



Solar PV Panels - What you need to know

What does PV stand for?

PV stands for photovoltaic - this is the latest solar panel system we have installed on homes to produce electricity.

How do solar panels work?

The panels extract energy from the sun's rays and turn it into electricity which you can use in your home.

Why did Plymouth Community Homes install solar panels?

We want to help our residents be more energy efficient, reduce their energy bills and improve the efficiency of their homes. It also helps us to reduce our carbon footprint, in line with our environmental policy.

We carried out a trial in Camels Head in 2012 and, as that was a success, we decided to expand it to include more homes.

How do I save money?

When your panels were installed, you will have also received a Watson meter, which is colour coded to let you know when your electricity is free to use - the time can vary. Try and use larger appliances like washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers when your meter says you have free electricity. When your free electricity for the day runs out, use smaller appliances like lights or televisions.

If you're using your larger appliances when you've got solar energy available, you should notice your electricity bill reducing.

It's worth taking some time to read the information you were given when the panels were installed, so you get used to the Watson meter, when you have free electricity to use, when you'll pay and what the rough cost is.



make it happen

What happens if I don't use all the energy from the solar panels?

The meter should help you use as much of the energy your panels produce as possible.

Anything left over will go back into the grid, and PCH will receive a Feed in Tariff (FiT) set by the government. We can invest this money back into services for residents.

What happens if something goes wrong once the panels have been fitted?

We're responsible for any repairs and maintenance of the equipment – we'll let you know when any maintenance needs to be done. If you think something isn't working, or if you have any questions about how to use the panels, you can contact PCH through our Repairs Line on 0808 230 6500.

Why have you stopped installing panels on PCH homes?

Any electricity generated by the panels which doesn't get used goes back in to the grid. We received a Feed in Tariff from the government for this, which helped us to fund future PV panel installations. Due to changes in the Feed in Tariff, we've had to stop installing them on our homes for now.