

December 2019

Appendix 07.03.05

Measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity

This output case describes our overall approach to measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity to our services and of our communications. As a new, standalone business, we want to build our brand awareness by being transparent in everything we do, and ensure that all customers, no matter their circumstance, have positive interactions with Cadent and the services we offer.

In RIIO-1 there is no measure for accessibility and inclusivity, however the CSAT incentive does encourage networks to improve communication for the three core services measured.

During RIIO-2 we will stretch ourselves and build on the positive work we have started by enhancing our accessibility offerings in several ways, including:

- Improving the accessibility of our websites, ensuring literature and content is available in multiple languages, including sign language where applicable, explaining the work we do and what to expect from our work.
- Continuing to offer services such as a specialist phone-line for those with hearing impairments.
- Providing details of our planned and ongoing work on our website, using road signs and on national roadwork websites (thereby linking up all utilities planned and ongoing work).
- We will work with an independent expert to establish an index which measures the transparency, accessibility and inclusivity of our communications. This will consider the specific feedback raised by different customer/stakeholder segments to ensure we are measuring the aspects that are most important. We will ensure that a measure is in place by the end of the first year of RIIO-2. This will allow us to set an appropriate benchmark and measure improvement year on year.
- We will become BSI 18477 (inclusive service provision) certified. This standard will ensure our services are accessible, fair, ethical and inclusive.

What we will deliver:

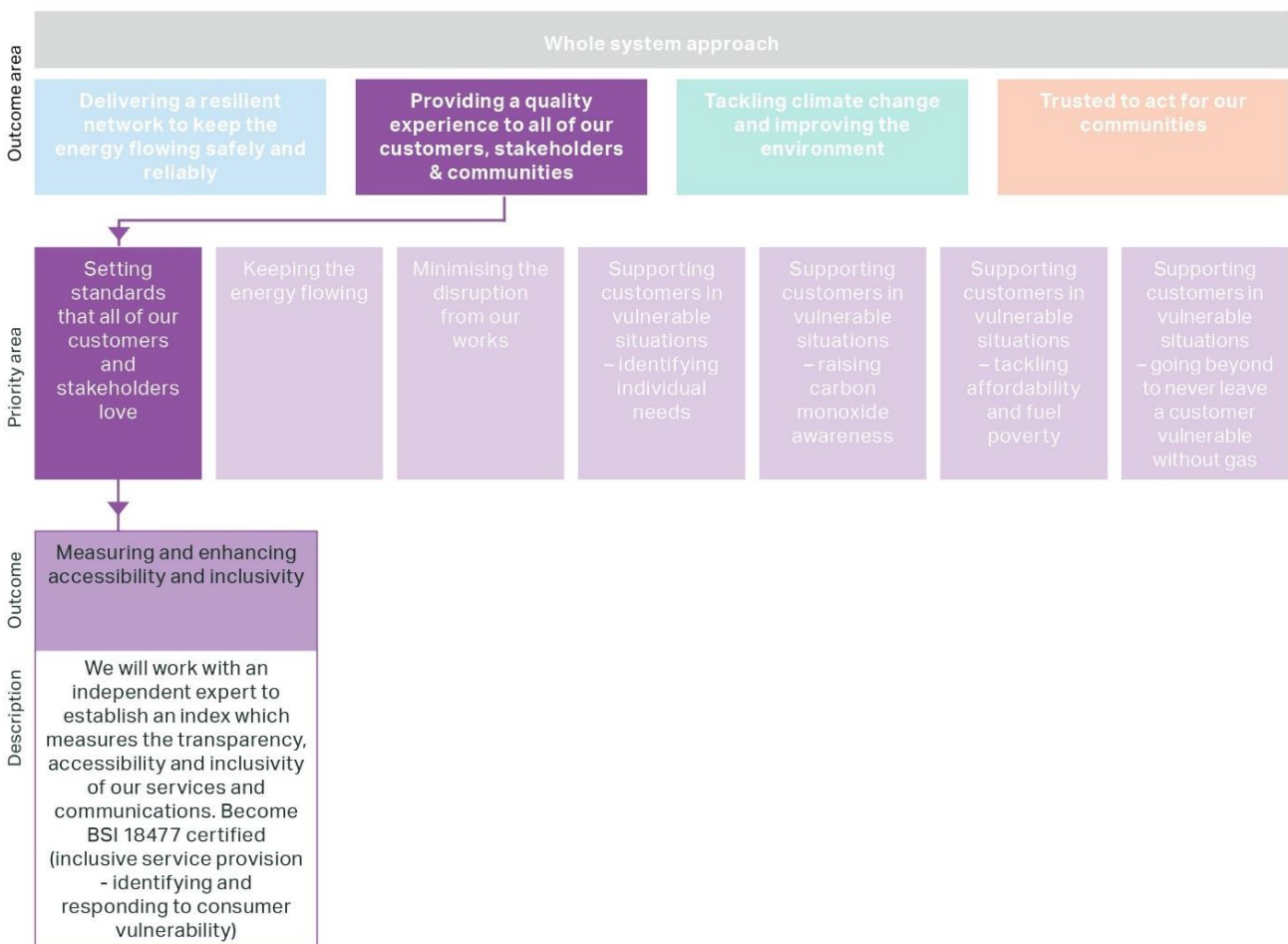


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How we have developed our proposals:

- We started with our vision** – We want all our communications to be accessible, inclusive and transparent so that all customers receive a great experience when interacting with us. As a standalone organisation in its infancy, we want to build our brand awareness.
- There is no output measure for accessibility and inclusivity of communications in RIIO-1** – Although we do have Licence Condition D13 that helps to ensure customers in vulnerable situations (CIVS) get extra support to meet their needs, and our CSAT survey provides customers with the opportunity to feedback on our communications during works.
- We assessed elements of the current CSAT survey to understand customer views on how we currently communicate** – Poor communication or expectation setting is the most common complaint reason across all four networks in our emergency response and repair process.
- This provided us with a clear problem statement** – We must enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of all our communications, together with increasing our transparency to build our brand.
- We gathered insights from historic experience and targeted engagement** – Customers have told us that we should do more to raise the awareness of our company. We need to use a wide range of online and off-line channels to keep customers up to date, and use more colloquial, less formal language to effectively communicate.
- We have looked at what others are doing to achieve this challenge** – As an example, Sustainability First suggest that with regards to improving access, a significant number of companies are offering adjustable and talking websites, large prints, print copies, translation services and outreach activities.
- We've developed and considered a number of options** - Based on these insights and best practice, we developed three options; continuing with the existing communication channels, offering enhanced multi-channel communication or offering innovative and accessible communication for all.
- We are proposing the option with the highest target delivery levels** – We received a very clear indication from customers via our qualitative engagement that they would like to see us significantly improve the accessibility and inclusivity of our communications and build our brand. This has been supported through interviews with CIVS and expert organisations working in this field. Our Board ambition is also high in this area and hence the proposal we have made.
- Our commitments** - We are proposing to deliver innovative and accessible communication for all, building on the improvements made in RIIO-1 (e.g. multi-language and signed website material, phone lines for the deaf, SMS feedback loop, etc), allowing us to become BSI 184777 (inclusive service provision) certified and we will work with an independent expert organisation to develop or adopt a comparable measure of accessibility for RIIO-2 as a bespoke output. This was originally part of our Customer Vulnerability Strategy, but through challenge from both our Executive and Customer Engagement Group (CEG), we acknowledged that this is a far wider initiative impacting all of our customers.
- We have already started delivering** – In addition to the initiatives listed above, as part of our wider customer strategy we have already started to transform the way we communicate by using big data and analytics to further understand our customer needs and implanting a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that will enable us to have a single customer interface system.

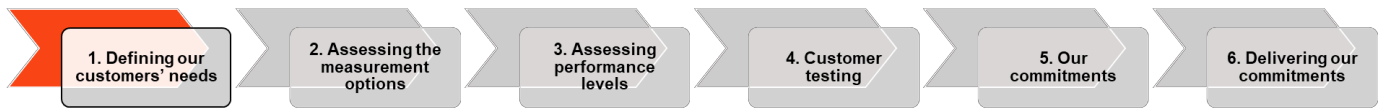
11. **We are not asking for funding to deliver this** – Although there are up to £5m costs related to delivering our commitments, we are proposing to absorb this and deliver without asking for any additional funding and therefore with no impact on customer bills.

The table below summarises our commitment in this area:

Table 1. Summary of our commitments

Measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity	
Common / Bespoke	Bespoke
Output type	Output Delivery Incentive (R)
Comment	Reputational via publishing our performance, once a metric is established
Target	Become BSI 18477 (inclusive service provision) certified Annual independent assessment of the accessibility and inclusivity of all our communications
Cost implications (annual)	N/A
Incentive range	N/A
Customer Value Proposition (CVP)	No financial CVP, qualitative benefits only

1. Defining our customers' needs



1.1. What is the area?

We serve over 30 million customers across the UK. An incredible variety of customers from all sectors and all walks of life live in the four regions we serve, ranging from young families to Chelsea Pensioners and from fish and chip shops to major manufacturers. All areas of society expect that businesses will provide great services to all their customers.

Serving the needs of all our customers is at the heart of what we do. We want to push the boundaries in RIIO-2 to make a real difference for customers across our regions. Our customers and stakeholders are individuals. There is no such thing as an 'average' customer and our services need to reflect this, be accessible to all and inclusive of each individual's needs.

Over the period of RIIO-1, we have significantly improved CSAT levels across all the services we deliver and in all four regulatory networks. Details of this are described in our output appendix '07.03.01 Establishing and raising the bar for all our customer and stakeholder experiences.' However, we recognise the increasingly high expectations of our customers, which call for ever-improving levels of service.

Timely and effective communication is essential to delivering positive customer outcomes across all our services. To achieve this, we must understand how our customers want to interact with us and provide a choice of communication channels. There is an increasing demand for availability, responsiveness and flexibility. Regulated networks are not exempt from this, and to be trusted and transparent, it is important that we raise our profile and share information with customers and stakeholders in a way that best serves them.

Social media is increasingly the preferred way to ask questions and voice customer complaints, compared to phone, email or face-to-face interaction. Almost one in five adults in the UK say that social media is their desired form of direct communication¹. With the evolving technological landscape, we have an opportunity to significantly increase two-way communication channels between ourselves and our customers.

Energy companies have a number of obligations around accessibility. In particular, the Equality Act 2010 requires them to not directly or indirectly discriminate against those who have protected characteristics and means businesses have to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure access to goods, facilities and services. Companies must also ensure that they follow the UK Government's guidance on meeting the accessibility requirements for digital and non-digital services.

As we enter RIIO-2, in order to be the leading gas distribution network, we will set out a clear road map of communication channel enhancements beyond those developed in RIIO-1. This will include a far greater use of social media and the establishment of a platform to enable customers to be informed instantly, in real-time.

1.2. Why is it important to customers and stakeholders?

Excellent customer service underpins our reputation and, put simply, it is the right thing to do. We exist to serve our customers and keep the energy flowing. In order to do this, we must understand our customers better, tailor our services to their lifestyles, and ensure that the customer experience they receive is as positive as possible regardless of their circumstances.

We have developed our customer strategy (see page 72 of 'Chapter 7: Our Commitments') following extensive research and benchmarking against other utilities and leading organisations that deliver customer service outside our industry. In addition, we have used the thousands of customer insights we receive every year and engaged directly with employees and customers to refine our strategy over time.

One of the six key areas of focus for the strategy is providing multi-channel customer communications. We want to do this by offering a far greater choice of methods by which customers engage with us, introducing options for

¹ <https://www.information-age.com/5-collaboration-communication-predictions-2017-123463542/>

SMS, social media, and enhancements to our web-service offerings. Not only do we need to offer greater choice but also ensure customers can easily access the information they require, engendering trust in Cadent as an organisation.

In our Customer Vulnerability Strategy (see page 84 of 'Chapter 7: Our Commitments'), we explain the diversity of needs that our customers have and our aim to ensure that our services are inclusive and accessible to them all. This requires us to understand their specific needs and tailor how we operate accordingly. For example, we publish much of our literature in various languages and we have specialist lines for deaf customers to call our emergency call centre. Recognising the need to ensure that our services are accessible to all is explained in our customer vulnerability strategy.

Customer insights from RIIO-1 show that 'communication/keeping me informed' is consistently in the top three reasons as to why customers have scored us the lowest possible score of one out of ten for satisfaction across all three of our core work areas.

Engagement with customers is a critical aspect of our customer strategy both in terms of offering better services and standards today and to help us understand the needs and priorities of customers in the future. Our engagement approach links the thousands of customer insights received every year (through real-time SMS feedback, social media, complaints, general enquiries, emergency calls, engineer feedback and CSAT surveys) with data gathered through regional customer and stakeholder focussed sessions in which we directly seek customer input to help us shape our proposals for RIIO-2. Through this approach we have developed a very comprehensive understanding of what is important to customers, what is not and their relative priorities when considering their willingness to pay.

1.3. What insights are shaping our thinking?

Communication should provide all customers and stakeholders with the appropriate information, in accessible formats, at the right time prior to, during and after all of the work we complete. This provision allows customers and stakeholders to learn about who we are and what we do, while also enabling them to interact with us in an informed and effective manner.

Over the period of RIIO-1, we have significantly improved the satisfaction levels of customers across all our services in all four regulatory networks. Most recently, our North London connections C-SAT has risen from the bottom of the Gas Distribution Network (GDN) league table to the top. Improving accessibility and communication across the process has been a principle driver in this shift.

It is important to us that we continue to satisfy growing expectations that customers can contact us at any given time of day, through a wide range of channels. To meet this need, in 2017/18 we implemented our 'Rant and Rave' tool. This is a real-time feedback system that allows customers to express satisfaction or dissatisfaction via SMS. We can respond immediately and quickly resolve any issues that are reported.

As we engaged with customers in preparation for our business plan, they highlighted several ways that they wanted us to build upon and improve our communication with them, making it more accessible for all customers. At Cadent, the most commonly used communication channels are:

- Enquiries telephone service.
- Email (wecare@cadentgas.com).
- Cadent website.
- Social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter).
- SMS (Rant and Rave).
- Face-to-face communication, including home visits before and after every customer gas interruption.

Table 2. Our current communication offering across our three core services

Cadent Communications			
Work area	Before work	During work	After work
Emergency Response	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas emergency phoneline Rant and Rave SMS service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSAT survey (to a sample of customers) SMS survey
Planned Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification letters (3 months and 5 days prior) including information on the reason for the works Door-knock prior to works commencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineer visit for gas off/gas on Drop cards (if the customer is not in) The 'Better Gas Pipes' website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSAT survey (to a sample of customers)
Connections	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone interaction to provide a quote Surveyor site visits Door knocks from engineers completing the works SMS (Rant and Rave) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSAT survey (to all customers) SMS survey

Sources of insight



Stakeholders and customers engaged



Sources of insight



Tailored RIIO-2 engagement activities

We engaged with the following customers and stakeholders to discuss how we can enhance accessibility and inclusivity of all our communications:

Table 3. Customers and stakeholders engaged

Customers	Charities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic customers CIVS Business customers Fuel poor customers Future customers English as a second language customers Non-English-speaking customers Employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens Advice Royal Association for Deaf people Royal National Institute of Blind people Carers Trust Alzheimer's Society National Energy Action Trussell Trust Shelter Disabled Living Sense UK Catch 22 Age UK Islington Chinese Association Blind Veterans UK Macmillan Cancer Support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinal Injuries Association • HEET • MS Society • Part-sight • Groundwork • Hackney Playbus • Maggie's Trust
Industry stakeholders	Community Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yorkshire Energy Solutions • Northumbrian Water • Institute of Customer Service • Ofgem • Committee on Fuel Poverty • Queen Alexandra College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Northumberland • Metropolitan Police • South Yorkshire Fire Service • Essex County Fire and Rescue Service • Rural England Community Interest Company • Leicestershire Police Against Scams • Surrey Council Against Scams • Highfield Food COOP • Cambridgeshire Council • Derbyshire healthy homes programme • Communitas Energy Community Interest Company

We collected customer feedback through a diverse and comprehensive range of engagement methods. We have summarised each activity, the questions asked (where applicable), the numbers involved, and a robustness score based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Robustness		Relevance
The score shown is based on a combination of the robustness of the source information (judged on whether it was recent, direct and representative) and the relevance to this area.	<1.5	One or zero criteria met	Limited relevance
	1.5 - 2.0	Two criteria met	Significantly relevant and contributory
	>2.0	All criteria met	Highly relevant and contributory

Table 4. Engagement activities

Phase	Date	Source name	Source description	Questions asked	# of stakeholders	Score
Historical Engagement	May-19	Vision's Culture Review	We commissioned Vision to assess our culture, as an organisation, with a view to diagnosing the mood and culture in Cadent's operations and causes.	N/A	0	3.0
	May-19	Research by Balisha Attalia, Coventry University	A Coventry University student performed some primary research, aimed at 18 - 24-year olds, to explore services that Cadent could provide to customers both in the home and the community and services that would attract 18-24-year olds.	Participants were asked if they knew what proportion of their gas bill went towards the provision of Cadent's services. Participants were also told of additional services that Cadent provides such as carbon monoxide alarms and other support for vulnerable customers and asked how important they felt they were an whether Cadent was the appropriate organisation to provide them. Finally, participants were asked if there were any other free services that they would like Cadent to provide to customers in the home and community.	75	2.0
Business as usual (BAU Insights)	Ongoing	Complaints	When customers or the public complain about our services, we try to resolve them as quickly as possible, and we are incentivised by Ofgem to do this. However, we also analyse the complaints we have received to try to identify potential common issues.	N/A	5,621	1.5
	Ongoing	CSAT	We are required to send postal surveys to a proportion of our customers following work on their properties to understand their views of our performance. This is used to determine our CSAT incentive.	Customers provide a score for our work across different areas relating to each process covered by CSAT, for example time off gas, competency and skills and respect to customer and property for the Emergency Response and Repair process.	24,067	1.5

Discovery	May-19	Business interviews	We commissioned Traverse to interview 18 businesses with a view to understanding specific business customer wants and needs in order to inform our proposed services for our RIIO-2 business plan. The interviews explored the general characteristics of the business and its gas use before establishing their existing knowledge of Cadent. The effects of interruptions and business expectations were explored. In addition, views on delivering our four outcomes were also discussed: delivering a safe, resilient network; supporting the energy transition; providing a high quality and reliable service; and acting in a fair, transparent and responsible way.	The interviews explored the general characteristics of the business and its gas use before establishing their existing knowledge of Cadent. The effects of interruptions and business expectations were explored. In addition, views on delivering our four outcomes were also discussed: delivering a safe, resilient network; supporting the energy transition; providing a high quality and reliable service; and acting in a fair, transparent and responsible way.	18	2.5
	Aug-18	Stakeholder interviews	We interviewed stakeholders with a breadth of expertise across each of our region, based on our stakeholder content list. We held a 20-30-minute conversation with stakeholders to identify topics of interest to them.	The interviews sought to understand each stakeholder's awareness of Cadent and how they, and their community, were affected by gas distribution. Future challenges that Cadent may face were discussed and the 4 business plan outcomes were discussed with the aim of understanding their relevance and importance.	21	2.5
	Sep-18	Deliberative workshops	We delivered full day deliberative workshops in each of our regions to discuss what services customers find important, find our customer expectations of GDNs and gather feedback on our (at the time) four draft customer outcomes. The sessions began with information-giving and building knowledge of Cadent, then eliciting participants' views of services and priorities.	Participants were asked about their awareness of Cadent and expectations of a GDN. Participants were also asked for their views on the four draft outcomes in Cadent's business plan: keeping your energy flowing safely, reliably and hassle free; protecting the environment and creating a sustainable energy future; working for you and your community safeguarding those that need it most; value for money and customer satisfaction at the heart of all our services. The aim of the discussions was to shape these draft outcomes and identify any gaps.	206	2.5

Discovery	Nov-17	2017 regional stakeholder workshops	We held four workshops in different regions to seek feedback from key stakeholders on the early development of our business plan. Each workshop began with a short presentation, followed by roundtable discussions. Electronic voting was also used to ask stakeholders about preferred options.	The workshops explored a number of topics, including safeguarding (e.g. Priority Service Register (PSR) awareness, partnerships and innovation opportunities); the future role of gas and the decarbonisation of home heating. Cadent's general approach to its business plan was also discussed, for example the importance and coverage of the four outcome areas identified, the extent to which the plan should respond to the needs of specific customer groups or regions.	127	2.5
	Sep-18	Deliberative workshops	We delivered full day deliberative workshops in each of our regions to discuss what services customers find important, find our customer expectations of GDNs and gather feedback on our (at the time) four draft customer outcomes. The sessions began with information-giving and building knowledge of Cadent, then eliciting participants' views of services and priorities.	Participants were asked about their awareness of Cadent and expectations of a GDN. Participants were also asked for their views on the four draft outcomes in Cadent's business plan: keeping your energy flowing safely, reliably and hassle free; protecting the environment and creating a sustainable energy future; working for you and your community safeguarding those that need it most; value for money and customer satisfaction at the heart of all our services. The aim of the discussions was to shape these draft outcomes and identify any gaps.	206	2.5
	Oct-18	CIVS report	We interviewed CIVS and professionals working to support them (e.g. district nurses). We selected participants based on PSR needs codes and recruited via community organisations.	The interviews sought to understand what services were important to CIVS and what expectations such customers had of Cadent to safeguard them and accommodate their specific circumstances. Participants were also asked their views of the four draft outcomes in Cadent's business plan.	20	2.5

Discovery	Oct-18	Domestic survey	We ran an online survey of a representative sample of our domestic customers (and non-customers). This aimed to test the findings of the earlier deliberative workshops and focus groups.	Participants were asked closed questions on 14 topics we could cover in the business plan (e.g. minimising leaks, affordability) and asked to rate how important they are. They were then asked more open questions about the level of importance and whether anything was missing from the list of 14. Finally, they were asked a multiple-choice question on their preferred engagement methods for the future.	2,332	2.5
	Oct-18	Focus groups with hard to reach groups	We held focus groups with individuals considered 'hard to reach' in each of our regions. Each group contained 8-10 participants and lasted two hours. Participants covered three groups: urban customers with English as a Second Language, Future Generations and Non-Customers (predominantly from rural areas). These built on our previous deliberative workshops, whose voices could otherwise become 'lost within the crowd'.	Participants were asked what they expected of Cadent. The four draft outcomes for the business plan were shared with participants and they were asked for their views on these, what they wanted to see from Cadent and whether there were additional outcomes that Cadent should include.	57	2.5
	May-19	RIIO-2 Employee engagement, May 2019	We engaged with 783 of our employees through a survey to test the latest RIIO-2 business plan proposals to ensure that the plan was robust, fit for purpose and accurately represented what our customers want from us. Employees were asked for their views both as customers and as subject matter experts. Participants were asked for their priorities from their perspective as customers. Then, as subject matter experts, they were asked to rate, and provide their views, on different service offerings (Customer Contact, Emergency Response and Repair, Domestic Connections, Commercial Connections and Mains Replacement).	Employees were asked for their views both as customers and as subject matter experts. Participants were asked for their priorities from their perspective as customers. Then, as subject matter experts, they were asked to rate, and provide their views, on different service offerings (Customer Contact, Emergency Response and Repair, Domestic Connections, Commercial Connections and Mains Replacement).	783	1.0

Targeted	May-19	Cadent customer forums: Interruptions and Reinstatements	The third round of customer forums was held at four locations (Ipswich, London, Manchester, Birmingham) involving 104 customers. The forums are designed to be ongoing conversations with customers, with engaged discussions around the role of Cadent within society. The third customer forum focused on planned and unplanned interruptions and public and private reinstatements to inform these sections of the RIIO-2 business plan. Within these themes, we investigated how customers are impacted and what level of customer service they think we should provide.	Customers were guided through different questions about the current service during planned and unplanned interruptions and new ideas Cadent were considering around: communication, length of interruption, provisions and timeslots to get gas back on. Discussions on public reinstatement focused on impact of public reinstatement on customers, communication, and multi-utility working. Discussions on private reinstatements focused on the quality and duration of works.	104	3.0
	Jun-19	CIVS, Phase 2	We commissioned Traverse to engage with 37 CIVS and professionals working with such customers to understand their needs and preferences to support our business planning process. The overarching key finding was that CIVS are individuals and, as such, have individual needs and preferences and should be approached on a need's basis. Organisations interviewed included, Maggie's Trust, Age UK and Disabled Living.	The interviews sought to understand the needs and expectations of Cadent to safeguard CIVS and accommodate their circumstances. Topics covered included identification, the PSR (including awareness levels), partnerships, alternative cooking and heating solutions during interruptions, safety in the home, tailored services, engagement and communication.	37	3.0
	May-19	Stakeholder research	Accent carried our research on behalf of all the GDNs to understand how well the needs of CIVS are met by GDNs; and assess if additional/ revised GSOPs specifically for CIVS might be required. The research included a rapid desk review of existing evidence and 16 telephone interviews with stakeholders working with or in the interests of CIVS.	The desk review included assessment of reports available from GDN research, GDN strategies regarding CIVS and reports from other bodies working in the interests of these customers. Interviews looked to understand stakeholder views on vulnerability, the current GSOP targets and performance levels and if any improvements could be made. They also explored the potential for new GSOPs.	16	3.0

Business Options Testing	Aug-19	Employee workshop, Traverse	We commissioned Traverse to engage with 80 Cadent employees (across grades and geographies) in a full day workshop. We sought views on our July draft business plan and held a number of exercises to gain input into further iterations. We gained a number of useful insights: influencing contractors was highlighted as a challenge for achieving carbon reductions, communication was noted as critical to great customer service, internal silos were highlighted as a barrier and some argued that greater ambition was possible for interruptions and reinstatements.	"We sought views on our July draft business plan and held a number of exercises to gain input into further iterations. Topics discussed included: improving the environment (including future hydrogen and carbon neutral options), achieving a quality customer experience (including the length of, and provisions during, interruptions; and reinstatements); what trusted to act for society means and our obligations to customers and society; and safety and resilience (including our business plan options and how realistic / ambitious they are)."	80	2.5
	Aug-19	Public consultation, BOT, qualitative phase, Traverse	We commissioned Traverse to conduct a survey of 2,605 members of the public to understand views on certain aspects of our business plan in each of the 4 outcome areas (environment, quality experience, trusted to act for society and resilience). The survey revealed strong support for utilities working together to minimise disruption and for outstanding customer service, as well as providing useful information on the relative importance to customers of different types of information and different environmental initiatives.	Participants were asked questions to understand their views and preferences on issues within each of the four outcome areas. On resilience, customers were asked which one single improvement we should make to reduce disruption the most. In relation to a "quality experience", customers were asked what level of service they'd love the most and how much they'd be willing to pay to ensure a vulnerable customer could get enhanced help if their gas stopped working. On the environment, customers were asked their relative preference for initiatives to achieve carbon neutrality and eliminate avoidable waste to landfill. Customers were also asked how much they knew about the decarbonisation challenge. Finally, for "trusted to act for society", customers were asked what the most important information to know about Cadent was and how we can help the customer / Cadent conversation flow. We also asked about their awareness of Cadent.	2,605	2.0

Acceptability Testing	Oct-19	Phase 4 - Business interviews and surveys	We commissioned Traverse to test the acceptability and affordability of Cadent's proposed plan amongst business customers. This consisted of an on-line / face to face survey of 504 business customers and in-depth qualitative telephone interviews with 45 business customers. This showed that the plan had achieved high levels of acceptability and affordability from a business customer perspective.	Business customers were asked about the acceptability and affordability of Cadent's overall plan. If they said that the plan was unacceptable, they were asked to explain their response. If they said that it was neither acceptable nor unacceptable, they were asked what they would like to see in order to find it acceptable. Business customers were also asked to rate the acceptability of the outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience). Then, having learnt about the outcome areas, customers were asked as "informed customers" to rate the overall acceptability and affordability of the plan.	549	2.0
	Oct-19	Acceptability testing - final survey report on domestic customers,	We commissioned Traverse to test the acceptability and affordability of Cadent's proposed plan amongst domestic customers. This consisted of surveying 4,446 domestic customers through on-line and face to face methods. This showed that the plan had achieved high levels of acceptability and affordability amongst domestic customers, including those who are fuel poor.	Customers were asked about the acceptability and affordability of Cadent's overall plan. If they said that the plan was unacceptable, they were asked to explain their response. If they said that it was neither acceptable nor unacceptable, they were asked what they would like to see in order to find it acceptable. Customers were also asked to rate the acceptability of the outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience). Then, having learnt about the outcome areas, customers were asked as "informed customers" to rate the overall acceptability and affordability of the plan.	4,446	2.0
	Oct-19	Acceptability testing - focus groups with the general population	We commissioned Traverse to explore the acceptability of our plans and commitments in each of the three outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience) with 79 members of the public in regional focus groups. Participants were supportive of our plans for quality experience and resilience, but no consensus was reached on our environmental plans.	A group discussion was facilitated to discuss views on Cadent's plans in each of the three outcome areas and participants were also asked to complete a survey to rank levels of acceptability and affordability.	79	2.0

Acceptability Testing	Oct-19	Acceptability testing - customer forum	We commissioned Traverse to explore the acceptability of our plans and commitments in each of the three outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience) with 109 customers who had attended previous customer forums. Overall, participants found our plans to be both acceptable and affordable.	A group discussion was facilitated to discuss views on Cadent's plans in each of the three outcome areas and participants were also asked to complete a survey to rank levels of acceptability and affordability.	109	2.0
	Oct-19	Acceptability testing - focus groups with future customers	We commissioned Traverse to explore the acceptability of our plans and commitments in each of the three outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience) with 20 "future customers" (16-18-year olds) in 2 focus groups. Participants were supportive of our plans for the environment and resilience but questioned whether helping vulnerable customers was part our remit.	A group discussion was facilitated to discuss views on Cadent's plans in each of the three outcome areas and participants were also asked to complete a survey to rank levels of acceptability and affordability.	20	2.0
	Oct-19	Acceptability testing - interviews with CIVs	We commissioned Traverse to explore the acceptability of our plans and commitments in each of the three outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience) by interviewing 20 CIVs. Overall, our plans were supported, and all found the plans affordable.	Throughout the interviews the CIVs were explained the elements of the plan, asked to comment on whether they found each outcome acceptable, which particular elements were important to them, and whether they had any additional comments. They were also asked whether the new business plan was affordable.	20	2.0
	Oct-19	Acceptability testing - fuel poor focus groups	We commissioned Traverse to explore the acceptability of our plans and commitments in each of the three outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience) with 35 customers in fuel poverty in regional focus groups. Overall, participants were supportive of our plans in all three areas.	A group discussion was facilitated to discuss views on Cadent's plans in each of the three outcome areas and participants were also asked to complete a survey to rank levels of acceptability and affordability.	35	2.0

Acceptability Testing	Oct-19	Verve business plan consultation	We commissioned Verve to gather views on our plans to reduce our carbon footprint from 25 customers. We did this through an online forum with customers and stakeholders to discuss the key components that we shared on our EAP. This included our intentions to support our employees to make a positive difference to tackling climate change.	Participants were asked about their awareness of Cadent, discussed the three outcome areas (environment, quality experience and resilience), discussed the bill impact breakdown (both at present and as a result of the plan), risks and uncertainties and innovation funding.	25	2.0
	Nov-19	Verve acceptability testing stakeholder interviews	We asked Verve to interview a small number of expert stakeholders and ask for feedback on our plan.	We shared a summary of our October plan with stakeholders and asked them for feedback.	5	2.0

1.4. Engagement feedback and insights

Who we are

Raising Cadent's profile was frequently mentioned by customers across all phase 1 engagement, although it was mentioned less so by stakeholders as they tended to be more familiar with who we are. Customers pointed out that they were not aware of Cadent and that we could do more to raise awareness of our company, the way the gas industry works and the benefits it delivers. They should also be reassured that the network is working correctly and safely.

This finding was corroborated by the survey of 75 individuals in Coventry, where only 22% of respondents had heard of Cadent, and only 14% were aware of the services we provide. While respondents pointed out that branding was not a priority, we recognise the need to raise awareness, particularly, due to confusion about our name change and the difference between Cadent and National Grid. Specific suggestions to improve awareness include educating call centre staff on the gas industry, using social media more effectively, (especially Facebook and Twitter), designing an app to supplement our website, and writing to customers as well as speaking with them directly to inform them of who we are.

The importance of raising awareness of Cadent's profile was similarly confirmed during our interviews with 18 businesses, especially when it came to smaller businesses. These customers stated that we should increase visibility and communication about who we are and what we do, so that businesses can better understand how Cadent's activities impact their organisation.

Our employees, especially field force employees raised this as a challenge that they face during the various staff engagement sessions. It is critical that they gain access to sites and households in order to fulfil the vital role that they play. However, since the rebranding to Cadent, they have occasionally found this more difficult as customers do not know who they are. This is always overcome by a phone call or the additional IDs and literature that they now carry, but they feel that greater knowledge of the brand would help them materially.

While we recognise that Cadent's profile is a low priority for customers when compared to issues such as safety and reliability, it was recognised by participants in our focus groups with hard-to-reach individuals who stated that increased awareness and knowledge of Cadent would increase trust in the company as a whole.

During the business options testing phase, we asked Britain Thinks to explore with customers and stakeholders their views on trust; their current perspectives of Cadent and the actions that they would like us to undertake to increase their trust in us. Understanding our brand and what we do was a key feature of these conversations and we have included a number of commitments to raise awareness in our brand, especially linked to safety and safeguarding in our Trust Charter, Appendix 07.05.00.

Identifying and understanding accessibility needs

Several stakeholders in our interviews with expert CIVS professionals and charities highlighted the importance of advocates, such as family members or carers, who can provide information on established policies or practice around someone's care, and who by being present for visits can reassure, explain and retain information on behalf of the customer. This may also involve facilitating communication for those with support needs.

Questions should be asked of someone in a potentially vulnerable situation around accessibility, tasks and support needs or systems. By asking questions such as 'how are you managing to cook and get out in the garden?' people can discuss their needs without feeling assessed. Asking questions such as 'do you have anyone dependent on you?', 'do you have any social support or physical needs?' and 'do you take regular medication, and do you sort out your medication yourself?' indicate whether a person needs support.

Communication

There is support for improved communication both within our organisation, and from our external stakeholders. Within Cadent, 11% of 783 surveyed employees feel that one of the top priorities that we should focus on is 'customer service' (note that the top priority was not surprisingly safety). Employees rated our customer call centres out of 5, with the following results: national gas emergency service at 4.6, plant protection at 3.7, and gas enquiries and dealing with complaints at 3.5. 72.8% of employees felt that these processes could be improved.

Not all customers are satisfied with our performance in this area. Communication is one of the lower-scoring CSAT responses, and poor communication or expectation setting is the most common complaint across all four networks in emergency response and repair (39% of complaints).

Keeping people up to date

Keeping people up to date is a priority. Engagement showed that this should take place through various channels including social media, calls, emails and face-to-face contact with households in our network areas, keeping everyone updated on ongoing works, interruptions and emergencies. Emergency numbers and different communication channels to get in touch with us in case of such events should be widely publicised, allowing us to respond as quickly as possible. While some respondents told us being informed and feeling safe was important, others mentioned we should focus on our core business and did not want to be communicated with at all, or suggested keeping communication to a minimum, (e.g. only in emergencies). Business customers specifically emphasised wanting to be aware in advance about maintenance works and any resultant interruptions to supply or roadworks, so that they can plan accordingly.

These suggestions were also supported at our customer forums on safeguarding and on interruptions and reinstatements, which had a total of 200 attendees. The 96 customers at the safeguarding forum requested a person as a single point of contact to provide updates on the reason for the work, why it is occurring during the winter (if applicable), and generally before, during and after the work. This person would be involved directly in the work on the ground, rather than in a call centre. The 104 customers engaged at the interruptions and reinstatement forum felt similarly, and they wanted to be well-informed of key dates, duration of works, and important road closures as well as any changes in plans.

During the design phase of our Connections Transformation Programme we engaged with existing and previous connections customers from each of our 6 customer segments in this area (e.g. domestic, new developments, entry connections). Whilst the website was felt to be good, the time taken to complete an application was seen as an issue and, in particular for non-domestic customers, the lack of a single point of contact was a consistent challenge.

Customers engaged in our safeguarding forum felt that six weeks' notice was appropriate in advance of a loss of gas for 3-5 days, whereas customers at our forum on interruptions and reinstatements felt that 28 days were appropriate with reminders at ten days.

Different communication preferences and needs

Different individuals have different communication preferences and needs, which we must be aware of and address. Various communication channels should be used, according to the feedback received, including emails, calls, text messages, smartphone applications, online portals and knocking on doors. Different customer groups felt strongly about different methods, for example, some customers wanted live updates and online information, whereas others did not want to have to download anything.

Customers also suggested that we investigate partnerships for communication channels. Customers at our safeguarding forum suggested that we keep them up to date through collaborating with gas suppliers or local service providers. Customers at our interruptions and reinstatement group likewise suggest that we take

advantage of local Facebook Groups, Residents' Associations, Neighbourhood Watches, GP office signboards, and the Local Council to inform residents.

Respondents told us to use more colloquial, less formal language to communicate more effectively, as well as to use infographics to make things more readily understandable. However, customers at our forum on interruptions and reinstatement warned that informal materials such as glossy flyers may be hard to distinguish from junk mail, and preferred a formal, addressed letter that may also inform them about alternative communication methods. Customers warned of similar concerns with phone calls, especially from blocked or unknown numbers.

Using suitable communication channels and content with vulnerable customers is a priority as they may have different communication requirements, particularly when it comes to detailed guidance by experts. Communicating clearly about the PSR and our services to customers in different vulnerable situations means we need to understand and meet the needs of people of each PSR code. Some of the 783 Cadent employees surveyed suggested that this can be done by giving customer-service employees more training and a greater understanding of the business.

This was reiterated at our May 2019 interviews with expert stakeholders (CIVS professionals and charities) who said if anything needs to be shown or signed, these need to be in accessible formats, such as size 16 fonts and black on yellow print, or in video format using British Sign Language (BSL). It is suggested that some deaf people are more receptive to engaging through writing notes once rapport has been established through basic BSL conversation (one customer referred to being visited by a gas engineer who could speak BSL and how much easier it was to communicate, though she felt she couldn't ask to be assigned that engineer every time). It is suggested Cadent could develop a toolkit of translations and accessible formats for emergency procedures.

Working with local organisations is advised for connecting with CIVS with specific communication needs, to find out the needs beforehand and provide appropriate materials or services, such as a translator, whilst keeping things simple, and recognising people need a little more time to process things.

Findings from the Accent research suggested that online technology should be used more when interacting with CIVS. For example, videos could be used to demonstrate clearly where work is planned and technology could be used to communicate with customers remotely instead of face to face, which can be threatening for some. We should also consider that some customers might need an interpreter (foreign language or deaf people). Likewise, a range of needs must be taken into account in communicating advanced notice of works. For example, we could ask neighbours to assist in informing vulnerable customers appropriately.

Making information easy to find

As part of effectively communicating and keeping people informed, Cadent should make information easy to find. In line with the above responses, this should be available both offline and online, especially for future generations and ESL groups or those who are unable to communicate in English. The information made available should always include ways to get in touch with us, gas and carbon monoxide safety, our services, and what we do. Customers in our forum on interruptions and reinstatement provided specific suggestions on how we could make information easy to find, such as by marking letters as 'important gas works' and providing a database of phone numbers for them to use in emergency incidents or to answer queries.

The difficulties in the accessibility of information were echoed internally. During Vision's assessment of our culture, it highlighted that Cadent operates a 'command and control model', where people act in isolated groups that do not know what other groups are doing. This means that information is difficult to find within our business, not just externally for customers. Plans in place to overcome this include implementing a customer-focused, depot-centric operating model. This will mean that decision making is transferred to network level and customer communication will become more proactive at every handover point during our works.

Table 5. Summary of insights

Feedback/Insight	How we have addressed this
<p>Customers pointed out that they were not aware of Cadent and that we could do more to raise awareness of our company.</p>	<p>We are still in our infancy as a standalone company and we want to work on building our brand and trust with customers. Fundamentally, we want to deliver first rate customer service via all our core services but appreciate that we also need to do more to get our name more widely known. This is important to point customers in the direction of the emergency telephone number if they smell gas or to know what to do if they suspect symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. Within this output case we explore the most appropriate means to build our brand and subsequently build trust with our customers. Also see our Trust Charter, Appendix 07.05.00.</p>
<p>Expert stakeholders suggested that questions should be asked of someone in a potentially vulnerable situation around accessibility, tasks and support needs or systems. By asking questions such as ‘how are you managing to cook and get out in the garden?’ people can discuss their needs without feeling assessed.</p>	<p>For RIIO-2 we will be committing to deliver annual vulnerability awareness training to all our customer facing front line staff. The vision is that training will range from web-based modules to real life role play with actors to really bring situations to life and ensure that our people are equipped with the skills to best serve our customers. For more information on this, see our output appendix ‘07.03.09 Identifying your needs and joining up support services’.</p>
<p>Customers want to be kept up to date with progress if works are impacting their lives.</p>	<p>Keeping customers up to date is a key theme that runs across a number of our quality service output commitment appendices, especially our Minimising Disruption from our works output Appendix 07.03.08. We are aware that our works can disrupt the day to day lives of our customers and know that we must tailor our communications to meet the needs of a wide range of customers, including those in vulnerable situations. Within this output case we explore making a number of commitments in the area of notification of works and providing customers with job updates and live information.</p>
<p>Different individuals have different communication preferences and needs. Various communication channels should be used to meet these different needs.</p>	<p>Throughout our RIIO-2 engagement programme we’ve ensured that our approach has captured a wide range of different customers and stakeholders, including those who are harder to reach, to make sure that our commitments are as informed and tailored as they can be. Identifying preferences and needs sits at the heart of all our quality experience output areas, and we have consistently applied this methodology when exploring potential options for customers in RIIO-2.</p> <p>For further information on how we are expanding our communication channels, please see output Appendix ‘07.03.01 Establishing and raising the bar for all our customer and stakeholder experiences’. Communication is also embedded across all our quality experience output cases.</p>
<p>Customers suggested that we investigate partnerships for communication channels (e.g. take advantage of local Facebook Groups, Residents’ Associations, GP office signboards etc).</p>	<p>Partnerships will form the foundations of our work to support CIVS in RIIO-2. Partners offer their expertise and their trusted voices in communities that we will look to utilise when further supporting CIVS. Communications will form a major part of our</p>

	<p>partnership working. For further information on how we will be expanding our partnership working in RIIO-2, see our output Appendix '07.03.09 Identifying your needs and joining up support services'.</p>
<p>Expert stakeholders said if anything needs to be shown or signed, these need to be in accessible formats such as size 16 fonts and black and yellow print, or in video format using BSL. It was suggested that some deaf people are more receptive to engaging through writing notes once rapport has been established.</p>	<p>We welcome the views of expert stakeholders and their expertise will help to shape our communication offerings for CIVS. We will be developing more BSL videos and accessible communication options for deaf people as part of our commitments for RIIO-2. We will also be delivering further vulnerability awareness training to our front-line engineers to give them the tools they need to build rapport and trust with customers. For further information on this, see our output Appendix '07.03.09 Identifying your needs and joining up support services'.</p>
<p>Some customers did not want to be communicated with at all or suggested keeping communication to a minimum (e.g. only in an emergency).</p>	<p>We are respectful of all customer needs and our Customer Liaison Officers work hard on the ground to understand if there are any specific communication needs during emergencies. If a customer would only like to receive essential, emergency information then we will be respectful of this.</p>
<p>For connections customers, whilst the Cadent website was felt to be good, the time taken to complete an application was seen as an issue and in particular for non-domestic customers, the lack of a single point of contact was a consistent challenge.</p>	<p>For most of RIIO-1 household connections customers have received an inconsistent experience and have generally rated us poorly compared to other GDNs when we've asked for feedback on their experience. We are in the process of transforming our connections services to deliver sustained improvements in customer service. Through this work we have identified a need to improve the timeliness of the front end of our domestic connections process, which we will do through two bespoke output measures that focus on the time it takes to quote and receive a site visit. For more information on this, see our output Appendix '07.03.04 Improving our connections service'.</p>
<p>Cadent should make information easy to find both on and offline.</p>	<p>We are aware that not all customers have access to the internet and already make provisions for this across all our customer facing processes and services. As part of this output case we explore increasing our presence both online and offline to ensure customers can access the information they need.</p>

2. Assessing the measurement options



2.1. How is it currently measured?

There are no specific output commitments relating to inclusivity and accessibility in RIIO-1. We do have the current CSAT measure that includes questions on how we communicate. We also have Standard Special Condition D13 within our Licence that requires us to provide services for vulnerable domestic customers, including ensuring that we meet additional communication needs that they may have.

How do current measures deliver against customer outcome/priority?

Both the current CSAT measure and the Licence Condition D13 are being enhanced in preparation for RIIO-2. Within CSAT, the survey questions are being updated to ensure they match the customer journey. Licence Condition D13 is being redrafted to make it a principles-based Licence Condition. This will ensure that services delivered across GDNs are more consistent.

These enhancements will combine and align with any proposed specific output commitments for accessibility and inclusivity in RIIO-2.

2.2. Assessing good practice

Improving accessibility

In January 2018, Sustainability First published a report², which notes that, with regards to improving access, a significant number of companies offer some of the following:

- Quarterly meter readings (which smart metering should remove the need for).
- Nominee scheme so a carer or third party can manage a person's affairs e.g. bill redirection.
- Adjustable and talking websites.
- Talking bills and braille.
- Large print.
- Print copies (where information is online).
- The provision of minicom/text phone services.
- Translation service e.g. Language Line.
- Outreach activities e.g. community liaison officers or community champions.
- Signposting or referring to third parties for help and support, to complement the support provided in-house.

We provide case studies and examples below.

Easy Read materials/Plain English:

- The British Institute for Learning Difficulties has worked with Smart Energy GB to develop accessible information to help make sure the smart meter rollout works for everyone, including those with learning difficulties.

Services for the deaf and hard of hearing:

- Western Power Distribution (WPD) offers a two-way texting service to all their 98,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing customers and is now looking to extend this service to all customers. The service allows easy

² [http://www.sustainabilityfirst.org.uk/images/publications/inspire/Energy%20for%20All-%20Innovate%20for%20All%20\(full\).pdf](http://www.sustainabilityfirst.org.uk/images/publications/inspire/Energy%20for%20All-%20Innovate%20for%20All%20(full).pdf)

immediate interaction between the company and customers, for example during a power cut. The text is forwarded to the social media team and responded to immediately in the same way as an incoming call.

- SignVideo enables deaf or hard of hearing customers who use British Sign Language (BSL) to communicate with Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) in their language of choice by making and receiving BSL-interpreted calls, in real-time. When contacting the company, deaf customers click on the SignVideo button on the SSE contact webpage. They can have a live secure conversation with SSE using a fully qualified BSL interpreter.

Autism awareness training for staff:

- WPD engaged with Dementia UK and MIND to provide its staff with specialist empathy training in order to improve engagement at first point of contact and identify warning signs of vulnerability.

Some water-company case studies outlining their plans for accessibility as part of their PR19 business plans are provided below.

Anglian Water

Anglian Water is proposing the following:

- A sign language interpreter service on the website and for field-based staff.
- Translation services for customers whose first language is not English, this includes a language line service and the introduction of a mobile app for field-based staff.
- Bills in other languages.
- A web chat function.
- SMS text conversations and reminders, which has been particularly useful for customers who are hard of hearing.
- Level 'AA' rated accessibility standard for their website and mobile app.
- A new app and online account management portal that will improve ease of contact and enable customers to submit meter readings, link their usage to charges, drive water efficiency, and generate more frequent bills, helping them with seasonal budgeting or 'paying as they go'.

United Utilities

United Utilities is proposing the following:

- Extend their Nominee scheme if customers have difficulty in communicating so a friend or family member can manage their account on their behalf.
- Use the 'knock and wait' protocol when visiting customer homes who may have limited mobility, so they do not have to rush.
- Provide a translation service for those on the PSR.
- Check in with all customers registered for Priority Services at least once every two years to check that the support offered is still appropriate.
- Provide quarterly meter readings if the customer is blind or partially sighted.
- Relocate meters to more accessible locations if the customer may find it difficult to access the meter.
- Use a password scheme when visiting customers' homes to help protect them against bogus callers.
- Provide a text generation and text service to help people with hearing loss to access their call centre.

BS 18477 Inclusive service provision. Requirements for identifying and responding to consumer vulnerability³

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, SSE, UK Power Networks, Wales and West Utilities and Western Power Distribution are the first organisations to achieve verification to BS 18477 requirements. The service verification scheme helps organisations demonstrate that they are providing a fair, flexible service that can be used by all consumers equally, regardless of their health, age or personal circumstances.

In order to achieve verification certification, organisations undergo an independent assessment including a rigorous on-site audit covering all the requirements of the standard to demonstrate that they have the processes for identifying and responding to consumer vulnerability.

Although the first organisations to achieve this are in the utilities industry, the scheme is suitable for any consumer-facing organisation, from energy companies to broadband providers, local councils, government departments, charities, banks or transport providers.

Insights from KPMG’s Global Customer Experience report 2018⁴

KPMG launched its Customer Experience Excellence Centre in 2010 with the mission to decipher and apply customer best practice to common business challenges. Since then KPMG has researched hundreds of brands, speaking to consumers, employees and business leaders, beginning in the UK, then the US and Australia. This revealed the fundamental common elements of best practice in customer experience. This latest report provides a uniquely broad body of research, with detailed observations on thousands of brands worldwide. Some of the key observations from the research are included below.

Figure 1. Four common signs of success for companies leading in customer experience

<p>A deep understanding of the mind of the customer and their evolving needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past behaviour is no longer a reliable indicator of future behaviour 	<p>First mover knowledge and experience of new technologies and approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automated Intelligence, machine learning, bots, predictive analytics and innovative digital applications all play their part in the leading firms’ technology strategy
<p>Mastery of ‘The Six Pillars’ of customer experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalisation • Integrity • Expectations • Resolution • Time and effort • Empathy 	<p>Orchestration and connectedness across their ecosystem of partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading organisations empower their workforce, remove barriers across the front, middle and back office and ensure their partners understand and honour the commitment they have made to customers

The most successful companies structure their internal and external connections to align against four key attributes:

- A commitment to excellence and competitive superiority.
- High levels of staff engagement and employee experiences that connect with the customer experience.
- An obsession with high-quality execution.

³ <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/about-bsi/media-centre/press-releases/2018/july/bsi-launches-verification-scheme-to-ensure-fair-and-flexible-services-for-all/>

⁴ <https://home.kpmg/uk/en/home/insights/2018/06/2018-global-customer-experience-excellence-analysis.html>

- Clarity on the economics of the experience.

Tomorrow’s experience, today

KPMG’s report states that the leaders of tomorrow will need to offer their customers something more than just great products, differentiated services and connected journeys. Leading organisations are using a deep understanding of their customers to design tomorrow’s customer experience. The table below provides some of the key principles of how to understand customer needs.

Figure 2. Key principles of how to understand customer needs

<p style="text-align: center;">Know me as an individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me contribute to your purpose • Contribute to my life purpose • Be unforgettable 	<p style="text-align: center;">Help me multi-task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorten customer journeys • Use ‘hidden intelligence’ to make my life easier
<p style="text-align: center;">Attract and maintain my attention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open, honest and transparent • Minimise social and environmental impact 	<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitate my connection to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help me solve life problems through your partner ecosystem • Help me make satisfactory trade-offs between time, money and debt
<p style="text-align: center;">Anticipate my needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate and fix problems for me 	<p style="text-align: center;">Show me you care about me</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure I feel understood

The customer experience hall of fame

Given how different cultures rate individual brands, KPMG has not produced a global league table, instead, they have focused on welcoming leaders in each country into their customer experience hall of fame. These companies (described below) are positive models in delivering leading customer experiences; the most effective firms from their customer’s point of view.

Topdanmark Financial services (Denmark)

Billed as an ‘insurance company with a difference’, Topdanmark is loved by their customers, who call them “fair and kind” and “honest and efficient”. The company focuses on helping its customers to minimise their costs and maximise their benefits, a powerful combination. Staff are recognised for being empathetic and sympathetic, building a strong emotional connection with their customers.

QVC

In 2011 QVC began to refocus on their customer experience. They started the process internally by focusing on their values. They focused on empathy, from the presenters on TV, to their distribution centre in Liverpool and how they delivered digital experiences. In support of this, QVC restructured the organisation and incorporated new technologies with the aim of getting closer to the customer. They focused on understanding customers’ expectations and connection to their organisation across channels to deliver them. In the process, they adapted their product range, based on how their target customers’ expectations changed in response to seasons, events and times of the day. Consumers in the UK now rate QVC as the leading brand according to KPMG research.

“It is extraordinary: whenever I watch QVC, I feel like they are talking to me personally and no one else is watching” *Respondent from the UK in KPMG’s research.*

Emirates

Since first starting operations in 1985 with just two aircraft, Emirates Airlines has been on a continuous quest for excellence in its customer service. As one of the first companies globally to ‘industrialise’ the use of customer-journey maps, Emirates continually reassesses the experiences it delivers to different types of customers embarking on different types of journeys. This has unlocked important innovations and improvements.

From how cabin crews look on long journeys, to the food and drink selection, and the way in which they empower passengers to create personalised experiences, every aspect is meticulously planned. They also put significant effort into scanning the world for great ideas and draw inspiration from any source. This has led Emirates to become a global customer-experience leader.

2.3. What options have we considered?

Defining objectives

Reflecting on the insights we have received from our customers and stakeholders and best practice across the industry, we have defined the objectives that the ‘enhancing inclusivity and accessibility’ output measure should deliver in RIIO-2.

Table 6. Defining the objectives

Objective	Business insights	Customer and stakeholder insight/feedback	Best practice	Strategy / policy
Increase Cadent’s brand awareness to enable customers to become more familiar with us	The Cadent brand is still in its infancy and we recognise that we need to do more so that our customers will become more familiar with us and create a positive brand relationship.	Customers have pointed out that they are not aware of Cadent and that we could do more to raise awareness of our company.		
All customer segments and demographics have equal access to communicate with us	No customer, whatever their circumstances, should have difficulty in communicating with Cadent.			Government and industry standards provide the minimum standards that we want to go above and beyond for our customers.
Innovate to increase the choice and variety of communication channels	Customers have told us that they value choice when it comes to communicating with us.	Stakeholders want us to ensure that our services are accessible to all.	Those who excel in delivering customer experience have pioneering knowledge and experience of new technologies and approaches.	
Always deliver timely and effective communications	Customers want more, real-time interaction that is tailored around their lifestyles.	Keeping people up to date is a priority. This should take place through various channels including social media, emails and face contact.		
Customers are clear on why Cadent are communicating with them and what (if any) action they need to take	We deliver a wide range of services to customers, some that require action from customers, and some that do not.	Customers like to have advanced warning of any interruptions so that they can plan accordingly.		

Table 7. Options we considered

Option 1: Continue with existing communication channels	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency – Campaign on transparency, including good advertising, PR articles and social media, information on our website, emails from strategic partners on our behalf, directions to our website for customers, on-hold music with call centre, BSL video for key messages. • Notification of works – For planned works, send notification letters (3 month and 5 days) including information on the reasoning for the works. For emergency explain over the phone that that an engineer will be out within 1 or 2 hours. For connections, provide start date within 20 working days of accepted quotation. • Contacting Cadent and job updates/information – Gas emergency phonenumber, enquiry / complaints line, email, social media accounts with the ability to direct message and receive updates for larger works), Connections quotes phonenumber, Cadent website, Door knock prior to works commencing, ‘better gas pipes’ website for planned works and roadworks.org, provide drop cards for steps within the process. • Feedback / customer aftercare – CSAT surveys for sampled customers (all customers for connections), SMS (Rant and Rave) survey for emergency response and repair (ER&R) and connections. Offer some form of aftercare for customers who expressed dissatisfaction. • Enquiries telephone line – Make all calls to the Cadent enquiries telephone number free of charge. 	
Assessing the merits and drawbacks	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases our existing level of transparency across our online channels. • Utilises a range of channels to reach a wide audience. • Provides customer notification of works and next steps. • Opportunity for some customers to provide feedback. • Closes the loop with dissatisfied customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited use of the online capability available to us. • Does not necessarily match the ambition / vision of Cadent in setting standards that others aspire to. • Paper-based notification limits accessibility for customers. • Advanced notice and response levels based on minimum standards. • Limited face to face interaction. • Not representative of all customers or services. • Limited customer accessibility.
Potential unintended consequences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cadent does not grow its brand identity. • Some customer demographics are not given a voice due to the limited forms of communication being used by Cadent. 	

Option 2: Enhanced multi-channel communication	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All elements of option 1. • Transparency – Printed materials such as flyers, posters, drop cards, newspaper wraparound, targeted mail campaigns to those affected by planned work and those we have existing relationships with. Press releases, radio interviews and attendance at local events. • Notification of works – Increase the level of information included on social media, providing advanced notification of our works to communities and the action they may need to take in order to reduce disruption in their day to day activities. Provide connection start dates based on customer needs. • Contacting Cadent and job updates / information – Increased communications from on-site customer liaison officer. Enhanced ‘better gas pipes’ website, beyond just planned works. Greater use of social media for all works. Enhance the Cadent website. Online messaging service. Simple connections online quotes portal. • Feedback / customer aftercare – Enhanced CSAT surveys offering more channels to respond and customer-focused questions. SMS (Rant and Rave) survey extended to planned works. Offer enhanced aftercare (including home visits) for customers who expressed dissatisfaction. 	
Assessing the merits and drawbacks	
Pros	Cons

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More targeted approach that will reach customers impacted by our works. • Use of radio and attendance at local events will allow us to reach a wider audience. • Greater use of wider communication channels to notify communities of works. • Connections planned dates based on customer needs. • Greater degree of face to face interaction with customers. • More avenues to access information and contact Cadent. • Opportunity for most customers to provide feedback. • Comprehensive aftercare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not necessarily match the ambition / vision of Cadent in setting standards that others aspire to. • Does not provide a personalised service to notify each customer for planned works. • Does not offer customers live updates. • Does not address all areas of accessibility. • Not representative of all customers or services.
Potential unintended consequences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers get confused as they receive / are exposed to multiple communications from Cadent and messages are mixed. 	

Option 3: Innovative and accessible communication for all

- All elements of option 1.
- **Transparency** - TV advertising campaigns and billboard campaigns raising awareness of our services.
- **Notification of works** – Provide additional notification through multiple channels (inc. post, text, email) to each customer utilising greater access to customer data. Integrate with other data sources (e.g. PSR) to provide further bespoke information and services. Offer alternative formats for communication including other languages, audio, braille, large print etc. Crystal Mark all external correspondence, removing jargon and any misleading information.
- **Contacting Cadent and job updates / information** – Real time job updates through preferred channel (e.g. text, email, call etc.). Connections customer portal allowing two-way communications. Dedicated customer liaison officer on every job available for contact 24 hours a day. Live web-chat feature on Cadent website. Offer translation / interpretation service (e.g. language line) for ESL customers. Provide Text Generation and text service to help people with hearing loss to access the call centre.
- **Feedback / customer aftercare** – Survey 100% of customers for all CSAT surveys. Offer alternative formats for surveying including other languages, audio, braille etc. Live web-chat features on Cadent website. Offer enhanced aftercare (inc. home visits) for all customers.
- **Partnership working** – Look to partner with an expert independent organisation to establish a robust measure of accessibility and inclusivity of our services.

Assessing the merits and drawbacks

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad range of channels utilised that help achieve maximum inclusivity. • Best aligns to Cadent’s vision of setting standards that others aspire to. • Provides customer notification of works and next steps. • Greater use of wider communication channels to notify communities. • Personalised service for all customers. • Offers accessible and fair service for all. • Live real time updates for customers to be informed instantly. • More avenues to access information across Cadent. • Opportunity for all customers to provide feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV advertising comes at a high cost, that ultimately may be funded by the customer. • Could be an expensive communications service. • Could be inefficient and costly to provide for all customers. • Finding the right partner with the necessary capabilities that we are looking for can be a challenge.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning from a partner will bring expertise into our business on how best to enhance our communications to make them accessible to all. 	
Potential unintended consequences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In implementing the ambitious proposals, costs are higher than initially predicted. Cadent's CSAT scores reduce as the demographic of customers completing the feedback shifts (due to the new channels) and expectations are higher. 	

2.4. Why are these the options?

We have considered a range of options from continuing with our existing communication channels, through to offering innovative and accessible communication to all which includes making a number of commitments to enhance how we communicate with our customers.

Options 2 and 3 are a build on the existing offering, which is option 1. They look to provide multi-channel communication, using the latest systems and techniques to deliver an enhanced customer experience. We are already on a journey to transform how we communicate with our customers (see our customer strategy) and these options help to clearly define what we want to deliver for our customers over the RIIO-2 period. All options have been informed using our existing customer insight together with specific RIIO-2 focused engagement.

Table 8. Options appraisal against objectives

	Option 1: Continue with existing communication channels	Option 2: Enhanced multi-channel communication	Option 3: Innovative and accessible communication for all
Be the leading GDN in delivering customer experience			
Increase Cadent's brand awareness			
All customer segments and demographics have equal access to communicate with us			
Innovate to increase the choice and variety of communication channels			
Always deliver timely and effective communications			
Customers are clear on why Cadent are communicating with them and what (if any) action they need to take			

No delivery	Weak delivery	Some delivery	Delivery	Strong delivery
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2.5. Customer and stakeholder preference

Based on our business insights, engagement and best practice, the preferred option is Option 3 which offers transparent, accessible and inclusive communication through multiple channels using innovative and creative methods to ensure we can deliver industry leading customer experience in RIIO-2. We will deliver this by adopting a number of elements of the good practice that we list above in this document. Our customers and stakeholders want to be treated as individuals. There is no such thing as an "average" customer and our services need to reflect this, be accessible to all and inclusive of each individual's needs. Building a strong emotional connection with customers was a characteristic of companies within the KPMG customer excellence hall of fame, so this is something we aspire to.

We believe delivering Option 3 will be the catalyst, together with a number of commitments across our output appendices, to us becoming the leading GDN in delivering customer experience. We have looked at all aspects of our customer journey to develop a fully accessible and inclusive option that uses innovative communication tools and techniques such as real time updates that we have never used before to build our brand and enhance our service. The offering will be stretching for us, but we believe it will deliver maximum benefit for customers.

3. Assessing performance levels



3.1. How we performed in RIIO-1

In RIIO-1 there are no specific output measures for measuring inclusivity and accessibility of information. Customer service is measured via the CSAT survey (see scores by work area below). We are pleased with the progress we have made in improving our CSAT scores during RIIO-1 but are still not satisfied with the levels of service we are providing. Our customer strategy provides the detail on how we plan to improve the customer experience we deliver both at the end of RIIO-1 and into RIIO-2.

Within our three CSAT survey questionnaires we ask a question regarding customer satisfaction with our communication during the works. This score is shown for year 17/18 across all GDNs for the three questionnaires:

Table 9. 2017/18 CSAT scores across our services

Network	ER&R – How satisfied were you with communication during works?	Planned work - How satisfied were you with communication during works?	Connections - How satisfied were you with overall communication?
East of England	9.16	8.32	8.33
North London	8.48	8.11	6.97
North West	9.00	8.07	8.64
West Midlands	8.95	7.66	7.85
Wales and West	9.23	8.60	9.15
SGN - Southern	8.97	8.64	8.95
SGN - Scotland	9.10	8.81	9.33
Northern Gas Networks	9.18	8.82	9.04

The scores we received for the communication questions in the CSAT survey indicates that customers are generally quite pleased with our communication as scores are mostly within the 7.5 to 9 out of 10. However, it is clear that we need to make improvements in certain areas and regions and that other GDNs are generally receiving higher scores than us in this space.

Although these scores provide us with valuable insight, one of the limitations of measuring our performance regarding accessible and inclusive communication is that CSAT only relates to some of the services we deliver.

3.2. What performance levels have we considered for RIIO-2?

We need to establish the target delivery levels when it comes to broadening communication channels and innovating to create alternative and new ways of communicating with all our customer segments and demographics.

To be the leading GDN in delivering customer experience we need to start by being ambitious in how we communicate with customers to give us the best possible chance to understand their wants and needs and subsequently adapt our service accordingly.

In order to deliver transparent communication, we have considered three target delivery levels that build on the options already discussed. The aim is that the varying levels reflect the thoughts and views from our customers and stakeholders regarding how transparent Cadent is currently. Transparency can range from how visible

Cadent's brand is in society to how much business performance information is shared with customers through various communication channels.

Table 10. Transparent communication target range and cost to achieve

	Option 1 (Low)	Option 2 (Medium)	Option 3 (High)
Elements	All of the elements of the online option in section 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on our website. • Emails from strategic partners on our behalf. • Directions to our website for on-hold music for call centre. • BSL video for key messages. • Campaign on transparency including good advertising, PR articles and social media. 	All of the elements from the low delivery package, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed materials such as flyers, posters, dropcards, newspaper wraparounds. • Targeted mail campaigns to those affected by planned work and those we have existing relationships with. • Press releases, radio interviews and attendance at local events. 	All of the elements from the low and medium delivery packages, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 TV advertising campaigns a year (one for each network each year). • 4 billboard campaigns for one month each (one for each network each year). • Become BSI 18477 (inclusive service provision) certified.
Costs	One of cost of £5,000 for website updates. £20,000 for a 6-week campaign.	£5,000 per month for printed material. £22,000 per month for mail campaigns. £10,000 per month for press activities, interviews and material for local events. + Cost of online package.	£125,000 per TV campaign. £10,000 for per one-month billboard campaign. + Cost of online package. + Cost of offline package.
Total cost to deliver (RIIO-2)	£25,000	£2,245,000	£4,945,000
Annual impact on customer bills	£0.00 (c. 2% of a penny)	£0.03	£0.06

The proposed packages indicate the activities we could undertake in order to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of our communications. However, it is important that we establish a robust output which measures our performance.

We want to set the right standards which assure our customers and stakeholders that we are offering a transparent, inclusive and accessible service. As we don't measure this today, we propose to partner with an independent industry expert to develop a measure for accessible and inclusive communications which we will report on, alongside our improvement work, throughout RIIO-2.

We also propose to become BSI 18477 certified. This service verification scheme will help us demonstrate to our customers and stakeholder that we are providing a fair, flexible service that can be used by all consumers equally, regardless of their health, age or personal circumstances.

Although there are costs related to each target delivery level, we are proposing to deliver these without asking for any additional funding and therefore with no impact on customer bills.

4. Customer testing



Our proposals for measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity were not tested via the quantitative business options testing process but did go through qualitative testing as part of our engagement programme.

Feedback received from customers and stakeholders across our engagement events on how we could enhance our accessibility and inclusivity is summarised below:

4.1. Summary of insight from engagement events

Table 11. Engagement insights summary

Area	Insights
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of the brand and the difference between Cadent and National Grid. Businesses say we should increase visibility and communication about who we are and what we do, so that business can better understand how Cadent's activities impact their organisation. Customers wanted to be kept informed of short-term changes that might affect them and wanted Cadent to be transparent about long-term strategic or operational changes as they develop.
Communication methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media was seen as having a wide reach, but less so with older people. TV and radio were seen as more likely to reach older people. Many others, particularly younger people, do not use TV or radio. Electronic banners will be effective for the blind/visually impaired, and radio will not be effective for deaf people. Cadent phoning customers would not be effective as many people, particularly the vulnerable, don't answer the phone to unknown callers. Text message was seen as preferable. ESL and non-English speakers reported that there should be a range of flexible communication options so that customers can choose how to receive works updates.
How we communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use more colloquial, less formal language, as well as using infographics to make information easier to understand. Cadent should communicate honestly with their customers and be upfront about potential impacts on price and service. The tone of any communications must be polite, non-patronising and clear. Customers want to be made to 'feel like an individual' i.e. speaking to a human, not a machine, and showing empathy with the customer. Customers suggested providing training for all employees because anyone might engage with customers. Customer Liaison Officers, engineers and site workers should have all the necessary information they need to feel more comfortable engaging with the public. Cadent should provide regular (or even live) updates; provide a single point of contact; explain why interruptions are happening and what the outcome will be.
Making use of partnership expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with local / national deaf charities e.g. Sense. Create BSL video for TV/Facebook/Youtube. Use partnerships to communicate such as Age UK, local health/social and wider services such as GP, dentist, library post office. Use local Facebook groups, Resident's Associations, Neighbourhood watches etc. to inform residents of important information. Consider using the service for visually impaired people called 'be my eyes', which enables someone else to direct customers whilst being able to see what's in front of them via a phone.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage with experts supporting customers vulnerable situations to better understand their needs and ensure actions are taken to improve customer journeys.
Putting things right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good customer service with quick response times is essential. Be responsive to customer needs and keep communication channels open. Customers have highlighted the importance of a friendly, accessible telephone line system that allows for any issue to be easily transferred to the right team. Customers highlighted the importance of seeking feedback once a job is completed so Cadent can learn and improve.

These insights provide us with a view of what our customers and stakeholders and would want us to focus on in terms of how we communicate. Any measure(s) could be set against these key areas with targets agreed with our customers and stakeholders to assure them that we are focussing on the areas which matter most to them. We will explore these measures and ensure that solutions are in place by the end of the first year of RIIO-2. This will allow us to set an appropriate benchmark and measure improvement year on year.

4.2. Acceptability testing of our quality experience customer outcome

In our acceptability testing, the quality experience aspects of our business plan were generally found to be acceptable:

- Of domestic customers, 83% of those surveyed found the quality experience section of the plan acceptable, and only 1% found it unacceptable. When asked what would make it acceptable, those who answered that they found it neither acceptable nor unacceptable suggested a further reduction in prices (14%) or wanted more detail on how it would be implemented (6%). This was broadly consistent across the regions.
- 49% of Cadent business customers said that they found the quality customer experience aspects of Cadent’s business plan “very important” and 37% “fairly important” (86% in total). The breakdown across business sizes was broadly consistent, but overall acceptability increased with business size, with the percentages finding the plan either very acceptable or acceptable being 79%, 87% and 90% for sole traders, businesses with 1-9 employees and business with 10-49 employees respectively. Customers said that a quality experience was an essential element of delivering a service.
- At our acceptability testing focus groups with the general population, participants were supportive of Cadent’s commitment to go beyond its legal responsibilities. They were pleasantly surprised by Cadent’s social action. Quality experience participants did not see any issues with Cadent’s quality experience commitments, and thus supported them. The majority of participants though that this outcome was either important or very important. 89% of participants found providing a quality experience important, with 53% finding it very important.
- Overall, customers in our acceptability testing focus groups with CIVS were supportive of the quality experience commitments outlined by Cadent.
- Generally, customers at our acceptability testing focus groups with those in fuel poverty felt that Cadent’s plans to provide a quality experience were going ‘above and beyond’ what was expected.
- Future generation focus groups did not see any issues with Cadent’s quality experience commitments, and thus supported them.

As part of the Verve business plan consultation, a quality experience was deemed a critical obligation for any organisation. Most customers saw this as a hygiene factor and it surprised a few customers that it was part of the Plan, although many welcomed it being spelt out. Many expected the commitments to be manageable for Cadent to undertake. However, no customers had any detailed experience of Cadent’s services. Providing detail of what the commitments should entail provided respondents comfort, though they noted that failure to deliver will quickly harm trust. Reliability and reassurance in relation to safety and service delivery stood out for respondents, while some customers had issues with jargon (e.g. PSR) and believed some commitments could be hard to achieve. Despite Cadent admitting that direct contact with their customers is rare, the promise that they are available, if needed, was reassuring to respondents.

5. Our commitments



5.1. Our commitments for measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity of our services

Given the support from across our customer and stakeholder community to enhance the transparency, accessibility and inclusivity of our communications, we want to ensure we are in a position to take positive action in this area ahead of RIIO-2. It is important that we focus in on the areas that customers value most and therefore will be working with a partner to develop the right measure for quantifying success.

Table 12. Our output commitments

Output commitment	Measure definition	Benefits to current customers	Benefits to future customers
Measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity	Reputation of publishing performance once a metric has been established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing our transparency will help to build our brand and reputation with customers. A broader range of communication channels will keep a wider range of customers informed, up to date and aware of Cadent's activities. Enhancing the accessibility of our comms should allow for a greater level of engagement with CIVS and those who may be seldom heard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing our transparency, using a wide range of techniques will help to build strong relationships with both current and future customers. The vulnerability landscape will be ever changing over time and therefore we need to ensure we adapt our communication techniques to meet the needs of future customers, therefore this output will be long term and evolve over time.
BSI 18477 (inclusive service provision) certified	Achieve the standard of becoming BSI 184777 certified in RIIO-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration to customers and stakeholders that we are providing a fair, flexible service that can be used by all consumers equally, regardless of their health, age or personal circumstances. Ensures that we can identify CIVS and provide them with an accessible and inclusive service. Increased trust in Cadent by customers, stakeholders and the wider industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services now and in the future will be inclusive and accessible to all, and flexible to customer needs as they continually evolve.

5.2. Assessment of how to treat commitments

We have undertaken an assessment of this bespoke output against Ofgem’s criteria to understand the best form of regulatory treatment.

Table 13. Regulatory treatment assessment

Regulatory treatment	Criteria	Rating	Further explanation of assessment
Reputational Output Delivery Incentive (ODI)	Demonstrate this is important to customers and/or stakeholders	Strongly meets criteria	Our preferred option for this output will allow us to improve our customer service in line with our customers’ expectations.
	Funded elsewhere in our plan, or inappropriate for funding	Meets criteria	This output is not funded elsewhere in the Plan, but we are proposing to absorb the costs associated with delivering these commitments.
	Can robustly measure performance improvement	Partially meets criteria	Our preferred option for this output contains a range of elements. Whilst we can measure improvement individually, they can’t be easily condensed into a single measure.
Financial ODI	Demonstrate this is important to customers and/or stakeholders and they are willing to pay	Meets criteria	As described for Reputational ODI. We do not have direct results from RIIO-2 research for willingness to pay for this output.
	Not funded elsewhere in our plan	Strongly meets criteria	This output is not funded elsewhere in the plan.
	Can robustly measure performance improvement	Partially meets criteria	As described for Reputational ODI.
Price control deliverable	Specific deliverable with clear timeline and targets	Doesn’t meet criteria	Our preferred option for this output does not provide a specific timeline of delivery.
	Demonstrable benefit to customers which they support	Strongly meets criteria	Our preferred option for this output will allow us to improve our customer service in line with our customers’ expectations.
Licence Obligation	Absolute minimum, with significant customer harm if we do not deliver it	Doesn’t meet criteria	Ofgem has proposed revisions to two existing GSOPs in relation to customer communication: GSOP12: Timely payment of GSOP consumer payments, and GSOP14: Timely response to complaints. Our preferred option for this output is a customer service improvement beyond these minimum standards.
	Applicable to all GDNs	Doesn’t meet criteria	For this output, we are proposing to expand our communication channels, which are bespoke to the existing methods we already offer customers.
Business Plan Incentive	Adds to the quality of our plan, but not a specific deliverable or performance measure	Doesn’t meet criteria	Our preferred option for this output includes specific programmes of work.
	Funded elsewhere in our plan, or inappropriate for funding	Doesn’t meet criteria	This output is not funded elsewhere in the plan.

Doesn’t meet criteria	Weakly meets criteria	Partially meets criteria	Meets criteria	Strongly meets criteria
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We are therefore proposing a commitment to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of our services with a reputational output delivery incentive against the BSI 18477 standard. We are also making a commitment to establish a benchmarkable measurement standard which robustly measures the transparency, inclusivity and accessibility of our communication and services.

Table 14. Bespoke output proposal

Output	East of England	North London	North West	West Midlands	Cadent	Comparison to RIIO-1	Cost
Measuring and enhancing accessibility and inclusivity	We will work with an independent expert to establish an index which measures the transparency, accessibility and inclusivity of our communications. We will ensure that a measure is in place by the end of Year 1. We will also become BSI 18477 certified (Inclusive service provision)					New measure for RIIO-2	£0
BSI 18477 (inclusive service provision) certified	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	New measure for RIIO-2	£0

6. Delivering our commitments



6.1. How we will deliver our commitments

We will deliver our commitments through the following improvements:

Table 15. Delivering our commitments

Area	What we will do to deliver commitments
Customer communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will use a range of communication techniques to increase our brand awareness and level of transparency e.g. increased presence on social media, more in-depth targeted communications to those impacted by our works, billboard campaigns to raise awareness of the key safety elements of our works. Improving the accessibility of our websites, ensuring literature and content is available in multiple languages and sign where applicable, explaining the work we do and what to expect from our work. We will continue to offer services such as a specialist phone line for those with hearing impairments, password services etc. We will provide details of our planned and ongoing work on our website, using road signs, on a national roadwork website (linking up all Utilities planned and ongoing work). We will also be focusing on opportunities to use livery and street furniture to provide context for our works as well as reviewing best practice in terms of keeping customers updated on larger, potentially more disruptive mains replacement works.
Processes/systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our wider strategy to set standards that our customers and stakeholders love, we will enhance the technological capability of our core systems to support big data, customer insights and multi-channel communication. We will look to make use of Automated Intelligence, including self-service voice and chat to smartly handle enquiries. Where possible we will take opportunities to reduce the requirement for customer enquiries by making information available and accessible on future works affecting communities. We will further enhance our systems to smartly handle PSR data to ensure we can target CIVS and serve them with the best forms of communication for their needs.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alongside all our other partnerships working across the business, we will be working with an industry expert to develop a measure for accessibility and inclusivity to ensure we are delivering to a high standard that benchmarks well across the energy and service industries.
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be establishing ongoing regional customer forums to monitor and improve our customer performance.

6.2. How we will protect against non-delivery

Table 16 Protecting against non-delivery

Regulatory tool	How it will help in protecting customers from non-delivery
Guaranteed standards of performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum delivery standards for communications (e.g. notification of works) and welfare provided to CIVS in the event of a supply interruption. Compensation is payable to customers if GDNs fail to meet a minimum standard.
CSAT incentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- financial incentive for CSAT performance across Emergency Response & Repair, Planned Work and Connections processes.
Complaint handling incentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downside financial incentive / GDNS are penalised if they score above a certain level within the complaint handling metric. GDNs are measured on timely handling of complaints, repeat complaints and Energy Ombudsman referrals.
Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that information about our works and our business is accessible and inclusive to all is the right thing to do.