

# Social Obligations

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# Social obligations: Our strategic focus

- We recognise how important this is to our customers
- This is the right thing to concentrate on, regardless of incentive
- Social obligations feature heavily in our 2015-23 business plan
- We are building partnerships with agencies and stakeholder groups to better reach, understand and serve our customers' needs
- Whether in our innovation projects, or our other delivery channels, we need to be open, creative and think outside the box

**NORTHERN POWERGRID** Our business plan 2015-23

Headlines | Our stakeholders | Reliability & availability | Safety & environment | Customer satisfaction | **Social obligations** | Connections | Low-carbon economy | Making it happen | What it costs | What you pay

**Social obligations**

*"We are conscious of the role that we must play in supporting the wider social agenda, and will change our current 'one size fits all' approach to spotting vulnerability to one that matches service to need. We will make more use of our local knowledge and presence to partner with others to help the vulnerable and the fuel poor. We will do all this whilst reducing our overall costs and holding our overheads flat."*

John Barnett - Commercial Director

**Our proposition...**

- Enhanced compensation of £200 for vulnerable customers if we fall the routine power cut guarantees
- Explore the feasibility of allowing communities to aggregate demand response in return for a community rebate
- Share more information to identify vulnerable customers
- Promote other organisations' support services to the 350,000 customers on our

**What it will cost...**

2015-23 spend	£0.9m p.a.
Share of our costs	0.2%
Domestic charge	£0.08 p.a.
Business charge	£1.47 p.a.

*What do these numbers mean?*

**Our stakeholders said...**

Does our plan cover the right things?	
Yes	82%
Don't know	14%
No	4%

*What does this mean?*

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John Barnett - Commercial Director

# Thinking outside the box



Innovation projects  
CLNR & ACE



Increased support delivered  
direct to our customers



Working with our partners  
to support the vulnerable  
in our communities



Working with partners to  
support customers during  
major incidents

# Establishing important project partnerships

- Customer-Led Network Revolution (CLNR):
  - Partnering with British Gas and northeast social housing groups
  - Trialling *ca.* 375 DECC funded heat pumps and *ca.* 100 solar PV automatic hot water systems
- Activating Community Energy (ACE):
  - Partnering with Durham County Council and SMEs
  - Offering community rewards based DSR
- Tower blocks:
  - Partnering with Northern Gas Networks and a local authority and social housing provider
  - Seeking affordable, sustainable heating solutions for tower blocks residents in our most deprived areas



# Our ongoing commitment

- With Citizens Advice Bureau, we are funding a fuel debt advisor
- Community energy events, including funding of a 'Community Seed Fund'
- Quarterly stakeholder panel and Social obligations expert groups
- Educating Yorkshire & the Northeast: School safety programmes
- Evolve partnerships to reach deeper into our local communities



Campaigning for Warm Homes



# Priority Services Register (PSR): Our vision

## *Current initiatives*

- Proactively contacting vulnerable customers on our PSR during a power cut to offer assistance
- Work placement for our customer liaison officer within the British Red Cross
- Radio adverts advertising the PSR
- Partnerships with NEA to promote PSR
- Promoting PSR at stakeholder events and during power cuts
- Dedicated web page

## *Ambitious plans going forward*

- Enhanced compensation for vulnerable customers if we fail the routine power cut guarantees
- Enhanced staff training on different types of vulnerability and how we can help
- Introduce 'friends and family' support service and 'good neighbour' scheme to identify vulnerable people
- Work with local communities and organisations to provide low-cost energy solutions



# In conclusion

**We see ourselves as a trusted 'honest broker'**

**We expect to operate in a multi-agency future world**

**We will act as an enabler for the communities we serve**

**We understand the importance our vulnerable customers place on the availability cost of our service**

# Thank You

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