

# Welcome to our regional workshop

Sarah Hopkins - People and Engagement Director

January/February 2021



# Purpose of today

- **Connect with new and existing stakeholders and provide you with an update on what we've been doing over the last year**
- **Gather your valued input into how we can effectively build a sustainable future through supporting those most in need with a focus on understanding how the needs, circumstances and aspirations of our customers has changed and is evolving**

Introducing...

# EQ Communications

- Who we are
- Zoom protocols
- Introduction to speakers

# Agenda

Item	Time
Welcome & purpose	10:30 – 10:35
Agenda and zoom protocols	10:35 – 10:45
Presentation: Background and Business update	10:45 - 10:55
Breakout – Introductions and discussion	10:55 – 11:05
Presentation: Supporting those most in need	11:05 – 11:20
Discussion session	11:20 – 11:45
Feedback session and voting	11:45 – 11:55
Presentation: CO Awareness – A targeted approach	11:55 – 12:05
Discussion session	12:05 – 12:20
Feedback session	12:20 – 12:25
What's next and Close	12:25 – 12:30



# Business update

Sarah Hopkins

People and Engagement Director

# Wales & West Utilities – about us

- Supply gas to 2.5m homes and businesses
- Serve a population of 7.5m people across Wales and south west England
- Provide a 24/7 service, 365 days a year
- 11,000 new customers connected each year
- Respond to 70,000 gas emergencies every year
- Maintain 35,000km of gas pipes
- Invest £2m a week in the gas network
- More than 1,500 skilled and experienced colleagues





# Keeping our customers, communities and colleagues safe



Our Safe and Warm fund has supported charities and organisations to help the most vulnerable

21



913

colleagues in Operations working to keep the gas flowing



£48,000

Colleagues support Marie Curie, Mind and Crisis in place of end of year celebrations

## The majority

of customers surveyed (including those shielding) in our qualitative in-depth survey were reassured that with appropriate PPE our pipe replacement work could go ahead safely

This has been a year like no other. In the face of a global pandemic, we've all had to deal with personal and professional challenges - that none of us could ever have dreamed of.

But whatever life throws at us, at Wales & West Utilities we know that our role is clear. Our priority remains to keep the gas flowing so our 7.5m customers and communities stay safe and warm.

74% of customers surveyed said they were comfortable with an engineer entering their homes

329 Post Self isolation Wellbeing calls made to colleagues

Weekly wellbeing e-newsletter

24 hour wellbeing helpline

Regular wellbeing cafés



Heated and powered **11** NHS Nightingale and Field Hospitals



# Maintaining momentum and high standards

**2<sup>nd</sup>**

consecutive year  
Winner of RoSPA  
worldwide Oil and Gas  
sector Award and gold  
medallist for the 7<sup>th</sup>  
year running

**99%**

of gas emergency call-  
outs attended within 1  
hour over last  
regulatory period

**ISO 45001**

Occupational Health &  
Safety Management  
standard, ISO 55001 - Asset  
management and ISO  
14001 - Environmental  
Management System  
achieved



**BS 18477**

for Inclusive  
Service  
Provision  
maintained

**Responsible  
Business  
Champion 2020  
BitC Wales**

Investors in  
People strategic  
review in June  
2020

We continue to meet all our regulatory and safety targets

# Our sustainable plan at a glance



It's our ambition to help communities and the environment thrive by delivering reliable, affordable and sustainable energy long into the future. We want to lead the way with high-quality, inclusive services for generations to come.

**9.2/10**

overall customer satisfaction target



**£1.4m**

investment annually to support the most vulnerable



**£400m**

invested between 2021-2026, not only to keep the gas flowing safely, but so that our network is



**£133**

a year

contribution to the average household bill between 2021-2026



**1 hour**

On average we'll get to all gas emergencies in under an hour to keep you and your family safe



**200%**

Increase in the number of Priority Service Register sign-ups to 12,000 per year, and work with others to make sure data is shared effectively



**Net Zero-ready by 2035**

contributing to decarbonisation of heat, power and transport

**80%**

of our waste will be reused or recycled by 2026



In the unlikely event of an interruption to your gas supply, we'll have it back on in under 10 hours



**Spend sensibly for the future**

using our 2050 Pathfinder simulator, researching smart hybrids and hydrogen to design the future of energy

**Sustainable**

Our plan is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals



**Invest in the diversity of our team,**

making sure it reflects the communities we serve



# Discussion session: Getting to know you



**Nigel Winnan**  
Customer and Social  
Obligations Manager

**Supporting those most in need**

# Our support for those in need – 2021 to 2026

## Core Business Funding

- Supporting all customers during our work in communities and customer contacts with Wales & West Utilities
- Promotion of the Priority Service Register (PSR)
- Providing alternative heating and cooking equipment during gas supply interruptions
- Free alterations to help people access their gas meter
- Fuel Poor Network Extension Scheme (FPNES): funding for up to 7,870 first-time gas connections to low-income and energy-inefficient homes

## Additional support

### New Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

- £5.34m for projects in our geographical area
- £1.78m for collaborative projects with other networks



# Allowable funding under VCMA

## Vulnerability (70%)

- Programmes promoting energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty
- Assistance with repairs to appliances shut-off for safety reasons, due to a gas emergency or our planned gas pipe works
- Raising awareness of the Priority Service Register and data sharing – working towards a single, joint utility register
- Additional services and support for people living with age-related and general physical disabilities, mental health conditions, and families with young children
- Vulnerability and demographic mapping
- Support for people to decarbonise home heating - transitioning to a net zero society

## Home safety(30%)

- Carbon monoxide (CO) awareness campaigns
- CO education programmes - schools and universities
- Free CO monitors to homes of people most at risk
- Research on the impact of exposure to CO
- Influencing government policy and legislation
- Locking cooker valves to support people living with early stage dementia, autism and learning difficulties

A Community Fund inviting applications from organisations to reach out to people and help provide safe and warm homes linked to the themes above was proposed in our Business Plan and trialled in 2020

# Proposed business plan split of WWU spend

Activity	Year 1 budget	Customer outcomes
Fuel poverty / energy efficiency projects	£350k	At least 1,500 homes helped to improve energy efficiency and alleviate fuel poverty
Support for customer broken appliances	£150k	200 households supported to keep safe and warm by helping to fund appliance repairs / replacements
PSR referrals / utilities data sharing	£50K	12,000 more people signed up to benefit from priority services. Data sharing and work to common PSR
Locking cooker valves	£10k	100 homes with early dementia needs helped
CO awareness	£150k	10,000 will be more informed about gas safety as well as wide reaching awareness campaigns
CO monitors	£75k	5,000 free issue monitors to most at need homes
Education	£75k	Schools education and building upon primary schools work from RIIO GD1 – 2,000 pupils
Work with customer groups	£100k	Focus on services for people living with disabilities, mental health issues and BAME groups
Community fund	£100k	Fund for projects with charities and organisations

WWU will also spend £356k per annum for collaborative gas network projects will allow for larger scale UK wide projects on similar themes (£15m fund over 5 years)

# Discussion session





# Group Feedback including voting



## Fuel poverty / energy efficiency projects

Give your rating

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Do a lot less    Do less    Keep the same    Do more    Do a lot more

Slido.com  
WWU2021



Elizabeth Warwick  
Stakeholder Engagement Manager

Carbon monoxide awareness – a  
targeted approach

# Carbon Monoxide – why awareness is important

- Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas that is released when any fossil fuel burns.
- Breathing it in can make you unwell, and it can kill.
- A headache is the most common symptom of mild carbon monoxide poisoning. Other symptoms can include:
  - dizziness
  - nausea and vomiting
  - tiredness and confusion
  - stomach pain
  - shortness of breath and difficulty breathing



# Carbon Monoxide – Our strategy



- For life focus for primary school children
- Awareness raising for at risk groups
- CO Monitor provision for priority groups within the ‘at-risk’ categories

# Carbon Monoxide – Research findings

Has working audible CO alarm:  
Overall – 42%

- **16 to 24 - 26%**, 65 to 74 – 63%
- Sheltered housing - 20% \*
- **Student – 29%, unemployed - 38%**, retired - 58%
- **4 or more children - 31%, 3 children - 34%**, no children - 43%

Quite or very important to have gas appliances serviced annually by registered engineer: Overall – 89%

- **16 to 24 – 79%**, 65 to 74 – 97%
- Sheltered housing - 76% \*
- **Student – 81%**, retired - 94%
- **4 or more children - 85%, 3 children - 83%**, no children - 90%

Gas Safety Research: Base 8,023 UK

\* Low sample (50)

# Carbon Monoxide Case Study

- Primary school safety sessions – with *Safety Seymour CO super hero*
- CO safety sessions for circa 50 schools and 2700 pupils; many more using *Safety Seymour* online resources
- 7 year old Jaydee Lee recognised the symptoms in her brother, knew the emergency number to call, saved her family and won a **Pride of Britain Award**



# Discussion session





# Group Feedback



# What's next?

Sarah Hopkins  
People and Engagement Director

- Research to understand customers' priorities since Covid 19.

We are also testing this with our internal colleagues

- Citizens' Panel trial

- Bringing together your insight with what we've heard at other workshops and the research findings, to shape our business planning approach, delivery and communications.

# THANK YOU

Feedback  
Forms

Sign up for e-  
newsletter  
and other  
events

