

Safe and Warm Stakeholder Event

Summary Report

October 2023



SGN

Your gas. Our network.

Event Summary

Why did SGN hold this event?

SGN is currently supporting customers in vulnerable circumstances on our network through the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA), as allocated by Ofgem. For the current price control period covering 2021 -2026 (GD2), we have ambitious targets to help 500,000 households across our network get the support they need to access and use energy safely, efficiently and affordably in collaboration with partner organisations. There have been a number of challenges faced by all in the UK since 2021, notably the Covid-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis. It's important that we work with stakeholders to assess our progress, identify opportunity for improvement and ensure key learnings are taken into our plans for the next price control period of 2026 – 2031 (GD3).

What did SGN share?

SGN shared information about the progress made against commitments made for the current price control period 2021 -2026 (GD2). SGN and representatives from Citizens Advice, Age Scotland and Gas Safe Charity shared experiences and perspectives related to the impact of recent events on UK household's ability to afford and use the energy they need.

What did SGN learn?

Stakeholders were split into discussion groups and asked for their thoughts on SGN's investment in the priority areas. The options were to invest less, the same or more time and money. The key insights gained where:

There are a number of new and changing issues facing customers in vulnerable circumstances.

- There's a lack of awareness about available support, especially for those experiencing difficulties for the first time
- There is a range of barriers to funding access such as mental health issues, lack of internet access and confusion about energy tariffs

Support schemes can be difficult to navigate and this can impact on the level of support provided

- Improved training and support materials would help those providing support feel more knowledgeable, especially with regards to benefit checks and energy efficiency. Other topics that would be useful to have further training on include Priority Services Register (PSR), disability awareness, Carbon Monoxide and debt advice

Ensuring inclusivity is of high importance and should be considered across all initiatives

- Language should be simple to reduce complexity
- There should be language and media options for the Priority Services Register, such as text-to-talk, languageline, social media and printed leaflets
- Carbon Monoxide awareness should include those with hearing impairment and in non-standard housing e.g. caravans, boats

Addressing fuel poverty requires a broad, cross-sector response that is cohesive across Scotland and England.

- Input from government, energy companies, partner organisations and the communities being served would help ensure those who need help can access it
- Support from partner organisations, like charities, can mitigate effects of distrust some customers have in the energy sector

Key Event Info



18 October 2023



Inclusive online event



67 participants



43 organisations representing nationwide interests



Private and third sector representatives in attendance

What did stakeholders think of the event?

Stakeholders were invited to share their views on the event through a Slido poll. In summary:



96% agreed that they were satisfied overall with the event.



93% agreed that topics discussed were relevant to their area of work.



96% agreed the event had enhanced their understanding of SGN and its activities.



96% felt the facilitation was professional and effective.



96% agreed the format was appropriate and enabled them to have their say.



96% felt confident SGN will listen and act on the views.