

Smart Meter Upgrade Programme Retailer Consultation

November 2020



Consultation Outcome

Thank you to everyone that participated in the consultation, you helped shape our views.



Background

We've started our programme to upgrade 760,000 meters over the next 5 years, replacing the current visual read meters with smarter ones that automatically supply meter readings.

This programme is part of our plan to tackle future water shortages by helping our customers use less water and drive down leakage further across the network. Working hand in hand with us, it will allow both domestic customers and Retailers to monitor usage in a smarter way.

We recognise the value collaboration plays in addressing the challenges of future water resources in our region and the need to work together with a wide variety of stakeholders, including our Retail Customers. Working closely with Retailers will help unlock additional value for Business Customers.

To help shape our non-household smart metering offering we'll incorporate the views of our Retail Customers as part of our design principles for the programme.

Through iterative steps, including consultation with our Retail Customers, we are working towards our collaborative plan.

Here's a summary of each step, including an overview of the consultation process:

Phase 1: Programme launch

We launched our programme to our Retailers on 3 September 2020 with a webinar, where our Head of Programme talked about our water resilience challenges, the smart meter rollout, benefits, timescales and process. You can find a link to the full webinar [here](#).

We also published our Frequently Asked Questions which include more detail around the strategy of the programme, process and data considerations. You can read the FAQs [here](#).

Phase 2: Consultation

We opened our consultation with Retailers between 2 and 23 October 2020. All Retail Customers were emailed directly by our Wholesale Market Services Account Managers with links to the consultation document and consultation questionnaire (available online using Microsoft Forms).

We also added a copy of the consultation to the Wholesale Market Services website. You can view a copy [here](#).

As well as an overview of the smart metering programme and rollout, the consultation asked for feedback on a range of areas including:

- the meter installation process
- enabling access to smart data
- possible enhanced service offerings
- how we tell Business Customers about the programme.

There were five sections in total, including the final section that gave the opportunity to provide any general feedback or comments on the proposals. Each section provided a free text field where any additional comments could be added.

Phase 3: Pilot and Test

November 2020. Once we've incorporated the views of our Retail Customers from the consultation, we'll develop a pilot and test phase towards the end of the financial year. Once we've completed our pilot, we're aiming to go live with the rollout from the start of 2021-2022.

Summary of responses to consultation

The responses we received covered 95% of all Supply Points and included responses from a representative cross section of Retailers.

It should be noted that two of the written responses were received after the initial consultation close deadline of 23 October 2020. We felt it important to extend the deadline by an additional week to give all Retailers the greatest chance possible to submit their responses.

We have assessed our approach to the smart metering roll out for Retail Customers as a result of the feedback received.



Consultation Response Summary and further considerations

Section 1 - Installation Process

Context

We want to make sure the meter installation process is as non-intrusive as possible for both the end-user Business Customer and Retailer alike. Our preferred approach seeks a balance to make sure that the process requires limited input from Retailers. As set out in our webinar on 3 September 2020, we aim to provide a three-month plan to Retailers in advance to provide sight of our programme. In addition, we'll notify Retailers through our Retailer Portal once the work has been completed.

Our Proposals

Appointment Making

All meter exchanges interrupt supply but most smaller meters will typically only need a short interruption of a few minutes, up to a maximum of 10 minutes. For these Business Customers we don't anticipate making an appointment and we'd ask our technicians to advise Business Customers when we're upgrading the meter, so they know exactly what is going on and what to expect. For larger meters, where the exchange is more complicated, or we need a period of low demand to add a smart device, we'll need to make an appointment directly with the customer so that

they know exactly when we're coming and when the water supply will be affected. We'll also need to make appointments where any meter is inside the property. Where we need to make an appointment with the customer, we'll make this as easy as possible.

Our intended approach is to make the appointment directly with the Business Customer using contact details provided to us by the Retailer. This way the process should need less input from Retailers.

Logger Installation

As we roll out smart metering, we'll also be reviewing our logger installation policy and we are interested in gathering views about future logging requirements.

The current policy can be found [here](#) and our policy on Retailer equipment can be found [here](#).

Once smart meters are installed, hourly smart read data (or other frequency depending on requirements) will be produced for all meters.

We want to get Retailer views on whether installing loggers is something they still want to consider in areas where smart meters have been installed and are producing data.



Questions (numbering reflects numbers on consultation document)

Appointment Making

5. Where we need to make an appointment are you happy to provide us with customer contact details to facilitate this?
6. If you have any comments or other considerations about our suggestion, please tell us.

Logger Installation

7. When we can start providing smart meter data reads from a meter that isn't already logged, do you expect to require the ability to install a logger onto a meter?
8. Can you tell us more about why you would or wouldn't consider this?

Responses and our view

Questions 5 & 6

There was unanimous support for the suggested approach, as long as Retailers had the data and it could be shared by a secure method.

The data will be shared using a SharePoint site and will therefore be secure.

We will work with Retailers to facilitate the proposed appointment approach.

Questions 7 & 8

Most respondents suggested that they may wish to install loggers in the future and did not want to have this option removed.

However, when considering respondent comments against this question, there were a number of deciding factors as to whether Retailers would or would not want to install loggers. These were related to easy, inexpensive access to data as well as maintaining data accuracy.

On this basis, we will continue to provide the option to install a logger where it is requested by our Retail Customer.

However, we'll continue to work with Retailers to deliver accurate data via smart meters.

Section 2 - Enabling Access to Smart Data

Context

Enabling access to smart meter data is key in helping to deliver our aim to save water in the region. As a core principle we believe that it must be simple to access and easy to use. This will unlock opportunities for innovation for Business Customers by enabling Retailers to offer greater support around water efficiency and leakage. As part of our approach we're looking at different ways we can provide smart meter data to the Retailer so that what we're supplying meets Retailer needs.

Consultation Proposals

Sharing Data

Providing data isn't new to us and we already provide Retailers access to over 1,200 Maximum Daily Demand loggers, providing 15 minutes data through our Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP). This is in a published, structured format. For those that use our meter reading services, we use a similar approach.

One option for providing smart meter data is to continue using an SFTP. Whilst this may be the most straightforward solution, it is an outdated approach to sharing data. More recently we've developed an 'Application Programming Interface', or API, for sharing meter reads and photos. This provides a useful alternative for sharing smart meter data. An

API sends the exact data you request, rather than simply sending you everything that is available. For example, could potentially input the meter serial number and the read date, or a specific date range and the API will return the relevant data.

We are considering using an API approach with two potential options, one offering access to 'Near Live' data (up to the previous three days) and the other to 'Broad Historical' data.

Smart Metering Data at a Market Level

As highlighted in our webinar, there are considerable opportunities associated with the installation of smart metering through sharing of data. With the advent of AMI smart metering, there may be additional opportunities in relation to the non-household market more generally. These may be through standardisation of approach across the market but also from the direct provision of data to the Central Market Operating System (CMOS).

As one of the first water companies to have an extensive rollout of AMI smart meters in the Business Retail Market we are seeking Retailer views on whether we should also focus on wider opportunities as highlighted above and whether we should start to work on aspects that future proof the market in this area.





Sharing Data

9. Do you have a preference for one option over the other, SFTP vs API?
10. If your preference is for API could you indicate which approach might work best for your organisation (Option A - 'near live' data; or Option B - broad 'historical' data)?
11. If you could please provide some more information to help us understand your preference or how your organisation would use the data.

Smart Metering Data at a Market Level

12. Do you think that there should be a standard approach developed across the market to the provision of AMI smart metering data?
13. Please could you expand on your views on this.
14. Do you support the view that AMI smart metering data should go directly to CMOS?
15. Please could you expand on your views on this.

Responses and our view

Questions 9, 10 & 11

Respondents gave a mixed view on whether they prefer SFTP or API and for API, whether they preferred near live or broad historical data.

Respondents comments showed some concern around potential cost and complexity of integrating an API system. In addition, a number of respondents who already use and have access to the SFTP, commented that this works well for them, they have built systems that already integrate with this and were keen not to lose this benefit.

However, other Retailers also recognised there could be considerable benefit in using an API as this could help optimise the use of the large amount of smart meter data available more flexibly and effectively.

Based on these comments, we'll take both options to the next stage of our evaluation to understand how we might be able to support the widest level of access to share the benefits in the simplest way.

Questions 12 & 13

The majority of respondents felt that there should be a standard approach developed for providing smart meter data. Comments suggested that this approach would avoid duplication of cost and effort and enable a more seamless service provision. One respondent replied that they did not support standardisation, however they did not elaborate on why this was not supported.

As a result, we'll investigate pulling together a wider working group to try and future proof this area. We've already held a number of discussions on this, including with MOSL, about the need for improvements in this area.

Questions 14 & 15

Respondents were largely supportive of this proposal. One Retailer did express that they feel it is the duty of the Retailer to deal with the provision of data to CMOS, as now.

However, all other comments suggested that this is a direction worth exploring further, subject to possible costs of integration, as well as being able to maintain the integrity and robustness of the data.

As a result, we propose to investigate this option further in the future, subject to cost benefit analysis by MOSL and the ability to validate any data. We've already shared this sentiment with MOSL in view of their current strategic metering review.



Section 3 - Enhanced Services

Context

The key drivers for introducing smart metering across our region is to support a reduction in leakage and water consumption. We want to make sure our offering meets the needs of our Retailer views on whether there is a requirement to offer additional value-add services over and above our standard offerings. We wish to gather views on several elements along with more general views. As standard we'll continue to offer insight to Retailers on an individual basis around potential leaks.

Consultation Proposals

Enhanced Data

We want to work with Retailers to offer the frequency of data they want, in the format that's most useful. For an upgraded meter we'll provide hourly readings to Retailers as standard. We believe this is the best frequency to help identify and track any increase in water use or any unusual trends. However, we recognise that such frequent reads may not necessarily be useful for all your customers.

We'd like to consider offering a customisable suite of options for how often we provide readings, which could deliver data based on 15-minute reads, hourly reads, weekly, monthly, six monthly, and so on.

Analytical Services

We'd like to understand if there's a requirement from our Retail Customers for a platform to enable them to undertake insight and analysis.

For example, this could provide information around high consumption alerts, trends in consumption, or alerts when a Retailer might want to review the Wholesale tariff. What we'd develop would be done in consultation with Retailers, depending on what would be most beneficial.



Enhanced Data

16. Are there additional data services required outside of the standard approach?
17. Can you tell us more about why you would or wouldn't be interested in this?

Analytical Services

18. Is there value in Anglian Water creating a platform to enable the provision of analytics for smart meter data as a value-add service?
19. Can you tell us more about why you would or wouldn't be interested in this?

Responses and our view

Questions 16 & 17

There was limited appetite amongst respondents for the provision of additional data services outside of the standard approach, with one respondent suggesting that even hourly data may not be required for certain customer types.

Unlike other questions in the consultation, there was less of a consolidated view, although there may be some interest in this in the future.

We will provide hourly read data as standard. We'll work with Retailers in the future, if there's an appetite for more customisable data provision.

15-minute data will continue to be available via loggers.

Questions 18 & 19

Again, there were a mixture of opinions around whether we should provide an analytics platform, with three groups emerging:

1. Retailers who felt we should develop this further as they do not have the capacity in house to do so.
2. Retailers who felt this should be considered, but at a national, sector-wide level rather than at wholesaler level.
3. Retailers who were not interested in exploring this further.

Given the lack of consensus on this, we'll make sure this feedback is included within our broader conversations around standardisation with MOSL.



Section 4 - Telling Customers about the Proposal

Context

We want to work with Retailers to make sure Business Customers are kept up to date with all the latest developments as we roll out smart metering.

Consultation Proposals

We sought Retailers' thoughts on this and what their preferred approach might be. E.g. Would Retailer Customers like to work together on the communications approach, or should this be led by Anglian Water, or each individual Retailer?

Enhanced Data

20. Are you interested in working with us to communicate to your customers?

21. Please share any further comments.

Responses and our view

Questions 20 & 21

All respondents indicated they were interested in working with us to tell customers about the programme. Comments further supported this view, with some Retailers feeling communications should primarily come from them.

We'll work with Retailers to develop any communications and agree how they are to be sent out to customers.



Section 5 - General

The consultation included a general section where Retailers were invited to share any other feedback, comments or queries on the proposals.

Only three respondents chose to comment further. Two expressed satisfaction at the consultation process; one commented that they were supportive of smart metering but wanted reassurance around accuracy of data and associated costs of the switch to smart metering.

Next Steps



We aim to deliver smart metering to Retailer Customers in the best, most effective way possible that progresses our joint aims of delivering great customer service and water efficiency.

Following this consultation, we will incorporate the views of our Retail Customers and develop a pilot and test phase towards the end of the financial year. Once we've completed our pilot, we're aiming to go live at the start of 2021-2022.

We'll measure success by looking at the long-term sustainability of water resources in the Anglian and Hartlepool areas. It will also be driven by making sure the products and services we offer to our Retail Customers and to their end-customer users are simple to access, easy to use and help unlock innovation.

We'll keep talking to and working with Retailers as the smart metering rollout develops.



Any questions?

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