



Action for Warm Homes

CAF Charities Aid Foundation



Smart Energy GB in Communities latest news!

This newsletter is part of Smart Energy GB's partnerships programme which is integral to the consumer engagement campaign.

Smart Energy GB in Communities supports a network of partner agencies working with harder to reach groups to ensure effective engagement with the smart meter rollout.

Looking back ...

The overall objective of the partnerships programme in 2017 was to reach people over 65 with no personal internet access, and to provide the necessary education and reassurance to build confidence in new technology by demonstrating that smart meters are easy to use.

The programme provided grants of up to £5000 to 66 organisations, trained 179 champions, and worked with 45 partner organisations not in receipt of a grant.

Where evaluated, partner activity successfully communicated the objective to older offline audiences that smart meters will be easy to use, and build confidence in using them (70% and 57% agree, respectively); not surprisingly activity which focused on direct engagement with people, was particularly effective at achieving this.

To determine the focus of activity each year Smart Energy GB review the learnings and insights from the previous year, and analyse the overall performance of the campaign, to determine the role for partnerships.

Looking forward ...

The Smart Energy GB in Communities programme for 2018 launches Monday 9th April and continues work to engage and support people who may otherwise experience barriers to understanding or engaging with the smart meter rollout.

The programme this year will be targeting funding and support to partners delivering activity which reaches:

- people who are over the age of 60 with no personal internet access and those over the age of 65
- people who are severe and profoundly D/deaf.

This is where the insight is showing us the campaign needs additional partnership involvement.

If your organisation works with either of these groups read below for more information about how we would like to work with you.

Smart outlook

Last week Smart Energy GB published Smart energy outlook, the largest independent survey of national public opinion on energy and smart meters.

The biannual nationwide poll into the opinions of almost 10,000 people in Great Britain, carried out by Populus, provides clear evidence that the overwhelming majority of customers who have smart meters installed in their homes are happy with them.

It comes as new official figures published by the government show that over 11 million smart meters have now been installed in homes across Great Britain.

Smart meters replace the traditional analogue meters we currently have in our homes. They enable accurate bills, near real time information on energy use and greater control over the way we buy and use energy.

The Outlook survey found:

- Around three quarters (73 per cent) of people with a smart meter would recommend one to friends, family or neighbours. That's equivalent to 6.3 million people who would recommend a smart meter
- The majority (82 per cent) of people with smart meters say they have a better idea of what they are spending on energy
- More than eight in ten (81 per cent) of people with a smart meter think their energy bill is accurate compared to only 67 per cent with a traditional analogue meter
- More than eight in ten (82 per cent) of people with smart meters have taken steps to reduce energy waste

The positive impact of smart meters also remains steadfast over time. People who have had a smart meter for longer than a year are more likely to feel their energy bill is accurate and to say they are not as concerned about running up a big energy bill.

Smart energy outlook shows that smart meters are not only proving popular – they're also positively influencing the way people use gas and electricity, as well as how they feel about their household energy.

We are excited to launch the 2018 small grants fund – Round 1 live from 9 April 2018

The Smart Energy GB in Communities Fund is seeking applications from not-for-profit organisations who can help engage people and communities across Great Britain with information about how to get and use smart meters. With two distinct target groups in 2018 we are running two separate funds.

Round 1 of the Smart Energy GB in Communities fund will launch on **Monday 9 April**. Grants of up to £5000 will be made available to partner organisations working to engage people **who are over 60 without personal internet access and those over the age of 65**.

In **mid-May** we will be launching a second round of funding available to partner organisations **reaching and engaging with people who are severe and profoundly D/deaf** we will be offering grants of up to £7,500 to partner organisations to assist with direct engagement activities to people in our target group.

Both funds are available for community organisations, regional groups and local authorities who will conduct activity which will specifically reach the respective target groups, and assist with overcoming barriers to those groups in response to the smart meter rollout.

[Click for further details on the fund](#)



NEA and EAS hit the road to meet with partners

The NEA project coordinators and trainers have hit the road delivering flexible training sessions across England, Wales and Scotland. The training sessions are aimed at organisations engaging or planning to engage with our 2018 target groups across Britain. The sessions include information about smart meters, the smart meter rollout and other valuable information that will enable organisations to engage their communities. Places on our training are limited.

Across 2016 and 2017 618 delegates have attended the smart meter champion training from 327 different organisations. The feedback on the quality of the training has been overwhelmingly positive. In 2017 98% agreed the training would help them communicate with their beneficiaries/services users about the smart meter rollout.

“It was excellent and very informative made something bland and mundane very interesting and engaged well with all the group”

99% of delegates surveyed agreed that the overall quality of the session was good or very good (82% very good, 17% good), and that the trainer had very good knowledge of the subject (87% very good and 12% good).

If you would like more information on these opportunities or to understand more about the programme please [get in touch](#) and let us know how you would like to use the training to support our 2018 target groups with the smart meter rollout.



Update on the Data and Communications Company (DCC)

The Data and Communications Company (DCC) is responsible for establishing and managing the infrastructure necessary to support the main roll out of millions of smart electricity and gas meters to homes and small non-domestic properties across Great Britain.

After rigorous testing we saw the DCC network go live in full in July 2017.

In November 2016 Release 1.2 (credit functionality) went live, and in July

2017 Release 1.3 (prepay functionality) allowing energy suppliers to install smart meters based on Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification version 2 (SMETS2). SMETS2 is a standard developed by the Government. Some of the first generation smart meters installed are based on an earlier technical specification, the Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specification (SMETS1).

The Government has set 5 October 2018 as the revised SMETS1 end-date after assessing the progress of energy suppliers in making the transition to SMETS2 meters. Additionally, the Government consulted on and undertook a process where energy suppliers could apply for limited derogation to the SMETS1 end-date. Energy suppliers who applied were assessed against strict eligibility criteria, allowing qualifying companies to deploy a limited volume of SMETS1 meters after the SMETS1 end-date and before 13 January 2019. This enables qualifying suppliers to manage the operational transition to SMETS2 and so avoid costs that could otherwise fall to consumers. In total twelve of the suppliers were successfully granted a derogation and details can be found [here](#).

The DCC network is being developed to support the [enrolment](#) of SMETS1 meters, to ensure ongoing smart functionality when customers switch suppliers, as well as the second generation (SMETS2) meters, allowing both to access the benefits of the new national network.

Consumer Reference Group frameworks

NEA participates in the Consumer Reference Group (CRG) led by the Department of Business, Energy and Industry (BEIS). The CRG is a forum set up under the Smart Metering Implementation Programme to provide advice and, where appropriate, solutions to mitigate consumer journey challenges arising from consumer experiences in the smart meter roll-out. Recommendations, principles, and amendments to policy will be escalated to the Smart Metering Delivery Group (SMDG) by the chair of CRG. NEA will be hosting frameworks and principles for best practice on our website in the useful information section. To see what has been published so far [take a look here](#).

As ever NEA will continue to drive greater ambition in engaging and supporting vulnerable and low income householders in the most effective way possible through the smart meter rollout to ensure people who need extra support receive it, and that best practice becomes standard practice across industry.

FAQs

Can you switch supplier with a smart meter?

A customer can switch supplier at any time whether they have a smart meter or not, and should consider switching as a means to save money on their energy bills. On average customers could save £200 per annum by switching, and customers who have never switched substantially more.

Although all suppliers are doing their best to avoid any disruption to a customer's smart services some smart functionality may be lost during a switch to a new supplier. This loss of functionality is temporary with plans being discussed at length about how best to enable SMETS1 meters to operate in the same interoperable way as SMETS2 meters. This process is called 'Enrolment and Adoption' and you can find out more [here](#).

Not all switches will be affected, it will depend on the suppliers in question as to which communications network they use – customers can find out by asking the acquiring supplier directly whether their services may be affected.

Examples of how functionality may temporarily differ after a switch include:

- a return to providing manual meter readings as before rather than automatically being sent to the supplier
- a customer's in-home display may only show consumption information only rather than pounds and pence. This will mean a customer can still see if appliances are using a lot of energy.

Once the meter is brought into the national network (the DCC) full functionality should be restored.

Are smart meters safe?

- Yes, smart meters are covered by strict UK and EU product safety laws. These ensure that smart meters all have the same high quality and safety standards, regardless of supplier.
- Before being allowed to install meters, all engineers undergo extensive training to achieve the high level of skills and qualifications required.
- Working with the government, the energy industry has committed to ensuring the highest health and safety standards during the smart meter rollout including strong systems to make sure any issues are identified and dealt with swiftly.
- If anyone has any concerns about their smart or traditional meter they should **contact their supplier** or if they smell gas the emergency number 0800 111 999 immediately.

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upon Tyne, NE1 3PA
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