

Western Power Distribution

Future Bill Payers workshops Executive Summary

Bristol University 15th Feb 2013

Nottingham University 17th Feb 2013

Executive summary

1.1. Power cuts

- Most students had not had a great deal of experience of power cuts and most believe that the current level of service they receive from their DNO is acceptable
- Most would not know to call their DNO if there was a power cut
- The general feeling was that a power cut of over one hour would be inconvenient and duration was considered more of an issue than frequency

1.2. Communications and social media

- Most of the students we engaged with do not use Twitter. Facebook is far more popular but the general feeling is that it is no appropriate for company's such as WPD to reach out to their customers via this medium
- In times of a power cut, most students would prefer an update via text message and only if they had decided to opt in to such a service
- Students felt that WPD ought to raise its profile. Ideas to do this included the distribution of fridge magnets or stickers which could be affixed to fuse boxes. It was also suggested that reaching out to students at the end of their first years (when they tend to move into their own homes for the first time) would be a good way of building a relationship with future bill payers

1.3. Climate change a severe weather mitigation

- Protecting the network against the effects of severe weather was generally considered to be a high priority issue
- The general view was that WPD should front-load investment in order to mitigate the effects of climate change and severe weather
- Students were of the view that WPD should be more transparent about the need for increasing spending to deal with this issue and that, if they did so, customers would understand

1.4. Smart networks and low carbon technology

- The general consensus was that WPD should adopt a cautious approach with regard to putting in place the infrastructure necessary for electric vehicles
- It was widely felt that this cautious approach also ought to be applied to all initiatives to future proof the network
- Most future bill payers would use a smart meter and felt that it would alter their behaviour, in a positive way