

Stakeholder Workshops 2016

Western Power Distribution

Western Power Distribution (WPD) recently invited stakeholders to attend six region-wide workshops in the latest round of stakeholder engagement events. Around 300 stakeholders have attended six region-wide workshops in our latest round of stakeholder engagement events, including domestic customers, businesses, developers and local authorities.

Stakeholders were given an overview of our progress during the first nine months of the latest eight-year business plan, known as RIIO-ED1, and invited to share their views on our long term priorities, including 'smart networks' and 'affordability'.

Design and Development Manager Nigel Turvey explained the role of a smart network and the challenges facing the network as a result of increasing distributed generation. He also shared details of WPD's longer term strategy and actions being taken to address these challenges.

Stakeholders were asked to feedback on some of the actions WPD are taking to address these challenges, including improvements in telecommunication links for the collection of data and control of generation and energy storage, as well as using intelligent switchgear.

The topic of 'affordability' covered WPD's increasing role tackling fuel poverty and Stakeholder Engagement Manager Alex Wilkes confirmed that more referral networks are being developed by WPD to provide fuel poverty services, targeting the areas with the highest fuel poverty rates and ensuring the schemes tackle the root causes of fuel poverty.

"Fuel poverty and vulnerability in a power cut are separate issues, but for customers there can be a correlation. We do not cause fuel poverty but are uniquely placed to help. We now have a wide range of initiatives in place, and in 2015 we supported over 5,000 fuel poor customers to save over £750,000 (\$1 million) a year," said Alex.

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Roundtable sessions encouraged discussions between stakeholders and WPD staff, with additional in-depth surgeries on the topics of connections, social obligations and the role of a Distribution System Operator.

For further information: For further information: Emma Vincent, 0117 933 2143

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