



SMART ENERGY OUTLOOK

March 2020



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Methodology

Populus, an independent market research agency, conducted 9,569 online interviews and 4,554 offline interviews using a bespoke survey designed to be representative of the adult population of Great Britain aged 21+. The interviews took place between 6th November and 2nd December 2019.

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

Executive summary

Background

Attitudes towards smart meters across Great Britain have improved since the last *Smart energy outlook* report in September 2019. Smart and non-smart meter consumers are more positive about the technology and how they can or could use it to eliminate energy waste at home, save money and help create a smarter energy system.

Smart energy outlook research shows that awareness of smart meters remains nearly universal across the country with 95 per cent of the population claiming knowledge of the technology and how it operates.

There are currently over 15.6 million¹ smart meters operating in homes across Great Britain, with Government having recently consulted on proposals to enable completion of the rollout by the end of 2024.

The installation of a smart meter at home enables customers to become more conscious of energy usage and also offers 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.

While nearly a third of the population claims ownership of smart meters, encouragingly uptake amongst those who live in social housing (39 per cent) is the highest across housing types while 37 per cent of people using pre-payment meters have upgraded to smart meters.

32%

of the population **now have a smart meter installed**

Nearly

two thirds²

of people with a smart meter **would recommend getting one**



¹ Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy official statistics - Statistical release and data: Smart Meters, Great Britain quarter 3 2019
² 62 per cent

Latest findings

There are currently more than 4 million³ second generation smart meters operating in Great Britain.

Of those who do not yet have a smart meter fitted in their home, 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.



33% North East	29% Wales
33% North West	38% East of England
37% Yorkshire and Humber	36% London
37% West Midlands	36% South East
41% East Midlands	31% South West
	36% 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.

35%

of people without a smart meter say **they would seek or accept an installation in the next six months**

64%

of people with smart meters **feel more in control of the energy they use at home**

69%

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

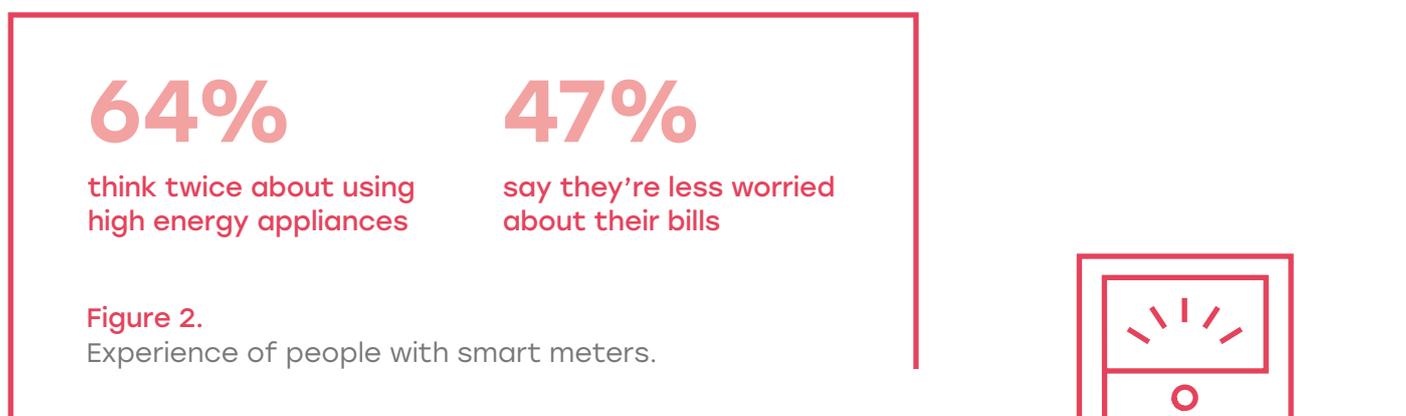
75%

of people with smart meters **believe their energy bills are accurate**



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

With over 15.6 million⁴ 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.



	Without a smart meter	With a smart meter
I think my energy bill is accurate	68%	75%
I understand my energy bills	67%	71%
I think I have the information I need to choose the right energy supplier	67%	70%
I think I have the information I need to choose the right energy tariff	65%	69%
I think I pay the right amount for the energy I use	55%	59%
I trust my energy supplier(s)	47%	54%
I'm not concerned about running up a big energy bill (without realising it)	33%	34%

Figure 3.
Attitudes towards energy: people with a smart meter vs. those without a smart meter.

⁴ 15.6 million operating smart meters - Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy official statistics - Statistical release and data: Smart Meters, Great Britain quarter 3 2019

What people say about smart meters



“ My husband and I have a very energy efficient and eco-conscious home. We have solar panels, and an electric car, so getting a smart meter was a natural progression to becoming even more aware of our usage and impact on the environment.”

Marilyn



“ Watching our energy costs in real time on the in-home display made us realise that leaving things like the light on for our pets was a waste of money. We're far more conscious about how we use energy and try to cut out as much waste as possible.”

Heather and Frank



“ My smart meter has improved my billing experience in every way; I can top up my meter from home, track my usage and it has helped me to cut down on what I'm actually using throughout the day. Everyone should have one, especially if you are on prepay.”

Doriver



“ The main issue I had pre-smart meter was that I never understood where the amount owed on my bills came from or what exactly I was using. I couldn't work out KW/h so when I read my meter it meant nothing to me. Now that I have a smart meter I can see exactly how much I have used each day and I'm a lot more on top of my energy usage.”

Helen

