



SGN

Your gas. Our network.

Moving forward together 2017

External engagement workshop review

April 2017



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1. Introduction

We're committed to stakeholder engagement; it's at the heart of everything we do. For the past five years we've been developing how we engage with individuals or organisations that are impacted by what we do, or have an interest in how our business is run. This focus will only become stronger as we continue through the current price control period and into the future.

Moving forward together

While stakeholder engagement is business as usual within our business, our flagship engagement events are our national 'Moving forward together' workshops. These workshops run alongside the other forums and workshops we organise as part of our overall stakeholder engagement programme.

In order to enable more stakeholders to participate, we held three Moving forward together workshops for the first time across both our network areas in March 2017:

- 21 March - Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, Victory Gate, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LJ
- 27 March - Edinburgh City Chambers, 253 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ
- 29 March - The Oval, Harleyford Street, Kennington, London SE11 5SS

Representatives from a wide range of stakeholder organisations attended the workshops, including suppliers, network operators, local authorities, highway authorities, environment agency services, charities, engineering institutions and government bodies.



This document details the subsequent suggested action points for us to consider, and collates the quantitative data captured on the day.

Workshop aims

- To provide an update on focus areas and initiatives
- To provide an open forum where suggested improvements could be easily shared
- To use feedback to inform how we engage with our stakeholders going forward

Format

This year we focused on listening to stakeholders, with a greater emphasis on round table discussions and more in-depth electronic voting.

After a brief introduction to who we are and what we do, the workshop was split into five areas:



Keeping the gas flowing and improving our service

These are key priority areas within our business. During this session we wanted to gather feedback on work we'd completed to date and how stakeholders viewed the way we deliver our service. Topics included how we tailor our approach to projects, how we minimise disruption to the public, improve resilience, and how we promote the Priority Services Register.

After a short presentation, we hosted detailed round table discussions so stakeholders could have their say, followed by a round of electronic voting.



Keeping energy affordable and supporting communities

These are also key priority areas within our business. During this session we wanted to gather feedback on work we'd completed to date and how stakeholders viewed the way we support our customers. Topics included fuel poverty, CO awareness, our dementia awareness training, our locking cooker valve (LCV), and how we give back to the communities we serve.

After a short presentation, we hosted detailed round table discussions so stakeholders could have their say, followed by a round of electronic voting.



Sustaining our future

This session looked to identify what stakeholders see as the future of heat in the UK. Areas explored included whether or not they see gas as part of that future, how reliant the stakeholder is on gas, and how receptive/interested they are in alternatives. We concluded this session with a further round of electronic voting.



Strategic priorities

The penultimate session looked to make sure our five strategic priorities for the past year (keeping the gas flowing, improving our service, keeping energy affordable, supporting communities, and sustaining our future) were still correct for the year ahead. This was concluded with another round of electronic voting.



The future of Stakeholder Engagement within our business

The final session involved a short presentation, updating stakeholders on how our stakeholder engagement strategy will evolve going forward. We hosted detailed round table discussions so stakeholders could have their say, followed by a round of electronic voting.

45 completed feedback forms told us:

100%

of attendees found the event to be beneficial or highly beneficial.

86.7%

of attendees felt they had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss their views at the event.

99%

of attendees felt they or their organisation could work in partnership with us in one way or another.

73%

of attendees said they would look to continue engaging through the Moving forward together workshops.

2. Suggested key actions for us to consider

Following a review of the feedback captured, the following actions have been identified as areas we should consider going forwards.



Keeping the gas flowing and improving our service

In general, stakeholders were of the view we'd worked hard to improve our service, particularly around innovation to minimise disruption to customers and the general public. The electronic voting suggested that while all areas discussed in this session were important, we should mainly focus on minimising disruption even further.

It was also felt we should work harder to promote the good work we do, and stop taking a solely conciliatory tone when informing residents of mains replacement work. While stakeholders accepted this type of work could be disruptive, it does have positive results for customers.

There was a strong belief we should be looking to form new partnerships in addition to deepening existing ones to improve how we run our business. There were examples in almost every discussion of how these improved partnerships will help us reach our goals.

Suggested actions

- Share mains replacement plans with local authorities
- Improve partnerships with local authorities to improve our resilience response
- Improve partnerships with local resilience forums
- Use Resilience Direct to notify local authorities of planned work
- Promote the use of technology such as iCore and robotics at a local level
- Explore how we can work with local authorities to develop the best engagement plan when implementing the project assessment tool
- Promote good news stories more widely. This should include local media, local community groups, social media and face-to-face engagement
- Investigate how Network Rail and Virgin Trains carry out local community engagement during projects
- Share engagement best practice with other utility companies
- Improve access to the contact details of relevant SGN employees
- Partner with other utilities to improve local authority engagement
- Share information on cyber issues and data security more widely
- Carry out further engagement with local communities to help them become advocates of our work
- Participate in the London utility sector panel day
- Engage with landlords on all issues, rather than only focusing on residents
- Promote the benefits of our work rather than just our investment
- Have a project manager on site during work to ensure engagement is present for the project duration
- Attend local community events such as school fairs to share information, rather than run our own events
- Make sure we continue to look for stakeholders with as many dissenting views as possible
- Explore the benefits of having a dedicated on site engagement employee wearing different PPE so customers know who to interact with
- Examine learning points from the 'Bristol code of conduct' to minimise disruption and costs during our work.



Keeping energy affordable and supporting communities

Stakeholders welcomed our efforts in keeping energy affordable and supporting the communities we work in. However, while they felt we could do more to help, they understood we may not be the best organisation to lead on every area, and again stressed the benefit of partnering with third parties such as local authorities, local resilience forums, charities and community groups who are already working in these areas. Stakeholders felt these groups would be able to take us to the next level.

There was particular support for the widening of the LCV project going forward, with several suggestions on how to get wider take up. 95% of stakeholders believed the LCV is a tool that can potentially save lives, and they gave examples of other groups that may benefit from having an LCV fitted.

With regards to fuel poverty, stakeholders were sympathetic to the problems we face securing funding in England, and the impact this is having on our targets for fuel poor connections. Stakeholders felt we should be working with Government to address this.

Suggested actions

- Improve partnerships with local authorities to promote the LCV and the priority services register (PSR)
- Improve partnerships with charities and community groups to promote the LCV and the PSR
- Improve partnerships with housing associations and health authorities to promote the LCV and the PSR
- Increase the number of partnerships with Fire and Rescue to promote carbon monoxide (CO) awareness and the LCV
- Expand the scope of the LCV beyond those with dementia to include people with young children
- Promote the LCV more widely on social media (eg Facebook)
- Further develop the LCV to be controlled via telemetry
- Make sure CO awareness education is focused beyond vulnerable customers
- CO awareness should focus on all sources of CO and not just boilers
- Establish partnerships with the Scouts to raise CO awareness
- Use drama in schools to raise CO awareness and other key messages
- Promote CO awareness at festivals such as Reading
- Review the terminology for 'vulnerable customers'
- Extend support to those considered 'just about managing'
- Share data with local authorities on vulnerable customers where possible, particularly in emergencies
- Investigate how we can use the Home Energy Scotland referral portal after identifying a vulnerable customer
- Offer energy efficiency advice to customers in fuel poverty, and those in off grid areas
- Partner with benefits registers to access those in need of fuel poor connections
- Make sure we use all available funding in the south of England to meet our fuel poverty gas connections targets
- Lobby BEIS to assist with funding in England to meet our fuel poverty gas connections targets, citing the success in Scotland
- Include alcohol and substance abuse in the PSR
- Consider the impact of all projects on the community
- Target promotion of initiatives at the private rental sector
- Use local authority magazines to share messaging
- Work with other utility companies to minimise the impact of our work
- Explore further opportunities to use technology such as robotics to minimise the impact of our work on communities
- Make information on technology available to customers and stakeholders
- Work with suppliers to investigate reasons behind a customer having abnormally high gas consumption.



Sustaining our future

Stakeholders generally believe the UK gas networks will continue to have a role in the future. There was considerable support for us to investigate alternative uses for the gas network, and for the increase in the amount of green gases within our network.

53% of stakeholders stated they would be happy to pay an additional £5 or more on their gas bill to facilitate the increase in green gas, while only 20% said they wouldn't want to pay anything.

Suggested actions

- Make sure greening the gas is prominent in our future business strategy
- Investigate a more holistic approach to greening the gas, including decarbonisation of vans etc
- Develop an energy strategy with partners
- We should fund the increase in green gas proportions rather than customers.



Strategic priorities

Stakeholders agreed in general that our strategic priorities were correct, and we should continue to focus on them over the 2017/18 regulatory period.



The future of Stakeholder Engagement within our business

There was considerable stakeholder support for the proposal of expert panels to improve our engagement programme going forward. While this didn't necessarily translate to stakeholders feeling the proposed engagement timeline would lead to improvements, it did result in 49% of stakeholders saying the proposed changes would make them more likely to engage with us in the future, while another 49% said the likelihood would remain the same.

There was also overwhelming support for us to increase our use of modern technology (social media, emails, online panels and webinars) to further improve engagement.

Suggested actions

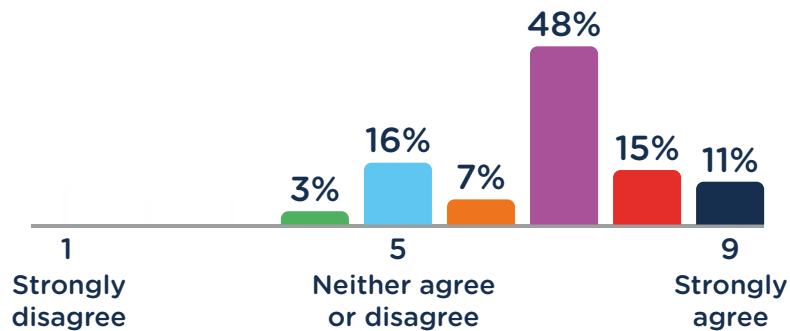
- Initiate the proposed expert panels
- Explore the use of email as a stakeholder engagement tool
- Stakeholder newsletters should be integrated into the website rather than publishing stories twice
- Stakeholder newsletters should include stories from other stakeholders
- Stakeholder newsletters should have more localised content
- Hold a greater number of localised events to attract more stakeholders
- Engage with more SME businesses
- Hold online engagement panels and/or webinars
- Make sure customer opinions inform our stakeholder strategy
- Work with other utility companies on joint engagement sessions to avoid crossover
- Share positive and negative stories during engagement
- Use social media to get engagement messages out to stakeholder groups
- Engage further with universities.

3. Collated electronic voting results

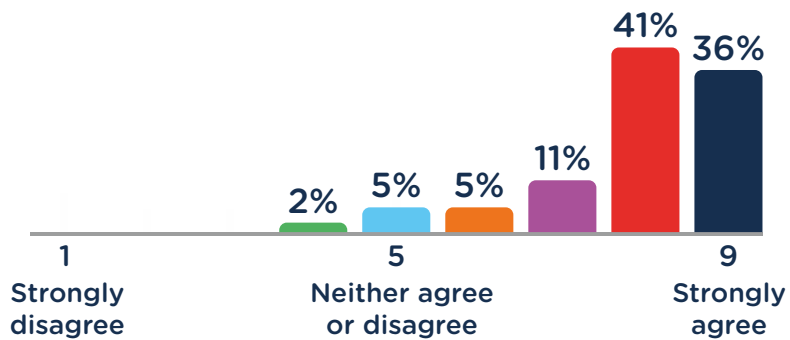
We asked delegates to answer a number of electronic voting questions at every workshop session to capture their views. This section of the report outlines the collated results of the electronic voting from each of the sessions.

Keeping the gas flowing and improving our service

Tailored project delivery is improving how we work in local communities



Investing in innovation is an effective way of minimising the disruption we cause

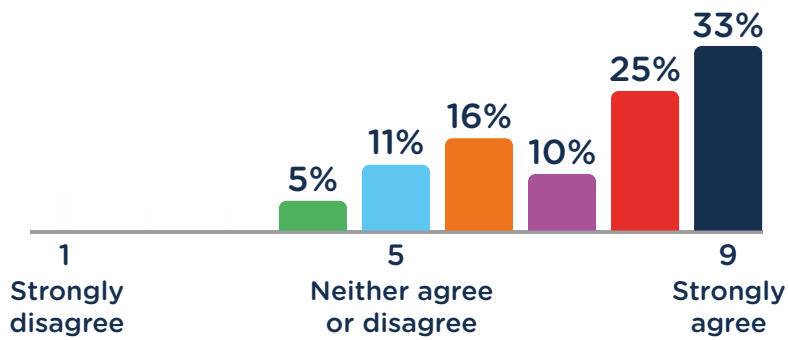


Which one of these should we invest in more going forward?

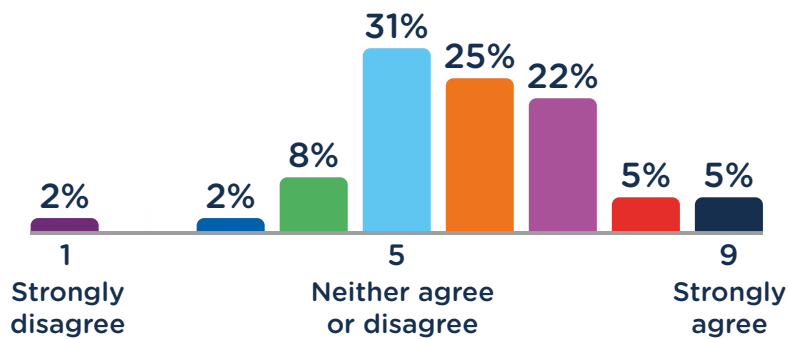


Keeping energy affordable and supporting communities

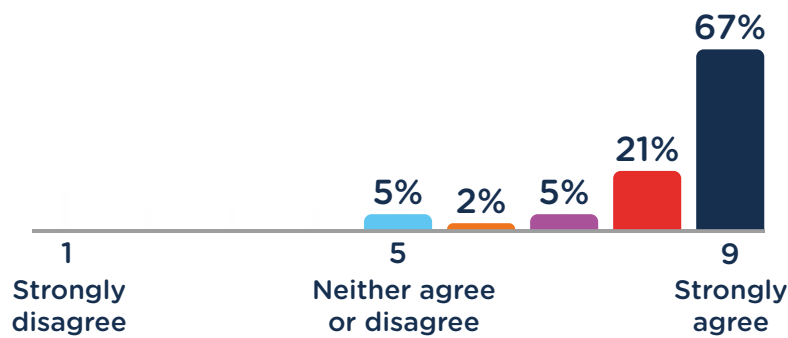
We should prioritise providing support for those living in fuel poverty



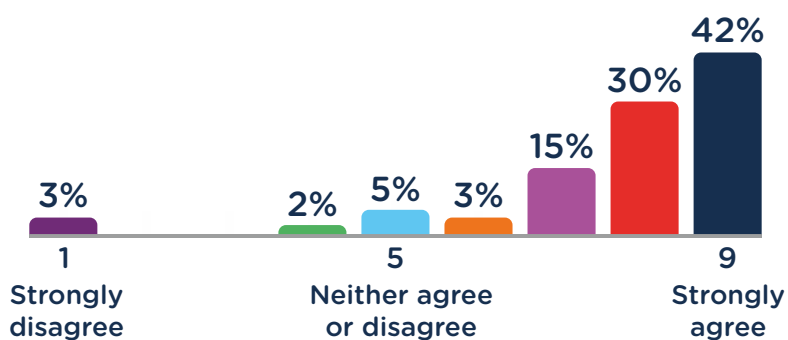
Our engagement projects serve our vulnerable customers effectively



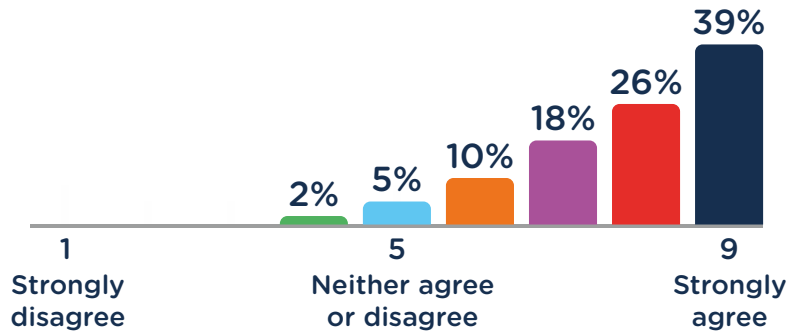
The locking cooker valve is a tool that can really make a difference



Training our people to be able to recognise dementia is important



We should always consider giving back to the communities we affect



Which of these projects should we invest in more going forward?



Sustaining our future

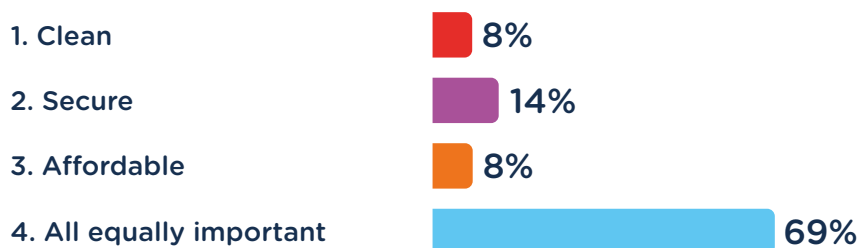
Were you aware of the energy trilemma?



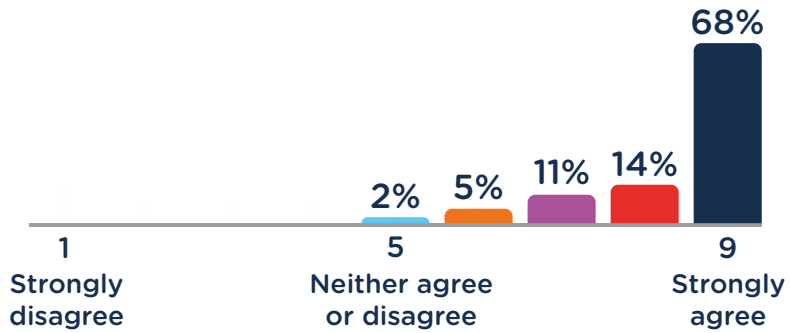
Do you agree it's important we try to address it?



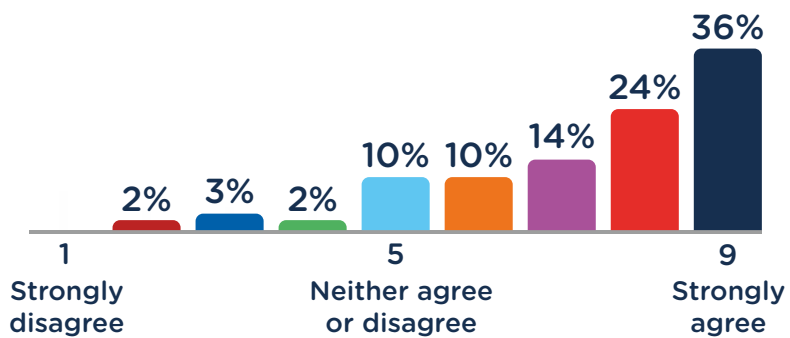
Which of the three points of the trilemma do you think is most important?



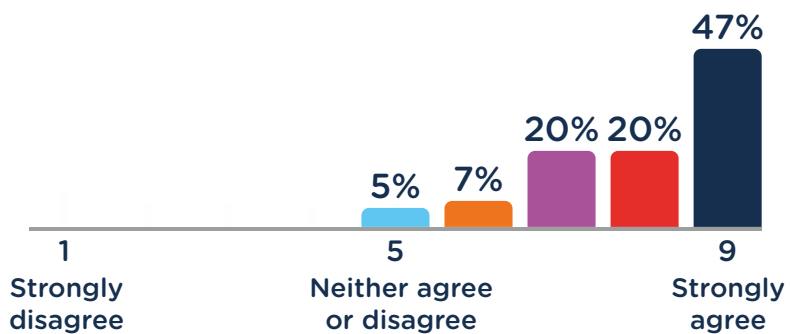
Gas networks currently play a vital role delivering UK heating and cooking needs



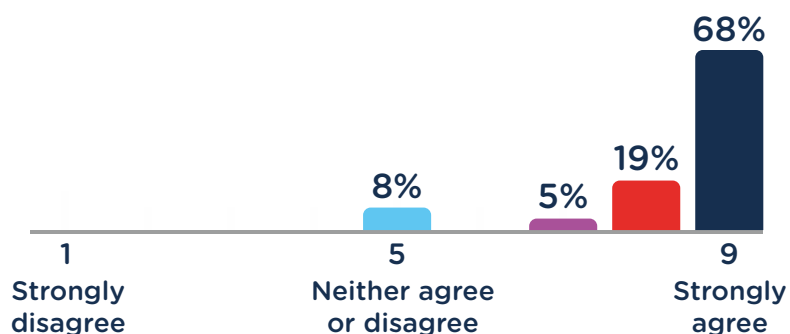
Gas networks will continue to play a vital role delivering UK heating and cooking needs in the future



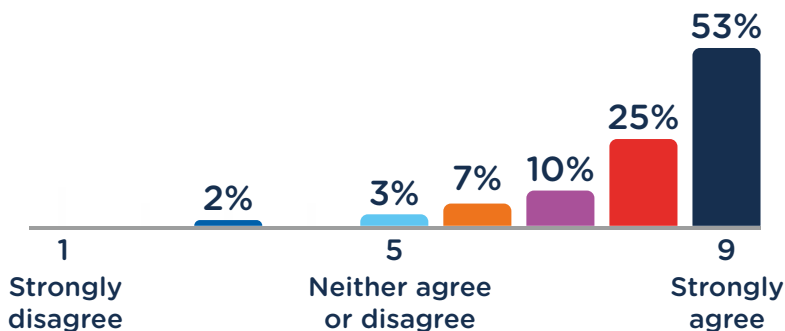
I would support SGN investigating alternative uses for its gas networks



We should be looking to increase the amount of green gas transported within our networks

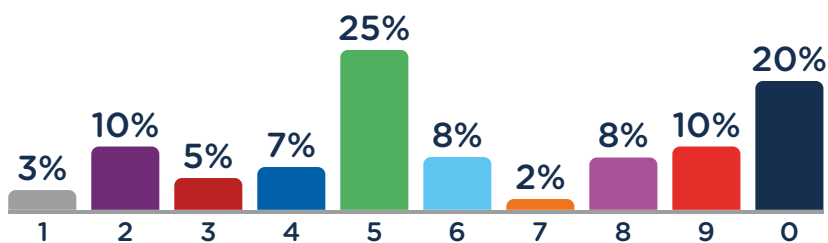


Research into the potential use of alternative gases should be a priority for gas networks



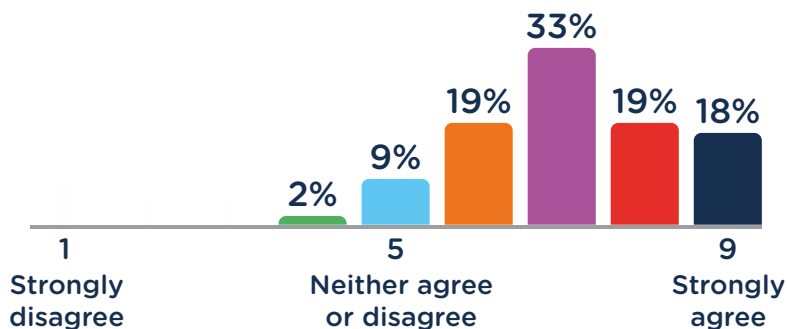
An average household spends approximately £60 on gas per month. How much more would you be willing to pay to increase the quantity of green gas available by 20%?

Using your pads please indicate how much you would be willing to pay per month 0 - 9 (0 = nothing, 9 = £9)



Strategic priorities

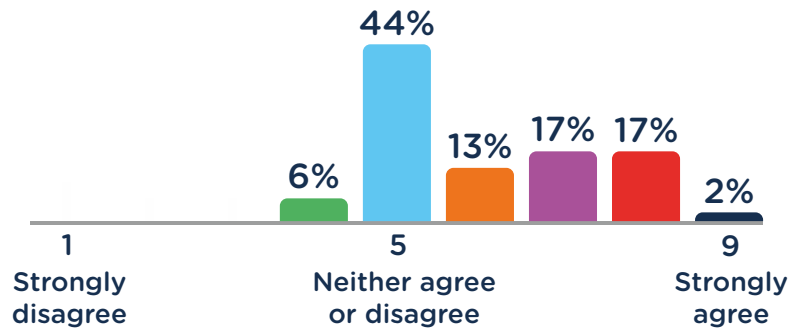
We have focused on the correct priorities in 2016/17



How do you rank the importance of the five priority areas?

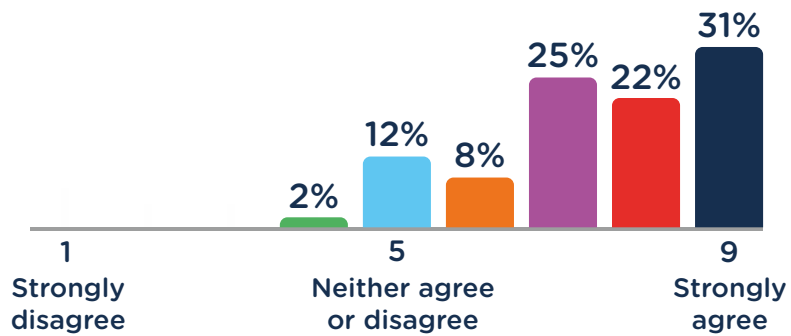


We used stakeholder feedback effectively to shape our business in 2016/17

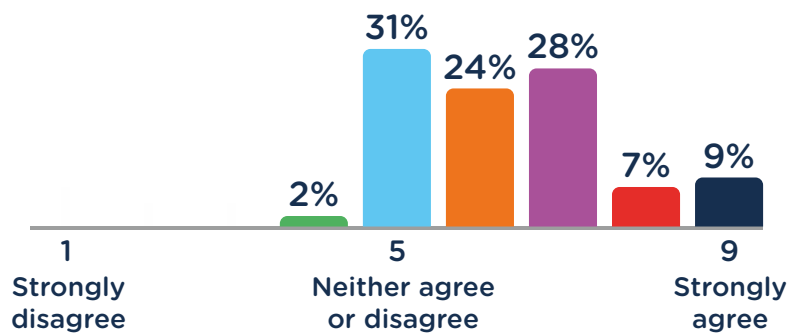


The future of Stakeholder Engagement within our business

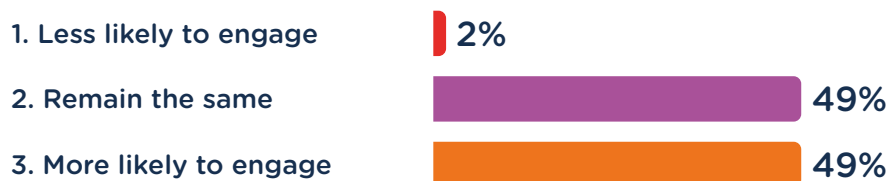
Establishing expert panels is the correct approach



The proposed changes to our timeline will lead to improvements



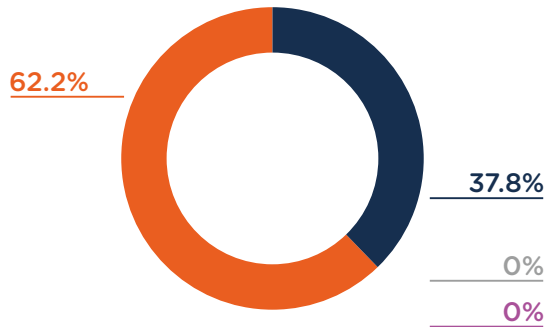
How will this new strategy impact your likelihood of engaging with us?



4. Feedback forms

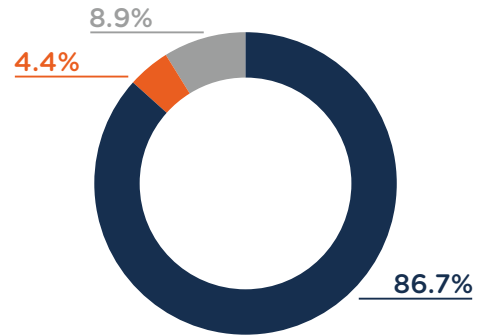
After the workshops delegates were invited to complete a feedback form to capture their thoughts on the success of the session, and ideas on how we can best engage with them going forwards. This section collates the results of the quantitative data captured from all three workshops. Please see the relevant workshop report for the qualitative data from each session.

Did you find the event beneficial?



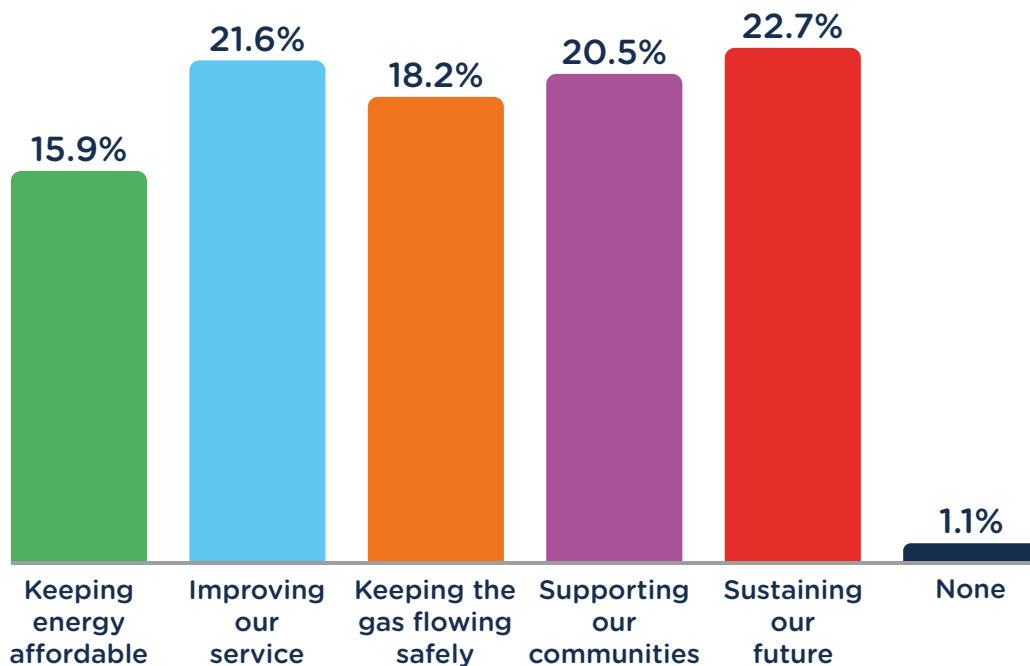
● Highly beneficial ● Beneficial
● Not beneficial ● Unsure

Did you feel you had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss your views today?

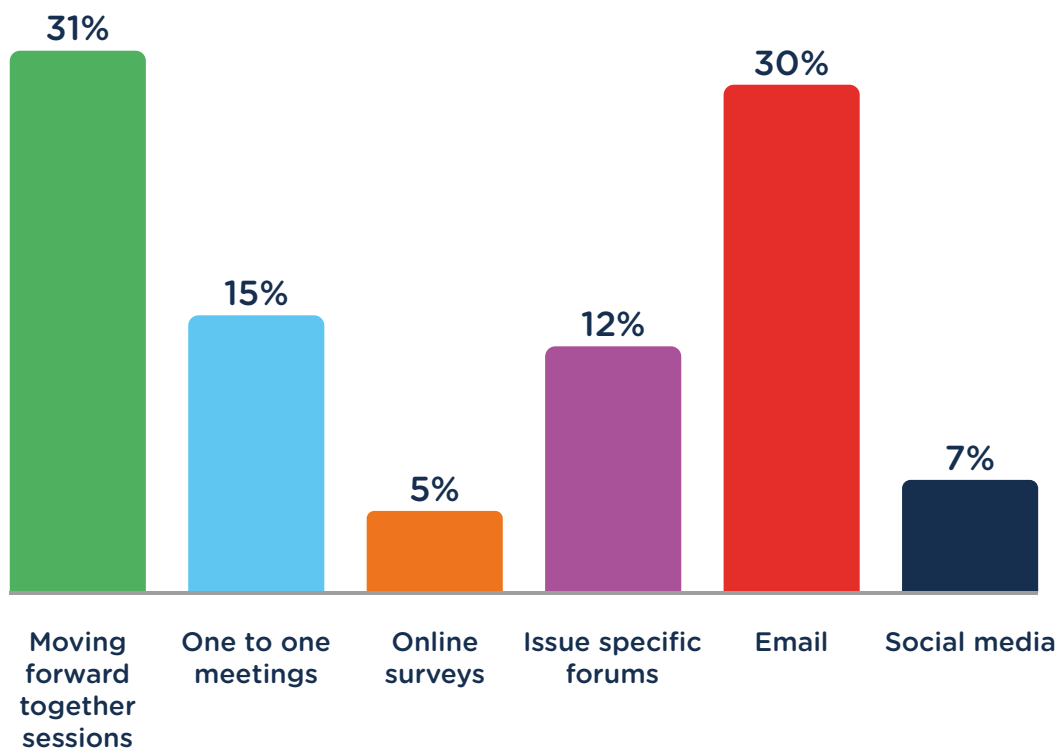


● Yes ● No ● Partly

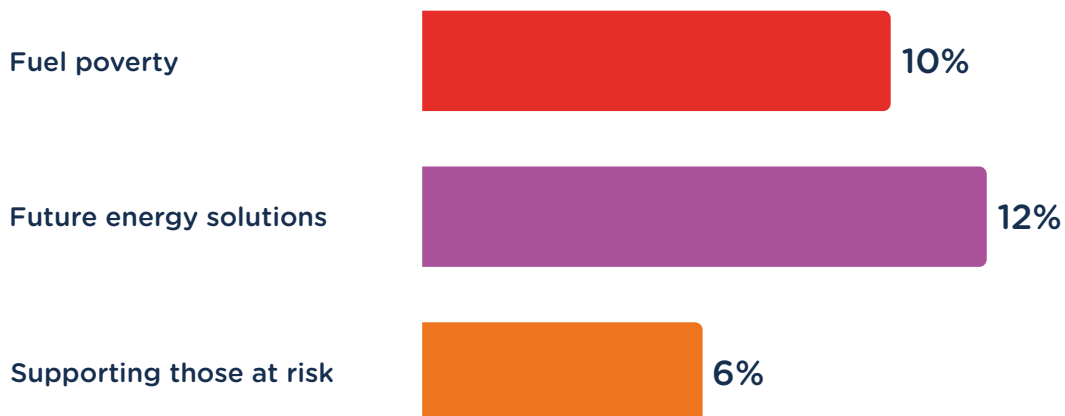
Which of our priorities do you feel your organisation could work in partnership with?



How would you like us to engage with you in the future?



Which expert panel would you like to be involved with?



5. Our commitment

We promise to incorporate our stakeholder opinions into how we prioritise and carry out our work, and to provide progress reports on an on-going basis.

If you have any further comments or suggestions, please email us at lets.chat@sgn.co.uk



Contact us

If you'd like to be part of the conversation and make sure your views count, or if you have any questions about our stakeholder engagement activities, please get in touch.



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Facebook



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lets.chat@sgn.co.uk



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Write to us
SGN, Axis House
5 Lonehead Drive
Newbridge, EH28 8TG



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