

Business Plan Commitments

Delivering on our promises to
the communities we serve

To 31 March 2024



We're improving the
biodiversity on this site.

You might notice that this site looks a little different. We are making room for nature as part of our biodiversity uplift plan which aims to leave many of our sites in a better ecological condition than they started with.

We hope you will enjoy seeing more wildlife around here in the future.

Find out more www.enwl.co.uk/transformingourcommunities

Our performance against our commitments to you

A message from our CEO

I am pleased to present the Annual Business Plan Commitment Report, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

I joined the business in September 2022 and presented the Business Plan Commitment Report for the year ended March 2023 with a description of the objectives and strategy for the business. This report covers our first year of delivery against this strategy and our progress against the commitments we made to our customers for RIIO ED2 (ED2), the current price control period from 2024 to 2028.

Our legitimacy as an enterprise is derived not just from Ofgem, our regulator, but directly from the employees, customers and communities we serve. We start with safety and after setting out a range of improvements for safety performance, the business delivered 13 months without a Lost Time Injury (LTI). This is the longest period the company has experienced without an LTI. Unfortunately, we had two injuries in October and November 2023 but since then we have not experienced any further LTIs. The business is currently at the frontier of safety performance in our sector and is acutely aware of the pitfalls of complacency.

The safety of the Company's employees, delivery partners and the public from the inherent risks of electrical assets is assured through the Company's ongoing asset investment programme and the associated asset risk management policies which define the programme scope.

With respect to public safety, a tragic incident occurred on the network in October 2023 which resulted in a fatal injury to a member of the public. The Company has fully investigated the matter internally and are assisting the Health and Safety Executive and HM Coroner with their investigations, which remain ongoing at the time of preparing this report. On behalf of myself, and everyone connected to Electricity North West, our deepest sympathies and condolences go out to all of the family and friends.

Our sector has been tested robustly in the last 18 months, given a backdrop of rising energy prices, high inflation levels experienced for the first time by large swathes of the population, and increased prices driven by global conflicts and costs associated with adaptation to climate change. During the last year we refocussed the business to prioritise and better serve the vulnerable and fuel poor in our communities. We have transformed our performance in this area and subsequently been ranked by Ofgem as the second best DNO in the UK for stakeholder engagement and customer vulnerability (SECV). Importantly, we have sustained this performance improvement into the new price control and as part of the customer satisfaction fuel poverty incentive introduced by Ofgem for ED2 have been ranked second in the DNO league table. Our winter fuel poverty campaigns and our partnerships with charities including the Samaritans, Energy Saving Trust and Citizens Advice, have attracted attention and received plaudits.

Our primary obligation is to deliver a safe, reliable supply of electricity. The last year has been characterised by volatile and extreme weather. In 2024, there were 13 named storms (2023: 1). Despite the weather there have been further improvements in automation performance and operational response and I am pleased to share that we have achieved the best storm performance on record and have delivered the best Customer Minutes Lost (CML) and second-best Customer Interruptions (CIs) in our history. In addition to this our overall customer satisfaction score at the end of March 2024 has seen a 2.6% increase compared to last year at 92.0% (2023: 89.4%) and ranked second of the DNO groups in the DNO league table.

Innovation is essential to maintain our sector leading network performance and reliability levels and to meet the increasing demands on electricity from the decarbonisation of energy, at an affordable cost. We continue to develop and deliver our cutting-edge engineering innovations such as CLASS, Smart Street and LineSIGHT that will keep the network reliable, efficient and safe.

Our capital delivery programme has been slow to mobilise in the first year of ED2. Tightening of global supply chains and increased costs are external factors which have slowed the programme and this has impacted progress on five of our ED2 commitments. In response to these challenges, we have strengthened our capital delivery capability and capacity so that all 46 commitments remain on track to be completed by the end of March 2028.

Overall, we have had a good first year to the current price control. Our strategy has been tested robustly and it has delivered for shareholders, customers, and employees. The business performance has improved in all areas despite strong inflationary and cost headwinds. Our focus is to ensure the energy transition and the journey to Net Zero is experienced by everyone in our community. Our primary priority for the year ahead as a business is to mature quickly as a capital delivery organisation.



Ian Smyth
Chief Executive Officer



Ensuring our Business Plan Commitments continue to reflect stakeholders' needs



There are 46 Commitments to report on for 2023/24

- We have refined our original list of 47 Commitments in line with Ofgem's Final Determination. One Commitment was added and two removed
- We have made a good start to the delivery of these 46 Commitments
- We report our Commitments across seven key areas:



Customer



Reliability



Safety



Net Zero



Vulnerability



Resilience



Environment

Our Business Plan Commitments are a way of ensuring that we are accountable for our performance through,

- Demonstrating public commitment of our critical role in enabling a Net Zero economy
- Demonstrating public commitment for investment targeted at high-profile public safety concerns and supporting those customers who are most vulnerable
- Updating existing Commitments to reflect industry evolution (licence obligation, regulation or legislation) and the resultant changes in company strategy
- We have established our Independent Oversight Group (IOG) to monitor and challenge our performance against our ED2 Commitments



Our performance

In spite of a marked increase in both summer and winter storm activity in 2023/24 and having to cope with the commercial impacts of the very high inflation and associated pricing pressures, we are pleased to report that ENWL has largely met or surpassed its Commitments. We continue to strive to improve our performance and provide the best possible service to our customers in the North West.

Safety

The Company operates in a high hazard industry and the safety of its people and customers, and the protection of the environment will always remain key priorities. Our safe operation is fundamental to the business's licence to operate. We are never complacent about safety.

We finished the year ended 31 March 2024 with a lost time injury frequency rate of 0.023 (2023: 0.035) having had two LTIs (2023: three). This relatively low incident rate reflects the sustained improvement since we embarked on a company-wide initiative to create an enhanced safety culture.

We have continued to invest to reduce further risks associated with link box failures and with rising and lateral mains in multi occupancy properties, such as blocks of flats.

Network reliability and resilience

Our customers and stakeholders continue to feedback that our fundamental role is to keep power flowing through network reliability. This becomes ever more important as customer dependence upon electricity continues to grow as we move to a low carbon future.

This year network reliability continued to be high, achieving industry leading levels of reliability. Our level of Customer Interruptions (CIs; representing the number of interruptions our customers' experience) was 26.2 per 100 customers (2023: 26.6), this outperformed the target of 29.9 set by Ofgem and represents our second-best CI position ever. The average number of Customer Minutes Lost (CMLs; representing the length of time customers are without power in the event of an interruption) were their lowest ever at 26.8 per customer (2023: 26.9) and again represented an outperformance of the target of 27.5 set by Ofgem.

Reliability performance this year has been unusually challenged by 13 named storms (2023: 1). We have been preparing for such events over the past 18 months and this year put into practice significantly bolstered preparation protocols and responses. This has delivered some best-ever ENWL responses during these events.

These improvements have been driven through a combination of investment in automation and network resilience, as well as improvements in operational response when faults do occur. This year saw further development of our network management system, providing a strong digital platform and offering industry leading emergency responses whilst protecting critical customers. We continue to improve resilience through investment in flood defences and interconnectivity to provide protection to a 1 in 1,000-year flood risk level at key sites.

We recognise that there is variability in the level of service experienced by customers and a few customers experience a level of service significantly worse than average, usually by virtue of their location or due to localised network issues. During the first year of ED2 additional funding of £20m has been made available to address these issues and we commenced investment in schemes that aim to reduce, in the long-term, the numbers of Worst Served Customers (WSC).

Customer service

Supporting those customers in vulnerable circumstances is core to our customer strategy. We have continued to increase support to customers in vulnerable circumstances through several initiatives. We have increased registration on our Priority Service Register (PSR) from 73% to 82% of those eligible in the region by promoting awareness and increasing accessibility.

We have also developed our Take Charge campaign with Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM) and Energy Saving Trust (EST). CAM and EST act as our strategic partners to support customers experiencing fuel poverty and energy efficiency, leveraging all available financial support and grants to enhance customers' lives. We have doubled the support provided this year from 12,362 customers in 2023 to 25,072. As part of the Customer Satisfaction Fuel Poverty incentive, our customers have rated the service 95.3%, ranked second in the DNO league table.

Our overall customer satisfaction score at the end of March 2024 has seen a 2.6% increase compared to last year at 92.0% (2023: 89.4%) and ranked second of the DNO groups in the DNO league table. A roadmap of key actions focused around reducing customer effort, simplification, owning what we do are developed from customer feedback and root causes analysis.

Net Zero

The Net Zero transition will undoubtedly result in very significant increases in network demand by 2050 driven by both renewable generation connections and new demand. Our business plan sets out a clear vision around Net Zero and how we will make sure that the network is not a barrier to connecting electric vehicles or other Low Carbon Technologies (LCTs). We measure our performance by two measures; time to quote and time to connect. In both these areas our performance continues to meet or exceed Ofgem targets and the targets we set ourselves in our customer commitments.

In line with this Commitment, in 2023/24 we have also unlooped 3,345 customer power supplies to enable adoption of LCTs and began modelling changes in the technical limit standards to allow more distributed generation/batteries to be connected to the network.

Cost Efficiency

Affordability and cost efficiency remains a key focus area, particularly against the backdrop of unprecedented rises in energy prices and the impact of failing energy suppliers, since the end of 2021. We continue to work hard to deliver our obligations efficiently, including a particular focus on the use of innovation, to keep customer bills as low as possible, which at £115 per year for a typical domestic customer is in line with the GB average.

Sustainability

Our "Leading the North West to zero carbon plan" sets out our target to decrease our emissions by 10% year-on-year in order to become zero carbon by 2038. This year we have made a number of important steps to support delivery of this vision. This includes making one of our depots carbon neutral; our goal for ED2 is to decarbonise one of our twelve depots each year or to make efficiency savings that target our biggest emission sources from our estate.

We have electrified 18% of our vehicle fleet, rolled out EV charging points at all our depots and we are incentivising colleagues to change to EVs. We have also engaged with local authorities and businesses across the region to support them with this transition, promoting the mass adoption of EV technology.

The accelerating uptake of LCTs will ultimately result in more demand being placed on our network, and our main challenge is to manage the change and keep the costs as low as we can while ensuring that our network remains resilient, reliable and meets customers' needs.

Ensuring our Business Commitments continue to reflect stakeholder needs

For the ED2 period we have taken the opportunity this year to reinforce and refresh the stakeholder advisory panel structure, enshrining the Ofgem requirement for enduring customer and stakeholder input in decision making.

We have over 130 stakeholders who regularly give us their time and experience through our advisory panel process. Following the quarterly meeting of the IOG, the independent chair meets with the ENWL CEO and Chairman to ensure that any concerns and opportunities can be raised directly with executive management.

Our original ED2 Business Plan contained 47 Commitments and these have now been updated to reflect the Final Determination from Ofgem. This update led to the removal of two Commitments and addition of one with minor changes to some of the others. All changes have been shared with our IOG who monitor our performance against our Commitments.

In conclusion

Overall, we have made good progress against our Business Plan Commitments. We encourage our stakeholders to hold us to account to deliver against our challenging targets in a transparent manner.

Performance snapshot 2023/24

Our network



Number of customers **2.4m**



Overhead lines
12,914km



Underground cables
47,911km



Submarine cables
23km

Total network length **60,848km**



TOTEX

£281m

Total expenditure*

£364m

R110-ED2 (ED2) allowance*

77%

of allowance (before adjustment for expenditure profile)

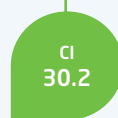
£90 Our part of a typical household bill*

*The price base for all £ values is 2020/21.

The typical household bill in current prices, and using a consumption value of 2,900kWh, is £115.

How we're performing

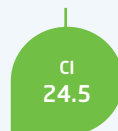
Reliability



Customer interruptions (Including exceptional events)



Customer minutes lost (Including exceptional events)

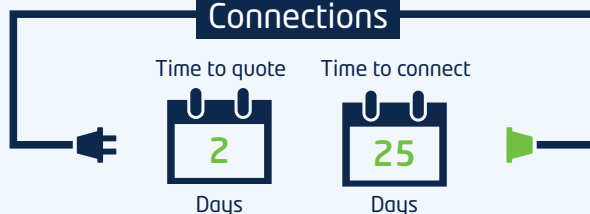


Customer interruptions (Excluding exceptional events)



Customer minutes lost (Excluding exceptional events)

Connections



No. of completed connections **10,260**

Our customer commitments

Customer satisfaction
92.0%

Customer Vulnerability score*
95.3%

Major Connections Customer Satisfaction*
86.0%

DSO Stakeholder Survey Score
7.94
Panel Assessment Score
6.19

*For full reports please use link below:

www.enwl.co.uk/about-us/engaging-with-our-stakeholders/stakeholder-engagement-publications/

Operating responsibilities

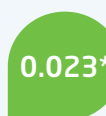
Safety

Licensee safety performance and compliance with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) legislation

Lost time injuries



Lost time injury frequency rate



*Number of lost time injuries per 100,000 hours worked

Community Outreach | **£100k** awarded to community energy projects www.enwl.co.uk

Carbon emissions



Undergrounding for visual amenity



<https://www.enwl.co.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/environment-report/>

Our performance in 2023/24

✓ Met target ● On track ● Behind schedule ✗ Missed target

Safety	#1	Make electricity safer in high rise buildings	●	P11
	#2	Deliver safety campaigns	●	P11
	#3	Increase safety and STEM education	●	P12
	#4	Improve overhead line safety	●	P12
	#5	Keep rural transformers safe	●	P13
	#6	Enhance security at major sites	●	P13
	#7	Improve the safety of underground cable pits	●	P14
	#8	Safety check on cut-outs	●	P14
	#9	Comply with legislation on PCBs	●	P15
Customer	#10	Make it easier for customers to contact us	●	P17
	#11	Provide additional support to businesses during power cuts	●	P17
	#12	Improve the speed and quality of our responses to customers	●	P18
	#13	Provide faster quotes and completion for new domestic connections	●	P18
	#14	Reduce the time it takes to complete emergency roadworks	●	P19
	#15	Increase community focused engagement	●	P19
	#16	Maintain high levels of competition in the North West	●	P20
	#17	Extend Smart Street to a further 250,000 households in our region	●	P20
Reliability	#18	Reduce the number of power cuts	●	P21
	#19	Reduce the duration of power cuts	●	P21
	#20	Improve performance for worst-served customers (WSC)	●	P22
	#21	Measure and report short power cuts	●	P22
Vulnerability	#22	Increase collaboration with other utilities	●	P23
	#23	Increase investment in referral work	●	P23
	#24	Expand our priority services register	●	P24
	#25	Create an innovation fund	●	P24
	#26	Support customers in fuel poverty	●	P25
	#27	Develop a new customer advisory panel	●	P25
	#28	Conduct home welfare visits for vulnerable customers during long-duration power cuts	●	P28
	#29	Introduce all-colleague training for vulnerable circumstances and mental wellbeing	●	P28
	Resilience	#30	Improve flood protection	●
#31		Plant 10,000 trees every year	●	P29
#32		Increase cyber resilience	●	P30
#33		Maintain resilience in a changing climate	●	P30
#34		Improve network health	●	P31
#35		Improve telecommunications resilience	●	P31
#36		Invest in electricity system restoration readiness	●	P32
Environment		#37	Reduce carbon footprint	●
	#38	Reduce oil lost from cables	●	P33
	#39	Undergrounding overhead lines	●	P34
	#40	Reduce losses	●	P34
	#41	Reduce potent emissions	●	P35
	#42	Create wildlife havens	●	P35
Net zero	#43	Help customers connect low carbon technologies	●	P37
	#44	Remove constraints for renewables	●	P37
	#45	Establish a new annual community energy fund	●	P38
	#46	Unloop customers' power supplies	●	P38



Our performance

in 2023/24



#1. Safer electricity in high rise buildings

We will install electrical monitoring systems in 234 high rise buildings considered at high risk of an electrical fire

Background

Often building owners do not realise that they may be responsible for the electrical network in buildings, and this lack of clarity on ownership can cause issues with maintenance.

Until responsibilities are formalised, we take responsibility and act and assess the condition of cables and fit circuit breakers and monitor communal electrical cables at high-risk properties 24/7. Formal agreements mean that we can more easily gain access to the properties to thoroughly inspect the electricity infrastructure, install monitoring devices, and renew their internal wiring where required.

Our monitoring equipment enables us to identify where faults are developing which may indicate a risk of an electrical fire.

We will expand our programme to cover 234 buildings which are considered high-risk during ED2. We will also continue our programme of rewiring buildings where inspections and monitoring indicate a potential safety risk.

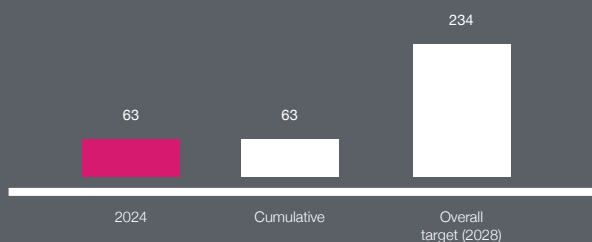
Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of electrical monitoring systems installed	234 buildings	2028

Performance ●

In ED1 we installed 51 innovative vacuum circuit breakers (Weezaps) in the highest risk high rise blocks.

In 2023/24 we have continued this safety programme and installed 63 more electrical monitoring systems.

The programme is 27% complete and is ahead of the run rate required to meet the 234 target at the end of the price control in 2028.



#2. Deliver safety campaigns

We'll continue to participate in industry-wide safety awareness campaigns

Background

We already collaborate in shared awareness campaigns with the other distribution network operators, coordinated through the Energy Networks Association, our representative national body. We will enhance these national campaigns by taking the lead in developing more regionally focused campaigns, in conjunction with other utility operators (e.g. water and gas) in the North West.

Joined-up messaging will make it easier for customers to access important safety information. We will increase public awareness of the dangers of electricity and behaviour-change that saves lives.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Safety awareness campaigns delivered	Leading regionally focused multi-utility safety campaigns	2028

Performance ●

We have created regionally targeted communications on a range of safety issues with a specific focus on public safety near our assets particularly during the storms in Autumn/Winter 2023. We used our external stakeholder panels to help guide our messaging and maximise news outlets in the North West to push our wider safety messaging for the public.

We also target our workforce in the North West with safety campaigns. Our campaign, 'Nothing left to chance' highlighted the danger of not following policy and received positive feedback from colleagues, receiving over 1,772 hits on YouTube. We embed our safety culture with a 'Phone 50' approach with our Executive Leaders talking directly to colleagues on safety focused themes.

We will continue to support educational campaigns, such as Crucial Crew, aimed at highlighting the dangers of electricity amongst primary school children.

ENWL will chair the national Underground Services Avoidance Group – a group which includes HSE representation together with asset owners and those who routinely excavate around underground services.

#3. Increase safety and STEM education

We'll work with schools to expand our safety and STEM education programmes

Background

We will work with schools to expand our safety and science technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education programmes. This will include delivering curriculum-linked educational material and awareness campaigns in person and online, to promote skills and opportunities in the electricity industry and ensure customers take precautions when working with or near electrical equipment to significantly reduce the risk of injury in our community.

Our educational work will include other key topics such as decarbonisation and sustainability, STEM skills and careers, targeting schools, college and university students and promote diversity and inclusivity.

We will continue to evolve our primary key stage two (KS2) offering and significantly scale up what we offer to secondary schools and colleges linking to our recruitment and inclusion in our people strategy.

We will review the ongoing effectiveness of the programme that will see increased engagement in safety issues and STEM among young people, changing behaviour and saving lives and increase awareness and interest amongst a diverse future workforce.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Delivery of curriculum-linked educational material and awareness campaigns	Wider safety education and STEM focused on secondary schools	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24, we developed new partnerships with third-party organisations to relaunch ENWL's delivery of our primary school workshops and introduce our secondary workshops and engagement for ED2.

Following postponement of our primary school workshops due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2023/24 we identified STEMfirst to redevelop our primary school curriculum workshops and introduce new safety and career messages.

We successfully trialed and started the roll out of our secondary school program, in collaboration with Science Made Simple, targeting students aged 11 to 16 with content aligned to the STEM curriculum, safety and future career prospects.

In a focussed effort to enhance safety education, we integrated it into both primary and secondary workshops and piloted 'Crucial Crew' in partnership with child safety media, providing 32 colleagues the opportunity to volunteer 161 hours to reach more than 1,500 students.

#4. Improve overhead line safety

We'll deploy our new LineSIGHT technology to install sensors on sections of overhead lines to detect any dangerous low-hanging lines

Background

Faults on rural networks can sometimes cause overhead power lines to hang low whilst remaining live, which also creates a public safety hazard. This can be a particular issue during storm events with multiple occurrences.

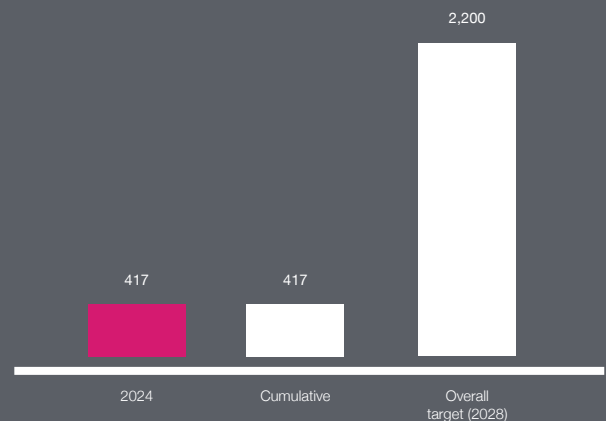
Innovative technology developed by Electricity North West will enable the detection of damaged equipment earlier and help us to pinpoint the location of faults, enabling more efficient despatch of repair crews.

Customers will benefit from the faster removal of safety hazards caused by network faults as well as reduced likelihood of power cuts. The system will also allow us to identify issues more quickly in storm situations where we can have many faults to deal with.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Earlier detection of damaged overhead lines and reduced likelihood of power cuts	Install 2,200 LineSIGHT units across the overhead line network	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24, 417 LineSIGHT units were installed representing 19% of the ED2 target. Our progress in year 1 means we are on track to complete the installation programme over ED2.



#5. Keep rural transformers safe

We'll replace small rural substations in exposed parts of the network

Background

We have 220 small ground mounted substations in rural settings which do not have modern standards of protection, meaning that fault restoration can be a lengthy process. Many of the substations are now reaching the end of their design life and their condition is starting to deteriorate.

We will progressively replace all of these substations with safer equipment, with 50% replaced by 2028 and the remainder by 2033.

The prioritisation of the replacement will be based on the condition of the equipment.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Substations replaced	Replace 110 rural substations	2028

Performance ●

Substation replacements require in-depth design and planning, this has been the focus in 2023/24. The replacements are planned to take place later in the ED2 price control period.



#6. Enhance security at major sites

We continue maintaining and installing enhanced security at our critical sites.

Background

We have an obligation to maintain the security of our sites and prevent trespassing which might cause major power cuts and safety risks.

We install additional measures at our most critical sites in response to their level of risk. We will continue this programme in ED2, maintaining existing preventative measures and installing new ones where the risk level changes.

We will also continue to meet requirements set out by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Safe and secure sites	Maintain security programme	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 we installed new or expanded site security measures at two major sites.

#7. Improve the safety of underground cable pits

We will complete a programme to inspect all cable pits on our network and take action where required to improve safety

Background

Link boxes are underground cabinets where low voltage cables come together and can be connected or disconnected. They can pose a risk to the public because a fault on the network can very occasionally blow their cover off.

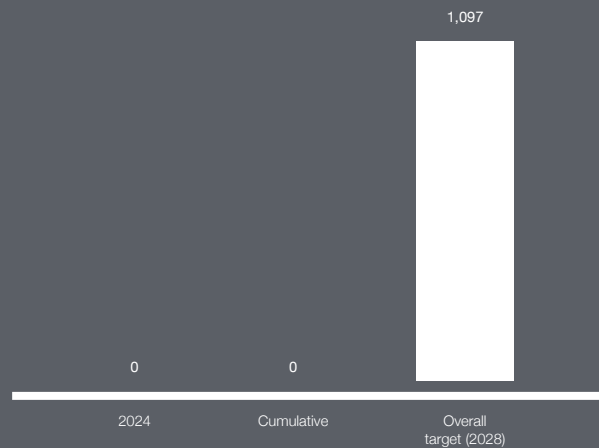
There were a number of such cases nationally during ED1. Many of these are located in pavements causing a safety risk.

Our ED1 programme either maintained, replaced or fitted a 'blast bag' to these link boxes, depending on their location and risk. In ED2, we have a similar programme to remove cable pits which are access points for cables, sometimes located in roadways. These pits are often in poor condition and are not used any more so, during ED2, we will complete our programme to fill in these pits with a blast absorbing material to mitigate any impact if a fault does occur.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
All cable pits inspected and action taken	Intervene on entire cable pit population to improve safety	2028

Performance ●

All cable pit inspections are expected to be completed by the end of calendar year 2024. Any action required will then be programmed in batches.



#8. Safety check on cut-outs

We will carry out proactive safety checks on cut-outs

Background

A cut-out is a piece of electrical equipment that forms the link between our electricity cable and the internal wiring in customers' properties.

In RIIO-ED2, most customers will have smart meters and meter readers will no longer be physically inspecting meters and cut-outs. Previously we have relied on them informing us of any issues with the cut-out.

Although some early smart meters will be being replaced by 2028, to ensure the cut-outs remain safe, we will need to start our own periodic inspections in ED2 and ensure we act on any issues found. This will be a proactive programme driven by analysis of the smart meter installs, the associated defect data and property demographics.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Proactive safety checks carried out	Initiate regular cut-out safety programme	2028

Performance ●

Cut out replacement volumes continue to be prioritised based on notifications from meter operators fitting new smart meters.

As this programme phases out in 2026, a follow-on proactive cut-out inspection regime will be instigated to identify cut-outs requiring replacement.

A NIA project (Kinectrics) is currently underway assessing potential approaches for this programme.

#9. Comply with legislation on PCBs

We will dispose of all PCB contaminated equipment

Background

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) are a group of artificially manufactured organic chemicals that have long been recognised as posing a threat to the environment due to their toxicity, persistence and tendency to be absorbed by living organisms. PCBs were used in electrical equipment such as transformers as an alternative insulating fluid where fire resistance properties were required. Although we never knowingly used PCBs, some contamination of our equipment occurred during the manufacturing process.

The use of PCBs has been banned since the 1980s and we recognise that any PCBs still remaining in existing equipment pose an environmental threat. New legislation requires all PCB-contaminated equipment to be disposed of or decontaminated of PCBs by 31 December 2025.

All transformers (and some other network assets) manufactured before 1987 are assumed to be potentially PCB-contaminated (unless proven otherwise via testing) and are registered annually with the Environment Agency.

We are working to either test or statistically determine the PCB content of all this apparatus and dispose of all those items that are confirmed as PCB contaminated by 31 December 2025. All PCB-contaminated equipment will be sent to authorised treatment facilities where the oil will be recovered and the metal components, principally scrap steel and copper, sent for recycling.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
PCB contaminated equipment disposals	Elimination of PCB contamination risk from our network equipment	31 December 2025

Performance ●

In 2023/24 568 equipment disposals were completed. We are on track to complete the programme by December 2025.





#10. Make it easier for customers to contact us

We will continue work on self-service functionality in ED2 to further improve our offering to customers

Background

Customers can currently contact us via phone, our website, social media, email and post but they have told us that they want new ways to contact us. Due to the urgency of some contacts, and so as not to disadvantage any customers, we must focus on taking phone calls.

We will set a realistic target to improve our customer satisfaction for ease of contact to 9 out of 10. We already use multiple languages and work with external agencies to provide translation services. We will continue to work on self serve functionality in ED2 to continuously improve our offer to customers. The advantages of this approach mean that people can contact us when it suits them, rather than waiting for specific working hours of certain teams. It also frees up the phones for people who do not easily have another option.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Improve customer satisfaction for ease of contact to 9 out of 10	Increase in self-service functionality	2028

Performance ●

Customer research and focus groups have been and continue to be held to make it easier for customers to contact us. Proactive messaging both via text message and phone call following the enhancements made to the online fault webform will all be going live during quarter one of 2024.

For Domestic connections customers, a number of telephony enhancements were implemented last year which has resulted in a significant improvement in answer rates (65% to 98% answered), less than 1% abandoned rate and calls to voice mails have significantly reduced.

As part of the CSAT road map for 2024/25 focus groups are ongoing through April and May of this year reviewing the telephony channel of which actions will be developed for future enhancements along with a review of self-service channels for General Enquires. For 2023/24 we were ranked second in the DNO groups for CSAT with a score of 92%.

#11. Provide additional support for businesses during power cuts

We'll improve our services to provide additional support to businesses during power outages

Background

Businesses can sometimes take a financial, and even a reputational hit due to the impact of power cuts. It can also be more disruptive without the latest information to help make decisions on whether to continue or send people home for the day.

To give businesses additional support during power outages (either planned or unplanned) we will continue our innovative Business Priority Services Register – like the PSR for our domestic customers.

Businesses signing up to this free service will receive a range of support, such as 30 days' notice of any planned power cuts. We will also offer advice on how they can obtain generators, and we'll proactively contact them during unplanned power cuts to keep them up to date and help them plan.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Businesses signing up to Business Priority Service Register	Continue to grow the Business Priority Service Register	On-going

Performance ●

We continue to manage and update our register for business customers.

Currently, we provide a Business Priority Register that businesses can sign up to which will ensure we have the right contact information for them and identify them as a business so we can provide more notice when a planned power cut occurs.

We also have an information leaflet that we share and is accessible on our website that provides lots of information about supporting businesses to become more resilient in a power cut.

#12. Improve the speed and quality of our responses to customers

We will increase the size of our customer team to answer enquiries more quickly

Background

In 20/21 we were pleased to achieve 90.6% overall customer satisfaction, and we aim to maintain this level through RIIO-ED2, despite the likely significant increase in customer contacts and rising expectations.

We receive around 400,000 telephone calls from customers each year and this continues to grow.

We will increase the size of our customer team to answer enquiries more quickly. This will also support resolving a minimum of 80% of complaints made within 24 hours. Where we receive complaints we do root-cause analysis to drive how we prevent complaints or improve the process, and we will continue this during ED2.

One of our roles is to connect new domestic or commercial properties to our electricity network, or change the location or size of existing services, so that customers get the power they need. Customers will benefit from an easier connections process which is responsive to their needs, from initial application through to works being completed. We will achieve this by being responsive to customer feedback, including the development of AI technology and an improved website to make it easier for customers to track their project.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Customer satisfaction score	At least 90% customer satisfaction despite increasing demands and expectations	On-going

Performance ●

In 2023/24 Customer Satisfaction delivered the best CSAT performance since the measures were introduced in 2015, achieving 92% (2.4% increase compared to 2022/23).

Connections Overall outperformed with a score of 92.9%. Connections Quotations also outperformed achieving 94% and ranked second place.

General Enquires achieved 93.3% and ranked eighth. The improvement resulted in ENWL being ranked second out of the six DNO companies and fifth place out of the fourteen licence areas league table, in comparison to third and tenth place last year.

#13. Provide faster quotes and completion for new domestic connections

We will beat Ofgem’s standard for the time it takes us to quote and connect new Domestic connections customers

Background

We will beat Ofgem’s standard for the time it takes us to quote and connect new Domestic connections customers. We will also increase customer satisfaction to nine out of 10 through continuous improvement looking at the processes and systems we use to streamline and develop improvements.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Time to quote	Exceed Ofgem targets	On-going
Time to connect		

Performance ●

We have had another good year during which we exceeded all the targets for Time to Quote, Time to Connection and connections customer satisfaction.

For LVSSA connections our time to quote was 2.22 days and our time to connect was 25.04 against respective Ofgem targets of 3.26 and 28.54.

For LVSSB connections we achieved a time to quote of 4.05 and a time to connect of 24.92, again above the Ofgem targets of 5.47 and 35.44.

Our customer satisfaction score is reflective of this achievement at 9.29 against a target of 9.01.

#14. Reduce the time it takes to complete emergency roadworks

We will work more flexibly in ED2 to reduce the average time taken to finish emergency repairs in the highway or pavement

Background

Emergency roadworks are required if our underground cables are damaged. Roadworks can cause disruption to local communities and commuters through extended travel time, loss of trade to businesses, noise, and air pollution.

Local authorities have asked that utility companies work collaboratively to identify opportunities for delivering roadworks in a more coordinated manner, to minimise congestion. Our customers were also supportive for reducing the time to complete roadworks.

In response, we will work more flexibly in ED2 to reduce the average time taken to finish emergency repairs in the highway or pavement. This will be measured from the time of repairs commencing to the site being tidied up and restored to its previous condition.

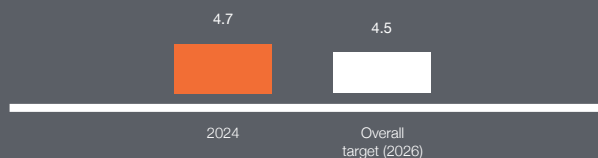
We have agreed a new incentive mechanism with Ofgem that only pays out if we successfully achieve it (and penalise us if we do not).

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Average time taken to finish emergency repairs from commencement to site tidying on highways and pavements	4.5 days	2026

Performance ●

Average End-to-End Restoration Time after unplanned emergency street works for 2023/24 was 4.7 days.

This is a significant improvement from the previous years performance at 5 days and puts us well on track to achieve our target in 2026



#15. Increase community focused engagement

We will introduce a more local community-focused approach to engagement and communications about work and services in our region

Background

We will recruit and train a specialist team to collaborate with local communities to engage about Electricity North West's current and future activities in local areas.

A recent example of this is engagement with a community in Golborne, Greater Manchester, which had suffered multiple power cuts in a short period of time. Community feedback resulted in us planning, scheduling and carrying out repairs in Golborne within two weeks. We wrote to 2,000 customers to keep them informed, engaged with the local MP and arranged for an online Q&A with customers on Facebook.

Customers will gain more tailored information and support over key issues that are affecting them through this approach.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
A more local community focused approach to engagement and communications in place	Community engagement team improving access to information on network issues	2028

Performance ●

At present we are delivering a reactive approach to customers who experience multiple interruptions to make them aware of ongoing long-term actions to resolve their issues and understand the impacts they have faced.

This year we have seen this within the South Lakes region as the customers from Storm Arwen were impacted by winter storms. The stakeholder team supported by Operations and Asset Management met with local leaders and the community to inform them of the investment plans in ED2 to build further resilience into their network.

Ongoing work is being carried out to understand the value of these meetings at a more localised level, as support will be required across the region and the team will come from existing knowledgeable employees within all departments of ENWL.

Following the completion of this work we will introduce a more structured approach to ensure we have the appropriate cross business team in place with the right expertise. We are not recruiting additional staff specifically for this role as we want to use more experienced members of the team to provide the required level of expertise.

#16. Maintain high levels of competition in connections in the North West

We will maintain high levels of competition in connections in ED2 as the best way of providing choice and value to customers

Background

Connection customers tell us that the best thing we can do to deliver value to them through efficient prices and high-quality service is to maintain a competitive environment for connections providers in our area.

We are the most successful network operator in demonstrating that there is active competition in our area. Ofgem conducted competition tests where new connections work was categorised into 11 market segments. Two of these were 'excluded' market segments which covered small connections (up to four premises) and where competition was expected to be less likely to develop; for these customers other mechanisms (e.g. customer satisfaction survey and time to connect incentive) are in place to ensure they receive good service. Of the other nine market segments, Electricity North West successfully passed seven representing more than 95% of all connections in our area.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Value to customer	Continue to enable competition	On-going

Performance ●

Our support of competition was endorsed by Ofgem as we passed another market segment as part of its review of Competition in Connections. This means we continue to be the leading DNO in evidencing active competition having passed eight of the nine market segments which accounts for about 98% of connections activities in the north west.

We also support competition by measuring the satisfaction of the services we provide and were pleased that we achieved 87.7%. This ranked us third across all the DNOs.

#17. Extend Smart Street technology

We will extend Smart Street to a further 250,000 households in our region

Background

Smart Street is our award-winning initiative to reduce customers' electricity usage and bills by managing the voltage on the local network. By using technology at our substations to subtly alter the amount of electricity flowing to homes, we can reduce consumption and save customers' money, without affecting their usage behaviour in any way.

Smart Street has been proven to reduce customers' energy consumption by up to 8% – equivalent to a £60 reduction in annual energy bills.

In ED2, we will extend Smart Street to a further 250,000 households in our region, through a £78m investment programme. We will target the deployment of this technology to areas where there are higher populations of customers in fuel poverty. This technology also increases the available capacity of the network and therefore we will also target the deployment where we expect clusters of low carbon technologies such as solar panels and heat pumps so that more costly network upgrades can be avoided.

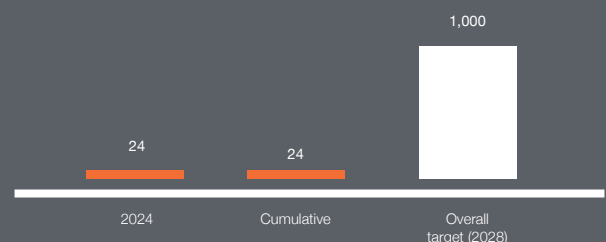
While the technology can only be applied to underground networks the cost to serve customers on underground networks is much lower than the cost on overhead lines. We already have in our plan significant investment earmarked to improve the overhead line network such as tree management, worst-served customer programme and the rollout of our LineSIGHT technology.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
No. of transformers installed	1,000 transformers	2028

Performance ●

There have been 24 substations where Smart Street transformers have been installed in 2023/24. We have planned for the majority of installs to take place later in the price control.

Early progress has been slower than originally anticipated due to availability of plant from manufacturers and long delivery lead times.



#18. Reduce the number of power cuts

We will reduce the number of interruptions experienced by customers on average by a further 20% from their levels in the 2021-2023 period

Background

The frequency of power cuts is measured through the number of interruptions a customer experiences on average.

We commit to reduce the number of interruptions experienced by customers on average by a further 20% from their levels in the 2021-2023 period. This will reduce the average from around once every four years to once every five years.

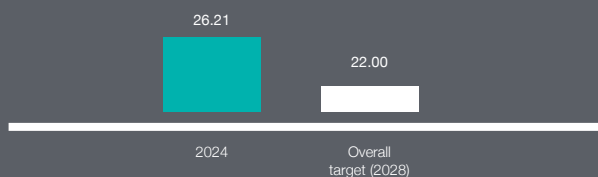
We will reduce the number of customers affected by each fault on the network by installing new automated control equipment.

Last year, our network had the second-best performance out of the 14 distribution network operators for power cut frequency. This Commitment will improve performance even further with customers benefitting from improved reliability.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Customer Interruptions	Reduce frequency of power cuts by 20% from 2021-23 levels	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 we achieved an average customer interruption result of 26.2. This is a 5% improvement on 2021-2023 level of 27.7 represents our second best performance.



#19. Reduce the duration of power cuts

We commit to reduce the duration of power cuts by 20% from the levels in 2021-2023 in the RIIO-ED2 period

Background

The overall time that customers are without electricity is expressed using the Customer Minutes Lost term.

We commit to reduce this by 20% from the levels in 2021-2023 in the RIIO-ED2 period. This will reduce the average time without electricity in a year from around 25 minutes to 20 minutes.

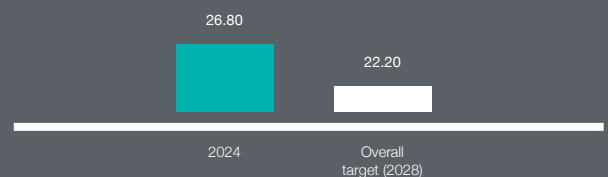
We will do this by rolling out new innovative technology to identify faults and their location faster and training more engineers to be able to respond quickly to these faults.

Last year, our network had the fourth best performance out of the 14 distribution network operators for power cut duration. This Commitment will improve performance even further with many customers benefitting from reduced disruption.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Customer Minutes Lost	Reduce time off supply by 20% from 2021-23 levels	2028

Performance ●

An average customer minutes lost result of 26.8 for the year represents our best ever year. This is a 2% improvement on our 2021-2023 level of 27.5.



#20. Improve performance for worst-served customers

We'll work to ensure none of our customers are classified as 'worst-served'

Background

Our customers and stakeholders want us to improve the levels of service we provide to customers in more exposed parts of our network.

In response, we will deliver a targeted programme of enhancements to improve the reliability of the poorest performing parts of the network. This will be based on using Ofgem's new definition of a 'worst-served customer' which are customers experiencing twelve or more faults at HV and above over three years, with a minimum of two in each year. We have assessed all the areas which would have qualified under this new measure since 2016 and have designed measures for each of them.

We were the only DNO to commit to achieving no worst-served customers in ED1 and we will continue to aim for this in line with the new broader stretching definition by the end of ED2.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of customers qualifying as worst-served	No WSC	2028

Performance ●

The number of customers meeting the new Ofgem definition of 'worst-served' increased by 322 in the year ended 31 March 2024 to 906 (2023: 584), as a result of a lower qualifying threshold in ED2.

We continue to focus on our ambition to have no customers meeting the Ofgem definition by 2028. To achieve this, we are delivering a major proactive investment programme, delivering substantive and sustained improvements in performance to 27 previously-qualified circuits, benefiting 2,939 WSCs and 39,343 customers overall.

Alongside this, we continue with our tactical intervention programme, which seeks to address any newly emerging WSC performance issues.

#21. Measure and report short power cuts

We'll include short power cuts in our reporting

Background

Very short power interruptions, (lasting less than three minutes) are not currently included in our performance reporting as they have traditionally caused less disruption and their exclusion encourages the use of remote control and automation on the network to restore interruptions quickly.

As the country becomes more reliant on electricity, we recognise the increasing impact of any power cut, regardless of the length.

We will work with other network operators to develop a reporting framework for these short interruptions to help us establish new ways of monitoring and ultimately, addressing them.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Short Duration Interruptions (SDI's)	Increased accuracy and consistency across DNOs of short power cut reporting	2026

Performance ●

The transition to NMS has made the process of reporting SDI's a lot more streamlined as it auto captures SDIs. Previously there was an internal requirement to manually create the short duration reports but it wasn't a mandatory system action so a lot of the reporting elements of SDIs were missed.

The number of SDIs being reported has increased significantly; this is in part due to more automation being installed on the network but also improved SDI reporting processes.

As part of the Quality of Supply (QOS) working group hosted by Ofgem, ENWL collaborated with the other DNO's to agree on the SDI reporting template. These sessions were productive and ensured consistency with interpretations of reporting rules and how to compile the template.

#22. Increase collaboration with other utilities

We'll collaborate more closely with other utility providers to provide improved services to customers in vulnerable circumstances

Background

To achieve this we will jointly fund new research projects and partnerships that improve support services, share awareness campaigns (e.g. safety) and share data to keep our Priority Services Register as up to date as possible.

This joined-up-approach is more efficient because it prevents the need for utility providers to always communicate separately with customers. A recent example is a new collaboration between Age Concern, Electricity North West, United Utilities and Cadent Gas alongside Preston North End Community and Education Trust, in a joint effort to reach and support older people in Lancashire.

Customers will benefit from a more efficient and cost-effective service with improved support for customers in vulnerable circumstances across the North West.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
A more efficient and cost-effective service with improved support for customers in vulnerable circumstances	Enhanced coordination with utility providers to support customers in vulnerable circumstances	2028

Performance ●

We continue to work closely with other utility providers, both in our area and across the UK.

Our data share process with United Utilities is now well established and the national data share project between energy and water has now moved to the next phase of providing an automated solution.

We are leading on a new initiative started with United Utilities, Cadent and GMCA to understand collaborative support in an incident.

#23. Increase investment in referral work

We'll grow our referral network

Background

We will increase our investment into referral networks to £350k per year to enable trusted partner organisations to provide customers in vulnerable circumstances with the support they need.

Funded partnerships allow us to refer customers in vulnerable circumstances to organisations (e.g. Citizens Advice) that are trusted by local communities and provide extra support. This can include energy efficiency advice, free first-time central heating, grants to insulate or upgrade a customer's heating system and volunteers making regular contact with lonely or isolated people.

Customers will benefit from health and wellbeing benefits associated with connecting customers to support services when they need them most.

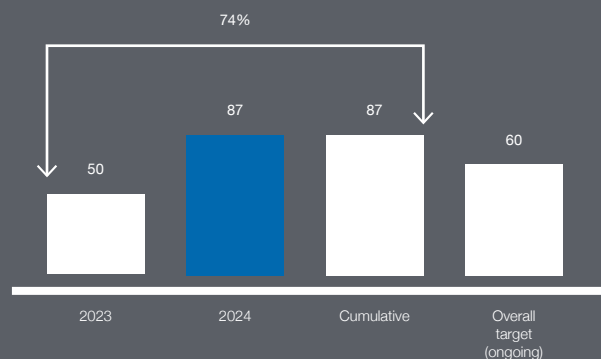
Measurement	Target	Completion date
Size of referral network	20% increase in referral network	On-going

Performance ●

During 2023/24 we have increased the number of active partners who we work with from 50 to 87.

Examples of partnerships new for this year include One Voice, Blackburn, who have produced videos on how to join the Extra Care Register (ECR) and get support in a power cut in multiple languages to reach their communities in Blackburn.

Asthma and Lung UK, ensuring ECR sign ups and supporting us to understand the unique challenges that this cohort can face during a loss of supply and Cockermonth resilience group, aiding community resilience and support.



#24. Expand our priority services register

We will maintain membership of the PSR to a minimum of 60% of those eligible

Background

We will ensure membership of the PSR is a minimum of 60% of those eligible for registration, targeting areas of the North West that have the greatest number of customers in vulnerable circumstances.

The PSR is a free support service to customers who need extra help during a power cut, either over the phone or face-to-face.

We will continue to develop and expand our PSR and the services we offer to those on it including support available during power cuts. We will enhance the service provided to members through making contact more frequently to check everything is okay, arranging visits from Customer Welfare Officers for those who need extra help, providing tips to prepare and stay safe during power cuts and developing new support services.

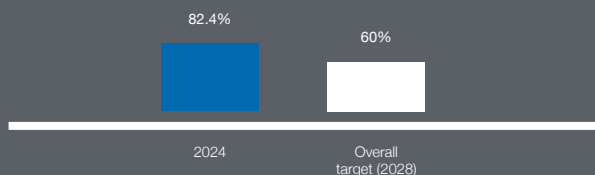
Customers will benefit from increased resilience and health and wellbeing benefits associated with reducing the stress and anxiety that can be caused by a loss of power

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Percentage those eligible for PSR with membership	At least 60% of those eligible to be registered	2028

Performance ●

In the year ended 31 March 2024 we continued to promote awareness of our free PSR service and increase accessibility to it including collaboration with funded and non-funded partners has also improved our view and reach of those who are vulnerable.

We have over 800,000 households on our PSR. Further embedding our “one contact” principle with our colleagues led to an increase of registrants on our Extra Care service this year from 73% to 82.4% of those eligible in the region.



#25. Create an innovation fund

We will introduce a new £150k annual fund to work with expert partners to develop solutions to barriers of taking-up of low carbon technologies

Background

One of the risks of a rapid path to decarbonisation is that customers with lower incomes and fewer opportunities will get left behind, as more affluent customers take up new technologies and reap the benefits. This could widen social and economic gaps further, creating an even more unequal society. To help prevent this imbalance, we will introduce a new £150k annual fund to work with expert partners to develop new solutions to address barriers to the take-up of low carbon technologies.

Key barriers to these technologies include their cost and the need for greater education and support to understand them. This fund is a specific new idea brought by one of our stakeholders as a suggestion on how we could increase engagement and communication with key groups. We are looking for new developments to trial and learn from. The investment level will support our learning and if we find something that works and want to develop further, we would make a business case to develop it. The annual fund will drive innovative solutions to ensure that everyone, including the most vulnerable, can benefit from a future energy system that is both smart and fair and ensures that no customer gets left behind.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
£150k annual fund made available	New solutions to address barriers to the take-up of low carbon technologies	On-going

Performance ●

In 2023/24, £122k of our innovation fund was utilised and financed works such as with Business in the Community, polling and a review of DNO innovation projects for example.

To inform our research and development we have conducted collaborative research with a broader DNO community and conducted the fourth wave of the independently facilitated, bi-annual low carbon technology (LCT) tracker.

This initiative has reached over 4,000 households and tracks understanding, perceptions and LCT adoption rates. Our research has helped inform our low carbon transition advisory service (GO Low offering).

#26. Support customers in fuel poverty

We will work more closely with trusted organisations to understand fuel poverty and deliver support services, investing £1.5m per year to support 250,000 fuel poor customers by 2028

Background

In the North West 12.1% of households (approx. 250,000 customers) are in fuel poverty, which is when people cannot afford to keep adequately warm at a reasonable cost, given their income. These households are in more vulnerable circumstances than most when power cuts occur because they don't have surplus income to cope during the power cut (for example getting a hot meal).

Working alongside local agencies we will provide a more integrated range of support services investing £1.5m per year to reach all 250,000 fuel poor customers by 2028. Energy efficiency advice, grants and debt management support will help recipients financially, but also build their confidence and knowledge. Wellbeing and other health challenges will also be supported through a referral scheme which will make it easier for customers to get the help they need.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of customers reached	Actively support 25,000 and provide advice to a further 25,000 customers each year	2028

Performance ●

This campaign has been hugely successful reaching 84,320 customers in year 1 with a social return NPV of £8.4m to date.

Our convening power has enabled a multi-agency approach to ensure satisfaction with this service delivered is as comprehensive as possible and that customers receive all of the support that is available.

Cross referrals between participating organisations further enhance this. Customer satisfaction with this service was 95.3% at the close of 2023/24.

#27. Develop a new customer advisory panel

We will establish new representative customer advisory panels to include direct input to our plans from members of the public

Background

A customer advisory panel is a group of customers that come together to review our business plans and provide feedback on our performance.

When developing our ED2 business plan, we established a new deliberative customer panel which has proved hugely insightful and beneficial. We want to capitalise on this investment and learning and introduce a new customer advisory panel to provide ongoing feedback on our strategy to support customers in vulnerable circumstances.

To ensure the panel is representative it will include a diverse range of customers that truly reflects the wide range of people that live in the North West. Part of the panel's remit will be to provide feedback on our plans for ensuring customers understand changes in the energy sector through videos, community sessions, education in schools and referral networks.

The outcome will be a strengthening of consumers' voices in business decision-making, influencing investment, future policy and customer benefits.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Customer advisory panels in place throughout ED2	Panel creation, membership and governance	On-going

Performance ●

We now have a Voice of the Customer panel in place which has 1,500 customers and colleagues registered. Further enhancements to the panel are planned and we have been running multiple focus groups with specific customer demographics to provide more tailored research.



ELECTRICITY

SIEMENS



#28. Conduct home welfare visits for vulnerable customers during long-duration power cuts

We will proactively offer welfare visits to vulnerable customers without power for twelve or more hours

Background

We will continue to offer timed appointments to customers who are having work completed at their property, or to those who require a welfare visit but we will also proactively offer visits to customers on our Priority Services Register who are experiencing power cuts over 12 hours.

Connections and cut-out work which is predominantly in someone's house are always appointment based. Planned welfare visits are arranged through discussion with customers and have either a timed appointment or, if support on the way, timed expectations.

Around 200 PSR customers experience power cuts over 12 hours each year. Visits will be made by a Customer Welfare Officer to explain what is happening, provide reassurance and tailored support.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Welfare visits and referrals	Proactively offer welfare visits to all electricity customers in vulnerable circumstances who are without power for 12+ hours	On-going

Performance ●

This new service is not yet in place so the commitment is slightly behind schedule but In the current year we have tested the market place through a tender exercise to assess how best to provide this new service and have concluded that this service will be best provided in-house. A new vehicle, welfare provisions, resourcing, use cases, training requirements and processes have now been agreed. This is currently under trial and set-up and delivery will follow a lessons learned evaluation later in 2024/25.

#29. Introduce all-colleague training for vulnerable circumstances and mental wellbeing

We will implement a broad, tiered, and targeted training programme to ensure education and awareness of vulnerability is aligned to all staff roles and responsibilities, to recognise and reduce the impact of vulnerabilities.

Background

We will also introduce new all-staff training on new and emerging mental wellbeing, linking the impacts of changing circumstances (i.e. power failures).

We embrace diversity and inclusion, enabling our colleagues to have a better understanding of these areas including where an individual's circumstances require us to make additional considerations in our daily activities.

We will amplify our current training structure to provide a regular training programme for all roles, to provide insight and awareness for colleagues to better support our customers. The training will cover circumstances such as digital exclusion, rural isolation and regional economic impact.

The outcome will be an enhanced service provided by our colleagues through better awareness and understanding of the impacts of vulnerability and ability to recognise and reduce impacts through our daily activities. The training will also continue to build our mental wellbeing strategy, empowering our colleagues to understand vulnerable circumstances that can affect everyone.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
New vulnerability and mental health training programme	100% of colleagues trained in vulnerability and mental health	2028

Performance ●

Training to recognise and act on any customer circumstances that could cause detriment is rolled out annually to all our colleagues and contractors.

Further training for identified cohorts has also been delivered, for example Dementia training for all leaders.

#30. Improve flood protection

We will improve flood defences in our highest voltage substations serving more than 10,000 customers

Background

The effects of climate change have led to some dramatic weather patterns in recent years, which have had an adverse impact on our network and our customers. For example, in 2015, Storm Desmond caused flooding at Lancaster’s major substation, cutting power to more than 60,000 customers.

We invested £6m to raise key equipment at the substation three metres above the ground, to keep them safe if the site flooded again.

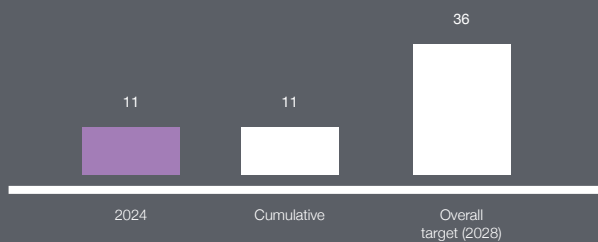
In ED2, we will build on the work completed to date, by improving flood defences to our highest voltage substations serving more than 10,000 customers, in line with the recommendations of the National Flood Resilience Review and also addressing sites newly identified as at risk based on the latest Environment Agency flooding data.

This programme will increase flood protection to 15 existing substations and install defences at 21 newly identified as at risk serving 345,000 customers at a forecast cost of £3.6m. Its completion means that all of our major substations will be protected to at least 1/100-year flood risk, including assumptions on future climate change impacts.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of sites protected	Protect 21 new sites and 15 existing sites from the risk of a 100 year flood	2028

Performance ●

Of the 36 sites, four did not require any flood mitigations works as no critical assets were at risk in the event of a flood. Seven sites were planned into 2023/24 and have been completed. We are on track to complete this programme of work over ED2.



#31. Plant 10,000 trees every year

We will plant 10,000 trees in our region every year of ED2.

Background

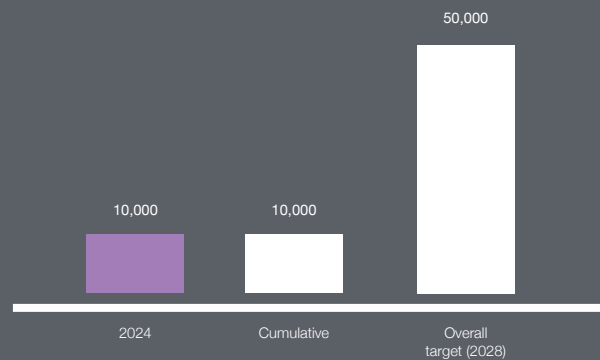
Trees or branches falling onto power lines can cause power cuts and damage. To mitigate these impacts, we (together with the other network operators and bodies such as local authorities and highways agencies) will need to start proactively remove some trees before they pose a danger. While most trees are pruned or coppiced by our skilled arborists, some trees do need to be fully cut down.

During ED2 we may have to cut down up to 10,000 trees a year so to offset this impact we are planning to work with partners to plant 10,000 trees in our region every year of ED2.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of trees planted	Plant 10,000 trees each year	On-going

Performance ●

We successfully planted the 10,000 trees in March 2024, on our land holdings in Carlisle.



#32. Increase cyber resilience

We will focus on enhancing our current cyber security capability

Background

As electricity networks become increasingly data enabled, it is more important than ever that the data networks that support them are resilient to external threats.

The government introduced the Network and Information Systems (NIS) Regulations 2018 to increase the overall cyber security and cyber resilience of Operators of Essential Services (OES) such as ourselves.

We rely on cyber security to protect our customers' data and provide excellent customer service, to ensure efficient working practices within our workplace, to protect the reliability of our network against unauthorised access, to protect the network now and in future as we move to more actively managed systems, to keep costs low for customers and to ensure the safety of our customers, employees, and contractors.

To develop our cyber strategy, we completed a self-assessment using the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) which informed our medium-term cyber security improvement plan. This sets out the steps we plan to take in ED2 and beyond to comply with the regulations and exceed them.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Compliance with The Network And Information Systems Regulations and our cyber resilience plan	Comply with requirements of Network & Information Systems Regulations	2028

Performance ●

We have embedded CAF basic policies, principles and disciplines and are now working towards achieving CAF enhanced status by Dec 25.

#33. Maintain resilience in a changing climate

We will continue to improve the resilience of our network in case of extreme events

Background

We face many challenges in ensuring that we continue to deliver leading reliability standards in the face of changing climate patterns. These actions are typically described as 'adaptation' to climate change, as distinct from the measures being taken to mitigate or restrict the level of climate change.

In ED2, we will complete our third Climate Change Adaptation report to Defra, setting out what we consider are the key medium and long-term impacts of climate change on the network. The previous assessment set out that the key risks related to the forecast increased frequency and severity of extreme events and so our plan is focused on continuing to improve the resilience of the network in this regard.

Our measures described on flooding and tree-cutting show the increased work we will undertake to improve resilience in a changing climate.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Achievement of Climate Change Resilience Strategy	Implement Climate Change Resilience Strategy	2028

Performance ●

Our Climate Resilience Strategy largely focused on how we would make our network more resilient in response to the changing climate. Our work in responding to Storm Arwen, which hit us in November 2021, and the subsequent BEIS and Ofgem reports has led us to think more about how resilient our network currently is and how we can improve that resilience.

We have played a major part in the establishment of the Energy Networks Association Climate Change Resilience Group (ENA CCRG) which is working to assess, manage and mitigate the impact of climate change on network assets and operation.

As part of the ENA CCRG, we have been working to develop a Climate Resilience Metric. Progress on this measure has been slow, but we are hoping that increased involvement from Ofgem will help to clarify the purpose of the metric, which in turn will help development.

We continue to be active members of all ENA Resilience Working Groups and Local Resilience Forums (LRF) to ensure that we develop a co-ordinated approach in dealing with other network companies and with our stakeholders.

#34. Improve network health

We will undertake a targeted and efficient programme of asset renewal

Background

The electricity network is a complex system comprising overhead lines, underground cables, substations, transformers and switchgear. Much of this equipment is long-lived. In fact, some of our underground cables are over a century old. Over time, these assets can degrade and become increasingly prone to failure, causing power cuts.

The largest part of our investment programme is devoted to the replacement and refurbishment of existing equipment. We measure the overall health and risk on the network using an industry standard approach. We will undertake a targeted and efficient programme of asset renewal which maintains the overall condition of the network.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Risk points	416.6m risk points	2028

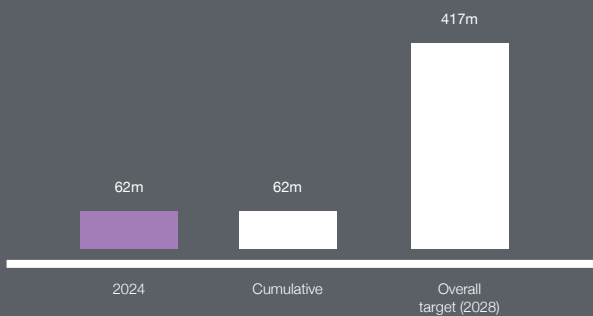
Performance ●

A major part of our reliability strategy is to intervene on higher risk assets before they fail. This is informed by a process of condition-based risk assessment in line with the Common Network Asset Indices Methodology (CNAIM).

Our targets for risk reduction through this programme were published by Ofgem in December 2022 and equate to 416.6m risk points over ED2.

In 2023/24, we delivered 62m risk points through our programme of targeted replacement and refurbishment activities, or 15% of our ED2 target.

We are still on plan to complete the full programme of work over ED2.



#35. Improve telecommunications resilience

We will improve the resilience of equipment that enables us to monitor and manage the electricity network remotely

Background

Customers benefit from faster restoration of power during faults due to automated responses and remote control of the network. Controlling the electricity network is dependent on being able to communicate with the equipment remotely.

We will improve the resilience of equipment that enables us to monitor and manage the electricity network remotely from our central control room. We own and operate a private communications and data network to do this. We will invest more in this network to increase its resilience against physical, virtual and weather-related threats.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Improved resilience against physical, virtual and weather-related threats.	Enhanced communication infrastructure resilience	2028

Performance ●

We continue to invest in our private telecommunications network to improve the reliability and performance of our systems. This work includes the replacement of aged copper pilot cables and fibre networks.

We have also replaced all legacy 1.4 GHz radio systems with new higher capacity and more resilient and secure radio technology.

Our Telecommunications transmission equipment is also going through a technology refresh, with the new technology providing high capacity and secure solutions for major site interconnectivity.

#36. Invest in Electricity System restoration readiness

We will comply with the new Electricity System Restoration standards

Background

Electricity System Restoration refers to the process of restarting the network following a national shutdown.

Our network is currently compliant to the standards for restoration set by government but these have recently been reviewed to enable faster and more widespread restoration in these circumstances.

We commit to delivering against these new standards. This will lead to increased costs for managing our control room operation but improving standards will give reassurance to customers that there is a robust emergency recovery process in place.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Standards for restoration by government	Compliance with the new electricity system restoration standards	2028

Performance ●

Following Ofgem's approval in early 2024 of the changes to industry technical Codes associated with the ESR standard, we have been working with the ESO and the other DNOs on developing our plans for the implementation of the new requirements ahead of December 2026 when the ESO's new obligations are due to come into force.

We attend the ESO's ESR steering group which aims to provide greater clarity on the specific requirements for DNOs in respect of ESR obligations and compliance.



#37. Reduce carbon footprint

We'll continue to reduce our carbon footprint

Background

We will continue to work to reduce our own business carbon footprint – a move that our stakeholders and customers strongly support.

In ED1, we reduced carbon emissions by 42%, compared to 2015 levels. We achieved this through a range of initiatives, such as better monitoring of heating in our buildings and installing LED lighting at all our sites.

In ED2, we will continue to lead by example, by accelerating the pace of our own decarbonisation programme, in an effort to become a carbon neutral business by 2038.

We will progressively replace vehicles with electric equivalents and convert our buildings to be much more energy efficient. We plan to make one of our depots zero carbon for each year of ED2. We will replace our current vehicles with electric equivalents when they become cost neutral or cost beneficial over their lifecycle. We anticipate that this will lead to our vehicle fleet being 29% electric by 2028.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Replacement of vehicles with electric equivalents.	Five new carbon neutral sites.	2028
Conversion of select buildings to be more energy efficient.	Reduce carbon footprint to 14,000 tCO ₂ e per year. Over 25% of vehicle fleet electrified.	

Performance ●

For 2023/24, we measured our emissions against our Business Carbon Footprint and met our annual target of 14,000 tCO₂e with a total of 13,999 tCO₂e. As we move into 2024/25, we will start to report against our science based target commitment, which will see an increase in our emission values as we include additional scope 3 indicators in our targets.

Our focus on vehicle decarbonisation is supported by a four core pillar approach: EV charging, data improvements, EVs/PHEV vehicle transition and fuel/vehicle reduction. We now have 209 EV's which equates to 18% of our fleet.

More progress has been made with our building energy reduction strategy with one site now completed and a plan in place for the conversion to net zero for another four depots by 2028.

#38. Reduce leakage from oil-filled cables

We will reduce leaks from the few bio-oil-insulated electricity cables that remain on our network

Background

We have 44,000km of underground electricity cables; 380km of these (0.9%) are of an older construction that contain oil for insulation. These older cables can sometimes leak when they are damaged, seals deteriorate or ground conditions change. We have been progressively removing this type of cable from our network over a number of years.

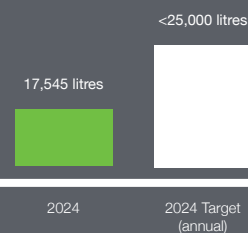
In ED2, we plan to continue with this programme prioritising the highest risk cables and also carefully manage those lengths that do remain using new tracing technologies to ensure that we can identify and fix leaks as soon as they occur. These measures will enable us to minimise the leakage from these cables and we have set an annual leakage target of less than 25,000 litres, representing a 17% reduction on the targets we set for the end of ED1.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Litres lost	<25,000 litres/ annum	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 our cable oil leakage was 17,545 litres which is significantly better than the target leakage of below 25,000 litres per annum.

Whilst we are replacing all of our oil filled cables in a long-term programme, the circuits that leak are repaired and put back into service. Conventional methods of finding leaks are time consuming and not always accurate. In 2019 we started using a new tracing technique which requires the cables to be dosed with Perfluorocarbon which enables the source of the leak to be detected more accurately and quickly.



#39. Undergrounding overhead lines

We will remove overhead lines in National Parks and National Landscapes

Background

Since 2005 we have been working with partners such as the Lake District and Peak District National Park Authorities to remove overhead power lines and replace them with underground cables in National Parks and National Landscapes in our region. Overhead lines in these locations can be deemed to be visually intrusive and detract from the landscape.

In ED2 we will continue our programme working closely with National Parks, National Landscapes and other key stakeholders to replace 7-8km of overhead lines each year with underground cables in locations identified by our partners of being of particular visual impact. We will work with experts where appropriate, including archaeologists, the Environment Agency and local councils to minimise other environmental impacts and ensure the work is handled sensitively.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Completed under-grounding requests from stakeholders	Maintain our programme of improving visual amenity	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24, we have undergrounded 3.3km of overhead line, replacing it with 4.5km of new underground cable.

The selection of sites is driven by our stakeholder partners and is ultimately driven by improvements in visual impact rather than length.

We continue to identify additional schemes and prioritise investment in line with our stakeholders' priorities.

#40. Reduce losses from network

We will reduce the amount of electricity lost in the distribution process

Background

A small amount of electricity is lost in the process of distributing it to customers, due to it being converted into other forms of energy, e.g. transformers getting warm. This is wasteful in terms of carbon emissions and the cost to bill payers for electricity they never get to use.

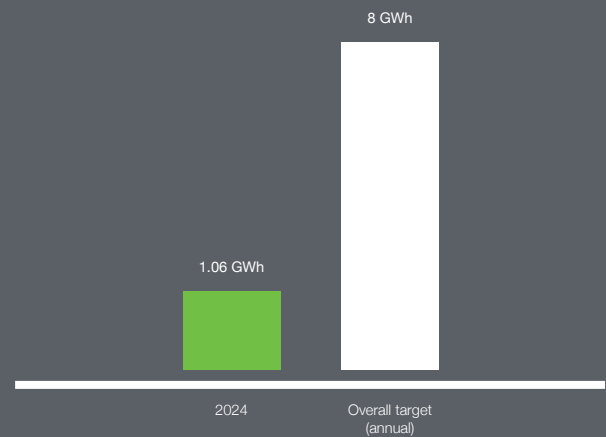
To reduce these losses in ED2, we will upsize cables and equipment to lower loss equivalents when we are undertaking work for other purposes and also proactively replace the highest loss equipment on our network, even if the equipment does not require replacement for any other reason. This proactive investment will save around eight Gigawatt hours of electricity (GWh) per year by 2028 – enough electricity to power around 2,760 homes for a year.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
GWh per year	Reduce losses by 8 GWh per year by the end of ED2	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 we replaced 46 transformers which equates to a loss reduction of approximately 1.06GWh per year.

We are still on track to reduce losses by 8GWh per year by the end of 2028.



#41. Reduce potent emissions

We will maintain a leakage rate of less than 0.3% of our total inventory

Background

Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF₆) is used throughout the industry as an effective electrical insulator and is in some of our equipment but is a potent greenhouse gas if leaks occur. A small amount of our total SF₆ is lost via leakage each year.

There are currently few viable alternatives to using SF₆ so we will proactively manage our equipment to minimise leaks, replace old equipment if its condition deteriorates, and also work with industry to stimulate the development of alternatives. As we switch over to installing SF₆-free equipment, we expect the costs to increase in the short term, until the widespread availability of alternatives.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
% of SF ₆ lost per year	<0.3% SF ₆ leakage per year	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 we continued to make improvements in managing and reducing losses of SF₆ from our network. Our SF₆ emitted was 0.17% of our total bank of SF₆ on the network.

We continue to look at options to reduce SF₆ on the network, which is an effective electrical insulator.

#42. Making our sites wildlife havens

We will expand our programme of transforming substation sites into wildlife havens

Background

In 2019/20 we transformed 9 of our substation sites into low-maintenance, self-pollinating spaces following a suggestion from one of our grounds workers. Not only do they benefit the local area but they can also reduce the amount of maintenance needed by Electricity North West. Unlike a site with grass that needs regular trimming and weeding, a site filled with self-pollinating wildflowers does not need regular visits. In addition, these sites are in the heart of local communities and many have been taken on to be maintained in partnership with local groups.

We will expand this programme in ED2 to create and support other green spaces and biodiversity schemes, including tree planting schemes where appropriate.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of sites enhanced for biodiversity	100 sites enhanced	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 we commissioned and completed a biodiversity baseline exercise across our estate which identified potential sites for enhancement opportunities and ecosystem services.

We analysed over 65 hectares of our total estate and targeted 100 sites for biodiversity enhancement. We are now actively managing those identified 100 sites with biodiversity management work beginning in September 2023, this has involved completing a first mowing cycle that will be continued in 2024/25 to allow plant species to flower and set seed.

To help with data collection and monitoring we developed a field reporting application that will allow notable plant and animal species to be captured throughout ED2.



#43. Help customers connect low carbon technologies

We will provide the right capacity for low carbon technologies in the right place at the right time

Background

Demand for electricity is likely to increase significantly from its current levels over the next decade, as the transport and heat sectors become increasingly electrified.

Although there are likely to be some offsetting reductions from energy efficiency improvements and changes in industrial demand, we nevertheless need to plan for a large overall increase in consumption. At the same time, we expect to see an increase in the connection of renewable generation to our network – another big change which also has implications for our network investment plans.

Meeting this increasing demand by simply expanding the network is not financially sustainable. We know from our research that bill payers would not accept the large price hikes that this would entail. Instead, we need to take a more strategic approach – by providing the right capacity in the right place at the right time, and by making the existing network work harder.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Meeting increased consumption demands	Ensure capacity is provided in the right place at the right time as demand increases	2028

Performance ●

We've engaged extensively across a wide range of regional stakeholders to understand how we best ensure our investment planning processes consider and support a whole system view.

We've taken a bespoke approach to local authority engagement and support, holding quarterly 'single conversation' surgeries for each Local Authority. This personalised approach has allowed us to tailor our support to individual Council needs. In some cases, that's meant being a technical and strategic partner in the development of Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs). In one example, we've supported Lancaster City Council in the development of their plan, which will be launched shortly.

In areas that are more advanced in their LAEP journey, such as Greater Manchester, we've been an active partner in the development of actions plans for the delivery of specific LAEP projects. For example, we supported Manchester City Council in the development of their Bee Network, resulting in over 20MW of electric vehicle (EV) charging points being integrated into bus depots across the city.

#44. Remove constraints for renewables

We'll help renewable electricity generation connect to the network, such as solar and wind power

Background

At the moment, certain parts of our network (e.g. city centres) are restricted in the amount of renewable generation that can connect because of the characteristics of some of the equipment installed there. If we don't support this, far less renewable generation will be able to connect in the North West.

We will ease restrictions on Distributed Generation connections where there is clear evidence of strong connections demand. By helping connect more renewable electricity generation we will enable the reduction of carbon emissions and help tackle climate change.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Connections of renewable electricity generation	Remove constraints for renewable generation connection	2028

Performance ●

We have begun modelling changes in the technical limit standards to allow more Distributed Generation/batteries to be connected to the network.

#45. Establish a new annual community energy fund

We will offer a £100k fund per year to support community energy projects

Background

Community energy projects are citizen-led schemes to reduce, generate or purchase energy. Examples include neighbourhood-led solar or hydro projects.

In ED1 we offered a £75,000 fund per year to support these projects and helped six such projects last year. These projects enable local, renewable electricity to be generated and connected to the network, as well as increasing awareness about energy efficiency and local action. The more power that is saved or connected locally means the lower the cost of the distribution of that power, saving money and emissions.

In ED2, we will increase this fund to meet demand. We will increase the fund from £75,000 to £100k for each year of the price control period. This will enable more projects to go ahead, while allowing for growth in the sector in our region. It will also enable ongoing benefits measurement based on projects delivered, which could support justification for increasing the funding level further in ED3.

Alongside the funding, we will provide a free, dedicated support service to help guide community groups in the development of their projects, applications for funding and the connection of their projects to our network.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Spending on community energy project schemes	£500k over ED2 period	2028

Performance ●

£100k of funding was awarded in 2023/24 and we were key sponsors of the Community Energy England awards.

This year's Powering our Communities fund was focused on the following themes: Scaling up delivery of a community or local energy project or group; Addressing a specific barrier that is holding back the development of community or local energy; Engagement to set up a new group or project and provided seed funds to enable initial progression of the successful projects.

#46. Unloop customers' power supplies

We will unloop the electricity services to properties installing low carbon technologies

Background

A looped service describes a situation where two or more households are connected to the electricity main with the same service cable. Hundreds of thousands of homes were historically connected to the power network in this way over the years to save the costs of connecting each individual property to the mains cable. However, this historic practice of sharing a service cable restricts the number of additional devices a household can connect to. This can prevent adoption of new technologies such as electric vehicle chargers – a change unforeseen when the original connections were made.

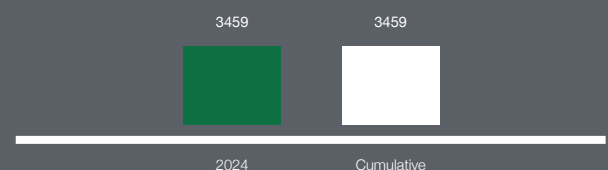
In ED2, we will unloop the electricity services to properties installing low carbon technologies such as electric vehicle chargers, putting in new cables to connect individual properties to the mains. We will do this when we are notified about electric vehicle charger connections or where customers want to connect heat pumps.

This will be the start of an ongoing programme to eventually remove all looped services in the North West.

Measurement	Target	Completion date
Number of services unlooped	Unloop services to properties adopting low carbon technologies	2028

Performance ●

In 2023/24 we have unlooped 3,459 customer power supplies to enable adoption of low carbon technologies.





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