



2019-20 | **Part 3**

Collaborative action on consumer vulnerability

Overview of Evidence

Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Submission



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746,821

households on our PSR –
65.8% of all eligible homes



33,441

direct PSR registrations with
SSEN, up 47.3% on last year



2,323

households helped with fuel
poverty, up 105% on last year



£3.64

average net benefit per £ spent
on eight initiatives measured



£631,447

social value delivered on the
eight initiatives measured



51

partnerships to support customers
in vulnerable situations

3.1 A collaborative approach to consumer vulnerability



As a provider of an essential service, our core purpose is to deliver a safe, reliable and accessible service to the customers and the communities we serve, putting the needs of all consumers at the centre of our activities.

With 3,800 employees working in the heart of communities, we also recognise we have a unique and central role to play **identifying and supporting the most vulnerable in society.**

This starts by first ensuring everyone across our business, from executive level to frontline teams, recognises **what it means to be vulnerable** and, secondly, everyone **understands their responsibility** and duty to play their part in supporting this group.

Our current experience of the Coronavirus pandemic highlights how quickly any one of us can find our personal circumstances changing, meaning we need to rely on others for help and support. It also clearly demonstrates the transient nature of vulnerability and that the service we provide must continually adapt and improve to meet the changing needs of our customers.

Our strategic focus

Our focus over the last year has been on those areas where there are **identified gaps in the services we provide** or areas where we can deliver **more impact and broader value.** They are:

- **Driving forward further developments to the Priority Services Register** – using stakeholder engagement and analysis we have continued to identify gaps in the reach and impact of our PSR, using **smart and innovative methods** to close these gaps, especially for hard to reach customers, such as diverse communities or those recently leaving hospital.
- **Ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible** – we have further developed and expanded training and support mechanisms over the last year to ensure frontline colleagues have **the tools and the confidence to recognise vulnerability** and feel empowered to do the right thing.
- **Expanding on fuel poverty and energy efficiency activities** – we've increased the scale of our initiatives and continue to focus on **innovative and collaborative approaches** to target areas that are hard to reach or have greatest potential to add the most value for customers.
- **Widening partnerships and collaborative activities** – we've built on our existing relationships, delivering **increased value and sharing best practice**, but have also taken a targeted and strategic approach to developing new relationships, especially in the utilities sector.

We have engaged widely to ensure our strategy and activity is appropriately scrutinised, informed and improved. Our strategic approach has been directly informed by **12 targeted stakeholder events** and workshops covering a broad range of topics and attended by a wide range of stakeholder groups. This was supplemented by over **2,600 direct engagements** as well as insight surveys and knowledge sharing from our partnerships, especially important for hard to reach customer groups.

The detail and, more importantly, the impact of our activities is set out further in this section but with a **record number of additional PSR registrations from direct channels, more partnerships than ever before and a doubling of the number of households we are helping with fuel poverty**, we believe this clearly demonstrates the real sense of commitment to addressing consumer vulnerability across SSEN.

Now, more than ever, we have a vital role to play, in ED1 and beyond, to tackle social issues relevant to the most vulnerable in our society. We believe the measures implemented in the last year provide a solid platform for **continual improvement and action on consumer vulnerability**, informed by the needs of our customers, the views of our stakeholders and active collaboration with our partners.

Lisa Doogan

Lisa Doogan,
Head of Customer Service Strategy

Stakeholder-driven core objectives



Drive forward Priority Services Register provision and promotion



Ensure our services are inclusive and accessible now and in the future



Expand on fuel poverty and energy efficiency activities



Widen our partnership network and collaborative activities

Key impacts and outcomes achieved in 2019-20

- ✔ Using data to find geographical and PSR category gaps
- ✔ Engaging with stakeholders to find impactful ways to close PSR gaps and add value
- ✔ **367,408** PSR records cleansed, up **59.7%** on last year
- ✔ Closed PSR registration gap to just **34.2%** of eligible households
- ✔ Comprehensive awareness PSR campaign reaching a hard to engage audience

- ✔ New vulnerability training rolled out to customer and stakeholder facing teams, with learners rating their confidence of helping customers in vulnerable situations as **9.5/10** following sessions
- ✔ New British Sign Language Video Relay Service launched across the top 3 BSL platforms
- ✔ Mental health training and projects rolled out across the business
- ✔ British Standard for Inclusive Service for the 5th consecutive year

- ✔ Innovative Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland fuel poverty programmes help over **500** customers in the first nine months
- ✔ **2,323** households helped with fuel poverty, up **105%** on last year
- ✔ Hard to reach communities supported via energy efficiency projects
- ✔ Improvements to our YES Energy Solutions and Home Energy Scotland referral processes and additional training resulting in a **79%** increase in referrals

- ✔ New partnership portal launched
- ✔ **74%** increase in data sharing referrals this year
- ✔ **All water companies** in both licence areas are now members of our Joint Utilities Working Group
- ✔ Collaborative PSR and energy/water saving initiatives with Thames Water, Wessex Water, Scottish Water, Bournemouth Water, Southern Water, SP Energy Networks and Portsmouth Water

3.2 A strategic and holistic approach

Our consumer vulnerability strategy is well established and built on championing the needs of every customer while providing a safe and reliable supply.

Throughout 2019-20, we have continued to evolve our understanding and definition of vulnerability, enhancing how we believe we can best meet the needs of those who find themselves in a variety of challenging circumstances. Our consumer vulnerability strategy is embedded within our stakeholder engagement strategy, ensuring that the

company can deliver a holistic, mutually reinforcing and coordinated approach to all our stakeholders. **Inclusivity and accessibility of our services, along with mitigating the impact of fuel poverty on our customers, have been key areas of focus in 2019-20.** Our company's approach to consumer vulnerability is underpinned by our mission to make our

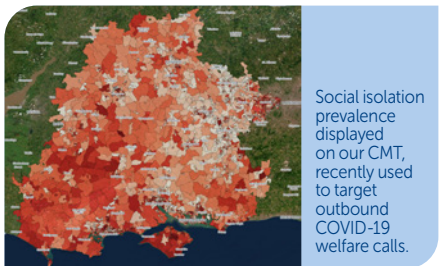
services inclusive and accessible to all customers, supported by four core objectives. Following the publication of Ofgem's draft Consumer Vulnerability Strategy 2025, we tested our core objectives with stakeholders in September 2019 with **82% of stakeholders agreeing they remained fit for purpose.**

Our embedded Customer Mapping Tool, created with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)

HARD TO REACH **ENHANCED**

Our embedded Customer Mapping Tool (CMT), created with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, enables us to identify customers who are likely to find themselves in vulnerable situations. In 2019-20, we worked with CSE to make the following substantial improvements to the CMT:

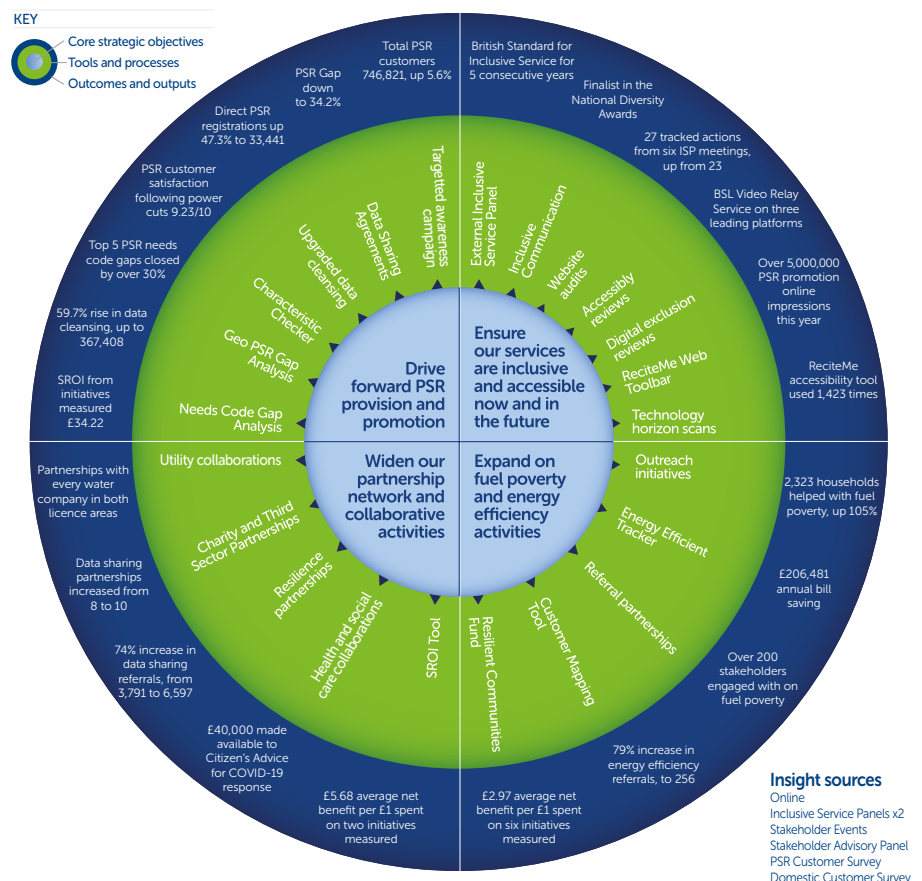
- Inclusion of additional data indicating the jurisdictions of local authorities to enhance engagement with these key stakeholders.
- Enhanced the number of customer vulnerability indicators from **24 to 36**, including access to health services and heating types; these help improve project planning, fuel poverty partnerships and customer support.
- To extend the benefits of our CMT we conducted **38 in-person training and Skype sessions** for frontline teams.
- We've trained **21 new partners** on our CMT this year, giving them access which helps them plan their outreach to support vulnerable consumers.



Other examples of the CMT being used at strategic, organisational and operational levels include:

Strategic: Identifying energy efficiency to avoid network reinforcement **ENHANCED**

In 2019-20, we used the CMT to identify households where energy efficiency projects could reduce the need for costly network reinforcement. In the future, along with the Energy Savings Trust, we aim to add detailed information about the properties in our licence areas to aid us in energy efficiency and network infrastructure projects.



Vulnerability Strategy Wheel **ENHANCED**

Our Vulnerability Strategy Wheel, introduced in 2018-19, visually represents our core objectives, the range of activities to deliver those objectives and the impact and outcomes for the year. Following feedback from our Stakeholder Advisory Panel, Inclusive Service Panels, Stakeholder Workshops in September 2019, AccountAbility AA1000 audit and colleagues, we have improved

our Strategy Wheel to demonstrate the processes and tools we use to deliver outcomes. These improvements enable us to better meet the targets associated with delivering our objectives. Our targets are deliberately challenging and come directly from stakeholder and customer feedback, which allows us to deliver outcomes that are meaningful to them and hold us accountable.

Organisational: Accident prevention **NEW**

In 2019-20, we collaborated with the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), using the CMT to identify the best locations to allocate our energy efficiency advice across Dundee and Aberdeen to families with children under five. This resulted in **600 Home Emergency Kits distributed to households** in the selected areas during 2019-20.

Operational: Informing our emergency response **EMBEDDED**

When power outages occurred as a result of Storm Ciara in February 2020 in the south of England, we used the CMT to strategically position our welfare vans. **Over two days we provided 2,490 hot meals across the region**, targeting our support to areas with the greatest potential impact.

3.3 Embedding data and measurement

Insight and data drives how we react in the present and plan for the future

Strategic planning to support consumers in vulnerable situations requires good data from a broad and inclusive range of stakeholders. Robust data ensures we can target the services we provide to quickly, and efficiently identify and help those most in need. Our data management is informed from a wide variety of stakeholder engagement mechanisms:

- Stakeholder workshops** ENHANCED
 Six of our stakeholder workshops this year featured Consumer Vulnerability as one of three engagement themes. Two workshops were held in Scotland and four in England, all of them helping us focus our resources and efforts in areas our stakeholders value the most.
- Surveys** EMBEDDED
 We surveyed over 2,000 domestic customers face-to-face across all seven of our regions with an additional 600 in-depth telephone surveys with PSR customers. We find talking directly with customers to be invaluable; helping us to continuously improve our services.
- Social data mapping** ENHANCED
 Our CMT is one of the most advanced in the UK and draws from over 40 data sets displaying 36 indicators as well as amalgamating data into five headline algorithms which help us plan our strategies, identify and develop partnerships, prioritise investments and enhance support for customers.
- Data-driven decisions on societal issues** EMBEDDED
 We keep abreast of societal issues which can impact our customers and stakeholders and the service we deliver to them. This proved invaluable by allowing us to react quickly to COVID-19, extending and adapting our services rapidly. More on Part 2, page 1.
- Increased PSR data cleansing** ENHANCED
 PSR data is managed on one secure system, which provides us with a holistic and real-time view to allow prioritisation based on customer need. We've dramatically improved our PSR data cleansing in 2019-20, increasing the cleanse rate by 59.7% this year alone. More on page 4.
- Using data to improve service** ENHANCED
 PSR data is interrogated geographically and a needs code applied to identify gaps, allowing us to drive the right activity in the right area and set key priorities for each region. We also use this data for PSR promotion and targeted response to large outages and planned supply interruptions. More on page 5.

Improving and expanding our partnerships year on year ENHANCED

Meeting the needs of customers in vulnerable situations is complicated and often requires specific expertise we do not have. This is a challenge we overcome through strong partnerships with organisations that are best placed to understand our customers' needs. Our partners help us develop tailored services to different vulnerability groups and deliver these services to our customers effectively. We use data to help identify appropriate

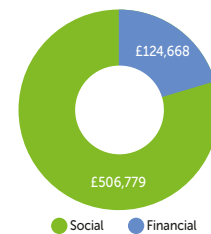
partnerships, for example partners who can assist in the closing of PSR gaps. When there is potential to join forces with other utilities, we reach out to them to collaborate in order to maximise impact and reduce cost. For example, working with CSE in Wiltshire has supported over 600 customers and delivered an SROI of £9.48.

Measuring the value of initiatives ENHANCED

It can be challenging to express the value of services provided to customers in vulnerable situations in monetary terms. This is due to the outcomes delivered being a combination of qualitative and quantitative benefits. In 2019-20, we worked with SIA Partners to introduce a Social Return on Investment (SROI) model, allowing us to measure, in monetary terms, the wider impact of our work.

In 2018-19, we collaborated with five other DNOs to conduct a stated preference survey that reflected the preferences of our customers across our licence areas. In 2019-20, we have again undertaken this exercise with four other DNOs to better understand customer wants and needs described in Part 1, page 7.

Total benefits measured



Stated preference

Category	Attribute tested	WTP (£/HH/Yr)
Customer support	Increase proactive contact with customers during power cuts so that over 60% of all customer contact is through proactive methods, e.g. direct email, text alerts, social media, etc.	£2.04
	Providing more information through face-to-face contact where this is beneficial, e.g. – seminars and surgeries to support community energy schemes. – working with local partners to attend community-based events to raise awareness of issues like power cut resilience.	£0.33

Social Return on Investment (SROI)

Initiative name	Partners	Total Social Benefit	NPV	SROI	Page no.
Young Carers Project	NEA, Wessex Water, Thames Water, Southeast Water	£50,986	£38,498	£3.58	8
Energy Adviser Programme	Citizens Advice Scotland	£115,750	£56,773	£0.58	8
Gap Funding Programme	WarmWorks	£32,194	£22,083	£1.14	8
Hospital Discharge Programme	CSE	£6,775	£4,131	£1.71	8
Energy Advice Referral	Home Energy Scotland and YES Energy Solutions	£17,448	£25,556	£5.29	8
	LSx	£31,781	£28,678	£5.51	8
CSE Wiltshire	Centre for Sustainable Energy	£136,813	£164,916	£9.48	10
COVID-19 Partnerships	CAS and CA Hampshire	£115,032	£72,495	£1.88	10

Total Financial Benefit = all financial benefit before costs are deducted. Total Social Benefit = all social benefits before costs are deducted. Net Present Value (NPV) = the sum of all benefits minus all costs SROI = sum of all benefits in this year divided by the total cost. Where we work with partners appropriate sharing factors have been applied.

3.4 Driving forward PSR provision and promotion

As a provider of an essential service, we have a core responsibility to care for customers who are more vulnerable.

Our Priority Services Register is the fundamental tool we use to do this. It therefore forms the foundation of our vulnerability services. The quality of services delivered for customers in vulnerable situations depends on the accuracy and completeness of the data in our PSR. We are committed to continuously improving the quality

and accuracy of our PSR data and we know that we should never be content with the current quality of the register.

As part of our continual improvement programme, in 2019-20 we conducted a gap analysis to identify likely eligible groups not yet registered. We have also improved the quality of our PSR information using data cleansing techniques.

Alongside these approaches, we've also continued the fundamental task of promoting the message

of PSR to our customers. We've entered into new partnerships with organisations such as Citizens Advice, the Footprint Trust and the Centre for Sustainable Energy to increase awareness of our priority services. During 2019-20 we've also included the promotion of PSR at shopping centres and community groups, through online chat and by phone. These efforts have resulted in 65.8% of PSR eligible households across both our licence areas now being registered.



Stakeholder feedback:

This year our ISPs, alongside other stakeholders, challenged us to improve how we target promotion of our PSR. They wanted us to ensure that we were not just focusing on raising overall PSR registrations, but were specifically targeting segments of unregistered customers that were underrepresented. They also stressed the importance of educating healthcare professionals on the benefits of the PSR for patients.

In order for us to deliver services effectively we must ensure our PSR data is up to date and accurate. Whilst recognising the need

for accuracy, the ISP felt this must be balanced with not contacting vulnerable customers too often. Both Internal and External ISPs felt that vulnerable customers in particular should not be pressured to re-consent too regularly. The panel also sought assurance that in maintaining our PSR we do not remove people until attempts have been made to contact them via letter and phone calls. Most recently, in February 2020, our PSR customers agreed with this policy. 83% of PSR customers surveyed said they believed it was reasonable for SSEN to contact them every two years to ensure their information was accurate.

Winter campaign – focusing on healthcare audience ENHANCED

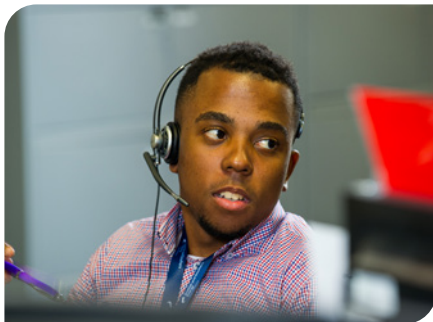
We acted: In line with stakeholder and PSR customer feedback, this year we ran our most successful winter campaign to promote PSR, 105 and the Power Track app. In addition to general promotion to help customers prepare for winter, we enhanced our approach this year, directly targeting healthcare professionals and hard-to-reach individuals, such as patients leaving hospitals.

Impact and outcomes:

- Hyper-precise geo-location PSR campaign delivering mobile advertising to people following visits to hospitals and health centres. This resulted in over 630,000 impressions, 72% of which were to NHS healthcare professionals.
- A dedicated webpage for healthcare professionals attracting 3,700 visits since October.
- Geo-location marketing also promoted the PSR to patients leaving hospitals.
- Digital outdoor advertising strategically located within 300m of hospitals, doctors surgeries health centres and pharmacies.
- Local and regional newspaper advertising with a readership of 834,197 to reach our more elderly customers.
- 15 radio stations also helped to engage an older demographic with a reach of 1,226,000.
- PSR leaflets were delivered directly to 121,277 homes in areas with the largest PSR Gaps; 75% of these households were in our southern licence area.
- These activities have helped to drive a 57% increase of website user visits during 2019-20.
- They have also helped to increase the number of direct PSR registrations by 47.3%, up from 22,699 to 33,441 in one year.

PSR data cleansing ENHANCED

We acted: We improved our processes enabling contact with our PSR customers every second year as a minimum. 2019-20 is the first full year of our new PSR data cleansing process, using a professional fulfilment house, with increased internal activity also driving data cleansing this year.



We use an 'every contact counts' approach when updating customer details.

Impact and outcomes: We have increased our data cleanse rate by 59.7% over the last year, to 367,408; meaning we are now refreshing data, on average, every two years, in line with stakeholder feedback.

PSR Pass NEW

Stakeholder feedback: We received feedback from partners, including Citizens Advice Scotland, about confusion over PSR services provided to consumers by differing providers such as DNOs, GDNs and water utilities.

We acted: Working with partners and other utilities, we created PSR Pass. This is a document designed to give partners a single reference point for everything customers could benefit from by joining the PSR, including easy to use look up tables and a PSR service wheel.

Impact and outcomes:

- 443 communication packs** shared with **16 external organisations.**
- Increased number of partnerships helping customers in vulnerable situations to **51.**



3.4 Driving forward PSR provision and promotion (cont'd)

Improving PSR impact through analysis

ENHANCED HARD TO REACH COLLABORATION

We acted: During 2019-20, we commissioned the Centre for Sustainable Energy to produce a detailed report to break down the spread of vulnerabilities in each region and identify which geographic locations were most likely to be underrepresented on our PSR. CSE used publicly available data, mapped against our CMT data to identify underrepresented groups. They also reviewed poverty statistics for each of our regions, providing a clear picture of fuel poverty levels in the communities we serve.

The report identified five underrepresented groups:

- People leaving hospital
- People unable to communicate in English
- People with hearing or speech difficulties
- People who use the Careline/Telecare service
- People with developmental disabilities



In addition, our SAP and ISPs told us it would be preferable to display PSR gaps in percentage terms, given PSR growth in recent years. The current gap rates, broken down by regions are shown below. We are actively targeting closure of PSR gaps in 2020-21, with immediate focus on our southern licence area.

Region	Population	Estimate of PSR gap 2019-20
Ridgeway	1,378,386	36.6%
Wessex	1,688,991	36.0%
Thames Valley	2,377,295	35.4%
South East	1,621,864	34.4%
South Caledonia	584,894	30.0%
North Caledonia	591,708	28.5%
Highlands and Islands	265,228	25.2%
All regions	8,508,366	34.2%

"Translated PSR and fuel poverty forms have really helped in breaking the communication barriers with customers who don't use English as their first language or cannot speak English at all. Customers recognised our 'outside the box' approach to serve them and appreciated our efforts to break down communication barriers to reach out to the elderly customers from ethnic communities.

By working together and with the support of ethnic, religious and community groups, we reached out to customers from all backgrounds at places of their convenience (Temples, Mosques Gurdwaras, etc.) and at times suitable to customers.

Due to our commitment and flexible approach to engage with ethnic communities, we have seen a large increase in engagement from customers from ethnic backgrounds in the last 12 months."

Mohammed Kamraiz,
Customer and Community Advisor,
SSEN Thames Valley Region



Impact and outcomes:

To identify people leaving hospital who may have complex health needs, mobility limitations, rely on electrically powered medical equipment or in complex situations with a dependence on power or water, we:

- Developed **new partnerships** with Occupational Therapists across both licence areas.
- Identified and **worked with discharge units in four major NHS hospitals** in central southern England to target PSR promotion.
- Collaborated with appropriate water utilities, the **British Red Cross and Age Concern Reading**, developing joint literature and speaking as one voice to health professionals to maximise impact.

✔ **PSR registrations increased by 42%**

To reach people unable to communicate in English we:

- Entered into partnerships in ethnically diverse areas, translating materials into two new languages, taking the total to nine.
- Appointed Rajnish Kashyap, General Secretary of the Hindu Council of the UK to the External ISP.
- Increased engagement with faith leaders to help us identify PSR-eligible customers.

✔ **PSR registrations increased by 22.5%**

To support people with hearing and speech difficulties we:

- Developed new partnerships with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and deafscotland.
- Launched a BSL Relay Service to ease contact for Deaf customers.

✔ **PSR registrations increased by 15%**

To identify people who use the Careline/Telecare service we entered into a new partnership with Telecare providers for Portsmouth.

✔ **PSR registrations increased by 43.4%**

To reach people with developmental conditions, we delivered specialist Dementia Reality Experience training, enhancing our teams' ability to identify and support this underrepresented group.

✔ **PSR registrations increased by 30.4%**

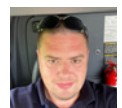
Next steps: We are targeting closure of PSR gaps in our central southern England regions during 2020-21.

Empowering teams with the flexibility to do the right thing for any customer

All our teams, regardless of their role, are empowered to use their own judgment and initiative to look after our customers. The toolkit they have to use includes a wide range of services beyond those mandated by regulation, such as on the ground support, targeted accommodation and generation where appropriate, established welfare provisions, resilience packs and energy advice referral schemes. Our customer-facing teams are trained to understand what is appropriate to offer, when and to whom, as well as being clear on our escalation process.

"I attended a fault on our network that affected a sheltered housing complex which supported approximately 25 PSR customers. When our normal third party welfare provider was unable to support, I arranged for suitcase generators to be deployed, allowing the residents to get a hot drink whilst we worked. As mealtime approached, it became clear that due to mobility issues the residents would be unable to use my offer of £15 each to buy a warm meal. I wanted to do more and felt empowered to do so. After a quick chat with the residents I bought fish and chips for all."

Rob Day,
Supply Restoration Team Manager,
Thames Valley



3.5 Ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible

At SSEN we believe that accessibility and inclusivity are fundamental building blocks without which effective services cannot be provided to our vulnerable customers.

The services we provide to customers in vulnerable situations must be tailored, specific, inclusive and accessible in order for our customers to benefit from them. As a licensed network operator we have a responsibility to ensure we deliver critical services that all our customers need and value without wasting customers' money.

Inclusivity means we think about the needs of all our customers, not just particular groups. We recognise that we do not have all the answers, and that we need to seek input from a wide range of stakeholders to directly inform how our services evolve. We are committed to continuously improving how our services best serve customers' needs, based on robust stakeholder engagement and feedback.

As uses of media change and we move towards more online customer engagement, we are acutely aware of the need to ensure we don't leave any of our customers behind.

We recognise that accessibility means offering our customers a range of appropriate methods and channels through which they can engage with us. The quality of our services is meaningless unless our customers are able to reach us and tell us what they want and need.

A big part of ensuring we can deliver impactful services is making sure our staff have the training they need. This year we've introduced e-learning on vulnerability which has first been rolled out to our contact centre staff and will soon be extended to all staff. We've also improved staff training on mental health.

We are constantly seeking new perspectives to inform our services. This year we've partnered with deafscotland and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists on how best to support customers with hearing loss. We've implemented new online live chat services through WhatsApp for customers who are unable to, or prefer not to, use the phone, so that they also have an instant way of getting in touch.

British Standard for Inclusive Service for the fifth consecutive year

Finalist in the National Diversity Awards – the First DNO ever to reach the finals

27 tracked recommendations and challenges from ISP meetings, up from 22 last year

Only DNO to be on three BSL Video Relay Service platforms

Stakeholder feedback:

Our PSR gap analysis shows that one of the five key groups underrepresented on our PSR included people with hearing loss or speech loss.

Our External Inclusive Service Panel advised against our proposal to use Makaton on the basis that:

- People who use Makaton tend to require care and support and are less likely to contact us themselves to report a power cut.

- If we issue content in an alternative format, for example Makaton, we must be able to communicate in that language to prevent misalignment between customers' expectations and our ability to fully meet these expectations.

The Panel advised we should seek expert advice from deafscotland and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists.

“Over the past year, the Inclusive Service Panels have continued to guide and support the business in their unwavering commitment to do what is right for millions of customers. We have seen the business embed suggestions and solutions given to them by the panels into a clear and well-defined strategy.”

Richard Shakespeare, Chair of the Inclusive Service Panels



Initiatives for people with hearing loss

NEW HARD TO REACH

We acted: We worked with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and deafscotland to review our service offering. They advised us to:

- Consider the methods of communication used for customers with hearing loss.
- Work with Deaf Hubs for all age groups.

- Implement BSL, and only put BSL on videos when we can engage with customers via a Video Relay Service.
- Continue to promote our Power Track App, as it allows customers to report power cuts without the need to speak with us.



Our ISP and SSE Chief Executive, Alistair Phillips-Davies, learning first hand how we support customers during outages.

Impact and outcomes: We have improved how people with hearing and speech loss can use our services by:

- Consistent use of plain English and simple language to help people with low literacy across all online and offline customer facing content.
- Better use of icons and other imagery including on PSR promotional materials.
- Partnering with InterpreterNow, ConnectScotland and SignVideo to launch a BSL video relay service.

- Working with Deaf Hubs, starting in Dundee, and offering fuel poverty advice with Home Energy Scotland at the same time as providing PSR information.
- Promoting Power Track App extensively to reach people with hearing loss.
- Partnering with the Deaf Base at Dingwall Academy and Education Scotland to deliver electricity safety training including PSR and Power Track to students with hearing loss and co-creating a safety video utilising BSL and starring the pupils.

“It is super to see the collaboration of our membership resulting in the exciting improvement of services for those affected by deafness. This work particularly benefits deaf people that use British Sign Language, a group often excluded from services.”

Janis McDonald, Chief Officer of deafscotland



3.5 Ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible (cont'd)

Stakeholder feedback:

We listen closely to our customers, stakeholders and colleagues when prioritising improvements to our services. Training, particularly on mental ill health and dementia,

were highlighted as topics for learning this year. In addition, staff training was highlighted as an area to improve on in our SECV 2018-19 feedback.

Extending our recognition of vulnerability NEW

We acted: We developed online learning content for our teams which helps them:

- **'Recognise, respond and record'** the various situations our customers are faced with.
- **Know who's eligible** for the PSR, what services are available and how to register customers for this help.
- **Realise the scale** of vulnerability and understand our strategy for provision of Priority Services.

- **Listen effectively** to customers' individual needs and provide the right solution for every situation.
- **Deal sensitively** with customers who may be in distress.


Through this module staff learn how to recognise a range of vulnerabilities ranging from cancer and depression to temporary situations resulting in transient vulnerability, like coping with bereavement and the arrival of a baby.


Impact and outcomes: Earlier this year, we rolled the e-learning out to colleagues across a number of areas including the customer contact centres and the stakeholder team.

Colleagues at all levels from Heads Of Department to Call Advisers have been selected to undertake the training and to date, **38% of the identified staff have completed their training.** The remainder are due to complete the training by the end of

April 2020. Following very positive feedback we will roll out the training to a further tranche of staff during 2020-21.

We conducted pre and post training self-assessments by asking learners "How confident are you when helping customers in vulnerable situations?" Prior to the sessions, learners rated themselves as **8.3 out of 10.** Following the training, **this score rose by 14.5%** to a new average score of **9.5 out of 10.**

Confidence before e-learning course
8.3/10 

Confidence after e-learning course
9.5/10 

Dementia Reality Experience Training

NEW COLLABORATION

We acted: Feedback from last year's Dementia Friends Training was very positive but was felt to be high level with more in-depth training being requested by colleagues.

Impact and outcomes:

We partnered with Training2Care to deliver a Dementia Reality Experience for over 140 of

our customer facing colleagues. In addition, we offered a **number of SGN staff the opportunity** to experience this training, allowing them to assess any benefits for their business.

In 2020-21, we will build on this with the Autism Reality Experience, as well as developing virtual reality training software which can be rolled out to all depots and centres.



Improving awareness of mental health

NEW COLLABORATION

We acted: To increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues, we have engaged in several initiatives with partner organisations this year to deliver appropriate training.

"As a business, we are committed to removing the stigma of talking about mental health and we are proud to have so many people who want to help their customers and colleagues going through difficult times by signposting them to professional services."

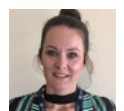


Pamela Harvey,
Customer Relationship Manager

Impact and outcomes:

- A **new face-to-face mental health training course**, Offload, from Rugby League Cares was attended by **275 colleagues** over 10 sessions in SEPD and 6 in SHEPD. This has been particularly well received by our operations teams with 95% of attendees rating the training either very good or excellent.
- Embedding our Mental Health First Aiders across our business, we now have **111 across SSEN**, up from **53 last year**, with Mental Health Cafes open for drop-in sessions.
- Daily Virtual Mental Health Cafes set up within one week of lockdown to support colleagues who are working remotely during COVID-19.
- Delivery of training to SSEN's frontline staff in Scotland by HUG Action for Mental Health, a network of people living in the Highlands who have direct experience of mental ill health.
- We held our first ever Health, Safety and Wellbeing week for Customer Contact Centre staff in our Portsmouth office, focusing on the safety and wellbeing of our staff and customers. It included sessions facilitated by The Samaritans on the importance of health and wellbeing and a day of activities focusing on PSR customers and their needs.

"Health, safety and wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do, for our employees and customers. Education has a critical role as we continue to seek to build upon the positive progress we have made."



Hayley Joynson, Head of Customer Contact Centre South

3.6 Expanding our fuel poverty and energy efficiency activities

Fuel poverty is an increasing challenge for DNOs as we all work, collaboratively where possible, to find new ways to support customers affected by this issue.

Our role gives us unique access to people, and we recognise that we can act as a crucial gatekeeper for customers, connecting them with services that can vastly improve their quality of life. It is therefore vital that we build partnerships with appropriate organisations that can provide effective services to customers experiencing fuel poverty.

An important strategy for tackling fuel poverty is to help customers consume less energy and lower their bills. We want to make sure that where appropriate, our customers can access useful,

easy to follow advice from trusted partners that helps them achieve this.

We've worked with many new partners this year to deliver energy efficiency advice and practical help for our customers.

We recognise that tackling fuel poverty is not an easy task and is one that requires deep cooperation between organisations and sectors. We are constantly looking for new partners and new ways to deliver services to the people that need them most.

2,323 households helped with fuel poverty, up 105%

Over 200 stakeholders engaged with on fuel poverty

79% increase in energy efficiency referrals, to 256

£2.97 average net benefit per £1 spent on six initiatives measured

Stakeholder feedback:

Fuel poverty has been core to our engagement during 2019-20; the top four strands of engagement have been:

- Our ISPs challenged us on where we should be working to help people out of fuel poverty and move towards a fair energy future. They recommended we partner with third parties to deliver this.

- During our Stakeholder Workshops we asked stakeholders to prioritise our work using the Ofgem Consumer Vulnerability Strategy 2025 core themes. Stakeholders told us to focus our efforts on working with partners to tackle issues that cut across multiple sectors, improving identification of vulnerability and smart use of data, and supporting those struggling with their bills. Our projects fulfil all of these three priorities.

- Bilateral meetings with National Energy Action and Energy Action Scotland to better understand emerging issues and further enhance our partnerships.
- Online customer engagement where **62.5%** said they would find energy efficiency help useful.

Energy Advice partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland

NEW **INNOVATIVE**
COLLABORATION

We acted: In 2019-20, we worked with CAS to develop a first-of-its-kind partnership which was fully funded by SSEN. This enabled the recruitment of four specialist energy advisers to operate in local Scottish Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABs) providing in-depth advice. Following a competitive process, which included a review of fuel poverty statistics and our CMT, CABs in Shetland, Western Isles, South West Aberdeenshire and East and Central Sutherland received funding, with advisers starting in post during July 2019.

The four CABs represent wide geographic coverage with high levels of fuel poverty worsened by factors such as geography and rurality.

In addition to providing funding, we have supported initial and ongoing training alongside active promotion of the services through press releases and our social media channels.

Impact and outcomes:

- 488 clients supported.
- 2,010 separate issues discussed with these clients.
- £89,218.31 of financial gain for clients.
- 94 PSR registrations.
- 96% of people rated the service as good or very good.
- People have been helped with topics including benefits, debt, housing, supplier switching, PSR, Warm Home Discount, billing and metering.

Project NPV	£56,773	Project ROI	£0.58
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Home and Well with Citizens Advice Hampshire

NEW **COLLABORATION**

We acted: Building on the success of funding an energy adviser in Great Western Hospital Swindon, and the CAS project, we looked to find a partner in our southern licence area. We identified Citizens Advice Hampshire as a potential partner. After considering numerous options, we developed the Home and Well project with them. As the delivery partner for this project, CA Hampshire offers holistic support to patients being discharged from hospital

including PSR and energy advice and is based within NHS trust sites. This partnership has widened to include Southern Water, Portsmouth Water and Hampshire CCG. The initial investment from SSEN was £115,000 for an 18 month period. Launched in March 2020, the project is forecast to deliver each month:

- 80 patients provided with fuel poverty advice
- 100 patients registered on Priority Services Register
- 75 patients initial financial assessments
- 80 patients triaged to other support services

YES Energy Solutions and Home Energy Scotland partnerships

ENHANCED **COLLABORATION**

We acted: This year we have further embedded and expanded our partnerships with YES Energy Solutions in England and HES in Scotland.

Enhancements in 2019-20 include additional engagement with customers, new training for colleagues, the ability for customers to call YES Energy Solutions' expert advisors directly, and a new webpage with self-referral options for YES and HES, reducing any barriers such as potential stigma around asking for help.

Impact and outcomes:

- 256 customers referred to YES and HES.
- 79% increase on referrals in 2018-19.

Project NPV	£25,556	Project ROI	£5.29
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Other energy efficiency partnerships where we have made improvements in 2019-20

We have calculated the social benefits for four of these partnerships (marked in bold).

This year we have partnered with 10 organisations to provide energy advice outreach initiatives. These organisations include **London Sustainability Exchange**, **Warm Works**, **NEA**, **Action Hampshire**, **Community Action Surrey**, **Groundwork Green Doctor**, **Citizens Advice Purbeck**, **The Centre for Sustainable Energy** and **Citizens Advice Scotland**. Some projects have been delivered in hospital settings working with Occupational Therapy teams, whilst others have arranged community Energy Hubs and cafes. Regardless of the delivery mechanism, all have the aim of engaging hard to reach communities with high rates of fuel poverty.

Impact and outcomes: These partnerships have supported over 2,060 customers and provided them a combined annual saving of £206,481.

Project NPV	£93,390	Project ROI	£11.94
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3.7 Widening our partnership network and collaborative activities

Based on the feedback we received from our stakeholders, we have learned that we are not always best placed to meet the complex needs of customers in vulnerable situations.

As a result, in the past six years we have strengthened our partnerships with organisations that are better suited to dealing with different kinds of vulnerability across the southern and northern licence areas. As our partnerships evolve, we learn about new ways to improve our services for vulnerable stakeholder groups. To capture this learning, we have implemented a consistent process for gathering and implementing feedback when working with partners. Informing customers about our PSR services is an area where we have seen significant improvement as a result of collaborative partnership working.

In the past few years, we have learned that customers are more likely to sign up to the PSR if they receive the information in conjunction with

other practical information while being discharged from hospital or receiving health care services. As a result, we have developed a process for identifying suitable partners to expand our reach for promoting PSR and delivering services to vulnerable customers:

- 1 Identifying the largest PSR gaps using PSR gap analysis.
- 2 Locating areas of vulnerability geographically, using the mapping tool.
- 3 Identifying partners that are best suited to provide services to a specific category of vulnerability.

 Working partnerships with every water utility in our licence areas

 74% increase in data sharing referrals, from 3,791 to 6,597

 £5.68 average net benefit per £1 spent on two initiatives measured

 51 partners helping us to support customers in vulnerable situations

Stakeholder feedback:

Our ISP told us in 2018-19 to increase the use of partnerships to deliver services to vulnerable consumers. In September 2019, 30% of stakeholders at our workshops told us to work with partners to tackle issues which cut across multiple sectors, this was the highest scoring of the segments. We also recognise that as we improve our relationship with existing partners and increase the number of new partnerships across our licence areas, we must ensure we

meet the increasing needs of the partners whilst working within the resource parameters that we have. Upon discussion with a number of partners, they told us they would like to have the ability to self-serve.

While we play an important role in tackling fuel poverty as a DNO, we recognise through stakeholder feedback that we are not best placed to advise on fuel poverty and financial matters for energy users in the UK. National Energy Action (NEA) identified households with young carers as a new category of vulnerability

in our licence areas. These households often have high utility bills as they require constant warmth as well as increased water use.

Through customer feedback from workshops, surveys and face-to-face individual engagements, we learned that there is a need for a centralised PSR sign up process. This will provide a 'one stop shop' for customers to register, regardless of geographic area, to all utilities. We knew that customers were looking for both electronic and paper methods of signing up.

Working with gas and water utilities

EMBEDDED COLLABORATION

We acted: We have had an ongoing collaboration with utilities for over four years by organising and chairing the Shared Utility Partnership. This year, Affinity Water has joined alongside Southern Water, Portsmouth Water, Bournemouth Water, Wessex Water, Thames Water, South East Water, Scottish Water, SGN and Wales and West Utilities to maximise our impact in delivering services to customers in vulnerable situations. The Partnership enables us to maximise our effectiveness in delivering benefits to our customers through registrations on both PSRs and supporting them financially with water tariff information as well as broader energy efficiency information.

Impact and outcomes:

- Data sharing agreements with water partners increased from 5 to 6 including two 3-way data sharing agreements.
- Registered 4,104 PSR customers via data sharing.
- Tri-branded partnership leaflets created with Wessex Water and Bournemouth Water, as well as Southern Water and Portsmouth Water.

New Partner Portal **NEW**

We acted: Keen to ensure that any offering met the needs of our partners, we held focus groups with a variety of stakeholders representing local authorities, charities, parish councils and fuel poverty support organisations. We asked the following questions:

- What is best practice working with partners?
- What collateral is useful and in what format?
- What benefits would you like to see from being a partner?

The feedback was clear that our partners wanted the ability to self-serve and would value an online tool to allow this. We have worked with our Digital and IT teams to find an effective way to support the needs of our partners in an enduring and cost-effective way.

Impact and outcomes: The first phase of the portal was delivered in March 2020.

Partnership with SP Energy Networks and Scottish Water **NEW COLLABORATION**

Feedback: Stakeholders regularly tell us that they want a 'one stop shop' to refer people for PSR across the whole of Scotland.

We acted: We have partnered with SP Energy Networks to create a nationwide PSR awareness programme.

Partnership with National Energy Action (NEA) and Energy Action Scotland (EAS)

ENHANCED COLLABORATION

We acted: For several years we have partnered with the two pre-eminent fuel poverty charities in the UK, NEA and EAS. As active Business Supporters Group members, enhanced with bilateral meetings and close collaboration on numerous events, these partnerships have informed us on where to prioritise our fuel poverty efforts.

Impact and outcomes: Working with NEA and water utility partners we are educating young carers in energy and water efficiency. Interactive workshops encourage behavioural change, help to manage household finance, increase understanding of assistance available and promote the PSR. This 18-month programme launched in April 2019 and has reached 106 young carers this year.

Impact and outcomes: We have produced a tri-branded PSR leaflet and have a joint website in production. The partnership of three businesses is working with NHS Scotland to promote the PSR to customers who use electrically powered medical equipment; this service is scheduled to go live during 2020.

3.7 Widening our partnership network and collaborative activities cont'd

Strengthening our partnership with CSE ENHANCED

We acted: After identifying relevant areas of fuel poverty in our southern licence area, we worked with partner water companies and the relevant local authority to find suitable local partner organisations who would be effective in undertaking outreach initiatives and letting customers know about the services available to them.

Impact and outcomes: Working with Wessex Water, we established a partnership with CSE to provide outreach on fuel poverty and the PSR through mobile libraries, links with Great Western Hospital and wider health professionals in the Wiltshire and Dorset areas. Through this work, SSEN's PSR has been added as a formal referral on the form used across the region.

This will enable third parties, like Fire and Rescue, to refer customers to CSE for energy and fuel poverty services. This partnership has been extremely successful and has so far resulted in 1,030 PSR registrations with over 576 also receiving energy advice.

Project NPV	£164,916	Project SROI	£9.48
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Some of our new or enhanced partnership projects

Partner	New or Enhanced	Co-creation and benefit as a result of the partnership
Wessex Water/SSEN combined event	NEW	Fuel poverty and physical vulnerability often go together. Wessex Water and SSEN worked together with a range of partners to promote PSR benefits from a physical and financial perspective at a jointly delivered event where 45 stakeholders attended.
Thames Water/SSEN/Royal Berkshire Hospital Discharge	ENHANCED	Stakeholders say that reaching patients as they are discharged from hospital is the right thing to do. Initial promotion through patients' services has extended to direct working with two discharge teams in elderly care wards.
Southampton Hospital/Southern Water/Red Cross/YES Energy Solutions Discharge team	NEW	Feedback suggested broader awareness was needed to target groups leaving hospital; lift wraps in Southampton Hospital near to Elderly Care wards raised awareness. Working with discharge teams and the Red Cross helped patients return to warm homes with appropriate financial support.
Renal Association/Thames Water/YES Energy Solutions	NEW	Renal patients are a priority group for utilities, but feedback suggested that second to clinical need was help with financial support. Working with the Renal Association and YES Energy Solutions, we are piloting a package of support which includes financial help, advice and PSR services.
Portsmouth Water/Portsmouth Council Telecare	NEW	Feedback from Portsmouth Council indicated they were part of the 6-week package helping patients settle back in to home to avoid being re-admitted to hospital. Part of this was installation of telecare systems in people's homes and helping them register for priority services.
Age Concern Reading/Thames Water	ENHANCED	Age Concern support patients settling back in to their homes after a hospital visit. Broadening the support through collaboration with both utilities enabled patients to register onto the PSR and benefit from financial water advice and energy information.
Southern Water/Footprint Trust/SSEN	NEW	This partnership funded the Footprint Trust to work with Mens Sheds, Prostate Cancer groups and home visits on the Isle of Wight to increase PSR registrations and fuel efficiency measures.
Wessex Water/CA Purbeck - SSEN	ENHANCED	Building on the partnership last year where CA were the trusted intermediary in the Purbeck area - Wessex Water and SSEN enhanced the partnership in order to promote working with health professionals, such as occupational health, and capitalising on the outreach work carried out by six bureaux in the Purbeck region of Dorset.
Affinity Water	NEW	The Slough area is serviced by more than one water utility. To enable a 'one stop shop' and make it easier for consumers, we successfully developed a new data sharing agreement with Affinity Water in addition to Thames Water.

Social Constraint Managed Zones

ENHANCED

COLLABORATION

Feedback: Stakeholders, including NEA and EAS, have encouraged us to find a way of balancing the network at the same time as providing societal benefits.

We acted: We worked with NEA to identify opportunities for SCMZs where communities and community organisations can receive payments for helping ease constraints on the local electricity network, as an alternative to upgrading cables and substations.

Impact and outcomes:

We held workshops in July 2019 for the first two SCMZ areas. These generated **nine interested parties** into procurement. To date, one partner has been successful and will be participating in the SCMZ. We have shared details of this project and our learnings with other DNOs through Ofgem working groups.

More information is on the NEA website: www.nea.org.uk/technical/scmz/workshop

Extending our partnerships with Citizens Advice Hampshire and Citizens Advice Scotland

NEW

Stakeholder feedback: In order to support customers remotely during COVID-19, Citizens Advice Scotland made a direct request to SSEN to provide laptops and headsets.

We acted: We donated £20,000 to procure the equipment. We also donated £20,000 to Citizens Advice Hampshire to establish a similar remote service.

Impact and outcomes: A total fund of £40,000 has been made available to Citizens Advice Scotland and Citizens Advice Hampshire to deliver their much needed and valued service remotely during COVID-19.

Project NPV	£72,495	Project SROI	£1.88
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"Our service is experiencing an unprecedented surge in enquiries, many from people self-isolating or concerned as they have underlying health issues. They need help with debt, housing and financial worries. This funding will allow us to enable clients to sign the Priority Services Register as an additional safeguard."

I am delighted and impressed that SSEN have extended their commitment to support communities and have raised the bar in offering to develop such a quick response."

Paul Bright, CEO, Citizens Advice Hampshire



3.8 Future challenges

1. We will continue to assess our PSR gaps, looking for new and effective ways to reduce these. Immediate focus will be given to the regions in our southern licence area.
2. We will review the impact COVID-19 has on our delivery partners given the face-to-face nature of the interactions that many of them undertake.
3. We will look to understand the longer-term implications the pandemic may have on our customers' needs and how best to serve these changing requirements.