SP Electricity North West

Our stakeholder engagement report

2025/26



Stakeholder engagement report contents

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Our report at a glance

Stakeholder insight continues to be at the heart of how SP Electricity North West plans, delivers and improves its services. Over the past 12 months, we have continued to listen to customers, communities and stakeholders, using their insight to shape decisions, strengthen our ED2 delivery and inform the development of our future ED3 Business Plan.

This report explains how stakeholder engagement has influenced our work during 2025/26. It highlights how we engage, what we have heard and, most importantly, the actions we have taken in response to deliver meaningful outcomes for the people and places we serve.

This is SP Electricity North West's third voluntary Stakeholder Engagement Report. It focuses on our North West licence area, where we provide electricity to more than 2.4 million properties and over five million customers across Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester and parts of Cheshire, Derbyshire and North Yorkshire. Throughout the report, you'll find examples of how stakeholder insight has helped shape decisions across our business.

While this report provides an overview of our stakeholder engagement activity, it forms part of a wider suite of publications that explain our performance, commitments and future plans in more detail. You'll find signposts throughout the report to help you explore these resources, with a full list included at the end of the document.

Above all, this report demonstrates our commitment to listening, learning and acting. By working collaboratively with stakeholders, we can make better decisions, create greater value for customers and communities, and help build a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable future for the North West.



Getting to know our region



By area, Cumbria makes up around two thirds of our region but only 10% by customer numbers. The tallest mountain in England, Scafell Pike, is in the heart of Cumbria and stands at 978 metres.



In November 2025, we energised our first ANM connection, a 30MW battery storage facility supplying 8,532 properties near Wrightington.



We're conducting unlooping trials in Warrington and Lancaster to ensure properties are better equipped for future energy demands.



The first permanent public electricity supply in the North West started in Keswick on 7 January 1890.



Lancashire is home to around 30% of our customers, and to the UK's first stretch of motorway – the Preston bypass (now part of the M6).



About 55% of our customers are in Greater Manchester, historically the global centre of the cotton and textile industry during the Industrial Revolution.



Foreword from Stephanie Trubshaw

Over the past year, I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on the role stakeholder engagement continues to play in shaping our business. Listening to our customers, communities and stakeholders has always been an important part of how we operate, but this year has reinforced just how valuable that dialogue becomes as the world around us continues to change.

Reliable electricity remains fundamental to everyday life, yet **expectations of network operators are evolving**. As homes, businesses and public services become increasingly dependent on electricity, stakeholders rightly expect more from us. They expect us to enable the energy transition, strengthen resilience to a changing climate, support economic growth and work alongside local communities to ensure that nobody is left behind. They also expect us to be transparent, accountable and able to demonstrate how the decisions we make create lasting value for the communities we serve.

For me, this is exactly why stakeholder engagement matters. It is not simply a regulatory requirement or a programme of consultation. It is how we **challenge our own assumptions, understand what matters most to the people we serve and make better-informed decisions**. Every conversation, workshop, survey and advisory panel discussion helps us build a richer understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing our region.

This has also been an important year for SP Electricity North West as we continue to integrate into the wider ScottishPower and Iberdrola Group. While remaining firmly focused on the needs of our customers and communities in the North West, we have increasingly **worked alongside colleagues across SP Energy Networks, sharing expertise, learning from one another and delivering joint engagement** to inform the development of our ED3 Business Plan. This collaboration is strengthening our approach while ensuring local insight continues to shape regional decisions.

During the year, **our engagement programme reached more than 20,000 stakeholders**, while our advisory panels and Independent Stakeholder Group (ISG) continued to provide valuable independent challenge and scrutiny. Their perspectives have helped us strengthen governance, improve our understanding of stakeholder priorities and ensure that engagement and stakeholder insights remain firmly embedded in decision-making throughout the business.

Alongside delivering our ED2 commitments, this has been a year of preparation for the future. Working with colleagues across SP Energy Networks, we have undertaken **one of the most extensive stakeholder engagement programmes we have ever delivered to help shape our plans for ED3**. The conversations we have had over the past year have provided a clearer understanding of what customers and stakeholders expect from the electricity network over the coming years, and those insights are already influencing the decisions we are making today.



> Foreword continued

What encourages me most is the growing evidence that stakeholders can see the difference their involvement is making. Independent research found that **79% of stakeholders were satisfied with our engagement, rising to 87% among advisory panel members**. Encouragingly, 71% believed we had acted on their feedback, an increase from 64% last year, while 76% said their engagement with us is meaningful. These findings are important because trust is not built simply by listening, it is built by demonstrating that stakeholder insight leads to real action.

Throughout this report you will see examples of that in practice. Stakeholder feedback has influenced how we support customers through our Extra Care register (ECR), strengthened our resilience and preparedness programmes, informed innovative tools such as our Low Carbon Technology (LCT) Readiness Checker, enhanced support for local authorities through supported programmes such as Empower and LAEP+, and helped shape the way we plan for a more flexible energy system. Across the business, stakeholder insight is helping us improve services, make smarter investment decisions and plan for the future with greater confidence.

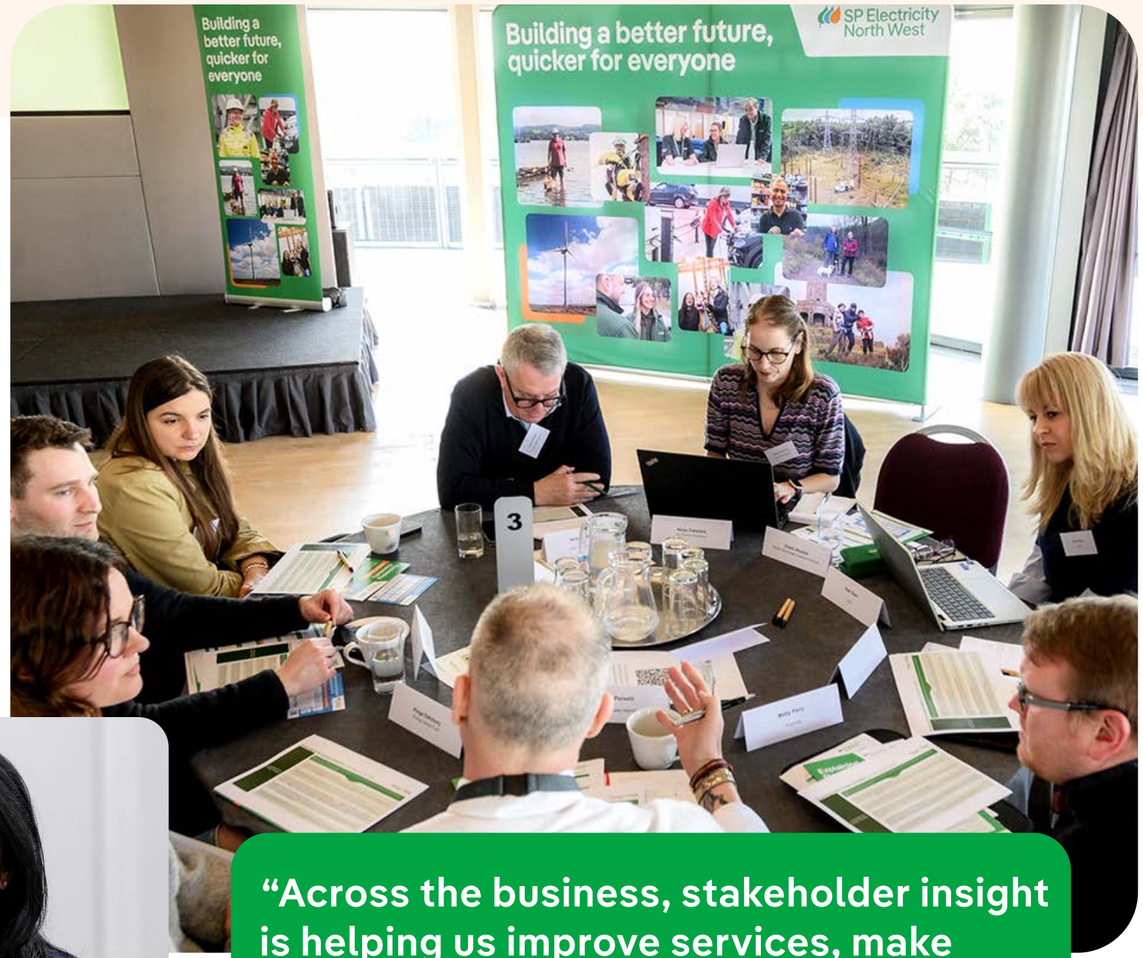
While there is much to be proud of, we know our work is never complete. **Expectations will continue to evolve, new challenges will emerge and there will always be opportunities to improve.** Maintaining an open, honest and constructive dialogue with our stakeholders will remain essential as we continue to deliver for customers today while planning for the future.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed their time, expertise and challenge throughout the year. Whether you are one of our customers, an advisory panel member, part of our ISG, a local authority, community organisation, partner or colleague, your insight has helped shape our priorities, improve our services and strengthen our plans.

Together, we are building a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable electricity network with stakeholder insight at the heart of every decision we make.

Stephanie Trubshaw, Chief Operating Officer





“Across the business, stakeholder insight is helping us improve services, make smarter investment decisions and plan for the future with greater confidence.”

2025/26 engagement highlights

Engaged 20,644 stakeholders across our programme of engagement.

148+ advisory panel and ISG members providing independent challenge and scrutiny.

79% overall stakeholder satisfaction.

71% of stakeholders said we had acted on their feedback, up from 64% last year.

98.2% Extra Care register coverage based on the 2021 Census.

Supported 94% of local authorities with Local Area Energy Planning.

Submitted 72 Strategic Energy Need projects to NESO.

Delivered £42.5m of customer and societal value through DSO activities.

Generated 20,000+ Extra Care register registrations through stakeholder partnerships.

Integrated One engagement programme helping shape our ED3 Business Plan.

SP Electricity North West

Award winning

During 2025/26, SP Electricity North West was proud to receive national recognition from the Institute of Customer Service, reflecting our continued commitment to customer service, stakeholder engagement and leadership.

Our Chief Operating Officer, Stephanie Trubshaw, was awarded the Customer Service Strategic Leadership Award in recognition of her leadership in championing customer-focused strategies and embedding a culture where customers remain at the heart of decision-making.

We were also honoured with the Employee Engagement Strategy Award, recognising the way colleagues from across the business work together to deliver outstanding support for customers, particularly during severe weather and major incidents. The award reflects the collaborative approach that brings operational teams, customer service colleagues and support functions together to respond quickly and effectively when customers need us most.

These achievements are a testament to the commitment of our colleagues, the strength of our partnerships, and the invaluable insight, challenge and support provided by our customers, communities and stakeholders. Together, they help us continually improve the services we provide and ensure we remain focused on delivering positive outcomes for the people and places we serve.



Figure 1: We received national recognition at the Institute of Customer Service awards



Figure 2: Our COO, Stephanie Trubshaw, was awarded the Customer Service Strategic Leadership Award

SP Electricity North West

2. Stakeholder engagement strategy and approach

Stakeholder engagement is fundamental to how SP Electricity North West plans, delivers and improves its services. It helps us understand the needs and priorities of customers, communities and wider stakeholders, strengthens the evidence underpinning our decisions and ensures we remain responsive to the changing expectations of the regions we serve.

Our vision is simple: **to build a positive reputation demonstrated by understanding, insight and advocacy among stakeholders, enabling our licence to operate, helping achieve business objectives.**

Our approach is **grounded in internationally recognised best practice**, following the AA1000 Accountability Principles (2018) and the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard (2015). These frameworks ensure our engagement is inclusive, material, responsive and embedded within decision-making.

This has been a significant year as SP Electricity North West has become part of the wider ScottishPower and Iberdrola Group. Alongside maintaining our regional engagement programme, we have **increasingly shared expertise with colleagues at SP Energy Networks (SPEN) and undertaken joint stakeholder engagement** to inform the development of a single ED3 Business Plan.

While our engagement has evolved to support this closer collaboration, we have also maintained continuity in our governance arrangements. During 2025/26, our focus has been on continuing to strengthen our long-established advisory panel structure, ensuring it remains an effective mechanism for stakeholder engagement. Although we have welcomed new members, the overall framework has remained consistent, allowing relationships to mature, challenge to become more informed and stakeholder insight to have an even greater influence on decision-making.



2.1 Strategic framework for stakeholder engagement

Our stakeholder engagement framework helps us understand what matters most to customers and stakeholders, identify shared priorities and work collaboratively to develop better solutions. It ensures stakeholder insight is considered alongside our responsibility to provide a safe, reliable and efficient electricity network, minimise our environmental impact and enable everyone to benefit from the transition to a low carbon energy system.

Engagement is an embedded **and highly valued function** across SP Electricity North West. While our programme is centrally coordinated by a dedicated stakeholder engagement team, delivery takes place across the organisation through engagement managers, operational colleagues and subject matter experts. This ensures engagement is both strategically coordinated and locally delivered by those closest to the issues being discussed.

Our **approach follows a structured five-step engagement cycle**, ensuring that insight is consistently gathered, analysed, acted upon and fed back to stakeholders. The level of engagement is tailored to the issue being considered. We use a wide range of methods to inform stakeholders through newsletters, digital communications and social media; consult through surveys, consultations and focus groups; involve stakeholders through workshops, advisory panels and bilateral meetings; and collaborate through joint working groups, co-design activities and deliberative research.

We make reasonable adjustments wherever required and work with specialist organisations **to ensure people from all backgrounds can participate confidently**, helping us hear a broader range of perspectives and better reflect the communities we serve.



Figure 3: Five step cyclical approach to stakeholder engagement

2.2 Mapping our stakeholders

As SP Electricity North West continues to integrate into the wider ScottishPower and Iberdrola Group, this year provided an opportunity to review how we identify and engage stakeholders while maintaining our strong regional focus.

Working alongside independent consultants, we **aligned our stakeholder mapping approach with SP Energy Networks** to create a consistent framework across our licence areas. Oversight of the review was provided by our ISG, ensuring the revised mapping remained robust, transparent and representative.

The review resulted in a streamlined stakeholder map, including **three new stakeholder groups, seven amendments and three clarifications to existing categories. The resulting 46 segmented stakeholder groups all fall under four high level categories:**



While improving consistency across the wider Group, the revised framework continues to recognise the distinct priorities and relationships that exist within the North West, ensuring local insight remains at the heart of our engagement programme.

2.3 Embedding engagement in decision-making

Listening to stakeholders is only valuable if their insights influence decisions. Throughout ED2 we have **embedded triangulation as a core discipline,** bringing together evidence from multiple engagement activities, operational data, independent research and wider industry insight to identify where there is a clear weight of evidence.

Rather than relying on individual conversations or single pieces of research, triangulation **enables us to understand areas of consensus, identify differing views and recognise where further evidence is required** before decisions are made.

This year we expanded this approach by combining insight across SP Electricity North West and SP Energy Networks. Sharing evidence across the wider ScottishPower Group enables us to identify common themes, learn from different regions and benefit from a broader evidence base, while ensuring decisions remain sensitive to local priorities and regional differences.

Stakeholder insight is shared throughout the organisation to ensure it informs operational delivery, strategic planning and investment decisions. Colleagues receive regular updates through our quarterly Insight Bulletin, while the internal Stakeholder Engagement Challenge Group comprised of senior leaders from across the business reviews emerging findings, identifies evidence gaps and considers how feedback should influence future activity.

Insights are also tested through our ISG who meet monthly both in-person and online, supported by additional working sessions as needed. Findings and recommendations are consolidated into our annual Stakeholders' Needs and Wants Paper, which is reviewed by our Executive Team and directly informs business planning.

Transparency remains an important part of this process. Throughout this report we highlight examples of "You Said, We Did", demonstrating how stakeholder feedback has influenced our decisions and the actions we have taken in response.



Figure 4: Insight triangulation through a strong governance structure

2.4 Strengthening governance and accountability

Our governance framework combines independent challenge with ongoing stakeholder dialogue through **six independently chaired advisory panels** focused on the delivery of our ED2 Business Plan. Together, these panels include 149 members representing customers, community organisations, local authorities, academia, industry and specialist organisations.

The panels cover six strategic themes:

- **Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances – Partnership**
- **Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances – Strategic**
- **Digital Futures**
- **Economic Growth**
- **Environment and Sustainability**
- **Distribution System Operation**

Alongside these panels, our ISG provides strategic oversight of stakeholder engagement and independent scrutiny of the development of our ED3 Business Plan. Comprising twelve national and regional experts, the ISG challenges our evidence base, reviews our engagement programme and provides assurance that stakeholder views are being appropriately reflected in future plans.

2.5 Measuring engagement effectiveness

Understanding the quality and impact of our engagement is as important as measuring the volume of activity.

During 2025/26 **our engagement programme reached 20,644 stakeholders**, excluding participants involved in independent market research. We monitor participation across all engagement activities, recording the stakeholder groups involved, topics discussed, outcomes achieved and the sentiment of interactions to help identify emerging trends and opportunities for improvement.

This year we also introduced sentiment monitoring within our engagement management system. Of the interactions recorded, **99% were positive or neutral**, providing additional insight into stakeholder experiences and relationships.

Where possible, we also **assess the outcomes of stakeholder engagement using recognised evaluation methodologies**. Depending on the initiative, this includes Ofgem Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA), the Common Evaluation Methodology (CEM), Whole-System Cost Benefit Analysis and Social Return on Investment (SROI) to understand the wider economic, social and environmental value created.

To strengthen this approach further, during 2025 we commissioned Frontier Economics to **develop and independently assure a new social cost-benefit model**. The model addresses limitations in existing methodologies and provides a more comprehensive assessment of wider societal impacts, ensuring stakeholder-led initiatives are evaluated consistently and robustly.

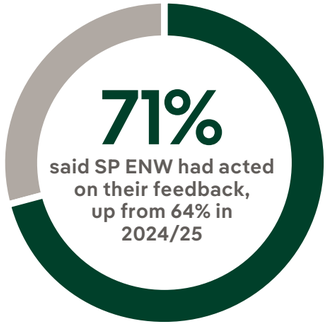
Alongside these quantitative measures, we continue to seek **independent feedback on the quality of our engagement through our annual stakeholder satisfaction survey**, using stakeholder insight, external assurance and operational learning to continuously improve our approach.

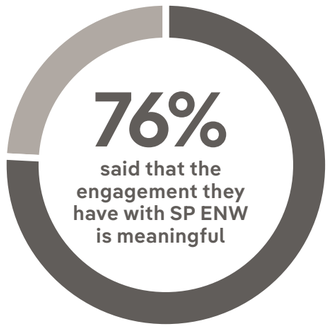
As we continue to develop our engagement approach, we remain committed to closing the feedback loop, providing clearer evidence of the difference stakeholder engagement makes and creating more opportunities for meaningful collaboration. Our independent stakeholder satisfaction survey will return later this year, and we encourage all stakeholders to take part. As trusted partners and critical friends, their feedback remains invaluable in helping us continue to improve.











SP Electricity North West

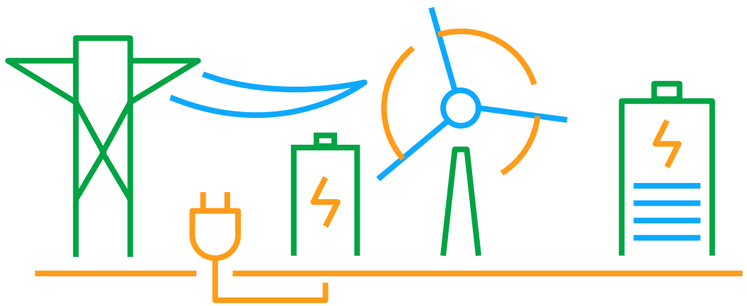
3. Listening to and addressing stakeholders' needs and wants

3.1 Summary of stakeholders' needs and wants

Understanding what matters most to our stakeholders is fundamental to how we deliver our ED2 commitments and plan for the future. Throughout the year, we engage with customers, communities, partners, colleagues and wider stakeholders through an extensive programme of research, consultation and ongoing dialogue, ensuring their views continue to shape our decisions.

Our Executive Team and senior leadership led Stakeholder Engagement Challenge Group receives regular updates on stakeholder insights and review our annual Stakeholder's Wants and Needs Paper, an independent synthesis of insight gathered and triangulated over the previous 12 months. The paper identifies the issues that matter most to stakeholders, highlights emerging opportunities and risks, and informs both the delivery of our current ED2 programme and the development of our ED3 Business Plan. It also reviews the progress made against the themes identified in the previous year's report, helping us understand how stakeholder expectations continue to evolve over time.

This year, we have built on the three core building blocks established in previous years, translating stakeholder insight into clear needs, priorities and opportunities that guide both day-to-day decision making and longer-term strategic planning.



	Wants	Needs and opportunities
Maintaining trust	Maintain a safe, dependable network capable of supporting electrification, economic growth and increasing dependence on electricity	• Investing at the right pace and in the right places to deliver a reliable, future-ready network while providing fair, transparent and long-term value for money • A resilient network that enables electrification, economic growth and increasing reliance on electricity without compromising reliability or customer service
	Deliver fair, personalised and accessible services	• Services that can identify and respond to changing customer circumstances earlier • More targeted and personalised support for customers with differing needs, vulnerabilities and levels of preparedness • Fair access to the benefits of the energy transition, regardless of income, location, digital confidence or personal circumstances
	Build resilience and help communities adapt to a changing world	• Greater resilience to climate change, severe weather, cyber threats and wider societal disruption • Meaningful involvement in decisions affecting communities and the future energy system

Emerging Expectations

Reliable electricity supply: Reliable and resilient networks remain essential

Increasing area of focus: Climate resilience and electrification

Stakeholders continue to see maintaining a safe and reliable electricity network as our most fundamental responsibility. However, resilience is increasingly being viewed through a wider lens. Rather than focusing solely on restoring power quickly, stakeholders want networks that are prepared for more frequent severe weather - periods of strong winds, flooding and extreme heat should all be anticipated and prepared for alongside increasing electrification and future demand.

Value for money: Affordability and value for money are under greater scrutiny

Increasing area of focus: Affordability and transparency

Affordability remains one of the most important considerations for customers and stakeholders. Participants consistently emphasised the importance of keeping bills as low as possible while demonstrating that investment delivers clear and lasting benefits. Increasingly, stakeholders expect greater transparency around the choices we make, the costs involved and the long-term value delivered for customers and communities.

Fair and accessible services: No community should be left behind

Increasing area of focus: Supporting a fair energy transition

Stakeholders continue to expect fair, accessible and personalised services, but increasingly frame these expectations within the context of the energy transition. They want to ensure that every community can benefit from decarbonisation, regardless of income, geography, digital confidence or personal circumstances, with support targeted towards those who need it most.

Innovation and investment: Technology must deliver practical benefits

Increasing area of focus: Practical benefits from digitalisation

Stakeholders remain supportive of innovation, digitalisation and smarter energy systems, provided these developments solve real problems. Technology is viewed as an enabler of better outcomes rather than an objective in itself, with customers placing greatest value on innovations that improve reliability, reduce costs, simplify interactions and make it easier to adopt low carbon technologies.

Trust and responsiveness: Trust and collaboration are more important than ever

Increasing area of focus: Accountability and transparency, and place-based decision making

As the energy system becomes increasingly complex, stakeholders place greater importance on transparency, accountability and meaningful engagement. They want to understand how decisions are made, how their views have influenced outcomes and how progress is being measured. At the same time, stakeholders increasingly expect network operators to work collaboratively with local authorities, community organisations and regional partners, ensuring that investment decisions reflect local priorities and deliver tangible benefits for the communities they serve.

4. Turning stakeholder feedback into meaningful action

4.1 Maintain a safe, dependable network capable of supporting electrification, economic growth and increasing dependence on electricity

Customers and stakeholders expect a service that is safe, reliable and affordable. Embedded in this objective are key priorities: making proactive investments that ensure power is available wherever and whenever it's needed, investing smartly to manage costs and reduce bills over time, and delivering clear value for money

Case study: **Our safety-first approach protects what matters most**

Strategic context

Whether protecting colleagues working on the network, customers in their homes or communities living alongside our network assets such as cables, poles and substations, safety is fundamental to maintaining the trust placed in us and our licence to operate.

While the likelihood of serious incidents involving network assets remains low, the consequences can be significant. As our network evolves to meet changing customer needs, stakeholders expect us not only to respond quickly when incidents occur but also to take proactive steps to prevent them. This includes investing in technologies that identify emerging risks earlier, strengthening our internal safety culture and exploring innovative ways to reduce hazards within the communities we serve.

What we heard

Across our ED2 engagement programme and research to inform our ED3 Business Plan, involving 1,498 customers and stakeholders, one message remained consistent: **safety is not an area where compromises should be made**. Stakeholders viewed protecting people as a fundamental responsibility that underpins every aspect of our business and should remain a priority regardless of wider investment decisions.

Stakeholders also challenged us to focus on **preventing incidents rather than simply responding to them**. Customers supported greater use of **network monitoring technology** and earlier intervention to identify faults before they developed into safety risks, particularly during severe weather, when damaged or fallen equipment can pose risks to the public. They recognised the value of investing in technologies that improve fault detection, reduce restoration times and minimise disruption to communities.

Customers also told us they wanted a better understanding of why network improvements are carried out. Those who had recently experienced planned power interruptions said that short-term disruption was more acceptable when they **understood the long-term benefits for safety, resilience and network performance**.

Who we engaged

- 1,498 customers and stakeholders through ED2 and ED3 engagement
- 2,000 operational workforce through climate surveys and HSE survey
- 6 stakeholder workshops across the North West and SPEN licence areas
- 1 advisory panel consulted – Environment and sustainability
- 63 customers participating in a sub-regional ED3 panel

> Case study: Our safety-first approach protects what matters most (continued)

Engagement also prompted new thinking about how existing approaches could be applied to emerging challenges. Building on our long-established Visual Amenity Programme which sees us undergrounding overhead cables, stakeholders suggested that this approach could be considered not only where it improves landscapes, but also in locations where it could **reduce safety risks around heavily used recreational spaces**.

Internally, colleagues reinforced that maintaining a strong safety culture is equally important. Although our 2025 Health and Safety Executive (HSE) safety climate survey showed high confidence in our commitment to health and safety, it also highlighted **opportunities to strengthen trust in reporting processes and encourage colleagues to speak up** and challenge unsafe behaviours without fear of blame.

What we did

To reduce risks across the network, we have accelerated the rollout of new high voltage overhead line monitoring technologies. By March 2026, we had **installed 1,845 LineSIGHT sensors**, providing faster and more accurate identification of damaged assets, downed power lines and emerging faults across our overhead network. When completed, LineSIGHT will monitor over 3300km of overhead line. We also delivered an 88 million-record LV visibility dataset, combining PRESense and smart meter data to provide time-series insight across more than 60% of customers, supporting more accurate capacity assessment and flexibility identification.

What is LineSIGHT?

Building on stakeholder challenge, we are also exploring a targeted ED3 proposal to underground or divert overhead lines at a small number of higher-risk community locations. Using our existing risk assessment method, this approach would prioritise sites where undergrounding could deliver clear safety benefits alongside wider community value.

We have also strengthened colleague safety. Following successful trials involving 130 drivers, we **introduced integrated telematics and driver monitoring technology across our operational fleet**, alongside a new driver scorecard application that provides personalised feedback to help reduce risks and costs, improve driving behaviour and lower emissions.



Figure 5: Our 800 operational vehicles are fitted with telematics to improve safe driving practices

> Case study: Our safety-first approach protects what matters most (continued)

Alongside these operational improvements, we launched our **SAFE campaign to continually strengthen our safety culture** and encourage colleagues to speak up when they identify unsafe behaviours. Delivered through a four-week multi-channel campaign centred on the themes of Stop & Think, Accountable, Family and Every time, everywhere, the messaging reinforced that everyone has a responsibility to keep themselves and others safe.

1,845
LineSIGHT sensors installed

800
operational vehicles fitted with telematics

SAFE
campaign delivered across the business

Stakeholder impact

During the year, we recorded three **lost-time injuries**, seven **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) reportable incidents and a 27% reduction in vehicle incidents**. And in our annual employee survey, colleagues reported strong confidence in following safety procedures, felt empowered to positively challenge unsafe behaviours and recognised that safety remains our highest priority for our customers, communities and coworkers.

Safety observations increased by 24%, while positive safety challenges increased by 22%, demonstrating growing confidence to speak up and help prevent incidents before they occur. Engagement with our SAFE campaign content was equally strong, generating more than 2,000 video views, almost 4,700 intranet article views and extensive participation across team briefings and workplace communications.

Our investment in LineSIGHT is delivering faster, smarter and more efficient network operations. By rapidly pinpointing the location of faults the technology reduces the need for engineers to patrol overhead lines to identify the cause of an outage, helping restore supplies more quickly, without impacting customers. It also supports automated restoration by enabling control teams to assess incidents faster and deploy the right resources to the right locations. Over time, the data generated by LineSIGHT will help us identify assets requiring maintenance, upgrade or replacement, supporting more targeted investment and improving network resilience.



Figure 6: Our engineers train at our purpose-built facility which replicates real-world network conditions

Case study: **Our role in transitioning to low carbon technologies**

Strategic context

As more households and businesses adopt low carbon technologies (LCTs) such as electric vehicles, heat pumps and solar battery, electricity networks must be ready to support the transition. While increasing network capacity is an important part of this, some challenges are far less visible.

One of these is the **presence of looped electricity supplies, where two or more properties share a single service cable**. Common in older semi-detached and terraced homes, looped supplies were an efficient way of connecting properties when electricity demand was much lower. However, as customers electrify their homes, many require a dedicated electricity connection before an LCT can be installed.

Around 500,000 properties across our network are estimated to have looped supplies (around 20% of properties are looped in the North West against a GB average of 16%), making this one of the largest hidden challenges to LCT adoption in the North West. Overcoming these challenges is essential to ensuring customers can transition to LCTs quickly, fairly and with confidence.

What we heard

Through our annual programme of regional stakeholder workshops, collaborative industry research and ongoing engagement with customers, local authorities and delivery partners, stakeholders consistently told us that the **electricity network should not be a blocker to the transition** to LCTs.

While awareness of looped supplies was low, customers consistently wanted greater visibility of potential network constraints before investing in an electric vehicle charger or heat pump. Research found that only **8% of customers were aware of looped supplies** before beginning their LCT journey, with many only discovering the issue after committing to an installation. Stakeholders challenged us to make network readiness more transparent so customers could make informed decisions earlier and avoid unnecessary delays.

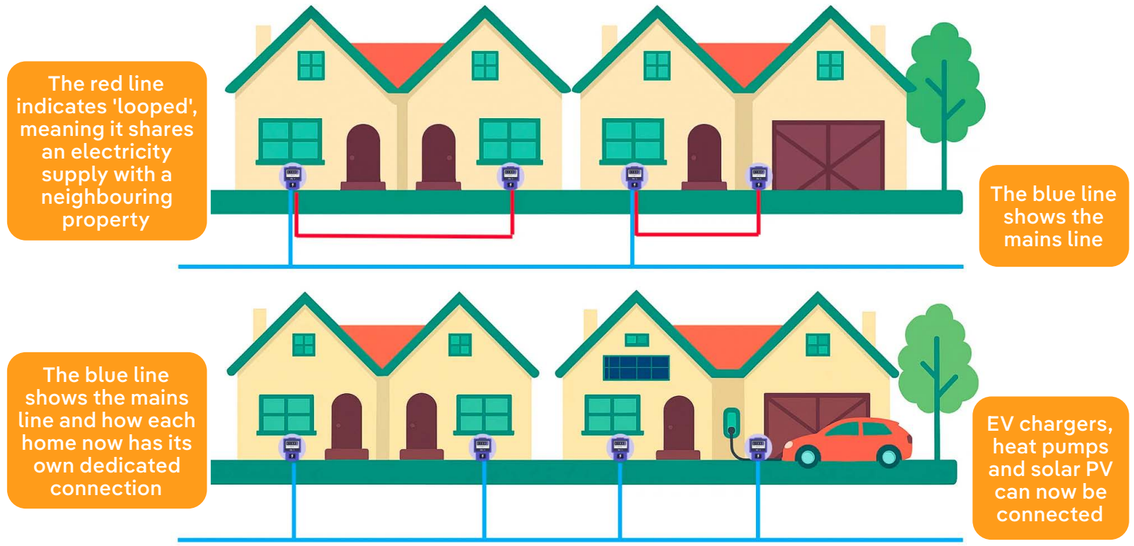


Figure 7: A looped supply is an electricity supply shared with a neighbouring property

Who we engaged

- 108 participants in our 2 sub-regional ED3 workshops
- All County or Combined Authorities engaged through ongoing strategic bilaterals
- 97 LAEP bilaterals, reaching 94% of local authorities across the region
- Nationwide participants in ENA-DNO collaborative research
  - 85 workshop participants
  - 40 depth interviews
  - 2,010 survey

> Case study: Our role in transitioning to low carbon technologies (continued)

Customers also shared concerns about the unlooping process itself. Collaborative research across the electricity network sector found that uncertainty about disruption, temporary power interruptions and access arrangements often created more concern than the work did in reality. Customers wanted **clear information explaining why unlooping may be needed**, what to expect during the process and how support would be provided, particularly for those in vulnerable situations.

Local authorities echoed this need. Through engagement with organisations including Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Rossendale Borough Council, **stakeholders highlighted the importance of street-level network visibility to support large-scale retrofit programmes**. With thousands of social homes planned for decarbonisation, understanding where network constraints exist is critical to coordinating investment and avoiding delays.

Despite these concerns, the research also showed that customer perceptions improved significantly once work had been completed, with around **70% considering proactive or reactive unlooping approaches acceptable**. On balance, stakeholders favoured area-based proactive delivery programmes that minimise repeat disruption while enabling more efficient long-term investment across communities.

What we did

Building on thousands of customer-led unlooping requests, we have **invested £4 million in proactive unlooping trials** across Manchester, Warrington and Altrincham, covering approximately 1,500 properties. These trials allow us to address network constraints before customers apply for LCTs, reducing delays and supporting more efficient delivery. The communications approach, including advance notice, is being informed by the learning from research and an ongoing lessons learned exercise conducted with strategic partners. Changes have enhanced the advance notices, general information, FAQs and ensured a personal contact and extra care support. All of this learning from these successful trials has allowed us to roll out further pro-active unlooping, with plans to expand the programme beyond Greater Manchester and target Preston, Wigan and Stockport within the next six months.

Alongside physical investment, stakeholder feedback directly influenced the development of our **LCT Readiness Checker**. Developed entirely in-house and self-funded, the tool provides property-level insights for **2.4 million connected properties**, allowing customers and delivery partners to understand multiple factors that may affect LCT installation, including looped supplies, service cable characteristics and network connections. During development, we redesigned the solution to protect customer privacy by replacing MPAN-based information with secure geospatial data, enabling practical planning without exposing personal information.

The same data is also supporting more coordinated network planning, helping our own teams and external partners identify opportunities to target investment where it will deliver the greatest benefit while reducing duplication and avoiding inefficient, piecemeal interventions.

Stakeholder impact

Since the launch in February 2026 until the end of the reporting period for this report (March 2026), the **LCT Readiness Checker has received more than 8,000 interactions**, giving customers, installers and local authorities greater confidence when planning LCT installations. This year more than 3,200 customers have already benefited from dedicated electricity supplies, helping them access heat pumps, electric vehicles and other LCTs more quickly.

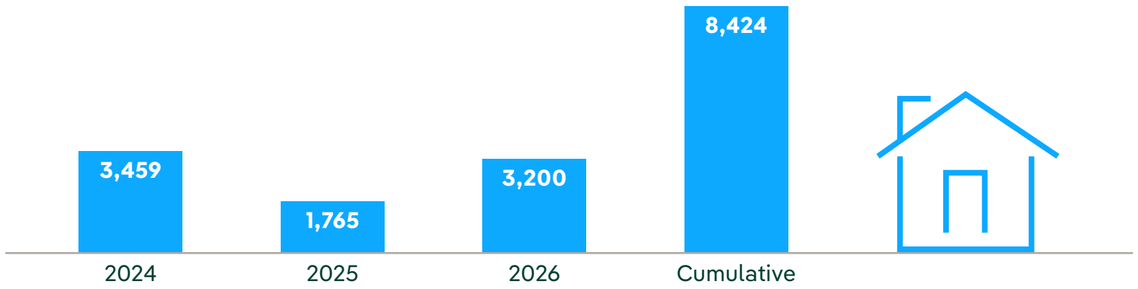


Figure 8: Since 2024 8,242 properties have been unlooped. We have plans to unloop a further 7,500 properties between now and FY28.

> Case study: Our role in transitioning to low carbon technologies (continued)

The data underpinning the tool is also **supporting wider decarbonisation**. Through our GridCharge Planner, organisations including Local Authorities can identify locations with available network capacity, helping optimise EV chargepoint deployment and maximise the value of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure funding. Meanwhile, our open datasets are supporting innovative projects to enable partners to combine network and local data to identify locations where vehicle-to-grid technology can improve community resilience while creating new flexibility opportunities.

Daniel Heery – Cybermoor, said: *"The SP ENW open datasets have enabled Charge My Street & Computing Students from Lancaster University to design a tool with which collates and visualises data from multiple sources in one view. This has saved time on EV chargepoint planning and opened up the potential to generate revenue from flexibility services."*

£4m
invested in proactive unlooping

1,500
properties included in current proactive unlooping trials

2.4 million
properties covered by the LCT Readiness Checker



Case study: **Our DSO accelerates connections and enables growth**

Strategic context

A key role of our Distribution System Operation (DSO) is to ensure customers can access electricity network capacity whenever and wherever they need it. As demand for LCTs, new homes and commercial development continues to grow, **making smarter use of the existing network and accelerating connections are becoming increasingly important** to support regional economic growth and decarbonisation.

Our DSO approach combines whole-system planning which looks beyond the electricity network alone and includes planning alongside local authorities, transport providers, housing developers, water companies, gas networks and NESO. We use regional forecasting and stakeholder insight to identify where network constraints could delay clean growth.

What we heard

During 2025/26, we engaged with more than 2,500 DSO stakeholders to understand how our DSO could better support customers and regional growth. Stakeholders consistently highlighted the importance of **timely, affordable access to network capacity**. Customers wanted us to make greater use of flexible connection arrangements and smart network solutions to avoid unnecessary reinforcement, reduce connection times and lower costs wherever possible.

Stakeholders also called for **greater transparency in how network decisions are made**. They wanted clearer processes, accessible information and greater confidence that flexibility and investment decisions are evidence-based and deliver tangible benefits for customers. Independent feedback from Ofgem's DSO Performance Panel reinforced this expectation, challenging us to strengthen how we demonstrate and quantify the value created through DSO activities.

There was also strong support for **expanding innovative connection solutions**, including Active Network Management (ANM) and flexible connections, particularly where customers were waiting for distribution or transmission network capacity. At the same time, stakeholders emphasised that flexibility should complement, not replace, strategic investment, ensuring the network can continue to support long-term economic growth and increasing demand.

Finally, stakeholders highlighted the need for **coordinated planning between electricity, transport, water and gas** infrastructure so that network planning supports wider regional development and the transition to net zero.

What we did

Our DSO retained responsibility for SP ENW's capacity release strategy, ensuring that **non-network solutions such as flexibility services, ANM and flexible connections are considered before traditional network reinforcement** to help customers connect sooner and reducing costs associated with traditional reinforcement.

Recognising stakeholder calls for greater transparency and consistency, we also **led an industry-wide programme to develop a standardised approach for measuring DSO benefits**. By establishing common methodologies for assessing outcomes such as accelerating connections, we have improved the consistency, credibility and comparability of performance across the sector.

Who we engaged

- 2,500 DSO stakeholders through conferences, consultations, workshops, surveys, webinars and bilateral meetings
- 100s reached through sponsorship of, and active participation in, wider industry and stakeholder events

> Case study: Our DSO accelerates connections and enables growth (continued)

Internally, we responded to evidence showing that flexible connection products were not being used as widely as expected. Rather than reflecting a lack of customer demand, analysis identified opportunities to improve awareness and confidence across our own teams. In response, we **embedded DSO specialists within our connections process**, delivered targeted training for designers and engineers, provided technical support during customer discussions and worked collaboratively with our connections teams to improve guidance for flexible connection products.

Customers now have **access to five flexible connection options**, giving them greater choice and helping many avoid the cost and timescales associated with traditional reinforcement.

We have also continued to work closely with the National Energy System Operator (NESO), including launching **a ICCP new real-time data link** that enables transmission and distribution constraints to be managed more effectively through ANM.

Stakeholder impact

During the year, **111MW of flexible connections were energised**, contributing to **£42.5 million of customer and societal benefits** through accelerated connections, avoided reinforcement and improved utilisation of the network. Accelerating connections accounted for 68% of all quantified DSO benefits (£62.4m), demonstrating the significant value delivered through smarter network operation.

117 sites were assessed and 47% were signposted for flexibility. Our Distribution Network Options Assessment (DNOA) identifies Moss Side in Leyland and Seven Stars in Blackpool as examples. We procured 23MVA of flexibility, enabling the deferral of £1.32m of load-related reinforcement.

Our strengthened collaboration between DSO and connections teams has also **increased awareness and adoption of flexible connection products**, ensuring customers are offered a wider range of options that can reduce costs and shorten delivery times.

The benefits are already being realised through individual projects. In November 2025, we energised our first ANM connection, a 30MW battery storage facility supplying 8,532 properties near Wrightington.

Benefits:

- Customer connection accelerated by three years.
- £3.2m of network reinforcement costs were avoided, with a further £1.5m reduction in customer connection costs, benefiting both bill payers and our connecting customer.
- Curtailment occurred only at the moments it was needed.
- The battery was able to operate almost normally.
- Network assets remained protected.

5
flexible connections options available for customers

1
Industry-leading
benefits methodology developed

117
sites assessed for flexibility

£42.5m
of customer and societal benefits through accelerating connections are already realised in 2025/26

SP Electricity North West

4.2 Deliver fair, personalised and accessible services

Creating personalised and targeted services ensures responsive support for our customers. We uphold customer protection and fairness by delivering these services transparently and inclusively ensuring everyone can access tailored support without discrimination or undue complexity.

Case study: **Our Extra Care register is reaching more people, in more meaningful ways**

Strategic context

Supporting customers in vulnerable situations is a core part of our role. Based on methodology developed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), around **978,000 households across our licence area are eligible for support through our Extra Care register** (ECR). Our ECR is free to join and is open to anyone who thinks they may struggle to cope during a power cut. Throughout ED2, a key priority has been ensuring those customers know support is available and can register easily.

By the end of 2024/25, **95.7% of eligible households across the North West** were registered on the ECR, providing us with the information needed to identify customers who may require additional support during a power cut. As awareness grows, reaching the remaining eligible customers, as well as those who become newly eligible, becomes increasingly challenging and requires more targeted communications, trusted partnerships and a deeper understanding of the barriers that prevent people from engaging.

Stakeholder feedback has shaped this journey from the outset. Following engagement in 2022/23, we replaced the industry term *Priority Services Register* with the *Extra Care register*, reflecting stakeholder views that the previous name was confusing and did not clearly communicate the practical support available. That decision marked the start of a wider programme of engagement-led improvements designed to make our service more inclusive, accessible and relevant.

What we heard

Throughout the year, our Consumer Vulnerability Oversight Panel and Partnerships Advisory Panel, together representing more than 40 independent members, continued to provide strategic challenge and practical insight into how we support customers in vulnerable situations.

Stakeholders consistently told us that the ECR brand name had made the service easier to understand and promote. Partners described the new identity as clearer, more positive and focused on the support customers receive rather than the circumstances they face. At the same time, they **encouraged us to continue moving away from traditional, deficit-based messaging that could discourage some customers** from recognising themselves as eligible for support.

They challenged us to consider how language, imagery and communication channels could better reflect the diverse communities we serve, particularly those who may not identify with the term "vulnerable" or who face barriers to accessing information.

Stakeholders identified opportunities to reach customer segments that remain underrepresented on the ECR. Organisations including The Deaf Village NW, One Voice Blackburn, Asthma + Lung UK and Age Concern Lancashire shared practical insight into the barriers experienced by Deaf customers, people with respiratory conditions, culturally diverse communities, older people and customers who rely on family members or carers to access support. Across these discussions, a common theme emerged: **trusted intermediaries and tailored communications are essential to reaching customers** who are less likely to engage through traditional channels.

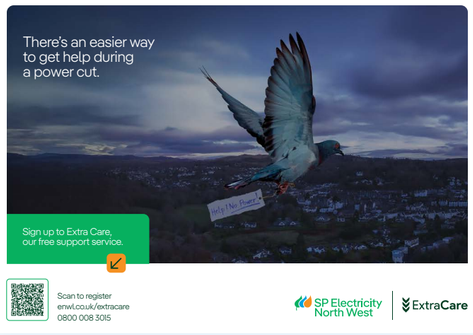
Who we engaged

- 40 specialist, independent advisory panel members
- 17 community partners

> Case study: Our Extra Care register is reaching more people, in more meaningful ways (continued)

What we did

Building on feedback about stigma and accessibility, we launched **a new visual identity for our ECR**, centred on empowerment, independence and practical support. Rather than focusing on vulnerability, the new approach challenged assumptions about who might need additional help during a power cut, reinforcing that registering for support should be simple, inclusive and relevant to a wide range of life circumstances.





Zaffer Khan, CEO, One Voice Blackburn, said: *"The Extra Care branding is of an exceptionally high standard. As a community-based charity representing some of the most marginalised communities, we at One Voice Blackburn see these resources as invaluable to our own winter promotional work."*

We also strengthened the accessibility of our communications through direct collaboration with specialist organisations. Working with The Deaf Village NW, we **engaged with Deaf British Sign Language users to better understand their experiences during power interruptions**. The findings identified significant barriers to accessing information and have informed service improvements and the development of more accessible communications, including a new BSL Extra Care leaflet, a QR code linking to BSL content and a series of informational videos.

Stakeholder feedback also reinforced the importance of reaching customers through organisations they already know and trust. In response, we expanded our partnership approach, embedding Extra Care information in multiple languages within **NHS East Lancashire Maternity Services Badger Notes app** and integrating awareness raising into **Asthma + Lung UK's national helpline**. These partnerships enabled customers to receive information about the ECR as part of existing healthcare interactions, helping normalise conversations about resilience and support while reducing pressure on frontline professionals. More widely, we also worked with The Big Food Project to brand three delivery vehicles, providing regular visibility of the ECR to customers experiencing financial hardship.

ASTHMA+ LUNG UK

NHS East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust A University Teaching Trust

Deaf Village GROUP

Stakeholder impact

During the year, partner-led activity generated more than **20,000 Extra Care register (ECR) registrations**, including 1,843 through the NHS maternity pathway and 2,248 through partnerships with Age UK Lancashire and Age UK South Cumbria. Additional awareness-raising and engagement activity delivered with The Big Food Project and Asthma + Lung UK helped extend our reach to even more eligible customers.

Following the success of our collaboration with Asthma + Lung UK, the model has been adopted by other network operators and energy suppliers, helping more customers across Great Britain access the support available to them.

> Case study: Our Extra Care register is reaching more people, in more meaningful ways (continued)



Figure 9: We worked with The Big Food Project to brand three delivery vehicles, providing greater visibility of the ECR to customers.

Baselining against the updated 2021 Census, our ECR now reaches 98.2% of eligible households, providing a more accurate understanding of current performance and helping us identify where further action is needed. The analysis shows particularly strong reach among customers with disabilities, hearing impairments, sight loss and mental health conditions, while also highlighting opportunities to improve awareness among households with young children, customers who are blind and communities where English is not the first language.

38,000
views on bespoke ECR content on NHS Badger app

517
callers to Asthma+Lung UK received targeted Extra Care information through the helpline

14,000
weekly opportunities to see our ECR branding on The Big Food Project livery

98.2%
of eligible households are now registered on the ECR (2021 census)

Case study: **Our customers are better supported when the power goes off**

Strategic context

Power interruptions can be stressful and disruptive, making it essential that customers receive clear, timely and reassuring information when they need it most. Our Customer Strategy is built around delivering a safe, fair and inclusive service. It is underpinned by three principles: reducing customer effort by making it easy to access support, engaging with customers to listen and improve, and taking ownership to minimise disruption.

Our Digitalisation Strategy supports this ambition by using technology to improve customer experiences and automate routine processes where it adds value. By making it easier for customers to access information and report power cuts, we can reduce effort, provide faster updates and enable our colleagues to spend more time supporting customers with more complex or individual needs.

Stakeholder engagement has been central to shaping this approach, ensuring that digital innovation enhances, rather than replaces, the personal support customers expect during a power interruption.

What we heard

Customer research consistently showed that **people want power cut information to be quick, simple and easy to access**.

Each year, around 60% of the 227,884 calls received by our contact centre relate to power cuts. Focus groups with both ECR and non-ECR customers highlighted a preference for faster access to outage information, with **many identifying the national 105 service as the simplest way to report a power cut** and receive support.

Despite strong support for the service, independent research identified low awareness as the main barrier to its use. Overall awareness of 105 was just 23%, although almost nine in ten customers said they would use the service during a power cut once they understood its purpose. Stakeholders challenged us **to improve awareness through clearer, more consistent communications** across all customer touchpoints.

Customers also shared positive views on automation where it made interactions quicker and more convenient. Research with customers who had recently experienced a power cut found **strong support for digital reporting tools and automated updates**, provided these complemented rather than replaced access to a customer advisor. This was particularly important for customers in vulnerable situations, customers relying on LCTs and those living in areas with poor mobile or broadband connectivity.

Across all engagement, customers emphasised the importance of receiving **accurate and consistent information** regardless of how they contacted us. Whether using SMS, online services or speaking with an advisor, they expected updates to be consistent and delivered in real time, helping reduce uncertainty during what can often be a stressful experience.

Who we engaged

- 6 focus groups participants (both ECR and non-ECR)
- 200 survey completes about awareness of 105
- 300 low voltage customers who had recently reported a power cut by speaking to an agent
- 31 future-focused customer focus groups and additional in-depth interviews, delivered jointly with SPEN

> Case study: Our customers are better supported when the power goes off (continued)

What we did

To increase awareness of the 105 service, we launched a **public campaign encouraging customers to "Save it. Share it. Use it."** Through social media, digital communications and customer information, we explained the benefits of calling 105 and helped customers understand what to expect when reporting a power cut. We also reviewed our website and customer communications to make the 105 number more prominent and easier to find. In addition, we promoted the number through Local Resilience Forums and engaged with local MPs to support the winter campaign which highlighted the 105 number.

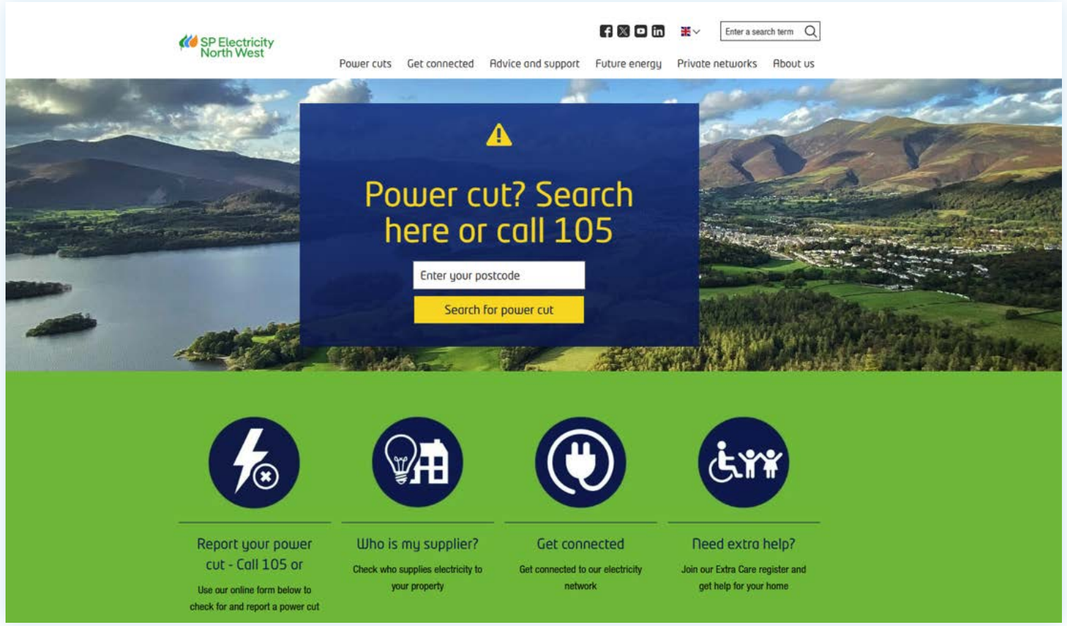


Figure 10: Our updated homepage promotes the 105 number more clearly

We simplified the customer journey by **introducing a new online 'Report Your Power Cut'** service, enabling customers to access live outage information more quickly while reducing the need to contact our customer centre for routine updates. At the same time, **we expanded proactive SMS messaging across our low voltage network**, allowing customers in affected postcodes to confirm whether they were experiencing a power cut before needing to contact us. This improves the speed and accuracy of fault identification while reducing customer effort.

We continued to **enhance our customer relationship management system** by automating routine processes. Online power cut updates are now written directly into fault records and managed by the same team responsible for SMS messages and outbound customer calls. This helps ensure customers receive a consistent version of events across all channels. In addition, **new integration with smart meter data enables advisors to remotely confirm whether customers remain off supply** following restoration. This allows us to identify customers who may still require support more quickly and resolve issues without unnecessary follow-up calls or site visits.

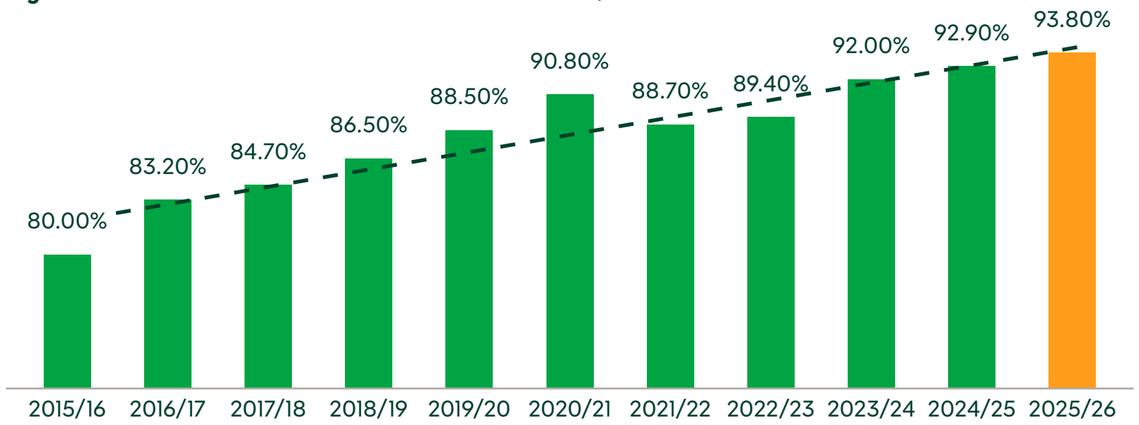
Stakeholder impact

By improving awareness of the 105 service and making outage information easier to access, **customers can obtain updates more quickly and with less effort**. Automated reporting, proactive communications and smarter use of network data are reducing the need for repeated customer contact while enabling colleagues to focus on customers requiring more personalised support.

During 2025/26, **92.6% of customers said they found it easy to contact us**, supporting our ambition to reduce customer effort and improve accessibility. We also continued to exceed our Business Plan commitment of maintaining customer satisfaction above 90%, remaining close to the maximum regulatory incentive target.

> Case study: Our customers are better supported when the power goes off (continued)

Figure 11: Overall customer satisfaction trend since 2015/16



The introduction of our new online reporting journey has also seen strong customer uptake, with **almost 38,000 power cuts reported through the service**. Together, these improvements demonstrate how customer feedback and digital innovation are helping us deliver a more accessible, efficient and reassuring service when customers need us most.

38,000
'Report a power cut' form completions

92.6%
of customers said they found it easy to contact us

93.80%
overall customer satisfaction – our best ever performance



SP Electricity North West

Case study: **Our tools and personalised support are accelerating local energy planning**

Strategic context

Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) are playing an increasingly important role in shaping how electricity networks are planned and developed. By bringing together local ambitions for housing, transport, economic growth and decarbonisation, they help ensure future network investment reflects the needs of the communities it serves.

This role is becoming even more significant as the energy planning landscape evolves through the Transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan (tRESP), providing the foundation for the future Regional Energy Strategic Planning (RESP) framework. Effective collaboration with local authorities is therefore essential to support the development of individual LAEPs and to ensure local priorities influence regional and national investment decisions.

Supporting local authorities with the knowledge, tools and data they need is central to our DSO role and to delivering a coordinated energy transition across the North West.

What we heard

Supporting local authority decarbonisation has remained a key focus throughout ED2. Over the last two years, we have worked closely with local authorities through 97 bilateral LAEP meetings, engaging more than 400 officers across 94% of local authorities in our licence area.

To better understand how our support could evolve, we **commissioned an independent review involving representatives from 16 local authorities across our three regions**, with oversight from our DSO Stakeholder Panel. The review confirmed that while local authorities valued our proactive support, **their needs differed depending on where they were in their energy planning journey**.

Authorities beginning to develop LAEPs wanted clearer, non-technical guidance to help build confidence and understand the energy system. Those progressing through modelling and stakeholder engagement highlighted the importance of accessible digital tools and specialist advice, while authorities moving towards delivery wanted support to develop investment-ready projects, interpret complex energy data and assess delivery options.

Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of stronger collaboration across organisations. Local authorities, combined authorities, transport bodies and community energy groups consistently highlighted the need for **better data sharing and closer alignment between local plans, regional priorities and future network investment**. They recognised that successful place-based decarbonisation depends on combining local knowledge with robust evidence and coordinated planning.

Who we engaged

- 97 bilateral LAEP meetings
- 94% of local authorities reached in our region
- DSO stakeholder panel
- 17 Empower participants
- 16 independent reviews with local authorities

What we did

Responding to calls for more accessible guidance, we **partnered with Green Economy to co-design 'Empower'**, a staged training programme that builds confidence in local energy planning from introductory learning through to project delivery. Supported by a newly appointed dedicated Stakeholder Engagement Manager, the programme provides flexible, practical support tailored to different stages of LAEP development.

> Case study: Our tools and personalised support are accelerating local energy planning (continued)

Feedback from trial participants has already informed the evolution of the programme, leading to improvements including enhanced guidance on stakeholder engagement, updated learning materials, stronger support for using our data hub and the development of additional content covering areas such as retrofit, heating and funding opportunities.

For authorities progressing through modelling and delivery, we introduced further practical support. Developed in consultation with other regional DSOs to promote standardisation and consistency in approach, we adopted a **common data request template** for local authorities operating across multiple network areas, allowing information to be submitted once and shared across electricity and gas network operators. We also **funded access to the LAEP+ platform**, giving local authorities across our regions free access to enhanced modelling and scenario-planning tools to support evidence-based decision-making.

Beyond supporting individual authorities, local insight gathered through this engagement has directly informed our strategic energy needs submissions to the National Energy System Operator (NESO), ensuring local priorities help shape future regional and national energy planning.

Stakeholder impact

Our stakeholder-led approach is helping local authorities plan for energy transition with greater confidence while ensuring local priorities influence future network investment.

Following positive feedback, we have committed to **providing LAEP+ and the Empower programme to all local authorities across our region** until at least 2028, delivering an estimated £1 million of benefits during ED2 through reduced resource requirements and more consistent approaches to local energy planning.

The introduction of a common data request process has **also reduced duplication for authorities working across network boundaries**, saving time and enabling partners to focus on planning rather than administration.

Perhaps most importantly, the relationships, insight and data developed through our engagement are now informing strategic planning at a national level. During the year, we submitted Strategic Energy Need (SEN) projects to NESO that reflected priorities identified through extensive engagement with local stakeholders. Many of these projects were included in the tRESP published in January 2026, highlighting the vital role SP Electricity North West has played in shaping future investment decisions across the North West.

400
local authority officers engaged

All
local authorities in our licence area will have free access to LAEP+

£1m
in societal benefits during ED2 through reduced resource requirements

One
common data request template

4.3 Build resilience and help communities adapt to a changing world

Resilience in today's world of rapid and unpredictable political, economic, social, and technological change means more than just having fewer power cuts. It's about strengthening local capabilities and support early planning measures that enable effective anticipation, adaptation and recovery from disruptions.

Case study: **Our resilience programmes are helping communities before, during and after incidents**

Strategic context

Extreme weather is becoming more frequent and less predictable, increasing the importance of building resilience across the communities we serve. **Storms, flooding and periods of extreme heat can all affect electricity supplies**, requiring robust preparation, rapid response and effective coordination between network operators, emergency services, local authorities and community organisations.

Resilience is about more than restoring power quickly. It is about helping customers prepare before incidents occur, providing clear and timely information during disruption and working collaboratively with partners to support communities throughout the recovery process.

By understanding how customers, community organisations and resilience partners experience major incidents, we continue to strengthen our operational response while helping communities become better prepared for future events.

What we heard

Throughout the year we engaged extensively with resilience partners, customers and community organisations to understand how we could strengthen preparedness and emergency response.

We began the year by hosting our Resilience North West Summit, bringing together more than 50 representatives from academia, charities, Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), emergency planning teams, transport organisations, infrastructure providers and consumer groups to explore emerging resilience challenges.



Figure 12: At the start of the year, we hosted our Resilience North West Summit

Who we engaged

- 50+ stakeholders at our Resilience North West Summit
- 5 LRFs in the North West
- 300 customers proactively contacted as part of our #BeWinterReady campaign
- 904 individuals engaged through our Communities Prepared pilot

SP Electricity North West

> Case study: Our resilience programmes are helping communities before, during and after incidents (continued)

A consistent message emerged: **society's increasing dependence on electricity means that power interruptions now have wider consequences than ever before**. Stakeholders highlighted the growing reliance on electricity for home healthcare, digital public services, home working, transport electrification and LCTs, increasing the importance of coordinated planning and customer support during major incidents.

Partners also emphasised the value of timely information sharing and closer collaboration between organisations before, during and after emergencies. LRFs highlighted that effective incident management depends on shared situational awareness, coordinated decision-making and clear communication with customers and partner organisations.

Customers provided equally valuable insight. Research following our winter preparedness campaign found that while proactive contact was widely appreciated, concerns about scams prevented some customers from engaging. Through our Communities Prepared pilot, partners reinforced the importance of using trusted community organisations to reach customers and highlighted that practical conversations about safety and wellbeing were more meaningful than discussing "resilience" in abstract terms. Partners also emphasised that increasing reliance on digital communications must not exclude customers who have limited connectivity or confidence using technology.

What we did

Ahead of winter 2025/26, we expanded our proactive customer contact programme, **increasing engagement with ECR customers by 25% compared with the previous year**. More than 40,000 customers received personalised preparedness conversations through telephone calls and doorstep visits delivered by colleagues from across the business. Following stakeholder feedback, we refreshed campaign messaging to focus on reassurance and wellbeing, strengthened guidance on scam awareness and introduced additional colleague training to help customers confidently verify genuine communications from SP Electricity North West.

Mr Hallsworth, ECR customer of pensionable age, spoke to friends and family about the call and made a note of the 105 number after the call: *"It's a good service. Our children live in different parts of the country so this call to us free of charge, puts our mind at rest to know help is out there, we are in our 80s. The agent went through checking our contacting numbers and checked we would know what to do, and they gave us the number to call. It was a good reminder that we are on the register."*

We also strengthened our operational preparedness by **developing a new centralised incident management dashboard**, bringing together customer, operational and network information into a single near real-time view. The dashboard updates every 30 minutes and supports faster decision-making during major incidents while improving situational awareness across response teams.

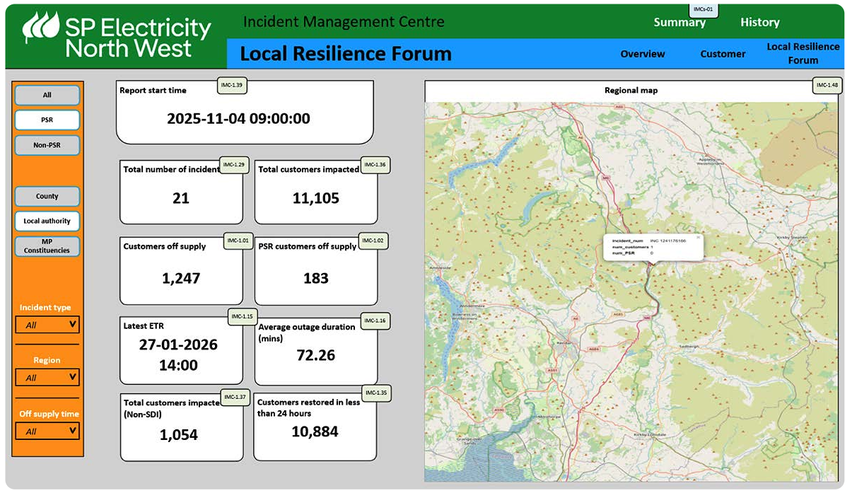


Figure 13: Our new centralised incident management dashboard

> Case study: Our resilience programmes are helping communities before, during and after incidents (continued)

Recognising the importance of customer communication during incidents, we **expanded both our standby customer support arrangements and colleague training** for inbound contact and welfare activities. Our customer support capability has increased significantly, with standby resource available for outbound calling, inbound calling and door-knocking activities rising from 360 to 750 colleagues. This strengthens our ability to provide proactive customer contact, welfare checks and on-the-ground support during major incidents.

Alongside these improvements, we **enhanced collaboration across the wider ScottishPower Group** and continued working closely with LRFs, local authorities and emergency planning partners. This included sharing forecasting tools, delivering resilience workshops and supporting partners to better understand severe weather risks and coordinate local response planning.

Stakeholder impact

Independent evaluation found that **80% of customers considered our proactive preparedness conversations useful**, with satisfaction among ECR customers increasing to 9.4 out of 10. The campaign also strengthened customer confidence by providing practical advice before severe weather and helping customers recognise legitimate communications from SP Electricity North West.

Our continued investment in resilience is also supporting strong operational performance. We continue to deliver the **lowest power cut frequency in Great Britain outside London**, contributing to industry-leading performance under Ofgem's Interruptions Incentive Scheme.

The strengthened coordination arrangements developed during the year extend beyond our own licence area. Improved mutual aid arrangements across the ScottishPower Group, together with closer collaboration with resilience partners across the North West, mean **resources, information and expertise can be shared more effectively during major incidents**, helping communities recover more quickly when severe weather occurs.

40,000+
proactive ECR customer conversations

537
colleagues supporting winter preparedness

94%
CSAT for ECR customers proactively contacted

New
incident management dashboard

Case study: **Our sustainability actions are delivering benefits today and tomorrow**

Strategic context

Every day, we manage 13,000km of overhead lines, 47,000km of underground cables, almost 84,000 items of switchgear and more than 35,000 transformers, creating environmental responsibilities that span our operations, supply chain and investment decisions.

Through our ED2 Environmental Action Plan, **we are delivering 21 commitments covering carbon emissions, biodiversity, resource efficiency, operational impacts and sustainable procurement**. These commitments support both our own environmental performance and the wider decarbonisation of the region. While the majority of our commitments are tracking strongly and producing impactful change, the only commitment with a red RAG status is our commitment to *maintain a leakage rate of less than 0.3% for our total bank of sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6) equipment* - although we remain within the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) emissions to date.

Delivering meaningful environmental improvements depends on transparency as well as action. Stakeholder engagement helps us understand where expectations are changing, identify emerging priorities and ensure we are open about both the progress we make and the challenges we face.

What we heard

Our Environment and Sustainability Advisory Panel, together with wider ED3 themed stakeholder engagement, continued to provide independent challenge on our environmental performance and long-term sustainability ambitions.

Stakeholders consistently told us that transparency is essential to maintaining trust. They welcomed the more open reporting introduced during ED2, including greater visibility of commitments that are off track, but **challenged us to continue explaining why performance has fallen short and how lessons are being applied to improve future delivery**.

This was particularly evident in discussions around SF_6 emissions, which is a potent greenhouse gas. Enhanced inspection programmes identified leakage from several assets previously expected to remain sealed throughout their operational life. Panel members challenged us to continue reporting the issue and emissions from our network openly, recognising that transparent communication about issues and setbacks is just as important as highlighting successes.

Stakeholders also encouraged us to look beyond managing existing assets and continue exploring lower-carbon alternatives to SF_6 where they are technically and economically viable. More broadly, they emphasised the importance of **aligning our environmental ambitions with regional priorities**, including Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and working collaboratively to maximise biodiversity and environmental benefits across the North West.

Who we engaged

- 54 specialist, independent environment stakeholder panel members
- 230 customers in ED3 engagement delivered jointly with SP Energy Networks

What we did

Following enhanced inspections, we continued to **report openly on SF_6 performance**, providing greater visibility of the causes of increased leakage rates and the actions being taken to reduce emissions. Alongside ongoing monitoring, we continued using specialist contractors to recover and recycle SF_6 from equipment removed from the network wherever possible, ensuring greenhouse gases are managed responsibly throughout the asset lifecycle.

At the same time, we have continued investing in alternatives to conventional SF_6 technology. Following the successful trial of a g^3 circuit breaker at Ulverston, which uses C4FN-based gas technology instead of SF_6, we expanded deployment of this lower-carbon alternative through additional installations across our network. While C4FN remains a fluorinated gas with a global warming potential of approximately 2,750 times that of CO_2, this is significantly lower than SF_6, supporting a reduction in emissions.

> Case study: Our sustainability actions are delivering benefits today and tomorrow (continued)

Stakeholder feedback also highlighted the importance of delivering visible environmental improvements beyond our operational assets. We continue to enhance over 100 of our network sites for biodiversity and natural capital improvements, increasing their environmental, aesthetic and societal value.

In support of our ED2 commitment to plant 10,000 trees per year, colleagues exceeded this year's target by planting over 10,500 trees across several sites, including through a collaborative volunteering initiative with the Nelson Allotment Society. Members of our Environment and Sustainability Advisory Panel were also hosted at our Penwortham biodiversity site, where they gained first-hand insight into the ways stakeholder feedback is informing habitat management and biodiversity enhancement across our estate.



Figure 14: SP ENW colleagues and Nelson Allotment Society planted more than 700 trees on company land



Figure 15: SP ENW colleagues taking part in a colleague tree planting volunteer day

Stakeholder impact

By openly sharing the challenges associated with SF_6 management, alongside the actions being taken to address them, we are **building greater confidence that our environmental commitments are underpinned by evidence, accountability and continuous improvement** rather than headline claims alone.

Our work is also influencing the wider sector. As Chair of the Energy Networks Association's SF_6 Working Group, we are **helping shape the industry's transition towards greenhouse gas-free technologies**, sharing learning and supporting the development of future standards across Great Britain.

Across our wider Environmental Action Plan, we continue to deliver measurable environmental improvements. During 2025/26, we have continued to make strong progress in resource efficiency, achieving 98% diversion of waste from landfill and 82% reuse and recycling, exceeding our EAP targets.

In parallel, we have strengthened our approach to biodiversity and natural capital through the implementation of a natural capital assessment tool and the identification of 100 sites for biodiversity enhancement across our estate. This provides a more strategic and measurable framework for delivering long-term environmental value, helping us track habitat improvements and support nature recovery alongside the operation of critical network infrastructure.

32,000
trees planted since 2023

g³ circuit break trial undertaken to replace SF_6 assets

Case study: **Our support is helping customers participate in a flexible energy future**

Strategic context

Flexibility is becoming an increasingly important part of the future electricity system. By encouraging customers, businesses and organisations to adjust when they use, store or export electricity, we can make better use of existing network capacity, reduce the need for costly reinforcement and connect more LCTs.

However, delivering these benefits depends on broad participation. While flexibility markets have traditionally been dominated by larger commercial providers, **increasing involvement from households, community organisations, small businesses and the public sector will help unlock additional flexibility** while ensuring the benefits of the energy transition are shared more fairly across the value chain.

As a Social DSO, our role extends beyond operating the network. Through stakeholder engagement, impartial advice and targeted support, we are helping remove barriers to participation so more communities can benefit from a smarter, more flexible energy system.

What we heard

Our DSO conferences, consultations, local authority workshops, webinars, Flexibility Forum and community energy events provided valuable insight into how flexibility markets can become more accessible and inclusive.

Across our engagement programme, some stakeholders consistently told us that **flexibility markets remain too complex for many potential participants**. Community organisations, smaller businesses and LV customers highlighted that technical requirements, market rules and uncertainty over financial returns often discourage participation.

Public sector organisations also identified significant untapped potential. NHS stakeholders recognised opportunities to generate additional income through flexibility services but highlighted **barriers including limited internal resource, uncertainty over business cases and a lack of clear routes into the market**.

Customers shared similar concerns through our Take Charge service and wider Social DSO engagement. Many said they lacked the confidence to make informed decisions about LCTs, smart tariffs and flexibility services, reinforcing the importance of trusted, expert, impartial advice. Stakeholders also challenged us to ensure vulnerable and underserved communities are not left behind, emphasising that **participation requires tailored support alongside digital self-serve services**.

Who we engaged

- 217 attendees at our flagship DSO conferences
- 108 participants at our future focused Stakeholder Regional Events
- 66 attendees to our community energy events, and DSO Functions webinars
- 12 Flexibility Service Providers attending our first Flexibility Forum

What we did

Our Autumn 2025 flexibility tender was the largest ever delivered by SP Electricity North West, creating **£14 million of flexibility opportunities. This tender sought 282 requirements across 141 locations** serving around 110,000 customers. To make participation easier, we **reduced the minimum participation threshold from 10kW to 5kW**, introduced monthly procurement windows to provide faster revenue opportunities and expanded pre-scheduled flexibility products that offer greater certainty for participants.

Recognising that engagement is just as important as market design, we also **launched a quarterly Flexibility Forum**, bringing together existing and potential flexibility providers, local authorities and community energy organisations to identify barriers and co-design future improvements.

> Case study: Our support is helping customers participate in a flexible energy future (continued)

Stakeholder feedback also shaped the launch of our new Social DSO Fund, providing grants of up to £25,000 to community and public sector projects that deliver both network and social value. Early projects include Energy Cloud, which redirects surplus renewable electricity to heat water for vulnerable households, and a partnership with NHS England and Energy Systems Catapult to help hospitals participate in flexibility markets for the first time.

Alongside these initiatives, we significantly **expanded our Take Charge advice service**. Customers can now access personalised support covering LCTs, smart tariffs and flexibility through advisers, community events and a new modular education programme, helping more people understand the opportunities available and make informed decisions.

Take Charge customer: *"With three kids and our energy bills going up I started looking into solar as a way to bring our energy costs down, but once I started getting quotes it became really confusing. That's when I got in touch with Take Charge. They explained how solar works, what my options were and how batteries and tariffs fit together. Everything felt much clearer and I felt confident making the decision instead of guessing."*



Figure 16: Solar made simple is the first of our modular educational series on LCTs

Stakeholder impact

During the year, **the number of registered flexibility assets increased to 68,640, a 450% increase** on the previous year, while 68 flexibility providers are now active across our network. We also **dispatched 8,786MWh of flexibility during the year**, more than double the previous year's total, and delivered our first 43.2MWh of low-voltage flexibility. Collectively, this represents 25% of all DSO flexibility dispatched across Great Britain, demonstrating the growing role flexibility is playing in supporting our network.

The Social DSO Fund is also creating **wider societal benefits**. Energy Cloud is helping vulnerable households reduce energy bills by making better use of surplus renewable generation through trusted intermediary, Irwell Valley Homes. In phase 1, 50 customers are benefiting from surplus energy diverted to heat their hot water cylinders overnight, with associated costs automatically refunded via their supplier, delivering savings of around £146 per year. Meanwhile, while our NHS partnership is establishing a scalable model that will enable public sector organisations to generate revenue from flexibility services while supporting a more efficient electricity system.

Our expanded **Take Charge service supported 3,005 customers** during the year, compared with 411 in the previous year. Independent evaluation found that 75% of customers felt more confident and more likely to take action after receiving advice, demonstrating the value of trusted, impartial support in helping customers participate in the transition to a smarter, more flexible energy system.

3,005
3,005 customers benefited from our Take Charge LCT advice service

8,786MWh
of flexibility, an increase of 102% year-on-year

450%
increase in registered flexibility assets since last year

£195,000
in grants awarded as part of our Social DSO fund

49
Take Charge community engagement events

5kW
minimum participation threshold

£14m
flexibility tender

5. Building and maintaining trust

5.1 Continuously improving our engagement

Meaningful stakeholder engagement is an ongoing dialogue that helps us understand changing priorities, respond to emerging challenges and continually improve the way we work. To ensure our approach remains effective, each year since 2020 we have commissioned independent research to understand stakeholders' experiences of engaging with SP Electricity North West and identify opportunities for further improvement.

The research for 2025/26 **engaged 187 stakeholders from across the public, private and third sectors**, including local authorities, regulators, utilities, supply chain partners, charities, community organisations, advisory panel members and DSO stakeholders.

The findings were encouraging. Stakeholders continued to value their relationship with SP Electricity North West and increasingly recognised that their feedback influences our thinking and decision-making. At the same time, they challenged us to go further by strengthening communication, improving visibility of the actions we take in response to engagement, and providing more practical support on the issues that matter most to them.

Stakeholders suggested several improvements

Stakeholders wanted **clearer evidence that their views were influencing decisions**, with stronger "You Said, We Did" reporting and more regular updates demonstrating the outcomes of engagement. They also encouraged us to improve communication and responsiveness, particularly around connections activity, projects and stakeholder enquiries, while making it easier to identify and contact the right specialists across the business.

Many stakeholders also requested **more practical, topic-specific guidance to help them navigate increasingly complex areas** such as connections, LCTs and flexibility services. Local authorities and delivery partners highlighted opportunities for greater collaboration on shared challenges, including LEVI, LAEPs and wider decarbonisation initiatives.

Action we've taken

Stakeholder feedback directly shaped our engagement programme during 2025/26. Alongside our wider programme of engagement, we **introduced a series of practical, topic-specific webinars** focused on connections, flexibility services and LCTs. The first nine sessions attracted 448 stakeholder registrations and achieved an average satisfaction score of 8.4 out of 10, confirming strong demand for accessible technical guidance.

We also used feedback from participants to shape future activity. Following requests for additional support, we delivered a **dedicated webinar on the ENA SAF G99 application process**, helping stakeholders better understand requirements and navigate the process with greater confidence.

Recognising the important role local authorities play in delivering the transition to net zero, we expanded our support through **dedicated LEVI engagement sessions and training on our Grid Charge Planner tool**. Stakeholders encouraged us to widen access beyond local authorities, so we opened the tool to charge point operators and other delivery partners, providing a clear example of stakeholder feedback leading directly to service improvements.

These activities complement our wider support for local authorities through LAEP and strategic energy planning programmes, ensuring stakeholders have access to the information, tools and expertise they need to make informed decisions.

You said	We did
Better technical guidance	*9 webinars delivered*
More support on G99	*Additional dedicated webinar*
Wider access to planning tools	*Grid Charge Planner expanded*
Better feedback loops	*Enhanced "You Said, We Did" reporting*

We have also strengthened transparency across our engagement programme. This year's report includes **expanded "You Said, We Did" reporting across all advisory panels and engagement activities**, with examples highlighted throughout the report to demonstrate how stakeholder insight has influenced our decisions and actions.





Figure 17: Our 'You said, we did' reporting provides transparency and accountability across our engagement programme

5.2 How stakeholder expectations are evolving

As part of the development of ED3, covering the period 2028–2033, we have worked alongside SP Energy Networks on a joint programme of engagement across all three ScottishPower electricity distribution licence areas: SP Electricity North West, SP Distribution and SP Manweb. Together with our annual stakeholder engagement and Needs and Wants research, this has **provided one of the most comprehensive pictures yet of how expectations of electricity network operators are changing**.

While many long-standing priorities remain unchanged, stakeholders consistently told us that expectations are broadening as society becomes increasingly dependent on electricity and the transition to net zero accelerates. Reliable electricity remains the foundation, but customers and stakeholders increasingly expect network operators to play a wider role in supporting communities, furthering economic growth, enabling decarbonisation and creating long-term value.



5.3 Independent oversight from our advisory panels

1 independent stakeholder group

6 advisory panels

149 advisory panel members

38.5 meeting hours

6 topics discussed on average

Our governance structure continues to evolve to meet changing stakeholder expectations and organisational priorities, while providing robust oversight of both -ED2 delivery and the development of our ED3 Business Plan.

During 2025/26, we **maintained our established advisory panel structure**, welcoming new members while retaining continuity to allow relationships, knowledge and challenge to mature over time. Coordinated by our central Stakeholder Engagement team, each panel meets regularly and brings together regional subject matter experts, customer representatives and specialist stakeholders, alongside members of our leadership team. Acting as trusted 'critical friends', **the panels provide independent challenge, monitor progress against our ED2 Business Plan commitments** and help ensure stakeholder insight continues to influence decision-making across the business.

While our advisory panels remain predominantly focused on supporting the successful delivery of ED2, **our ISG provides independent scrutiny of stakeholder engagement and the development of our ED3 Business Plan**.

In early 2025, as part of our ambitions for an integrated business plan, the SP Electricity North West Independent Oversight Group (IOG) and the SP Energy Networks Independent Net Zero Advisory Committee (INZAC) were merged to form the ISG. The ISG brings together national and regional experts with a broad range of experience spanning consumer issues, regulation, sustainability, local government, energy systems and customer vulnerability. The previous chair of the IOG, Dr Jayesh Parmar, is now the co-chair of the ISG, and the North West voice is strongly represented through four members. The Group held its inaugural meeting in May 2025 and has since provided independent challenge throughout the development of our future plans.

Figure 18: Our ISG provides independent scrutiny of stakeholder engagement and the development of our ED3 Business Plan



Angela Love
ISG Co-Chair



Jayesh Parmar
ISG Co-Chair



Matthew Cole



Emma Degg MBE



Prof. David Flynn



Ashleye Gunn



Roger Hey



Todd Holden



Prof. Jovica Milanovic



Jenny Willis



Damien Yeates



Dr Matthew Vickers

The Chair of the ISG meets regularly with our Executive Team to provide strategic oversight and constructive challenge, while also participating in the national network of ISG Chairs. This helps share good practice across the sector, strengthen consistency between network companies and ensure our stakeholder engagement continues to reflect evolving regulatory expectations.

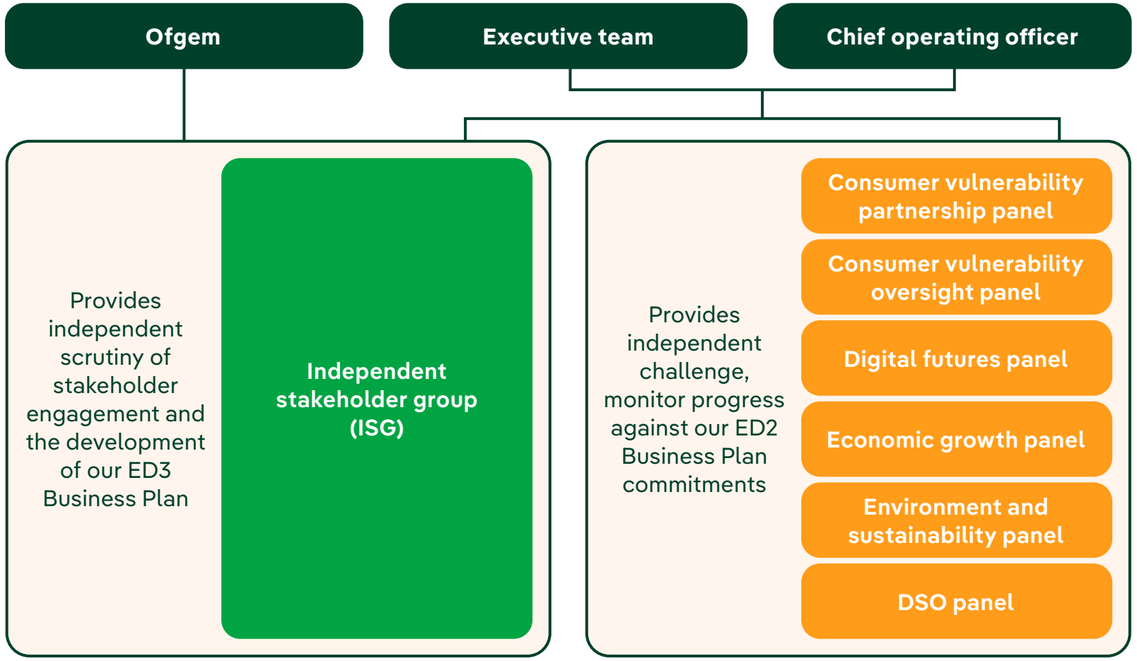


Figure 19: Our ISG and advisory panels provide scrutiny and challenge of our current and future business plans.

We have invited the independent chairs of our advisory panels to comment on our stakeholder engagement approach for 2025/26.

Jenny Willis, Chair of our Consumer Vulnerability Oversight and Partnership Panels, said:



"The start of the ED2 period presented a significant challenge: how to increase support for customers in fuel poverty, those who may need extra help during a planned or unplanned loss of power, and those at risk of being left behind as the energy system changes. Partners have been central to rising to this challenge alongside the team at SP Electricity North West.

Advisory Panel meetings have continued to provide a valuable space to explore how services can reach the people who need them most, particularly through trusted organisations and accessible communication channels. One of the strongest themes this year has been the importance of building relationships over time, so that support provided during moments of difficulty can also contribute to longer-term resilience.

As Chair, I always try to speak to new partners before they attend an Advisory Panel meeting, and a highlight this year was hearing how SP Electricity North West had proactively reached out to partners and worked collaboratively in ways that support both partner organisations and customer outcomes. As financial pressures, severe weather and changes in the energy system continue to affect customers in different ways, partnership working is more important than ever. I hope the team continues to give this the priority it deserves."

Steven Steer, Chair of the Digital Futures Advisory Panel, said:



“I joined the Digital Futures Advisory Panel as a member in 2024, and I took on the role of Chair this spring, so I have seen the panel from within and I have now wrestled with the complexities of learning how to ensure that the panel is best designed to help everyone contribute. My thanks, and those of the wider panel, go to Matt Stephenson, who did a great job as Chair before me.

Something I have come to appreciate is how most of our members are local to the North West and the benefits that this has. This has rooted discussion and attention in local issues that directly affect members and SP ENW - the members are each customers, digital and data experts and regional partners all rolled into one. This intersection of people is creating community and local partnership that extends beyond the panel itself, it is joining up services across sectors and across the region.

As a member, I valued our scrutiny of the Digitalisation Strategy and Action Plan and the open mind with which the panel’s views were received; with discussions ranging from staying on top of rapidly evolving data and AI services to the resilience of rural communications when the power goes out.

Much of my early focus as Chair has been on advancing 'how' we work. We are challenging ourselves to innovate to improve our own activities as a panel. We have trialled more collaborative, digitally enabled ways of working designed to maximise opportunities for every member in the room to contribute and guide our agenda. This has already allowed us to create new ways of providing SP ENW with the robust but supportive critique that they desire and in return it is making it easier for SP ENW to demonstrate how they’ve acted and adapted in response. This is the kind of continuous and incremental course-correction that sits at the heart of best practice for digital and data delivery; it is heartening to see the enthusiasm and impact it is having.

My thanks to all our members and also to the SP ENW team, for their humbleness, openness and partnership. I look forward to the year ahead.”

Elise Wilson, Chair of the Economic Growth Panel, said:



“The Economic Growth Panel includes a diverse mix of individuals with a common focus and commitment to economic growth and development, ensuring that the voice of businesses from across all three counties within the licence area are represented and feed into SP ENW’s plans and investments.

Despite the scale of change experienced over the past year, whether that’s on a macro level around energy policy, or on a more localised level within SP ENW and the acquisition by Iberdrola, their commitment to stakeholder engagement has remained strong. These significant changes haven’t been without challenge, but the organisation has continued to work collaboratively with the Economic Growth Panel to navigate these changes together.

Over the past year, we have continued to provide robust scrutiny on the ED2 business plan commitments under our oversight remit and offer a critical eye over developments in Connections, Flexible Services, Innovation and skills development, amongst many others.”

Todd Holden, Chair of our Environment and Sustainability Panel, said:



"The Environment and Sustainability panel has continued to meet on at least a quarterly basis either virtually or in person, including an opportunity to visit some of the excellent biodiversity work being undertaken in Lancashire. To help the panel to critically challenge the company, we have held deep dive sessions looking at particularly complex issues such as sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6), scope 3 emissions in Science Based Targets and Climate Resilience, issues which are becoming increasingly important in the next business plan cycle.

We continue to attract new members to the Panel to ensure we can appropriately reflect on the region's priorities, which will be even more important as devolution accelerates and more decisions are made locally. The panel continues to review performance on a six-monthly and cumulative to date basis, identifying practical action which can be undertaken to support the delivery of the Plan.

The Panel has retained its strong focus on SF_6 emissions and leakage from oil filled cables and while the SF_6 emissions have been challenging, the company has been very transparent and overall remained within its Science Based Target for Greenhouse Gas emissions. At the halfway point of this Business Plan cycle the company is making good progress against its ambitious Environmental Action Plan commitments and is using this learning to support the Energy Network Association; as the Chair of their Sustainability subgroup to meet Ofgem's requirement to standardise EAPs in the next business planning cycle (2028-33).

Following the merger with Scottish Power Energy Networks, the panel has been supporting the development of a joint EAP covering all three Licence areas in the next Business Plan, providing an excellent opportunity to accelerate progress through the adoption of good practice."

Andrew McInstosh, Chair of our DSO Panel, said:



"As chair of the company's independent DSO stakeholder panel, I'm extremely proud of the progress we have made together, the input we have provided and the ways our collective knowledge and insight have supported the SP ENW DSO to deliver its objectives. Feedback from stakeholders at the end of year one of ED2 suggested that the company needed to do more to support its customers and stakeholders to achieve net zero. With the help of this panel and leaders across SP ENW the DSO team delivered a step change in performance over the last two years, reflected in a much improved performance in the DSO incentive score which rose from 7.1 to 8.5, an increase of almost 20%.

We regularly review our panel's performance and our Terms of Reference, and we now meet bi-monthly to provide earlier and more agile challenge, whilst also expanding our membership. Governance, DSO methodologies, and conflicts of interest remain regular agenda items to ensure full transparency. We have also increased our examination of ED3 and regulatory reforms through the creation of a new policy sub-group.

I look forward to continuing to support the SP ENW DSO team in the coming year as we build on the progress we have achieved together so far, and work towards the delivery of a fair and equitable transition to net zero for the North West."

6. Moving forward into 2026/27

Thank you for taking the time to read our review of stakeholder engagement during 2025/26.

As we continue to deliver our ED2 commitments and develop our ED3 Business Plan, stakeholder engagement will remain central to everything we do. The conversations we have today will help shape the electricity network of tomorrow, ensuring our plans reflect the needs of the communities we serve while supporting a fair, resilient and sustainable energy transition.

Over the next 12 months, we will focus on six key priorities:

- **Delivering our ED2 commitments** informed by stakeholder insight and challenge.
- **Co-creating our ED3 Business Plan** through continued engagement with customers, communities and stakeholders.
- **Demonstrating influence and accountability** by providing clearer evidence of how stakeholder feedback has shaped decisions, investments and outcomes.
- **Strengthening governance and independent challenge** through the ongoing work of our advisory panels and ISG.
- **Developing deeper partnerships** with local authorities, communities and regional organisations to maximise the value and impact of our work.
- **Promoting inclusive participation** so that everyone has the opportunity to influence and benefit from the transition to a smarter, lower carbon energy system.

Stakeholder expectations will continue to evolve, and so will we. By continuing to listen, learn and collaborate, we can ensure our decisions remain grounded in the needs, priorities and aspirations of the customers and communities we serve.

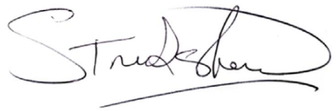
Finally, I would like to thank everyone who contributes their time, expertise and constructive challenge throughout the year. Your insight helps us improve the way we work today while shaping our plans for the future.

Help shape the future of the North West's electricity network

By engaging with stakeholders through our advisory panels and a wider programme of engagement, we gain the insight, challenge and expertise needed to make better-informed decisions. Whether you're a community organisation, local authority, business, academic, customer representative or industry expert, your insight can help shape our future plans.

If you would like to become involved or find out more about our stakeholder engagement programme, **scan the QR code to explore our advisory panels** and get in touch with the Stakeholder Engagement team.

Stephanie Trubshaw, Chief Operating Officer, SP Electricity North West



SP Electricity North West

Glossary

We have abbreviated terms throughout our report, where doing so improves clarity and readability. We provide the full form of an abbreviation at first use and then the abbreviation thereafter. A full list of the abbreviations and commonly used terms is provided in the glossary below.

ANM	Active Network Management
CBA	Cost-benefit analysis
CEM	Common Evaluation Methodology evaluates flexible alternatives to network reinforcement
DNO	Distribution network operator. A company licensed to distribute electricity in Great Britain by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem)
DSO	Distribution Systems Operator. The systems and processes needed to operate energy networks in the net zero carbon future
ECR	Extra Care register. The name for our priority services register which offers enhanced support to customers in vulnerable circumstances
ENA	Energy Networks Association. The trade body that represents the electricity transmission and distribution companies in the UK
Energy transition	The process of changing the energy system (including power, heat, and transport), from a system based on carbon-intensive fossil fuels, to one based on low carbon technology
EV	Electric vehicle
ISG	Independent Stakeholder Group. An independent group that provides perspectives on our insights, highlighting key risks, and opportunities
KPI	Key performance indicators
LAEP	Local Area Energy Plan. A data-driven and whole energy system, evidence-based approach that sets out to identify the most effective route for the local area to contribute towards meeting the national clean growth target, as well as meeting its local clean growth target

LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure fund supporting local authorities in England to plan and deliver charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking
LCT	Low carbon technology such as electric vehicles, electric heat pumps, solar and wind energy
LRF	Local resilience forum
NESO	National Energy Systems Operator. An independent, expert, impartial body with new roles across electricity and gas
NMS	Network management system
Ofgem	Office of Gas and Electricity Markets. The government regulator for gas and electricity markets in Great Britain
ED2	Electricity distribution price control period, 2023- 2028
ED3	Electricity distribution price control period, 2028- 2033
SEN	Strategic Energy Need
SF_6	Sulphur hexafluoride, a potent greenhouse gas used as an electrical insulator.
SHE	Safety, health and environment
SROI	Social Return on Investment. The monetary value associated with positive outcomes received, and costs avoided by society because of a given initiative
Stakeholder	Stakeholders are those parties that are affected by, or represent those affected by, decisions made by SP ENW and Ofgem. As well as consumers, this would for example include Government and environmental groups

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