

One thing we have learnt this week smart meters delay

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This blog has blogged on smart meters [more](#) than once. As we

said in our [book](#) smart meters are meant to "monitor total energy consumption in real time and predict and manage trends.". There are now 4 million in the UK. Today a smart meter energy hub linking energy suppliers was supposed to open, but has been delayed for further testing. Details in this hub are very hard to come by but it is costing 2 billion pounds and I assume links the household energy information to the grid in real time. In principle smart meters are a good idea. They allow smart use of energy and make managing large amounts of micro-generation much easier. There are however some issues that I'm not happy with. The first is the means of communication between the household and the energy supplier this is via 4G. This has led to problems when installers have turned up and there is no 4G coverage. This is in my view more easily hackable than power line modem technology (that is signals sent through the electricity grid itself). If a frequency far away from 50Hz is used then these signals do not interfere with everyday electrical equipment. My old system PV inverter uses this technology to communicate with a computer for its settings to be altered (which had to be done once). This leads onto my my main concern, global hacking of the systems. The smart meters have in my view an outrageous feature. They can do remote disconnect. In my view people should not be disconnected anyway. If there is a bill payment issue this should be sorted out in some other way. If the energy companies are hacked then and hundreds of thousands of consumers cut off suddenly you could bring the grid down. This is a huge security weakness. Lastly there is a compatibility issue. Some smart meters are only compatible with the energy company that installed them (this however seems to be a legacy issue). Also the very people that smart meters are most useful for, those of us with with solar PV systems smart meters don't work and according to the government we are supposed to be a priority. At the moment both those who are against and those who are in favour are not happy. Those against like the [IOD](#) say they are a waste of money. One energy supplier was interviewed this morning said it was cheaper for low income families to have smart meters. But there is no doubt in the short term these have to be paid for somehow and will raise bills*. They should cut them in the long term though. Those in favour say the rollout at 10,000 a day needs to be stepped up to 30,000 a day. All I can say is watch this space. *Even the costs are disputed with the IOD saying £400ish each and those in favour saying £200ish each. Neil

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