Smart EV
Customer Engagement Plan

Author: EA Technology
Date: 27 July 2016
Version: 2.1

The ‘Smart EV’ project is the public identity for the Network Innovation Allowance project “Framework PIV: Management of plug-in vehicle uptake on distribution networks” (formal title). The formal title is used for contractual and Ofgem reporting purposes.

Lead Partners

Co-author

In partnership with:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Reference documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13/05/2016</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>Gill Nowell / Karen Platt</td>
<td>First draft</td>
<td>Registered PEA document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EA Technology)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.smarternetworks.org/Project.aspx?ProjectID=1905">http://www.smarternetworks.org/Project.aspx?ProjectID=1905</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/06/2016</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>Gill Nowell</td>
<td></td>
<td>Data Protection Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/06/2016</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Gill Nowell / Susie Smyth</td>
<td>Revisions post SSEPD review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Impact Utilities)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/07/2016</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Gill Nowell</td>
<td>Final review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/07/2016</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Gill Nowell</td>
<td>Update post SSEPD regulatory review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Approval**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>EA Technology authorisation by</th>
<th>SSEPD authorisation by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29/06/2016</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Mark Sprawson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/07/2016</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Mark Sprawson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/07/2016</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Mark Sprawson</td>
<td>David MacLeman, Ross Bibby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Contents

1. Introduction 4
   a. The Smart EV project 4
   b. Who are we engaging with and why? 5
   c. How will engagement be targeted? 5

2. Communications Strategy 6
   a. Customer interaction 6
      i. How will the project engage and recruit customers for the Engaged Customer Panels (ECPs)? 6
      ii. Eligibility criteria to take part in the ECPs 6
      iii. Operation of the ECPs 7
   b. How will customers be engaged with after the Engaged Customer Panels? 7
   c. Queries, compliments and complaints 8

3. Priority Services Register customers 9

4. Customer consent 10

5. Safety information 10

6. Further customer interactions 10

Appendix A: Management of customer complaints 11

Appendix B: Engaged Customer Panel - Customer Consent Form (example) 13
1. Introduction

This document sets out the intention for customer engagement as part of the Smart EV project. The project will run from March 2016 to December 2017. Customer engagement will take place between February and April 2017. This customer engagement plan will be published on the project website and the learning portal in accordance with the NIA governance Section 4.8.

a. The Smart EV project

The Smart EV project is funded through Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution’s (SSEPD’s) Network Innovation Allowance. The project is being delivered by EA Technology. It is providing a viable solution to the challenges posed by increased uptake of plug-in vehicle (PIV) in GB, following a previous innovation project by SSEPD and EA Technology: My Electric Avenue (the public facing name of the Low Carbon Networks Fund, Tier 2 project Innovation-Squared EV). My Electric Avenue identified the potential to avoid £2.2billion of cost for electricity customers, by 2050, if demand side response was rolled out for PIV charging. However, My Electric Avenue also signposted that the industry currently lacks a standardised mechanism to access this response.

The Smart EV Project will seek to address the issues outlined above. The outputs will be:

1. Provision of industry agreed material to inform an ENA Engineering Recommendation (or equivalent) available to third parties for supply and manufacture of the home end and/or substation end controllers (the Solution)
2. A functional specification describing the system components and operation to allow vendors to produce a compliant Solution
3. Evidence of UK PIV industry acceptance of the Solution, including original equipment manufacturer (OEM) engagement and clear path to adoption
4. Customer Messaging Strategy to facilitate customer understanding and buy-in to PIV controlled or smart charging and network demand response tools to improve customer acceptance of the solution(s).

This Customer Engagement Strategy relates specifically to the Customer Messaging Strategy under the fourth project output, as detailed above.

In order to inform the Customer Messaging Strategy to support demand side response/demand control of PIV, a number of Engaged Customer Panels (ECPs) will be delivered. The aim of the ECPs will be to establish how best to communicate the Solution (which will be a mechanism to support PIV demand control) to customers. These focus groups will cover themes such as:

- Context with regards to the structure of the electricity industry
- The “problem”: The likely impact of new technology such as PIVs on the electricity network
- Responsibility for ‘keeping our lights on’
- What is demand side response / demand control? And how is it relevant to customers?
- The impact of demand side response / demand control on customers
- Would customer behaviour need to change?
- How best to communicate PIV demand control to customers
- Who is best placed to communicate PIV demand control to customers?
- How long does a communications campaign need to be, in order to effectively communicate the need for PIV demand control?
The ECPs will be conducted by a specialist customer research sub-contractor, Impact Utilities (a wholly owned subsidiary of Impact Research Ltd). The ECP will carry out a key role in informing and guiding the Customer Messaging Strategy, with feedback gained from the various ECP sessions being incorporated into the customer messaging strategy.

b. Who are we engaging with and why?
The Smart EV project will be engaging with a small number of PIV users (drive at least once a week or more often) within SSEPD’s licence areas via ECPs to explore their knowledge of the electricity industry and understand their points of view about responsibility for ‘keeping lights on’ as the use of electricity evolves. Critically, the ECPs will be asked for their views on how best to message customers about the need for and advent of demand control for PIVs, who is best placed to take responsibility for that messaging, and which methods of communication could be deemed most effective.

The learning derived from these ECPs will be analysed and used to underpin a customer messaging strategy. This strategy will form the basis of an engagement platform to be developed on a potentially national scale to support the standard mechanism developed under the Smart EV project, to facilitate controlled PIV charging.

c. How will engagement be targeted?
The customer engagement required for this project is exploratory by nature, and employed to acquire an understanding of underlying perceptions and to develop ideas for the customer messaging strategy. A numerically robust, statistically significant approach is not required here to prove or disprove any particular hypotheses or research questions. As such, the most appropriate method for customer engagement is a qualitative approach. This will allow sufficient breadth and depth to develop and refine effective communication messages for customers about the Smart EV project and controlled PIV charging, to inform the customer messaging strategy.

Customers will be recruited to participate in the ECPs by Impact Utilities. There will be two ECPs convened, with two meetings of each group. One ECP will be held in each of SSEPD’s two licence areas (northern Scotland and southern England). This approach will provide a sufficiently varied customer panel incorporating both of SSEPD’s licence areas within budget and time constraints. Impact Utilities will aim to recruit ten respondents to each ECP, in order that each ECP will have between 6-8 customers taking part, allowing for a certain level of attrition between recruitment and attendance. This attendance level is typical of focus groups as it is sufficiently large to generate lively discussion and encompass a range of viewpoints whilst still being manageable for moderation. It is therefore envisaged that there will be no more than 20 customers recruited to the ECPs. The sample size is in line with standard industry practice and has been determined by and in conjunction with Impact Utilities, as experts in the field of customer research.
2. Communications Strategy

Governance requirement: The plan must include a communications strategy which sets out inter alia:

‘Any proposed interaction with a Relevant Customer or premises of a Relevant Customer or proposed interruption to the supply of any Customer for the purposes of the Project, and how the Customer will be notified in advance; Ongoing communications with the Relevant Customers involved in the Project; Arrangements for responding to queries or complaints relating to the Project from Relevant Customers.’

a. Customer interaction

Customer interaction in the Smart EV project will be limited to the customer researcher (Impact Utilities) engaging with two ECPs. Neither SSEPD nor EA Technology will directly recruit nor engage with the customers, except to sit as observers in the ECPs themselves, or in the case of complaints escalation as outlined in Appendix A. The outputs from the customer engagement will be integrated into a revised set of communication materials, to be produced based on feedback received from the ECP. These materials will have the benefit of being optimised by SSEPD customers, providing confidence in their effectiveness before being used to inform a wider customer messaging strategy designed to facilitate customer understanding and acceptance of an agreed PIV-network demand response tool. The Smart EV project will be responsible for disseminating the ensuing customer messaging strategy.

i. How will the project engage and recruit customers for the Engaged Customer Panels (ECPs)?

The focus for engagement will be with existing PIV users; experience dictates that non-PIV users have little to no understanding of PIV technologies or charging, nor their likely behaviour should a PIV control charging mechanism be implemented for domestic use.

Impact Utilities will be responsible for the customer recruitment for the ECPs. The intended approach for customer recruitment is to recruit customers directly at PIV charging points near central locations in each of the SSEPD licence areas. Each ECP will be recruited to reflect a mixture of domestic PIV users (range of age, gender, urban/rural, PIV vehicle type and charging rates) in order that a variety of opinions and viewpoints will be taken into account. At the point of recruitment, customer consent will be gained for participation in the research and use of the data collected for research purposes and dissemination as outlined in Section 4.

ii. Eligibility criteria to take part in the ECPs

Customers will need to pass the following eligibility criteria to be accepted into the ECPs:

- They will need to be resident in SSEPD’s licence area
- They will need to be an existing or previous frequent PIV user or owner (drive at least once a week or more often)
- They will need to be the person wholly or jointly responsible for paying the electricity bill for a domestic property
- They must not be an employee of a company or organisation that operates in the electricity industry (e.g. regulator, DNO, electricity supply company, network operator, contractor or consultant)
- They must be available and agree to participate in both ECP meetings.
iii. Operation of the ECPs

The ECPs will be run consecutively in both SSEPD licence areas, two to three weeks apart. For example, one will run in SEPD's licence area, with a second running at a similar time in SHEPD's licence area; the same groups will then reconvene a couple of weeks later in their respective areas.

In advance of the ECPs, the engaged customers will be asked to sign and return a consent form to take part in and commit to the programme of ECPs. Further detail is available in Section 4 and an example consent form may be found in Appendix B.

Customers recruited into the ECPs will be sent information about the project and confirmation of details regarding the ECP sessions (e.g. date, time and place, and what the ECP will involve) in advance of the ECP taking place. This information will be sent by email to the customer, unless the customer requests for the information to be sent by alternative means (e.g. post or by telephone). The information pack will include the following:

- Background to the project, why it is needed and FAQs
- Project partners involved i.e. SSEPD, EA Technology, Impact Utilities.
- Information pack from Impact Utilities explaining:
  - Who they are
  - Date, time and location details for the ECP/s
  - What the ECP will involve and what will be asked of the customers participating
  - How the information from the ECP will be used and stored securely
  - Whom they can contact in case of any further queries or complaints
  - Where to find published project outcomes and reports on the project website

Impact Utilities will be the main point of contact for customers on the project during the ECPs with the exception of escalated complaints as outlined in Section 2b. Following the ECP there will be no other communication opened into by the project, its partners or sub-contractors with the ECP participants, unless in response to participants enquiries or where explicit permission has been given (e.g. to proactively share project outcomes).

Each ECP will run for approximately two hours. The first ECP for each group of participating customers will cover basic understanding of how the electricity distribution sector works and how it differs from the supply industry as well as a first review of draft communication materials. The second, reconvened, ECP will cover the detailed questions surrounding messaging to customers of controlled PIV charging.

b. How will customers be engaged with after the Engaged Customer Panels?

Customers participating in the ECP will be provided with an appropriate monetary incentive for their participation. This will be provided in cash immediately following each meeting of the ECP. In addition, participant customers will be given a letter thanking them for their participation.

Any publishable materials such as finalised customer communication materials and reports will be posted to the project website for wider dissemination to the ECP and any other customers interested in the Smart EV project. ECP participants will be provided with the website address as part of their introductory information pack.
c. Queries, compliments and complaints

A process will be implemented by Impact Utilities to capture and record all queries or concerns raised by customers relating to this research. This will ensure that any enquiries or complaints are handled promptly and appropriately, and resolved to the satisfaction of the customer. During recruitment, ECP participants will be provided with a general enquiries telephone number and email for the relevant duration of the project. It is anticipated that any customer enquiries will be resolved during the initial contact. However, those which are not resolved at the first point of contact will be managed centrally by the Smart EV project team.

The complaints procedure and log held by the customer researcher are described in Appendix A.

The project will be subject to continued quality assurance through quarterly meetings of the project steering group, comprised of representatives from EA Technology, SSEPD and other DNOs, automotive and charging experts and customer representation e.g. Citizens Advice. The steering group will have ultimate oversight of the project’s strategic direction, receive regular updates on progress and ensure the deliverables are of the highest quality. The EV Network Group will provide wider consultation to the project and will deliver project-based solutions under a programme of Working Groups, comprised of a range of additional relevant stakeholders. Smart EV aligns with the outputs of one of these Working Groups, and is engaging with this wider stakeholder cohort.
3. Priority Services Register customers

**Governance requirement:** the plan must include:

‘Information on the Priority Services Register Customers who will be involved in the Project and how they will be appropriately treated (including providing information to any person acting on behalf of a Priority Services Register Customer in accordance with condition 26 of the Electricity Supply Licence, where applicable).’

All DNOs maintain a Priority Services Register to ensure the well-being of vulnerable customers\(^1\).

The project will not specifically target customers on or eligible for the Priority Services Register (PSR) so any details relevant to any aspect of vulnerability obtained will be through the Engaged Customer Panel (ECP) recruitment process outlined above. However, when/if a customer responds and wishes to participate in an ECP, they will be asked if they are on the PSR or consider themselves to be otherwise vulnerable. These customers are dealt with in an appropriate manner, for example, by ensuring that appropriate means to communicate will be provided if speech is a problem. As Impact Utilities will not be explicitly targeting vulnerable customers for the ECP, numbers should be minimal. Vulnerable customers will therefore be treated on a case-by-case basis, with engagement and communication conducted in an appropriate and considered manner for the duration of the engagement.

In line with SSEPD’s Code of Practice, where PSR or vulnerable customers are being communicated with, checks will be in place to ensure that the information has been understood and that the customer understands what they are signing up to.

An example of how it will be verified that the vulnerable customer (and the person acting on their behalf, if applicable) understands the Consent Form and what they are committing to will be asking them to explain some of the key information back to the customer researcher before proceeding with the next steps, i.e. signing the form. Again, as the Project is not explicitly targeting vulnerable customers, the same approach will be taken in each applicable instance.

\(^1\) [https://www.ssepd.co.uk/PriorityServices/](https://www.ssepd.co.uk/PriorityServices/)
4. Customer consent

**Governance requirement:** the plan must include:

‘Details of how any consents that may be required as part of the Project will be obtained.’

Consent for the use of personal data will be via the agreement to participate in the Engaged Customer Panels (ECPs). Participants will be asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix B for an example) during recruitment to the ECP. Participants will be fully informed by the customer researcher about how their personal data will be used and shared before they sign the consent document. By doing this, they will agree to the learning and analysis from the ECPs being used by the project.

The customer researcher will inform the participant customers that their personal data will not be used nor shown in any analysis in a disaggregated manner.

5. Safety information

**Governance requirement:** the plan must include:

‘Details of any safety information that may be relevant to the Project.’

The Smart EV project does not involve any practical work being undertaken. There will therefore be no threat to safety either of project staff, DNO staff, or the general public. Smart EV will not expose any customers to any safety risks.

6. Further customer interactions

**Governance requirement:** The Network Licensee (or its contractors) and its Project Partners must also:

‘Not visit a premises of any Customer for sales or marketing activities in connection with, in the context of or otherwise under the guise of the Project; and
‘Have regard to the implementation of the smart meter roll-out in the geographical area relevant to the Project to ensure that the Project does not impede the implementation of the roll-out in any way.’

This project will not directly affect customer power quality or supply as it does not involve physical changes to the distribution network, customers’ private installations or any other aspect of supply provision.

The Smart EV project will not include visits, or approaches of any kind to customers for any sales or marketing activity. Impact Utilities is bound by the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct and participants will be provided with the MRS contact information should they wish to understand more about the company or make a complaint.

The Smart EV project aims and objectives will be clearly explained to participants during recruitment, and therefore it is not anticipated there will be any interference with, or confusion for customers with the smart meter roll out.
Appendix A: Management of customer complaints

Complaints Handling Process

If, unfortunately things have gone wrong then you can use the following process to let us know.

How to contact us

The easiest and quickest way to resolve a complaint is to telephone us and ask for a member of the Smart EV project team, Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 5.00 pm:

Impact Utilities [01932 226 793]

Alternatively, if you are unable to telephone or would prefer to write, you can contact us by post using the addresses detailed below, or by email.

[Address: Impact Research Ltd, 3 The Quintet, Churchfield Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2TZ]  
[Email: info@impactmr.com]

The Market Research Society is the regulatory body for Market Research. If you would like to check the validity of this research or seek reassurance that Impact Research is a responsible organisation that will keep the information you give it safe, you can do so by calling the Market Research Society UK Freephone verification service free* on:

0500 39 69 99 or visiting http://www.theresearchbuyersguide.com/freephone/alpha/all

*Calls to Freephone made from outside the UK may incur charges.

Complaint escalation

If you are unhappy with the outcome having been in contact with the customer researcher, you can contact the Smart EV project manager Gill Nowell at EA Technology:

Gill Nowell
EA Technology
Capenhurst Technology Park
Capenhurst
Cheshire
CH1 6ES
T. 0151 347 2359

[Email: gill.nowell@eatechnology.com](mailto:gill.nowell@eatechnology.com)
Complaint Handling Statement

Sometimes things can go wrong, so we have produced this Complaint Handling Statement to show what will happen if you have cause to complain to us.

Our Process

In the first instance, Impact Utilities will endeavour to resolve your enquiry as quickly and easily as possible. As part of resolving your complaint, we will offer you an explanation and an apology.

Step 1 – Aim to resolve your problem within 10 working days

If you contact us with a problem, we aim to resolve matters with you directly, as soon as possible within 10 working days. However, if we cannot resolve your complaint fully or have not agreed a form of resolution within 10 working days of your first contact, then we will escalate your complaint to EA Technology, the project lead.

Step 2 – Aim to resolve your problem within the next 10 working days after escalation

If unresolved, your complaint will be passed to the project manager at EA Technology who will do everything possible to address your concern and reach a positive conclusion.
Appendix B: Engaged Customer Panel - Customer Consent Form (example)

Dear xxxx

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the Smart EV’s project’s Engaged Customer Panel.

The group discussion or interview you take part in will be:

- Audio Recorded
- Video Recorded
- Observed by people in the room/from another room/location

The Data Protection Act requires that we (Impact Research) collect and use the information you provide in a method that respects and protects your confidentiality. Your personal details (name, address, telephone number) will not be disclosed to anyone else without your permission other than to (customer researcher).

In most cases the recordings will be heard/watched and the transcription read only by the transcriber and researchers from the customer research company. The transcript will only be read/recordings listened to/watched for research purposes and only to pursue the aims of the study. Excerpts from the transcripts or recordings may be used to illustrate the research findings. This will always be done in a way to protect your identity (i.e. comments will not be attributed to you personally).

The recordings will not be used for non-research purposes, such as promotion or direct sales activity. The recordings will be dated and deleted, at the least, two years after the research is completed. In exceptional cases the recordings will be listened to/watched/the transcription read by SSEPD or EA Technology employees working on the project. In these circumstances the customer research team will delete any references to people’s names or anything else that could identify them.

Anyone from SSEPD or EA Technology who reads the transcripts or listens to/watches the recordings will sign an undertaking that they will respect the anonymity of those taking part. Thus if anyone recognises you (s)he will immediately stop reading, listening or watching. Any other material or information generated by you, such as ideas written down on paper, will be subject to the same strict codes.

You may find the following information useful to help in your understanding what data will be collected from you and how it will be used. Please read the information and indicate your consent at the bottom of the form.

What is the purpose of market research?

Market research attempts to generate understanding and knowledge about customers’ behaviour within it, by gaining information (data) from specific samples of customers and extrapolating results to the population as a whole.

Market research is scientifically-conducted research where the identity or respondents, and all personal data they give to researchers, are kept fully confidentially, and cannot be disclosed or used, for any non-research purpose.
Market research is not a commercial communication or selling opportunity. Market research has no interest in the individual identity of respondents.

**What is personal data?**

The following definitions were taken from the Data Protection Act 1998.

‘Personal data’ is defined as any information which is capable of being used to identify a living individual.

In addition to names, address and contact details, this could include individual preferences, transactional history, and record of activities or travel, profiles or credit score.

‘Sensitive personal data’ is defined as any personal data that relates to any of the following: racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or other similar beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, criminal convictions or proceedings.

**What personal or sensitive personal data will be collected from you?**

Any answers that you give in group discussions will be treated in confidence in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society.

This means that all the information collected will be used for research purposes only and it will not be possible to identify any particular individual or address in results.

You will also be asked if you or anyone in your household have a disability, medical equipment in your household, mobility problems, are seriously ill or have visual or hearing impairment. This sensitive personal data is asked to understand if customers falling into any of these categories have different dependency or perceptions regarding their electricity supply. You will have the opportunity to opt out of answering questions of this nature.

**Who will this personal or sensitive personal data be shared with?**

At the end of the project and as part of sharing the learning and outcomes, aggregated data and the results of the Project will be shared with interested parties such as other electricity companies, and academic institutions. Any data shared with interested parties or published for general readership will not contain any personal data.

No personal data will be provided to any third parties for any marketing activity.

Neither SSEPD nor EA Technology will not use this Project or any information collected in connection with the Project to market any products or services to customers.

I agree that after the above explanation, I was given the option not to take part in the Engaged Customer Panel, if I had any reservations.

**Name:** …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………