

# Transforming our Communities

Our Responsibility Framework  
Annual Report 2020/21





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## A NOTE FROM PAUL BIRCHAM, REGULATION AND COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR

We are now in our third year of embedding our 'Transforming our Communities' responsibility framework. Keeping a safe and reliable flow of energy to 5 million customers is core to our business but over the past year our role as a critical worker has become that much more important and complex. Although this has been an unprecedented year for our customers, colleagues and business I am pleased that we have continued to make progress and perform against the goals we committed to in 2019/2020 despite the pandemic.

We know that our role will become increasingly important as the demand for electricity increases and as more businesses and customers adopt low carbon technologies and reduce their carbon footprint in the future. We have committed to be at the forefront of leading the North West on their net zero carbon journey. However, as an essential service provider, throughout the pandemic, maintaining the electricity network to homes, businesses and hospitals was more important than ever and highlighted not only the crucial role we play in keeping our customers lives running now and, in the future, but ensuring their, and our colleagues, wellbeing and safety.

This report is being published as we continue to face the unprecedented impact from COVID-19 which we know will have a lasting effect on our region going forward. As a critical worker our business and colleagues have been flexible and adapted quickly to ensure we continue to operate at normal service levels while keeping customers and colleagues safe.

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I am incredibly proud of the work we have achieved this year and take pride knowing that our business and colleagues are adaptable and switched on to continue to provide a reliable service no matter the circumstances.

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Despite the challenges of a global pandemic and national and regional lockdowns, we remained focused on achieving the responsible business goals that we set out, flexing our approach to meet our commitments during these unprecedented circumstances. We have still been able to make a significant difference in our communities, environment and ensuring the wellbeing of our colleagues and partners.

## A NOTE FROM PAUL BIRCHAM, REGULATION AND COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR

Collaboration is pivotal to our approach and working side-by-side with our customers and stakeholders ensures we provide the best support to our communities, colleagues and partners. This year we have introduced a number of new partnerships and initiatives to improve and support our colleague's wellbeing, support our most vulnerable customers and lower our carbon footprint. We have continued to improve opportunities for our communities and colleagues, particularly around our diversity and inclusion (page 12) and being a responsible employer and partner (page 13-17).

In parallel with delivering a reliable and safe service we have continued our commitment to leading the North West to net zero. On page 20 we share with you how we are driving down our own carbon emissions and how we are helping customers, our region and colleagues to do the same. This year many of us gained a greater appreciation of our local areas and the benefits of the natural environment, on page 25-26 we share how we are enhancing biodiversity and how we are reducing our waste and resource use.

It is important that we continue to inspire and provide opportunities for the next generation of engineers and employees and this year we have introduced another 19 high level apprentices. We also took the opportunity to respond to the challenges of school closures and home schooling and developed our new Bright Sparks online programme that helped teachers deliver Key Stage 2 circuits curriculum material to pupils with digital flexibility during the pandemic.

This has also been a crucial year for our business as we have been developing our draft business plan for our next price period, RII0-ED2 from 2023-2028. The plan sets out more than £2bn investment in the region's network before 2028, and we've managed to keep customer bills low with just a £2.03 per year increase. Our bills in the North West are already lower than almost all other networks, and we expect them to remain that way while delivering the plan our region wants and needs. On page 33 we share with you the development of our business plan and what this means for our business, customers and communities going forward.

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It is important that our activities contribute to the success of our region and support our environment, colleagues, customers and communities. COVID-19 has created a lot of uncertainty across our region, our partners and also our economy. We have committed to bring forward Green Recovery projects to support our region's economic recovery from COVID-19.

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I am pleased with our performance this year and the accountability our senior leaders and colleagues have taken. Each area of our framework is managed by a goal lead and this year they share their activities, measurements and goals for 2021/2022 ensuring we remain accountable and dedicated to change and growth within the region.

We hope you enjoy reading our 'Transforming our Communities' annual report and celebrate with us the incredible work Electricity North West are doing to provide a better North West for all.



Paul Bircham

Regulation and Communications Director

# 'TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITIES' RESPONSIBILITY FRAMEWORK

Our framework outlines our commitment to social, economic and environmental issues and how we take a responsible approach to our people and partners, our community and our environment.

This year we have embedded our framework even further across our business and within our communities. Our responsibility as a business lies not only with providing an essential service, maintaining the electricity network and investing in the future of electricity demand, but ensuring we take responsible approach to our activities and processes.

Despite having to adjust our plans and actions this year due to the pandemic we have been able to deliver great work against our 'Transforming our Communities' framework and goals, in parallel with developing new projects and outcomes.

By focusing on three key areas that align to our Purpose, the framework demonstrates how we consider social, environmental and economic impact which we have ensured is reflected in our activities around our people and partners, our communities and our environment.

This year more than ever we have played a crucial role in our region and although we have continued to meet our day-to-day commitments we have increased support to our colleagues, communities and environment.

Sponsored by our Executive Leadership Team and managed by our senior leaders, each goal lead sets out our activities and outputs within the year to enable us to reflect on what we achieved in the previous year. The framework was launched in 2019 and over the past two years we have been working hard to instil key measurements for our goals to allow us to better track our performance both qualitatively and quantitatively. These goals are monitored internally every quarter, reported to our directors and Board and publicly shared as part of this annual report.

In this report we present a review of our activities over the past year and look at how we performed against our goals and measures we set and share with you our ambitions for the coming year.





# Our response to COVID-19 pandemic



In March 2020 the UK was impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic, it has affected everyone, every community, charity and business in some way. Our role became vital to keep electricity flowing and our communities' lives running, ensuring that hospitals and other key services could operate efficiently and that people could comfortably be in their homes for work, school, shopping and online socialising.

We acted fast to ensure that we could still provide the best 24-hour service during the pandemic and keep our customers' lives running while ensuring the safety of our workforce. We quickly put in place processes that have allowed us to work effectively and efficiently and throughout the year we have been able to adapt our approach to ensure we continued to play our role as a responsible employer in supporting our communities, the environment and our people and partners.

At the start of each year we set clear goals and measurements across our business in line with our 'transforming our communities' framework to ensure that all colleagues remain accountable for their actions and performance. This year, despite the pandemic, we have achieved the majority of our goals and measurements that we had originally set out. Some of our goals were inevitably impacted by lockdown restrictions, however, our colleagues and partners have shown great adaptability and flexibility which has enabled us to deliver alternative activities, reschedule delayed projects as soon as possible and still deliver against our responsible business commitments. The pandemic has also provided opportunities to do things differently, work more closely with our partners and find alternative ways to give back and make a difference.

Throughout the report we share details of our COVID-19 response and how we have responded and made a difference among our people and partners, our environment and our communities.



# OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## Highlights





## Our people and partners

It was imperative that we reacted immediately to the pandemic and using our embedded incident experience we prioritised keeping our colleagues, stakeholders and customers informed and safe while keeping power flowing to the region. Within days nearly 50% of our workforce transferred to home working and additional PPE was acquired to support colleagues who had to remain working in the office or in the field. Mental health and wellbeing support was increased, and operational guidance updated for our colleagues and partners regularly. At the point of publishing this report we continue to implement COVID-19 restrictions across our business to ensure the safety of our colleagues and customers.

We formed a COVID-19 steering group to coordinate our response to the pandemic as a business and have continued to work very closely with our Trades Union partners to ensure that colleagues are given the best advice available, in line with Government guidelines. Throughout the pandemic we have had 96% of our workforce available to keep the power flowing



## Our communities

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our communities and customers. With part of the North West experiencing lockdown restrictions for most of the year, the reliability of electricity became increasingly important as schooling and working moved to homes. As a result, we needed to be able to respond to power cuts even more efficiently and keep people informed even more than usual, particularly over the darker winter months. Our customers and communities were also impacted financially and although we do not have a billing relationship with customers we saw increasing issues with fuel poverty and poverty in the region. Working with partners we increased our direct energy efficiency support and colleagues unable to do their normal duties supported local foodbanks. To protect vital vaccine supplies we proactively promoted our Business Priority Services Register to pharmacies and GP surgeries to ensure that we could provide fast and efficient support in a power cut and protect locations storing vital vaccines and medicines. We carried out essential work at the Nightingale Hospital which was purpose-built at the start of the pandemic and working with Local Resilience Forums also increased reinforcement work at hospitals, health care centres and essential manufacturing infrastructure to ensure a consistent and reliable electricity supply.

The pandemic and home schooling meant that our education programme could no longer be presented in person, so we took the opportunity to develop a digital version that could be delivered in schools by teachers or as part of home-schooling.

We have always been proud of the support that our colleagues contribute to our communities by volunteering and fundraising and we remained committed to their activities throughout the pandemic, encouraging them to find alternative ways to support their community groups and secure funding through this difficult time.



## Our environment

Throughout the pandemic we have seen a dramatic reduction in our measured carbon emissions due to home working, online meetings and reduced business travel etc. As we, hopefully, return to the office over the coming year we are looking to trial an agile working approach so that many of the benefits of this new approach can be retained whilst ensuring that teams can still meet in person where it is appropriate to do so.

Implementation of our leading the north west to net zero plan has continued throughout the year. Carbon Literacy training and work on the net zero training academy and depot, although initially delayed due to restrictions, were picked back up as soon as we were able and we will achieve our goals shortly.

Another project initially impacted was our Transforming our Spaces programme, which was impacted by lockdown restrictions over the spring planting period. A flexible approach meant that where it was possible autumn planting was rearranged and other sites delayed to the following year. However, our commitment was supplemented by a new tree-planting partnership with City of Trees.

# OUR 2020/21 PERFORMANCE

Key	✓ Completed
	✓ In progress (some actions delayed or amended due to COVID-19 restrictions)

	Goal/Commitments	What we said we would do in 2020/2021	Status	Main Output	
People and Partners	Tackling modern slavery at home and abroad. We will work to eliminate modern slavery	Continue to work with SFA and to understand risk areas within our supply chain relating to modern slavery Perform a threat assessment review with SFA on our approach to modern slavery Support suppliers and vendors to ensure they recognise modern slavery Re-issue modern slavery training to over 2,000 colleagues	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Updated our commitment to modern slavery and conducted a gap analysis, to understand what more could be done to strengthen our approach. Page 18.	
	Being a responsible employer - We will encourage a first class supply chain that is high performing, ethical and safe, whilst ensuring human rights are adhered to and supporting a sustainable environment	Perform assurance check with top 20 suppliers on Supply Chain Charter requirements Conduct a trial to use an alternative to diesel on our generator supplier An electric van supplier will be secured through Selectus work Increase number of suppliers signed up to be Real Living Wage employers	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Updated Supply Chain Charter and working with suppliers to reduce environmental and community impact. Page 17.	
	Being a responsible employer and partner - We will strive to eliminate harm from anyone impacted by our activities (H&S)	Strengthen our safety performance including updating HSE policy and standards in line with ISO 50001 Continue to improve our safety culture and implement policy compliance at all levels Deliver safety behavioural training course to all colleagues Report full health and safety performance	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	100% of scheduled safety training complete and exceeded all safety targets for the year. Page 15.	
	Being a responsible employer and partner - We will work with communities to offer 'fresh starts' to talented people	Achieve silver accreditation as a Friendly to Forces employer Work with charities and partners to offer fresh starts Strive to achieve social mobility accreditation Continue to target ethnic minorities and women in our recruitment	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Maintained Forces Friendly accreditation, achieved Disability Confident level 1 and partnered Careers Transition Partnership (CTP) to attract ex armed forces persons. Page 16.	
	Being a responsible employer and partner - Real living wage	Review colleague salaries annually and amend where needed Retain our Real Living Wage accreditation Review apprentice pay	✓ ✓ ✓	Maintained Real Living Wages (RLW) accreditations and liaised with top 20 suppliers to develop a plan to achieve RLW accreditation. Page 16.	
	Being a responsible employer and partner - We will strive to eliminate harm from anyone impacted by our activities (Wellbeing)	Meet the requirements for Thriving at Work Roll out training across the business to raise awareness of mental wellbeing and support the four key areas of wellbeing Establish partnerships with external charities to support mental health Continue to work with BITC on our wellbeing approach Increase engagement with our Employee Assist Programme	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Partnered with Mates in Mind who provided wellbeing training to 257 managers and introduced 50 wellbeing champions across our business. Page 13 and 14.	
	Having a workforce that represents our community - We'll take action to ensure our workforce represents the communities we serve	Meet requirements for Disability Confident level 2 and potentially level 3 Maintain Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter Maintain and enhance the work we are doing with our five partnered schools Roll out unconscious inclusion training to all managers Implement new tracking system to measure accessibility standards Continue our commitment to reducing our gender pay gap Development of our diversity and inclusion strategy Continue our engagement in ethnic minority communities including mosques Increase number of female candidates for engineering roles and candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds by 20%	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Launched new applicant tracking system (ATS) to improve accessibility for candidates with hearing, sight and language barriers. Increased female representation at a leadership level - now at 30%. Page 12.	
	Environment	Driving down carbon emissions	Complete our two carbon neutral depots Continue the roll out of carbon literacy training Find greener alternatives to our equipment Roll out LED lighting across our non-operational sites Continue the roll out of electric vehicle (EV) charging points at our depots and incentivise colleagues to change to an EV Continue to develop a plan to minimise losses from our network Achieve a carbon emissions target of 18,000 tCO2e pa	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Exceeded our carbon footprint target for the year. Page 20.
		Helping customers and colleagues drive down carbon emissions	Deliver a business-to-business engagement campaign to enable them to take action to decarbonise Continue to engage with local authorities to support their decarbonisation ambitions Understand the role we can play in removing the barriers to the adoption of solar PV and electric vehicle charging infrastructure Roll out innovative technology to help the adoption of low carbon technologies and reduce emissions i.e. Smart Street Develop activity to support rural communities in Cumbria with EV charging infrastructure to show leadership in this area Continue our collaboration with Cadent Gas on decarbonisation pathways for the region. Our decarbonisation pathways provide energy blueprints to inform decision making and investment planning for the adoption of low carbon technologies for Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cumbria	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Developed and shared Decarbonisation Pathways for Lancashire and Cumbria. Page 22. Developed a number of initiatives for customer and colleagues to reduce their carbon footprint including a new scheme for colleagues and expert guidance for customers. Page 21 and 22.
		Support community and local energy schemes to address network constraints and other business priorities	Refreshed Community and Local Energy Strategy to demonstrate our commitment to community and local energy stakeholders Support Community Energy State of the Sector report Powering our Communities Fund to support local projects Continued stakeholder engagement to ensure we develop our understanding of the issues our customers are facing and ensure our response is appropriate Track metrics of individuals engaged, and number of community and local energy projects supported Track total amount of community owned generation connected to our network	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	We awarded seven new projects as part of our 'Powering our communities fund' and have seen a significant increase in the number of local energy projects in our region. Page 23.
		Optimising waste and resource use	Continue the investigation and trials for the removal of plastics from around the business Identify the weight of plastic packaging used in our supply chain and whether it is primary, secondary or tertiary Continue to work with our logistics and resource partners to understand their approach to single use plastics and find alternatives	✓ ✓ ✓	Implementation of two new waste management suppliers who have improved how we separate recycle and reuse waste. Page 24 and 25.
		Enhancing biodiversity and ecosystems	Identify and prepare an additional nine sites for our 'Transforming our Spaces' project and continue to monitor previous sites Draft and issue green waste management code of practice Develop our biodiversity policy in conjunction with colleagues and stakeholders Research and initiate partnerships with local authorities, charities and environmental organisations within our region aligned with the aims and objectives of our biodiversity plans Review and revise environmental risk assessments for all sites	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Enhancing biodiversity through new partnership with City of Trees and continuing to make improvements against our business carbon footprint. Page 25 and 26.
Community		Inspiring next generation of engineers and employees - We'll support STEM subjects to create an industry pipeline	Transition from ISO 18001 to ISO 14001 to ensure continued effectiveness of our environmental management system Deliver Bright Sparks to 3,500 pupils Develop a STEM ambassador programme Continue to develop our secondary programme to ensure it aligns with diversity and inclusion and recruitment priorities Review and develop online resources to support primary and secondary school curriculum Continue to participate in science festivals across the region Identify schools in key Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) areas using social mapping Increase engagement with schools on career and apprenticeship opportunities. Including attending ten career fairs per year	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Launched Bright Sparks Online in response to the impact of COVID-19. Page 30 and 31.
		Supporting colleague-led community engagement	Continue to support colleagues and the charities and organisations that matter to them Continue our support to charities and organisations across the North West Promote volunteering and the utilisation of two days volunteering to support our partners and charities Develop volunteering opportunities with our existing partners	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Over £19,000 donated to 85 charities and 500 hours volunteered. Page 32 and 33.
		Expressing our regional economic impact - We will better understand and articulate our role in enhancing the economic prosperity of the North West	Review SROI model to increase usage within business to help with decision making Continue stakeholders mapping and prioritisation work to benefit our current and future goals RIIO-ED2 business plan development	✓ ✓ ✓	Engaged with over 18,000 customers and stakeholders on our RIIO-ED2 business plan and increased SECV score to 6.61. Page 34.
		Responding to consumer vulnerability - We'll take steps to understand and address consumer vulnerability	Continue to improve our overall customer satisfaction score Invest over £190,000 through our Empowering Communities Fund to support local partners and our vulnerable customers Increase partnerships and collaborations with various referral and fuel poverty schemes Improve energy efficiency advice to customers Use data mapping to identify key hot spots and aim to close the PSR gap and identify 'hard-to-reach'	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Achieved 90.8% customer satisfaction score and successfully invested £500,000 in a number of our partnerships to support our customers. Page 28 to 30.



## Our people and partners

The success of our business is determined by the pride, passion and commitment of our people and partners. They are instrumental in delivering all aspects of our business and play a vital role in transforming our communities. Eliminating harm from anyone impacted by our activities has always been a key focus for us and this year the critical importance of our approach to health, safety and wellbeing has been highlighted like never before due to the pandemic. We strive to be a responsible employer and partner and are continuing to work to ensure that our colleagues represent the communities we serve. The impact of COVID-19 has effected some of our initial plans, however, we have adapted our approach and continued to make progress in a number of areas, whilst also dealing with the massive challenges of ensuring that we keep colleagues, customers and partners safe as we continue to operate a critical service. We are pleased to have made progress across our people and partners goals and share more details of this years' achievements below, whilst recognising that there is more for us to do in this area.

HIGHLIGHTS:





**GOAL - Having a workforce that represents our community**

**We will take action to ensure our workforce represents the communities we serve including areas of attraction, recruitment, retention and legal compliance.**

Electricity North West serves over five million people from a variety of diverse backgrounds across the North West. We recognise that we have an important role to play to ensure our workforce is representative of the communities which we live and work in and know this is an area of development for us. Over the past year we have been working in partnership with Business in the Community (BITC) and diversity and inclusion (D&I) specialists to understand our current position, what more we could be doing to be more inclusive and attract more colleagues from diverse backgrounds and plan for the future. Colleagues pride associated with our efforts has been high due to the potential to leave a positive legacy and they have told us diversity and inclusion is important to them.

We strive to make colleagues feel a sense of belonging when they come to work. This year we have implemented a new applicant tracking system (ATS) which will improve accessibility for candidates with hearing, sight and language barriers and the overall candidate application process. Following the success of our partnership with local mosques we have continued to develop this relationship to better understand what more we could be doing to attract ethnic minorities. We were advised by the mosque community that many were unclear how to write a CV or how to be successful at an interview. We created and delivered two CV and interview skills workshops at Masjid E Sajdeen and Madina Institute to help support potential colleagues and the wider community with job applications. We have also been working with the mosques as part of our transforming our spaces scheme, which looks at improving planting and biodiversity around our substations. Read more about this scheme, page 25.

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Our community engagement is positively influencing our workforce diversity. Overall, we have seen an increase of colleagues who identify as being from an ethnic minority, from 2% to 4% this year compared to 14% in the North West. In our 2020 High-Level Apprentice intake of 19 colleagues, 21% were female and 26% from ethnic minorities.

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We have implemented a number of initiatives in recent years to improve our gender mix. **We have achieved our commitment to have 30% female representation in our senior leadership by 2020, which is in line with the North West Business Leadership goal.** Due to COVID-19 we unfortunately had to postpone our planned work with the six secondary schools we partnered with in 2019/20 as well as our career fairs. However, throughout the year we continued to promote women in engineering and our inclusive recruitment programme through social media and supported schools with our education programme, read more about this on page 30 and 31.

Rachael Parr, our HR Director, said:



**“Traditionally, engineering has attracted more males than females. Our challenge as an engineering company is to make our company an exciting option for females. We are working hard to partner with and support local schools to encourage interest in STEM subjects at an early age. We are proud that as part of our recent engineering apprentice programme 21% of successful applicants were female.**

**“The D&I journey is a long one that needs commitment and focus and I am pleased that we have buy in at an executive level. We have actively focussed on our gender pay gap recognising the challenges that being 75% male brings to this. I am delighted that female representation at a leadership level is now at 30% and we are committed to continue to keep growing this.”**

We’ve trialled unconscious bias training with our Operations Managers and our aim is to complete conscious inclusion training for all leaders in 2022 and a further programme for colleagues later on. Last year we partnered with Disability Confident and achieved level 1 status and we continue to work with the charity to create an environment where disabled colleagues can thrive and succeed. We maintained our Greater Manchester Combined Authority good employer status and continue to build on improvements for diversity and inclusion.

Over the past year we have been developing our RIIO-ED2 business plan which includes our approach to diversity and inclusion and the development of our strategy for the period 2023-2028. We will begin to implement our strategy in 2021 to ensure we gain momentum and start embedding our commitments now rather than later. Our strategy will support our aim to ‘create a sense of belonging for our colleagues and truly reflect the communities we serve’ and help to drive the significant change in company culture to support this.



Our commitments in our diversity and inclusion strategy are;

1. **Belonging:** We will work with our colleagues to create a great place to work, where all cultures and differences are respected
2. **Attracting diverse talent:** We will be innovative in attracting talent and making our career paths accessible to diverse talent in our communities
3. **Inclusive leadership:** Our leaders will support all colleagues driving respect and fairness in everything we do
4. **Community partnerships:** We will work with experts to continually progress our inclusion journey and embed best practice into our supply chain

We are confident our strategic commitments will drive change and increase the overall diversity of our workforce, female representation (including leadership roles) and attract diverse candidates to truly reflect the communities we serve. To read more about our plan for 2023-2028, [click here](#).



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Our CEO will launch our D&I strategy in 2021
- Recruit a dedicated D&I Manager to support our journey
- Provide conscious inclusion training for all leaders by the end of 2022
- Provide conscious inclusion awareness training for all colleagues by the end of 2022
- Expand our community partnerships to continue to attract diverse talent into the business
- Increase ethnic minority representation from 4% to 10% by the end of ED2 (2028)
- Continue to increase female representation year-on-year
- Develop a D&I dashboard to monitor trends and identify opportunities for growth
- Introduce blind CVs as standard recruitment process by end of 2023



**GOAL - Being a responsible employer and partner**

**Supporting Wellbeing**

We are incredibly proud of the work we have done this year around our colleagues wellbeing and the initiatives we have embedded. As a business it is our role to ensure our colleagues leave work as happy and healthy as when they arrived, if not better. Our aim is to empower colleagues to maintain and improve wellbeing, increase awareness, tackle stigma and discrimination at work to spot signs and be able to intervene to support and rehabilitate colleagues. Our Board and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) are committed to our wellbeing strategy (2018) and a non-executive Board member is the employee wellbeing champion, providing support and overseeing the change programmes and policies. A member of our ELT sponsors and champions our activity and leads our quarterly steering group who drive cultural change, raising awareness and reduce the stigma associated to mental health.

Over the past few years we have made significant progress in providing our colleagues with the additional support they need. This included signing up to 'Time for Change' and launching our wellbeing campaign that offers colleagues additional help and support around financial, mental, social or physical wellbeing.

Our plans to progress in this area were accelerated this year in recognition of the impact that the pandemic has had on our colleagues and their families. This was particularly important as we continued to deliver an essential service through various lockdown restrictions and many colleagues had to balance home working and home schooling.





This year we have introduced a number of new initiatives to provide additional wellbeing support to our colleagues including;

- In December 2020 a **mental health survey** was completed by 20% of colleagues, illustrating that 74% of colleagues felt that their wellbeing is supported. This will continue on a regular basis to provide further insight and support continual change and focus if required.
- At the start of 2021 we recruited more than **50 mental wellbeing champions** across our business who act as a point of contact for colleagues who are experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. They have had the necessary training to listen to concerns and signpost them to the appropriate help.
- We have developed a **mental health toolkit** for managers and have increased communication about our Employee Assistance Programme with Health Assured who provide a range of online support including free webinars, programmes, mini health checks, counselling, medical guidance and much more. Employee Assistance usage has increased by 42% since 2017/18 and this year had over 140 calls logged by colleagues for additional support.
- As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting our colleagues mental wellbeing, we have partnered with Mates in Mind, who over the next three years will help us make a cultural shift and deliver our wellbeing strategy. They will work with us so that we have the right level of resource, skills and tools available to support both our colleagues and managers in addressing mental health issues. So far, we have conducted **'Manage the conversation' training** with 257 managers who found the session very helpful and insightful and showed what a huge role a manager and organisation plays in mental wellbeing and removing the stigma.
- We have worked in **partnership with NSPCC, Dementia Friends, MIND, Energy Savings Trust money advice**. We have also partnered with Salary Finance to support our colleague's financial inclusion and recognising that controlling finances can have a significant impact on wellbeing. Offerings include: low cost loans, saving schemes and salary advances.

This year it has been critical that we help our colleagues to stay informed about the pandemic and follow the company and government guidelines. We have been proactive in our engagement issuing over 150 updates and communications to clarify policy or to promote support available. We know the significant impact COVID-19 may continue to have on our colleagues and communities and the impact could be overwhelming and introduce a wealth of different emotions and challenges. We recognised throughout the year that there were things we could do to support our colleagues' wellbeing and help them to manage it, as well as that of our families and friends. In response we were proud to launch our mental wellbeing hub that offers colleagues direct links to additional support and also developed our wellbeing centre that looks to provide general advice, recipes and exercise videos.



In addition to providing additional support we also recognised the increased expectations of our colleagues at home and work and the impact on work life balance. We have family friendly policies that support working parents so that colleagues can balance home and career. Throughout the pandemic we have experienced how flexible we can be with working arrangements and will trial an agile working approach in the coming year to further develop an environment where colleagues can continue to reap the benefits of working more flexibly.

Our journey has only just begun but we are invested in our colleagues' wellbeing and ensuring they leave work as happy and healthy as when they arrived, if not better.



## OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Sustain Employee Assistance Programme usage between 7-10%
- Achieve Thriving at Work standards by 2021
- Continue to work with Mates in Mind and have all managers and colleagues trained through Mates in Mind by the end of 2021
- Stress work assessments to be completed for all work-related stress absences – 95% by 2023
- Conduct mental health champion quarterly reviews to update activity based on colleague feedback
- Annual mental health survey to achieve 75% satisfaction by 2023



**We will strive to eliminate harm from anyone impacted by our activities (H&S)**

We continue to be committed to achieving the highest standards of health and safety within our business to ensure the protection of our colleagues, customers and environment. Our health and safety performance is regularly reviewed by our Board and this year we have again seen significant improvements. Our continued focus on our safety culture has resulted in our lost time incident rate exceeding our target of 0.075 to 0.012. Our injury frequency rate is measured using the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) methodology and is a calculation of the number of injuries sustained per 100,000 hours worked.

This year we developed a new Safety and Policy Framework and updated and consolidated operational policies including:

- COVID-19 policies and risk assessments which have enabled all work activities to continue throughout the pandemic and be completed safely, ensuring we keep our customers safe.
- New Waste Management code of practice which has seen the tendering of our waste contracts and the success of two companies, more on page 24.
- New Lifting Operations Code of Practise and training for operational colleagues.

It is vital that we continue to drive our safety culture and we continue to ask colleagues to consider safety from a position of ‘chronic unease’ and never forget to observe our Safety Golden Rules, our High Hazard Life Saving Rules and our Office Safety Rules. Health and safety updates are a central part of our monthly team briefing process to all colleagues and this year we have also introduced our monthly toolbox talks, topics included maintaining corporate memory, risks and challenges colleagues face on a daily basis, environmental impact, waste, biodiversity and biosecurity and mental wellbeing. These are given by each manager as part of our monthly team brief and are compulsory for all colleagues to attend.

We have successfully transitioned from ISO 18001 to ISO 45001 which demonstrates our commitment as a company to our employees’ health and wellbeing and to continuous safety improvement. ISO 45001 takes a proactive approach that requires hazard risks to be evaluated and remedied before they cause accidents and injuries. We will now embed this throughout the business.

As a result of the support and commitment of our colleagues to embed a positive health and safety culture across the business we have seen an improvement across the board in health and safety performance including, 100% completion of safety training of over 1,000 colleagues, 11,000 near miss reported exceeding a target 8,000 and 2,000 positive challenges.

Measure	2018/2019 Target	2018/2019 Actual	2019/2020 Target	2019/2020 Actual	2020/2021 Target	2020/2021 Actual
OSHA lost time injury frequency rate	0.075	0.047	0.075	0.024	0.075	0.012
Near miss reports	8,000	12,250	8,000	11,261	8,000	9,286
Positive challenge reports	1,000	1,580	1,000	2,048	1,250	1,878
Safety training attendance	95%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Achieve OSHA lost time injury frequency rate
- Continue to observe and record safety observations and near misses
- Record number of positive challenges
- Continue to deliver monthly safety briefs to all colleagues
- Deliver safety training to colleagues
- Update and reissue incident management process
- Update HS&E Audit criteria
- Recertification certification for ISO 50001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001
- Deliver 12 Toolbox Talks
- Conduct operational review and audit high risk practices



**We will be a Real Living Wage Employer and ensure that our supply chain reviews their status**

Since achieving our Real Living Wage accreditation in December 2019 we continue to review and maintain our commitment to ensure our employees can earn a wage which is enough to live on and have ensured that we continue this commitment through our procurement process.



We are in the process of conducting assurances to ensure that all key delivery contractors and agencies are Real Living Wage Employees (this assurance is due to be completed in August 2021) and providing support for our top 20 suppliers to create the necessary plans to enable them to achieve Real Living Wage accreditation. We have a responsibility to continue to inspire all our suppliers on this journey and have committed this year to engage with more suppliers to sign up to the Real Living Wage accreditation.



**We will work with communities to offer 'fresh starts' to talented people in our communities**

We recognise that to have an inclusive recruitment approach there are opportunities to engage with a wider sector of our community. We signed the Forces Friendly Covenant in January 2020, achieving a Bronze Status. This year we have maintained our accreditation and recruited three colleagues through our Forces Friendly Partnership.

In the coming year we want to continue to build our partnership with the Ministry of Defence to assist in the transferable skills of ex-armed forces into the business.

We continue to advertise vacancies with Careers Transition Partnership (CTP) to attract ex-armed forces and our new applicant tracking system aims to attract applications from CTP and other identified partnerships. The system is more accessible to diverse groups and improves the candidate experience.

We aim to look at future initiatives that will help to offer a fresh start to talented people in our communities.

This year we introduced 19 new High-level apprentices to our programme and have provided more detail on this and our programme on page 30 and 31.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Maintain the Real Living Wage accreditation
- Include reference to Real Living Wage in all tender exercises by 2021/2022
- Enhance the current Real Living Wage process to capture 100% of companies that fall within the Real Living Wage criteria. We will engage with contacts across the business to capture all companies who provide services to Electricity North West that fall into scope as part of the next Real Living Wage certification process
- Log 100% of deviations and engage with each supplier as any instances arise



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Successfully achieve Forces Friendly Gold accreditation by 2022 and continue to build partnerships in the development of ex-armed forces.
- Successfully achieve Disability Confident Employer level 3 accreditation by 2023
- Continue to look for opportunities to work with partners and local communities on creating fresh starts for talented individuals



We will encourage a first-class supply chain that is high performing, ethical and safe, whilst ensuring human rights are adhered to and supporting a sustainable environment

As we transition to a low carbon future, we recognise the importance of working with our supply chain partners to help our communities. Our [Supply Chain Charter](#) has been updated in the period and supports our efforts to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits. In addition, it sets out our expectations for all our partners within our supply chain ensuring that it is high performing, ethical and safe, whilst ensuring human rights are adhered to and supporting a sustainable environment.

Our charter looks at both procurement opportunities and our Corporate Social Responsibility. As part of our efforts to continue to embed our charter and requirements we performed an assurance check for top 20 suppliers to validate that they operate within the requirements of the supply chain charter which includes:



**Ethical standards**



**Our purpose and principles**



**Health and safety**



**Environment**



**Modern slavery**



**Real living wage**



**Performance and reporting**

Our suppliers are instrumental in helping us achieve and enable a responsible business approach and this year we have continued to make strides in the way we operate and how we support our environment, business and customers in partnership with our suppliers.

- We are engaging with our operational waste contractors to increase the amount of our waste that is reused or recycled as opposed to energy recovery and continue to identify further opportunities with our waste suppliers on how to reduce our waste. Read more on our waste management on page 24.
- Plastic resin buckets are a significant waste stream within our operations and to tackle this we are currently conducting a trial to recycle our plastic resin buckets into plastic pallets with a supplier.
- We continue to advocate the Real Living Wage and encourage our partners and suppliers to do the same for all of their workforce. Page 16.
- Ensuring our suppliers put the correct processes in place to tackle the risk of modern slavery. Page 18.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Supply Chain Charter to be reviewed and updated
- Ensure Real Living Wage and modern slavery are included in the tender process
- Conduct trials on battery generators
- Continue fleet tender for electric vehicles as this was delayed due to COVID-19
- Become a partner for the Supply Chain Sustainability School.
- Continue to support Utilities Client Collaboration group
- Engage with contacts across the business to capture all companies who provide services to Electricity North West that fall into scope as part of the next Real Living Wage certification process



**GOAL - Acting on modern slavery - at home and abroad**

**We will work to eliminate modern slavery**

We supply electricity to over five million customers across the North West and visit a number of domestic and business properties. As a customer-facing business, we recognise the role we play in helping to protect our communities and having the ability to identify and report potential instances of modern slavery.

Each year we review and update our Modern Slavery Statement to ensure it appropriately describes our developing approach to addressing modern slavery. We conducted a gap analysis with the Slave Free Alliance (SFA), a social enterprise that works with organisations to eradicate modern slavery, to understand what more could be done to strengthen our approach to tackling it. Through the analysis, a number of improvements were identified such as incorporating modern slavery training into corporate induction days and enhancing coverage of modern slavery in a number of policies. These actions have now been embedded within our processes and we will address the other improvement actions identified during 2021/22.

We continue to put the necessary processes and mechanisms in place for our colleagues and suppliers to report any potential modern slavery concerns safely and anonymously through our 'SpeakUp' mailbox and continue to promote this through our internal communication platforms.

We are committed to developing our role within the utilities national working group which is now well established with 20 members. The working group looks to bring together ideas and best practice to aid our approach to managing modern slavery risks. A key output from the working group has been improvement to our Pre-Qualification Questionnaire process and a project to work with a key clothing provider.

Our aim is to eliminate any harm or wrong doing around modern slavery and we will continue to make this one of our commitments now and in the future looking for new opportunities and working closely with our colleagues and suppliers.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Contact all suppliers to confirm stance on modern slavery by April 2021
- Training of all operational staff to be completed by June 2021
- Develop and deliver awareness training to all new starters via the induction process by March 2022
- Develop a training matrix by March 2022 so that all levels of employees receive training on modern slavery that is pertinent to their role
- A formal record will be maintained of discussions with top 20 suppliers on modern slavery
- All actions to be completed from the SFA's gap analysis





## Our environment

The move to a low-carbon economy continues to gather momentum and as the regional network provider, we play a significant role in helping the North West meet its net zero ambitions. In addition, some of our key regional stakeholders have set further ambitious targets to deliver this change earlier and it is this regional acceleration that has become central to our strategic thinking.

In leading the North West to net zero, our role is changing from a distributor of electricity to that of an innovative, flexible active and trusted contributor. One that is helping shape and influence how customers, communities and companies think about and make changes to the way they use, pay for and generate electricity, to reduce carbon emissions.

We continue to work side-by-side with our Stakeholder Sustainability Advisory Panel who have been instrumental throughout the year in helping us plan for our next price period, RIIO-ED2, that will run from 2023 – 2028 and in the development of our [Environmental Action Plan](#). The plan sets out our ambition for the five-year period including our transition to net zero and many other areas of environmental impact, including many highlighted in this report.

This year, despite the pandemic, we have taken further steps to optimise our resource use, enhance biodiversity and minimise any adverse impact our activities might have on the environment. In 2019 we committed to leading the North West to net zero, both by leading by example through reducing our own carbon emissions and helping our customers on their carbon reduction and energy reduction journeys. We're continuing to deliver on these commitments and share our progress on investing £63.5m to support the transition to net zero.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

**3,880 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**  
reduction on carbon  
emissions from  
2019/20

**300**  
trees planted through  
City of Trees  
partnership

Investing  
**£20m**  
in Green  
Recovery  
projects

Over  
**1m**  
litres of oil  
recycled

**£75,000**  
invested in  
community and  
local energy  
projects

Smart  
Street  
rolls out to  
over **180 site**  
benefitting  
**64,000**  
customers



**GOAL - Driving down our carbon emissions**

**We will drive down our operational carbon footprint and emissions related to network losses**

Our 'Leading the North West to Net Zero' plan sets out the actions that we're taking to decarbonise our operations and we have made significant progress to this plan over the past year.

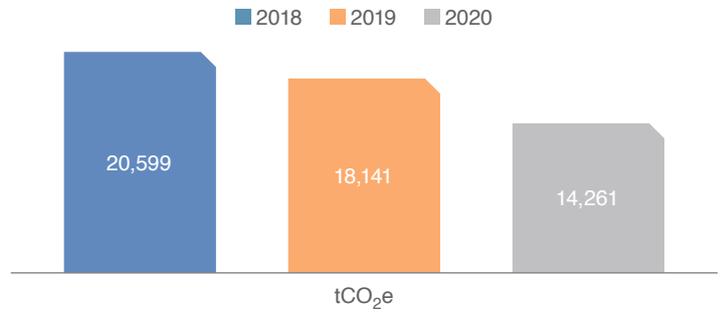
We continue to deliver year on year reductions in our own carbon emissions and we have seen a 42% decrease since 2015. In 2020/2021 we set a carbon reduction target of 18,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e and exceeded this by achieving a carbon footprint of 14,261 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a significant 22% reduction on our previous year and 21% ahead of target. However, it was not a typical year with 58% of the savings due to reduced mileage as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. This was due to 50% of our workforce was based at home throughout the year.

Rail and air transport were down almost 100%; diesel for the fleet 69%, business mileage down 31% and emissions from our fleet 27%. The biggest impact on our savings was the reduction in operational travel which whilst only down 23% made the largest contribution to our total savings.

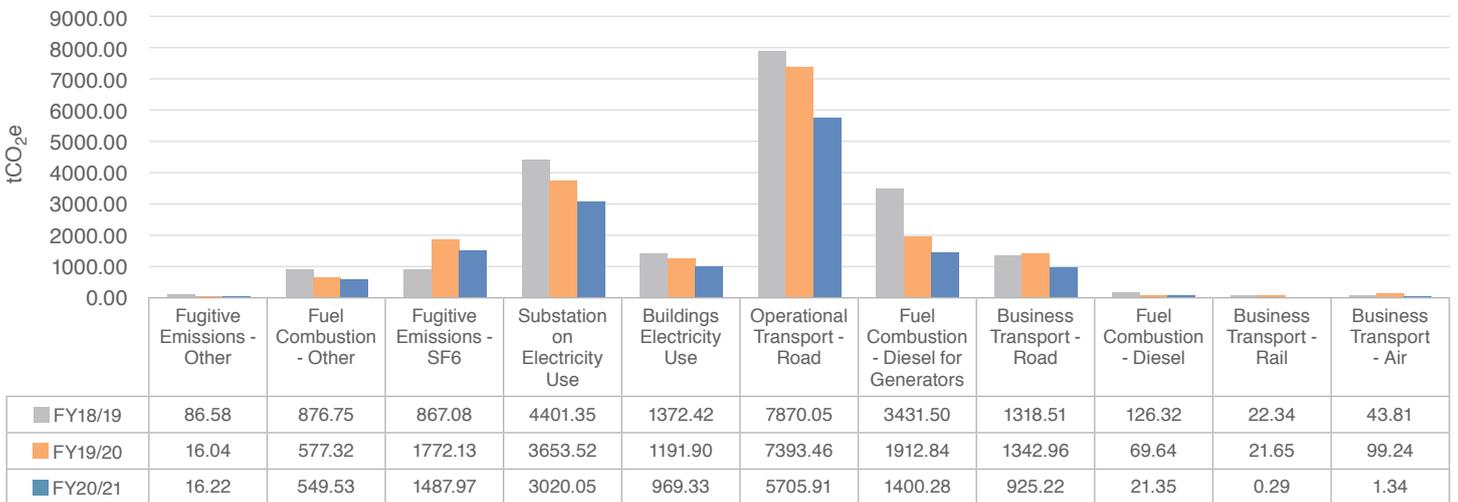
Our depots remained open and many colleagues continued to operate and travel throughout the pandemic to ensure that essential electricity supplies were maintained. As a result, 6% of the savings were from a reduction in building energy use, improved temperature monitoring has helped to reduce these emissions. We have seen a 7% reduction in SF<sub>6</sub> related emissions and a 13% reduction in generator emissions.

We have joined the UN Race to Zero in July 2021 and committed to set science-based targets for our business CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This will ensure our commitments are aligned with the latest international best practice for business climate action and the latest science. The target will be set by December 2021, with a view to developing our detailed action plan and preparing for delivery from 2022.

**Our yearly carbon footprint (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)**



**A reduction year on year on our Business Carbon Footprint**





Our plans to complete our two carbon neutral depots were delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions early in the year, however, we picked this up as soon as we were able and now plan to complete the sites in 2021.



**OUR ACTIVITIES**

- We continue to supply our offices and depots with green electricity from Walney Wind Farm off the coast of Cumbria
- We have purchased an additional two fully electric JCB diggers taking our total to four. The electric diggers provide zero exhaust emissions and are also five times quieter than our diesel equivalents
- The roll out of LED lighting across our non-operational sites has now been completed
- We are future proofing all our office and depots by installing around 100 EV charging points and we are currently working on replacing 13amp chargers to 7KW chargers. We are constantly monitoring the efficiency of our chargers and will increase these in line with demand as more colleagues switch to an EV. We will soon be installing an additional 50 charging points at our substations to support colleagues across our operations.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Achieve a carbon emissions budget of 17,500 tCO2e
- Deliver two net zero carbon depots
- Deliver two net zero substations
- Increase number of EV charging points across our estate
- Increase the number of colleagues driving electric vehicles
- Develop our Science Based Targets in line with the SBT initiative and Race to Zero campaign which we have now joined
- Obtain silver status in Carbon Literacy
- Increase awareness of our colleague incentive scheme and of electric vehicles for business mileage
- Become signatory with Race to Zero campaign. A commitment to align our Science-Based Targets to 1.5c



**GOAL - Helping customers and colleagues drive down carbon emissions**

We know that the success of the region's decarbonisation aspirations not only rests with us changing the way we operate but also relies on our colleagues and customers to make the necessary changes to reduce their carbon footprint. Our customers have also told us that we need to do more than just operate smarter and greener networks, they are looking to us as industry experts, to provide the support they need to make their own transition and help them better understand what they can do, how we can support them and explain how they can benefit from interacting with us.

This year we have introduced a scheme to make it easier for our colleagues to make the change to an electric vehicle (EV). This includes free charging facilities at our depots/offices, partnering with an EV supplier (ALD Select), free loans for home charges and one-off payments to support with the installation. We have also amended our company car scheme to include EV options and increased the cash allowance for colleagues who choose an EV or plug in hybrid. For those colleagues that are not in a position to switch to an EV we have increased our Cycle to Work limit to £2,500 and offer public transport season tickets. So far, we have seen 30 company EV car purchases, 18 enhanced allowances and 120 Cycle to Work Schemes purchased. In the coming months we have also committed to install an additional 50 charges at our substations to make it easier for our colleagues to adopt EV vehicles.

We continue to drive forward our Innovation Strategy which is focused on low carbon innovations and initiatives such as CLASS, Smart Street and Quest to name a few. They all help to reduce demand on the network through voltage control whilst not impacting the electricity user experience. Our [flexibility services auctions](#) also help us to balance supply and demand by encouraging users

to flex their usage and a flexibility first approach will prevent large scale investment in infrastructure and its associated carbon and environmental impact. We host two flexible service auctions each year and this year was no exception.

After years of continuous innovation, this year we began the roll out of [Smart Street](#) to over 180 sites. Smart Street delivers the technical capability to actively manage the voltage on our low voltage (LV) networks and in doing so delivers several benefits including; reduction in energy consumption for customers connected to our managed network, reduction in energy lost within the network as system losses, and releases network capacity for increased connections of low carbon technologies including solar panels, electric vehicles, and heat pumps. Smart Street will also have a significant benefit customer in vulnerable situations and will reduce 64,000 customers' energy bills by up to £70 per year.

**SMART STREET**

We have developed a ground breaking artificial intelligence analysis tool called PREsense that includes LV monitoring enabling us to examine alternate network investment scenarios and compares the efficiency of each option considering risks and benefits. The tool will allow customers to connect their low carbon technologies safely and alert us to check capacity or issues on our network.



Developed in collaboration with Cadent Gas our Decarbonisation Pathways are the first of their kind and provide near to mid-term certainties around the future of energy supply and demand. They can inform decision-making and investment planning for the adoption of low carbon technologies (including solar PV and electric vehicles) as the North West transitions to a net zero future. These energy blueprints have been developed and shared with the strategic authorities for Greater Manchester, Cumbria and Lancashire and can be found on our website, [here](#). The pathways will be reviewed and updated every two years with the next one due next year.

We have developed exemplars, research evidence and business case studies to inform the investment decisions that stakeholders need to take a decarbonised approach to their homes or businesses. To make this information widely available have developed our [Go net zero portal](#) on our website to encourage others to embrace energy efficiency and help them understand how to adopt low carbon technologies by sharing top tips for reducing energy bills and solutions which will deliver the most benefit for particular business sectors.

The transition to distribution system operation (DSO) is an industry-wide initiative to help deliver the changes needed to achieve net zero carbon emissions in the UK. Our three strategy documents describe the progress we have made and sets out the next steps we are taking on the transition to [‘distribution system operation’ \(DSO\)](#). We have also created a DSO animated video [‘The new world of electricity’](#) to help stakeholders and customers understand the transition and what it means for them. 84% of our Public Panel found the DSO video informative and thought it would be useful to share it more widely with our customers and stakeholder community.

Mark Atherton, Director of Environment at GMCA said:



“The pathway for GMCA is an incredibly valuable input to the Local Area Energy Plans that we are producing with Energy Systems Catapult for all ten areas of Greater Manchester. These will inform a programme of action and funding which will significantly increase the likelihood of our ambition being realised.”





In addition to the Decarbonisation Pathways we are also using our network management planning and insight to help strategic stakeholders plan their own decarbonisation journeys and each year we publish an update to our [Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios \(DFES\) report and workbook](#). DFES details our view of the North West’s future electricity requirements and outlines a range of scenarios which show how different influences can change demand and generation on our network. And for the first time, this year’s DFES report includes net zero carbon scenarios, which provide an understanding of the steps that must be taken for our region to transition to a net zero carbon future.

We know that to achieve the regional aspirations for net zero collaboration is key and we are working with a number of local authorities to support their carbon emission targets and to ensure that the network does not hinder their ambitions. We continue to work with GMCA on their strategic Energy Plan as they work towards a net zero ambition of 2038. Lancashire County Council announced an ambition to achieve net zero by 2030 this year and we have worked with them throughout the year as they have developed their plans including £7.5m investment to accelerate their Salmesbury project. Throughout the year we have also worked with Cumbria County Council on their Transport and Infrastructure Plan which includes significant electric vehicle opportunities to support residents and a green visitor economy.

In 2020 as part of the response to COVID-19, the regulator Ofgem, identified an opportunity to bring forward investment as part of a Green Recovery. Following a consultation in early 2021, Electricity North West identified £20m to support 11 projects across the North West, all geared to helping the region hit net zero targets. A number of the projects will support strategic reinforcement of the network to support and enable electric vehicle rollout and there is an innovative project which will allow the electrification of the Windermere lakeside area and ferry.

**We will support community and local energy schemes.**

We recognise the important role community-led energy projects play in decarbonising energy systems and the transition to Distribution System Operator.

This year we have engaged with more than **400** individuals on community and local energy, a 16% increase on the previous year

We currently have **41** community and local energy projects within our region which is a 36% increase

We have **17.6MW** of community owned generation connected to our network

Working with our Stakeholder Sustainability Advisory Panel and Community Energy England we refreshed our Community and Local Energy Strategy and continue to inform our stakeholders through our quarterly newsletter. We received strong support from customers and stakeholders for enhancing our future programme as part of RIIO-ED2 which have now been published as part of our [draft business plan](#).

As we strive to engage and support more community and local energy projects, this year we awarded over £75,000 to seven projects as part of our annual ‘Powering our Communities Fund’ to support the aim of putting community and local energy at the heart of our communities. Below we share with you the successful projects and a summary of their plans (you can read the full case studies [here](#).) Now in its third year we have had great success with our community fund and since its launch have supported 19 projects. You can read more about each of these projects [here](#).

We ensure the projects we fund cover Greater Manchester, Cumbria or Lancashire. This year our funding is supporting the first Energy Local Club in Cumbria, helping to explore new possibilities and research, installation of new low carbon technologies and promote training.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Promote the resources available through our ‘GoNetZero’ portal
- Support the development of the Zero Carbon Business Portal which offers support and advice for SMEs, in collaboration with other DNOs the FSB, CBI and other key partners
- Continue to work closely with and engage our stakeholders and customers to help them reduce their carbon footprint
- Increase awareness of colleague incentive schemes for carbon reduction



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Powering our Communities Fund will re-open later in 2021
- Continue to engage with stakeholders on community and local energy projects including hosting our community connect events
- Continue to plan to increase community and local energy support in our next price period 2023-2028
- Increase community and local energy projects supported in region and the amount of community owned generation connected to our network
- Publish annual report to provide a progress report on the actions in the Community and Local Energy Strategy actions



GOAL: Optimising waste and resource use

We are committed to reducing our waste and increasing recycling from our offices and operations. This year we have developed our operational waste scorecard that will further improve the tracking of what happens to our waste and the impact that we make in the environment, this will be implemented in 2021/22. The scorecard will look to breakdown our recycling into type of processing (i.e. landfill, recycling/reuse and combustion) and will indicate our CO2 emissions against our year target.

Last year we reviewed where single use packaging was being used and tasked suppliers to find alternatives to remove single use plastics from our material where possible.

Where we have identified single-use plastic we are looking to remove or identify reuse opportunities where possible. Within our direct logistics network, we have started utilising multi-use pallet collars to remove the need for single-use stretch-wrap during transit. We are trialling the recycling of plastic tubs into plastic pallets. As part of our supplier assessment during tenders we also request a breakdown of where single use plastics are used and what the plan is to reduce this by our suppliers. In addition, we have started industry wide discussions about suitable alternatives for single-use plastics.

We have implemented new waste management code of practice and contracts which have helped us to identify some opportunities for improvements in how we manage and report our waste streams. This will further improve the collection and processing of our waste and reduce our carbon emissions going forward.

The new waste contract has introduced key metrics which will help us reduce emissions by:

- Trialling the use of compactors to reduce the number of waste collections
- Monitoring the service to minimise wasted journeys for skips which don't need emptying
- Improving management data to provide better information on waste and carbon emissions.

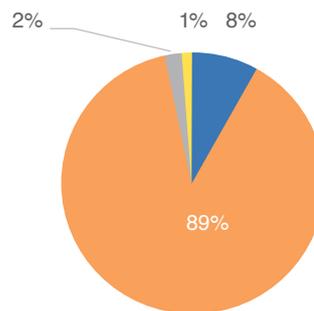


One of our waste contractors, Recycling Lives are a charity that offers offender rehabilitation, residential support and food redistribution. They have also helped us to review our waste stream hierarchy and identify opportunities for greater recycling. We are continuing to work with them and our other partners to develop this further in other areas including, in the reduction in food waste contamination.

We have applied a zero-avoidable waste to landfill strategy for waste for some time and our previous supplier continues to manage a zero to landfill regime with majority of waste going to combustion and recycling. Our new supplier has been able to segregate our waste streams even further with over 60% going to recycling but their initial returns indicated that 5% was going to landfill. We have now had discussions with the provider who have now committed to eradicate any waste going to landfill. We are constantly engaging with our waste contractors to identify new opportunities and to increase the amount of our waste that is reused or recycled as opposed to landfill and energy recovery and will continue to work with providers to segment our waste.

We are excited to be working with our providers to continue to understand our waste types and as part of our R110-ED2 business plan we have developed a resources strategy, which commits us to reusing or recycling 70% of our waste by 2025 and a commitment to send zero avoidable waste to landfill by 2025.

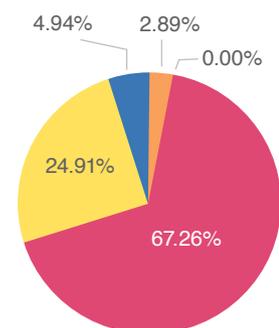
Waste by group (Ton)



Total waste handled: 1,219.65tn

- Mixed construction
- Mixed municipal
- Timber
- Hazardous

Waste disposal through recycling lives (Tn)



- Resuse rate
- Recycle rate
- Recovery rate
- Energy rate
- Landfill rate



**Central oil reprocessing department**

Located at our Blackburn depot in Whitebirk is our central oil reprocessing department (CORD). With millions of litres of oil used across our network each day the environmental impact of replacing aged oil would be significant. We have developed an innovative approach of recycling our oil which we are incredibly proud of. This year we have doubled the amount recycled to over 1 million litres of oil, representing an 82% recovery rate which is consistent with last year. Through our Social Return on Investment tool we know that through recycling and minimising the purchase of oil there is a social benefit of £4.6m per year.

We will continue to play our role in reducing and recycling our waste but also commit to finding new ways of working to ensure our impact on the environment is minimal.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Utilise the metrics and scorecard for all recycling to identify ways to reduce waste further
- Embed and report operational waste scorecard quarterly within the business
- Continue investigations for the removal of plastic from our business and operations
- Ensure resin tubs returned to depot are converted to plastic pallets
- Divert all waste from landfill
- Increase waste recycling to achieve 80% combustion, 20% recycle and 0% landfill



**GOAL: Enhancing biodiversity and ecosystems**

Our biodiversity enhancement programme started in 2019 with the launch of our Transforming our Spaces scheme. We have achieved an incredible 85% success rate in transforming these sites into low-maintenance, self-pollinating, attractive spaces, benefiting over 9,000 customers and increasing the biodiversity of the areas. These activities have delivered a social benefit of £321,000 over the past year. The scheme was very positively received by customers and stakeholders as part of our RIIO-ED2 research this year and we will now work to scale this up so that we can successfully deliver 30 sites by 2023 and a further 100 sites by 2028.



In 2020 the spring seeding for Transforming our Spaces initiative was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions with only a small number of sites benefiting but as restrictions ease this will be picked up throughout 2021/22. We have also partnered with Cumbria Wildlife Trust to enhance and develop sites.

To build on our positive progress with Transforming our Spaces, we also looked to see how we could best utilise some of our larger sites. As a result we developed a partnership with the City of Trees which has led to us utilising land adjacent to one of our larger substations for tree planting and so far have planted over 300 trees, enhancing our biodiversity and net zero commitment even further. This is a partnership we will continue to develop and have already started to review additional sites suitable for tree planting.

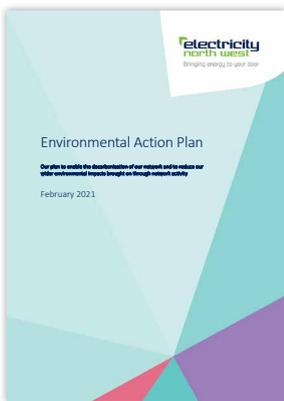




This year we completed a review of our Biosecurity Guidance, providing advice to colleagues and contractors and accompanying the ‘Green book’ (see below / page 26). The management and control of invasive species has been a focus this year, particularly Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed. We have removed a number of sites off the knotweed control list this year, successfully eradicating the colonies which are incredibly damaging to local biodiversity, and also to nearby properties’ and structures. Colleague communication campaigns have successfully enhanced colleague awareness and early identification of Giant Hogweed has prevented colleagues coming to harm.

Although COVID-19 has hindered some of our activities this year we have been dedicated to formulating a comprehensive [Environmental Action Plan \(EAP\)](#) that will be rolled out between 2023 - 2028. The EAP has been heavily influenced by our stakeholder Sustainability Advisory Panel and our [Customer Engagement Group](#). It has been publicly consulted on and will be refined until December 2021. It features plans for supply chain management, chemical contamination from our oils, natural capital, emissions of greenhouse gases, scope 3 emissions, climate change actions and resource optimisation. This includes plans to significantly increase our commitment and actively enhance 20 sites per year for a biodiversity / natural capital net gain and fund the planting of 10,000 trees per year.

We also actively work with local communities to restore and preserve nature and this year we have also developed the ‘Green book’ which is a ready to use internal guide to help raise awareness with our colleagues of tree hazards and invasive species within our region so that we can have our entire workforce combating these issues. In the coming year we hope to identify an appropriate biodiversity net gain tool which can be used to measure our impacts. We work with regional stakeholders including collaboration with Environmental Agency and National Farmers Union around raising awareness of other land access issues such as access during lambing, harvesting and sensitive soil conditions in parts of our region.



Each year we manage thousands of trees around the overhead network to protect electricity supplies. We work with land-owners to ensure we mitigate any negative impacts from our activities, but also seek our opportunities for restoration where possible through disposal of tree prunings and should we need to remove any natural waste we look for re-use in forest schools and wildlife sanctuaries who utilise these for good.

### OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Deliver 10 Transforming our Spaces sites in 2021/2022
- Identify one new site suitable for tree planting per annum
- Launch our biodiversity policy including biodiversity action plan
- Introduce biosecurity awareness briefings with over 100 colleagues
- Continue to manage and determine social benefit of City of Trees partnership and Transforming our Space initiative
- Develop additional partnerships to improve and increase our biodiversity

Our current business plan includes reducing our business carbon footprint (BCF), reducing the volume of oil and gas leaks into the environment and removing overhead lines that could impact on migratory birds and improve visual amenity. We continue to make progress against these commitments as shown in the table below and more detail will be provide in this year’s Sustainability report in October [here](#).

Commitment	Measurement	Target	Target date	2020/21
Reduce loses	Annual gigawatt hours (GWh) saved	11	2021	Programme completed
Reduce carbon footprint	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent	10%	2020	42.29%
Reduce oil lost from cables	Litres lost	<30,000 per year	2023	16,998
Undergrounding overhead lines in Designated Areas	Km removed	80	2023	11.23km for a total of 45.62km



## Our communities

Central to our Purpose and Principles is our role in 'Transforming our Communities'. Our communities are at the heart of everything we do. It is our responsibility to play a key role in supporting and developing our communities now and in the future. Our role includes but is not limited to providing additional support to our customers in vulnerable circumstances, inspiring the next generation of engineers and employees and giving back to the charities and organisations in our communities that matter to our colleagues.

This year we share the great work we have done and how we have performed against what we said we would do despite COVID-19, and share the extraordinary measures we have taken to continue to support our communities.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Over  
**£19,000**  
donated to colleague  
supported  
charities

New  
education  
offering **Bright  
Sparks** online

Intake of  
**19**  
high-level  
apprentices

Customer  
Satisfaction  
**90.8%**

Over  
**£400,000**  
to fund our  
partners

Stakeholder  
Satisfaction  
**71%**

Increase  
SECV score  
to **6.61**

**£31m**  
in social value  
benefits for our  
activities





### GOAL: Responding to customer vulnerability

#### We will take steps to understand and address Consumer Vulnerability

Our consumer vulnerability goal is to provide an inclusive and supportive service for all users of electricity in a rapidly changing world – recognising the need to maximise the reach of our services through collaboration, innovation and working with a community of trusted partners across our region ensuring no one is left behind both now and in the future. We have achieved our plans set out in 2019/2020 and share details of our activities below.

Ensuring we provide a safe, reliable and resilient electricity network is core to our business, however the pandemic has intensified the everyday challenges that our customers face including their physical and mental health, livelihoods and difficulty accessing services. This meant that we had an important role to play to keep our customers lives running but also to ensure our colleagues could provide the additional support that our customers needed.

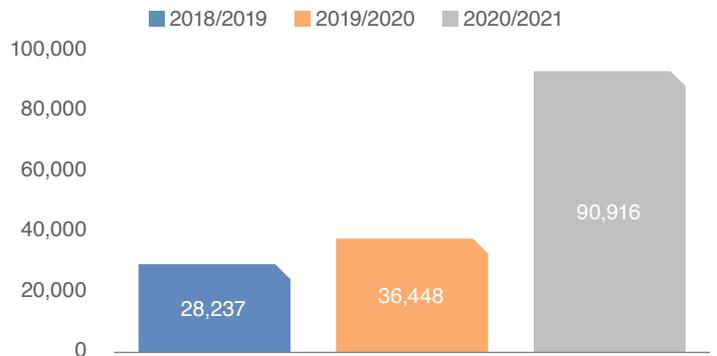
We know that power cuts are inconvenient for everyone but we understand some of our customers may require additional support during this time due to sickness, age or disability. Our Priority Services Register is a free support service whereby our welfare team will help keep our you safe and comfortable until the power is back through products, services and additional resources and support. To find out more about our PSR or to sign up visit our website [here](#).

Through our Priorities Services Register (PSR) we provide support for electricity users in vulnerable circumstances. We have continued collaboration with Utilities Together: this multi-utility approach has enabled a cost-effective method of connecting more consumers to vital support including Priority Services Register (PSR), energy efficiency messaging on 400,000 pharmacy prescription bags, over 7,000 energy efficiency referrals and distributed 60,000 PSR leaflets in 200 pharmacies in hard to reach communities across the North West.



In addition, working with other partners we have seen an increase in the number of customers register on our PSR to over 900,000 – 55% of those eligible. Our Utilities Together collaboration has also supported Age Concern Lancashire’s new [community outreach service](#). You can read more about our partnerships in this year’s [Stakeholder Engagement Consumer Vulnerability Submission, Part 3, Page 7-8](#).

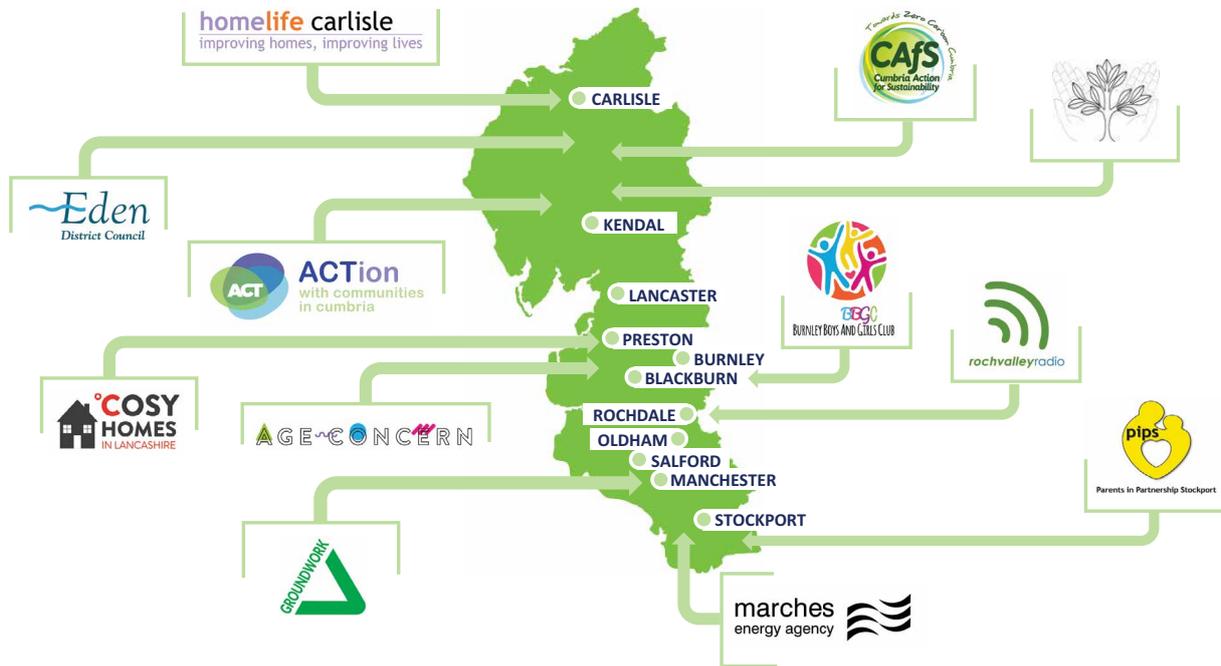
Figure 1: Growth in PSR members year-on-year



This year working with our partners has been more important than ever and we continue to recognise that they are often better placed to support our customers and communities across our region. This year we awarded £250,000 from our Consumer Vulnerability Fund to support partnerships to help us to reduce fuel poverty in our communities, provide ‘access to’ or a ‘voice for’ seldom heard groups and increase the take-up of our priority services register (PSR).

A further £250,000 a year for the next 2 years has been committed to Citizens Advice to help provide crucial support for fuel poor customers and those who need a little extra help this winter.





In total we have engaged with an additional 28 partners this year taking our number of partnerships to 100 to support those customers in vulnerable circumstances. Through these we have been able to reach 27,444 customers in vulnerable circumstances which has had a social benefit of £4.01m. For details on all our partners visit our website [here](#).

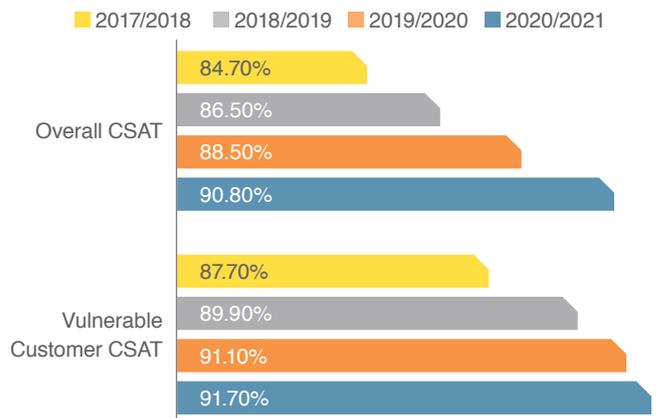
customers to join our Priority Services Register (PSR). This year we have also continued to promote our business PSR to help reduce the impact of power cuts on our business customers with a particular campaign for pharmacies and doctors surgeries critical to the COVID-19 vaccination program.

Every day we strive to deliver outstanding customer service and this year has been no different, we achieved an overall customer satisfaction score of 90.8% and an overall satisfaction score of 91.5% with our PSR customers.

Our Welfare Engagement & Partnership Lead, Jill Hendry, said:



“Our partners are often better placed to support our customers and communities across the region. They are instrumental in helping us provide additional support to our communities and customers in the event of a power cut. “We continue to build strong relationships and deliver positive outcomes for our customers through outreach services, spreading awareness of our priority service register, offering energy savings advice, preventing self-disconnection and offering financial support to families in crisis.” She adds that “Supporting our partners through the pandemic has been a tough but rewarding time, and the experience has helped in the development of future plans.”



Our social data mapping allows us to look for future trends to ensure we are ahead of any new issues or circumstances that may arise for our customers including understanding vulnerability challenges of the North West and engage with our strategic and delivery stakeholders. It has allowed us to rank the local authorities in our region based on vulnerability criteria including low income, fuel poverty, physical disability.

Understanding the need across our region ensures we target investment wisely. This year we introduced 12 new needs categories which has helped to identify 47,118 high priority

Our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel gives us the platform to engage with more than 80 stakeholders on a regular basis from a number of charities and organisations. This year we hosted 20 panel sessions engaging with stakeholders for than 50 hours on topics such as COVID-19, Brexit, needs codes and future support for vulnerable customers and investment. The panel helped us to identify two new needs codes to identify consumers who are struggling financially and those who live alone, better inform our partnerships during COVID-19 and help us to finalise our draft business plan and how we will support customers in 2023-2028.



OUR ACTIVITIES

- Collaborated with other utilities including United Utilities, Northern Gas Network and Cadent Gas to create a multi-agency approach, Utilities Together that has enabled a cost-effective method of connecting consumers to vital support
- Enhanced our mental health strategy with Mates in Mind to optimise our support structure not only for our colleagues but to improve call quality and better support our customers
- Supported 479 customers at risk of self-disconnecting during the pandemic with £10 top-up vouchers providing immediate relief from anxiety of their power going off
- Equipped our frontline colleagues with the essential training to deal with issues developed from COVID-19 including isolation, anxiety and stress. The training was provided by our partner, NSPCC and was designed to help our colleagues recognise and report signs of abuse and neglect. We shared our learnings through 'Utility Together' leading to three other utility providers rolling out the training within their business
- £1.88m in total benefit to fuel poor customers through Smart Street, an innovation that enables our network and customers' appliances to perform more efficiently and make it easier to adopt low carbon technologies. Read more on page 21. One Manchester and Marches Energy partnership which are due in the new year. Read more about our initiatives to tackle fuel poverty [here](#), Part 3, Page 9-10.



Jenny Willis - Independent Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel Chair

"During 2020/21 we have been all too aware of the devastating impact of COVID-19 on so many fundamental aspects of our lives and in our communities. It would have been understandable if members of the Advisory Panel had responded by focusing more on their own organisations. However, it is my observation that the opposite has happened with members being more involved, contributing and sharing more than ever before.

The panel provides a network across the region of organisations which all have supporting people in vulnerable circumstances as their reason for being. Moving to online engagement has given the opportunity for more frequent, but shorter and highly focussed meetings."



OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Achieve CSAT year target 89.2% and increase sign ups to our Priority Services Register by 5%
- Achieve 11,000 referrals for energy saving advice
- Award 14 funded partners through consumer vulnerability fund and increase non-funded partners
- Continue to engage our stakeholders through our Consumer Vulnerability Advisory Panel
- Introduce two youth projects to our activities focused on energy efficiency and PSR promotion
- Continue to develop Utilities Together group to maximise benefits to consumers
- Continue to develop our partnerships and partnership projects
- Increase training on vulnerabilities for our contact centre colleagues
- Build and support resilience to fuel poverty



GOAL: Inspiring the next generation of engineers and employees

At Electricity North West we recognise the national shortage of engineers and the role we play as a key employer in our region to inspire the next generation of engineers, innovators and colleagues. We continue to support science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects to create an educational pipeline into our industry and business.

We take pride in our apprenticeship programme. This year we welcomed 19 new high-level apprentices into our business. The three-year programme will provide apprentices with a thorough insight into electricity distribution, training and hands-on experience and an opportunity to study for a Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Electrical Engineering.

In January 2021, seventeen high level apprentices became the first in the country to complete the Power Network Engineer apprenticeship which covers roles such as asset management engineer, planning engineer, design engineer, control engineer, electrical project engineer and operational delivery engineer.

We take great pride in our apprenticeship scheme which received the Commitment to Skills Award at the Lancashire Business View Sub36. and this year our apprentice. Sub36 is about recognising hard work, skills and ambition and recognising the great workplaces that allow the younger generation to flourish.





In July this year we celebrated six of our substation fitting apprentices successfully completing their Power Network craft-person level three Apprenticeship, achieving four distinctions and four passes. Since 2017 we have supported a total of 94 apprentices.

As part of our commitment to a workforce that is representative of the community we serve we have successfully formed a number of partnerships that will ensure we meet this goal. To read more about how we are ensuring diversity and inclusion within our workforce see page 12.

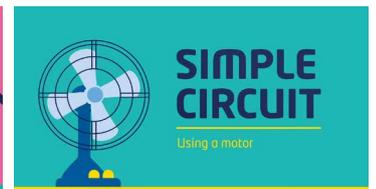


Over the past eight years, we have been delivering our [Bright Sparks](#) programme to over 3,500 pupils each year across the North West in partnership with Cumbria and Greater Manchester STEM. The workshops focus on delivering electricity and safety-based curriculum to Key Stage 2 primary school pupils.

Since the pandemic we have postponed our Bright Sparks workshops as they are delivered face-to-face. This presented a gap in our programme and an opportunity to review it and make it more digitally available so that we can continue to inspire future generations and broaden our reach across the region. This development included workshops with teachers, other Distribution Network Operators (DNO) and have continued to work with Science and Industry Museum and University of Lancashire despite no science festivals taking place this year. We used what we learnt to develop Bright Sparks Online, an easy-to-use electricity programme, made up of four lessons, for teachers of 7–11s that can be delivered in the classroom or remotely.

[Bright Sparks online](#) aims to spark curiosity about the world around them and develop children’s understanding about safety and electricity. From building electrical circuits to looking at why it’s important to save electricity, and ways to do so. In addition, to drive learning around circuits and to give young people the knowledge of how they fit within their lives we filmed a number of videos to support the lesson plans. Since our launch we have had over 150 views on our seven circuit videos and over 1,400 views on our ‘Powering our future’ webpage.

Although we were unable to participate in Science Festivals and Career fairs this year we have engaged with a number of schools, Science and Industry Museum and University of Lancashire on the development of our new resources.



We have also expanded our education hub ‘[Powering your future](#)’ to include resources that already existed around the business that teachers have told us would be useful to their pupils, particularly around careers in the industry suitable for Key Stage 3 and resources around our assets.

Queen’s Drive Primary, Fulwood

“Content is very comprehensive and ensures full coverage of what we need. Activities are engaging and practical and vary in range. Very well resourced and workbook supported learning well.”



Primary Teacher

“The lessons provide up to date curriculum links and a variety of resources to support students learning. They allow students to expand their knowledge of electricity in engaging ways.”



Although we have not achieved each of our aims this year we are proud of the work we have achieved and the incredible new education offering to schools despite the impact of COVID-19. Going forward we look to continue to expand our education programme online, update some of our safety material and look at how we can incorporate more curriculum linked resources for secondary schools.



OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Increase engagement for both Bright Sparks online and workshops
- Increase awareness of electricity safety and safety around our assets
- Develop support for secondary schools by 2023
- Develop support for STEM ambassadors
- Continue to look for new opportunities to support promoting STEM subjects and inspiring the next generation of engineers and innovators
- Increase engagement with schools through careers and apprenticeship opportunities



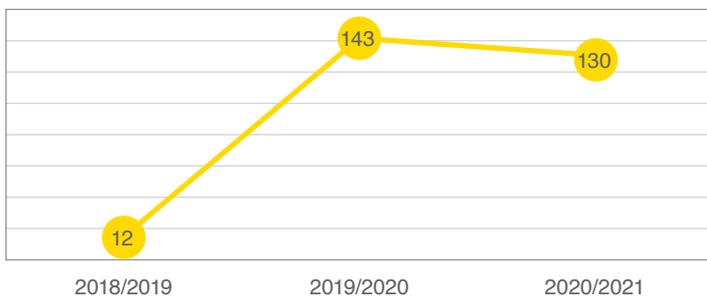
GOAL: Supporting colleague-led community engagement

We will develop and promote colleague-led community fundraising and volunteering opportunities

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on charities and organisations that support our communities either due to reduced funding because activities and events were cancelled or increased need from our community. In addition to the support we provide through our vulnerability partnership work we provide a colleague-led donation program for colleagues to use to support the charities and organisations that matter to them.

Following our significant increase in donations last year with the introduction of our new colleague-led fundraising scheme we have maintained momentum this year and only experienced a slight drop in donations requests. This year we are proud to have made 130 donations to the value of £19,700 to 85 individual charities, 26 of which received more than one donation and have supported 90 colleagues' requests.

Number of requests year-on-year



Although majority of our funds were focused around supporting charities through the pandemic more than 50 donations were based on colleagues participating in physical activities and volunteering in their own time. Through this programme we know that our colleagues additionally also raised more than £10,000 to support our communities.



This year we successfully trialled our business led volunteering programme which saw 42 colleagues volunteer over 680 hours refurbishing Petherill Bank School staff room, supporting food distribution with the Bread and Butter Thing and our kind-hearted engineers also transformed an outdoor space at Age Concern in Lancashire to make it safe for visitors and the staff. Over the next year we plan to relaunch our volunteering programme which allows colleagues up to two days leave to support volunteering activities linked to our responsibility framework.

We would like to say thank all our colleagues who continue to support local charities and organisations especially in these challenging times.



OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Donate over £19,000 to charities important to our colleagues
- Increase number of colleagues supported through our colleague-led fundraising scheme
- Increase number of charities supported by volunteering and fundraising
- Increase number of donations made to charities across the North West
- Launch new volunteering policy and guidance documents
- Promote a number of volunteering opportunities to colleagues
- Increase number of hours volunteered by colleagues



**GOAL: Expressing our regional economic impact**

This year has been crucial for the development of our future business plan. How we operate, invest in our region and serve our customers is overseen by our regulator Ofgem. Our next price control period (called RIIO-ED2) is 2023 – 2028. Over the past two years we have been developing our plan which has been informed by more than 22,000 interactions with more than 18,000 stakeholders, customers and consumers to date.

Our plan which is currently still in draft sets out more than £2bn investment in our network before 2028, it aims to cut the number and duration of power cuts by 20%, go even further in protecting the network from storms and floods, and continue increasing the capacity of the network so it can accommodate the predicted rise in demand from lower-carbon technologies like electric vehicles and heating. It also commits to providing additional support for vulnerable customers to ensure nobody is left behind by the region’s shift to becoming a net zero carbon economy.

Transparency has been key throughout our business plan journey and we have strived to keep our customers and stakeholders informed while providing them with an engagement platform to share their views and feedback with us. Over the past year we have undertaken extensive research, engaged with stakeholders on a number of consultations around our individual strategies and shared an early draft of our business plan and hosted a number of external events. Electricity North West are only one of two DNOs to publish our draft plan.

Our engagement methods have included large scale quantitative research including customer segmentation, willingness-to-pay and acceptability testing of our 41 proposals. Qualitative engagement included public panels and online communities, stakeholder advisory panels and engagement with wider stakeholders

Through this engagement, we have been able to gain key insights from our customers and stakeholders on where our key areas of focus should be and also the challenges that we face. You can read more about this in our RIIO-ED2 business plan [here](#).

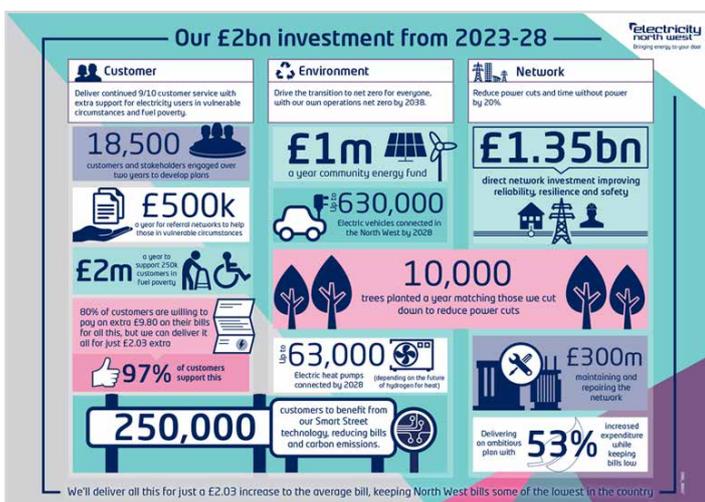
Final submission of our business plan is due in December 2021 and throughout 2022 we will prepare to roll out our approved plan in April 2023. To keep up to date on our business plan visit our website [here](#).

Although COVID-19 forced us to take an online approach to our stakeholder engagement we have seen a significant increase. We hosted 33 panel sessions and engaged with over 200 industry experts on a variety of topics including impact of COVID-19, green recovery and electric vehicles. We also conducted our first stakeholder satisfaction survey with 200 stakeholders. It indicated that 71% of stakeholders were satisfied and although we had significantly increased our engagement they wanted to engage more on topics such as electric vehicles, fuel poverty and resilience planning. To view the full details of our survey, visit our website [here](#).

Each year we need to submit an annual Stakeholder Engagement Consumer Vulnerability submission to our regulator, Ofgem. It looks to demonstrate how we proactively engage with stakeholders in order to anticipate their needs and deliver a consumer focused, socially responsible and sustainable energy service. We are proud that our score this year increased from 6.03 to 6.61, placing us 5th amongst our peers To this year’s submission, visit our website [here](#).

Our Social Return on Investment (SROI) helps us to measure the positive impact on our business, environment and communities. This year we calculated 61 benefit values which delivered a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of £31m with a future outcome of £143m.

Time period	Activities	Benefit £m	Cost £m	Multiplier
Benefits/outcomes delivered	36	£31.38	£5.53	13
Future outcomes enabled	8	£143.22	£42.66	40





**GOAL: Expressing our regional economic impact**

As a business we have a responsibility to support economic growth across our region. This year we have invested millions into projects to support economic growth, increase capacity for low carbon technologies and rebuild the North West. £7.5m has been invested to create vital new capacity on the network in Samlesbury. The investment will accelerate the progress being made at the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone, which will create significant new demand on the electricity network as businesses grow and develop. Read more [here](#).



At Manchester Airport we have invested £7m to create vital new capacity in South Manchester including installing a new 33,000-volt substation and laying 30km of new underground electricity cables that will almost double the network capacity and power the rapidly expanding area around Manchester Airport and Wythenshawe.



Over the past year the 'Green recovery', has become a widely adopted term to kick start the recovery by speeding up the delivery of environmental projects that will help rebuild our economy, create jobs, spark growth, and repair the damage done by the pandemic.

In support of this Electricity North West will play a role in rebuilding the North West we are bringing forward more than £20 million of investment to provide immediate support for projects which will drive a green recovery from COVID-19.

The investment is part of Ofgem's Green Recovery scheme and following a consultation in February to identify a number of possible projects we have now planned to deliver a total of 11 projects, all geared to helping the region hit its net zero carbon targets with many supporting the expansion of the electric vehicle network. To read more about these projects visit our website [here](#).

Each of these projects are targeted to drive net zero, increase jobs and drive economic growth to read more about our investments, visit our website [here](#) for the latest press releases.



**OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- Conduct stakeholder satisfaction survey
- Increase engagement with stakeholders through [advisory panels](#) and regional events
- Complete Business in the Community tracker
- Achieve further improvement in Stakeholder Engagement Consumer Vulnerability (SECV) submission
- Continue to develop Social Return on Investment updated for 2021/2022
- Maintain RIIO-ED2 business plan engagement and roll-out





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