

Operational performance

## Customer satisfaction

Taking care of all our customers, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, is deeply embedded in our culture at UK Power Networks. It is an instinct that permeates the entire company, not just those on the customer frontline.

We are delighted that our strong customer service culture is reflected in objective assessments of our levels of customer satisfaction. This year again, Ofgem ranked us Number One for our Broad Measure of Customer Satisfaction score at 93%, and in January 2022 we were ranked fourth best customer service provider in the UK in the Institute of Customer Services (ICS) survey across all industries. We were the only utility company in the top five. The ICS measures five dimensions of customer service: Experience, Complaint Handling, Customer Ethos, Emotional Connection and Ethics. We pride ourselves on the embeddedness of our customer service culture, so it was particularly rewarding to see that we were the only company to feature in the top 10 of each of these five dimensions.

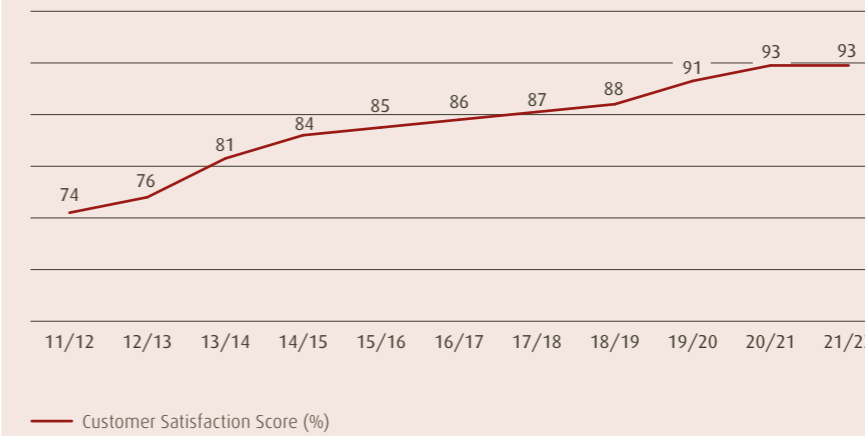
### Getting ready for low carbon technologies

Aside from the regular work we do to maintain these excellent levels of service, this year we have focused on preparing our network and range of services to be ready for the considerable uptake we have seen in the adoption of low carbon technologies in our area, particularly EVs. We saw an increase in enquiries about low carbon technology (LCT) connections of over 600% this year, as LCT is becoming a reality in many locations. People have been buying EVs at rates way ahead of recent forecasts, and we have developed cutting edge infrastructure and put services in place to respond to that increased demand.

Smart Connect is a portal that we introduced this year for domestic and business customers who want a connection for LCTs at their premises. The benefits of the portal include automated assessment to reduce processing times and issuing instant approval when criteria are met, automatic referrals to our internal teams if required (for example upgrading the main electrical fuse), a simple dashboard with a view of all of the customer's requests and the status, the ability to add images and supporting documents to a request, and search functions to help customers find requests they have raised with us. Smart Connect can process connections for the following domestic LCTs:

- Electric Vehicle charge point (EVCP)
- Vehicle-to-grid (V2G) EVCP
- Heat pump
- Solar panels
- Battery storage

### Ofgem's Broad Measure of Customer Satisfaction



93%

Our highest ever customer satisfaction score

Ranked No. 1

Ofgem ranked us No. 1 for our Broad Measure of Customer Satisfaction score

### A ten-day application process now takes a matter of minutes

Before we introduced Smart Connect, approvals for this sort of connection usually took the industry standard of approximately ten days from application to approval. With Smart Connect, the process can be completed in a matter of minutes. Domestic customers using this service awarded us 9.7/10 for customer satisfaction and business customers scored 9.4/10.

### The role of smart meters in a power cut

People who are medically dependent on equipment powered by electricity, such as oxygen ventilators, are at particularly high risk during a power cut. In 2021/22 we teamed up with Smart Energy GB to encourage such customers to have a smart meter installed. We found that 75% of people in these circumstances were not aware that their power distribution company would become aware that they were experiencing a power cut without them having to contact the company, and instead the power distribution company would be able to contact them and their emergency contacts to alert and support them. Sixty-seven percent of those contacted said that they would install a smart meter as a result of the campaign.

### Serving customers on the move

Data is an increasingly valuable resource across UK Power Networks and this year we have been analysing data in order to identify and understand changes in patterns of customer usage and requirements, in order to continue to deliver excellent service. As you can read on page 31 of this Annual Review, we have made great strides in reducing the number and duration of power cuts across our networks in recent years. Nevertheless, with the advent of EVs, the impact of a power cut is intensified, since it could mean that customers are unable to travel as they usually would. Using vast,

anonymised data sources from a mobile phone operator, in 2022 we were able to model and understand how customers are moving across our network geography. A power source at home is no longer the only place where customers need to be able to access electricity. People are travelling from area to area, as commuters, entrepreneurs, students, visitors and more, and those driving EVs need to know quickly about any problems with the power supply. That's why we have been looking into the communications needs of these more mobile customers. Channels such as the satellite navigation system, WAZE, are often sources of information for drivers, as are community apps such as NextDoor. We are assessing these as channels for us to communicate with our customers in the event of a power cut, as that will affect their ability to complete their journey. We are also looking into finding ways to feed in to the information gantries above the motorways, to alert drivers of problems at, for example, motorway EV charging stations.

### Support for customers affected by storms

A significant element of how satisfied our customers feel about our service depends on their experience during power cuts. You can read about how we responded to our customers during some of the most severe storms of recent years on page 30. Part of that customer service related to an improved approach to estimating and communicating our Estimated Times of Restoration (ETRs) during unplanned power cuts.

Our research and customer feedback told us that, with the greater prevalence of working at home, people are increasingly less tolerant of changes to the predictions of when power would be restored. We have made it a priority to improve our approach to establishing and communicating when power is likely to be restored to customers.

We also developed a real-time outage dashboard that helps managers understand the experience of our customers live during a power cut, and helps managers make informed decisions about how to adapt the customer service approach and support customers as incidents unfold.

### On-street charging

In 2021/22 Kent County Council took a strategic approach to developing EV on-street charging infrastructure throughout the county. UK Power Networks has been working closely with Kent County Council to assess its EV charging needs. We listened to what they told us and designed a process to satisfy those requirements. In 2022 we began a programme to deliver over 500 on-street EV chargers across the county in a community-wide electrification scheme. West Sussex and Surrey are now looking to replicate the Kent approach with help from UK Power Networks.

**"UK Power Networks provided a key role to Connected Kerb during the planning phase by providing a dedicated team to support early identification of Points of Connection, estimates on available power and connection costs for each site."**

**Nathan King**  
Head of Infrastructure  
at Connected Kerb

On this page you will see how we have performed against the following Sustainable Development Goals:

