

Stakeholder Justification Paper – Support	
Output/Commitment Title	
Support our customers through the net zero transition.	
Detail	We will work with trusted partners to offer unbiased advice on sustainable energy solutions for homes and businesses, prioritising customers who are in vulnerable situations. We will also train our customer-facing colleagues and partners, so they are knowledgeable about the net zero transition, and develop tailored communication approaches to engage with customers, so that guidance is available to help prepare communities for a sustainable net zero future.
Targets (more stretching than GD2?)	VCMA project in GD2 have included an element of energy efficiency awareness, this will be significantly increased in GD3.
Strategy Document/ Business Plan Section	Vulnerability Strategy – Draft GDN Vulnerability Strategy – BP: Protecting our customers and communities – Supporting Net Zero
Cost & Bill Impact	
Proposed Funding	Base (PCDs and LOs) or otherwise (ODIs, UM)? Requested Ofgem to include this in base totex
Benefits & risks	
Summary of benefits	<p>Summary: People have a greater understanding of the UK energy transition, the heating and cooking options available for them, who can help them and potential funding sources for home energy system upgrades.</p> <p>Direct financial benefits: Customers signposted to suitable grants and loans (boiler upgrade scheme, ECO4, Nest in Wales)</p> <p>Societal benefits: Impact such as health & wellbeing, job creation, carbon footprint reduction, helping UK achieve net zero targets</p> <p>UK energy transition assistance to customers has been a secondary outcome for VCMA projects in GD2, whereas will take more significant role in GD3.</p>
Summary of risks	Consumers may remain unaware of the energy upgrades they need to make to transition safely to low carbon heating, due to a lack of information. Risk of them being left behind. Without support, consumers in vulnerable situations and particularly those on low incomes may struggle to afford home energy system upgrades.
Stakeholder voice - Golden thread	
Engagement method (what and who)	<p>Methods: Methods include hosting workshops and customer/ consumer meetings for interactive sessions and focused discussions, engaging with stakeholders through face-to-face interactions and community events, collecting input via surveys and feedback forms, and using digital platforms like online voting and webinars. Traditional media channels, educational and awareness campaigns, collaborative efforts, customer panels. Additionally, engagement with policymakers through educational sessions.</p> <p>Stakeholders: Consumers/ Customers, Vulnerability Service Providers, Utility Representatives, Business Representatives, Charities, Local Authority Representatives, Electric Connection Queue Stakeholders, Financial Stakeholders (e.g., private equity, venture capital, mortgage lenders), Offshore and International Stakeholders, Service Providers (e.g., heat and electric vehicles), Local Governments, Supply Chains (materials, manufacturing, and installation), Early Education Academia (to support more engineers and skilled professionals into the sector), Social Partners (including marginalized groups and communities), NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), and Developers.</p>

Stakeholder Views (what they said, regional differences and how we responded)

Opinions, views: Stakeholders have suggested that to support vulnerable customers through the energy transition financial assistance through social tariffs, better use of Priority Service Register (PSR) data, and education on energy efficiency is crucial; as these initiatives aim to reduce financial burdens, improve identification and support, and raise awareness about the benefits of the green transition. Some stakeholders highlighted barriers to a Just Transition including communication gaps, where many target audiences are unaware of available support, highlighting the need for effective communication campaigns and face-to-face engagement. Poor housing conditions, particularly in rural and older properties, were identified as significant barriers. All stakeholders have called for more collaborative efforts with local authorities and other stakeholders, highlighting the importance of clear communication and proactive interaction for successful partnerships. Local authorities, business representatives and customers also supported funding for innovations that benefit customers without imposing heavy financial burdens, with a particular focus on collaborative work on clean fuel vehicles and sustainable local energy planning. Additionally, customers expressed a preference for automatic eligibility for support services, as self-identification can often be a barrier.

Associated facts: There will be an accelerated RAV depreciation, confirmed by Ofgem during RIIO-GD3. Little funding available for low carbon domestic heating solutions. Ofgem Business Plan Guidance v3 states "To inform their vulnerability strategies, GDNs should work with stakeholders, VCMA Project Partners, and their ISGs to develop common definitions of "most at risk" and a fair "transition to net zero" to consider how best to support these consumers."

Conflicts: While there is strong support for net zero initiatives and innovation funding, some stakeholders are reluctant to accept bill increases due to the cost-of-living crisis. There is also a split opinion on whether to prioritise short-term or long-term innovation solutions. Scepticism exists about the global commitment to net zero efforts, and business owners are concerned about the economic impact of a net zero-ready network. Additionally, there are differing views on whether utility companies or local authorities should take the lead in supporting energy plans and vulnerable groups. Some stakeholders call for government leadership and clear policy directives, while others advocate for the independence of utility companies from government directives.

Regional differences: Across regions, there was a consistent call for more effective communication campaigns to ensure that vulnerable customers are aware of the available support. This included face-to-face engagement through caseworkers or care workers. Stakeholders across different regions supported the idea of collaborative work on projects like vehicles powered by clean fuels and sustainable local energy planning strategies. Local authority representatives in south Wales were particularly concerned about the condition of existing homes, especially older properties and houses in rural areas.

Options considered: We considered the following options:

1. Upskill our customer facing colleagues and existing partners to deliver key information on the energy transition to net zero, as part of business-as-usual activities.

	<p>2. Upskill our customer facing colleagues and existing partners to provide key information on the energy transition to net zero and develop tailored communications and delivery channels to support customers most likely to be involved in the energy transition, proactively taking these communications into communities.</p> <p>How we responded: To make sure we address the diverse needs of our stakeholders and customers and protect vulnerable individuals from being disproportionately affected by the UK's transition to net zero, we will strengthen our existing partnerships and enhance our colleagues' skills. This will enable us to provide crucial, unbiased information on the energy transition and create referral pathways to support those most in need.</p> <p>Our Willingness to Pay research supported this level of ambition. We engaged 1,252 domestic consumers, 153 business consumers, and 100 future bill payers about our proposed GD3 commitments. The results showed that 68% to 74% of domestic participants were willing to pay an additional £8 to £10 on their gas bills to support a higher level of ambition.</p> <p>We also conducted a separate study with 1,401 participants, including domestic and business consumers and future bill payers, to test the acceptability of this commitment. The findings revealed that 91% of domestic consumers and 95% of business consumers accepted this commitment.</p>
<p>Performance</p>	
<p>GD2 Performance, Benchmarking/ Industry comparison</p>	<p>This has not been a focus area for GDN's in GD2, but Ofgem have asked GDN's to consider how they can support customers in the UK energy transition in GD3. We will work with the other GDN's to join up knowledge, expertise and develop consistent communications.</p> <p>The DNO's already have targets within ED2 to contact and support priority customers.</p>
<p>Deliverability & Whole Systems Impact</p>	
<p>Deliverability & viability implications</p>	<p>We have experience of delivering awareness campaigns and education on carbon monoxide, gas safety and Priority Service Register through our own staff and partnerships. We will develop and evolve our messaging during GD3. The UK government decision on hydrogen for home heating planned for 2026 will be key to messaging we provide going forward.</p> <p>More detail can be found in section 9 of the WWU Vulnerability Strategy.</p>

Triangulation scorecard

Our engagement scoring methodology leverages the information from the HM Treasury's Magenta Book, Quality in Qualitative Evaluation framework and various weighing methodologies used by networks to assess how much impact each piece of evidence should have on their decision-making process.

Each piece of evidence is given a score between 0-2 against a scoring criteria including *Relevance to topic, Level of stakeholder knowledge, Quality of engagement, Rigour of feedback collection* and *Credibility of analysis and interpretation*.

The table below outlines how the evidence used to produce this document scored against each criteria and its overall score. An average and modal score is then provided, which is associated to a grading system that demonstrates the feedback robustness and quality.

Document Name	Score					Final Score
	Relevance to Topic	Level of Stakeholder Knowledge	Quality of Engagement	Rigour of Feedback Collection	Credibility of Analysis and Interpretation	
06.03.24- SGN Response to GD Annex PUBLIC_Redacted	1	2	2	2	2	9
20231206 WWU Customer Journey Improvements v1	2	2	2	2	2	10
2305 GDNs full analysis	2	2	2	2	2	10
2305 SCOPE disability CO safety and PSR awareness research 2023 GDNs summary recommendations	2	2	2	2	2	10
3037 LCT Tracker W4 Report WWU FV	0	2	2	2	2	8
3564 WWU Customer Business Priorities FV2	2	2	2	2	2	10
3636 WWU Customer Priorities Report_Debrief_v3	2	2	2	2	2	10
3830_NEA_Fuel-Poverty-Monitor-Report-2022_V2-1	2	2	2	2	2	10
Cadent RIIO-3 SSMC Response_GD Annex Final	1	2	2	2	2	9
CCC - Reducing emissions in Wales	0	2	2	2	2	8
Citizens Advice_A flexible future_Extending the benefits of energy flexibility to more households 3 August 2023	2	2	2	2	2	10
consultation-just-transition-framework	0	2	2	2	2	8
CVS-and-Community-Resilience-Executive-Summary-FINAL	2	2	2	2	2	10
DAR - SR - 220915 - DAR Ofgem Local Energy Institutions Workshop	0	2	2	1	2	7

ENA External Stakeholders Insight Report v1.1	0	2	2	2	2	8
Energy Networks Innovation Strategy 2022	1	2	2	2	2	9
Entry Gas Connection Charging Consultation 24.06.22 published	0	2	2	2	2	8
Experiences-Emotions-and-Ethics_Refreshing-the-customer-priorities-that-underpin-the-UKCSI-bsetpn	2	2	2	2	2	10
Final version WWU - Critical Friends Panel - Feb 2023 - Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
ICS-UKCSI-Exec-Summary_Jan22_INTERACTIVE-h2d26m	2	2	2	2	2	10
LCP Delta - Online consultation responses summary	0	2	2	2	2	8
Marie Curie Quality Account Report 22-23	2	2	2	2	2	10
McCann Cadent CO research debrief	2	2	2	2	2	10
ms1590 WWU PSR Customer Experience Research Presentation vFINAL	2	2	2	2	2	10
National Gas Transmissions NGT Response to Ofgems R110-3 Sector Specific Methodology Consultation	1	2	2	2	2	9
NEA Cymru - VCMA DAR	2	2	2	1	2	9
NEA-Report-CO-and-Fuel-Poverty 2	2	2	2	2	2	10
Ofgem-consumer-standards - NEA Response	2	2	2	2	2	10
PE21199 Understanding consumers' attitudes to safety measures when using 100_ hydrogen in the home v1.0	1	2	2	2	2	9
PSR Code Group Report. DRAFT w exec summary 21.11.23	2	2	2	2	2	10
PSR-Code-Group-Report-w-exec-summary-FINAL-7.12.23	2	2	2	2	2	10
Safeguarding the switch to domestic hydrogen WWU Report 1.0	1	2	2	2	2	9
Scope Cost of Living Report	2	2	2	2	2	10

UKRI Culture of Innovation_Full report_Oct 2023_Pdf_version	0	2	2	2	2	8
UKRI-PA-InnovationCultureReport	0	2	2	2	2	8
Utility-Panel-Research-Presentation_26.10.23	2	2	2	2	2	10
VCMA Collaborative Report Year 1 21-22	2	2	2	2	2	10
VCMA Collaborative Report Year 2 22-23	2	2	2	2	2	10
VCMA Year 1 Showcase Stakeholder Workshop - Feedback Report	2	2	2	2	2	10
Workshop 2 Summary - Futureproofing the networks	1	0	2	2	2	7
Workshop 4 Summary - Transforming how networks interact with industry	0	0	2	2	2	6
WWU - Critical Friends Panel - Feb 2024 - Feedback Report v5	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU Biodiversity Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU Business Panel_full report with appendix	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Citizen Panel Full Report_V1	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Citizens Panel report Decarbonisation of home heat March 2022 FINAL	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Customer Satisfaction_full report	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU Customer Service Trends Secondary Research - Findings report - Final	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU Employer of Choice Qualitative Follow-up Findings report v1	0	2	2	2	2	8

WWU FW strategy workshop 180721 final	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU GD3 Business Planning Workshop Feedback Report	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU LAEP Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU qual priorities report FINAL	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU Safety Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Sustainability Strategy Workshop - Feedback Report	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU VCMA strategy 2023 Ofgem version June 2023 v5.0	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU Vulnerability Panel Report_V3_060923	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU_Improving the CEX research programme_Stage 1_Report of findings_17.01.23	2	2	2	2	2	10
Average score of sources						9.14
Mode						10

Score	Grade	Description
0-3	Poor	Feedback should not be used for triangulation as it does not meet the minimum quality standards.
4-6	Average	Feedback could be used for triangulation but possible lacks robustness.
7-8	Good	Feedback meets the standards necessary for credible triangulation.
9-10	Excellent	Feedback meets the best standards of rigour and quality.