

Annual Stakeholder Report

2024

About us

We own and maintain more than 35,000 kilometres of gas pipes and supply gas to around 2.5 million households and businesses, serving a population of around 7.5 million people. We don't sell gas; instead, we use our extensive network of pipes to transport gas throughout Wales and the south west of England.

Our customers trust us to respond to gas emergencies and keep their 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.

We work with a range of stakeholders and communities to develop sustainable, innovative and affordable energy solutions. Part of our role is to contribute positively to the quality of life and wellbeing of our customers and the communities we serve. That's why we work around the clock and invest in our gas network to successfully deliver gas to homes and businesses, offering the very best service for our customers now and for generations to come.



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Introduction

Welcome to our annual round-up of 2024 highlights and the benefits they have brought to our consumers and stakeholders. This report aims to reinforce our aspiration to lead the industry in innovation, inclusivity, and community benefits.

2024 was a significant year for us. We developed, finalised, and submitted our 2026-2031 Business Plan to Ofgem, detailing the ambitious commitments we propose to deliver for our consumers and stakeholders. Ofgem will make a final determination on our Business Plan proposal in December 2025, ready for implementation from April 2026.

Our investment planning and delivery are shaped and refined by listening to, and acting on, consumer and stakeholder insights. Thank you to everyone who participated in our engagement activities last year and helped shape our Business Plan. We hope you will continue to support us in refining our services so we can act in the best interest of the communities we serve.

In this report, you will read about our support for industrial decarbonisation through participation in the hydrogen-focused HyLine Cymru project. You will also read about a new initiative funded by Ofgem's Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance. This project aims to help thousands of older consumers stay safe and warm in their homes. We also highlight our strides towards a sustainable and inclusive future and our recognition for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion efforts – though we acknowledge there is still work to be done in this area.

We remain dedicated to our core operations, ensuring a safe and reliable gas supply to everyone who relies on us daily. This focus earned us our 11th Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents Gold Award for Safety in 2024 – making us one of only two utility companies in the UK to achieve this impressive accolade.

We hope you enjoy reading our report. If there is anything you would like to discuss, our engagement team would be delighted to hear from you. Their contact details are at the end of the report.

Graham Edwards OBE
Chief Executive

Our ambition

Trusted to expertly serve customers and communities with safe, reliable and affordable energy services today, whilst investing wisely to create a sustainable, greener future.

Our priorities

Doing all we can to provide sustainable energy

We are working to achieve net zero targets and deliver reliable, greener energy for heat, power and transport.

Driving outstanding service

We strive to exceed customer expectations by offering fair, inclusive, quality services while looking after those in need.

Demanding safety always

We never compromise on the safety, wellbeing and health of our colleagues and customers and continuously improve standards.

Designing our future

We're building a skilled, resilient, diverse team to work with stakeholders and help our communities and society thrive.

Delivering value for money

We always spend and invest money wisely, working smarter to offer affordable services that give value for money.

Demanding safety always

Our stakeholders continue to tell us that safety is a top priority and we are committed to safeguarding our consumers, communities and colleagues. We maintain high safety standards in our daily operations, secure our sites, data, and network, and actively raise awareness about the dangers of carbon monoxide.

Award-winning high standards

We are immensely proud of our safety record. Our achievements in this high-priority area for stakeholders have been consistently recognised by safety standards agencies.

In 2024, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) **awarded us our 11th consecutive gold award** for our exemplary health and safety performance. The RoSPA Health and Safety Awards competition is the largest occupational health and safety awards programme in the UK and one of the most prestigious and recognised schemes in the world. The gold award recognises the commitment of everyone in the business and reflects their dedication to continually meeting the high standards we set ourselves.

Gas industry awards recognition

Our dedication to safety and innovation was further recognised by the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers (IGEM) at its annual Gas Industry awards in London, where we were delighted to receive the IGEM Safety Award for our continued focus on preserving the wellbeing of our team and the communities we serve.

This year, we also scooped the Linesearch before U dig (LSBUD) Best Damage Reporting Process Award for our continued reduction in third-party damages since becoming an LSBUD member. Awarded as part of National Safe Digging Week, the accolade recognises the work our Plant Protection team does to engage with customers on site before works start and provide safety guidance to minimise the risk of damage to our network.



We celebrated our
11th RoSPA Gold award

Being vocal about the silent killer

We know how important safety is to our consumers and stakeholders and we are committed to making sure everyone can heat their homes and businesses in the safest way possible. We have been working on a number of campaigns to raise awareness among consumers about the dangers of **carbon monoxide (CO)**, dubbed the “silent killer”.

During CO Safety week, we launched our annual campaign with the support of our Gas Safety Ambassadors to raise awareness about the symptoms and dangers of CO poisoning – the odourless, invisible gas. This campaign featured an interactive game “Crack the COde” that offered players the chance to win an iPad while delivering key safety messages. It also reminded stakeholders of the Gas Emergency number to call **(0800 111 999)** with CO-related concerns.

Alongside this, we joined forces with the other Gas Distribution Networks in a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of CO that focuses on seasonal risks. The multi-channel campaign provides awareness messaging about the dangers of CO poisoning and provides vital safeguarding information so people can protect themselves from the “silent killer”.

Our Gas Safety Ambassadors programme has delivered a series of gas safety workshops across our network to local communities including Additional Learning Need students hosting an exhibition stand within the Welsh Government building in Cardiff Bay, the Senedd, which was well attended by Senedd members.

Our partnership with Gas Safe Charity delivered CO workshops for safeguarding organisations such as Care & Repair and MIND. These sessions focus on the signs and symptoms of CO poisoning and the support services available, with the aim of helping these groups protect themselves and their clients. In 2024, we educated 64 key workers in these workshops and are planning to deliver more in 2025.

Find more information on our CO campaign [here](#).



Demanding
safety always

FACT FILE

Our Gas Safety Ambassadors reached more than 12,000 young people in 2024 across 372 sessions, delivering 463 hours of messaging.

Doing all we can to provide sustainable energy

Sustainability is important to our stakeholders and is at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to supporting the transition to a sustainable and resilient energy system, reducing our environmental impact and promoting low or no carbon energy sources.

A pipeline to net zero

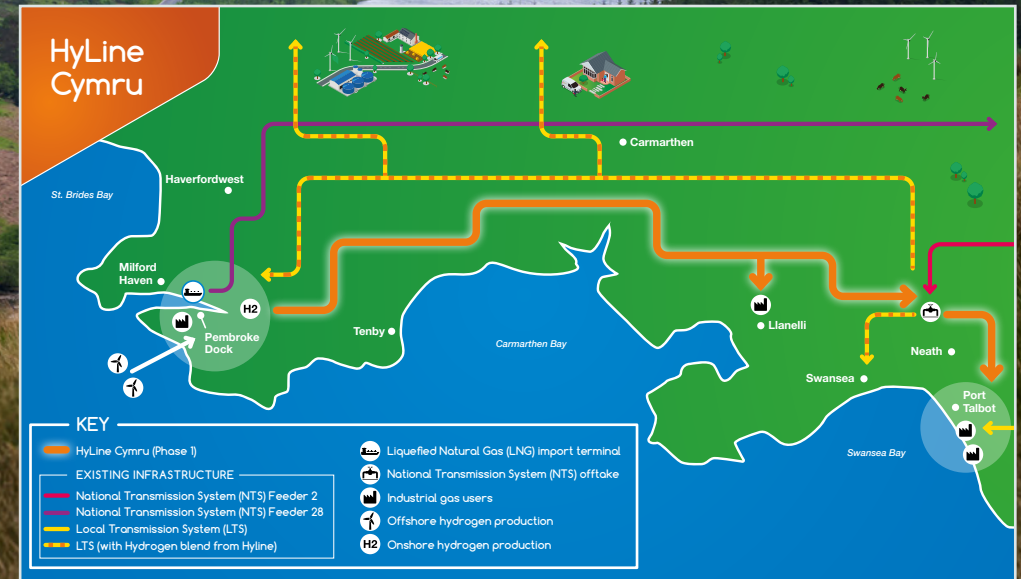
Central to our sustainability plans is making sure the infrastructure is in place to support the delivery of greener gas to homes and businesses. That's why we have developed the pioneering HyLine Cymru project to support the decarbonisation of industry, working collaboratively with partners in the South Wales Industrial Cluster.

HyLine Cymru is a proposal to build a new 130-kilometre hydrogen pipeline from Pembrokeshire to Port Talbot, which will transport a home-grown, low-carbon energy source to industrial customers while helping unlock the potential for floating offshore wind by providing a route to market for clean energy producers.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Hyline Cymru.

By replacing natural gas (methane) with low-carbon hydrogen, the project could enable a reduction of up to 3.2 million tonnes of CO₂e a year from industry while securing and creating hundreds of jobs during construction and operational phases.

To engage and involve stakeholders in the project, we held a drop-in session at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay in early 2024. Attended by Members of the Senedd, including some from their Climate Change Committee, the event outlined the benefits of the project and how it could help us achieve our net zero targets.



Hydrogen innovation

Our stakeholders told us how important sustainability is to them and we believe the best way of becoming more sustainable is to implement evidence-based solutions. That's why we've launched a range of innovative initiatives aimed at facilitating more green gas production and distribution, demonstrating the feasibility of hydrogen and making our operations more sustainable.

In partnership with automotive and green energy developer First Hydrogen, we trialled a hydrogen-powered van to assess its performance against a number of metrics, including range, refuelling and towing. We also worked with green hydrogen producer Protium Green Solutions and hydrogen refuelling company Hyppo Hydrogen Solutions to develop the ecosystem to support our operations.

We recognise that to be able to use hydrogen, we need new sources of clean production and storage, which is why we have launched two projects to address these inter-connected challenges.

We are working on a project to produce green hydrogen from impure water sources such as rainwater, storm overflow and wastewater using renewable electricity. So far, the results have been impressive and the technology we are using could remove the practical and cost-related barriers to green hydrogen production.

To explore how hydrogen storage options can integrate with the future energy system, we are collaborating with Northern Gas Networks and Progressive Energy on a project investigating the potential for storage in aquifers. Currently, most work on storing hydrogen focuses on depleted gas fields, but aquifers may be a cheaper option while still offering the equivalent operational performance.



Doing all we can to
provide sustainable energy

We are committed to designing a future that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable and are working to create a diverse workforce.

Inclusive initiatives

We have made significant strides forward in our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) efforts in the past year. This is an important area of focus for us internally as well as helping us support the wider community.

The Women's Inclusion Network (WIN) is one of our groups that brings together employees with shared identities and/or interests.

Along with our Future Generations Group and Accessibility group, WIN is set up and run by colleagues, to help create an inclusive workplace, foster a sense of community and boost employee engagement.

Our internal ED&I initiatives have included the launch of Thrive, a wellbeing-focused newsletter distributed among all colleagues, and the appointment of a new Wellbeing Advisor.

The work we have been doing has been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, which awarded us the Best Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Initiative at its annual CIPD Awards Wales. Judges praised our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace that prioritises psychological safety, authenticity and transparency.



Prioritising consumer support

In July 2024, we launched a team dedicated to providing priority customers with customised support, including communicating via preferred methods, arranging meter services, offering gas safety support and making referrals for extra help.

The team also helps source replacements for obsolete appliances, provides suitable heating and cooking options during long interruptions to service and co-ordinates follow-up work with third parties such as gas suppliers and landlords.



Designing
our future

FACT FILE

- 11,337** Customers referred to join the Priority Services Register
- 46** Safeguarding referrals
- 45** Locking Cooker Valves fitted to keep customers safe in their homes

We're dedicated to understanding what's important to our consumers so that we can meet and exceed their expectations. Addressing the needs of consumers in vulnerable situations is a particular focus.

Meeting expectations

To meet consumer expectations, we have engaged with key stakeholders, including colleagues, customers, and community partners. Our adoption of the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) "Service Experience Model" embeds the right culture and drives, transforms, and future-proofs our consumers' experience. This framework helps build a service culture with necessary skills for better engagement and a strategic vision led from the top.

Our efforts have been rewarded with customer satisfaction scores of over 9/10 in surveys for planned work, gas connections, and responding to gas emergencies, reflecting our commitment to exceptional service.



Looking after those most in need

In a bid to reduce the impact and severity of fuel poverty, we have committed to two years' funding for the Care & Repair Cymru charity's "Older not Colder" project.

Funded through our Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA), the charity's Home Energy Officers will help consumers aged over 60 to keep their homes warm and energy efficient and is expected to help 8,500 households over the two years of the project.

As well as helping maximise customers' income through benefit entitlement checks and broadening access to energy efficiency grants, the charity will provide energy advice and signposting to help manage fuel debt. Home Energy Officers will share information about the risks of carbon monoxide and how to register for the Priority Services Register.

Being at the annual Care & Repair conference gave us a great opportunity to hear first-hand from key workers and other stakeholders about some of the challenges faced by people in vulnerable situations and how they can best be supported, to inform targeting our future vulnerability support.



Driving
outstanding service

Priority Services Register (PSR)

Did you know every gas, water and electricity supplier and each of the distribution network operators have what is called a Priority Services Register (PSR)? This helps us and other utilities to provide the support that really looks after those who need it most.

We know it's important to our consumers to provide cost-effective services while maintaining high standards of quality and we strive to do this by driving efficiencies, to make sure consumers get the best possible value.

Vulnerability support in our communities

Through our Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA), we have funded a range of projects to support people experiencing fuel poverty.

Plymouth Energy Community (PEC)

We worked with PEC to support more than 20,000 people. PEC provides energy efficiency advice and helps people maximise their income. PEC also helps people better engage with their energy supplier and provide information on the Priority Services Register (PSR).

PEC offers a walk-in service and its advisors also visit people in their homes to provide tailored support.

YES energy solutions

We have teamed up with YES, who offer a free energy advice helpline to customers in the south west of England, funded in part through our VCMA, which helps customers save on energy bills. The organisation aims to help more than 4,200 customers save an expected average of £502 per household. It provides energy-saving tips and information on locally available funding and support with their energy bills.

Action for Caerau and Ely (ACE)

Also through our VCMA, we fund a project with ACE who aim to support 1,620 people in or at risk of fuel poverty. This project supports eligible community members through outreach sessions in GP surgeries, by signing them up for the PSR and getting access to programmes such as the Warm Home Scheme to help maximise their income.



At the cutting edge of customer engagement

Stakeholder and consumer engagement is our primary method of making sure our decisions are relevant to the people we serve. By putting our communities at the heart of what we do and engaging in tailored ways, we identify our stakeholders' wants and needs while maximising the value we add.

We have become one of the first adopters of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) engagement analysis tool created by Sirio Strategies. The AI tool enables swift and accurate analysis, synthesis and triangulation of insight, which has sped up the process of accessing precise and true analysis of stakeholder insights. It gives us the ability to quickly follow up the answer to a question with further questions, to develop a thorough understanding of consumer and stakeholder insight.

The tool works by rapidly analysing our engagement insight data, robust external reports and credible third-party engagement feedback. We gain valuable insight to help shape our business decision-making without having to manually trawl through research reports to find information, which offers us a real value for money alternative.



We are Wales & West Utilities

We are a Gas Distribution Network (GDN) that transports gas to customers through our 35,000km of pipe. We invest £2.5 million every week in the maintenance and replacement of our network.

We serve diverse communities across cities, towns, villages, and open countryside. We provide a safe and reliable gas supply to 7.5 million customers across 2.5 million homes and businesses across Wales and south-west England.

We currently employ over 2,000 skilled and experienced colleagues who help deliver our service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We also respond to 90,000 gas emergencies every year.

Delivering
value for money

The AI tool in action

In 2024, 200+ diverse reports providing relevant insight were uploaded to our AI tool for analysis, supporting business planning.

Contact us

Your feedback is valuable to us!
Please feel free to email us at –
engagement@wwutilities.co.uk

Find out more about our plans for
2026 to 2031 [here](#).

Our [Business Plan](#) details each of our
commitments, our business areas,
and how our decisions have
been shaped by consumers
and stakeholders.



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