

3 Customer satisfaction

Keeping customers satisfied

We take every opportunity we can to listen to what our customers want, and we act on what they tell us. In particular, we pay attention to what our vulnerable customers want and need. We are proactive in the way we keep customers updated and we use multiple channels such as web and video chat. We are delighted that our customer satisfaction measure this year is our highest ever at 85%. We know there is even more that we can do, and that is one of our priorities for the coming year.



Supporting vulnerable customers

A customer called us in February to report a power cut. In the course of the call he told us that he had recently been discharged from hospital and was feeling cold. On hearing that, we sent our engineers right away and, as the fault was complex and would take some hours to repair, we connected the customer's home to a generator while the power was off. We also provided him with a Medipack, a temperature controlled mobile carrier that is

designed specifically to store refrigerated medicines in the absence of electricity. We arrange these for customers who have highlighted a specific need in preparation for planned outages or as a response to a concern raised about the resilience of the electricity supply to the property. We also added the customer to the Priority Services Register while he recuperated. His son called later in the week to thank us for the care we had taken with his father.

85%

Our highest ever customer satisfaction score

5,000

We have invested over 5,000 hours of customer service training in the year

Feedback from a customer

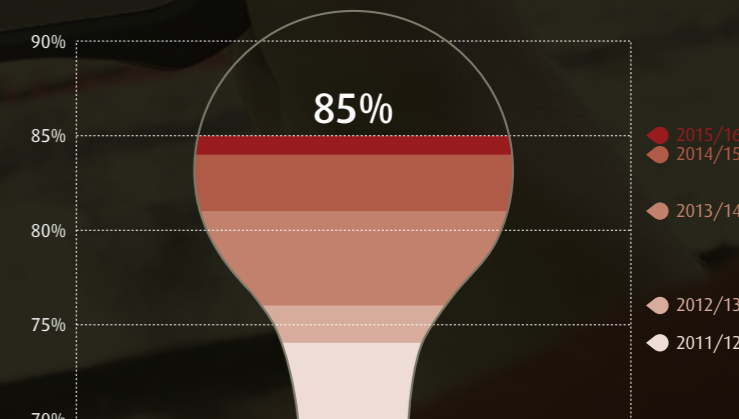
Abigail's mother was worried. Abigail has diabetes and had a fridge full of insulin when there was a power cut at her home. As soon as Abigail's mother told us we arranged for her to be added to the Priority Services Register (PSR). The PSR is a list of vulnerable customers who receive priority treatment during power cuts. We made sure that Abigail and her mother knew what was happening and when they could expect power to be restored. We also sent her a Medipack to keep her insulin safe.



Thank you for putting Abigail on the priority list, she was very grateful to receive the Medipack. She had been very ill since the weekend due to low body temperature and a virus. To be on the priority list in future would help enormously, thank you again for your help, it is most appreciated.



Broad measure of customer satisfaction



The regulator Ofgem asks our customers to score our service out of 10. Ofgem began this measurement in 2011.

Customer satisfaction

continued

The year from April 2015 to March 2016 was a period of tremendous achievement for UK Power Networks. Customer satisfaction reached an all-time high. Reliability, as measured by the frequency and duration of power cuts, was our best ever. Safety measures, too, showed that we are continuing to accelerate improvements in this vital area.

We have achieved this success by keeping a laser-like focus on the following areas: safety, customer service and costs. We pride ourselves on leading innovation in our sector, and all the technology and new ways of working that we develop are designed to make the experience of our customers better, cheaper, greener, faster or easier, or to help us take better care of the safety and well-being of our employees and the general public. And sometimes they do more than one of these.

We are diligent about our role as a respected corporate citizen. We are working hard to earn our place at the heart of the society and the business community that we serve. That commitment includes the individuals and businesses that we support, the environment where we live and work, and the people who work for us, and their families.

Summary of our performance

Improvement since 2010/11



Lost time incidents improved by **80%**



Customer interruptions improved by **42%**



Customer minutes lost improved by **53%**



Customer satisfaction increased by **15%***

* Since 2011/12

Customer satisfaction

As long as everyone is safe and well, customer satisfaction is our driving force. The needs and preferences of customers are at the centre of our business and we have seen measures of customer satisfaction rise since we have adopted this position. Our score of 85% customer satisfaction this year is our best score ever and, among our vulnerable customers, we scored 87%, which is another record for us.

We operate where our customers live and work, so most of our interaction with them happens at a local level. That means we have people out and about in the community, getting to know those we serve.



Our customer care team engaging with customers in Hastings, East Sussex.

The strength of our service really only comes to light when there is a problem. Much of our customer satisfaction derives from times when there has been a power cut or some other problem. That's when we need to take steps to minimise the inconvenience or, in some cases, avert a potential crisis for our vulnerable customers such as finding a power source for medical equipment during a power cut.

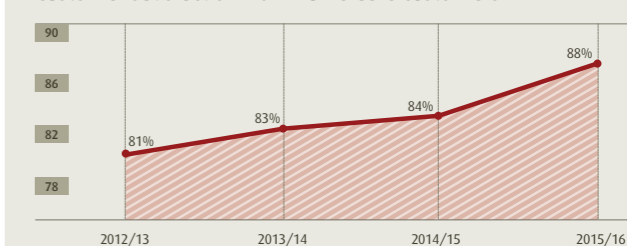
Our customers told us that what they want most of all during a power cut is information. They want to know in advance about planned power cuts and we do that through the channel they have told us they prefer. Once there is a power cut, they want to know how long it is going to last, what caused it and which areas are affected. We have developed a whole range of ways to keep our customers informed. Some of these are breaking new ground for our industry and we are happily sharing them with our peers. As well as phoning, texting or emailing, customers can use video chat or web chat through our website, and we have developed an online interactive power cut map to show which areas are affected. We have also ramped up our proactive communications about power cuts so customers don't have to contact us to find out what is happening. We will call or text them, depending on their preference. We made 680,000 proactive calls to customers from January to December 2015. This is more than twice the number we made last year.

When we hear ideas from our customers, or come up with them ourselves, we always test them out with a pilot group to make sure they work. In fact we often work with our stakeholders to co-design products and services that are useful for customers. Our 'You and Your Home' campaign that helped households identify ways to reduce their bills is an example of a co-designed service. And we worked with customers through local forums to redesign quote letters for new connections after they told us that the existing one was too long and difficult to understand. It is now much shorter and the options are clearer. We are grateful for the work and commitment our customer groups provide in helping us to improve our service.

Supporting vulnerable customers

The impact of power cuts on vulnerable people can, in a number of ways, be far greater than it is for the general population. People with long-term medical conditions, for example, may be highly dependent on electric-powered medical equipment; someone with Alzheimer's disease may become highly distressed or confused by a lack of power. We work hard to understand the needs of vulnerable customers. We work with a number of charities such as the Alzheimer's Society, Age UK and the Royal Association for Deaf people to learn what they want from us. Working closely with the charities, as well as several parish councils, we publicised the Priority Services Register (PSR). This is a list of vulnerable customers who receive priority treatment during power cuts and advance warning and information if we know about cuts before they happen. With the help of the community groups, we let people know how they could go on the register and what the benefits to them are. Anyone who feels that they have special requirements can elect to go on the PSR and some people may be on it temporarily, such as those recovering from surgery, or families with a new baby. We introduced the concept of temporary vulnerability as a direct result of feedback from our customers who said they wanted to be treated as individuals, rather than be categorised. The work we do is having a real impact, as shown by the satisfaction score among our customers on the PSR.

Customer satisfaction from vulnerable customers



Customer satisfaction continued

680,000

We made 680,000 proactive calls to customers this year. This is more than twice the number we made last year

Case study

Customer and community support team

We have a dedicated team that goes out and about in our community support van during power cuts. They provide hot food, blankets and information for those on the PSR. Our team in the call centre make sure they get in touch with everyone on the register to tell them what is happening, what help we will be providing for them and when to expect it.



Case study

Putting ourselves in the shoes of our vulnerable customers

People dealing with conditions such as arthritis and impaired vision told us that they wanted us to have a better understanding of what it was like to be in their shoes. We acted on that request. With the help of Age UK, we developed a training programme, attended by most senior people in the company, as well as those who deal directly with customers. The sensory training allowed us to experience for ourselves how difficult it was, for example, to use a trip switch with stiff fingers or to read a meter or one of our leaflets with poor eyesight. Everyone who has taken part in this training will remember vividly how it felt. This has brought a new level of empathy to our call centre staff and helps all of us when we are in contact with people who contend with such challenges in their day-to-day lives. It has also led us to redesign many of our leaflets and forms.

Our employee, trying to use trip switches whilst wearing a glove that restricts movement to replicate arthritis.

