

A guide to Solar Photovoltaic (PV)

This leaflet is intended to provide advice and guidance to households which have solar PV.

Solar PV is a major building element which Platform may install as part of major works projects. It is not a home upgrade we would expect residents to install themselves.

Using Solar Photovoltaic (PV)

Solar panels convert sunlight into electricity, which you can use in your home for free, saving you money. The system runs automatically, so there's nothing you need to do.

If you use more electricity than your panels produce, you'll buy the extra from your supplier. You don't need to do anything - the system will automatically import what you need from your existing supplier. Any unused electricity goes to the grid, but as a tenant, you can't sell it.

Solar PV can't store electricity unless you have a battery, which most homes don't. This means you need to use the electricity as it's generated.

When do solar panels generate electricity?

Solar panels generate electricity during the day, especially when the sun is shining directly on them. You'll get more energy in the summer because the days are longer and the sun is higher in the sky.

If you have a smart meter, you can see how much electricity you're buying from the grid. When your panels generate more than you're using, the smart

meter's in-home display will show that you're not importing electricity.

Checking and maintaining the Solar PV system

Platform monitors the solar PV system remotely. If we spot a problem, we'll contact you to arrange a visit from a qualified electrician. Since a working system saves you money, it's best to allow access for all necessary service visits. You don't need to agree to any maintenance contracts or pay any fees.



A generation meter.

What can you do to help?

You can also help by visually checking the system and the panels regularly. The generation meter has a red light that flashes when the panels are generating electricity. The faster it flashes, the more electricity is being produced. At night, the light stays on constantly. The meter reading increases during the day, but on very dull winter days, it might not change much.

If there's no change in the meter reading over a week, the system might not be working. You can report this, or any damage to the panels for repair to the Customer Hub on **0333 200 7304** or via our website

<https://www.platformhg.com/report-repair>.

Top tips for maximising savings

To get the most out of the solar PV system, try to use appliances during the day when the panels are generating power.

High-power appliances, like washing machines and dishwashers, should be used one at a time and preferably at lower temperatures.

If it's safe, use timers to run appliances while you're out during the day.

You could also cook your evening meal during the day using a slow cooker instead of the hob or oven.

Consider getting a smart meter from your electricity supplier, it will help to monitor your electricity usage.

Other energy and money-saving tips

In the kitchen: only boil the amount of water you need in the kettle, cook with lids on pans, and think about using your microwave more - they use less energy than your oven or hob.

Tumble dryers use a lot of energy - try to dry your clothes outside or on a clothes airer instead.

Turn off appliances when they're not in use and avoid leaving them on standby.

You can also try switching energy suppliers to get a better tariff rate.

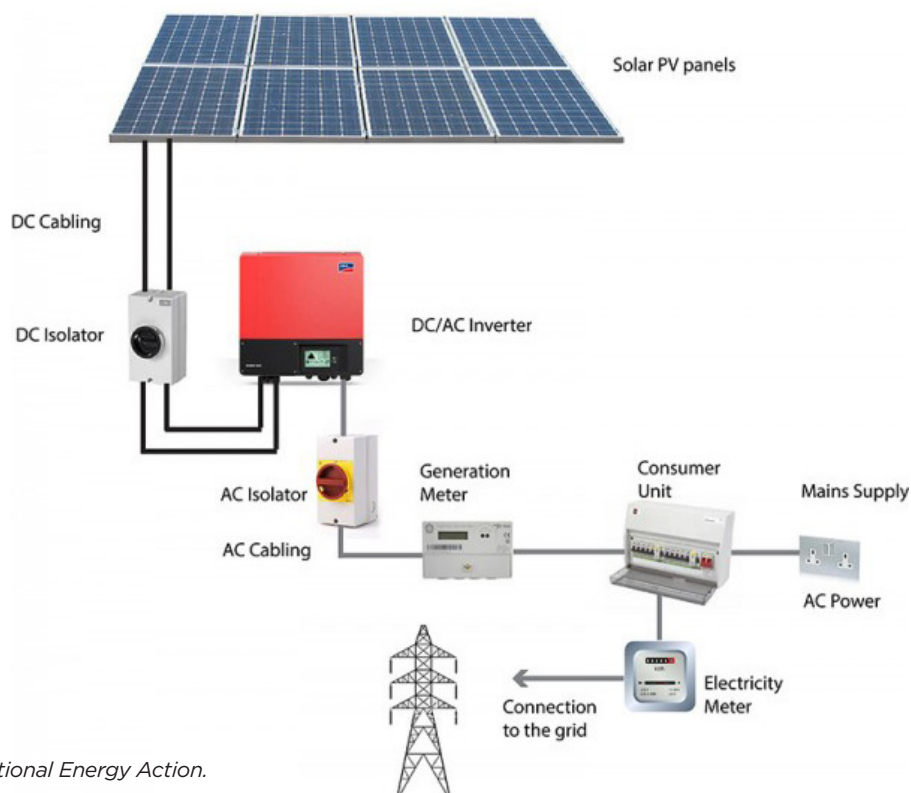
For more information, visit the National Energy Action website <https://www.nea.org.uk> and search 'Solar PV'.

If you're a Platform customer and have questions about your solar panels, the easiest way to contact us is via The Customer Hub on **0333 200 7304** or our website

<https://www.platformhg.com/report-repair>.

* The term **photovoltaics** (or **PV**) comes from the process of changing light (photons) into electricity (voltage), called the **photovoltaic effect**.

Diagram of a Solar PV system



Fuel poverty charity National Energy Action.