

WPD meets MPs to promote Priority Service Register



WPD's Chief Executive Robert Symons and senior managers joined MPs at a parliamentary reception at the House of Commons to call on vulnerable residents to sign up to the Priority Service Register.

Hosted by James Heappey MP, the Member of Parliament for the Wells Constituency, around sixty MPs and key stakeholders were able to find out more about the help available to vulnerable customers within WPD's distribution area when they experience a power cut.

The Priority Service Register helps WPD to support people who may be particularly vulnerable during a power cut, such as those medically dependent on electricity, with a particular communication need, or who may just find a power cut particularly difficult such as the elderly or disabled.

New research by WPD has found there was a 138 percent increase in people signing up to the Priority Service Register last winter, following an initiative led by WPD and local MPs. Over 20,000 more vulnerable people signed up than during the same period the year before. However, it is believed that more are still yet to sign up for the extra support they are eligible for in the event of a power cut.

WPD also used the event to highlight their involvement in a host of new technologies, systems and skills to create the smart network of the future, including leading the world's largest electric vehicle use trial.

James Heappey MP said:

"I was delighted to host Western Power Distribution in Parliament, and to hear about the important work they are doing in Wells to keep the lights on and to ensure vulnerable residents get helped first in the event of a power cut. I am calling on all residents of Wells to call 0800 917 79 53 if they believe they would be vulnerable if the power went off."

"I also discussed WPD's investment to create a smart network for residents of Wells. As the country's energy use and mix changes, our networks are being asked to do more to take the load. It was great to hear how WPD is developing new skills and innovations to adapt for the future, keep costs down and give consumers greater control."

Robert Symons, Western Power Distribution Chief Executive said:

"We were delighted to be hosted by James Heappey MP in Parliament to discuss our role of keeping the lights on and supporting our customers. Since 2012 we have cut the likelihood of powercuts occurring by a quarter. However, we cannot eliminate the chances of power cuts completely, so it is vital that we know who our most vulnerable customers are so we can support them first."

“WPD is also rising to the challenge of creating a smart network that works for everyone. We are investing \$8.75 billion (£7.1 billion) between 2015 and 2023 to improve network resilience, connect new homes, businesses and generation, and to roll out new innovations.”

During a power cut, please call 105 or 0800 6783 105.

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