Partners			
<p>Social value modelling demonstrated that providing one-to-one, advice-only support around LCTs can deliver low value in some cases. For many customers in vulnerable situations or fuel poverty, LCT offers are not a priority, and feedback from partners demonstrated that without hand-holding support through to tangible measures and grant funding, customers were less likely to engage or take action on advice provided.</p> <p>This support is often costly, and therefore delivered limited value unless customers could benefit from the installation of home measures such as heat pumps or solar panels.</p>	<p>Total NPV delivered to customers through LCT support in 2023/24: -£28,386</p>	<p>Increased in 2024/25 to: £1,145,295</p>	<p>Social Value: Improved</p> 
<p><b>Outcome:</b> Partner showcases and roundtable discussions at our Smart Energy Advice Forum and partner best practice workshop allowed established fuel poverty partners to leverage their expertise and help others tap in to previously unknown grants and funding. This has unlocked higher value savings for some of the customers they support. <b>Increased average savings are boosted by some higher-value installations, leading to improved social value.</b></p>			



# 9. Delivering our vulnerability strategy commitments

## 9.1 Understanding the vulnerability landscape

It is vital that we understand the complex challenges of customer vulnerability, both to protect those whose wellbeing is at risk during a power cut, and to support those struggling with energy affordability and the transition to net zero.

Regular, in-depth engagement with expert stakeholders and customers enables us to continually review the ways we identify and address vulnerability. Local delivery experts continue to provide valuable insight on key and emerging issues prevalent in our region and the effectiveness of our approach.

This understanding is further enriched by research and data analysis, allowing us to understand evolving needs, proactively identify hard-to-reach customers and establish effective, trusted support services.

### Research informs our understanding



Regular horizon scans, for example those undertaken on our behalf by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, increase our understanding of the support sector and root causes of fuel poverty. Detailed research informs our social obligations programme, helping us identify organisations offering relevant support services in our region, the types of services they offer, prevailing issues affecting customers and any gaps in support.

Additional research, through our membership on the cross-sector Rural England Utility Research Panel, provides opportunities for collaborative studies into the experiences and issues for rural energy and water customers. This year, the ‘Energy and Water use in Today’s Countryside’ research seeks to understand attitudes to energy and water conservation and decarbonisation amongst rural householders in areas with high levels of poverty and energy and water use. The research will gather views of people with particular vulnerabilities in relation to energy and water use, alongside those of key agents involved in providing support, with a report published late 2025.

### Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25



- Increased network of referral partners from 197 to 223 (**see page 18**).
- Targeted communication for new projects or funding.
- Selection of champion spaces for the Warm Welcome partnership in communities where need was greatest (**see page 19**).



## Mapping vulnerability leads to targeted support



Our Social Indicator Mapping allows us to effectively target partnerships and support with maximum impact. This enhanced understanding of vulnerability, through annually refined and expanded datasets, helps us to locate and target outreach schemes to areas with the greatest need.

We share access to the frequently-updated maps on our website to allow Local Authorities and partners to target and reach geographical areas where customers may be struggling to maintain a warm home or could benefit from being registered on the PSR.

Our mapping currently identifies the following key data:

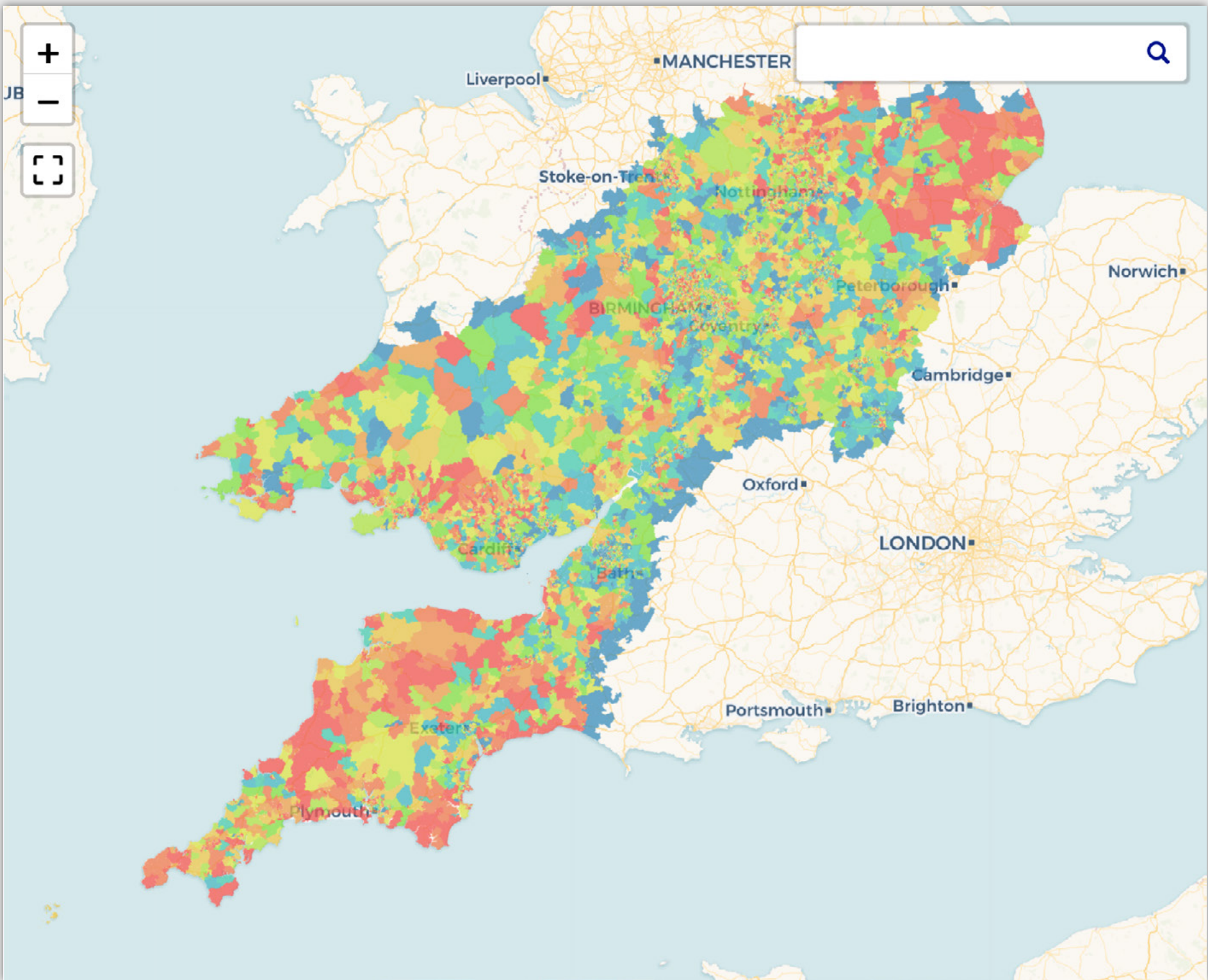
- **PSR:** Total number of customers eligible and gaps in NGED's coverage.
- **Fuel poverty:** Households finding it difficult to heat their homes affordably.
- **Resilience:** Community resilience levels to inform local network investment.
- **Community energy:** Schemes which could protect/involve the interests of the most vulnerable in the smart energy transition.
- **Income factors:** Including information about benefit eligibility and children in low income families.
- **Low Carbon Technology:** Smart technology capabilities.

## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25



- Targeted outreach and support, for example by Kidney Care UK (see page 16).
- Added 'care home beds' as a data set as an additional vulnerability indicator. This included the ability to distinguish between small capacity care homes and very large capacity care homes in our regions and at a local community level.

The map below taken from our Social Indicator Mapping tool provides an overview of the total number of PSR records (households) across our four licensed areas.







# Spotlight on: Kidney Care UK



Kidney Care UK (KCUK) is the UK's leading kidney patient support charity. They offer practical advice, emotional support and financial assistance to thousands of kidney patients and those affected by chronic kidney disease – a common, long term and irreversible condition affecting up to 7.2 million people in the UK.

Our first year partnering with KCUK provided support in regions identified by our social indicator mapping as having the highest level of deprivation and with a high prevalence of chronic kidney disease.

### Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25:

- Active face-to-face promotion of the PSR to the kidney community saw over 2,000 patients reached with PSR advice.
- Joint social and digital communications promoted both Kidney Care UK and the PSR - reaching over 57,000 patients.
- Patients at renal units and kidney clinics were offered energy efficiency advice, support joining the PSR and access to our trusted fuel poverty partners.
- Bespoke, expert training for 33 Contact Centre colleagues improved understanding of how to support kidney patients in a power cut, especially those with kidney failure and on dialysis.
- NGED volunteers visited renal centres and hospital dialysis wards, offering PSR sign up and power cut advice to patients on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease.

“We just wanted to say a massive thank you for your support for the patient event at Northampton. Patients were so grateful to have access to information that would benefit them and it was great to see individuals attending showing real interest in chronic kidney disease and treatments as well as a genuine attentiveness towards the patients. The medical team members were delighted with the way the sessions were supported by the professionals in attendance.

Colleagues who support customers in power cuts attended hospital wards and renal units, sharing valuable power cut advice with patients and KCUK team members, whilst learning about the impact of a loss of power on kidney patients. In addition to helping patients with kidney disease join the PSR, the partnership with NGED allows us to help even more people access our vital support.”

**Liz Robinson, Kidney Care UK**



**2,000** patients reached with PSR advice

Over **57,000** patients reached with joint comms

**Contact Centre Teams**  
trained to support kidney patients

**NGED volunteers**  
attended kidney units





## 9.2 Identifying eligible PSR customers to optimise our reach



**This year, 223 partners helped us to sign up 62,875 hard-to-reach customers to the PSR.**



**PSR reach: 76% of eligible households. Medically dependent customers increased by 19%.**



**249,015 records securely shared with water companies (up 28% on last year).**

### Equipping all NGED colleagues to help reach PSR customers

Over 7,000 colleagues work at NGED and every single one knows a person, or people, who could be eligible for the PSR. Naturally, as they go about their lives, many of them frequently visit clubs or venues in their local communities.

For this reason, we have designated PSR champions at every depot and we are boosting our regular colleague training with new, weekly drop-in sessions for local depot staff. These online sessions, open to all employees, provide best practice sharing and offer information from PSR experts on updated PSR policy and practices - leading to standardised, high-quality services for all PSR customers.

An information stand at our leaders' conference demonstrated senior-level commitment and recently reached 400 senior leaders, providing information and communication material for their teams to use when promoting the PSR in their communities.

Many of the 2.6 million customers on our PSR might struggle during a power cut.

For this reason, we must continue to focus our efforts on ensuring we can reach and register as many eligible customers as possible through a variety of channels including our own colleagues, trusted support partners and collaborative industry relationships.

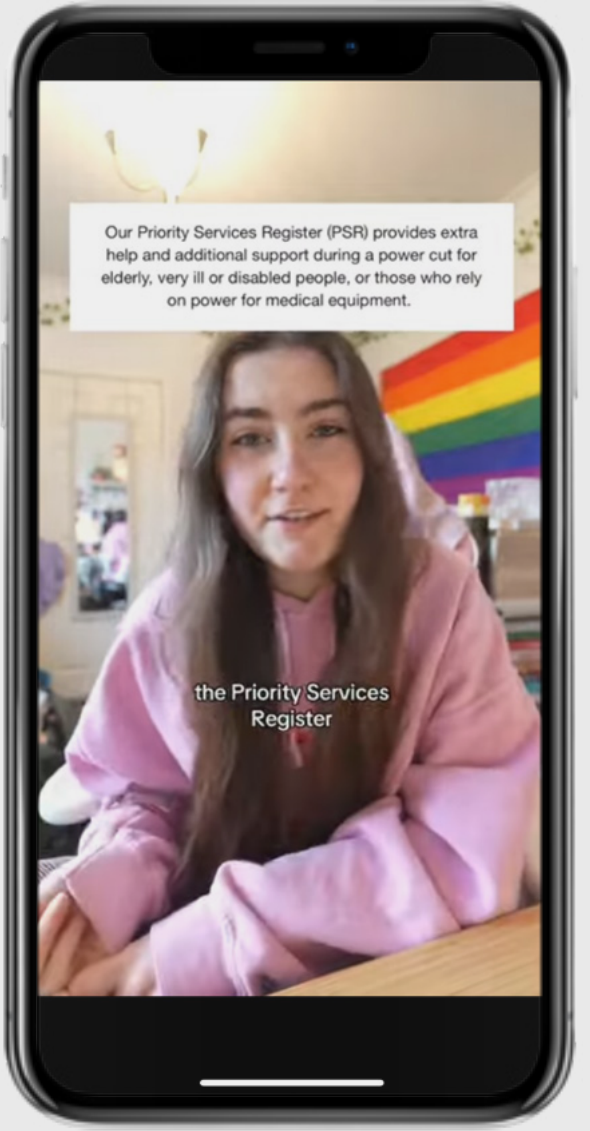
### Tailoring communication campaigns for maximum impact

Stakeholders at our events continue to highlight the importance of regular, informative communication campaigns that evolve with customer needs and preferences. Our last winter preparedness campaign, created in collaboration with our trusted Customer Panel, gained more than 46 million impressions on outdoor promotions and over 135 million digital advertising impressions (**see page 37**).

More recently, partnering with Three Hands Insight, we worked with customers with lived experience of vulnerability to improve key customer touchpoints on the PSR journey. These customers told us our welcome letter (sent to new PSR customers) fell short of their expectations.

They wanted clearer information, with simple language and sections to make the document easier to read. We worked with them on an improved letter, which all new PSR customers now receive and used their valuable feedback to create an 'easy read' version of our power cut advice leaflet.

It is imperative that PSR promotion resonates with customers. It must be clear and simple with a call to action and influence customers to quickly seek key information and join the PSR. We often use QR codes to take readers directly to our PSR web form, or use innovative ways to share PSR and power cut preparedness material. For example, scan the QR code here to watch our influencer video on YouTube which was viewed almost one million times.





Many of the customers who are eligible for the PSR have health concerns and interact with the NHS, so we have continued our long-standing hospital promotion, working in collaboration with water companies to maximise impact with minimal cost.

This year, we went one step further; having received a proposal from the National Pharmacy Association, we ascertained this project could benefit all customers in the UK so brought other DNOs on board and built draft content for review.

The resulting, collaborative projects benefitted all DNO regions to engage both pharmacies and social prescribers and deliver:

- PSR promotion, complete with power cut and energy efficiency advice, in a printed pharmacy guide. More than 250,000 copies were printed and distributed to around 5,000 pharmacies.
- A micro-website for pharmacy patients sharing the same information with 1.5 million readers electronically.
- All-DNO PSR promotion by email to over 100,000 people who signed up to receive information through their pharmacy.
- A poster, promoting the PSR, for NHS link workers and social prescribers across the UK urging them to sign up eligible patients.



Excerpt from power cut and energy efficiency advice published in 'Pharmacy First' guide nationwide.

Our network of more than 220 referral partners, including Local Authorities and health sector organisations is key to maximising efficient and effective outcomes for customers. This year, it's been boosted by our partnership with the Warm Welcome Campaign (**see page 19**).

Partnerships and collaboration maximise customer benefits

This year, our enhanced fuel poverty support model (**see page 28**) has allowed us to link grassroots organisations - which help us to identify and support hard-to-reach customers - with our established fuel poverty partners. This holistic approach ensures we use events, community outreach and relationships with partners to get the very best outcomes for customers, embracing every opportunity to promote the PSR and maximise value from every touchpoint.

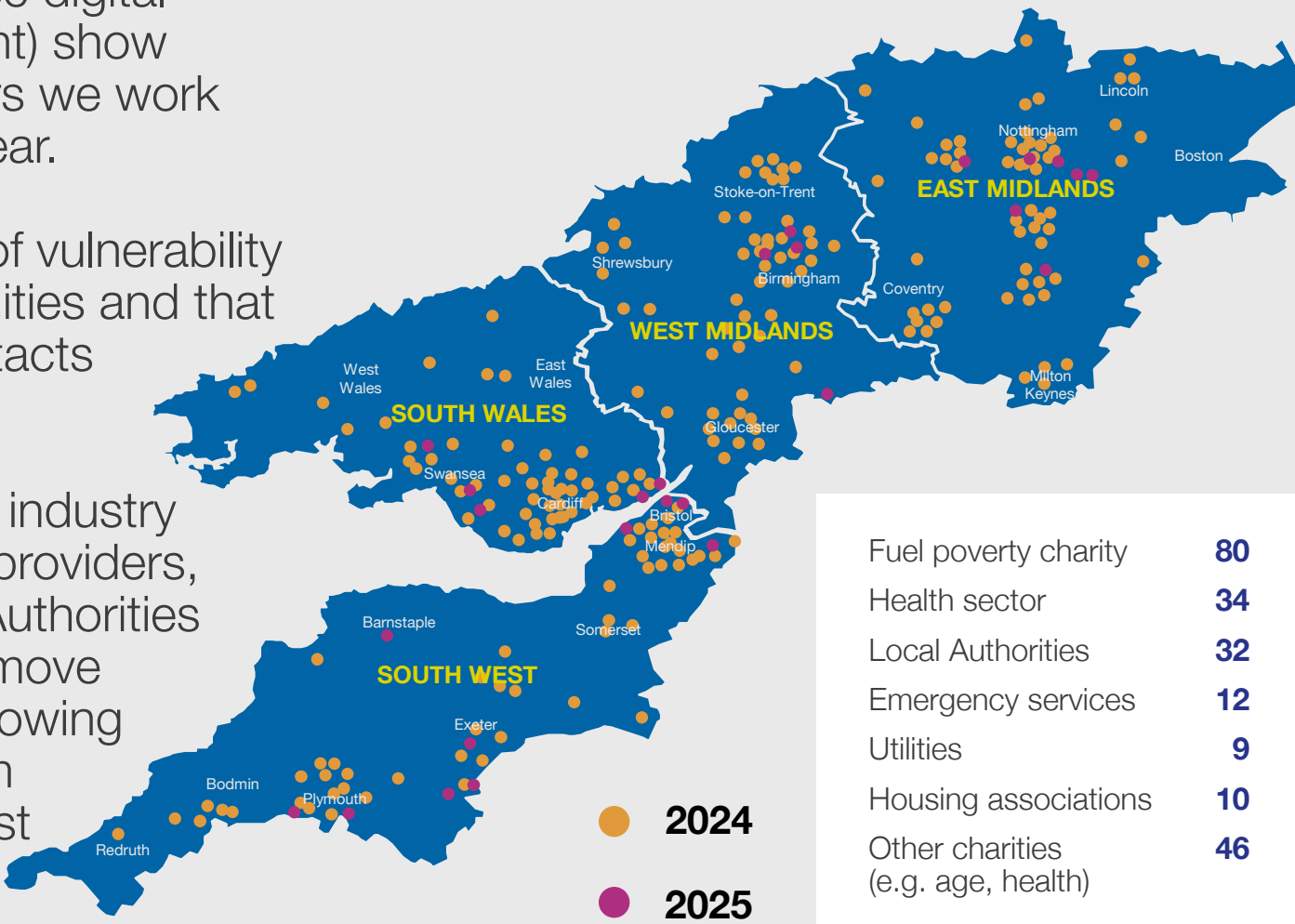
Referral partners interact with customers who are less likely to self-identify as vulnerable; they could live in isolated or rural locations, for example, or face digital exclusion. The table and map (right) show the locations and range of partners we work with and the increase since last year.

Customers with lived experience of vulnerability told us there's a lack of trust in utilities and that dealing with multiple different contacts can be frustrating or stressful.

NGED continues to collaborate at industry level and share data with oxygen providers, Fire and Rescue Services, Local Authorities and, importantly, other utilities to move towards a 'tell us once' service allowing customers to receive support from multiple organisations by telling just one about their needs.

We continue to work with participating water companies in our region on an industry-wide solution. This joined-up approach to PSR data sharing will allow us to move away from multiple data-share agreements and monthly data swaps with water companies towards a simple, standard, automated solution.

This will ensure customers receive emergency assistance alongside support with bills and debt advice from water suppliers as well as from their energy suppliers. It is our ambition to extend this beyond utility companies, and include telecommunication providers.







# Spotlight on: Warm Welcome Campaign



The Warm Welcome Campaign has more than 5,300 Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK, each offering a community space for an average of 80 guests per week to seek warmth, information, companionship and a link with their community.

NGED was the first energy network to partner with the Warm Welcome campaign. The partnership has already provided an incredible opportunity for both organisations to support and champion community spaces across the UK.

## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25:

### PSR and power cut advice

All spaces are equipped to share information about the PSR and what to do in a power cut – whoever their DNO might be.

### 20 Champion Spaces created in NGED's region

Space leads receive bespoke support, equipping them to sign vulnerable guests up to the PSR and promote the PSR in their communities. Working closely with these spaces allows us to identify needs and opportunities for better support, finding what works and rolling this out across our wider network.

### Shared communication and promotion

During Warm Welcome Week, NGED helped the campaign reach 438 million impressions to promote warm spaces, advocate community support and banish loneliness.

### Referral pathways and support for vulnerable individuals

Champion spaces have detailed information about power cut advice and the PSR. Ongoing engagement has helped build relationships between warm spaces and NGED's established, trusted fuel poverty partners, enabling warm handovers for guests who need longer term support.

### Visiting and volunteering in Warm Spaces

It is our ambition to have an NGED colleague visit or volunteer in every space – they are fast becoming keen advocates of the campaign.

In turn, this encourages them to share the map of spaces or direct customers to their nearest space during their day-to-day interactions.

During Warm Welcome week, NGED colleagues volunteered in Port Talbot Library and Barnstaple Library.



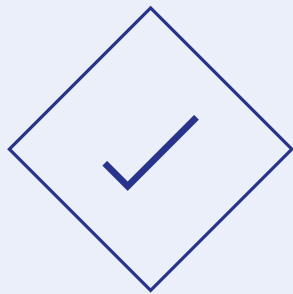
NGED and Warm Welcome visit Hope Hut in Nottingham which operates multiple weekly events including warm spaces, 'running hut' and 'craft hut'.



"The warm space is amazing, It really struck me how vital these initiatives are, not just in providing warmth but in tackling loneliness and hardship. The kindness and generosity on display were genuinely moving, and it's the sort of thing that deserves far more recognition and support."

**Emma Davies**, NGED PSR Team Leader





# Outcomes and Business Plan Commitment updates

The following table summarises our 2024/25 performance against our vulnerability focused Business Plan commitments relating to this section.

Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones	Status update
PSR Reach	Expand the reach of our PSR to at least 75% of total eligible customers and 80% of customers with critical medical dependencies to ensure those in greatest need receive targeted support services. This will include registering 50,000+ additional hard-to-reach customers each year.  (Note: the medical dependency element of this commitment is being reviewed due to external data to measure at household level being currently unavailable. As an interim measure, we are tracking the growth of medically dependent customers on our PSR).	Local, trusted organisations, with a good understanding of the regional issues customers face, support customers effectively and enable us to proactively target our PSR promotion and outreach services.	Increase PSR reach to 75% by 2024/25.	PSR reach for all licence areas combined is 76.1%.
			Interim milestone: increase the number of medically dependent customers year-on-year.	Registered medically dependent customers up by 19% on last year.
			Register at least 50,000 additional hard-to-reach customers each year.	62,875 customers registered direct with NGED in 2024/25.
			Expand our network of referral partners year-on-year.	223 referral partners (up by 13% this year).
'One-stop-shop'	Achieve a 'one stop shop' service so customers only have to join the PSR once to be registered automatically with their energy water, gas and telecommunications suppliers.	Customers can get multi-agency support from utilities by joining the PSR once, allowing greater access to wider support for those who need it most without needing multiple touch points.	Data share agreements and two-way data sharing with all water companies in advance of an automated industry solution.	Agreements and two way sharing in place with all participating water companies, with the ambition to include telecommunications companies in future. 249,015 records sent and 255,503 received this year.

Key Progress is on track Progress is delayed but likely to be achievable before the end of RIIO-ED2 Milestone is at significant risk and likely to be missed



## 9.3 Building resilience to power cuts and how we support PSR customers



**Proactively contacted 4.1 million PSR customers during and after power cuts to their properties.**



**Attempted to contact all PSR customers, over two years, to update their record and offer power cut, fuel poverty and LCT support.**



**1,131 crisis packs handed out to customers who would most benefit ahead of and during power cuts.**

### Identifying eligible PSR customers is just the first step for us.

Maintaining accurate, up-to-date information for customers is vital if we want to provide timely, tailored support during power cuts for the 2.6 million customers on the register. We attempt to contact every customer to discuss their circumstances and contact details at least once every two years.



### Building power cut resilience through accurate data

Regular contact enables us to update customers' individual needs and provide them with valuable advice on how to be prepared in the event of a power cut. Our improved digital communication channels also offer immediate, one-to-one support for customers viewing our PSR web pages, providing the opportunity to update records, answer questions and give advice on the services we can support with, including smart energy referrals.

We continue to deliver regular customer vulnerability training, with key guidance for all staff and specialist information for field and Contact Centre staff who regularly interact with vulnerable customers. In addition, we source external, expert training from partners such as Dementia Friends and Kidney Care UK.

This winter, noting the increased number of customers with mental health needs, we rolled out training from the Samaritans on supporting customers in crisis. We also have an internal process in place to support team members following emotionally challenging conversations, alongside our established mental health first aiders and ongoing support for staff.

Our evolving toolkit means agents who, by the very nature of their conversations, often learn that customers have other worries or challenges, or are simply lonely, are equipped with online support networks, Warm Welcome maps and emergency fuel vouchers, for example.

They can offer immediate (often crisis) support to customers at the time of contact while also making a fuel poverty referral, helping customers access long-term, sustainable support with sometimes life-changing outcomes.



### New to the agent toolkit - example delivery and outputs in 2024/25

- Information about **Warm Welcome Spaces** enables agents to personally direct customers to a warm space near them or share the interactive map so customers can look up a space at a convenient time (**page 19**).
- We partnered with a number of water companies and **National Support Network** on a digital hub allowing customers to easily access expert support when facing life's toughest challenges – including mental health, financial or health challenges. Our hub had over 1,700 hits in the first three months alone.
- Access to the **Fuel Bank Foundation** portal enables our Contact Centre staff to access same-day fuel vouchers for customers in crisis (**see page 28**).





# Spotlight on: Digital PSR services

We have been listening to our customers and tailoring our communication approach to better suit a broader range of touch points.

Some customers told us they prefer to communicate with us digitally and this type of contact has increased month-on-month. Equally, we recognised that although customers could update their details online, there was no immediate human support available in real time.

We realised, after initiating contact with people looking at our online PSR pages using a pop-up chat facility, that many customers prefer to be able to interact with us instantly. Customers told us there are many reasons for this including hearing impairment, being time-poor, not having English as a first language or mental health issues.



**One in three people have serious difficulty using the telephone. This goes up to over one in two for people with mental health problems.\***

We worked with our expert Customer Panel to explore rationale for increasing digital accessibility and consider the process for trialling digital tools, ensuring we could incorporate panel feedback into the planning.

It was agreed, following this feedback, that customers can switch to the telephone at any point during digital interactions. The trial, using agents to provide live online support during daytime hours, allowed us to digitally communicate with 38 customers in just three days, providing power cut advice, checking PSR details and updating records.

Customer feedback was excellent, with every customer engaged rating the chat as 'good'.

Outcomes were presented to the Panel later in October 2024 and, as a result, we now have four permanent digital agents available to support customers with extended service hours, 8am to 7pm weekdays.

The Customer Panel endorsed a change to our business plan commitment so that any PSR updates done in this way count towards our 60% target of meaningful contact.

## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25:



**Over 50,000 customers** supported by the digital team in the first year alone.



**Live Q&A sessions** on our social media platforms (see image right).



**80% update rate** for customers that have no time to update their details on the phone, but opt for email.



\*Utility Week Consumer Vulnerability Conference 2024



Over the past year we have made significant investment in our Contact Centre, now headed by a new Customer Excellence directorate. We have modernised systems and processes, developed innovative digital pathways for customers who prefer alternative contact methods and increased headcount to ensure our customers get the best service possible every day.

New Amazon Connect technology, allowing scalable customer support through multiple channels whilst providing holistic workspace views for agents, provides a seamless experience for customers as well as a business-specific, tailored platform to help agents work more effectively.

The cloud-based technology is a flexible and cost-effective platform, allowing us to scale up or down and easily introduce new features as they become available and, at the same time, provide added reliability and security during high-volume incidents.

The first phase of delivery has already led to positive impacts for our Priority Services Register team.

Enhancements include the ability to hold a customer's place in the queue for a call back instead of waiting on the line and technology that assists agents when dealing with difficult conversations.

In addition, customer journey mapping has enabled us to develop critical customer insight, allowing us to better understand the varied 'personas' of our PSR customers. Personas are a set of fictional representatives that together, depict the diverse needs, attitudes, behaviours and expectations of our customers.

Having this insight about customers on the register ensures we build empathy with them, providing us with a simple, creative tool to help us recognise what customers value and, in turn, design services to meet their needs.

Customers in vulnerable situations often need additional support. Focusing on the **key principles that make up a good customer experience** ensures we provide targeted, meaningful support during both planned and unplanned power cuts:

✓ **communicate well**

✓ **set clear expectations**

✓ **keep our promises**

✓ **treat customers the way they want to be treated**

When a customer calls us on our dedicated telephone number, our system recognises those on the PSR so agents are immediately aware of their needs.

This, alongside bespoke training and a suite of support tools, allows our teams to respond to specific needs and support customers in an appropriate and empathetic way.





The most valuable information we can give customers who are vulnerable in an unplanned power cut is an estimated time of restoration. This, coupled with support during incidents, ensures our customers can be as equipped as possible to cope with any interruption to their supply.

In the event of prolonged incidents, 'crisis packs' can be delivered to customers who may need extra help. These contain useful items including a wind-up torch, flask, hat, socks and gloves. 1,131 crisis packs were handed out this year. In some situations, generators can also be used to support our most vulnerable customers.

In the event of an **unplanned power cut** we contact every PSR customer to provide up-to-date information on the power cut affecting them, report on estimated restoration times and check on their welfare.

In 2024/25, we proactively contacted 4.1 million PSR customers during and after power cuts to their properties.

Our social media teams also post regular, informative updates on power cuts, and respond to enquiries within four minutes, on average (excluding storm periods).

We can call upon the British Red Cross to provide additional welfare support for our customers, and we have an arrangement with the Nationwide Caterers Association to provide hot food to those affected by prolonged incidents. Our Contact Centre teams have the autonomy to help customers with reasonable costs towards taxis, food and hotels should the need arise.

All customers experiencing a **planned power cut** will have received our statutory notice to advise them of the date and time and offer some advice on how to be prepared.

Customers also receive useful text reminders (tailored for those on the PSR) ahead of a planned outage, enhanced to include cancellation notifications, incident web addresses and a consistent tone of voice.

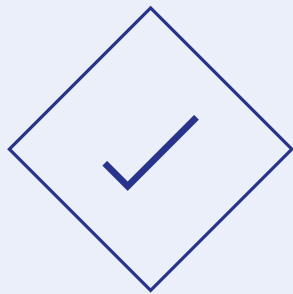
They can also sign up for SMS updates about their own power supply. Insight gathered through our extensive customer journey mapping has led to a number of improvements for customers experiencing planned interruptions.

This year we introduced a planned power cut portal, which allows customers to search for their postcode or incident reference, leading to a 175% increase in page views over the past year.

Incident specific web addresses have also been added to the notification letters that go to customers, ensuring they can reach their specific information quickly and directly.







# Outcomes and Business Plan Commitment updates


The following table summarises our 2024/25 performance against our vulnerability focused Business Plan commitments relating to this section.

Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones	Status update
Proactive contact	Maintain high quality data to allow us to deliver bespoke support to customers in vulnerable situations by proactively contacting over two million PSR customers once every two years to remind them of our services and update their records (with 60% via direct telephone call).	Regular contact ensures the needs of our most vulnerable customers are accurate and up-to-date and we can, in turn, provide efficient support (Note: We now recognise the telephone may not be every customer’s preferred method of contact).	Proactively contact over 50% of registered PSR customers each year to ensure every customer is contacted once every two years.	We have attempted to contact 100% of our PSR customers at least once in every two years to verify their PSR data.
Improved network reliability	Maintain network reliability where on average power cuts are better than one interruption every two years lasting less than 24 minutes whilst utilising vulnerable customer data to prioritise network improvement schemes.	Utilising vulnerable customer data means teams have a clear sight of vulnerability in the area where new schemes are being proposed, ensuring customers in vulnerable situations are not disadvantaged and, where possible, benefit from prioritised network improvement.	Vulnerability data to be mapped against network performance data with mechanisms for cross-comparisons examined.	Vulnerability data is now mapped against network performance data and work is ongoing to ensure this data is used effectively when considering network improvement schemes.


**Key** Progress is on track Progress is delayed but likely to be achievable before the end of RIIO-ED2 Milestone is at significant risk and likely to be missed




## 9.4 Our fuel poverty programme



**21,372 customers benefitted from fuel poverty support.**



**£22.1 million saved by customers (including home measures).**



**Fuel poverty model expanded to achieve maximum benefits and support for those in need.**

The rising cost of energy and the cost-of-living crisis continue to force families into fuel poverty. Stakeholders tell us the best way to make a difference is to partner with trusted organisations who can locate the hard-to-reach and provide vital, effective support.

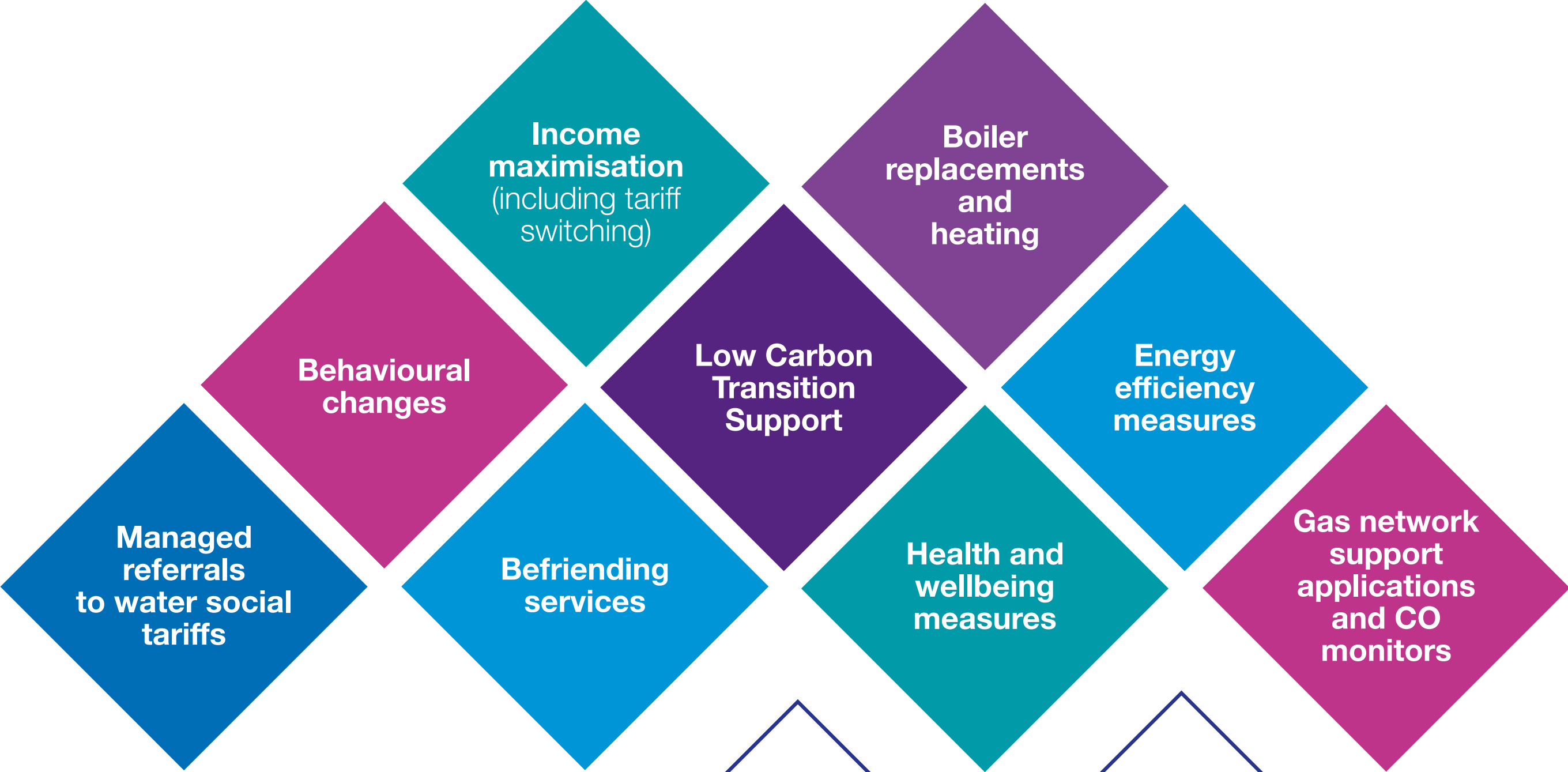
Our fuel poverty programme, which has been established for over a decade has continued to expand and evolve.

Our core projects ‘Power Up!’ and ‘Affordable Warmth’ run using a hub model where one lead partner manages a number of sub-partners. To ensure comprehensive, holistic support each customer has a single point of contact with end-to-end support until their case is closed (**see page 27**).

Over the last two years, we have also upskilled partners to deliver Low Carbon Transition Services.

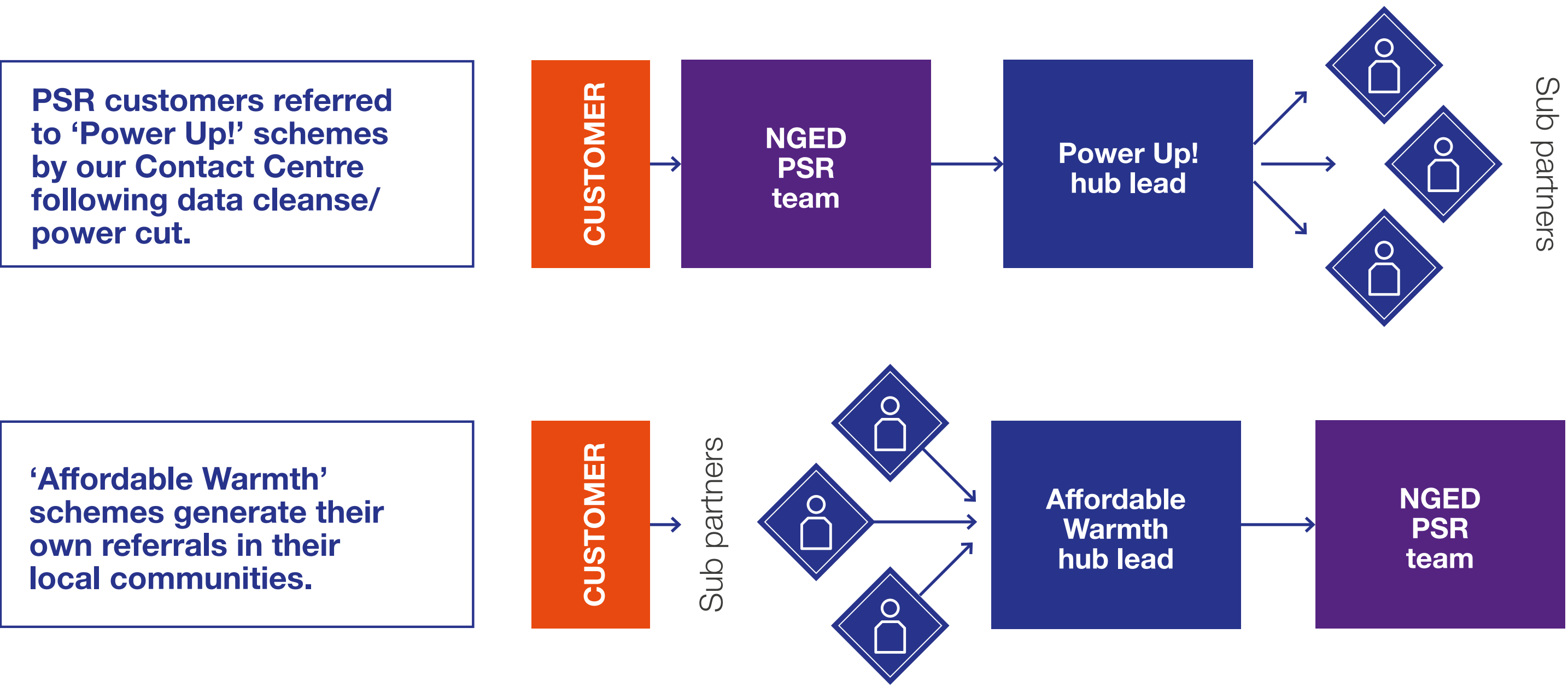
This means, alongside established fuel poverty support, customers can also benefit from advice on maximising smart meters and flexible tariffs, grants for solar panels and heat pumps and guidance on maximising benefits of smart technologies (**see page 31**).

**Every one of our fuel poverty projects must be capable of delivering the following interventions:**





Our Power Up partners in each of our four license areas receive referrals from our PSR team and Affordable Warmth partners identify people in need of support through their own outreach, providing referrals back to NGED's PSR:



Power Up!			
East Midlands	West Midlands	South Wales	South West
Over 9,000 customers supported to save £3.3m			

Affordable Warmth			
East Midlands	West Midlands	South Wales	South West
Over 11,000 customers supported to save £14.7m			

In addition, a number of bespoke, targeted projects allow us to support customers with more specific needs such as expectant mothers, patients using oxygen and those struggling with mental health issues.

All projects are required to provide robust reporting, demonstrating the outcomes and savings we have achieved for every single customer. Reviewing performance at regular contract meetings allows us to remain confident every project is delivering maximum value, whilst providing opportunities for shared best practice and innovative solutions (see page 8).

This year, we proudly promoted our expanded fuel poverty model (see page 28) at the Utility Week Vulnerability Conference – and we have been excited to see other companies follow suit with similar models.

Our expanded programme maximises touch points and benefits for customers, who can access support whether they enter the process through our Contact Centre, an interaction in their community (e.g. through a health or charity organisation) or via our trusted fuel poverty partners. The added benefit being that they can then access support from any/all of the organisations in the model.

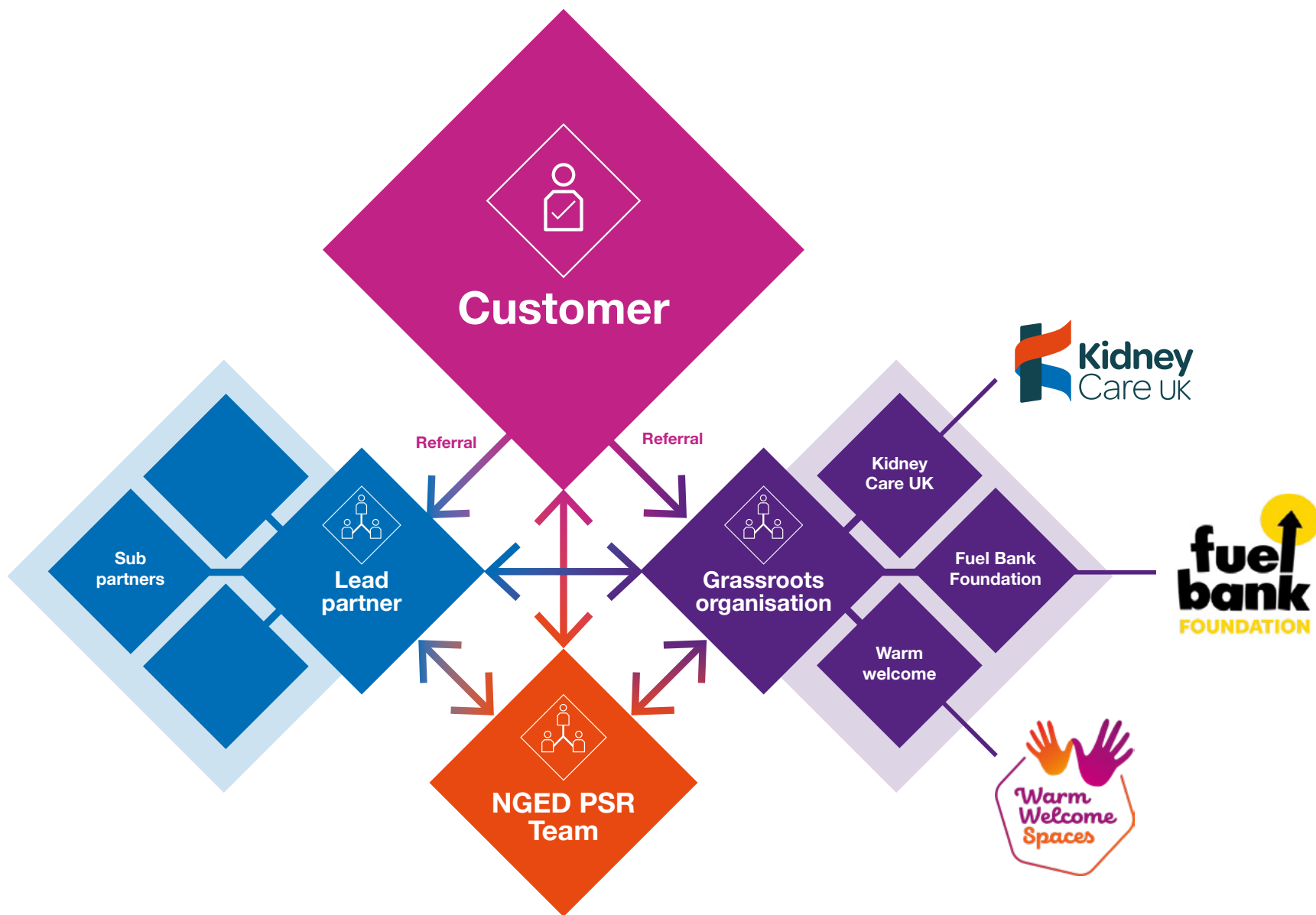
**This year, we are proud to have supported 21,372 customers to save over £22.1m.**

\* The Net Present Value of services delivered to customers (see page 10) was calculated using the Ofgem approved, industry agreed method of calculating fuel poverty savings but our holistic delivery model means that, in addition, our partners have also delivered home measures such as accessibility rails and stair lifts (considered out of scope of the CVI). As a result, the gross financial benefits delivered by our entire programme this year, (including the £18m achieved from Power Up! and Affordable Warmth shown, left) was over £22m. These savings also include benefits achieved by our smaller, bespoke fuel poverty projects; for example we work with Hope4U who support expectant families and Citizens Advice South Somerset who support customers with mental health issues (see page 13).





# Spotlight on: Our enhanced fuel poverty programme



## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25:

Kidney Care UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Over 2,000 kidney patients</b> offered PSR/power cut advice.</li><li>• <b>33 Contact Centre staff trained</b> to support dialysis users.</li><li>• <b>NGED teamed up with water colleagues</b> for hospital visits.</li></ul>
Fuel Bank Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partners and NGED access to <b>Fuel Voucher Portal</b>.</li><li>• <b>Same day fuel vouchers</b> in a crisis.</li><li>• <b>183 customers supported</b> in just eight months.</li></ul>
Warm Welcome Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>20 Champion spaces</b> linking in to trusted partners.</li><li>• Testing upskilling and <b>PSR sign up</b> before scaling up.</li><li>• NGED ambition to <b>visit every warm space</b> in our region.</li></ul>

### Example 1:

Customer visiting a Warm Welcome space is added to the PSR and referred to a trusted fuel poverty partner for detailed, one-to-one fuel poverty (and LCT) support.

### Example 2:

Customer receiving fuel poverty services from a trusted partner mentions they receive kidney dialysis so is referred to Kidney Care UK for specialist health advice.

### Example 3:

Customer in immediate crisis joins the PSR through our Contact Centre and is supported to receive fuel bank vouchers and referred to a trusted partner for wraparound fuel poverty support when they feel ready.

## Case Study

Mrs A has four young children. Her gas meter was at emergency credit and electric meter on its last pound.

At the point of heating or eating, NGED referred Mrs A to Coventry Citizen's Advice Power Up.

The client met the Fuel Bank Foundation criteria so a fuel voucher, providing an average of 10 days worth of energy, was arranged.

CA also requested a food voucher, and explained the Social Supermarket criteria to the client so she could budget better and save money going forward.

A benefits check ensured Mrs A was getting eligible income and she was signposted to the local Council's Household Support Fund to assist with white goods, bedding and furniture.

Mrs A was given energy-efficiency and smart meter advice and signposting to relevant grants to keep her home warm.

citizens advice  
Coventry

### Outcomes for Mrs A:

- ✓ **Fuel and food vouchers**
- ✓ **Income maximisation**
- ✓ **Energy efficiency measures**
- ✓ **Budgeting utilising smart meter functions**
- ✓ **Household Support Fund**



Total annual savings:  
**£2,305**



# Our Community Matters Fund

Our established Community Matters Fund delivers far-reaching support in our communities. The enduring, annual fund is paid for by shareholders and distributes £1m a year to local grassroots organisations.

Since its inception, the fund has awarded £11.3m to more than 1,900 organisations, supporting an estimated 800,000 beneficiaries.

Funding is awarded in phases and administered ensuring a range of societal challenges are addressed. Previous themes have focused on fuel poverty, mental health and social isolation, holiday hunger, green spaces and biodiversity and active communities.

## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25

- £1m awarded across three phases (STEM, future skills and fuel poverty), funding more than 247 groups with an estimated 40,000 beneficiaries.
- Charity Times Award won for our impactful partnership with Local Giving for their support of Roshni Birmingham who support black and marginalised female victims of domestic abuse.

## Case Study

Age UK Lindsey has been delivering services for local people in East Lindsey for almost 35 years, tackling loneliness, isolation and poverty and promoting equity and diversity.

Due to the rural and coastal location they serve, instances of social isolation and loneliness are high.

Funding from NGED allowed AGE UK Lindsey to continue to deliver important services through the winter months, including the distribution of their Winter Warmth packs.

The practical packs help older people who can't heat their homes and contain a fleece blanket, hats, gloves, a flask, draft excluders and food and drink supplies.

**£5,000 from National Grid enabled Age UK Lindsey to support 400 customers.**



## Funding

grassroots charities  
through our **Community  
Matters Fund.**

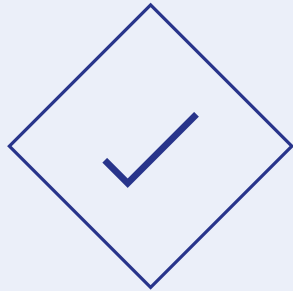


“The Community Matters Fund is vital to us. Without support of this kind we would not be able to support the most vulnerable older people. We know support like ours can reduce stress and protect mental and physical health.

Our team is committed and passionate about improving the lives of vulnerable older people. A big thank you - together we can keep older people safe, warm and well this winter.”

**Andy Storer**, CEO, Age UK Lindsey





# Outcomes and Business Plan Commitment updates

The following table summarises our 2024/25 performance against our vulnerability focused Business Plan commitments relating to this section.

Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones	Status update
Fuel Poverty Support	Support at least 113,000 fuel poor customers to save £60 million on their energy bills over RIIO-ED2.	Customers living in cold homes and/or struggling to afford their energy bills receive tailored support to make long term changes to improve their ability to afford to heat their home.	Support at least 22,600 customers by the end of 2024/25 (cumulative target 45,200 customers supported).  Achieve savings of over £12m for customers by the end of 2024/25 (cumulative target £24m).	21,372 customers supported to save over £22.1m.  We were very close to meeting our in-year milestone and remain confident of meeting our overall RIIO-ED2 targets.
Community Matters fund	Support and add significant value to our local communities via a 'Community Matters' social initiative associated with the smart energy transition, vulnerability, environment and sustainability.	As a socially responsible business we support the needs of the local communities we serve – delivering key corporate social responsibility initiatives to help people in vulnerable situations.	This will include a shareholder-funded annual £1 million community support fund and 1,900 volunteer days per year for NGED staff to support local causes.	£1m awarded across three phases (STEM, future skills and fuel poverty), funding 247 groups with around 40,000 beneficiaries.  1,356 employee volunteering days delivered.

Key Progress is on track Progress is delayed but likely to be achievable before the end of RIIO-ED2 Milestone is at significant risk and likely to be missed



## 9.5 Bringing customers along in the smart transition



**A record 4,911 customers  
benefitted from Low  
Carbon Transition Services**



**£4.8 million savings  
achieved for customers**



**880,246 customers offered  
a Smart Energy Action Plan**

In a time of rapid change for our customers, as the decarbonisation of heat and transport gathers pace, we have a responsibility to remain fair and inclusive, providing additional support to those who need it most.

Through a network of trusted partners we are supporting more and more customers in vulnerable circumstances to participate in, and benefit from, the transition to net zero.

Factors such as digital capability, attitude to innovation and change, energy usage, dwelling type and access to finance have been identified through the Smart & Fair research project (undertaken with Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN) and the Centre for Sustainable Energy) to affect customers' ability to participate in smart energy offers.

The research found that those likely excluded from smart energy offers were also likely to be the group with significantly higher rates of vulnerability, posing the risk that non-participation may exacerbate their situation further and potentially increase financial inequalities.

Learnings from 'Smart and Fair' and our established fuel poverty programme enabled us to continue to evolve our Low Carbon Transition (LCT) Services and the delivery of Smart Energy Action Plans to ensure customers in vulnerable situations are not left behind.

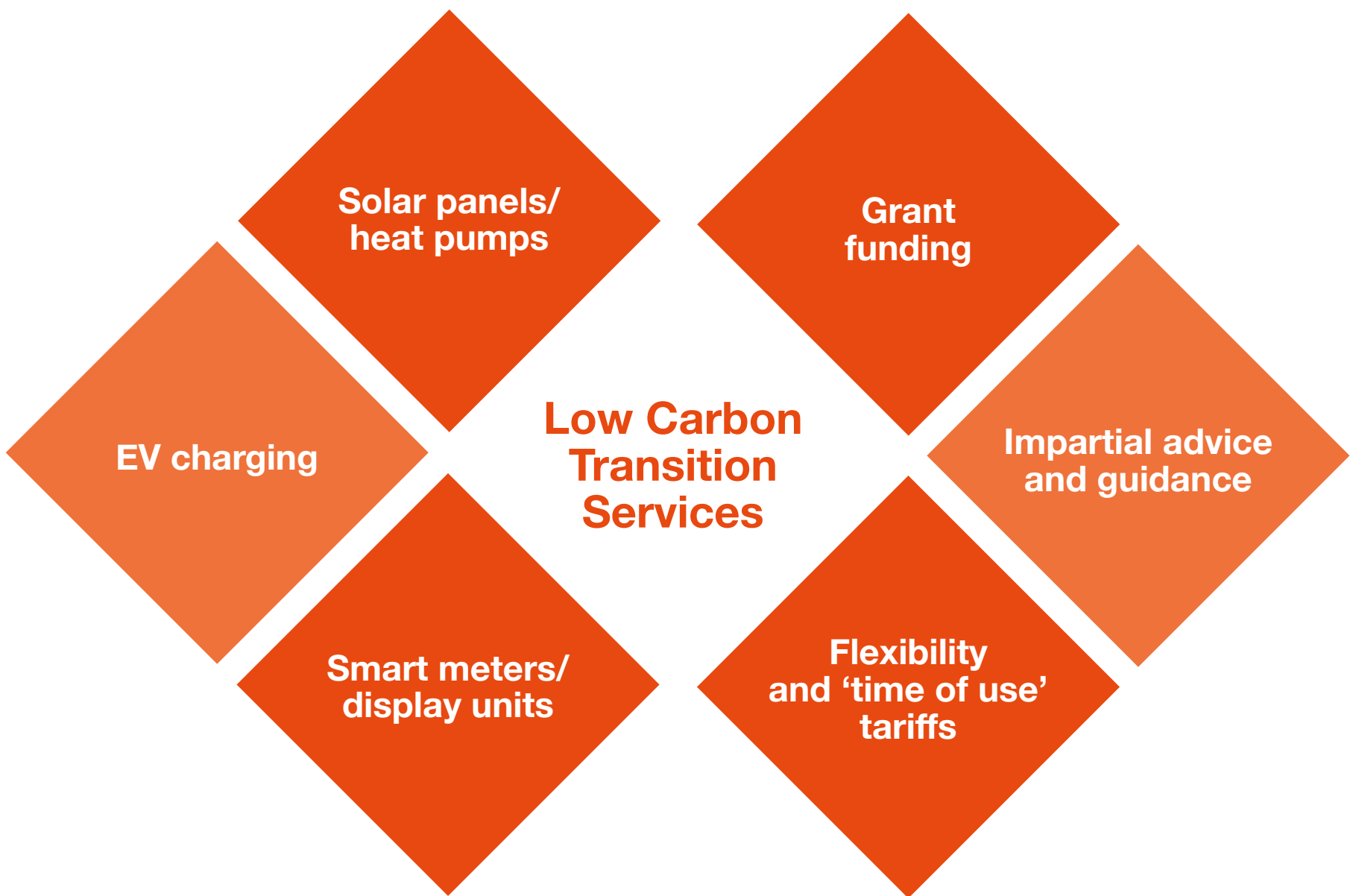
**Phase Three of 'Smart and Fair'**, funded by NGED and SSEN will run over the next two years, with the objective of increasing activity to improve the effectiveness of our LCT Services and deliver insights which will enable the energy transition for all.

### Low Carbon Transition Services

Embedded across our entire vulnerability programme, LCT support, like our established fuel poverty support, is based on providing one-to-one, tailored advice, using a huge range of partner expertise.

Some customers opt for smaller measures such as smart meters and flexibility tariffs, using advice and guidance to make savings and build confidence. Where customers are in a position to benefit from retrofit measures, our partners assist with grant funding for solar panels and heat pumps, for example.

For customers who already have measures installed (e.g. by their housing association), partners unlock greater savings through expert, tailored advice on the technologies. To ensure comprehensive support, partners actively share guidance, information and links to funding opportunities allowing customers to access a range of LCT interventions, including:





Stakeholders at our Smart Energy Advice Forum, the second event in our suite of vulnerability workshops this year (**see page 8**), told us some customers have distrust in the technology and concerns about both upfront and ongoing costs.

In response to partner feedback, we followed the forum this year with a best practice event, allowing partners delivering higher volumes of advice and home measures to share their successes so other partners could learn from this and access additional funding for their clients.

The consequence of the shared best practice, combined with additional training and the enthusiasm from our partners led to a doubled up effort to adopt additional solutions and maximise support for customers.

This resulted in a significant boost to the support and savings unlocked for those customers wishing to access low carbon technologies this year.



Stakeholders at our Smart Energy Advice Forum

### Case Study

Mr M is a 50-year-old homeowner who has lived in his off-gas property for four years. His home was extremely cold, suffering from damp and mould, and he contacted Nottingham Energy Partnership as his energy bills were rising to £250 a month.



NEP supported Mr M's application for the installation of a free air source heat pump, highlighted he was eligible for the Priority Services Register and provided energy saving advice to help combat his cold home.

#### Outcomes for Mr M:

- ✓ **Air Source Heat Pump**
- ✓ **Energy saving tips**
- ✓ **Added to NGED's PSR**
- ✓ **Customer's home is more energy efficient**



Total annual savings:  
**£19,263**





# Smart Energy Action Plans – a Consumer Value Proposition

As part of our Business Plan for RII0-ED2, we developed a Consumer Value Proposition (CVP) to go above and beyond and deliver outstanding service to our customers. Our CVP detailed an innovative support service targeted at customers on our PSR.

Our proposal to offer a Smart Energy Action Plan (SmEAP) to 600,000 customers annually allows customers wishing to receive a plan to access tailored support to meet their needs.

The expert guidance, delivered on our behalf by CSE, helps customers benefit from relevant offers available to them in the immediate term,

as well as providing guidance on the uptake of future LCT Services.

The plan can be introductory or detailed depending on customer need and can be offered by CSE or following a request from either our Contact Centre or established fuel poverty partners.

 **In the second year of the five year price control period we have offered 880,246 plans to customers.**

### Referral pathway

1. Our Contact Centre offers a detailed, bespoke Smart Energy Action Plan

2. CSE self-source customer through outreach

3. Fuel poverty partner refers customer (following initial LCT support)

#### Stage 1: Customer circumstances assessed by CSE

- Smart meters
- Digital skills
- Digital technology
- Energy literacy
- Flexing usage
- Renewables



#### Stage 2: Introductory Smart Energy Action Plan

Tailored advice on improving smart energy capabilities, plus advice on one or two offers (e.g. smart meters, digital display units.)



#### Stage 3: Detailed Smart Energy Action Plan

- Comprehensive preparatory work completed by an expert advisor, e.g. property Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) search and introductory conversation.
- In-depth call with customer, questionnaire to determine priorities (e.g. saving money, comfort, convenience or security). Suggested actions broken down into capability development (e.g. smart heating, time of use tariffs, electric vehicles).
- Customer sent bespoke, detailed, written Plan outlining discussion points and recommendations.

This year, our innovative collaboration with housing associations also shared SmEAPs with social housing tenants who:

- had technology such as solar PV or heat pumps installed but hadn't maximised benefits
- had mobility issues or visual impairments, so could benefit from tools such as timer plugs and smart controls to control their lighting, appliances and heating systems
- were in fuel poverty, but home a lot, with high electricity demand, so could shift usage to benefit from time of use tariffs.

A template introductory plan was built for 56 household 'types', so each could receive a tailored plan based on circumstances and capabilities. Plans covered advice on low-cost/no-cost offers, allowing tenants unlikely to be able to make major changes to their property to benefit from the smart transition.

### Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25

- 543 customers supported with a bespoke Plan and achieved over £53k in benefits in line with the Social Value Framework.
- Three housing associations supported 489 tenants with introductory Plans.

### The Social Value of the CVP

Using the agreed Social Value Framework, our SmEAPs delivered a net value of -£108k in 2024/25. Delivery cost continues to outweigh benefit due to the development stage of projects. We continue to explore activity to increase delivery volumes and efficiency.

"As the UK transitions to a smarter energy system, some tenants are at risk of being left behind, or being negatively impacted. We are exploring how to best support tenants to adapt to, and benefit from, a smarter energy system, by taking up smart energy technologies and offers suited to their needs. SmEAPs are a unique offering, providing impartial support that enables households to improve their understanding of smart energy, take up low carbon offers and technologies, and benefit from the transition. It works for all households, meeting households at their current capabilities and providing advice relevant for their finances and household set up."

### 2 Rivers Housing

### Coming soon



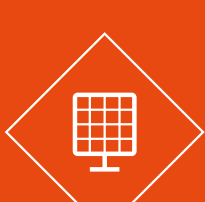
A self-serve tool developed in collaboration with CSE, and jointly funded by Northern Powergrid, allowing upskilled Contact Centre agents to provide Plans helping customers to participate in smart opportunities relating to their own circumstances.



# Our Social Contract in action

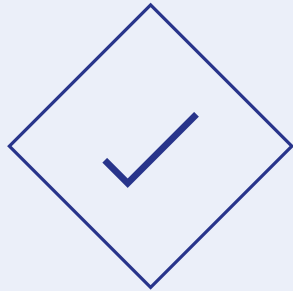
Our Social Contract outlines how we act as a good corporate citizen across everything we do as a company. The Social Contract simultaneously underpins, and builds on, what we set out in our Customer Vulnerability Strategy, by outlining the social purpose that guides our actions, as well as initiatives that go over and above to generate wider social impact.

**In 2024/25 our social contract outputs and delivery included:**

-  **£1m awarded across three phases of our Community Matters Fund (STEM, future skills and fuel poverty), funding 247 groups with an estimated 40,000 beneficiaries (see page 29).**
-  **Decommissioned company technology donated to reduce electronic waste and tackle digital exclusion.**
-  **Delivery of solar installations through our Solar for Schools partnership which aims to invest £2.7m by 2028 in solar panels for schools and community buildings in our region to support communities and customers in their net zero journey.**







# Outcomes and Business Plan Commitment updates

The following table summarises our 2024/25 performance against our vulnerability focused Business Plan commitments relating to this section.

Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Description	Expected outcome/benefit	Key milestones	Status update
Smart Energy Action Plans	Ensure customers are not left behind in the smart energy transition by offering 600,000 PSR customers a bespoke Smart Energy Action Plan each year.	Targeted advice and support for vulnerable customers in relation to low carbon technologies, smart meters and flexible energy services, for example.	Offer 600,000 customers a bespoke Smart Energy Action Plan annually.	880,246 customers offered a bespoke Smart Energy Action Plan this year through our Contact Centre and partners.
Social Contract	Deliver enduring, long-term support to our communities by publishing a Social Contract and performance report annually.	Communities realise social and environmental benefits from a social purpose embedded throughout NGED, with investment in community-led projects and staff volunteering.	Publish an annual update to the Social Contract Strategy.	Our Social Contract can be found online <b>here</b> .
Solar for Schools	Build decarbonised communities and local energy schemes by providing £540,000 shareholder-funded support annually to install solar PV on schools in areas of high economic deprivation.	Environmental benefits through carbon emissions saved, and financial benefits in reduced electricity bills. Reduced consumption through behavioural changes delivers financial and carbon savings. The solar PV starter packs will allow schools to promote STEM learning activities with a practical focus.	Provide £540,000 shareholder funded support per year to install solar PV on schools.	£540,000 shareholder funded support is available annually to install solar PV on schools. In 2024/25, NGED committed £46k to fund three further schools, with seven installed to date.

**Key**  Progress is on track  Progress is delayed but likely to be achievable before the end of RIIO-ED2  Milestone is at significant risk and likely to be missed



# 10. Plans for effectively supporting customers in vulnerable situations during winter

Extreme weather affecting the UK, such as storms and heatwaves, could become more frequent and more intense.

Power cuts in cold and dark winter months can be particularly distressing for customers in vulnerable circumstances so it remains critical for us to consider their wellbeing.

It is our aim, not only to provide tailored assistance during severe weather events, but also to increase customer and community resilience to ensure they are as prepared as possible for inclement weather.

This year, we responded to four exceptional events<sup>1</sup>, including Storm Darragh which was the worst storm ever to impact our network (see table 3, below and **page 39**).

Throughout storm situations we work around the clock to restore power and respond to customer calls. This includes making proactive calls to update customers on their local incidents and handling social media enquiries.

Our customers and stakeholders can **register on our website** for severe weather updates and choose to receive information before, during and after severe weather.

Updates include the latest weather conditions and areas affected, the number of customers without electricity, and the measures we are taking to quickly and safely restore power.

We have also enhanced our storm offering online by enhancing the IT infrastructure and providing a dedicated space for customers to access storm updates and power cut information quickly.

Table 3: 2024/25 storm performance

	S. West & S. Wales <b>Storm Bert</b> 23-29 Nov 2024	All Areas <b>Storm Darragh</b> 6-17 Dec 2024	South Wales <b>Storm Eowyn</b> 24-28 Jan 2025	South West <b>Storm Hermania</b> 26-30 Jan 2025
<b>Customers restored</b>	82,191	749,574	23,091	52,215
<b>Calls taken (all areas)</b>	26,857	238,093	26,626	20,286
<b>Proactive calls (PSR)</b>	91,305	880,785	27,253	60,595
<b>Social media/webchats</b>	1,434	7,454	1,517	1,299

<sup>1</sup>Exceptional events are defined as 'Category one' (all storms apart from Darragh) when we have eight times our average daily HV fault rate within a 24hr window. Or 'Category two' which is more significant, and we have 13 times our average daily HV fault rate within a 24hr window.



Building on the success of the previous year, our winter 2024/25 preparedness campaign ‘Get Switched On’ was crowned Campaign of the Year at the prestigious Energy Awards. It reached a significant number of customers and achieved a 143% increase on PSR sign ups and a 657% increase on website visits.

Comprehensive customer research and engagement with our expert Customer Panel helped us strategically update and build on our approach, choosing the most efficient and impactful media (e.g. digital media, out of home and bus backs has proven more successful than printed media) as well as including new digital methods such as utilising influencers, voxpop content and advertising on TikTok.

**This year’s campaign delivered record reach and impact. We achieved over 200 million impressions across social media, outdoor and radio promotion this year with information designed to:**

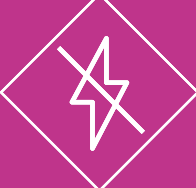



-  Drive awareness around power cut preparedness and the 105 number.
-  Build engagement in our message around being power cut prepared and what to do during a power cut.
-  Encourage traffic to our PSR and ‘Get Switched On’ website pages.
-  Prompt sign up to the PSR and encourage customers to update their details with us.



Table 4: Winter campaign results over two years

	2023/24 campaign	2024/25 campaign
Emails, texts and letters	500,000 emails, 1.3 million text messages and 184,000 letters sent	4.7 million emails, 382,000 text messages and 564,000 letters sent
Digital advertising	58 million impressions and 34,000 clicks	Facebook and X: 71 million impressions and 43 million video views <b>NEW:</b> 53 million TikTok and 11 million YouTube impressions
Outdoor advertising	4 million impressions	46 million impressions
Paid social media	1.25 million impressions	135 million impressions
Radio advertising	1.5 million reach	26 million reach
Bus advertising	2,000 interior ads, 250 rear ads and 150 street liners with an estimated 4 million reach	500 placements across our region with an estimated 32 million reach
Website	46,000 website hits	400,000 website hits





## Ongoing measures to protect customers during winter

Network resilience remains of the highest priority and our annual programme of essential maintenance and vegetation management is underpinned by effective planning to ensure all customers, especially those in vulnerable situations, are prepared and protected in the event of weather disruption.

We have one of the largest vehicle fleets in the country, including specialist vehicles with 4x4 capability, and can mobilise and relocate staff to provide additional resource in any of our four licence areas.

During Storm Darragh, staff from our East and West Midlands depots were able to assist their colleagues in the South West and South Wales.

Our fleet of five helicopters also has a key role in patrolling overhead lines and supporting our vegetation management programme. Other ongoing measures include:

- Bespoke daily weather forecasts and flood alerts through the Environment Agency's targeted service allows us to assess the impact on our network.
- A robust vegetation management programme, including tree cutting and sequential cutting along our 11kV overhead lines.
- Substation and circuit inspections throughout the year, supported by our helicopter fleet.
- Four flood response vehicles with pumping capability.
- Overhead line crews with 4x4 capabilities and additional hired vehicles for transporting essential support staff during winter.

Close working relationships with all Local Resilience Forums in our regions allow us to stay up-to-date with any community issues or customer needs, year-round and when events unfold.

In the event of prolonged outages we can also call upon our contracts with the British Red Cross and Nationwide Caterers Association to provide customers with welfare support and hot food respectively.

Over 236 fully trained and experienced 'ramp-up' staff can quickly be mobilised to support our 126 strong Contact Centre in busy times; and all staff can be effective from home, making 'ramp-up' almost immediate and ensuring the safety of our colleagues when travelling is difficult.







# Spotlight on: Storm Darragh

A record number of customers were impacted by Storm Darragh, the biggest storm ever to hit our network, with 96mph winds recorded in Berry Head, South Devon.

A multi-agency response included emergency services, Local Authorities and the NHS, enabling us to co-ordinate updates on the numbers of customers affected, the support available to them and estimated times of restoration.

We also shared customer data with Local Authorities, allowing them to check if affected customers were recipients of social care and provide additional support. Network operators successfully shared mutual aid including personnel, equipment and vehicles.

Our welfare response included the provision of warm spaces and food vans and was promoted through social channels, while communications teams focused exclusively on storm-related and power cut information.

Messaging informed customers through a series of regular updates, including advice and reassurance, and promoted the PSR. In many cases, customers expressed their gratitude for these additional resources and for the hard work of our teams in restoring power and keeping them informed.



Damage to our network during Storm Darragh.

## Example delivery and outputs in 2024/25:

	<b>880,785 proactive calls</b> were made over 12 days to our customers on the PSR.		Our Contact Centre saw <b>4,000 calls every five seconds</b> .
	<b>Website traffic increased by 600%</b> and <b>5,860 customers joined the PSR</b> online.		We <b>mobilised 1,185 people</b> to respond to power cuts, reconnecting <b>95% of customers</b> within 24 hours.
	<b>201 generators were supplied</b> to support those experiencing prolonged outages.		<b>14 welfare vehicles</b> were deployed to provide hot food, drinks and mobile phone charging.

“Thank you for your hard work. The storm has caused more damage than ever could have been imagined.”

“Well done to all the field staff and the supporting teams co-ordinating repairs and helping with customer contact. Great efforts in an unimaginable amount of storm damage.”

“Fab work all. Thank you is not enough for the hours you have worked in awful conditions.”

## Social media customer comments



## Reviewing the efficacy of our actions

In the last 12 months there were almost 10 million views of our power cut web pages, with 90% of users accessing information on mobile devices. We have already made it easier for customers to navigate our storm pages and online power cut map and continue to take a mobile-first approach to any new web content.

On our website, customers can report a power cut, check for updates about an outage, understand the impact on our network and find helpful information and advice. Our Customer Support App has also been updated and built specifically with PSR customers in mind, now providing users with power cut notifications and information, the ability to track postcodes of friends and family, links to join the register and the option to set an outage alarm.

The significant impact of Storm Darragh demonstrated that while our plans are effective, the increasing risk of significant weather events means we must be prepared for more severe damage.

As a result, we:

- Undertook a full storm review with our Executive Team and major stakeholders.
- Released an incident policy reflecting the 'command' structure to be triggered instantly in a storm.
- Planned a storm exercise to test our processes before Winter 2025/26.
- Established a working group to consider the most effective on-site welfare support (e.g. local/mobile options).
- Evaluated staff welfare processes to ensure those working in difficult situations have robust, adequate support.



## Plans for the coming Winter

Winter 2025/26 planning will see us engage with stakeholders such as other network operators, trusted Customer Panel members and customers with lived experience of vulnerability.

Having robust winter preparedness measures in place to ensure all customers, particularly those in vulnerable situations, are supported during a power cut is an important part of our role. We review these measures annually and our year-round preparations for the winter ahead include:

- Supporting the Met Office 'Get ready for winter' campaign.
- Implementing our maintenance programme and ensuring key circuits are returned to service ahead of winter.
- Monitoring detailed weather forecasts to ensure resources are readied and planned interruptions are rescheduled during severe weather if required.
- Progressing with our established tree trimming/vegetation management programme.
- Enhancing our risk management processes with the introduction of an internal group to regularly examine key risks.
- Reviewing welfare support arrangements so we continue to provide adequate, relevant support in prolonged power cuts.
- Participating in a review of mutual aid arrangements by the Energy Networks Association.
- Continuing our work with Local Resilience Forums to plan for severe weather and other risks – including progressing local multi-agency debrief recommendations from Storm Darragh.
- Reporting to the National Energy System Operator, Ofgem and the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero.



For more information on our winter preparedness or anything else in this report please email **[NGED.socialobligations@nationalgrid.co.uk](mailto:NGED.socialobligations@nationalgrid.co.uk)**.



# Appendix 1:

## Independent assurance

The confirmation below has been issued to us by the industry-appointed assurance assessor who has confirmed we have met the minimum requirements criteria of each metric.

Metric	Minimum reporting category	Minimum reporting category	Has the criteria been met?
PSR Reach minimum requirement	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 Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE).	Yes
	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?	Yes
Value of Fuel Poverty Services delivered minimum requirement	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 Rule Book.	Yes
		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.	Yes
		The values reported are accurate from the calculations in the relevant SROI model.	Yes
Value of Low Carbon Transition Services delivered minimum requirement	Assurance that performance against the targets has been calculated and reported in line with the common methodology.	The £NPV value calculated is in line with the common Social Value Framework Rule Book.	Yes
		The £NPV value calculated is attributed to the value of LCT Services delivered and the scope of the metric set out within Chapter 2 of the RIIO-ED2 Consumer Vulnerability Guidance Document.	Yes
		The values reported are accurate from the calculations in the relevant SROI model.	Yes



# Appendix 2: Summary of performance against wider Customer Vulnerability Strategy commitments

In addition to the nine core commitments in our Business Plan relevant to customer vulnerability detailed in **Section 9** of this report, our **Customer Vulnerability Strategy** also proposed an additional 41 initiatives to drive the highest levels of service and positive outcomes for our customers.

Of these, 24 sought to stretch our performance significantly beyond Ofgem’s baseline expectations and our own high standards of industry-leading performance. These initiatives are summarised in the table below.

Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Delivery in 2024/25	Principle			
		1	2	3	4
1 Publish social indicator mapping online with open-sourced data, inviting ideas to collaboratively develop new services. The data enables us to tailor outreach to gaps on our PSR take up, where the mapping suggests potential areas of vulnerability. <b>Our approach will include more than 60 social indicator datasets.</b>	Social indicator mapping is published and continues to inform partners and projects allowing projects to target areas of greatest need.	◆	◆	◆	
2 Commission an annual horizon scan with the CSE to identify additional datasets to incorporate into data mapping and potential new referral partners.	Interim Horizon Scan research highlighted additional datasets to incorporate into data mapping and potential new referral partners.	◆	◆	◆	
3 Encourage, reveal and promote innovative ways in which other organisations have made use of NGED’s vulnerability data and mapping tools to deliver social benefits.	Best practice shared with partners. Criteria for projects selected for our new Smart Energy Affordability Fund included the innovative use of data.	◆	◆	◆	
4 Develop innovation projects that use data to better understand the causes of vulnerability and identify relevant interventions to support those customers.	Innovation projects benefit vulnerable customers by reducing outage time, helping us locate and restore faults as quickly as possible and improving our ability to identify faults before they occur. In addition, the research project ‘Equinox’, obtains insight on customer attitudes to heat pumps and flexibility.		◆	◆	◆
5 Have a PSR data and information strategy in place and reviewed annually.	Our data and information strategy includes information on the ways we will analyse, use and share PSR data to expand the reach of our PSR and maintain high quality data.	◆	◆	◆	
6 Maintain dedicated PSR data cleanse teams, to attempt to contact all customers registered on the PSR at least once every two years.	Dedicated expert PSR teams attempt to contact 100% of our PSR customers to verify their PSR data every year.	◆	◆	◆	◆
7 Have data share arrangements in place with suppliers, gas distributors and water companies, compliant with GDPR and Ofgem Data Best Practice Guidance. We have an ambition to extend data share arrangements to telecoms companies.	We share data with all participating water companies in our region and are working with the ENA, energy and water on a standardised industry data share solution	◆		◆	

**KEY:** ◆ Commitment supports or directly contributes to Ofgem’s key principles    ◆ Commitment exceeds Ofgem’s vulnerability baseline expectation



Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Delivery in 2024/25	Principle			
		1	2	3	4
8 Maintain a network of referral partner agencies providing coverage across all four licence areas. Use data mapping to identify and target gaps in coverage to proactively reach out to local trusted agencies to expand our coverage (extend to telecoms and expand to 150 partners).	We now have 223 referral partners and use our data mapping and Horizon Scans to target gaps in coverage.	◆	◆	◆	
9 Work with local agencies, including those in the health sector, to broaden awareness and increase understanding of the PSR among customers in vulnerable situations and those who support them. <b>We will provide all partners with training to share best practice, innovative approaches and interventions to support customers in a smart energy future.</b>	We continue to work with local agencies, including those in the health sector, e.g. Kidney Care UK and National Pharmacy Association. <b>We regularly share training material and have best practice events sharing innovative approaches to widen smart energy support.</b>	◆	◆	◆	
10 Achieve external accreditations, ensuring independent experts assess and endorse our processes and continue to provide guidance and advice allowing us to set strategic direction (e.g. BSI inclusivity standard and Customer Service Excellence). <b>We will achieve compliance or compliance plus ratings in all 57 elements of the Customer Service Excellence assessment.</b>	We have held the Customer Service Excellence standard since its inception and will be assessed against the BSI Inclusivity standard in 2025/26. <b>We have achieved ‘compliance’ or ‘compliance plus’ for all elements of the CSE standard.</b>	◆	◆	◆	◆
11 Maintain Accessibility AA standards on our website. <b>Achieve AbilityNet Accreditation for NGED website.</b>	Our new domestic website is focussed around key customer journeys (e.g. PSR, power cuts and connections) ensuring a light-content website delivers information in an easy and accessible format. <b>We will be assessed by AbilityNet towards the end of 2025.</b>	◆			
12 Customers can communicate with us via multiple channels including: X, Facebook, NGED Power Cut Reporter app, text message, website, email, WhatsApp and Webchat.	We continue to offer multiple communication channels and have expanded our service to meet the needs and demands of customers who prefer digital channels.	◆			
13 <b>Translation services available 24/7 by telephone and on our website for over 100 languages including RoboBraille function for customers to quickly and independently convert information or documents on our website into audio books, braille or another format.</b>	<b>We comply with BSI inclusivity standards and continue to deliver translation services 24/7, offering information or documents in any format requested by customers.</b>	◆			
14 <b>SignVideo service, providing customers with the ability to contact NGED via a sign language interpreter free of charge.</b>	<b>We comply with BSI inclusivity standards and continue to offer SignVideo free of charge at any time.</b>	◆			
15 Dedicated online content targeted at customers in vulnerable situations including a dedicated Priority Services Hub, Power Cut Reporter App and social media targeted campaigns.	Dedicated online content targeted at customers in vulnerable situations includes our new pop-up live web support for customers preferring digital engagement.		◆	◆	
16 PSR customers provided with dedicated 24/7 phone number to call in the event of a power cut.	All PSR customers are provided with a dedicated 24/7 phone number to call in the event of a power cut.	◆			

**KEY:** ◆ Commitment supports or directly contributes to Ofgem’s key principles    ◆ Commitment exceeds Ofgem’s vulnerability baseline expectation



Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Delivery in 2024/25	Principle			
		1	2	3	4
17 Our average speed of response for PSR customers will be two seconds.	Following stakeholder feedback we are moving towards a target based on the percentage of calls answered in a specified time. PSR speed of answer will be monitored in future phases of our Contact Centre system development.	◆			
18 PSR customers provided with 24/7 support during power cuts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>information on planned and unplanned outages</li><li>accurate information and bespoke alerts via online map and Power Cut Reporter app</li><li>collaboration with external agencies to provide welfare support</li><li>tailored advice for customers medically dependent on electricity.</li></ul>	PSR customers are provided 24/7 support during power cuts including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>proactive outage information using preferred methods</li><li>welfare support from external agencies</li><li>tailored advice for medically dependent customers including discussions around back up plans.</li></ul>	◆			
19 Work with expert stakeholders to develop resilience planning specifically targeted at premises providing care and support for vulnerable customers, including care homes, refuges and shelters.	Our internal working group focuses on resilience planning specifically targeted at premises providing care and support for vulnerable customers.	◆		◆	
20 Work with expert stakeholders, including our Customer Panel and expert referral partners, to refresh our definitions and understanding of vulnerability each year.	In-depth research and extensive engagement with trusted, expert stakeholders continues to shape our understanding of vulnerability.		◆	◆	
21 Hold annual customer vulnerability workshops to engage expert stakeholders and work with them to develop our understanding of vulnerability, share best practice and understand the priorities which need to be addressed.	Our Smart Energy Advice Forum and a remote Fuel Poverty workshop ‘Supporting our Customers this winter and beyond’ attracted 151 attendees collectively.		◆	◆	◆
22 Work with expert stakeholders to update our Customer Vulnerability Strategy each year and co-create an ambitious annual action plan to develop new, innovative outreach initiatives for the vulnerable and fuel poor.	Our Customer Vulnerability Strategy is updated annually with input from trusted, expert stakeholders.	◆	◆	◆	◆
23 Our work with CSE on ‘Smart and Fair’ will provide research to enable us to expand our definition and understanding of vulnerability, to reflect capabilities to participate in a smart network and considering how this evolves over time. We will collaborate to further develop the Capability Lens and offer profiling tools, enabling us to model and therefore identify the capabilities of vulnerable customers to participate in a smart, low carbon future. These will be used to: calibrate existing schemes; design and implement new interventions to support wider participation in a smart energy market.	This leading source of insights and innovation on delivering an inclusive transition continues to develop a set of concepts and practical tools to support diverse households to access and benefit from the low carbon transition.		◆	◆	◆
24 Work with key stakeholders to understand and serve the needs of disabled EV drivers, ensuring they are provided access to adequate charging infrastructure in a timely manner, delivered as part of local area energy plans.	Our innovative new Smart Energy Action Fund, administered by CSE includes a project tailored around disabled customers and their needs.			◆	

KEY: ◆ Commitment supports or directly contributes to Ofgem’s key principles    ◆ Commitment exceeds Ofgem’s vulnerability baseline expectation



Vulnerability Strategy Commitment	Delivery in 2024/25	Principle			
		1	2	3	4
<b>25 Collaborate with industry partners to create an online platform bringing together tools, advice and support for small and medium businesses to participate in the energy system transition, and provide energy resilience advice in relation to dealing with power cuts.</b>	<b>We continue to work with cross-industry partners (including energy networks, banks and professional bodies) to further develop the UK Business Climate Hub, providing net zero advice for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).</b>		◆	◆	◆
<b>26</b> Continue to maintain partnerships with Local Resilience Forums to assist in the co-ordination of community support during incidents such as flooding.	We continue to be members of 20 LRFs in our area and work closely with them on severe weather and flooding for example.	◆	◆	◆	
<b>27</b> Core fuel poverty schemes delivered by expert lead partners.	Core fuel poverty schemes delivered by expert partners delivered £22m of savings for over 21,000 customers.		◆	◆	
<b>28</b> Power Up Smart, providing core interventions and tailored energy advice targeted at PSR customers with smart meters.	Low Carbon Transition services are now offered by multiple partners as this programme becomes established.		◆	◆	
<b>29</b> Power Up Health, providing core interventions in partnership with local health services and support groups. Customers referred to NGED by oxygen providers.	Power Up Health delivered £336k in savings for 893 customers this year.		◆	◆	
<b>30</b> Annual fuel poverty innovation competition ‘Energy Affordability Fund’ seeking innovative projects to tackle fuel poverty.	Re-modelled as the ‘Smart Energy Affordability’, the fund saw two new phases launched this year.		◆	◆	
<b>31 Develop and implement new interventions for fuel poverty outreach schemes, specifically targeting advice to support customers in the energy transition and participate in the opportunities this provides to help them with their energy costs.</b>	<b>The Smart Energy Affordability Fund targets advice to support customers in the energy transition and participate in opportunities to help them with energy costs.</b>		◆	◆	
<b>32 Every NGED innovation scheme will formally consider the impacts and opportunities for customers in vulnerable situations to enable maximisation of touchpoints, signposting support for customers participating in trials and expanding referral channels.</b>	<b>All NGED innovation schemes consider the impacts and opportunities for customers in vulnerable situations.</b>			◆	◆
<b>33 We will take a leading role in a coordinated approach with a range of industry participants (including funding for collaborations with community energy stakeholders and water companies) to share best practice and co-deliver schemes to ensure vulnerable customers are not left behind by the smart energy transition.</b>	<b>We continue with a coordinated approach with a range of industry participants, e.g. this year we launched a support portal in collaboration with Wessex, Bristol and South West Water.</b>	◆	◆	◆	
<b>34 Enhance our internal App for all field staff, providing access to advice and information on identifying vulnerability, our support and the PSR.</b>	<b>Our internal app for field staff ensures staff can help customers to join the PSR and access fuel poverty support.</b>	◆	◆	◆	◆
<b>35 Deliver customer vulnerability training to all employees on an annual basis, with key training for all staff and specialist training for staff who regularly interact with vulnerable customers (e.g. field staff, Contact Centres).</b>	<b>Tailored training and PSR promotion is ongoing and has included promotion at leadership conferences and weekly drop in sessions for all staff.</b>	◆		◆	◆

**KEY:** ◆ Commitment supports or directly contributes to Ofgem’s key principles    ◆ Commitment exceeds Ofgem’s vulnerability baseline expectation



Vulnerability Strategy Commitment		Delivery in 2024/25	Principle			
			1	2	3	4
36	We will continually review and expand the training provided to staff in line with changing customer needs. <b>We will identify expert external training on individual factors that can give rise to vulnerability including the provision of support to ensure customers are able to participate in smart energy services.</b>	<b>Bespoke training continues to be sourced and provided and this year has included Kidney Care UK, Samaritans training and training on smart energy advice from The Centre of Sustainable Energy.</b>	◆		◆	◆
37	As part of our induction process, all new employees receive training about the PSR and the services we offer customers in vulnerable situations ensuring this focus is embodied by our entire workforce.	All new employees and apprentices receive training about the PSR, including who is eligible, how to join and the benefits of being registered.				◆
38	NGED's Director of External Affairs, as Vulnerability Champion, provides strategic direction and ensures consumer vulnerability is embedded in NGED's company-wide operations and embodied in our culture.	In the new Customer Excellence Function we now have a Head of Vulnerability to champion our support for customers in vulnerable situations.	◆	◆	◆	◆
39	<b>Appoint vulnerability champions at local depots to act as a point of contact for staff and to raise awareness of our customer vulnerability programme.</b>	<b>Each of our 27 depots has a PSR champion to ensure dedicated, specialist support is always on hand.</b>				◆
40	NGED policy ensures all necessary vetting and screening processes are conducted on relevant staff with Disclosure and Barring Service checks for all new employees and those who enter customer premises on a tri-annual cycle.	Disclosure and Barring Service checks are undertaken for all new employees and those who enter customer premises.				◆
41	<b>NGED's Social Contract will drive wider understanding of vulnerability for NGED staff through initiatives building links with the communities they live and work in.</b>	<b>A wider understanding of vulnerability for NGED staff has been driven through Social Contract initiatives, such as colleagues volunteering in their communities.</b>				◆



National Grid Electricity Distribution plc  
Avonbank  
Feeder Road  
Bristol BS2 0TB  
United Kingdom

**[nationalgrid.co.uk](https://nationalgrid.co.uk)**