ElectraLink Host:

Central Solutions for a Fast-Evolving Utilities Industry - Engagement Day report

Introduction

ElectraLink organises and hosts biannual events called Engagement Days. The purpose of these events is to:

- Discuss the challenges facing the ever-changing British utilities landscape;
- Share insights and solutions to address existing issues and anticipate upcoming developments;
- Encourage collaboration by providing a platform for market participants, including regulators and central bodies, to share updates and engage with industry;
- Provide a platform for ElectraLink to share and collaborate with market participants, focusing on projects and innovations that ElectraLink has undertaken, and
- Allow ElectraLink to gather feedback from other organisations to improve our offerings and continue our innovative work.

ElectraLink's sixth Engagement Day, *ElectraLink Host: Central Solutions for a Fast-Evolving Utilities Industry,* took place on 5th November 2019 in Central London. In total, 150 attendees registered from various sectors, including energy and utilities and this report summarises the feedback we received.

Agenda

ElectraLink's CEO, Stuart Lacey, opened the Engagement Day at 10:00. Stuart's opening address reflected on the state of the UK energy market in 2019, what transformation means for market participants and the public and the costs associated with UK central bodies including ElectraLink.

Stewart Reid, Head of Future Networks for SSEN, provided a thought-provoking keynote speech on the Art of Distribution Network Operation in a Digital World.

Kaija Valdmaa, Project Manager for the Estonian Data Hub project through Elering joined us for our Engagement Day to provide a lesson-learnt adaptation of the Estonian experience. Delegates found the international comparison unique and useful to promote debate.

Dan Hopkinson presented the day's first roundtable topic, Empowering Consumers and Networks to Deliver the Energy Transition, and gave a future-facing overview of transition to a smarter energy system and some of the challenges faced by the market in its delivery.

Mark Pearce, Rosella Jones and Alan Gregory presented on three ElectraLink products and services that use Existing Infrastructure to Address Future Challenges, setting the tone for the second roundtable delegate discussion.

After lunch, Stefan Leedham and Paul Linnane gave a presentation on how we can put data at the centre of future governance. The presentation preceded a panel which included four members of industry, Rachel Clark from Ofgem, Clem Cowton of Octopus Energy, Matthew Vickers from Ombudsman Services and Judith Ward from Sustainability First.

Finally, Stuart Lacey delivered closing remarks and concluded the day's proceedings.

Key themes from the round table discussions

Empowering Consumers and Networks to Deliver the Energy Transition

As managers of the Energy Market Data Hub and with the energy industry fast-evolving towards a smarter energy future, we felt it was important to discuss with our stakeholders their current views on the energy industry's ability to use data to enable market participants to manage this transition and ultimately empower consumers. The options contained in this summary are the opinions of the industry attendees of the Engagement Day, not necessarily those of ElectraLink.

What barriers need to be overcome to allow more open access to data that supports this transition?

Summary

There was a consensus amongst delegates that driving change in such a complex market was proving difficult for most market participants. Several barriers were highlighted including the market's ability to access data and innovate; ensuring data quality issues are resolved and the education of consumers in order to bring about a behavioural shift. There was agreement that the energy industry is far too complicated, and no participants will be able to do what they need to do until we all create a community where the barriers are drastically reduced.

The industry members present felt that central bodies such as ElectraLink are uniquely positioned to advocate for better infrastructure to bring about innovation and provide insights for regulatory consideration and that this is best achieved when they work together.

Key challenges

- Open access to data: It was suggested there are two angles to the issue of access to data; the consumer perspective and their protection under GDPR and, in tandem, accessing the data that sits in multiple repositories. Data is captured by separate entities across the chain and not all the data is fully accessible to the entire market. The industry would greatly benefit from interlinking the data sources, in order to simplify complex interrelationships. Some participants felt that some central bodies are not providing access to data and this creates barriers to transformation.
- Data quality issues: participants suggested there are quality issues with some industry data that needs to be resolved to enable change effectively. Industry would benefit from setting standards for capturing data and for central bodies to provide more transparency in the process of improving data quality.
- Data security and GDPR: the protection of personal consumer data can be a barrier for progress in terms of industry transformation; it is difficult to distinguish between private data and public data for industry use. This is compounded by consumers' lower levels of trust in the energy industry when compared with other industries that are accessing their personal data. Some delegates believed it is the regulator's role to make this distinction and separate GDPR issues. Are we too sensitive over personal data that could be aggregated to provide the insights required to manage a smarter energy market?
- Behavioural shift for consumers: A quarter of the consumer market is expected to be using green energy by 2030, with 10 million electric vehicles charging at homes across the UK. It was thought that current infrastructure still won't be able to manage this change and the retail market can't keep up with this pace without a collaborative and well-planned effort.

- Industry still too siloed: Delegates across the tables stated that the market needs to take a joined-up approach with more collaboration and open communication. They all agreed the energy industry is far too complicated and no participants will be able to do what they need to do until we all create a community where the barriers are broken down.
- Risks to innovators: With the barrier of data access and low levels of trust, innovation is stifled.

What more could be done to encourage greater engagement in the flexibility market?

- Greater consumer engagement: Improve consumer engagement by providing better information and consumer education on topic such as the available technology, as lack of consumer understanding of the industry is contributing to the lack of trust in the industry.
- Need to incentivise flexibility: This includes bundling services and making use of new technologies such as car battery storage and smart white goods such as washing machines.
- Increase physical service provision: Such as charging points and battery exchanging programmes.
- Enforce smart metering: This will ensure that data can be utilised effectively and will drive innovation.
- Have a common goal with an engaged audience.
- Improvements in AI: Intelligence to enable more flexibility and smarter predictions.

What role could central bodies such as ElectraLink play in coordination of this market transition?

- There should be a centralised initiative to push and advocate for infrastructure change led by central bodies.
- Take a lead role in advocating on behalf of industry.
- It was suggested ElectraLink could create a forum for the DTS, so the "community" could help, offer advice and solve each other's problems where they are not technical. Webchat is useful but sometimes you just want to ask how someone else resolved a business problem.
- Supplier hub principle holds back UK progress of smart systems and a smart future and Ofgem needs to regulate for where/when data is made available.
- A delegate suggested that ElectraLink should make their data available to the market and hope the other code/network operators would do the same.
- Improve the pace of change: The time that is taken on governance and administration is longer that actual delivery and this needs to be addressed.
- We operate one supply chain and central bodies have a role in coordinating the members of that supply chain.
- Collaboration between central bodies: Central bodies need to work together more and share best practice. An example offered was that there needs to be security accreditation, so the participants are registered and then have a single solution administered data catalogue that includes open data and prevents data fragmentation.
- The general feeling on one table was that ElectraLink was one of the better central bodies and more available. They all agreed the only way forward to make the changes required was that the central bodies all need to work together and have a balanced set of obligations with less focus on competition.
- Supplying data to industry and removed barriers to access: Multiple participants all need to have access to the data and there are too many blockers that can be alleviated by a standard set of practises.

How could regulation better support the transformation?

- Regulatory change could better support transformation with faster processes for change, as the current pace is quite slow and can hinder innovation.

- Not sure the changes need to happen as we can't design governance processes ahead of time, as not sure what is going to change, as technology moves forward.
- Have access to data to feed into code reviews and regulation as part of the structured process.

ElectraLink's response

ElectraLink welcomes the invaluable feedback provided by our stakeholders and are undertaking a number of programmes of work and strategies in response.

Feedback	ElectraLink response
A need for greater awareness and transparency, including training for smaller suppliers.	Training sessions are available both from the DTS and Governance Services teams at ElectraLink. Our DTS training is available to all DTS users and our Governance Services training is available through the codes we manage. Our Governance Services team can also provide more bespoke, tailored training to individual businesses. To find out more about this tailored training visit our advisory services page on our website.
Access to data needs to be improved, including resolving the issue of data being held in multiple repositories	We have been working closely with other central bodies to understand how we can offer a more unified data service to industry. This includes a current project to provide a single, dual fuel data catalogue that will be launched in quarter 1 of 2020.
ElectraLink could create a forum for the DTS, so the "community" could help, offer advice solve each other's problems where they are not technical.	We will consider setting up such a forum and explore ways in which this could be achieved, including using digital channels. We will then involve the DTS users to understand the appetite for such a forum.
Increase standardisation of energy market data to bring about improvements in data quality.	We have been heavily involved with several cross-industry initiatives, including working with Ofgem to deliver central reporting and responding to the recommendations of the Energy Data Taskforce. We believe the delivery of these recommendations will greatly improve the quality and accessibility of energy market data.
Is there too much sensitivity over personal data that could be aggregated to provide the insights required to manage a smarter energy market?	We do not believe there is too much sensitivity around protecting personal data; however, we do not believe that protecting personal data is a barrier to providing insights to the market, as long as there is sufficient governance is in place. We provide a range of insights to industry, where the data has been aggregated or pseudonymised to protect the identity of individuals or companies, but which still improves the understanding of the state of the market. Likewise, with appropriate governance and oversight, we believe parties should be able to provide disaggregated data to industry participants to improve the workings of the energy market – in line with of GDPR legitimate purpose. Our industry-led governance process has also meant we have been able to provide more granular data to organisations such as Ofgem and National Grid as it was viewed by our User Group to be beneficial to the wider industry and consumers alike.

	To better understand our rigorous triage process and the levels of accessibility of our various forms of data, visit our new Open Data page on our website.
ElectraLink should make their data available to the market and hope the other code/network operators would do the same.	We are committed to democratising access to the energy data we hold and improving the transparency of the market, which is why we have been working closely with other industry partners, including Ofgem, to deliver the recommendations of the Energy Data Taskforce.
Improve the pace of change, particularly in governance and administration.	We are taking action to improve the pace of change in both the governance and administration of the energy industry. This has included the introduction of FlowBuilder on the DTS, a tool that can be used to prototype catalogue change proposals before submitting them for formal approval, reducing the time required to make a change. We are also pioneering the concept of Agile Governance, an approach that provides a flexible, iterative and digital approach to governance. The initiative seeks to make understanding and interacting with the rules and regulations much easier for those already operating in the industry and those entering it.

Using Existing Infrastructure to Address Future Challenges

This session of the Engagement Day focused on how existing infrastructure can be used to address future challenges to industry during periods of rapid transformation. The session was preceded by three ElectraLink presentations on examples of work being done to utilise existing systems to solve industry problems. ElectraLink's custom data exchange sandbox solution, FlowBuilder was presented along with CSSConnect, the flexible adapter we're providing to enable faster switching. In addition, we also presented on using the Data Transfer Service to support further utility data exchanges between the water and energy markets. These products and services are provided to industry on a regulated basis as part of the Energy Market Data Hub (EMDH) and are examples of the support ElectraLink looks to provide industry. The EMDH is a brand new, smart, innovation platform that brings together all the products, services and solutions we offer. It also offers the opportunity for innovators to develop their own products and services for the benefit of the utilities industry.

Delegates were asked to feedback on these solutions and identify how central bodies can be proactive in designing solutions that are fit for the future. The feedback has been detailed here in the themes below along with ElectraLink response to some of the suggestions.

Feedback

There was a mixed level of recognition for FlowBuilder and our flexible adaptor solution CSSConnect with some delegates being fully aware and supportive while others felt there needs to be more engagement. Some suggested the use of case studies, reports on programme development and marketing of the tools to our existing customers. Those who were aware had primarily heard about themt through their involvement with the DTS, though some had heard of some of the solutions through ElectraLink communications channels.
Across the board, attendees were keen to see more engagement with industry around the various solutions. Suggestions included providing worked examples of how these solutions have helped businesses; workshops to help businesses understand how these solutions could support them; webinars; attendance at the small suppliers' forum; and sandboxes to allow market participants to 'try out' these solutions.

It was felt that there was a lack of understanding by the market about the nature of the data available and how it can be accessed, along with several concerns around GDPR that would need to be addressed.

What more could we do to support your businesses?

There were several suggestions for additional services that could be explored:

- A better insight to flexibility;
- Single, dual fuel data catalogue to help reduce costs;
- Visibility of address and consumption data; and
- Consumer-facing services that would allow consumers to check their bills.

ElectraLink's response

ElectraLink welcomes the invaluable feedback provided by our stakeholders and is undertaking a number of programmes of work and strategies in response.

Feedback	ElectraLink response
Continue to promote the new tools and services highlighted at today's event.	We will continue to share updates on all these products. We will be launching the next phase of FlowBuilder at the end of this month and will be launching CSSConnect before the end of the year.
Build on this engagement to continue to understand the needs of industry and develop solutions that are needed.	We are currently developing our industry engagement plans for next year. We are committed to continue with this sort of event twice a year, but we will also be exploring other ways to ensure we have the two-way dialogue that the industry has asked for.
Suggested developments	
Better insight to flexibility	We recently launched a joint report with the REA, Flexible Futures, which provides valuable insights on the embedded generation connected at the distribution network. You can download the report here. We also continue to work closely with our shareholders, the Distributed Network Operators, to understand how we can use data to better support the flexibility market.
Single, dual fueld data catalogue to help reduce costs.	This is a project which is already in progress. We will share more about this in early 2020.
Visibility of address and consumption data.	This is data that is rightly protected by GDPR. However, if you have the right to access this data then we have a number of products that can help you. To better understand how to access this data please visit our new open data page on our website.
Consumer-facing services that would allow customers to check their bills.	We currently only provide B2B services, but this is something we may consider in the future.

Sli.do questions and answers

Throughout the day, attendees sent questions to speakers and panellists via Sli.do. Several questions were answered on the day, however time constraints left us with too little time to answer them all, including questions with the most Sli.do upvotes. We have therefore addressed any questions we were unable to answer on the day below:

The Art of Distribution Network Operation in a Digital World

Sli.do questions	ElectraLink responses
How ready do you think the DNOs are for the shift to DSO?	The ENA's Open Networks project is the prime vehicle for DSO transition in GB. ElectraLink is working alongside and with the DNOs to ensure that existing data infrastructure is being utilised to benefit the energy market under DSO, and to enable the transition.
How important is data in understanding the needs of the customer in a more engaged energy system?	As customers increasingly engage in the market – either through switching or smart meters – data becomes central to improving the workings of the energy system. Not only is it central to the processes and systems that drive the energy system, but it is key to the customer experience. Understanding the driving forces behind customer engagement will ensure the needs of the customer are met and understanding these driving forces requires data. For example, increasing switching figures alone are interesting; however, if you match switching data with the figures of customer service or how 'green' the supplier is, you start to better understand the customer needs. As a result, when switching data indicates increased switching rates to suppliers with Time of Use tariffs, which offer better engagement in the energy market, for example, then this is an indication of customer expectations in the market and, therefore, this should drive a move in the market to meet expectations and improve the energy system.
How do you forecast open data is going to impact profitability across the market?	Open data will allow for more transparency within the energy industry, which we believe will increase the efficiency of the market and therefore raise profitability. Our rationale for this is that access to data would minimise investment risk and improve planning and forecasting. Making data available to existing and new industry actors prevents these actors making ill-informed decisions and improves the ability for actors to better understand the environment they are working within.
How would the industry leverage economies of scale that result in savings to consumers in such a deregulated market?	The energy market is undergoing significant change. At the heart of this revolution is the impact of unprecedented technological advancement on the market, where renewable technologies and intelligent devices provide opportunities for remote demand management. Combined, these technology changes are driving the requirement for new smart innovations and interactions within the energy market. As a result and to unlock all the opportunities of this market – regulatory programmes are required to update the current market structures, systems and processes However, all of this comes at a cost. Consumers and businesses already spend £55bn every year on energy and studies have seen that if we are to totally decarbonise the energy system (including heat), this could add up to

	£800 per year onto each consumer's bill. As the price cap is just under £1,300, an additional £800 per annum is significant for consumers and businesses. Establishing economies of scale in non-differentiated services – such as data transfer – should help avoid unnecessary costs for consumers. And whilst this is not the answer to all industry change, where possible, we believe that it is important to minimise the cost of industry change by reusing existing industry systems across the market to support market development.
Do DNOs feel they have the technology expertise to move to a data driven world?	DNOs recognise that the future energy network is data-driven; some are already developing their digitisation strategies; in general, they are taking onboard support for technology and data-driven network management.
How do we move from talking about governance change to doing something?	At ElectraLink we believe we need to move away from talking about change to delivering it. This means moving away from change by consensus to developing quick change to address the challenge, testing this with industry, and then rolling it out with a fail fast mindset. This means monitoring the outcomes and being prepared to roll back the change if it does not work or tweaking it to reflect experience and data. This means trusting independent managers to identify solutions and trialling these.
How can networks send viable price signals when their charges don't include the price of energy which is at least 10x more than the cost of the relevant network?	Price signals have been noted as playing a central role to realising the benefits of flexibility. As the flexibility market changes, the need for viable price signals to reflect the needs of the DNO and herald consumer demand or supply changes is key. Establishing effective price signals is key to ensuring that flexibility can be deployed in capacity constrained areas in place of network reinforcement. If price rises do not result in the desired results, then alternate incentive mechanisms will need to be deployed and we believe that innovation projects looking at appropriate incentive mechanisms would be a good mechanism to achieve this.
Given the role suppliers have to play in facilitating this transition, is there any work being done to allow more DSO/supplier communications?	With the various changes ongoing in the industry, there is undoubtably a change in the role of the supplier and the DSO. Given the decentralisation of energy supply and the increasing role of local energy supporting local demand, the role of the supplier is likely to change. The Open Networks Project is looking at the changing role of the DSO and ESO to support the flexibility challenge; however, limited discussion has been around DSO/supplier communications. ElectraLink believes that more should be done to support DSO/supplier communications and we would welcome the opportunity to trial new DSO/supplier communication options.

Estonian Experiences in Data Transparency – Answered by Kaija Valdmaa, Elering

Sli.do questions and comments	Response
Do you think the network companies are better placed to roll out smart meters?	In essence it does not matter who installs and operates them, but it should be a non-biased partner and organised in a way that the same meter can handle supplier switching – the meter should stay the same if the supplier changes. Otherwise it is a waste of time and resources. In Estonia the DSO

	was responsible for smart meter roll-out, maintenance and sending the meter data from their meter management system to Elering´s data hub.
Has Estonia seen a significant benefit in the settlement role also fulfilling the energy market data hub?	I am not sure if I understand the question, our data hubs also manage settlements and yes, it is necessary for market operations.
Are national identity cards essential for the system to function/Is the ID system fundamental to the security of the platform?	Not in essence as username and password could also be used but this is a much lower security level authentication. However, while Estfeed in essence suggests higher level authentication tools, while scaling Estfeed to other countries we do not oblige any authentication tools or security levels, it is up the local market and central government to decide on those.
How did you address consumer concerns on security of data?	We have message logs on the platform that contain information about the type of data and between whom was exchanged (to be clear, Estfeed does not see into the message but logs between whom and what type of data was exchanged). In addition, the platform always checks if there is the consumer consent for third party data access. Until now there have not been any problems.
How will this sort of platform prevent monopolisation of the market and encourage commercial capitalisation and not abuse of data permissions?	It hands the control over to the consumer what services they want to use and if these can access their data. Of course, there needs to be awareness in terms of the different services, transparency of who uses the data and for what purposes and a simple to use customer interface that can be used to view all of the above and make changes to, include removing consent. It also needs to report any misuses. The current situation in many of the countries is that the suppliers control which services reach their client and the market as they have the contact with end-user clients and the client base.
Does the system default to "no access"?	Not sure if I understand the question but the basic idea is that only those third-party information systems (who are interfaced with Estfeed) gain access to the specific consumer meter data only if the consumer has given a consent to this specific third party energy service provider. If there is no consent, data is not shared with this third party.
Is it just energy data access? Is there opportunities for consumers to manage a broader spectrum of their data (e.g. water / telecoms)?	At the moment it is electricity and gas meter data, weather data and electricity price data. We have been in discussion with district heating providers to include their meter data and also water, but these are still in discussion phase.
Do you think other countries would suffer cultural barriers for getting data consent?	I have experienced that the problem is more related with consumer authentication and in some countries the citizens do not trust their government enough to use the government provided authentication services (like we have the ID-card and ID-number in Estonia). In this case, transparency and security of the system becomes even more important. Also, the awareness of the consumers must be increased of their rights and responsibilities with private data and allowing access to it for third parties to process their data.
What is the latency of the system; how close to real time can it operate?	In terms of consumer smart meter data (that could be shared with third parties) it is hourly data of the previous day and earlier dating back to the time when smart meters where rolled out in 2013.
I understand the concept up to the national level for this low level data access, please could you elaborate more	I just visited the European Utility Week last week and there are loads of companies who provide novel and innovative energy services ranging from energy monitoring vitalized with AI to smart EV charging and flexibility services to grid operators. As one example, at the moment, all of these

benefits for Europe wide connection?	services have to interface with all the different meter data management systems of local utilities. In case of a EU-wide platform, the service provider has to 1) interface their service only to one platform, 2) chooses in which countries they would like to provide their service, 3) if there are already data hubs and meter data management systems (MDMS) of this region interfaced with the platform, then the energy service chooses which data services they would like to use, 4) energy service starts the provision of its services in this specific region (B&B or B&C), 5) consumers (if they want to use the service) have to give consent to this specific service provider so that it can access the data from the data hubs and MDMS of this region, 6) and finally customer receives the service of this specific energy company.
How different have your settlement processes become given your access to historical smart data and has this impacted suppliers in a big way?	This is not my area of expertise but maybe you can find more information here
Given that you do everything that ElectraLink mentioned in the opening address, is your annual budget close to the £700m that the UK spends on the same function?	Elering is a TSO and manages the electricity and gas transmission grid and the energy market in Estonia, annual report can be found here
Do you think the requirement to break off from the Russian electricity network helped the public get on board with accelerated transformation?	Not really, as smart meters where rolled out much earlier. The desynchronization from the Russian grid is a development of the later years and very much related with general security issues and how Russia is behaving with other European countries (like Ukraine).

Using Existing Infrastructure to Address Future Challenges

Sli.do questions and comments	ElectraLink responses
Are your systems CIM (Common Information Model) compliant?	The CIM is a standard developed by the electric power industry which aims to allow application software to exchange information about an electrical network. The Data Transfer Service is not an application software but rather the mechanism to exchange data between participants, and therefore doesn't require compliance with the CIM.
Do you support API exchanges with non-industry participants?	Yes, a number of switching sites already use our APIs to access market information.
How do you see this fitting in with the options that the EDTF have proposed?	The future state architecture designed to support real-time messaging, internally within the EMDH platform data is message driven and real-time
Like the Estonia's have you considered self permissioning of data sharing?	This is something we are considering for implementation at a later date through a self-service portal

Putting Data at The Centre of Future Governance

Sli.do questions and comments	ElectraLink responses
What is your view on Ofgem's Market Exit consultation recommendations, how could SOLR best be managed to protect other market actors?	It is right that Ofgem looks at what they can do to minimise the risk of customer failure and ensure there are more protections in place for consumers. At the same time, we are in a competitive market and so suppliers will go out of business. We need to use data so that the risks and exposures of industry to a failing business are minimised. This could include monitoring 'in debt' position across the industry rather than just under specific codes and identifying early warning signals so that any struggling company is managed and monitored.
Given the DNOs have to make sure the wires in the ground don't melt, why would a supplier that is a bill engine and call centre have more right to the data?	We should remember that ultimately this is customers' data and so should be protected. We also need to ensure that permissions matrixes are developed so that those who are entitled to access the data are able to do so, combined with assurance to make sure parties are only accessing data they are entitled to. We should also be aware the energy market is in a state of transformation; whilst suppliers historically were billing agents and a call centre this may not be the model going forward. They could be service managers and transport providers, equally new players may enter the market taking over the customer interface from the supplier or supplementing it. Data governance needs to be developed so that customers decide who accesses their data with a safety net to ensure their data is protected.
Why is Ofgem not looking to treat electric vehicle chargers the same way they treated smart meters by defining and publishing an interoperable specification?	UK Government has recently published a consultation that seeks to address the issue of lack of interoperability in the EV sector, under its Automated and Electric Vehicles Act. The REA has also recently published a paper on the interoperability challenge: https://www.r-e-a.net/resources/the-interoperability-of-public-ev-charging-networks-in-the-uk/ .
Who should cover the costs of creating standards across the industry that can reduce waste of investments in solutions that don't add up?	If standards are being developed that benefit the entire industry, then arguably the costs of developing these should also be borne by the industry. This ensures solutions are developed to the benefit of industry and avoids the risks that these standards are not developed as the benefits are spread.
Based on what the panel are saying. Has it been a failing of govt and suppliers of not marketing the benefits of smart metering. How can that change?	When the Smart Meter programme was developed, there was also a specific, Government-backed company set up to promote the programme with consumers, Smart Energy GB. However, discussions at the Engagement Day suggested that our delegates felt there was still more that could be done and much debate as to who is responsible. Overall, there was consensus that the energy industry as a whole need to be far more vocal about the benefits of smart metering.
Please can you share your insights on the issues with data quality in the SOLR process?	There are five main issues with the SOLR process: • Timelines – There are issues acquiring and accessing data from failed suppliers, which can take a long time. During this time, consumers are (unnecessarily) concerned about their supply. • Validity – During the SOLR process many customers move supplier before the allocated supplier has a chance to onboard them. This leads to a very fractured process and less certainty about which customers require the focus of the newly appointed supplier

	• Data quality – Data quality is a big issue. Systems and data handling can be poor and may have contributed to the failure of suppliers. • Integration – Data is often locked up in proprietary systems, which can be difficult to unpick. This process can take a long time and has its own problems associated with it. • Other third parties – When SOLR occurs, the supplier is contracted with other third parties to provide the data. On a recent SOLR event there was a situation when both the supplier and meter operator failed, which made it difficult for the new supplier to obtain the consumers metering data to enable the onboarding of the data to support billing. In an ideal situation, a clean copy of all the data would be linked with MPANs that are available to the new supplier, so that they can follow their own protocols. ElectraLink has a number of solutions that can already support this process, and are in the process of building a data lake for all transfers across the DTS, which would be able to support suppliers during the SOLR process.
How much do we really believe consumers know or care about the data held on them anyway?	Many consumer groups have worked with consumers to understand how much they care about the data held on them and the consumer responses vary considerably. As such, we believe that only data required to perform your role as an industry actor should be held and, when required, consumer consent is key for data sharing.
Is there a danger the smart meter rollout means worse outcomes for people who don't engage? Already, for some suppliers' best tariffs you need a smart meter.	Yes. With every industry change, there is a risk that disengaged consumers will lose out. At best, they will lose out from receiving the benefits of the change; at worst, they will be negatively impacted by the change. Smart metering requires two types of engagement – first, taking the smart meter and, second, responding to the information in the smart meter and reducing consumption. Smart metering is a key change that could potentially impact disengaged customers who actively disengage through not wanting a smart meter and it is the requirement of Ofgem and suppliers to educate and work with these customers to get a smart meter to enjoy the benefits. Those customers who cannot actively engage in demand management for various reasons – i.e. individuals with medically dependent equipment or young children – need to be protected by Ofgem to ensure that they are not negatively impacted (either by cost or risk to life) by industry change. As such, we support the work of Citizens Advice, the Safeguarding Customers Working Group and other consumer groups which are working closely with Ofgem to ensure that those customers are not negatively impacted through change.
Would customers' interface with energy in the future be more likely to be Car Suppliers, Appliance and heating system Suppliers rather than Energy Suppliers?	It is clear that energy as a whole is in a period of transformation and disruption. This may mean customers no longer purchase energy, but instead purchase a car which comes bundled with energy; or purchase a home system that comes with associated energy - in the same way that tariffs are bundled with a phone in the telecoms market. Equally we are aware that some suppliers are also entering this market. It is too early to tell whether current supplier interfaces will be replaced by other entities, or whether new entities (such as DSOs and energy service companies) will appear in addition to the energy supplier. As an industry we need to make sure the rules and governance are in place to support all these different models whilst ensuring the customer is protected and the lights remain on.

Ofgem is working with BEIS to amend regulation to support innovation and technology, what is the role of technology to improve regulation and governance?	As an industry we have tended to view governance and regulation as static, and instead tried to flex the rules around new business models. At ElectraLink we strongly believe that some of the administrative issues with industry codes that have been identified by Ofgem and BEIS inquiry are because they are still delivered through a PDF document. The best move is not to make these documents more accessible through PDF, and question how these documents are accessed and reform this so that they become more accessible using technology and more valuable. We need to embrace today's technology to solve today's problem and challenge the traditional delivery methods.

Attendees

In total, 121 people from across the energy industry attended the event. This marks the highest-ever attendance level for an ElectraLink Engagement Day. 44% of the external attendees had not attended an ElectraLink event before and 97% said that would attend future events.

Feedback from attendees

We collected feedback from attendees through Sli.do polls and hard copy feedback forms.

5.2 Overall, 100% of respondents polled as 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the event. The most noteworthy aspects of the day included:

- Being provided with an international perspective in one of our key notes
- The roundtables as an opportunity to debate some of the key issues facing the utilities industry

- The quality and relevance of the subjects being covered
- logistics and planning, including venue, refreshments, the use of Sli.do and video.

5.3 Finally, 80% of respondents felt that the event had completely met their expectations, with the remaining 20% expressing their expectations were somewhat met. We will process and incorporate constructive feedback data into our preparations and themes for the next Engagement Day in 2020.

About ElectraLink

ElectraLink is a central body at the heart of the UK energy market. We manage the Energy Market Data Hub (EMDH), a data infrastructure that encompasses the Data Transfer Service (DTS), which supports the exchange of essential energy market data 24/7/365 between over 270 electricity and gas parties in the UK, underpinning a wide range of critical industry processes. This allows us to partner with a variety of utility stakeholders to develop innovative data insight and analytic solutions, with in-built governance structures, that are democratising access to energy market data, enabling innovation and competition across the full spectrum of energy market participants and develop solutions that ultimately bring notable benefits to consumers.

We also provide expertise to several energy industry codes which set the 'rules' for the gas and electricity markets. Our reputation for impartiality and energy market expertise makes us an ideal partner in the implementation and change management of energy market governance arrangements.

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ElectraLink

For more information on ElectraLink's Engagement Day, please visit our website or contact:

communications@electralink.co.uk.

For EMDH enquiries, please contact Chris Lane at **Chris.Lane@electralink.co.uk.**

ElectraLink's next Engagement Day will take place at the beginning of Q2.

Follow us and keep checking our social media channels for updates, reminders and news on Twitter and LinkedIn.

Keep checking our website for more information on the EMDH, Governance and Data Solutions:

https://www.electralink.co.uk/