




# How we're delivering our purpose: healthier

## Key performance indicators

Our key performance indicators for building a healthier North West are colleague engagement, customer satisfaction (as measured through our ranking within Ofwat's C-MeX survey), and the number of customers lifted out of water poverty. We report on a selection of other metrics relating to customers, colleagues and other social matters on page 82.

<b>Colleague engagement</b> Level of colleague engagement as measured by our annual colleague opinion survey.	<b>C-MeX ranking<sup>(1)</sup></b> Ofwat's customer measure of experience (C-MeX), comprising two surveys – the customer service survey, and the customer experience survey.	<b>Customers lifted out of water poverty<sup>(1)</sup></b> Where our support acts to lift a customer out of water poverty, which is defined as spending more than 3 per cent of income on their water bill.
<b>Target</b> At least as high as the utilities norm benchmark	<b>Target</b> Upper quartile against water and sewerage companies (WaSCs)	<b>Target</b> At least 66,500 customers lifted out of water poverty by 2024/25
<b>Annual performance</b> <b>87%</b> Colleague engagement has increased this year to a very high level, outperforming the utilities norm and seven points higher than the UK high performing norm benchmark. 2023/24: 81 per cent 2022/23: 82 per cent	<b>Annual performance</b> <b>Second quartile</b> We continue to be the highest-performing listed company, ranked sixth out of the WaSCs, and eighth out of all 17 companies. 2023/24: top listed company, fourth WaSC, and sixth overall 2022/23: top listed company, fourth WaSC, and fifth overall	<b>Annual performance</b> <b>96,937</b> We have helped nearly 100,000 customers out of water poverty so far this AMP (including 84,726 against our regulatory target and related ODI, which applies a maximum cap on the number of company-funded customers that can be included). 2023/24: 100,758 customers 2022/23: 106,936 customers
<b>Status</b>  Met target	<b>Status</b>  Close to meeting target	<b>Status</b>  Met target
<b>Key stakeholder</b> Colleagues	<b>Key stakeholder</b> Customers	<b>Key stakeholder</b> Customers
<b>Relevant material themes<sup>(2)</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colleague engagement</li> <li>• Diverse and skilled workforce</li> <li>• Health, safety and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<b>Relevant material themes<sup>(2)</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service and operational performance</li> <li>• Trust, transparency and legitimacy</li> <li>• Political and regulatory environment</li> </ul>	<b>Relevant material themes<sup>(2)</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability and vulnerability</li> <li>• Customer service and operational performance</li> <li>• North West regional economy</li> </ul>
<b>Link to remuneration<sup>(3)</sup></b> n/a	<b>Link to remuneration<sup>(3)</sup></b> Bonus	<b>Link to remuneration<sup>(3)</sup></b> LTP
<b>Assurance<sup>(4)</sup></b> Independent third-party verification	<b>Assurance<sup>(4)</sup></b> Regulatory reporting assurance	<b>Assurance<sup>(4)</sup></b> Regulatory reporting assurance

<sup>(1)</sup> Measure relates to the water and wastewater activities of our regulated entity, United Utilities Water Limited.

<sup>(2)</sup> Read more about our materiality assessment on pages 29 to 30.

<sup>(3)</sup> Read our remuneration report, with details about the bonus and Long Term Plan (LTP), on pages 146 to 172.

<sup>(4)</sup> Read more about the assurance over our performance metrics on page 67.

## Creating value for



Customers



Communities



Colleagues



Suppliers



Investors

## Delivering great service for our customers

We have made a number of improvements to customer service, over the last year and across AMP7.

The performance commitment targets set out in our final determination for AMP7 were increasingly challenging year-on-year, but we have met or beaten around 80 per cent of them across AMP7, and earned a net reward against outcome delivery incentives (ODIs) in every year, with a cumulative net ODI reward of £129 million across AMP7. This has been consistently higher than average, and demonstrates a strong all-round level of service.

Some of the improvements helping us to earn this ODI reward are our strong performance on increasing reservoir resilience, mains repair and reductions in unplanned outages, lead replacement, and reducing the number of customers experiencing low water pressure. However, there are other areas where we fell short of the stretching target and are working to improve further.

We improved water quality further this year, with a 29 per cent reduction in customer contacts achieved over AMP7. Our long-term investment programme to clean and re-line the Vyrnwy Aqueduct, which will continue in AMP8, is driving a big reduction in discolouration, which is one of the main drivers of customer contacts about water quality. This has been supported by our Water Quality First programme, launched in 2021 with the aim of providing customers with industry-leading water quality, which is training and engaging colleagues right across the business and our key supply chain partners on how they can help improve water quality. However, the number of contacts was higher than targeted and there is more to do.

Our AMP8 investment programme will help us to deliver further improvements for customers. Lead pipes will be replaced in 30,000 homes, we are upgrading seven of our water treatment works as well as continuing re-lining the Vyrnwy Aqueduct, we have a major programme to replace 900 kilometres of water mains, and construction work will be starting on replacing key sections of the Haweswater Aqueduct.

We experienced periods of particularly intense rainfall in the winter of 2024, and four named storms in the last three months of the year. This, naturally, impacted our weather-responsive wastewater performance measures, particularly flooding, resulting in a £24 million ODI penalty for combined internal and external incidents. This is a challenging measure for us, but we recognise the huge impact it has on customers and continue to work very hard to improve.

Notwithstanding the penalties incurred, we have delivered around a 19 per cent reduction in internal sewer flooding compared with last year. We earned a net reward on the permanent solutions we have implemented to improve hydraulic flood risk resilience, reducing the risk of flooding due to the overloading of sewers. We have also performed well with rewards for reducing sewer blockages, which are down by around a fifth since 2020, and raising customer awareness to reduce flooding. This has been supported by our investment in Dynamic Network Management (DNM), with sensors across the wastewater network alerting us to issues so that we can proactively intervene and resolve these before customers are impacted.

This will remain an area of particular challenge during AMP8, and we have ambitious multi-faceted plans to tackle the risk of sewer flooding. We have more than £100 million targeted investment for sewer flood resilience, we are expanding the use of DNM with thousands of additional sewer-level sensors, and installing property-level flood alert sensors in every flooded property to reduce the chance of repeat incidents in these higher-risk areas.

We are also investing and working with partners on new and innovative approaches to rainwater management, particularly in heavily built-up urban areas like Greater Manchester and Merseyside where we are partnering with the combined authorities, as set out on page 86, which will help to reduce flood risk as well as contributing to reducing spills from storm overflows.

Our consistently strong all-round performance has helped us to rank highly in Ofwat's measure of customer satisfaction, C-MeX, earning a reward against this metric in every year and achieving the third highest reward in the industry across AMP7. For this year, we placed eighth highest of all 17 companies, sixth highest water and wastewater company, and we are consistently ranked as the best of the listed companies.

We also perform strongly on developer satisfaction, D-MeX, and business retailer satisfaction, BR-MeX. We expect to finish the year in an upper quartile position for both. These are important measures of our service and, as we enter AMP8, these experience measures will increase in importance.

Underpinning our focus on service excellence for all customers, we are the only UK water and sewerage company to have earned the ServiceMark with Distinction from the Institute of Customer Service, the Chartered Institute of Credit Management excellence in credit management, and the BSI kitemark for inclusive service.



# How we're delivering our purpose: healthier

## Supporting customers with affordability and vulnerability

The North West of England contains 47 per cent of the most deprived (top 1 per cent) neighbourhoods, so helping customers that struggle to pay their bills has always been a key focus area for us and we have an industry-leading approach to affordability and vulnerability support.

We have supported 414,000 households in AMP7 through our comprehensive range of affordability schemes, and we continue to lift customers out of water poverty, earning an ODI reward against this performance commitment.

We use a variety of methods to help support customers with management of their bills and highlight the support we have available. Utilising data, we're monitoring customer payment behaviour to proactively identify customers showing signs of struggling to pay, and sending early intervention emails with tailored messaging designed to increase customer awareness of the support we, and third-party organisations, can offer.

Our use of Open Banking enormously speeds up the time it takes for customers to clear eligibility criteria, making the process much simpler and quicker for us to get customers the right support when they need it.

Customers that struggle to pay their water bills will inevitably also struggle with other bills, so we believe the key to providing real tangible support is cross-industry collaboration. We host annual affordability summits in January of each year, bringing together partner agencies and key stakeholders to highlight the importance of collaborative cross-sector working and discuss ways to be more joined up when it comes to helping people across the region.

With necessary bill increases to support the increased investment needed in AMP8, we proposed our biggest ever support package, doubling the financial support available to £525 million and helping one in six customers during 2025–30. We have also introduced new social tariffs, including an annual discount for low income households. More information can be found on page 83.

We also remain supportive of the drive to introduce a national social tariff, which would help to provide a more equitable sharing of support for customers across the country.


It is not just customers experiencing financial hardship that require additional support from us. There are a number of different factors of vulnerability, including medical needs, age, and language barriers. Our Priority Services Register helps to provide additional tailored support for customers experiencing vulnerable circumstances. Since the launch of the register in 2015, we have significantly increased the number of customers receiving support, exceeding

our AMP7 targets. Around 540,000 of our customers are registered for our Priority Services offering, which holds accreditation to the international consumer vulnerability standard, ISO 22458:2022 – one of the first water companies to attain this.

When conducting research for our AMP8 business plan, we included a wide range of vulnerable customers and designed our research to be representative and accessible.

As well as affordability summits we also host annual vulnerability summits, giving us an opportunity to share what we are doing to support vulnerable customers with key stakeholders across the charitable sector, local authorities and vulnerability groups.

At our third customer vulnerability summit, in May 2024, we shared our business plan and our future commitments relating to vulnerable customers with 100 organisations across the region, who provided valuable feedback and creative ideas. In June 2024, we also published a new vulnerability strategy setting out our plans, priorities and targets, as well as progress made to date.

 Read our vulnerability strategy at [unitedutilities.com/globalassets/documents/pdf/10400-priority-services-strategy-document.acc24.pdf](https://unitedutilities.com/globalassets/documents/pdf/10400-priority-services-strategy-document.acc24.pdf)

We will continue to develop our industry-leading support for vulnerable customers in AMP8, improving the quality and level of support we provide, and by 2030 we are targeting 20 per cent of our customers to be accessing Priority Services.

## Providing a safe and great place to work

Delivery of our purpose is underpinned by a strong, high-performance culture and the diverse, skilled and engaged colleagues that carry out day-to-day activities.

In our annual colleague engagement survey, our overall engagement score of 87 per cent was an improvement of 6 points on last year, and exceeded all external benchmarks used in the survey (High Performing companies, UK companies, and Utility companies).

Our highest performing categories in the survey were Health and Safety (94 per cent), Wellbeing (94 per cent) and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (90 per cent), reflecting our commitment to prioritising the health, safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and improving equity, diversity and inclusion.

We were particularly pleased that 91 per cent of colleagues said they are proud to be part of United Utilities. In order to deliver the significant improvements we have planned for AMP8, we are going to need a great team of people behind us, so having such a high level of engagement will be really important.

Our 'Call it Out' initiative encourages colleagues to raise ideas and opportunities for improving efficiency and performance directly to the CEO, allowing swift action to be taken. We know that we are better

together, and our colleagues bring an unparalleled level of knowledge and experience to help us improve. This also helps to improve engagement, with everyone knowing that they have a voice that is valued – 87 per cent of surveyed colleagues agreed with the statement "my voice is heard".

Following positive feedback from the all-colleague event we hosted after submission of our business plan, we hosted a follow-up event this year, once again open to everyone across the organisation, to discuss our final determination and plans for AMP8, and give all our colleagues the opportunity to ask any questions they may have had. We have a big programme to deliver, and getting everyone together to talk about how we will accomplish that and what it means for each and every colleague is an important step.

Health, safety and wellbeing continue to be key focus areas. We have engaged with more than 1,100 colleagues in face-to-face 'standdowns', and implemented improvements in the way we tackle occupational road risk and process safety management through cross-business 'task and finish' teams. We have also refreshed our Home Safe and Well programme this year, with three behaviours supported by 12 lifesaving rules, as set out on page 53.

Through collaborative effort and focus on health and safety, we have increased our health and safety engagement score to 94 per cent this year, and also reduced our colleague one-day lost time injuries frequency rate by just over 30 per cent. Our colleague RIDDOR injury frequency rate for 2024/25 was 0.078 per 100,000 hours worked, a 15 per cent improvement compared with last year, amounting to 11 injuries in the year.

Unfortunately, with the increase in workload as we ramp up to AMP8, we have seen higher incidents of contractor lost-time injuries – 24 in the last 12 months compared with 20 in the prior year. Our contractor RIDDOR injury frequency rate was 0.078 accidents per 100,000 hours worked. We are actively working with our contractor partners to learn from all incidents, and forming a joint safety forum to collaborate and share best practice to simplify and streamline our health and safety processes.

## Focusing on equity, diversity and inclusion

Diversity breeds creativity, and we make sure we are reaching and recruiting from every part of our community. In 2024, we were placed fourth on the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers list, which highlighted our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion through our comprehensive strategies and initiatives. We were ranked in the Top 10 of the Corporate Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index, an international benchmarking survey that is used to track progress in embracing religion and belief (including non-theistic beliefs).

We were awarded Diversity Team of the Year at the 2024 Inclusive Awards, reflecting the significant strides we have made in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion across the company, and our focus on fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace whilst increasing diverse recruitment to build a strong diverse culture.

This year our colleague networks represented the company at Pride events within our five counties and introduced a number of new awareness campaigns including Islamophobia Month, South Asian Heritage Month, and hosting our first armed forces remembrance service. We also connected members of our networks with others in similar roles within different organisations and industries across our region, and hosted the first external colleague network session, attended by representatives from over 30 organisations, now regularly sharing many valuable examples of best practice of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Our workforce profile remains at 65 per cent male and 35 per cent female. At 44 per cent, we exceeded our 2024 target to have 40 per cent of women on the board, ranking in the top third of 100 FTSE companies in the FTSE Women Leaders index. In the utilities sector, we were ranked sixth in the combined FTSE 350+ Private 50 companies index. We also led the way this year with 24 per cent of engineering roles filled by women – putting us ahead of the national average by 7.5 per cent. As a result of our commitments to gender equality, we were included in the 2024 Women in Work (WiW) Gender Equity Measures Report as being an equal, fair, and supportive workplace for all women.

Our graduates and apprentices also bring a breadth of diversity, with 40 per cent of our overall graduates and 28.5 per cent of our apprentices being female. Our work to attract, support and develop women across all areas of the business will bring long-term improvements in our gender pay gap, building on the positive improvements we've seen since we started reporting, with our 2024 mean gender pay gap standing at 4.8 per cent. We were proud to have our first female mechanical field service engineer join our apprenticeship programme, and she was awarded the Derek Jackson Special Achievement Award for her outstanding work in the North Manchester water services team at the Young Engineer Awards.

In our latest survey, 92 per cent of colleagues – across all business areas, job roles, genders and time served within the company – said that United Utilities supports diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

## Attracting and developing future talent

We have strong levels of retention, successful graduate and apprentice schemes, and a continued focus on training and development, helping us to ensure we have the right skills and a committed team of people to help us ensure long-term success.

We deliver our own apprenticeship training using the Government's Apprenticeship Levy, and were Ofsted inspected in 2024 at our Bolton Technical Training Centre. We are very proud to have been rated 'Good' in all five areas of our internal apprenticeship provision. The inspection noted that our leaders are ambitious and acutely aware of industry skills shortages and the importance of succession planning, with apprenticeships providing a pipeline of talent and leaders supporting apprentices to successfully achieve their apprenticeship and to secure employment beyond it.

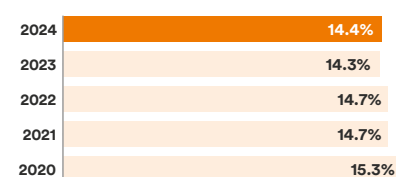
We've also set a new benchmark for workforce competency and operational excellence by becoming the first water company in the UK to extend the Competent Operator Scheme beyond water treatment works to include water networks.

882 colleagues secured new roles within the company this year, and we continued to recruit and train new talent through our award-winning graduate and apprentice programmes. We welcomed 127 new graduates and apprentices this year, bringing the total to 455 in AMP7, and we expect to see a further 750 in AMP8.

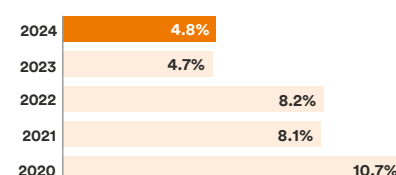
Strong female role models from all levels of our organisation volunteered to help run our award-winning 'Engineering Masterclass' competition with secondary schools from the local area. With a high number of pupils from deprived and disadvantaged backgrounds, this helps to improve social mobility, and its aim is to inspire young people from a wide range of backgrounds to pursue STEM-related careers.

We have welcomed 43 students from the 10,000 Black Interns programme into the business since 2021. Through a six-week placement, the programme is designed to transform the horizons and prospects of black students by offering paid work experience to undergraduates and postgraduates.

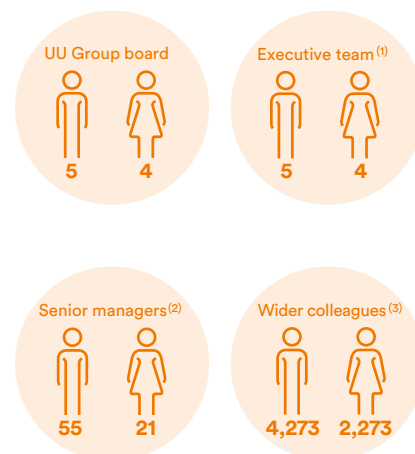
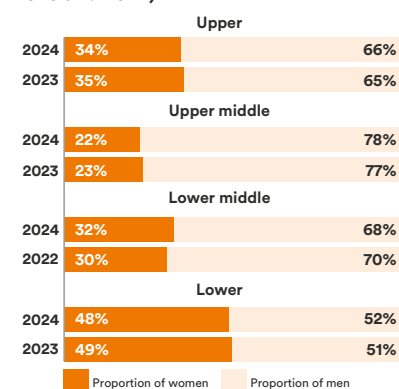
### Our median gender pay gap over time



### Our mean gender pay gap over time



### Percentage of women and men overall and in each quartile of the pay range (figures for 2023 and 2024)



<sup>(1)</sup> Executive team excludes CEO and CFO who are included in group board figures.

<sup>(2)</sup> As at 31 March 2025, there were 7 male and 5 female colleagues appointed as statutory directors of subsidiary group companies but who do not fulfil the Companies Act 2006 definition of 'senior managers'.

<sup>(3)</sup> Wider colleagues as at 31 March 2025.

# How we're delivering our purpose: healthier

## Status key

Performance against target  Met expectation/target  Close to meeting expectation/target  Behind expectation/target

## Stakeholder key



Customers



Environment



Communities

































Colleagues



Suppliers



Investors

Measure	2025 target	Performance				Assurance <sup>(5)</sup>	Link to remuneration <sup>(2)</sup>	Key stakeholder	Status
		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23					Performance against target
Customer ODIs <sup>(1)</sup>	Year on year improvement	<b>£24 million</b>	£34 million	£25 million		RRA	Bonus		
Water quality customer contacts per 10,000 population <sup>(1)</sup>	12.2	<b>12.8</b>	13.2	14.1		RRA	Bonus		
Supply interruptions per property per year (hours:minutes:seconds) <sup>(1)</sup>	00:05:00	<b>00:14:18</b>	00:09:39	00:38:44		RRA	PC		
Unplanned outages of peak week production capacity <sup>(1)</sup>	2.34%	<b>1.78%</b>	2.05%	1.73%		RRA	PC		
Number of household written complaints compared to WaSCs <sup>(1)</sup>	Upper quartile	<b>Third quartile<sup>(3)</sup></b>	Third quartile	Second quartile		RRA	n/a		
Speed of resolution <sup>(1)</sup>	5 days	<b>5 days</b>	3.95 days	3.9 days		RRA	n/a		
Developer satisfaction score (D-MeX) <sup>(1)</sup>	Above industry median	<b>Above industry median</b>	Above industry median	Above industry median		RRA	PC		
Number of households registered for Priority Services <sup>(1)</sup>	In excess of 220,000 (7%)	<b>540,380 (16.51%)</b>	401,987 (12.35%)	294,490 (9.1%)		RRA	LTP		
Certification for Priority Services <sup>(1) (4)</sup>	Maintain certification	<b>Maintained ISO22458</b>	Maintained ISO22458	ISO22458: 2022 Verification achieved		ITV	n/a		
Helping customers look after water in their home <sup>(1)</sup>	10% increase	<b>34.50%</b>	34.30%	31.60%		RRA	PC		
Compliance Risk Index <sup>(1)</sup>	0.00	<b>10.21</b>	6.00	3.67		RRA	LTP		
Wellbeing Charter accreditation	Retain accreditation	<b>Retained</b>	Retained	Retained		ITV	n/a		
Accident frequency rate for colleagues (per 100,000 hours)	10% year-on-year improvement	<b>0.078</b>	0.092	0.072		IAT	n/a		
Accident frequency rate for contractors (per 100,000 hours)	Year-on-year improvement	<b>0.078</b>	0.043	0.078		IAT	n/a		
Your Opinion Survey score for diversity and inclusion questions	Upper quartile against utilities norm	<b>Upper quartile</b>	Upper quartile	Upper quartile		ITV	n/a		

<sup>(1)</sup> Measure relates to the water and wastewater activities of our regulated entity, United Utilities Water Limited.

<sup>(2)</sup> Read our remuneration report, with details about the bonus and Long Term Plan (LTP), on pages 146 to 172.

PC = Performance commitment subject to reward and/or penalty as part of customer outcome delivery incentives (ODIs). These feed into both bonus and LTP through inclusion of customer ODIs and return on regulated equity (RoRE) respectively.

<sup>(3)</sup> Latest comparative data available 2023/24.

<sup>(4)</sup> The new Consumer Vulnerability standard, ISO 22458:2022 replaces the previous BS18477:2010 Inclusive Service Provision standard.

<sup>(5)</sup> Read more about the assurance over our performance metrics on page 67.

ITV = Independent third-party verification. RRA = Regulatory reporting assurance. IAT = Internal audit team.



#### Case study:

#### Increasing our affordability support to help one in six households with their bills

With the scale of our investment for AMP8 requiring an increase in bill levels, we know that it's more important than ever that we support customers who are already feeling the strain on their finances due to cost-of-living pressures.

Through the work we'll carry out over the next five years we aim to secure improved resilience in the face of climate change, meet the demands of our growing population, and address the priorities of our customers – helping to create a stronger, greener and healthier North West. While we've worked to make our programme as efficient as we can, and will have the third lowest projected bill in England by 2030, delivering a step change on the things that matter most will, however, mean that bills will need to increase – and we need to have robust measures in place to extend our affordability offerings.

That's why we're increasing our support to £525 million for the 2025–30 period. It's our largest ever affordability support package, and will help one in six households with their bills. Our commitment to helping those struggling to pay has been recognised by regulators, with Ofwat stating that our business plan demonstrated a "sector-leading level of ambition on affordability".

We're introducing two new schemes for AMP8, on top of our existing levels of support. The first of these, our Low Income Water Discount, provides a £50 annual discount on water charges for eligible

income-deprived households. As a result of our data share agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions, over 180,000 customers have already been flagged as eligible in our billing system, ready to receive the discount on their first bill containing 2025/26 charges – and we have a manual application process in place for customers not automatically identified.

Secondly, we're launching WaterSure Plus, an extension of our WaterSure scheme which caps bills for metered customers who use a lot of water due to medical conditions or having a large family. The WaterSure Plus tariff widens eligibility beyond the current legislative scheme to include low-income customers in receipt of disability-related benefits.

On top of this, we're working to make the affordability support process as seamless as possible for customers. We've launched the first phase of a new, improved assessment solution, building on our existing partnership with IE Hub. It allows us to create a more holistic affordability assessment journey, with capability for customers to self-serve where appropriate. Future phases will provide additional improvements, including the integration of open banking – which we're already using to verify customer income in real time to

improve the accuracy and efficiency of our customer affordability assessments.

And we continue to host an annual Affordability Summit, bringing together organisations including councils, charities, housing associations and others that interact with vulnerable customers and those experiencing financial difficulty. The summits give attendees the chance to share experiences and discuss ways for their organisations to be more joined up when it comes to helping people across the region. At this year's event, guest speakers included the credit reference agency Equifax, and the Money and Mental Health Institute. Attendees also heard from the Department for Work and Pensions on how they support customers with disabilities return to the workforce and the upcoming changes to Universal Credit.

#### Delivering value for



This is creating value for customers and communities.

➤ Read more about **affordability** on page 80