



PROJECT SUMMARY:



CLIENT
Sentinel Housing Association

PROJECT
Installation of Solar PV Panels

TIMESCALE:
12 Weeks

CONTRACT VALUE:
£3 million

OVERVIEW

Vital Energi has helped Sentinel Housing Association (SHA) to reduce the carbon footprint of its social housing, and cut resident's fuel bills, by installing

£3 million of solar PhotoVoltaic (PV) panels to more than 300 of its homes in Hampshire.

CHALLENGE

As part of its RE:THINK upgrade campaign and climate change strategy, Sentinel Housing Association (SHA) is investing £5 million upgrading its homes with a range of green technology to reduce their environmental impact and cut residents energy bills.

Long term, SHA wants to cut CO2 emissions from its properties by 15 per cent and reduce fuel poverty among its residents.

SHA has identified solar energy as a key technology to help it achieve its

energy and cost-saving targets. SHA expects the solar PV panels to generate overall savings of £45,000 in energy bills for customers and an average yearly saving of £150 off electricity bills per household.

According to the Energy Saving Trust, fitting solar PV panels can save as much as 1,200kg of CO2 a year.

THE BENEFITS:

- > Cuts electricity bills
- > Generates income: If a system is eligible for the Feed-In Tariff scheme it could generate savings and income – payment is made for both the electricity generated and used, and what isn't used can be exported to the grid
- > Low maintenance: solar PV needs a little maintenance
- > Long life: The panels are warranted to last 25 years or more

▶ Vital Energi installed 300 solar PV panels on residential homes in the Basingstoke, Deane and Hart District areas of Hampshire.



“Vital Energi’s professional project management and excellent tenant liaison has led to the successful delivery of over 300 Solar PV installations to an extremely tight timescale. We are very happy with the quality of service and cooperation provided to the residents throughout the project. The scheme will not only deliver long term financial savings but will also help us to achieve our carbon reduction targets.”

CAROLYN WHISTLECRAFT, SHA’S CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER

▶ THE SOLUTION

SHA appointed Vital Energi to install solar PV panels to 300 of its homes in the Basingstoke and Deane and Hart District areas of Hampshire as a pilot scheme.

Vital Energi has been operating in the sustainable energy sector for more than 25 years but this was the first time it had installed solar PV panels as part of a large scale contract. It won the contract because it met other more crucial contract criteria.

SHA needed a contractor that would continue its excellent track record for customer service to its tenants. Vital Energi’s experience of successfully and sensitively handling projects in occupied homes meant it was the ideal partner to handle a project which required effective tenant liaison to ensure tenants embraced the scheme and could be confident that their homes would be treated with respect.

The project also had an extremely tight timeframe, with installation of all solar PV panels to be completed within 12 weeks. Vital Energi’s experience of successfully delivering projects to tight timescales was another key factor in its selection. Not only did Vital Energi meet its target, it actually exceeded it by increasing the total number of installations by 12 per cent to 337 homes.

Vital Energi provided a number of specialist services to SHA over the duration of the contract. These included conducting a detailed business case analysis for the installation of solar PV on a site wide and individual property basis, carrying out pre-installation surveys of each property to determine their compatibility for solar PV, designing and procuring materials and project managing the installation.

Vital Energi also ensured access to funding for the client and developed a funding projection model over 25 years for each of the 337 properties. It advised SHA on to its eligibility for the Feed in Tariff (FIT) which was introduced to provide cash back for renewable electricity generated by homes.

The payments are tax free and linked to inflation. They work across two tariffs:

Generation tariff - depending on the size of the solar PV system, householders are paid per kWh of metered energy that their panels generate. This amount is payable whether the householder uses the electricity or exports it.

Export tariff - whatever size the panels are, householders can choose to receive either 3p per kWh of electricity (at an estimated value of 50 per cent of the generation value) or sell it on the open market.

THE CONCLUSION:

This project is an example of how Vital Energi is able to deliver renewable energy to social housing projects to the benefit of both Housing Associations and residents, while simultaneously working towards the government’s target of a 60 per cent reduction in CO2 emissions by 2050. The sustainable energy market is extremely fast-moving with new technologies being regularly introduced.

CONTRIBUTING TO REDUCING CO2 EMISSIONS BY

15%

As a specialist in the sustainability sector, Vital Energi is ideally placed to apply its existing expertise in designing, installing and commissioning sustainable energy systems to new technologies as they emerge. Vital Energi was awarded the SHA contract because of its expertise and experience in sustainable energy, customer service and delivering to tight timescales.