



# Smart energy outlook

March 2021

**Smart  
Energy<sub>GB</sub>**  
Join the quiet  
revolution

## Contents

Executive summary	4
Smart meters - how the public feel and use the new technology	6
What people say about smart meters	7



### Methodology

Yonder, an independent market research agency, conducted 7,704 online interviews and 2266 offline interviews using a bespoke survey designed to be representative of the adult population of Great Britain aged 21+. The interviews took place between 16<sup>th</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Smart meter customers featured as case studies in this publication did not necessarily take part in the Yonder research.

# Executive summary

## Background

Due to the COVID pandemic, a *Smart energy outlook* report was not commissioned in mid 2020, therefore, it has been twelve months since the latest attitudes to smart meters and home energy use has been published.

As 2020 progressed and national restrictions due to the COVID pandemic were introduced, Smart Energy GB scaled back our promotional activity while energy suppliers were unable to enter properties and physically replace gas and electricity meters in homes. Despite this, almost all of Great Britain remains aware of the smart meter rollout. *Smart energy outlook* research shows that just three percent of those without a smart meter claim not to have any awareness about the technology.

There are currently 23.6 million smart meters<sup>1</sup> now installed in homes across Great Britain, with the Government aiming to introduce smart meters into every household and small business to upgrade to a truly smart energy system that is fit for the future by 2025.

The installation of a smart meter at home enables customers to become more conscious of energy usage and also offer an opportunity to make savings on energy bills. With some of the cheapest tariffs only available to those with smart meters the savings available to consumers are increasing as more smart meters are installed across Great Britain.



**42%**  
of the population  
say they have a smart meter  
fitted at home

Just over  
**two thirds**  
of people with a smart meter  
would recommend getting one

## Latest findings

There are currently more than 16.75 million first generation and 6.85 million<sup>2</sup> second generation smart meters operating in Great Britain.

Of those who do not yet have a smart meter fitted in their home, and despite the uncertainty of COVID restrictions, millions of people say that they would request or accept a smart meter installation in the next six months.

**Demand for smart meters remains strong across the nations and regions of Great Britain.**



<b>39%</b> North East	<b>39%</b> Wales
<b>36%</b> North West	<b>31%</b> East of England
<b>40%</b> Yorkshire and Humber	<b>41%</b> London
<b>35%</b> West Midlands	<b>39%</b> South East
<b>39%</b> East Midlands	<b>36%</b> South West
	<b>38%</b> Scotland

**Figure 1.** Geographical breakdown showing the proportion of people who would seek or accept a smart meter in the next six months, of those who have not yet upgraded.

Only  
**3%**  
of the population say  
they are unaware of what  
a smart meter is

**75%**  
of people with smart meters  
have a better idea of their  
energy costs

**67%**  
of people with smart meters  
are more conscious of their  
energy use



<sup>1</sup> Latest smart meter installation statistics correct as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/967284/Q4\\_2020\\_Smart\\_Meters\\_Statistics\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/967284/Q4_2020_Smart_Meters_Statistics_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Data correct as at 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 [smartdccc.co.uk](https://smartdccc.co.uk)

## Smart meters – how the public feel and use the new technology

With over 23.6 million smart meters operating across Great Britain consumers are reporting that the technology is helping them to have confidence in their bills, cut energy waste at home and save money.

**44%**

of smart meter owners say they always or usually use the technology to actively manage their energy consumption at home

**61%**

of smart meter owners say they think twice about using high energy appliances

**46%**

of smart meter owners say they're less worried about their energy bills

**50%**

of smart meter owners say it is helping them to save money

	Without a smart meter	With a smart meter
I think my energy bill is accurate	66%	74%
I understand my energy bills	64%	70%
I think I have the information I need to choose the right energy supplier	66%	72%
I think I have the information I need to choose the right energy tariff	63%	71%
I think I pay the right amount for the energy I use	57%	63%
I trust my energy supplier(s)	49%	57%

**Figure 2.** Attitudes towards energy: people with a smart meter vs. those without a smart meter.

## What people say about smart meters



“ Getting a smart meter had an immediate impact on my understanding of my bills. I’m far more conscious of what appliances I am using and what level my heating is set at now, as I can see how much they can cost almost straight away.

Being able to see what my energy consumption actually means has helped me be a lot less absent minded in my power use and make changes that are both beneficial to me and the planet. It’s even helped me convince my husband to be greener!”

**My-Yen**



“ The smart meter had an instant impact— because our bills were no longer estimated - we began paying for exactly what we were using, which is a huge help when it comes to our budgeting. It also means I no longer have to remind myself to check my meters anymore, as my smart meter sends my readings to the supplier automatically.”

**Emma**

