



**Powering communities and keeping  
our colleagues and customers safe  
Coronavirus (COVID-19)**



## Introduction

As the company responsible for the network that powers everyday life for 8 million customers across 3.9 million homes in the North East, Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire, we are prepared as the COVID-19 pandemic affects our customers, business and the communities we serve.

We recognise that we provide an essential service to all our customers and stakeholders and they will be reliant on the electricity we distribute over the coming weeks as the current situation develops.

We have well developed emergency plans for various scenarios and we activated our business continuity and pandemic plans in early 2020. We are working within this framework, informed by our close working with Ofgem and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, and we are acting in line with government and latest medical advice to:

- support the UK efforts to delay the spread of COVID-19
- manage our workforce and keep them informed and safe
- support our customers, especially those who may be more vulnerable in a power cut, and
- continue to manage and maintain our network for our customers and the economies we support.

## Message from Geoff Earl, Northern Powergrid's Director of Health, Safety and Environment

"We are reassuring our customers that, like other critical service providers, we will continue to be there for our customers, while taking appropriate precautions based on latest expert advice.

"Our priority remains taking care of our people while we deliver services for our customers to power their lives.

"We are doing this by maintaining high standards of hygiene in and around our facilities, following the latest expert advice when it comes to working in the communities we serve and increasing remote working, where possible, so that we can reduce occupancy levels at our sites to protect colleagues who have critical roles in managing our network."

## Supporting our business critical roles and services

As a provider of essential services and critical infrastructure, our business continuity plans are designed to enable us to effectively manage pandemic situations which could result in us needing to respond to increased colleague absentee rates and customers with a power cut who may have COVID-19 or be self-isolating.





Contact us 24/7 on Facebook or Twitter  
or view our power cut map on  
[northernpowergrid.com/power-cuts](https://northernpowergrid.com/power-cuts)



## Working in partnership

We are working closely with government and our industry partners to ensure that we deliver for our customers and support the national response to COVID-19.

We are sharing intelligence and data, in line with GDPR, with official agencies to support the response to the virus.

## Managing our network control and dispatch teams

Our network control engineers monitor and manage our network of more than 60,000 miles of overhead power lines and underground cables across 9,650 square miles and our dispatchers ensure we mobilise our frontline teams needed to respond to power cuts or electrical emergencies.

We have implemented arrangements to restrict access to our Network Control and Dispatch areas so only colleagues who need to be present are given access.

We also have arrangements to operate our Network Control and Dispatch teams from back-up locations, if required.

## Supporting our customers

### Online and contact centre services:

Our [power cut map](#) and [reporting service](#) provides customers with online support while our 24/hour contact centre and social media (Facebook and Twitter @Northpowergrid) remain ready to offer advice and information.

Our business continuity plans ensure we can continue to be there for our customers if they need us. We have additional colleagues across our business who are trained and able to support our contact centre teams in dealing with calls and enquiries.

Customers on our Priority Services Register will continue to be kept updated via our Powergrid Care team and additional support will be offered where appropriate and possible.

Any customers who are medically dependent on electricity and have not joined our free register are encouraged to do so by visiting:

[northernpowergrid.com/care](https://northernpowergrid.com/care)  
or calling 0800 169 2996.







## Interacting with our customers

Supporting our frontline colleagues is key. We have issued health and safety instructions based on latest medical advice, to ensure they take appropriate precautions when responding or engaging with our customers and moving around the communities we serve. We have appropriate stocks of PPE for working in potentially infectious environments.

We are asking customers who are either self-isolating or have a confirmed case of the coronavirus and need an engineer to attend their property, to ensure they tell us before any visit so that appropriate precautionary arrangements can be put in place.

## Maintaining our network

We are monitoring our planned maintenance programme, which includes work that does not affect our customers and supports our investment programme to improve network reliability and capacity. We are endeavouring to provide our full range of services in line with current Ofgem expectations, however this may change in due course. Our teams will continue to proactively manage our programmes so that we can make informed decisions about what work takes place and when.

## Protecting our supply chain

We continue to actively monitor our supply chain to ensure that we have the necessary equipment and resources available to support our operations, colleagues and customers.

## Supporting our people

We are committed to keeping our people safe and informed. We have provided guidance and interim requirements to enable them to work safely and be supported should they – or their families – be personally affected by COVID-19. We continue to:

- proactively share latest government and public health advice with our colleagues,
- encourage work and hygiene practices that support the UK effort to delay the spread of the disease,
- implement appropriate social distancing and encourage practices which enable our people to manage their day-to-day working life in a sensible way that supports other colleagues, customers and the UK effort to delay the spread of the virus, and
- monitor employee absence levels daily so we can respond swiftly and accordingly to any changes in our resource levels.

**Thank you for your support as we continue to deliver our key role in powering the region while supporting the UK response to delaying the impact of COVID-19.**