

PROJECT MODEL: INSTALLING SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) PANELS ON A COMMUNITY BUILDING

LOCAL
ENERGY
SCOTLAND

This project model is aimed at local communities looking to install solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on a community building in order to save carbon and reduce energy costs.

Time		1 year
Cost		Low
Effort		Medium
Benefit		Medium
Carbon		High

REQUIREMENTS

There are a few things you'll need to take your project forward.

- ✓ A mandate from your organisation's members to investigate energy options.
- ✓ One or more buildings with an appropriate roof or adjacent ground space.
- ✓ A sound roof structure and roof finish, or accessible but secure level ground.
- ✓ An appropriate energy demand during daylight hours and in all seasons. You may also want to consider adding battery storage.
- ✓ Full ownership of the building or a long lease.
- ✓ Responsibility for paying the electricity bills.
- ✓ A person with responsibility for, and capacity to, administer the project.
- ✓ An ability to fundraise or otherwise secure capital funding.



ACTIVITIES

Preparing for installation

There is a lot you will need to do before you can install solar panels on a community building and we've listed them below. Apply to CARES for financial support during your preparation, if required.

- ✓ Assess your current and future energy requirements.
- ✓ Consider the energy efficiency of the building(s) in question, supported by:
 - reviewing your [Energy Performance Certificate \(EPC\)](#), or getting a new one
 - contacting [Business Energy Scotland](#) for one to one support.
- ✓ If leased, confirm landlord authorisation and agree provisional terms of lease.
- ✓ Discuss planning requirements with your Local Planning Department.
- ✓ Confirm with Building Control if an installation will require a building warrant.
- ✓ Discuss your grid connection with your local [Distribution Network Operator](#).
- ✓ Discuss the impact and benefits of implementing energy efficiency measures.
- ✓ Estimate the project scale, costs and programme.

Delivery

You will need to carry out the following activities to get your project underway.

- ✓ Prepare a budget based on estimations.
- ✓ With support from CARES, estimate the energy, carbon and cost benefits.
- ✓ Gain a mandate to agree progression to fundraising and obtaining quotes.
- ✓ Seek quotes from installers which will require coordination of site visits. Quotes should typically include:
 - **Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS)** compliance
 - an estimate of yield (generation) and a financial assessment
 - full specification and costs for all materials, equipment and labour
 - the provision of an appropriate export meter
 - full assessment of roof or land housing PV panels
 - making a grid application on your behalf
 - all works required to submit and administer a planning application
 - securing a Structural Certificate
 - all works required to submit and administer a Building Warrant
 - appropriate access (e.g. scaffolding) and welfare facilities on site
 - construction and Public Liability insurance
 - compliance with Health and Safety regulations
 - an abortive fee should consents progress, but not installation
 - an indicative timeline, indicating when invoices will be raised
 - an indication of future operation and maintenance costs.
- ✓ Compare quotes and select a preferred installer, but do not contract yet.
- ✓ Request that a grid application is made by the preferred installer.



- ✓ Gather information on other future costs through quotations. This can include:
 - insurance (often best included in the current building insurance)
 - operational costs (maintenance, metering, etc. as a comparison)
 - lease amendment work, if appropriate
 - a smart meter from your Energy Supplier, if appropriate.
- ✓ Finalise your budget and agree a mechanism of securing capital funding. This can be from a mix of sources. Options to consider include:
 - a loan – for example, an **SME loan** from the Scottish Government
 - own funds or reserves
 - specific fundraising activities
 - crowd funding or seeking donations
 - applying for grants, for example from local community benefit funds
 - raising funds through a community share offer or community bonds.
- ✓ Confirm any other energy efficiency measures to be implemented.
- ✓ Agree target programme with your preferred installer.



Community Shares Scotland provides advice and support in raising community funding.

Implementation

There are several steps to implementing your project; we have listed these below.

- ✓ Confirm funding, the mechanism for claiming, and any funding conditions.
- ✓ Secure legal advice and formally amend the lease, if appropriate.
- ✓ Secure your grid connection by accepting the offer and making payment.
- ✓ Contract any other energy efficiency measures to be implemented.
- ✓ Confirm the programme based on consenting period and grid connection.
- ✓ Instruct your preferred installer to begin work (securing consents, initially).
- ✓ Await consents and confirm any conditions prior to progressing to installation.
- ✓ Instruct the installer to commence installation and agree a pre-start meeting date.
- ✓ Confirm all practical details of the installation at the pre-start meeting. This may include:
 - all site restrictions and requirements of site users
 - any restrictions required to suit other parties (e.g. neighbours, local council)
 - site access and storage arrangements
 - welfare arrangements
 - time on site
 - contingency arrangements (e.g. weather, unforeseen events)
 - evidence of contractor's insurance
 - confirm contact details and roles for all responsible parties.
- ✓ Support the installation by being available, attentive and helpful.
- ✓ Confirm your own insurance cover to operate from installation completion.
- ✓ Contract your operation and maintenance requirements, if necessary.
- ✓ Receive your Installer's MCS Commissioning Certificate.
- ✓ Make all final payments.
- ✓ On completion, secure payment for any generation not used on site. This will be through a [Smart Export Guarantee](#) or through a Power Purchase Agreement with an energy supplier. In either case, referencing a smart meter or export meter will be required.
- ✓ Next steps include monitoring your energy demand and generation and if you haven't already, consider the benefits of [EV charging](#), [battery storage](#). and decarbonising your heating.

HOW LOCAL ENERGY SCOTLAND CAN HELP

- ✓ **ADVICE** – We have a network of Local Development Officers across Scotland to provide regional advice and support, wherever you are.
- ✓ **RESOURCES** – Our free online resources, tools and good practice guides will help you along every step of your journey.
- ✓ **FUNDING** – we help you access the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) support and funding. Support may be available for solar PV and battery projects, where heating is also being decarbonised, through the Let's Do Net Zero Community Buildings Fund.

For more information, call Local Energy Scotland on **0808 808 2288**, email info@localenergy.scot or visit localenergy.scot

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