

Social Obligations Newsletter

July 2019

Western Power Distribution has a wide range of outreach schemes and partnerships to help support customers in vulnerable situations, including power cut vulnerability and fuel poverty. It is vital that we continually take steps to update and enhance WPD's understanding of the nature and distribution of vulnerable households across our area.

Our Headline News....



Social Indicator Mapping Tool →

We have worked with the [Centre for Sustainable Energy](#) to undertake analysis to inform a better understanding of the nature, scale and distribution of different types of household vulnerability. This includes those who may be eligible to be included on the [Priority Service Register](#) (PSR) and those likely to be finding it difficult to afford energy to heat their home.

We have created a new version of the [Social Indicator Mapping Tool](#). This map helps to identify areas with the highest concentrations of vulnerable customers which allows us to target outreach projects in areas of highest vulnerability.

We endeavour to make this a helpful and useful tool for both our partners and customers. Following feedback we have now released a helpful [how-to video](#) which walks you through all the available features within the map.

[Take me to the map](#)

Assist Pathway Mental Health Support →

We have partnered with [South Somerset Citizen Advice Assist Pathway](#) project to support customers with mental ill health. We are providing finance for a debt and money adviser to work on the assist pathways project and provide specialist energy advice to clients. There is also a joint referral pathway in place with [MIND Somerset](#).

The unique aspect of the project is the interaction between the client, the debt and money adviser and the mental health support worker who will work together for the benefit of the client so that every contact counts and limiting the number of times that the client needs to retell their story.

This new and complimentary role does not only focus on income maximisation or debt outcomes for clients as, whilst these obviously provide measurable and sometimes quick fixes for the client, they do not necessarily support or enable clients to take back control of their finances with a view to longer term recovery and independent living.

The face to face support for the clients is spread over approximately four meetings and the adviser and client to work together and progress towards the client's financial recovery including helping to switch, budgeting, credit reference reports and identifying debts as well as help completing benefit forms.

Case Study

Mrs. A is living with her husband in a household that has been under strain for many years. They have two grown up sons in the property but they don't lend support and Mrs. A is under strain with anxiety and confidence problems. Her husband has had to finish work due to a brain tumour.

The client didn't know where to turn for advice and needed help to establish and correct a Universal Credit claim. This is being investigated and has been escalated by the debt advisor. Electric usage is high in the property and the advisor is helping the client to investigate the cause of this and what can be done to reduce this burden.

The funding from WPD into the project is enabling us to visit the client at home to offer above support as she is unable to leave her husband unattended.

In Other News...

Social Obligations Workshop →

On the 10th October 2018, we held a [stakeholder workshop](#) on our social obligations programme.

The purpose was to inform stakeholders about the company's current and future programme, and to get feedback on our activities.

Attendees included local authorities, emergency services and non-profit organisations / charities.

We are holding two more workshops this year to discuss the actions we have fulfilled and further projects going into 2020.

The upcoming dates are:

23rd October 2019 - Bristol

24th October 2019 - Birmingham

[Register your interest](#)

Power Up →

Our [Power Up](#) advice hubs are helping customers to save money and keep warm

As part of our Social Obligations programme, we've developed a number of innovative schemes to tackle fuel poverty. These are the first of their kind for a Distribution Network Operator and are already helping many of our vulnerable customers to save money and keep warm.

Our key fuel poverty scheme is the ['Power Up'](#) initiative.

This has developed from our commitment to contact all of our customers we know to be potentially vulnerable in a power cut, to check and update their details.

Every customer that we contact is given the opportunity to be referred to one of our Power Up projects. We provide direct referrals to an expert partner who then offers a range of income, tariff and energy efficiency support and advice. To make sure that the projects benefit our customers, we monitor all referrals so we know that each one has had an outcome.

We also now have ['Power Up Health'](#) and ['Power Up Smart'](#).

'Power Up Health' is a partnership with Air Liquide oxygen supplier who offer our bespoke fuel poverty and energy support through our Power Up Health Partner Nottingham Energy Partnership.

'Power Up Smart' gives advice and support to customers on how to understand and use their smart meter to better manage their energy and keep warmer for less.

[Learn more](#)

Affordable Warmth Projects →

'[Affordable Warmth](#)' collaborative outreach schemes aim to help customers gain information and support on fuel poverty.

We support existing, trusted outreach services that use their fuel poverty outreach as a way to identify and support hard-to-reach customers not already known to WPD for the Priority Services Register, who are then referred to WPD.

The schemes follow a 'hub model' with one Hub Lead coordinating multiple sub-partners with the diverse expertise required to offer a fully holistic support service. These local agencies are established and embedded in their communities; and we specifically fund new, expanded services.

The support our partners can provide, includes:

- Income Maximisation e.g. debt management
- Energy Tariff e.g. switching
- Energy efficiency measures e.g. home insulation schemes
- Heating solutions e.g. boiler replacement schemes
- Behavioural changes e.g. effectively using your heating system
- Health and wellbeing e.g. mobility aids, fire safety checks, etc.

[Learn more](#)

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Western Power Distribution

We are the electricity distribution network operator for the Midlands, South West and Wales.

We deliver electricity to over 7.9 million customers over a 55,500 square kilometres service area. Our network consists of 220,000 km of overhead lines and underground cables, and 185,000 substations. We employ over 6,500 staff. [Learn more about us](#) →



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