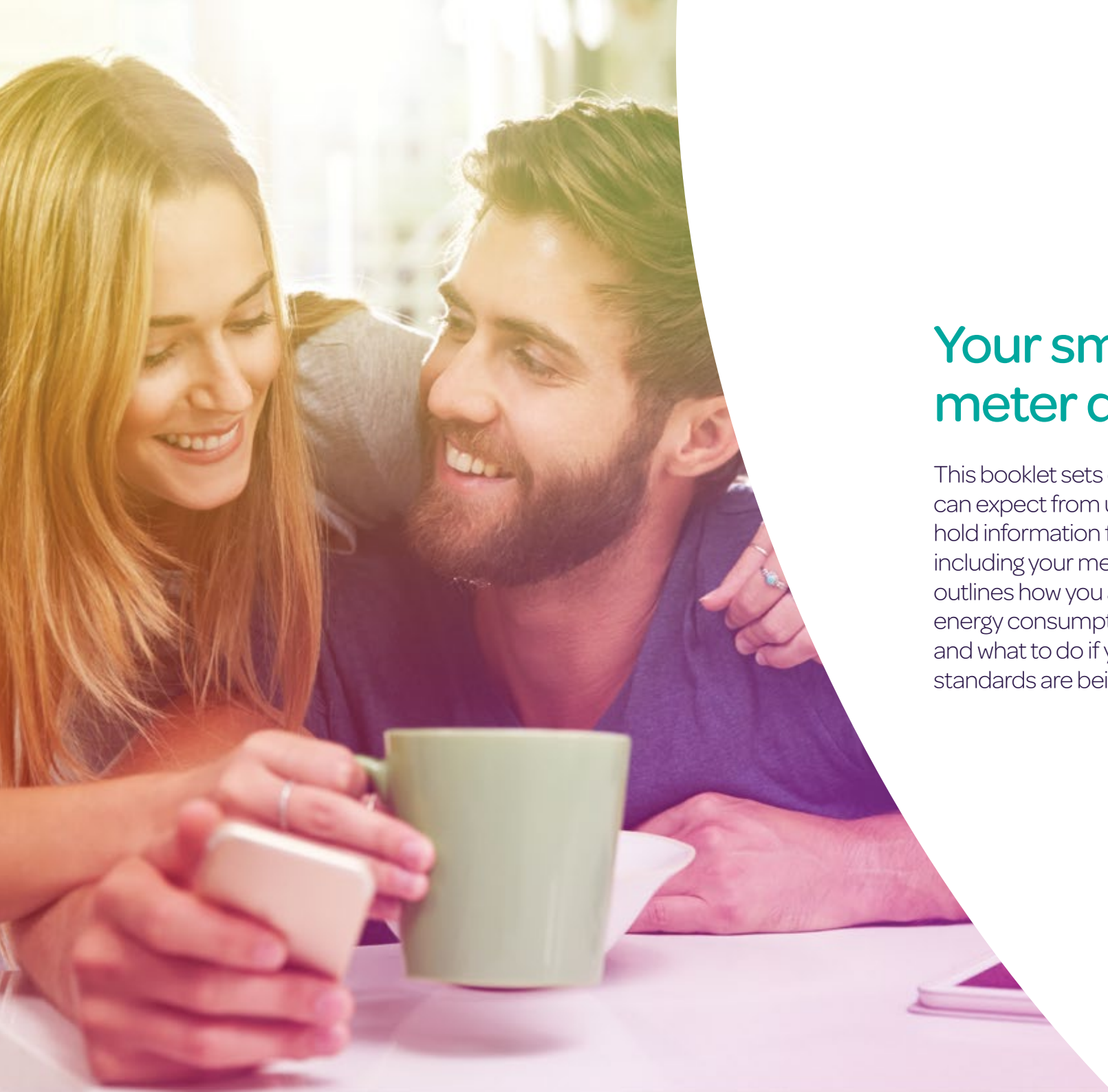


## Data Protection: Smart Meters

How we'll use the information we receive from your smart meter.

bringing energy to life





## Your smart meter data

This booklet sets out the standards you can expect from us when we request or hold information from your smart meter, including your meter readings. It also outlines how you access your personal energy consumption information, and what to do if you don't think our standards are being met.

## How do smart meters work?

The government has laid out plans for every home in Great Britain to have a smart meter before the end of 2020 – so what do they actually do?

Smart meters provide us with meter readings automatically, meaning that estimated consumption is a thing of the past.

The smart meter collects meter readings each day and stores those readings for 13 months. Once a reading is older than 13 months, the smart meter will delete the information.

The smart meters will communicate with your In-Home Display (IHD) which tells you how much energy you're using almost immediately - you can use this information to save energy and money and also contribute to the UK's carbon reduction targets.

Smart meters will send and receive information using a secure wireless network, so the meter can send us your meter readings and we can display your tariff information.

For customers using Pay As You Go functionality you can add credit without having to leave the comfort of your home.

We won't make any changes to your tariff or your account without making every effort to contact you first.



## 1 What are the benefits of a smart meter?

### Accurate bills

The smart meter will send us your meter readings, almost completely eliminating the need for estimated bills. (We do rely on a mobile phone signal to receive your readings and if for any reason this signal, or the meter, should fail then we'll have to produce a bill based on an estimated reading).

### No more meter reading visits

Smart meters allow your meter to be read remotely, meaning we won't have to visit your home to read your meter. However, some visits will still be necessary to check the meter is still working properly.

You can choose to move to prepayment mode without needing to have the meter changed.

### A clever In-Home Display

The smart meter will be installed at no up-front cost to you and an In-Home Display (IHD) will be offered to you, free of charge, as part of the installation – your IHD has a screen which shows how much energy you're using at any one time so you can keep track of your energy usage and budget more easily.

### It could help you save money

By seeing how much energy you're using and getting to know which appliances use the most energy, you may be able to reduce your energy usage and save money. In time, you may be able to benefit from new and different tariffs, which could give you better rates for using your energy at different times of day.

## 2 Your choices

You can make choices about how we collect and use your information at any time before or after your smart meter is installed, including when you are notified of any changes to how your information is collected or used.

## 3 Collecting your information

Before we collect your personal information and meter readings, we will...

- Make sure that we tell you why we need the information (including your meter readings);
- Give you the opportunity to opt out of allowing us to collect your meter readings once per day. The Government allows us

to collect one meter reading per month to calculate your energy bill and to meet our legal obligations;

- Give you the opportunity to allow us to obtain your meter readings on a half-hourly basis and explain to you the benefits that this can offer you. The meter readings will be collected once a day and will not be collected in real-time (unless it is needed for a particular product or service you have agreed to take). We won't be able to see the exact time you have used your energy, just a total amount used between any two separate meter readings; and
- Give you the opportunity to agree to us using your meter readings for marketing purposes.

## 4 Our responsibilities

When we collect your personal information and meter readings, we will...

- Collect your information lawfully and only in connection with your relationship with us;
- Do our best to ensure your personal information is accurate and kept up-to-date;
- Avoid collecting any unnecessary information;
- Protect your information and meter readings and make sure only authorised people have access to it;
- Make sure we only keep your information as long as necessary, in line with our legal and regulatory duties;
- Advise you in advance, and where necessary obtain your consent, if the way your information and meter readings are to be used changes, or if they are to be used for different purposes;
- Remind you at regular intervals throughout our relationship of the choices you have made for our use of your personal information, including your meter readings;
- Advise you how you can access the energy consumption information stored on your smart meters; and
- Ensure any third parties who may hold your information on our behalf will apply the same standards to safeguard your information.

We will not...

- Use meter readings from your smart meter to market products or services to you, if you have asked us not to;
- Action any changes to your tariff or your account without contacting you first;
- Give third parties your personal information together with your meter readings for their own marketing purposes without your agreement;
- Transfer your personal information and meter readings to an organisation outside of Great Britain unless such an organisation has procedures approved under the Data Protection Act 1998 to safeguard your personal information; or
- Collect consumption information about the use of your individual appliances in your home, unless it is needed for a particular product or service you have agreed to take from us.

## 5 Your responsibilities

- Please provide us with accurate information;
- Please tell us as soon as possible if there are any changes to the information provided, such as a change of address to help us to keep your information accurate and up-to-date; and
- Please tell us as soon as possible if you notice a mistake in the information we hold about you.

## 6 Keeping your personal information secure

- The meter readings we collect from smart meters will be protected using a range of security measures, including those agreed with the Government;
- Access to information from your smart meter will be limited to authorised members of staff who have received appropriate training; and
- Any third parties who may hold your information on our behalf will apply the same standards to safeguard your information and we will remain responsible for their use of your information.

## 7 Who else may be given access to the information collected from your smart meter?

- Organisations and agents that we appoint to help us with our day to day business obligations or who help us provide products and services to you. Our Privacy Policy (**which is appended to our Standard Supply Contract Terms**); and
- Organisations we have been asked to provide information to, by Ofgem or the Government, to undertake questionnaires or surveys.

We will ensure that these organisations adhere to these guidelines...

- Industry parties, such as network operators who help manage energy supply, distribution and central industry systems;
- The police or other organisations, including industry bodies involved in preventing and detecting theft or fraud. Whenever possible we will tell you if they need to disclose information about you to any other party.

If you decide to leave us, we will still be able to access historical meter readings for the period we supplied you, but we won't be able to access any new information generated from your smart meter from the date your new supplier takes over.

## 8 How we can help

Please contact us for more information on:

- Finding out what information we hold about you;
- How to correct any mistakes in your information.
- Agreements we have with other organisations for sharing information;
- Circumstances where we can pass on your personal information without telling you (such as in relation to a criminal investigation);
- How we collect, use and delete your personal information; and
- How we maintain accurate and up-to-date information.

You should also read our Energy Supply Contract for Domestic Customers, Appendix A (Privacy Policy), which sets out how we will use your personal information. You will be able to find it at [www.sparkenergy.co.uk/legalstuff](http://www.sparkenergy.co.uk/legalstuff). These guidelines supplement our Privacy Policy.

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Call us

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