

Annual Stakeholder Report 2020/21



About us

At Wales & West Utilities, we look after the pipes that keep the gas flowing to heat homes and power businesses and keep the lights on across Wales and south west England.

We respond to gas emergencies and keep communities safe, connect new homes and businesses, and upgrade the gas network so it stays safe today and is ready to transport green energy in the future.

During 2020/21, we engaged widely to help shape that future. We used a range of methods including market research, social media, virtual events and through local community engagement. The insight we gained from this engagement, together with the feedback we get from thousands of daily customer contacts, has helped shape our existing services and activities and is making sure that our future plans take in a broad range of views.

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Introduction

In this unprecedented year, the safety and wellbeing of customers and colleagues has been our absolute priority. As the pandemic progressed, we completely refocused our engagement and work activities as expectations and attitudes evolved quickly.

I am so proud of how our people responded in such exceptional circumstances, delivering the high levels of customer service that have made us trusted and valued by the millions of people who rely on us every day. We managed to achieve a customer satisfaction score of 9.17 out of 10 overall, and retained our BSI Inclusive Service accreditation. With almost 25 percent of our customers living in fuel poverty or vulnerable situations, this tests and benchmarks our approach and services against a trusted standard.

During the pandemic, we involved our stakeholders in how and when we have delivered our work. Customer research and feedback drove the evolution of our working practices, work plans and our communication campaigns. We have changed our delivery plans and approach to respond to changing attitudes and priorities – such as increased concern for the local areas where people live and work, given we now spend so much time in or near our homes.

Listening and responding to customer and other stakeholder views has been equally critical as we focus on transitioning to net zero, making sure no-one gets left behind. Our engagement feedback showed us how complex customers find our industry, so it's our job to be inclusive



in our decisions and planning. This ranges from our unique leadership role using our Pathfinder energy model to making feedback central to our investments. In doing so, we are shaping our services to meet the needs of our customers and stakeholders now for the future.

Establishing the value and impact of what we achieve, through measurement and regular feedback,

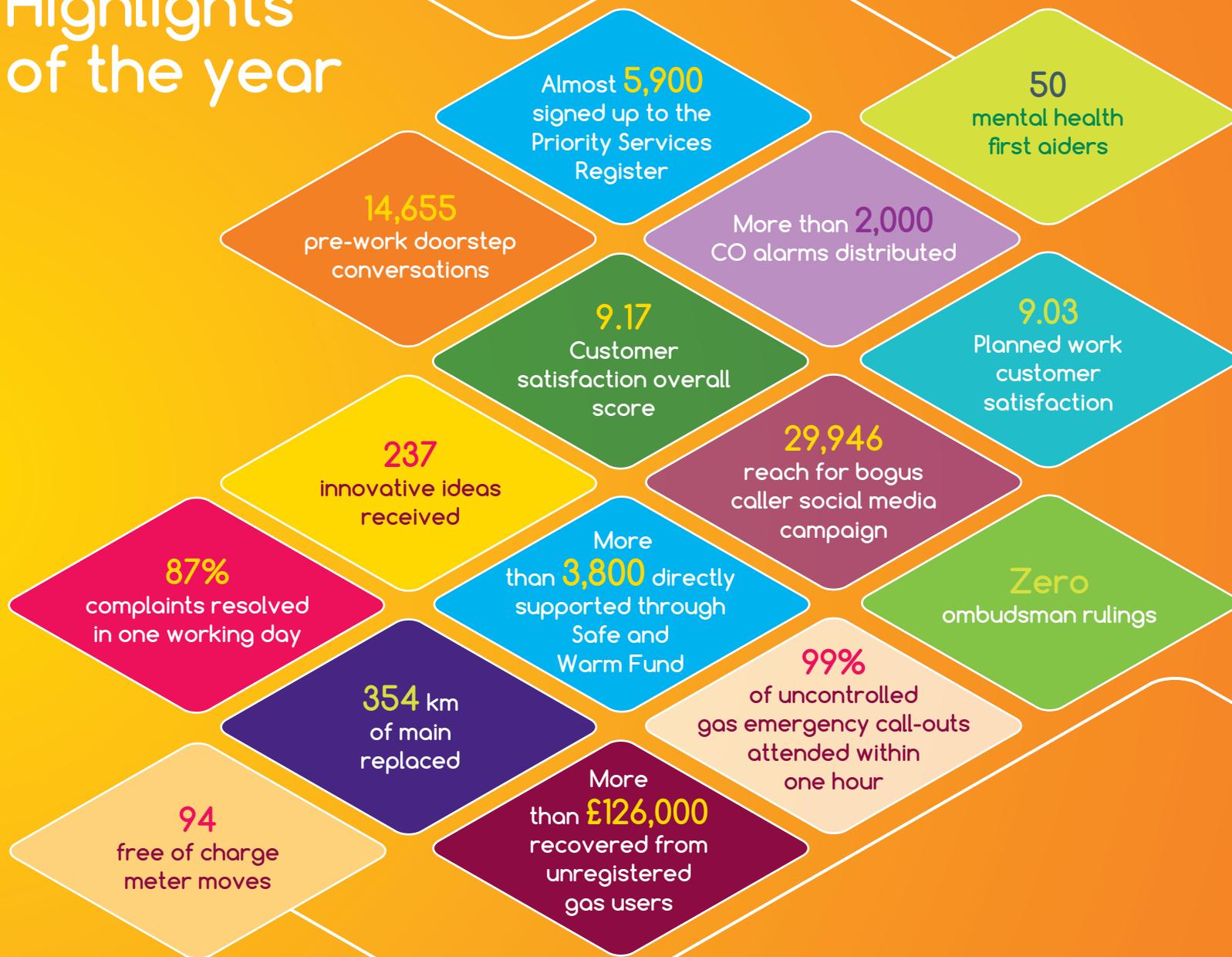
provides assurance we are doing the right things through inclusive services proudly delivered by myself and my colleagues for our customers and communities.

Graham Edwards
Chief Executive

Awards and achievements



Highlights of the year



Our customer service and consumer vulnerability strategies

Alongside our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, our Customer Service and Consumer Vulnerability Strategies support our overall ambition to deliver on the needs and preferences of our customers and other stakeholders.

Our customer service strategy shows how our ambition and customer commitments are delivered through day-to-day actions (see diagram). These are enabled by our people and the values we hold and supported by our systems and processes.

CUSTOMER SERVICE DAY-TO-DAY ACTIONS

<p>Predict Predicting customer issues before they arise</p>	<p>Assess Assessing the most appropriate services</p>	<p>Deliver Delivering a 10/10 service and responding quickly</p>
<p>Embed learning Communicating learnings and measuring delivered impact</p>	<p>Learn lessons Identifying root causes of issues that arose</p>	<p>Follow-up Ensuring actions are embedded in future BAU processes</p>

Our Consumer Vulnerability Strategy aligns with regulator Ofgem's Consumer Vulnerability Strategy. Its objective is to: **Safeguard all vulnerable customers by proactively identifying stakeholders' needs to deliver innovative and tailored support that goes above and beyond our**

obligations. Working with diverse partners, we will continually monitor and annually review the success of our safeguards to ensure they regularly evolve to deliver ongoing value.

This objective is delivered by six supporting capabilities (below).

OBJECTIVE

Analyse and identify Knowing who needs support, when and how

Partner Working with third parties to deliver services we are not best placed to offer

Deliver Providing a cost-effective suite of tailored services that addresses vulnerability

Engage Understanding what support our communities want and need

Facilitate Giving colleagues the skills to identify and manage support for vulnerable customers

Evaluate Ensuring the services have the intended impact and remain the most suitable approach



Responding to customer feedback to deliver better services

Changing circumstances can mean that customer and stakeholder priorities can change quickly – on a temporary, transient or permanent basis.

Our previous research to understand the circumstances and needs of our most vulnerable customers highlighted the significant occurrence and impact of customers experiencing emotional vulnerability, often resulting in anxiety about the unknown and change from normal routine. Our research showed that anxiety experienced specifically about our planned or emergency work is more significant for people living alone and is an important issue for us to address.

The pandemic challenges and associated restrictions added to vulnerabilities and anxieties, so we worked hard to understand pandemic impact on our customers and how we can continue to meet and plan to meet their needs.

In March 2020, as the UK entered lockdown, our planned essential work was paused, while we continued with work to keep the gas flowing reliably and emergency work to continue, while keeping customers and communities safe. Aware of the anxieties that many of our most vulnerable customers were likely to be

experiencing during this time, we wanted to understand our customers' views on restarting our pipe replacement work that would involve our engineers entering homes.

We commissioned in-depth qualitative research work to understand customers' views explaining the nature of our work and proposed safety measures, complementing this with research questions on a large UK survey. The findings showed that, while participants were generally comfortable with an engineer entering their home for planned work, they wanted us to take the necessary precautions including social distancing, hand washing/wearing fresh disposable gloves and a face covering. While the majority of people who were shielding were also comfortable with an engineer entering their home, the results of the large customer survey showed they were significantly more likely than those not shielding to be uncomfortable with an engineer entering their home to undertake work.

Acting on customer research feedback with



insight from our own Customer Support Officers' (CSOs) customer conversations provided us with the confidence to restart mains replacement work during Covid-19, while taking appropriate measures and wearing face coverings. We provided new guidance for engineers and stepped up communication with our CSOs visiting every property where we work checking people's health and making sure they were comfortable with our plans. All in all, we conducted more than 14,500 customer doorstep conversations before we started work and many more subsequently. We decided not to restart planned work in the homes of people who were shielding, but to regularly review plans taking into account the latest Government guidance. We were proud when our 2020/21 average customer satisfaction score for planned work turned out at 9.03 out of 10.

Checking in with our customers

As part of an extensive research programme in 2019, we asked customers about their current priorities for our latest price control activities, starting in April 2021. We decided to speak to customers again in 2020/21, to understand their concerns two years on and how the pandemic has influenced their physical, mental and economic wellbeing and to check if their priorities had changed.

The overall research findings show that all customer groups, including those living in vulnerable situations, are more concerned about the local economy and their community, climate change, their mental health and wellbeing, household finances and keeping up with bills – along with job security.

Women, in particular, say they are significantly more concerned about several areas including the local economy and community. Young people are significantly more concerned about their mental health and wellbeing, household finances, bills and job security.

Our in-depth research highlighted general lifestyle changes – more customers working from home and finding it difficult to maintain work-life balance while caring for and home-schooling children and increased feelings of isolation.

Interviews with people who are digitally

disengaged highlighted a heightened awareness of phone scams, suspicion of emails and, in some cases, anxiety turning people off the internet. For us, this reinforces the importance of our CSOs' role in communities.

Customers' perspectives on our areas of focus

Our research into the relative importance of different customer priorities showed the overall top priority is safety; especially promptly attending emergencies. This priority is particularly important for people aged 65 and over and has remained unchanged since 2019.

Environmental sustainability is also important with recycling waste rising from third to second place and is especially important for 18-24-year-olds. Delivering a net-zero ready network by 2035 features in the top five priorities ranking and is more

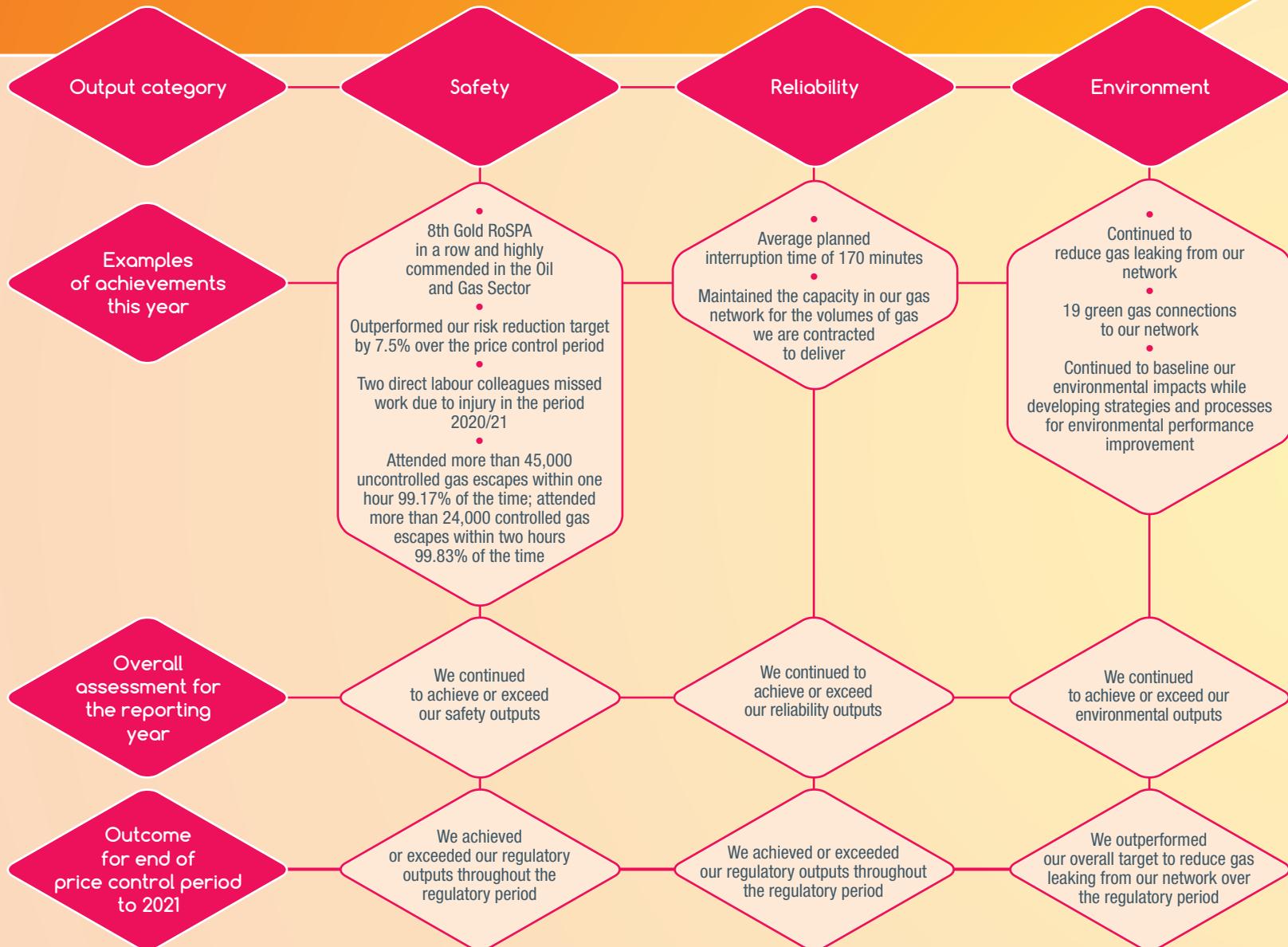
OUR NEW CITIZENS' PANEL

We have set up a Citizens' Panel comprising a group of people aged 16 and over from across our region. The panel, now familiar with the structure and workings of the gas industry, has already provided useful feedback on decarbonising heat including the importance of awareness raising, maintaining safety standards and keeping costs realistic. Members have recently been involved in testing our new self-service gas connections portal.

important for urban customers.

Acting on feedback, we prioritise our emergency service, while also working to support a net-zero transition through our gas pipe replacement work. Our Environmental Action Plan is at the heart of our actions to protect our environment, and we make sure we work in cost-effective ways by effectively targeting our services, in particular to meet the needs of people living in vulnerable situations.

Performance across regulated output categories



Customer Service

- Overall customer satisfaction score 9.17 in 2020/21

- Resolved 87% of complaints within one working day

- £126,965 recovered from unregistered gas users

We continued to achieve or exceed our customer service outputs

We achieved or exceeded our regulatory outputs throughout the regulatory period

Social

- Retained the British Standard for Inclusive Service Provision (BS 18477)

- 718 households benefitted from our 'Healthy Homes, Healthy People' assistance with average savings of £1,242.37 per household

- More than 2,000 carbon monoxide alarms provided to customers in the most vulnerable situations

- Referred almost 5,900 customers to the priority service register who are now able to receive support

Connections

- 99.7% of connections quotations were issued within agreed standards of service including 56% of standard quotations issued on the day of contact

Innovation

- £16.3 million realised in benefits saved through innovation (April 2013 to March 2021)

A sustainable future means our business priorities reflect your priorities

Stakeholders support sustainability commitment

Our five priorities underpin our business operations, aligning with those of our stakeholders.

We constantly seek stakeholder feedback to help shape and improve our business plans and delivery. Over the last year it has been critically important to understand how needs and wants have changed and how we can contribute towards a sustainable future both for stakeholders and our business.

We're proud of our Engagement culture and the values we live and work by every day.

We believe we've delivered valuable outcomes for all our stakeholders this year.

We'd like to share with you some examples of who we've engaged with, what they've told us and how it's shaped what we've done as a result of listening to and acting on this insight.

Demanding
SAFETY
ALWAYS



Driving 
OUTSTANDING
SERVICE

Delivering
VALUE
FOR MONEY



Doing all we can to 
PROVIDE
A RELIABLE
GAS SUPPLY
& PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY 

Designing

 **OUR FUTURE** 



Energy Systems Toolkit supports net zero transition

Designing

OUR FUTURE

We know decarbonising to reach net zero – that is achieving a balance between carbon emitted into the atmosphere and the carbon removed from it – is a key priority for our customers and stakeholders. So, we are supporting energy planners and communities to find out about the impact of different decarbonisation options using our Pathfinder modelling tool.

In 2021, we developed a simplified version of the tool – as part of our Energy Systems Toolkit – in response to the increasing number of requests we were receiving from local authorities and community groups for support with their net zero planning.

The toolkit is designed to be accessible to experts and non-experts alike, supporting organisations' planning at different stages of their net zero journeys. This means stakeholders can explore the whole energy system options they might take to help meet their own specific net zero targets. During 2021, the toolkit will be rolled out to a number of local authorities for further testing ahead of its wider launch later in the year.

KEYFACTS

- Pathfinder analyses current energy data and future options, assessing the viability of any decarbonisation approach. It defines the implications of energy investment plans, showing their impact on energy reliability and the resultant carbon emissions. Our latest model, Pathfinder Plus, can also provide comparisons of the potential customer cost for each energy scenario that is modelled.
- Net zero happens when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed.



Carbon reduction all in one box

Building on the success of our earlier involvement with the Freedom Project – a hybrid heating system trial that used a stand-alone gas boiler and external air source heat pump – we wanted to broaden the appeal.

A new hybrid heating product called HyCompact was developed to be suitable for a wider range of home environments. It combines the gas boiler, electric air source heat pump and smart control software in one unit.

This can be hung on the wall in place of an existing gas boiler.

Over the last year we have been working alongside partners UK Power Networks, PassivSystems and Delta EE to trial HyCompact – initially gaining insight from research into customers' needs and wants in relation to heating systems and the likely appeal of hybrid heating and then installing trial units in homes. The trial seeks to deliver what customers want in terms of cost, comfort, convenience and aesthetics while contributing to the decarbonisation of heat.



WHAT IS A HYBRID HEATING SYSTEM?

Hybrid heating systems use a gas boiler and an electric air source heat pump along with smart control software. The system flexibly switches between using renewable electricity when it is available and green gas at other times – with switching driven by cost and carbon. This joined-up approach is cost effective and avoids the need to overinvest in changes to the building, generation or electricity networks. It also avoids the need for significant disruptive changes in the home that would typically be needed for electric only solutions, such as deep insulation measures, the re-installation of a hot-water tank and changing over to larger radiators and pipework.

Working together to positively change behaviours

Building a more sustainable future involves organisations working together and we're working with Bristol Water, Bristol Waste, University of the West of England, Western Power Distribution, Wessex Water and Bristol Pay to consider if we can promote resource efficiency more effectively together.

We want to understand what messages trigger behaviour changes that will positively impact on local environments and will monitor results through usage and waste volumes. A trial area in Southmead, Bristol has been identified where under a single "Resource West" brand, we can engage in-depth with 100 homes and use the learning gained to support messaging across the whole of Bristol. A detailed plan has been developed and work is underway including analysis of energy and water consumption and waste data for the trial area while engaging with local stakeholders.

Keeping customer concerns at the core with smart collaboration

Customers and other stakeholders said utility companies planning big infrastructure projects need to improve the way they discussed their joint plans ahead of starting work to minimise disruption for communities and this was a priority for them. We needed an area to pilot this in and recognised the need for a more strategic and collaborative approach to medium-term planning in the wider Cardiff region, with large projects such as the South Wales Metro and rail electrification of parts of the Core Valley Line in development.

We brought key infrastructure providers together and created a Strategic Infrastructure Steering Group (SISG) comprising rail, road, energy, water and telecommunications organisations, along with local authorities. We also sought learning from other expert bodies including the Welsh Government, representatives of the National Underground Asset Register (NUAR) project and the Welsh Highways Authorities and Utilities Committee.

We first scoped out the benefits and challenges associated with taking a

strategic collaborative approach to gaining common agreement on projects, understanding this would involve sharing and mapping of big data about essential and critical infrastructure assets.

In 2020, we led on taking forward a data-hub pilot project with the associated objectives of minimising costs, testing data/data flows, the speed of reaching an outcome, proof of concept, and how working together could start to unlock benefits. We needed to first set up confidentiality agreements for sharing information on critical



infrastructure. As the agreements were set up, we digitally transferred data relating to group members' current assets and their planned work projects into a joint data repository using our own ESRI/GIS digital mapping platform. This brought together the big data into a central hub which was designed to be dynamically refreshed as infrastructure project plans inevitably changed and evolved.

The pilot successfully delivered all of its objectives and the SISG confirmed there were significant current and future benefits to be gained from sharing of data and significantly improving the collaborative strategic planning and operational delivery of infrastructure in Wales and the UK.

The project is set to continue linking with the NUAR project.



Driving 
OUTSTANDING
SERVICE

Driving outstanding service

It's all systems go for new connections portal

Our Citizens' Panel is testing the prototype of a new, improved online portal for customers looking to connect to our gas network.

The gas connections portal will offer more self-service options, reducing time and effort for customers. We will use the feedback from the Panel to make sure the design and language of the online portal is clear and simple, ahead of "go-live".

The portal is part of a much wider IT project designed to deliver improved outcomes for stakeholders and our business. This has included streamlining our enquiries and complaints procedure, integrating data to give customer services assistants relevant information at their fingertips from a single sign-in to the customer software system. This significantly reduces the steps colleagues need to take to support customer contacts, meaning a faster, smoother response for customers.

Covid communication tips support tailored customer services

We want to make sure that we are tailoring our services properly to take account of customers' specific needs and are proud we have again retained the BS 18477 accreditation in 2020, acknowledging our achievements in this area.

As we got to grips with the challenges of Covid-19, we quickly adapted to make sure we were still able to provide inclusive service.

Customers told us that wearing masks was preventing deaf customers from lip-reading, so we promptly equipped our Customer Service Officers with transparent protective face guards to continue their customer doorstep

conversations while maintaining social distancing.

We kept colleagues up to date on how they could best support customers during the pandemic by holding awareness sessions to which we invited stakeholders who could provide relevant insights and tips. These included representatives from mental health awareness charity Mind

and also Marie Curie, who ran a session on bereavement. We also hosted representatives from Language Line and Sign-Video, to support on customer communications.

The National Autistic Society has continued to help us expand our autism understanding, providing training during our colleague Priority Services week, to

improve our service delivery. Our Dementia Champions were able to continue to run Dementia Friends' training using adapted materials for virtual engagement.

We also encourage suppliers and their employees to adopt our new Sustainability Charter principles which include diversity and inclusion and the living wage.





Supporting wellbeing in our communities

Supporting wellbeing in the community has never felt more important.

We established a virtual working group of seven large businesses and seven high schools, local to our Head Office, to focus on sharing best practice and initiatives on

wellbeing to support teachers and staff. Experiencing this first-hand, one Head Teacher reached out to the group Chair, Sarah Hopkins – our People & Engagement Director – for support. Sarah volunteered her expertise to develop a tailored school wellbeing strategy, focusing on

supporting wellbeing and mental health, engagement and recognition plans for staff. This benefits pupils by having teachers who are better equipped to cope with their increasing demands. Concerns are increasing that coronavirus has further widened education and

employment inequalities across society, so we see a growing requirement for businesses to take positive action to help narrow the gap. This partnership is set to develop further and we look forward to maximising this approach across our region.

Research guide on vulnerability engagement

With communities recovering from the pandemic, it is increasingly important that businesses understand how they impact on their customers and the communities relying on them.

We launched a guide that explores our engagement with people in vulnerable situations, so we can share what we've been told is an innovative engagement approach.

Engaging with customers in vulnerable situations: a research guide is the result of a research project we carried out over several years with Mindset Research.

The guide's invaluable insights can be read [here](#) or by visiting www.wvutilities.co.uk/media/4102/engaging-with-customers-in-vulnerable-situations-a-research-guide.pdf



Demanding Safety Always



Safety is a key priority for our customers and other stakeholders, so it's a key focus for us.

We consider all aspects of safety, including putting safe working processes and practices in place in relation to our day-to-day physical work as well as making sure that we use best practice to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission and protect the general wellbeing of our colleagues and the wider community.

We are proud to have won the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Gold Award for the eighth consecutive year, while also being highly commended in the Oil & Gas Sector Award.

We were also delighted to be awarded Business in the Community Cymru Responsible Business Champion in 2020 for our approach to wellbeing.



'Most at risk' are key targets of CO campaigns

Superhero Safety Seymour

Younger school-age children just love to hear about the adventures of carbon monoxide (CO) superhero Safety Seymour – and our Gas Safety Ambassadors have been only too keen to visit schools to raise CO awareness with Safety Seymour's support.

When the pandemic meant we

could no longer do this, alongside the other Gas Distribution Networks, we launched a Safety Seymour website, using social media to target parents to show their young children the interactive website's fun-focused CO safety videos, activities and stories.

Safety Seymour delivers part of our CO strategy, focusing activities on those most at risk from the effects of CO.



Supported by research conducted with the other gas distribution networks, we identified that young people between 16-24 were more likely than others to not have an audible CO alarm and to not realise the importance of having their gas appliances serviced regularly, potentially putting them at risk of CO poisoning.

It could be game over...

To raise CO awareness for these young people we first researched how best to reach this age group and then launched an innovative campaign.

We ran the campaign on the social channels best suited to this age group, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and

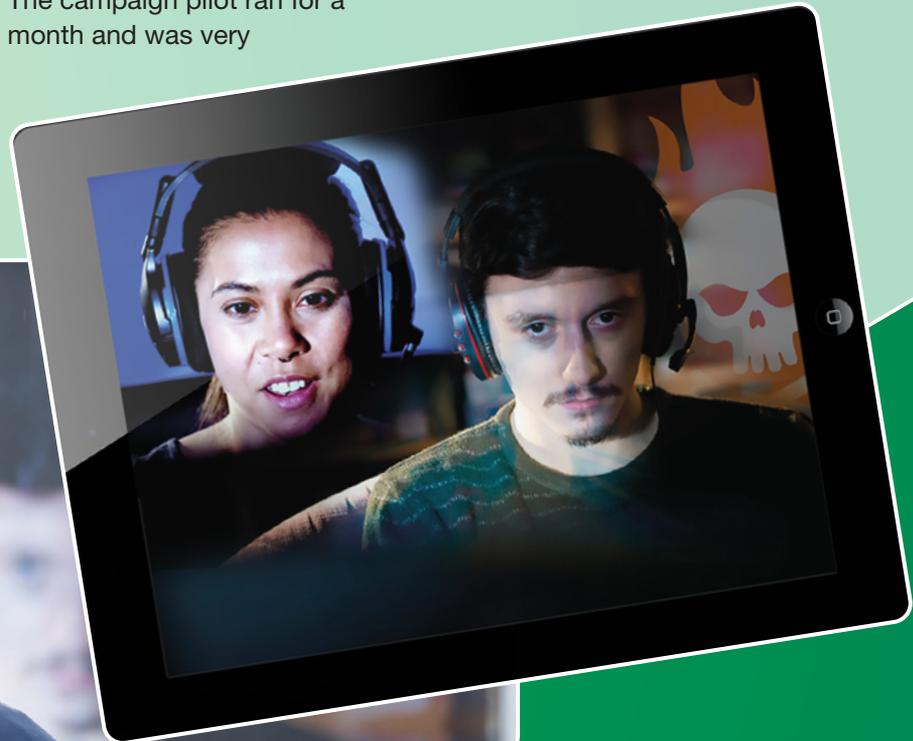
TikTok. The social campaign was supported by advertising on streaming services Spotify, Octave Radio and ITV Hub, running very targeted adverts based on user demographic.

Working with experienced partners, the Game Over campaign used this compelling creative message based on video gaming with a simple call to action, urging young people to learn how to stay

safe, including identifying the symptoms of CO, getting an audible CO alarm, getting their gas appliances serviced annually, and knowing what to do in an emergency.

The campaign pilot ran for a month and was very

successful, so now we are working with the other gas networks on a plan for a nationwide campaign rollout, with an enhanced call to action and endorsement from social media influencers.





Community groups prove essential in Covid support ambition

As the first wave of Covid-19 began, the UK Government urged people to volunteer to support the NHS and the most vulnerable in our communities, so we quickly engaged with local authorities, Health Boards and Resilience Forums offering our support.

We paused our planned gas pipe replacement work and other work, including new gas connections complying with Government guidelines, and focused on responding to gas emergencies and essential maintenance work.

This provided the perfect

opportunity for our workforce to help with deliveries of essential supplies as needed but, while our engagement and offer of support was initially welcomed by these groups, our opportunity to provide meaningful support was limited due to local authorities' management differing from county to county.

Based on feedback from these stakeholders, it became clear that financial support would be more beneficial to those most in need – so, alongside our existing colleague volunteering and charity fundraising 'Match Funding Scheme', we developed our Safe and Warm Fund.

The Fund enabled front-line organisations responding to the Covid-19 crisis to apply for support. These included community and parish councils, not-for-profit co-operatives or community interest companies, charities and community groups. Recognising the sharp rise in those finding themselves in vulnerable situations due to the pandemic, we wanted support to be available to a range of organisations from food banks to domestic abuse charities. We also wanted this support to be

as targeted as possible, allowing us to maximise not only the impact of our funds on communities but also the support offered by existing groups.

A structured, but simple, application process enabled voluntary organisations to tell us what mattered to the communities they support and how they could make the biggest difference. This, in turn, enabled us to successfully identify and map the benefits applicants could offer our communities. Recognising the urgency of the situation, we changed internal processes to allow us to make support payments quickly. The ease of application and pace of payment (just over one month from the opening of applications to receipt of funding) helped fill a gap identified by stakeholders and organisations working in the front line.

This approach delivered significant benefits, helping local organisations extend or relaunch their services, directly supporting more than 3,800 of the most vulnerable people in our communities and many more indirectly. For our part, we have gained valuable insight into the workings of these community groups and the people they support, which we would not otherwise be able to access.

One of the organisations to benefit was Age Connects Torfaen. Before Covid-19 hit, they ran a lunch club for more than 200 elderly and vulnerable people a week. Supported by the rapid award of our funding, they were able to offer a hot, home-cooked meal delivery service.

"Our hot meal delivery service has been such a hit and the feedback has been positive. So much that we have adapted further to run virtual lunch clubs, for those with access to the internet.

"The benefits of a home-cooked meal are evident and we are delighted that the funding allowed us to continue so that local people across Torfaen are able to feel connected to their friends."

Emma Wootten, Development Co-ordinator for Age Connects Torfaen



High safety stakes for high risers

Keeping on top of information to keep customers living in high-rise buildings safe, became ever more important in light of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

So, our large-scale engagement programme with customers living in these buildings, alongside the building owners, local authorities and Fire &

Rescue Services, took a priority focus. Together we have explored and provided advice on building work plans and shared information on our network investment plans. We expanded to include three to five storey buildings in our programme, and have now surveyed or inspected 5,033 and a further 33 high-risers during 2020.

We've also started an identification programme on commercial properties such as shopping centres, known as complex distribution systems, and agreed a programme of surveys and stakeholder engagement for these over the next five years.

Better regulation and controls in these multiple occupation

buildings will help keep residents safe, and we've taken a role in this. We were involved in 2021 with the Welsh Government 'Safer Buildings in Wales: A Consultation' and have a new Distribution Asset Manager role overseeing this critical work programme.

Doing all we can to provide a reliable gas supply and promote sustainability

Doing all we can to
**PROVIDE
A RELIABLE
GAS SUPPLY**
& PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

In 2020/21, we invested £69.5m in our gas pipe network, replacing 354 km of old metal pipes with a more durable version able to transport the green gases that are connecting into our system, resulting in improvements to reliability, reduced emissions from leakage and long-term sustainability.



Building a sustainable future

Sustainability is an important priority for our stakeholders and is a key business theme for us and we are committed to aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) to support us in achieving this.

We also recognise that building a sustainable future means working together so, working with other Gas Distribution Networks, we published our first joint

sustainability report along with National Grid Transmission.

Sustainability Report – Our Commitments 2021 is the joint Gas Networks' commitment to the UN SDGs. It identifies our common sector goals and is aimed at driving consistency in working towards shared industry ambitions.

The report highlights a mix of case studies against each of the common priority goals, and it is available to read on our website [here](#) or visit

www.utilities.co.uk/media/4147/gas-goes-green-sustainability-report-our-commitments-2021.pdf



Old hats and new tools help our sustainability ambitions

Customers and other stakeholders have told us that recycling waste is one of their top priorities. We are also keen to reduce the impact of our construction spoil by reusing it. This can be challenging – particularly in south west England where there are limited reuse facilities.

It means taking waste to other recycling sites can involve

longer, costly journeys – with associated harmful vehicle emissions. To address this, we’re supporting ReCon Soil, a new project led by the University of Plymouth, which is developing a safe and sustainable source of healthy soils from construction waste.

Colleagues are also scratching their heads and coming up with great recycling ideas to support our sustainability ambitions. One colleague suggestion is to recycle our hard hats, and this is now being trialled. We’ve also

made progress with our corporate green footprint and “greening” our company car fleet, while also improving the energy efficiency of our properties – our new Redruth depot, opened in 2020, has a net zero Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating.

Measuring impact is important to baseline our activities and as proof of concept, so we used the Defra metric for biodiversity to do this during 2019/20.

We’re expanding on this and over the last year we’ve engaged on the development of the ‘NATURE’ tool. This is being developed as an industry standard for the built environment sector to objectively assess, manage and implement environmental net benefits, based on locally defined priorities and objectives. We are committed to trialling this “free to use” tool to support its continual development.



Solar energy at Redruth Depot



Vehicle charging at Redruth Depot

KEYFACTS

- By recycling our hard hats, we could save 219 kg a year diverted from landfill, based on buying 547 new ones a year. If the trial is successful, this will potentially divert more than 2,500 hard hats from landfill over the next five years.



Delivering value for money



We want to make sure our safety awareness campaigns deliver real value for money. So, in raising awareness of the risks of CO to a hard-to-reach group – young people – we employed a very creative, highly targeted online campaign. It definitely hit the spot, driving awareness and action among 16-25-year-olds, achieving high levels of engagement.

We calculate the wider benefit to society of our activities using our social return on investment tool which enables us to prioritise the activities that deliver most value. Our Healthy Homes Healthy People programme has continued to bring wide benefits to people living in fuel poverty. With households experiencing reduced income and spending more time at home, more people are struggling to pay their energy bills. To tackle this, it was important to work with partners to

provide advice on energy savings while maximising income. Project engagement largely switched from face-to-face to telephone conversations, which brought some limitations, but large savings have still been secured for beneficiaries – with average savings of £1,242 per household. Our social return on investment calculation showed that for every £1 spent on the Healthy Homes Healthy People initiative, there would be £11.25 of wider net benefits (2020 base).

Healthy Homes Healthy People assistance

Area	Savings	Households assisted	Average saving per household
South Wales	£303,260.46	211	£1,437.25
North Wales	£487,549.44	377	£1,293.23
Cornwall	£101,210.81	130	£778.54
	£892,020.71	718	£1,242.37



Future focus

We've just started the first year of our new five-year price control period and embarked on delivering the commitments we made to our customers in our Business Plan in a way that meets the changing needs of our stakeholders. In the coming months we will focus on:

- continuing to embed our culture, where sustainability, innovation and stakeholder engagement are our core business ethics, and not forgetting colleague, customer and community wellbeing
- continuing to adapt, develop and test and include new ways to engage with us, such as self-service intelligent options
- using the things we learn from our Citizens' Panel trial to support our decision making
- encouraging new ideas, to evaluate and take forward work and initiatives that will support people living in vulnerable situations.



Contact us



If you'd like to keep up to date with our stakeholder e-newsletter *Let's Connect* you can register at www.wwutilities.co.uk/stakeholderengagement.



If you'd like to get in touch with our Stakeholder team, you can email engagement@wwutiities.co.uk. Your views are important to us – and we look forward to hearing from you.



If you have a new idea for a product, service or research that might be relevant to what we do, our Innovation team would be delighted to hear from you – please email innovation@wwutilities.co.uk. Our challenges are on our website at www.wwutilities.co.uk/innovation.



Our Warm Home Assistance scheme can provide financial help with new gas connections and you can find out more by emailing warmhomeassistance@wwutilites.co.uk.



If you fancy joining our team, our latest job vacancies are on our website at www.wwutilities.co.uk/about-us/our-company/careers.



Remember, if you
smell gas, call us
free on 0800 111 999

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