

**PART 3** | 2022-23

# COLLABORATING FOR SOCIETY

**Overview of Evidence**

Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Submission



**Scottish & Southern**  
Electricity Networks

Powering our  
community

# PART 3

## Welcome to our Part 3 submission to Ofgem's Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive (SECV) for 2022-23.

In the final year of the Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive (SECV), Part 3 of our submission encapsulates our strategy and priorities, insight, approach, adaptability, collaboration and the action we have taken to ensure we are going over and above for our vulnerable customers.

We demonstrate how we have addressed consumer vulnerability issues that have been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis by engaging purposefully with our stakeholders, anticipating their needs in order to continue to deliver positive outcomes for our customers and their communities.

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### The two additional parts that make up our submission

#### PART 1

Introduces our Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Strategies and outlines our approach to working with stakeholders and supporting consumers in vulnerable situations.

#### PART 2

Highlights key achievements and benefits delivered through engaging with our stakeholders during the 2022-23 regulatory year.

### Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution (SHEPD)

**780k+**

homes and businesses

**170,970**

PSR households registered, up 6.9% from 2021-22

**40%**

estimated fuel poverty in Scotland\*



### Southern Electric Power Distribution (SEPD)

**3.1m+**

homes and businesses

**682,446**

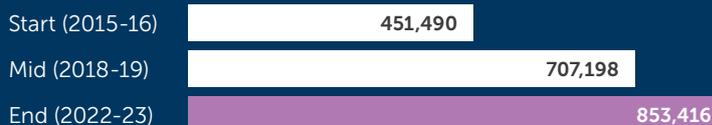
PSR households registered, up 12.4% from 2021-22

**13.4%**

estimated fuel poverty in England\*

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

#### PSR growth during RIIO-ED1



#### Fuel poverty support during RIIO-ED1



## 3.1 STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE



**5.7%**  
closure of overall  
PSR gap  
**10**  
new fuel poverty partnerships

**68.3%**  
increase in households  
supported by fuel  
poverty measures

As the cost-of-living crisis deepened throughout the year and customers faced greater challenges, we knew that we had to do more than ever before to help play our part.

We started 2022-23 by redoubling our efforts to truly understand the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, with our full Executive Committee (ExCo) undertaking in-depth sessions with frontline advisors from both Citizens Advice Bureaux and Maggie's Cancer Charity. This provided an invaluable experience and learning for our executive team, reinforcing the urgent need to support, protect and extend fuel poverty and energy efficiency activities.

This was supported by a considered programme of engagement and executive level bilaterals with several leading national charities. These insights led to decisive action, the first of which was the **application of a cost-of-living lens** to each of our core objectives to ensure we help those most in need.

Significantly, we committed considerable additional spend – **£1m over a two year period** – to enhance our existing fuel poverty partnerships and establish new programmes of support, recognising new and emerging vulnerabilities. This led to a **68.3%** increase in the number of households we supported this year – an achievement of which the team and I are very proud.

This additional investment followed our three-stage approach of supporting critical advice services, enabling funds and 'point of crisis' help.

We invested more into our Energy Advisor Programme with Citizens Advice Scotland in the north, as well as expanding our YES Energy Solutions activity in the south (both of which are detailed in full in section 3.4).

We increased our investment into our enabling fund with Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), helping customers to secure grants they so desperately require to install energy efficient measures and low carbon technologies, reducing demand in the longer term.

Moreover, we invested in our 'point of crisis' initiatives as our partner organisations were clear that in the current climate we needed to support customers in the immediate term, allowing them the space and time to consider longer term support options.

Our second priority was to grow our PSR, closing key gaps, and we were proud to lead the collaborative delivery of **www.thepsr.co.uk**, a single signposting website, making it easy for partners to promote PSR on behalf of DNOs and GDNs on a GB-wide basis. We also established **two-way data sharing agreements** with all relevant water companies in England, making it even easier for customers to access the support being on the PSR brings.

Through a wide-reaching winter awareness campaign, coupled with targeted partnering, we were able to increase PSR registrations and **close our gap by 5.7%, significantly exceeding our target**. We continually strive to be as inclusive and diverse as possible, and this was demonstrated through our accessibility kitemark accreditation as well as our work with improving the language we

use with customers and launching our new Sitemore accredited website.

Thirdly, and in line with our general approach this year, we've sought to extend and strengthen our partnership working, creating **10 new fuel poverty partnerships** with organisations as diverse as Kidney Care UK and Surrey Council, while strengthening our learning opportunities in the DNO community with a formal collaboration agreement with ENWL.

I am incredibly proud of the work we have led and delivered this year to protect our customers and ensure they remain at the heart of all we do. But this is only the beginning of the journey. As we close a chapter on ED1, we have laid the groundwork on which we will build upon in ED2 – to support **50,000 households** living in fuel poverty, achieve **1 million PSR registrations** and play our full part in a just transition to net zero.

**Lyndsey Stainton**,  
Head of Stakeholder Engagement

### Our approach

Our approach to consumer vulnerability is well established and deeply embedded within our business. It continues to be underpinned by the following five key principles:

- 1 Understand the needs of our customers.
- 2 Use data effectively to deliver tailored support.
- 3 Work collaboratively and in partnership to drive efficiencies and improve services.
- 4 Embed knowledge and learnings, and share best practice.
- 5 Track performance to ensure our efforts remain effective.

### Another record year of delivery against our stakeholder-led priorities

This year we delivered an **uplift of 68.3%** in households supported with fuel poverty and energy efficiency, smashing the annual uplift target of 30% that was set with our Inclusive Service Panel (ISP) and agreed by our Executive Committee. We also exceeded the 3% target in relation to the closure of our PSR gap, achieving a reduction of 5.7%. These substantial improvements to support those most in need were achieved by fully utilising the flexibility our well-established consumer vulnerability strategy brings, along with a deliberate focus on the cost-of-living and increasing the number of targeted partnerships.



**EXPANDING OUR FUEL POVERTY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTIVITIES**

- Additional **SSEN financial commitment of £1m** in light of enduring cost-of-living crisis.
- **14,744** households supported with energy efficiency and fuel poverty support, **up 68.3%** from last year.
- **1,448** households supported with an enhanced 'point of crisis' offer including fuel vouchers, winter warm packs and access to a hardship fund.



**WIDENING OUR PARTNERSHIP NETWORK AND COLLABORATIONS**

- **10** new fuel poverty partnerships created.
- **506** Surrey households supported via collaborative Warm Hubs project.
- **121** partner colleagues supported across **four** mental health webinars, **13%** of which were ENWL partners.



**DRIVING FORWARD THE PSR PROVISION AND PROMOTION**

- **77%** eligible households registered for PSR, a year-on-year **increase of 5.7%**, significantly ahead of **3%** target.
- Led **'The PSR' collaboration** with DNOs and GDNs, providing a key route for partners to promote PSR to their service users.



**ENSURING OUR SERVICES ARE ALWAYS INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE**

- **One of only two DNOs** to achieved Inclusive Kitemark BS ISO 22458 for Consumer Vulnerability.
- **Only DNO to have two-way PSR data sharing agreements** in place with all water companies by 31 March 2023.

## 3.2 EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA AND INSIGHTS

In Part 1 of our submission, page 10, we detail our approach to decision making, ensuring that we use data and methods effectively to inform strategic decision making, and continue to deliver positive outcomes for our customers and stakeholders.

During 2022-23 we have sought insight and used data in several ways to inform our decisions and the way in which we support consumers in vulnerable situations.

We continue to seek fresh insights, and have engaged on a cyclical basis for enduring areas of focus such as the cost-of-living crisis.

### Increasing Partner Insights New

This year we surveyed our partner organisations and held our **first dedicated Partner Shared Learnings Workshop**. 41 informed stakeholders from nine organisations joined us to discuss common challenges and share learnings which were used to inform our workplan and improve outcomes for consumers in vulnerable situations.

We were also keen to support our partners. Through our survey, our partners told us the impact the cost-of-living crisis was having on their employees and organisations. This led to the development of **specialist mental health workshops**, exclusively for charity partners.

### Informing Decisions with our Customer Mapping Tool Enhanced

The data sets feeding into our established Customer Mapping Tool (CMT) were refreshed this year to include **four new data sets**, aimed at helping to identify fuel poverty. These data sets are: households in social rented housing; properties electrically heated in band EFG; children in low income families; and the cost-of-living vulnerability decile (England Only).

The CMT was key to identifying new partnerships, allowing us to strategically select partners and ensure high levels of effectiveness. One example is our partnership with Maggie's Cancer Centres. We now fund two centres in regions with a very high percentage of fuel poverty along with lower levels of health related benefits being accessed.

### Enhancing PSR data Enhanced

Recognising the transient nature of vulnerability, we continue to operate an **'every contact counts'** approach to ensure PSR data accuracy. During 2021-22 we wrote to all PSR customers to educate them of the increased risk of Rota Load Disconnections and provide them with information on how to prepare. Working with selected charities and medical partners, we **provided tailored advice** relating to medical equipment which was

### Improving Service Provision Enhanced

As part of our established and embedded practice, we conducted in-depth telephone surveys with our customers, giving us fresh insights into awareness, service provision and expectation of our PSR. Reflecting the challenges associated with the current cost-of-living.

The survey also confirmed a strong demand for **Home Emergency Plans** to support the **building of personal resilience** in the event of a power outage. As a result of this we improved our Home Emergency Plan information and shared these plans with outreach partners, charities and local authorities to distribute to vulnerable customers. Our PSR satisfaction score also increased from 8.5 to 8.7 out of 10.

relevant to our most vulnerable PSR1+ customers (those who rely on electrically powered medical equipment). A **dedicated telephone number was set up** enabling PSR customers, including those who are digitally excluded, to call with any questions they may have had following the communication. This process allowed us to cleanse our data at a faster rate resulting in 498,122 PSR records being cleansed, a 11.24% increase on cleanse rates in 2021-22.



8.7

PSR satisfaction survey score, an increase from 8.5 last year



6,191

calls to the dedicated PSR emergency preparedness phone line



## 3.3 MEASURING THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK

**As a responsible network operator, we must ensure that the activities we undertake provide value to our customers, the communities we serve and wider society. Our embedded approach to measuring the impact of our work has been refined over a number of years and is detailed in Part 1, page 10.**

Throughout 2022-23, we have continued to regularly measure the wider benefits of our work through an established, and externally verified, process of Social Return on Investment (SROI). By looking at the wider impact we can fully assess not only the direct financial savings but also the social impact such as positive health benefits including increased control and reduced levels of stress that our initiatives can create. Having brought the responsibility for SROI measurement

in-house during 2021-22, we have embedded a process of checking the impact of our work at regular intervals including prior to work starting, midway through a project and at the close of a project. This **enhanced level of insight** allows us to make informed choices, including which projects to initiate, which to scale up and those that should be stopped. To ensure our measurement outputs are robust, we have engaged the support of SIA Partners, an expert in the field, to audit our work and provide external assurance.

Additionally, we have adopted a **consistent framework of fuel poverty metrics**. In response to Panel feedback, all DNOs have collaborated to align on clear and consistent fuel poverty reporting metrics to aid comparability, supported by a common

definition of fuel poverty services and consistent independently assured application of a SROI measurement rulebook.

Finally, to further enhance the transparency of our measurement, we have provided additional detail on the key drivers of the value created and measured through SROI modelling.

This year we have measured 21 initiatives across Part 3 using the SROI model. The table below summarises the gross direct financial benefit for customers, as well as the gross social and environmental benefits along with the SROI for these initiatives.



£2,899,098

Total Customer Financial Benefits

£547,152

Total Societal Benefits over one year

£3.10

Average SROI achieved per £1 spent over 21 initiatives measured

## 3.4 EXPANDING OUR FUEL POVERTY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTIVITIES



The rate of fuel poverty in both our licence areas has increased significantly during 2022-23. People face increasingly impossible choices in light of the cost-of-living crisis, and it has pushed more households than ever before into disadvantage and poverty. Recognising the significant impact on our customers and communities, we simply had to do more. As a result we have upscaled our proven programme of activity and introduced new interventions. In doing so we have dramatically increased the reach and scale of the support we provide to those facing challenges as the cost-of-living crisis deepens.

**14,744**

households supported

**68.3%**

increase year on year

**1,448**

households provided with point-of-crisis support

**£3.10**

average SROI delivered for every £1 on 21 projects measured



### Scaling up support in the midst of a deepening cost-of-living crisis

Status: **New** **Enhanced**

#### We listened

##### At a strategic level:

Our MD, Chris Burchell, held bi-lateral meetings with the CEOs of five national charities, enabling an in-depth discussion on the cost-of-living crisis, the impact on each of the charities and the customers they support. This was supported by 'education days', undertaken by our Executive Committee, giving them the opportunity to spend a day with front line advisors from both Maggie's Cancer Centres and Citizens Advice Scotland.

##### At a working level:

We held a partner workshop with the aim of better understanding the current landscape from a delivery view point. This was supported with a dedicated survey. Additionally, we held regular 1-2-1 conversations with all delivery partners.

Finally, we invited Matt Cole, Head of Fuel Bank Foundation, to present at our annual stakeholder engagement sessions, allowing stakeholders to gain a greater insight into frontline challenges and supporting Fuel Bank Foundation to share their message more widely.

##### We learned:

- **New vulnerabilities** emerged such as 'working vulnerable' and 'transport poverty'.
- **New thinking** on solutions emerged such as the need to focus support on the human as well as the home.
- Those living with chronic conditions are often disproportionately impacted by rising energy costs.
- The need for 'point-of-crisis' support increased significantly with Fuel Bank Foundation reporting a **75% increase in demand** since 2020.

"This has been such a lifeline for me I was down to my last 67p on my meter and didn't know what to do next – thank you."

**Hardship Fund Client**

- The **change of the scale and shape of demand** was overwhelming for many partners with the mental health of front-line staff being adversely impacted. 77% surveyed said they would benefit from support in this area.
- Volunteer numbers were significantly depleted post COVID and recruitment was challenging which impacted the ability to mobilise new projects.

#### We acted

##### We reviewed our established programme:

Taking into consideration previous successes, SROI for each project, the ability for partners to expand their current offering to support emerging issues and the positive impact current projects have made on PSR registrations.

"The energy crisis has led to unprecedented demand on NEA's Warm and Safe Homes advice service; with energy costs at a record high, often leaving people with no option but to go without heat and power, the hardship fund has proven to be a lifeline for so many of our clients. We are grateful for the ongoing support from SSEN at this time of crisis for millions".



**Danni Barnes**, Director of Development & Partnerships, NEA

##### We committed additional funding:

Working with our ExCo and finance team, we **committed an additional £1m of funding** to support consumers in vulnerable situations. This represented a **doubling of funds** in both 2022-23 and 2023-24 compared to 2021-22.

##### We enhanced our established programme:

- We increased funding for an additional six advisors with Citizens Advice Scotland, specifically placed in **off gas grid areas**, in line with our Fair Energy Future strategy, and with an element of support 'on the road' to support those experiencing transport poverty, reaching 345 additional service users.
- We doubled funding for our enabling funds in both Scotland and England, reaching **60 additional service users**.
- We increased doordrop volumes for our winter awareness campaign, including energy efficiency advice and information on referrals to Home Energy Scotland (HES) and YES Energy Solutions (YES), to **1m homes – up from 120k** last year.

##### We established new methods of support:

- We funded **two benefits advisors** at Maggie's Cancer Centres in Dundee and Southampton, reaching 656 service users.
- Working with a specialist provider we delivered **four mental health webinars** for colleagues within our partner network.

##### We enhanced point of crisis support:

- We supported the **training of volunteers** at 260 newly established warm hubs and spaces.
- We worked with National Energy Action (NEA) to establish a **hardship fund**, providing warm clothing, food parcels, boiler repairs and energy efficiency products, reaching 277 additional service users.
- We worked with CSE to provide **winter warm packs** which included items such as heated throws and thermal clothing, reaching 300 additional service users.
- We **doubled our funding** for Fuel Bank Foundation, reaching 387 additional service users.

##### We checked:

In November we shared our proposed plan with stakeholders. 80% told us they strongly supported our approach.

#### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ **2,123** additional households received direct support as a result of increased funding.
- ✓ **£1,053,302** customer financial benefit delivered.
- ✓ **£496** average financial benefit per customer.
- ✓ **£145,727** societal benefit delivered.
- ✓ **1,448** customers received point-of-crisis support.

**£2.32 average SROI achieved for every £1 spent**

driven by income maximisation and energy efficiency advice.



"The demand on services is significantly changing. Knowing the circumstances can make all the difference and lead to real, in-depth support being delivered which is tailored to the individual's needs. It's really important that we truly understand our customers and what matters most to them. We all know the cost-of-living crisis is real. Hearing it from those who support families every day, highlighted it even more to me and the team."



**Andy Scott**, Customer Services Director

## Maximising the depth of support for referrals in England

Status: **Enhanced**

SSEN and YES Energy Solutions have a well established pathway to help customers improve their energy efficiency.

Acting on insight gained from our cost-of-living engagement programme, we worked with YES to co-create a broader customer offering, recognising the significant financial pressure the cost-of-living crisis is placing on customers and the emergence of newly vulnerable groups such as those who were previously 'just about managing' and may be facing financial hardship for the very first time.

Our stakeholders were clear that if domestic consumers were able to reduce energy consumption at scale, this could provide some protection against the impact of rising global energy costs.

Launched in December 2022, our enhanced offering is provided on a tiered approach which allows advice to be tailored to the level most appropriate to the needs of each customer, allowing customers to self-select the depth of support they receive.

The introductory advice often piques customer interest to undertake a more in-depth review based on the knowledge that savings increase significantly when advice is tailored to their specific energy use profile and property characteristics.

The tiered approach also earns the customer's trust and builds rapport over multiple interactions, which can be vital when offering complex support in sensitive areas including debt advice and benefit entitlement checks.



### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ 1,701 households supported.
- ✓ £360,835 customer financial benefit delivered.
- ✓ £71,686 societal benefit delivered, driven by carbon benefits due to behavioural changes.

### £3.93 SROI achieved for every £1 spent

driven by income maximisation, tailored energy efficiency advice and carbon savings.



"It can be easy to forget advice after a call, so the follow-up energy saving pack and personal report has been really useful to keep referring back to. We've made a number of changes which are helping to cut down our energy use – in particular we've cut down significantly on our shower time on the back of the advice received. Two months on and we've kept up all the changes! I think this is a fantastic service that SSEN and YES are providing and I'm glad for the chance to provide feedback."

Mr C, Customer, Christchurch

### Tier one: 100% of referred customers

- General energy efficiency advice and behaviour change tips
- Eligibility checks and referrals to relevant energy efficiency schemes
- **New** General energy efficiency advice pack with behaviour change tips
- **New** Winter preparedness information

### Tier two: 66% of referred customers

- Tailored energy efficiency advice and behaviour change tips
- **New** Smart Meter follow-up advice
- **New** Initial smart technology/Low Carbon technology readiness assessment
- **New** Befriending services
- **New** Income maximisation support and benefit entitlement checks
- **New** Warm homes discount applications

### Tier three: 6% of referred customers

- Desktop analysis, Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) review and detailed recommendations
- **New** Remote home energy check (using smartphones to analyse the fabric of properties and heating systems over a face-time app)

## Tackling fuel poverty in remote and rural communities in Scotland

Status: **Enhanced**

### We listened

As part of our direct engagement with partners, and subsequently echoed by stakeholders at our November event, we were made aware of the increasing need for support in rural areas. This is also evidenced in recent fuel poverty statistics that show the estimated rate of fuel poverty in Scotland is 40%. This represents an uplift of 15.4% since 2020-21.

### We acted

At the outset, we committed to continue funding the established, and effective, Energy Advisor project with Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS). This allowed the five advisors currently in post to continue providing much needed support.

Additional funding allowed us to fund a further six advisors, more than **doubling the programme** for the winter period. The Customer Mapping Tool was used to inform advisor locations by identifying off gas grid areas, increased levels of poverty and customers' proximity to services.

In response to the issue of transport poverty, an **outreach service** was also built into the offering, ensuring customers living in rural areas were not excluded. These clients received an **enhanced level of support** with advisers travelling to a location near them, removing travel costs for the clients. Outreaches included warm hubs, libraries, foodbanks and NHS/health settings.



Peripatetic advisers visited the outreaches on a rolling basis providing holistic advice to clients across Angus, Argyll and Bute, Nairn, Skye and Lochalsh, Stirling District and Western Isles.

### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ 345 households supported.
- ✓ £127,851 customer financial benefit delivered.
- ✓ £370 average financial benefit per customer.
- ✓ £21,107 societal benefit delivered, driven by health benefits associated with debt advice and income maximisation.

### £0.39\* SROI achieved for every £1 spent

driven by income maximisation advice and behavioural changes.



\* SROI low due to initial expansion costs – expected to above £2 by end 2023

## 3.5 DRIVING FORWARD PSR PROVISION AND PROMOTION

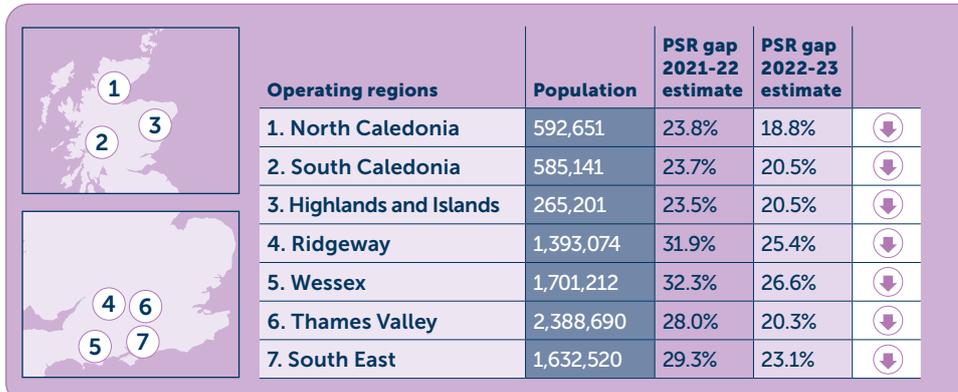


Growing our PSR and closing key gaps is a core target for SSEN and is included in our monthly key performance indicators (KPI) reporting tracked by our senior leadership team and reported to our Board.

Utilising our embedded, stakeholder-led approach, we engaged with our Inclusive Service Panel (ISP) to determine the appropriate targets for growth in 2022-23. With the ISP, we co-created ambitious targets for PSR growth, committing to increase registrations and close the overall

PSR gap (the difference between PSR eligible households and actual registrations, calculated as a whole and at both regional and needs code basis) by a further 3.0%. Through a focussed and co-ordinated programme of activity we **exceeded our targets for 2022-23**, delivering a **11.1% growth** in our PSR and a gap **reduction of 5.7% from 2021-22**. This year we led a collaborative project with all Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) and Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) to deliver

'ThePSR', an easy-to-use signposting website to help educate partners on the benefits and eligibility criteria of PSR, as well as removing barriers for its promotion to their service users. We have continued to work with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), further enhancing our data rich mapping tool to analyse our PSR gap areas and eligibility. Based on the below work and promotion we reduced our overall PSR gap from 28.7% in 2021-22 to 23% in 2022-23.



**853,416**

households registered on PSR  
Up **11.1%** from 2021-22

**77%** of PSR eligible households registered – up from **71.3%** in 2021-22

**6.5%** average PSR Gap reduction since 2020-21 in SEPD following targeted campaigns across these regions

**498,122** PSR records cleansed, the highest number in RIIO-ED1 – up **11.24%** from 2021-22



### Leading the way with The PSR website

Status: **New** **DNO First** **Collaboration**

#### We listened

Following the successful launch of PSRScotland.com, a simple signposting site to support the partners working across DNO/GDN boundaries to promote PSR on our behalf, we were **encouraged to replicate this on a GB-wide basis**. Having engaged with several national charity partners, along with our strategic stakeholder panels, it was clear stakeholders also had a strong appetite for the model to be replicated. Following a collaboration day with ENWL where this was discussed, we further socialised the idea at several opportunities including the Utility Week Customer Conference, the DNO/Water project steering group, the Customer Service and Social Obligations Working Group (ENA run) and the DNO collaboration day in December.

#### We acted

##### SSEN instigated and led a working group:

Following agreement from all DNOs, SSEN instigated, and led, a pan utility project which included all DNOs and GDNs, with water companies expected in a future phase following the conclusion of the data sharing agreement. A specialist agency was engaged to create a neutral brand and website. Through effective project management we led the project at pace and successfully delivered it over a nine week period.

#### We continued to engage:

Working collaboratively, the group enhanced the project through further stakeholder engagement which included:

- Testing possible URLs.
- Testing of the proposed site look, feel and functionality at the NEA conference and through Customer Groups. Stakeholders told us they liked the simple content and design as well as the ReciteMe functionality.
- Accessibility testing undertaken by experts at Scope with seven areas of improvement identified, all of which were successfully addressed prior to launch.

#### We communicated:

In readiness for launch, the group created and distributed a **dedicated communication** to over 670 charity partners known to one or more of the DNOs/GDNs, many of whom work over geographical boundaries.

We **worked with the ENA** to create and issue a singular press release and LinkedIn post, aimed at reaching groups who are currently unknown to us. To support this, SSEN created and issued a LinkedIn blog to **raise even greater awareness**. This achieved over 1k views in two weeks, just on initial promotion alone.

Finally, the group secured opportunities to promote the new website in NEA and Rural England newsletters.

#### Positive impact delivered

Since the launch in March 2023:

- ✓ **Over 670** regional and national charities have received dedicated communications advising of the service.
- ✓ **1,281** unique visitors to website in first 14 days, with **85.7%** of users submitting a postcode search.
- ✓ **918** supplier outbound clicks to GDN and or DNO PSR web pages.

"thePSR.co.uk is a real breakthrough in support for customers who need additional help. We know that persuading customers to disclose when they have vulnerabilities in their lives is a major challenge. This portal makes it wonderfully easy for customers to find their electricity and gas networks and sign up to their Priority Services Registers, and explains in simple, clear language what the PSR is and why it matters. I really hope that charities, consumer groups and other trusted third parties will get behind this portal and spread the word."



**Steve Crabb**, Independent Chair and Consultant specialising in consumer vulnerability issues

#### Enhanced data sharing with water companies **DNO First**

The sharing of data is a critical tool in the effective and efficient delivery of PSR services. Following a change in legal basis for consent, and an industry wide collaboration, we have established 2-way data sharing with all eight water partners in our SEPD licence area. **SSEN were the only DNO to have 2-way data sharing in place with all relevant water companies** by the 31 March 2023 deadline.

Our consent has changed from Explicit Consent to Substantial Public Interest (SPI). This change in legal basis will make it easier to support more customers as we will now be able to act upon PSR referrals made by trusted partners on behalf of vulnerable customers they are supporting.

"I am delighted that SSEN have fully delivered two-way data sharing with our water utility partners. The sharing of data will enable an increase to both the awareness of, and sign up to, critical services such as PSR, supporting thousands more customers."



**Louise Jones**, Social Obligations Manager, SSEN

## Delivering our biggest ever PSR awareness campaign

Status: **Embedded** **Enhanced**

### We listened

In line with our embedded strategy and the additional focus on energy security and resilience, we sought to increase awareness of the additional support offered via our PSR. At the start of 2022-23, in conjunction with our ISP, we evaluated the results of our previous awareness campaign. It was concluded that to significantly increase our PSR registrations we must provide enhanced routes and better targeting.

### We acted

Our awareness campaign ran between October 22 and February 23. In addition to promoting 105, we highlighted the work we do to prepare for winter, shared simple energy efficiency hints and tips and signposted to our referral service. We also

provided information on the topic of Rota Load Disconnections. We significantly increased the volume of our targeted PSR doordrop from 122,864 households to **1 million households**, with a focus on remote and rural locations.

To maximise impact we considered the current rates of PSR registrations and fuel poverty in each area. As well as increasing general awareness and registrations, we were keen to **target the known PSR Gaps** of post hospital, mental ill health, visual impairment and hearing loss. Informed by the success of our previous campaign, and the learnings where more could be achieved, we increased bus street liners and outdoor advertising near large teaching hospitals and advertised in bespoke press relating to our PSR needs codes.

### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ **28,166** PSR registrations in this period, up 109% from 2021-22.
- ✓ **Over 13,000** PowerTrack mobile app downloads between Oct 2022 and Feb 2023.
- ✓ **Over 4m** PowerTrack page views between Oct 2022 and Feb 2023.
- ✓ **Over 8,500** PSR registrations in December 2022 alone, **up 208.5%** from December 2021.
- ✓ **9,929** PSR registrations classified as 'temporary', **124% increase** from 2021-22.



DIGITAL	RADIO	OUT OF HOME	PRESS AND LEAFLET DOORDROPS
<p>Online promotion including social media, YouTube, LinkedIn and Fonemedia reaching: <b>&gt;34m impacts, &gt;95k clicks, 3.4m video views and 2.5k social post reactions</b></p>	<p><b>1,696</b> radio ads played across <b>21</b> days per main station (eight stations) + <b>14 days</b> per local station (eight stations)</p> <p><b>&gt;8.5m impressions and &gt;1.18m people reached</b></p>	<p><b>28 Bus Streetliners and 54 prominent outdoor billboards</b> across our key hospital regions</p> <p><b>Billboards delivered &gt;5.66m impressions and &gt;1.18m reach</b></p> <p><b>Streetliners delivered 798,367 impressions</b></p>	<p><b>1 million received doordrop</b>, upweighted to remote and rural, PSR eligible and additional need households</p> <p><b>15 regional press titles targeted</b></p> <p><b>Over 1.78m people reached</b></p>



## Using partners to target PSR Gap closure

Status: **Embedded** **Collaboration**

### We listened

First established in 2018, we continue to enhance and evolve our targeted, data led PSR gap reduction strategy. In 2022-23, our ISP confirmed this approach remains effective and should continue. In line with these views, we worked with CSE to continue our established cyclical process of rigorous data analysis, ensuring we effectively monitor the progress of known PSR Gaps and swiftly identify emerging gaps on both a geographical and needs code basis. Following a review in early 2022-23, we identified the following gaps as a clear focus: Deaf and Hard of Hearing; PSR1+ (those who rely on electrically powered medical equipment).

### We acted

In line with the insights from our ISP, we sought strategic partnerships to drive further closure of identified gaps.

#### Supporting those with hearing loss

We formed a new, collaborative partnership with The Royal Association for Deaf people (RAD), Bristol Water, NGED and Wessex Water. Through the new partnership, deaf customers in our region and beyond are able to access support from RAD through online Zoom sessions and face to face workshops

at local deaf clubs with; Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), Financial/Benefits/Debt assistance and registering people to our PSR.

#### Supporting medically dependant electricity users

We partnered with Kidney Care UK (KCUK), targeting a critical sub-set of customers who fall into our PSR1+ gap, living with kidney disease. The partnership enabled us to target renal care patients in four of the most deprived areas across our network in Aberdeen, Dundee, Portsmouth and Oxford (approx. 14,821 kidney patients) with PSR promotion. KCUK also have links with Clinical Directors, Pre-Dialysis Clinics, GP surgeries, and Lead Nurses/Renal Unit Managers across these four regions to raise awareness of the partnership and the benefits that PSR can provide to patients under their care.

**"We take a strategic approach to closing known PSR gaps and have specifically sought out key partners to support this. Combined with a targeted winter campaign, we have been able to increase our PSR in the areas that matter most."**



**Lynn Westwood**, SSEN Partnerships Manager, Consumer Vulnerability

### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ **Increased awareness** amongst dialysis patients with a promotion of the PSR in Kidney Care Newsletter reaching over 12,000 subscribers.
- ✓ **£25,042** customer financial benefit delivered.
- ✓ **1,700** deaf users reached with an advisory British Sign Language video clip on social media.

**£4.06 SROI achieved for every £1 spent**

driven by income maximisation activity and grants for dialysis patients.



#### Hearing Impairment/Speech Difficulties Needs code

2022	56,872	↑ <b>+13.4%</b>
2023	64,468	

#### Dialysis Needs code

2022	3,203	↑ <b>+21.6%</b>
2023	3,896	

## 3.6 WIDENING OUR PARTNERSHIP NETWORK AND COLLABORATIONS



Collaboration is firmly embedded in our business and is led from the top by our MD, Chris Burchell. This year we have increased the emphasis on two-way learning both within the DNO community and beyond. By embedding this approach, we have unlocked greater benefits for our customers, the communities we serve, the partners we work with and our company.



### Supporting our partners to deliver

Status: **New** Collaboration

#### We listened

As energy prices continued to rise and the cost-of-living crisis continued, more consumers than ever turned to specialist charities for support. We engaged with our partner network, through a dedicated workshop and surveys, to better understand the impact on them. Partners told us that the significant increase in demand, coupled with a continued downturn in volunteer numbers, posed a real risk to their ability to deliver. Two key issues were identified:

- **77%** of partners noted a negative impact to the mental health of their workforce.
- **87%** said that additional training on areas such as Home Emergency Plans and the PSR would be beneficial.

#### We acted

We collaborated with a specialist occupational health provider to create a suite of free Mental Health Webinars, open to all partners. The order and topic for each webinar was shaped by our partners. An invitation to join these sessions was extended to all DNOs to share with their partner networks following our collaboration day with ENWL.

To address the training issue, we hosted an online **Shared Learnings Workshop**, at which we shared in depth information on both PSR and Home Emergency Plans. We supplemented this with the introduction of Partner Plus – a toolkit providing training materials from the workshop to support effective promotion of PSR and Home Emergency Plans.

#### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ **41 attendees** across north and south partnerships benefited from the shared learnings workshop.
- ✓ **121 partner colleagues** supported across four mental health webinars, 13% of which were ENWL partners.
- ✓ **80%** said they were likely to take further action to support their personal wellbeing following the webinars.



### Sharing, and Learning, Best Practice with Electricity North West (ENWL)

This year has seen a significant level of collaborative activity with our DNO peers, ENWL. Knowledge sharing commenced in September with common areas of interest and challenge, learnings from previous projects and future opportunities to collaborate at both a strategic and working level all discussed.

#### We shared key learnings with ENWL:

- An in-depth look at our tactical PSR campaigns which targeted our 'language as a gap' PSR gap.
- Our approach to PSR data cleansing.
- Our model for providing on the ground customer support in each of our regions.

#### We learned how ENWL:

- Engage younger community members in collaboration with Girl Guide Association.
- Support partner organisations with energy efficiency advice.

#### We took action:

- We extended the invitation to Mental Health webinars to ENWL partners.
- We initiated discussions with Girl Guide Associations in both licence areas with a view to replicating the 'Girl Power' badge.
- We formalised our future intent in a **Collaboration Agreement**. Under this two year agreement we have committed to deploy at least two collaborative projects which deliver a clear benefit to customers and communities.

#### ENWL took action:

- They reviewed their approach to welfare support based on the SSEN strategy and model, including the use of welfare vans and door to door checks.
- They were an active supporter of ThePSR.co.uk project.

"Our visit to Perth was the catalyst for a step-change in our ongoing collaboration with SSEN. Openness is the cornerstone of any strong relationship and it has led to the replication of our Girl Guides initiative and SSEN's psr.co.uk, both of which are rooted in the learnings taken from the success of the other party."



**Michael Brainch**,  
Strategic Engagement Manager, ENWL

#### Next Steps

Following the successful agreement of formal collaboration agreements with ENWL and UKPN, we will actively seek to replicate this model with other DNOs during 2023-24.



### Coming together to support Warm Hubs

Status: **New** Collaboration

#### We listened

In our annual workshops, stakeholders asked us to provide more consumer support through community-based groups. Throughout 2022-23 there has been an increase in the number of Warm Hubs, many of which are based in established community buildings. This presented an opportunity to broaden our support in line with stakeholder views.

#### We acted

Working with Surrey County Council, UKPN and SGN, we created a support framework that proactively offers information to all Surrey residents on how to access Warm Hubs to help stay safe and warm during winter. Warm Hubs were established to provide vulnerable residents living in hard-to-heat homes, and those experiencing fuel poverty, with a place

where they could warm up, have a free hot meal and receive PSR, energy advice and financial support.

Established in and around areas of high need as identified by the deprivation index, the hubs were delivered through a mix of volunteers, Surrey County Council staff, and charity partners, throughout libraries, church halls and community centres. Taking learnings from this collaborative project, we replicated this model in the Sussex area, again working with SGN and UKPN.



#### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ **1,949** households (of which 506 were in SSEN's territory) received direct support with access to personalised energy advice, winter grab bags, debt advice and crisis support.
- ✓ **482,000** households reached through a direct mailer providing information on winter resilience, PSR, CO safety and energy advice.
- ✓ **£3,577** customer financial benefit delivered.

**£0.83 SROI achieved for every £1 spent**



driven by income maximisation and savings from energy efficiency advice.



## Growing partnerships to increase support

Status: **Embedded** **Enhanced**

### We Listened

As outlined on Page 4, it was clear from our engagement with both our Strategic Panels and the wider stakeholder community that whilst our embedded approach to fuel poverty support remained effective, we must go further as the significant impacts of a deepening cost-of-living crisis were felt.

### We Acted

Working with partners, we reviewed our current range of projects to ensure they remained effective and to identify any further gaps in line with changing consumer needs. Through this review we identified a need to enhance our 'point-of-crisis' support. This resulted in several new partnerships being

identified as well as additional funding being awarded to fully established and effective partnerships, delivering a timely boost for customer support over the winter period, as partner resources were stretched.

**23** fuel poverty partnerships, up from 12 in 2021-22

### Positive impact delivered through direct enabling support or critical advice services

	Project	Partners	Description	Total Households Supported	Customer Financial Benefit	SROI
Embedded	Home and Well	Citizens Advice Hampshire, SGN, Hampshire and Isle of Wight CCG, Portsmouth Water, Southampton Water, South East Water	Energy and water support for post hospital leavers	2,196 ↑ 180%	£187,044	£1.87
	Warm and Well	The Footprint Trust	Energy support for the Isle of Wight	2,420 ↑ 102%	£191,481	£17.00
	Highland Affordable Warmth	SGN	Energy support for the Highlands	334 ↑ 65%	£36,827	£4.84
Enhanced	Energy Advice	Action Hampshire/Community Action Surrey	Energy and PSR support for Hampshire	598 ↑ 29%	£32,653	£4.88
	Age Scotland	Age Scotland	Energy support for the over 50's	66 ↑ 43%	£16,658	£4.14
	Energy Advisors	Citizens Advice Scotland	Energy and Income Max advice	1,482 ↑ 55%	£484,219	£0.83
		Centre for Sustainable Energy	Energy and Income Max advice	1,826 ↑ 62%	£290,506	£1.39
	Enabling Fund	Centre for Sustainable Energy	Enabling Fund for Energy Efficiency measures	74 ↑ 95%	£551,403	£9.57
		Warmworks	Enabling Fund for Energy Efficiency measures	75 ↑ 9%	£39,480	£0.19
Empowered by Energy	National Energy Action	Support for Asylum seekers and Refugees	61 ↑ 154%	£11,518	£8.17	
Referral Pathway	HES and YES	Support with Energy Efficiency and Income Max advice	3,371 ↑ 193%	£640,879	£5.82	
New	Energy Resilience Advisors	Change Mental Health	Support for those with mental health issues	84	—	—
	Energy Advisors	Maggies	Support for people with chronic health conditions	656	£289,822	£11.16
		Kidney Care UK	Energy and Income Max advice for people living with Kidney Disease	100	£25,094	£4.06
		Royal Association for Deaf People, Wessex Water, NGED, Bristol Water	Energy and Income Max advice for people who are deaf/hearing difficulties	50	—	—
	Warm Hubs	SGN, UKPN, Surrey Council	Warm hubs giving energy and income max advice	506	£3,577	£0.83
		SGN, UKPN, Sussex Council	Warm hubs giving energy and income max advice	397	£2,630	£0.65
	Young Carers	National Energy Action	Learning modules provided for Young Carers leading to a qualification	20	£1,393	-£0.89*
	CA Arun & Chichester/SGN/(TFPT)	Citizens Advice Arun, SGN, UKPN, Southern Water	Energy and Water support for Arun and Chichester area	320	£7,946	£0.02
CAN/Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch/Dorset	Community Action Network	Energy and Income Max advice	108	£25,085	£9.70	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>14,744</b>	<b>£2,899,098</b>	

\* See Page 9 for explanation

### Positive impact delivered through point-of-crisis support

Point-of-crisis support removes immediate pressure points, allowing customers time to make informed decisions regarding enduring support options available.

Project	Partners	Total households supported	Customer Financial Benefit	SROI
Hardship Fund <b>New</b>	National Energy Action	277	£41,236	£0.14
Winter Packs <b>New</b>	Centre for Sustainable Energy	300	£21,825	£0.09
Fuel Bank Foundation <b>Enhanced</b>	Fuel Bank Foundation	871	£37,301	£0.68

## 3.7 ENSURING OUR SERVICES ARE ALWAYS INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE



Our geographies and the people we serve cover a multitude of different customer needs. Therefore, the services we provide for our customers need to be tailored, specific, inclusive, and accessible, with a view to the future as vulnerabilities adapt and evolve.

We are committed to continually improving the service we provide for customers and the training to support our colleagues in doing so. This year we were one of the first two DNOs to achieve the Inclusive Service Kitemark certification, demonstrating we understand the impact of consumer vulnerability and providing an inclusive and flexible approach to address the needs of a diverse range of customers. We also focused on our PSR Gap areas specifically where cultural differences or language can prove to be a barrier to aiding inclusion, support and understanding.

### Equipping Young Carers in the with energy efficiency tools

Status: **New**

#### We listened

In 2021-22, our Stakeholder Advisory Panel told us that supporting young people in carer roles across the UK was an important group to help support in Energy Education. Due to Covid, it was not possible to provide support immediately. During 2022-23 we re-tested this request with our ISP who confirmed this remained a priority.

#### We acted

Working with National Energy Action and NCFE, a national educational awarding organisation, we developed five training eLearning modules around 'Using Energy at Home' to pilot with Barnardo's Works to upskill 20 learners with a full Level 1 NCFE qualification. The Learning Outcomes of the module covered a mixture of practical advice, simple calculations regarding energy use and cost as well as strategies for using energy

efficiently in a domestic setting. The course content was developed in two formats, for both face-to-face delivery and an e-learning option. The aim of both versions was to promote discussion and learning, to be inclusive and to be engaging for learners. The five short test papers were aimed at Level 1 learners, to accompany the course offering a mixture of matching tasks, multiple choice questions and true / false responses, to be completed as an 'open book' exam to offer support to learners.

"We are delighted with this the results of this amazing pilot. We have fantastic team engagement and both our young people and Project Workers are on board – we all really learned something new. We will take this forward more widely and are already seeing interest from other service areas."

Barnardos Works Tutor

#### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ 20 young carers supported with new skills.
- ✓ 130.6% increase in PSR registrations against the Temporary Young Householder.
- ✓ NEA will continue to work with Barnardo's to support learners and grow the scheme to other service areas.
- ✓ £1,393 customer financial benefit delivered.
- ✓ The low SROI (-£0.89) is due to the deliberately small pilot versus cost of delivery. As support expands, the SROI is expected to rise significantly through efficiencies.



### Empowering refugee communities

Status: **Enhanced**

#### We listened

Empowered by Energy is a unique energy awareness project, developed in response to a community of refugees who were receiving little or no support in the energy market. Our analysis of our PSR gaps identified that engagement with communities of differing cultures, faiths and languages continues to be a key area of focus that requires continual work and support.

#### We acted

After the positive inroads made in 2021-22, together with the NEA and SGN, we **doubled the number of workshops this year**. This was based on expert insight from our partner, NEA, to locate the most prominent areas of need in our north and south regions. The workshops continue to be delivered via face-to-face and online sessions for those that could not attend in person. They were supported by

expert partners from organisations such as the Scottish Refugee Council and Reading and Berkshire Refugee Support Network.

The workshops build a self-sustaining support network to embed useful life skills and make communities more resilient. Without such support, refugees and asylum seekers can quickly find themselves owing hundreds of pounds to an energy supplier they did not know they had. The workshops give them the confidence to take control of their energy bills, and join their PSR.

Participant numbers were limited to 10 per workshop following learnings from the 2021-22 workshops which showed this to be an optimal number for high levels of engagement and interaction between participants who have limited/no English and require an interpreter.



#### Positive impact delivered

- ✓ 61 participants attended the workshops this year funded by SSEN and SGN, **an increase from last year of 154%**.
- ✓ Language as a barrier PSR registrations increased by **31.5%** from 21/22.
- ✓ **£11,518** customer financial benefit delivered.
- ✓ On average, each participant will share their new knowledge with a further **10 community members** each.
- ✓ **£2,565** societal benefit delivered, driven by health benefits associated with debt advice and income maximisation.

**£8.17 SROI achieved for every £1 spent**



driven by income maximisation advice and the issuance of energy efficient appliances.

### Implementing our PSR Financial Vulnerability Needs Code **DNO First**

Informed engagement as part of our ED2 plan led us to include a commitment to implement a financial needs code into our PSR, a DNO first. As a direct result of the growing financial impact consumers are currently experiencing, we have expedited this output and will bring the code in, during 2023, to better serve our customers. Some of the ways in which this new code will inform our service provision includes:

- How we support customers presenting with this needs code in the event of a prolonged outage. For example, where we offer reimbursement for hot food during storms, we will offer fully funded options first such as Just Eat vouchers or arrangements with local facilities.
- Proactive, targeted offering of referrals to our enhanced programme of support through YES Energy Solutions.

### Achieving the Inclusive Service Kitemark



This year SSEN were certified to the BS ISO 22458 standard for Consumer Vulnerability. SSEN are one of only two DNOs, and a further seven organisations to achieve this standard. The Kitemark provides an assurance that we provide an inclusive and flexible service which benefits all consumers, regardless of their personal circumstances and demonstrates our continued commitment to this.

Investing in our colleagues to deliver excellent and inclusive service

Status: **New** **Enhanced**

**We listened**

We continually strive to increase colleagues knowledge and training to support the delivery of an enhanced service for customers.

This year our Customer Contact Centre colleagues told us they would like to enhance their skills and knowledge to support customers with autism. With over 700,000 people in the UK living with autism, it is imperative that we understand the major upset a power outage can bring to a neurodivergent customer's daily routine and the heightened emotional distress.

This is also a focus in our strategic approach to PSR gap closure with our ISP challenging us to increase PSR registrations under the 'Developmental Condition' needs code during 2022-23.



**We acted**

During Neurodiversity Week we commissioned the Autism Experience bus at our Customer Contact Centres in Perth and Portsmouth. The bus is an immersive experience which has been designed to recreate, as far as possible, what it's like to be autistic through a series of overwhelming sensory scenarios, including heightened sense of noise, smell and distorted fields of vision.

We also shared the opportunity to participate with peers from a Transmission business.

**"It's really important that we understand as much as possible about a customer's individual situation and 'see beyond' the power cut itself. The Autism Reality Experience bus gave our teams a vivid understanding of what our autistic customers may be feeling, including sensory overload and distress of upset routines. Through this, colleagues not only feel more informed but also empowered to make service decisions that support specific needs."**

**Gemma Wilson, Head of Customer Contact Centres, SSEN**



**Positive impact delivered**

- ✓ **94** colleagues participated in the training.
- ✓ **100%** stated they felt more informed on the needs of customers living with autism.
- ✓ Our enhanced knowledge has contributed to a **38%** increase from 2021-22 in PSR registrations against the 'Developmental Condition' needs code.

Improving our PowerTrack app accessibility

Status: **Enhanced**

**We listened**

Following customer feedback and an additional accessibility review of our core customer and public platforms, we identified an opportunity to enhance the capability of our fault reporting app PowerTrack for customers who are colour blind.

**We acted**

In June 2022, ahead of any potential storms, we added a colour-blind overlay to PowerTrack. The overlay removes shades of blues, greens and browns that are usually seen on a map and makes any land a grey colour allowing the 'planned', 'unplanned' and 'engineer on site' icons to be much more distinguishable.



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

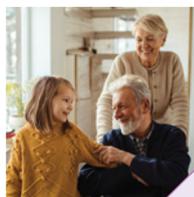
During RIIO-ED1 we have taken an industry-leading position in championing fairness in the transition to net zero and the inclusive uptake of low carbon technologies. Three projects doing just that right now are, Vulnerability Future Energy Scenarios (VFES), Smart & Fair 2, and Household Or Microbusiness Energy Flexibility (HOMEflex). An update on their impacts and next steps are below:

**VFES – Putting customers at the heart of investments**

Working with Imperial College London, The Smith Institute and National Energy Action, VFES was launched to measure and assess consumer vulnerability in a consistent and replicable way, GB-wide. VFES is a live project. It is already proving that a combination of machine learning, foresighting and expert validation is a viable way of analysing and presenting consumer vulnerability indicators to prioritise less resilient communities during network investment planning.

**During 2022-23 we have:**

- Embedded vulnerability considerations into our DFES procurement process and Invitation to Tender for future DFES contracts.
- Shared learnings with other DNOs and with National Grid ESO for their Consumer Building Blocks project.
- Shared the model with consultants and companies responsible for FES and DFES reports across GB.



**Smart & Fair 2 – Embedding fairness**

Smart & Fair Phase 2 is taking the findings from the acclaimed work done in Phase 1 and turning them into actions.

We have increased our funding, shared our consumer vulnerability and connections expertise, and deepened our involvement with CSE to expand the program of opportunities across four categories:

- Tool development and data validation.
- Market monitoring and distributional analysis.
- Implementation of Phase 1 guidelines.
- Initiatives to widen participation.

One significant outcome for consumers is the new Energy Choices Tool which is being rolled out to energy advisors in England, Scotland and Wales to guide consumers to the right low carbon, lowest cost, options for them.

SSEN has worked with CSE to ensure the tool can help consumers in vulnerable situations to realise maximum benefit from the transition to net zero.



**HOMEflex – Fairness in flexibility**

SSEN launched the HOMEflex project in early 2022 to help create an inclusive, fair, and transparent domestic flexibility market; with clear lines of accountability to ensure participants abide by their commitments and to guarantee customers are protected and fairly rewarded. It also benefits flexibility service providers, who will be able to demonstrate their credibility to customers.

Already the project has delivered extensive engagement on the first three of five chapters with Ofgem, BEIS, CAB, suppliers and aggregators. Qualitative research with varied domestic consumer groups has also highlighted their needs and concerns about energy flexibility. Engagement and research will continue this year when HOMEflex outputs will include a Code of Conduct for domestic flexibility providers, frameworks and business models for a compliance scheme and mechanisms for customer complaints which could include dispute resolution and a 'trust mark' for suppliers, aggregators and other registered market facilitators.





“This year SSEN’s Leadership Team met with CAS staff, CAB managers and advisers to improve their understanding of the bureaux experience of delivering energy advice. I was also pleased to meet with Chris Burchell, and welcome SSEN’s commitment to developing a collective agreement on how to support vulnerable communities during the energy crisis.”



**Derek Mitchell,**  
Chief Executive, Citizens Advice Scotland

“The cost-of-living crisis has seen a huge increase in people struggling to afford their energy bills for the first time.

SSEN’s scheme is having a huge impact in addressing this need by helping to address the root causes of fuel poverty, including supporting customers who are finding themselves struggling for the first time. By delivering wrap-around advice via a one-stop-shop model, we are keeping things simple for customers and unlock huge benefits for them.

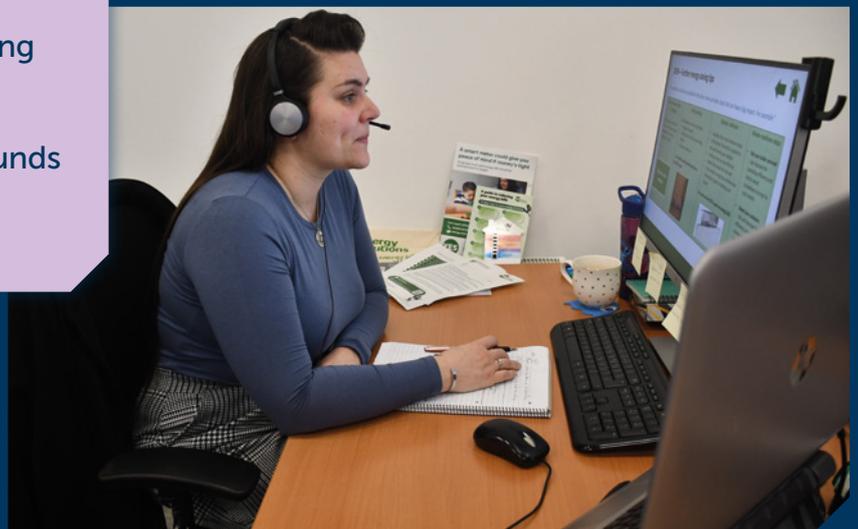
I find speaking to people who might be struggling and giving them advice on how to reduce their energy bills really rewarding. Offering advice on quick, cheap and simple ways to save energy can have such a big impact on reducing energy bills. Something that might seem obvious to us, might not be for the average energy consumer. On top of that we offer support on maximising household income, including checking eligibility for benefits. We’re also able to facilitate access to available grants and funds for local energy efficiency schemes.”

**Katie Redhead,**  
Advice Centre Co-ordinator, YES Energy Solutions

“Maggie’s is delighted to be working with SSEN to raise awareness of the support available to people with cancer and their families through the Priority Services Register. People with cancer often need additional support from their DNO, for example they use more heating, live on reduced incomes and many have mobility issues. Despite this, many aren’t aware that free support is on offer to people registered on the PSR, thepsr.co.uk will help Maggie’s staff to signpost centre visitors to this vital support so they can register with their DNO.”



**Adam Feder,**  
Head of Partnerships, Maggie’s Cancer Care Centres



Page 5 – Working with YES Energy Solutions we have increased the support available for customers through a referral process



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