



**Friends of  
the Earth**

**Feed-in tariffs and the  
renewable heat incentive**  
**Your questions answered**

## Clean energy cashback

Thanks to a successful campaign by Friends of the Earth and our supporters, there's a new way to make money which also tackles climate change. Install a clean, green energy system in your home, business or community building and you'll get paid for the electricity or heat you produce. This booklet explains how the so-called feed-in tariff and the renewable heat incentive can work for you.

Our demand for energy is higher than ever. But burning fossil fuels – like coal, oil and gas – to generate energy releases the climate-changing gas, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Around a third of our emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> come from the power stations that bring us electricity.

There are cleaner ways to generate power – from renewable sources like the sun, wind and water. But renewable energy systems still aren't a common sight in the UK. We need to do more if we're to avoid dangerous climate change and meet the UK's legal target to cut carbon emissions.

This is what the new payments are all about.

Install a renewable energy system and you get free energy, cash for every unit of energy you generate and a bit more for any surplus you export to the national grid. Think of it as clean energy cashback.

And there are other benefits too. Producing energy from renewable sources makes us all less reliant on the dwindling supplies of

imported gas and oil. It also helps protect against a future of power cuts, price increases and petrol queues.

In this booklet we answer some of the common questions about the feed-in tariff and renewable heat incentive (see page 3). And we explore the financial benefits of different small-scale renewable energy technologies (see page 10-19). Read on to find out how you can join the growing number of people in the UK generating their own clean, green energy.

The case studies are based on Friends of the Earth's report *FIT for the Future* (ARUP 2010). Download the full report [www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/fit\\_for\\_future.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/fit_for_future.pdf)

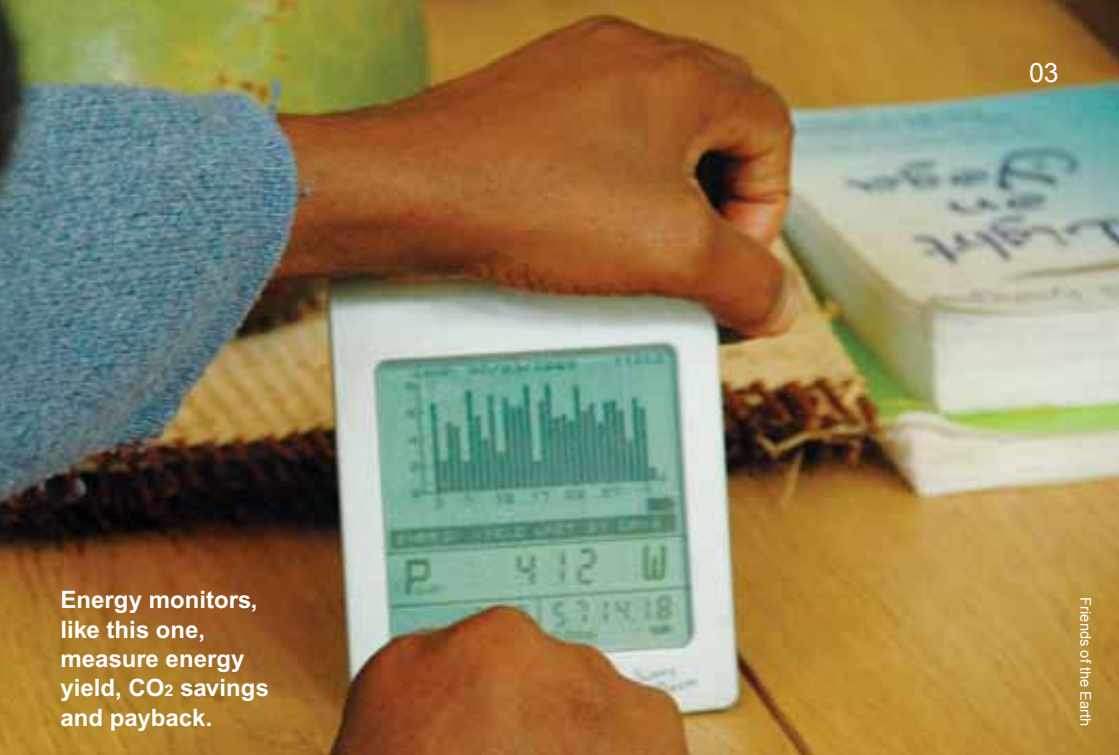


### Did you know?

Once you've signed up, FIT payments are guaranteed for up to 25 years. It's tax free and because it's index linked it won't be reduced by inflation.

## Contents

Clean energy cashback	2	Case studies:	
Should I get solar panels?	4	Making a green home	10
My story:		Outstanding schools	16
We've got lower bills	6	Community and business	18
Do an energy health check	7	My story: Group buying power	20
Make your own electricity	8	Support Friends of the Earth	23
Make your own heat	9	Useful contacts	24



Energy monitors, like this one, measure energy yield, CO<sub>2</sub> savings and payback.

### What's the feed-in tariff?

It's a payment from energy companies to anyone generating their own electricity from renewable sources (eg sun, wind or water). It launched in April 2010. You get:

- **Free electricity** – the electricity you generate and use during the day is free, so you'll save money on your energy bills.
- **Generation tariff** – your electricity supplier pays for every unit (kWh) of electricity you generate. Tariffs vary depending on the size and type of system.
- **Export tariff** – you also get paid 3p for every unit you don't use but export back to the national grid.

The Government is reviewing FIT payments for new installations. Rates are likely to change in April 2012. Find out more at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

### What's the renewable heat incentive?

Similar to the FIT, the renewable heat incentive (or RHI) rewards anyone producing clean, green heat. The first phase (launching in 2011) focuses on businesses, organisations and communities. Homeowners will be able to apply for the RHI from October 2012. Find out more on page 9.

To qualify for the FIT and the RHI you have to use a Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) approved installer (see back page).

### Is being energy-efficient still important?

Before you say yes to renewable energy it's essential to make sure your home is energy-efficient – there's no point generating your own electricity only to waste it through draughty doors or a poorly insulated roof. See the tips on page 7.

# Should I get solar panels?

There are several ways of generating your own clean, green electricity that are eligible for the feed-in tariff (FIT) payment. Here Friends of the Earth's Vicki Felgate tackles the questions thousands of people ask before saying yes to solar photovoltaic (PV) panels.

## Q How much does solar PV cost?

Typically £7-11,000 depending on the size of the system you choose (the cost is coming down all the time). But with the FIT you'll save money on your electricity bills and get payments for 25 years. See pages 10-19 to find out how much you could make.

## Q How long before it's paid back?

The capital cost of putting solar PV on your home should be paid back in around 10 years – type your postcode into [www.solarcentury.co.uk](http://www.solarcentury.co.uk) for a super-quick estimate. But FIT payments for new installations are under review (2011) so payback times might change.

## Q How would I pay for it?

**Savings?** Before you retire (from 55) you can take up to a quarter of your pension fund as a tax-free lump sum. **Need to borrow?** Some banks (eg Co-op) offer energy-efficiency and renewable-energy loans. Some suppliers also offer two-year interest-free deals on solar PV. Or try increasing your mortgage – it might be cheaper than taking out another loan. Check with an independent financial adviser to find the best option for you.

## Q Will it cut my carbon footprint?

Yes. A 2 kW solar PV system on your roof should save 1 tonne of carbon a year – a sizeable chunk off the average 10 tonnes most people in the UK are responsible for every year. If a group of you funded an 8 kW system on a community building you could save 6.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

## Q Does it matter where I live?

It's sunnier in the south so panels will be more efficient and pay back faster. Check out the map at [www.solar-trade.org.uk/solarHeating.cfm](http://www.solar-trade.org.uk/solarHeating.cfm) to see the solar electricity potential where you live.

## Q What sort of roof do I need?

Ideally it should be south-facing to maximise its electricity generating potential, but south-east or south-west is also fine. It needs to be largely unshaded (so no trees or chimney pots) and strong – to carry the weight of the panels. Solar PV can be put on flat roofs and the ground but the panels need to be slanted at 35-45 degrees.

## Q Can I add renewables to a village hall or school?

Yes. See examples on pages 16-19. Or check [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) Business & Public Sector pages for info on community projects and funding.

## Q Is this the end of electricity bills?

No, but you'll definitely save money on your bills. The energy you produce isn't stored on site, so you can only use the energy for free as it's being produced (eg when the sun is shining). You still have to pay for any electricity you use at night.

## Q If there's a power cut will I have electricity?

No. The inverter (part of your system) needs electricity to operate and most people generating renewable energy are still supplied by the national grid.

A 1.7 kW solar PV system on a typical house roof costs around £8,500 to install and earns around £600 a year from the feed-in tariff.

## We've got lower bills

**Council tenants in Stoke-on-Trent are having their homes made more energy efficient and fitted with renewable energy in a pioneering scheme linked to the Government's Community Energy Saving Programme.**

This scheme will see councils, community organisations and energy suppliers improve the energy efficiency of 90,000 homes in 100 locations nationwide. Already Stoke City Council has secured £2.3 million funding from E.ON.

Mum Samantha Bryson was the first tenant to get solar panels.

**“Having two small children means there’s always a computer or television on, or the washing machine and tumble dryer. We currently have a meter to pay for our electricity and are putting in £10 every two or three days. The solar panels are a great idea because it means we’ll get cheaper electricity bills and it will be good for the environment.”**

See pages 18 & 19 for more community examples.



**Stoke City council is putting solar PV panels on many of its properties. Samantha Bryson's family was the first to get them.**

## Do an energy health check

**Before going ahead with your clean energy plans make sure your home or workplace is energy efficient. It will save you money and ensure you're not wasting the power you use. Here's how:**

### Block up draughts

Use draught excluders and brush strips to block up gaps around doors and windows, it could save up to £25 a year on heating bills.

### Insulate

Most people think their home is properly insulated. In fact, £1 in every £4 we spend heating our homes is wasted due to poor insulation. Make sure your loft is properly insulated (it should be 270 mm thick) and get your cavity walls filled (if you have them).

### Fit energy saving lightbulbs

They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs and one bulb can save you around £45 over its lifetime.

### Get an energy meter

Using an energy monitor will help teach everyone in the family how much it costs to use each appliance, from the kettle to hair straighteners. The Owl model (approx £35) has good reviews but if you're generating your own energy consider the Wattson (approx £99) which provides real-time info.

### Replace your old boiler

Boilers account for around 60 per cent of a household's total energy bill for a year. Replacing your old boiler with a new high efficiency condensing boiler can save up to £225 a year. Visit [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) for more information.

### Financial help

For advice on where to get financial help for energy-saving home improvements see [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)



### Did you know?

During the cold winter of 2010 more than half of Britons kept the heating on non-stop for more than 12 hours each day to try and stay warm. That was despite energy prices going up and average annual gas and electricity bills rising to £1,228.

## Get energy-efficient

Draughtproof doors, windows and floorboards.

Try thick, lined curtains to stop heat escaping out of windows.

Fit a chimney balloon in unused fireplaces.

Insulate your loft and cavity walls.

Buy or borrow an energy monitor to see which appliances use the most power.

Check out [www.foe.co.uk/living](http://www.foe.co.uk/living) for more home energy-saving ideas.

# Make your own electricity

With the **feed-in tariff (FIT)** you can join the UK's clean energy revolution whether you are a home owner, school governor, housing association or council tenant, community group, farmer or business.

The FIT applies to:

## Solar photovoltaic (PV)

Solar PV uses the sun's rays to generate electricity. Panels can be attached to a south-facing roof or free-standing. If your roof needs retiling or it's a new building project consider solar PV tiles instead of conventional tiles or cladding. A 2 kW system for a typical terrace house can generate 1,964 kWh a year – a fair chunk of a typical household's total electrical demand for lights and appliances of 3,000 kWh.

## Hydro-electric

Water has been used to generate power for centuries. Small-scale hydro can use flowing water to drive a turbine. The electricity can be used locally or fed into the grid. It's generally cheap to run and offers a constant source of power. It doesn't consume any fuel, or need electricity to operate.

## Wind power

Uses a turbine to generate power, so long as it's breezy enough. Half the power generated by a home turbine is typically used on site, the rest is exported to the grid. At a school about 40 per cent is used on site.

The upfront cost of installing solar, hydro or wind can be expensive but with the feed-in



Friends of the Earth

## Did you know?

Solar electric doesn't need to be in direct sunlight to work. It will produce electricity on cloudy days (but not at night). Power varies according to the position, the amount of sunlight and the type of cell used.

tariff this cost should be paid back years before your green technology stops working. And it will give another decade of income too. Look at payback times to help decide which is best for you. See pages 10-19.

# Make your own heat

**There are loads of cleaner ways to heat homes and businesses which also avoid the risk of gas and oil supply shortages and price increases. You've probably already seen a solar hot water system on a south-facing roof but did you know that you can use compost, food scraps and even cowpats to make energy?**

The new **renewable heat incentive (RHI)** rewards anyone making clean, green heat. It launched for businesses, organisations and communities in July 2011. Homeowners will be able to apply from October 2012.

The RHI applies to:

## **Solar thermal**

Solar hot water systems – also known as solar thermal – use the sun's energy to heat water. It connects to a hot water tank which you can use for washing or underfloor heating.

## **Biomass boilers**

Biomass boilers use logs and woodchips or pellets to provide heat for radiators, heat water or underfloor heating. The boiler generally needs a bit of space and you will need a dry storage area for the fuel.

## **Heat pumps**

Ground source heat pumps need outside space (to lay the pipes underground) so it might not be suitable if you have a small garden. It also requires major building work so is best for new buildings.

The Government is still deciding if air source heat pumps will be eligible for the RHI.

These take ambient heat from the outside air and compress it to generate heat. They can be fitted to most buildings.

**“It's worth doing the maths to find out what's best for your home,”** says Friends of the Earth's Dominic Murphy (pictured below). **“When our old oil boiler conked out, I got in an energy consultant to advise on how best to reduce the carbon footprint of our home. He crunched some numbers, reminded us about draught proofing and insulation, etc, then said a pellet boiler would slash our emissions by 60 per cent. I was hooked.”**



Hannah Solloway

# Making a green home

## What options do I have for home-generated power?

Once you've done an energy-efficiency makeover it's time to see if any renewable technologies will suit where you live.

Most of the examples below are for home owners, but tenants can use them to inspire landlords (see page 6 and 19).

The feed-in tariff rates in this section are for systems installed by March 2012, after which the rates may change (see page 20).

### Solar thermal (2 kW) on a semi-detached home

Cost **£3,000**

Payback **approx 15 years**

RHI lifetime **20 years at £160 per year (+ £88 gas bill savings per annum)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> saving **0.4 tonnes**

Solar thermal panels (or tubes) take around a day to install. Some systems can also provide room heating – especially if it's underfloor heating as this doesn't need to be kept as hot as radiators. It certainly keeps running costs down in the summer. You can also buy systems that automatically top up the heat on colder days so you don't need to keep fiddling with your boiler's gas controls.

### Biomass boiler (10 kW) in a two-up two-down

Cost

**£4,500 plus annual fuel costs of £659**

Payback **approx 4 years**

RHI lifetime **20 years at £1,022 per year (+ £673 energy bill savings per annum)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **3.3 tonnes**

A biomass boiler is ideal if you need to keep your home warm all day (eg if you're caring for someone at home) or you're at home a lot and keen to lower your carbon emissions. It's also good if you're not on gas mains.

Even in the suburbs you can have a biomass boiler – provided you have space to store the wood pellets and somewhere to unload deliveries (approx 3.5 tonnes a year).

It produces more pollutants than a gas boiler (nitrogen dioxide, particles and sulphur) so might not be allowed if you live in an air quality management zone (check with your Local Authority). Larger systems (eg for a block of flats) have better pollution-control equipment and are preferable in urban areas.

Homeowners will be able to apply for the RHI from October 2012.

**“There's nothing like coming in from a hard day's work in the garden and having a nice hot shower that uses no gas to heat up. Solar-heated water almost feels different.”**

**Matt, Bedfordshire**

## Domestic wind turbine (1.5 kW) on a two-storey house

Cost **£6,500**

Payback **9 years**

FIT lifetime **20 years at £680 per year (+ £120 electricity bill savings per annum)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **1 tonne**

To generate electricity using a wind turbine, you need a windy location and a high average wind speed, so it might not work every day. But we live in the windiest country in Europe, with some of the world's leading small-scale wind manufacturers. Turbines can be inefficient in town but are good for homes on urban hilltops or rural sites, especially those off-grid.

## What's a watt?

A watt is a unit of power.

1 kilowatt (kW) = 1,000 watts, 1 megawatt (MW) = 1 million watts.

0.1 watts used by washing machine on standby.

5-30 watts used by fluorescent lamps.

25-100 watts used by old-fashioned lightbulb.

500,000 watt (500 kW) wind turbine produces enough energy to power 100 homes.

20 MW solar farm produces enough electricity to power 5,100 homes.

# Making a green home

## Solar PV (2 kW) panels on a suburban home

Cost **£9,850**

Payback **approx 10 years**

FIT lifetime **25 years at £811 per year (+ £120 electricity bill savings per annum)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **1 tonne**

Matt and Nikki have a large foster family and live in a seven-bedroom house in Bedfordshire. They installed a 1.75 kW solar PV system in 2010.

**“We’re a family of nine, with a dog, chickens and teenagers – can you hear Nirvana being played on the electric guitar in the background? So if we can get everyone using less electricity and there are nice sunny days when we are generating a lot of electricity from our solar panels then we’ll be in profit in terms of our overall costs.”**

## Solar PV (2 kW) roof tiles on a city house

Cost **£16,000**

Payback **approx 17 years**

FIT lifetime **25 years at £728 per year (+ £123 electricity bill savings per annum)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **1 tonne**

Solar PV tiles look similar to slate and can provide more than half your home’s electricity. If your roof needs fixing anyway, then consider redoing it with solar PV tiles instead of installing panels. If you plan to run a ground source heat pump to keep the house warm, you can make good use of the free electricity during the day and bring down the running costs.

Solar PV tiles are increasingly used on new houses and may be worth considering for an extension.

### Did you know?

If you’re at home during the day then generating your own power makes real financial sense because you get to use the free electricity. If you’re out you can still benefit – put appliances on a timer to run during the day.

### Do I need planning permission?

Different rules might apply if you live in a conservation area or a listed building, but generally you shouldn’t need planning permission. Check with a council planning officer to see if your renewable energy system comes under **permitted development rights**.

---

**“We’ve already noticed our electric and gas bills come down. And we had our first FIT payment – we got about £500 for the first six months. It’s been a good financial investment because it’s reduced our outgoings. And it’s the right green thing to do.”**

Matt, Bedfordshire

---

Matt and Nikki installed solar PV and solar thermal in 2010.



## We'll be in profit

**Helen Catt, a former human resources consultant and mum of three, at home a lot with a 10 and three year-old, added solar PV (for electricity) and solar thermal panels (for hot water) while renovating her Cornish seaside cottage. She signed up to the FIT in December 2010. She's definitely a fan.**

**Here are Helen's tips for making the most of the FIT.**


"Who should install renewables? Well, I think there's a point in our life when we are making money but the future is less certain – income may drop, we might be looking at no pension – so how nice to think installing this will give us a future with lower heating and electricity costs. It should be perfect for people retiring too – who perhaps have a lump sum and may not be earning in the future – they could look forward to a future of lower bills.

"It is a cost up front and it seems high, but once you've got it you can be living almost bill free and that's something really special.

"My tip? Forget the payback comparison because it's not appropriately applied to the question 'Should we install?' only to 'Which renewable should we install?'. You wouldn't work out payback before you bought double-glazing or a new dress would you?"

"I did some calculations of what the panels and woodburner cost and how much we would get back with the feed-in tariff (for the solar PV) and I know we'll be in profit."

Helen's energy supplier is Good Energy – the UK's only dedicated 100 per cent renewable energy supplier. See page 22 to find out about Good Energy's feed-in tariff service.



**Did you know?**  
FITs are paid if you are producing electricity anywhere in the UK (except Northern Ireland) from a renewable source – solar, wind and water.

**I've been offered free solar panels. Should I say yes to rent-a-roof?**

Some companies will put solar panels on your roof – even a school or housing association roof – for free. In return the householder or landlord gets some free electricity (or discounted electricity) for the next 25 years but the company takes the FIT payments. Renting your roof is an option if you can't afford the upfront investment and want to cut your carbon emissions. Or if you're at home during the day and can make



“We use the dishwasher and washing machine when the sun is out,” says Helen Catt, who is one of the one in 25 Good Energy customers generating renewable energy.

Paul Glendell/Friends of the Earth

the most of the free electricity. But it's even better for the companies that will invest around £11,000 to put solar panels on a house but expect to make between £900-£1,450 each year for 25 years. That's why *Guardian Money* (14 August 2010) advised investors: “If you have a suitable roof and a half decent credit history, you should have the panels installed yourself. This is one investment worth going into debt for.”

Check [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) before saying yes to a rent-a-roof scheme.

# Outstanding schools

## What can I do at school?

**Adding renewable energy to power school life could be a smart way for parents and governors to future proof at a time when budgets are being slashed.**

Use the Eco Schools framework to help come up with ideas and activities to make your school greener.

See [www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk)

Take inspiration from other schools that have installed renewable energy. Check out the school case studies at [www.solarcentury.co.uk/schools-public-sector/schools/case-studies/](http://www.solarcentury.co.uk/schools-public-sector/schools/case-studies/)

Or visit [www.solar4schools.co.uk](http://www.solar4schools.co.uk) for advice on how to fund and install solar panels at your school.

### Wind (15 kW) at a school

Cost **£4,000**

Payback **8 years**

FIT lifetime **20 years at £6,315 per year (+ £1,155 pa for exporting to the grid)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **12.2 tonnes**

In the right spot wind turbines are a top performer.

At St Columb Minor Primary School in Cornwall, 40 per cent of the energy generated by the wind turbine is used on site – saving 15 per cent on energy bills.

### Solar PV (200 kW) on a school

Cost **£600,000**

Returns for school **About £16,500 worth of free electricity per year**

Returns for community funders **About 5.3 per cent**

FIT lifetime **25 years with revenue of at least £31,717 per year**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **90 tonnes**

Guildford & Waverley Friends of the Earth has helped to form a co-operative to get 50 kW solar PV panels on the roofs of five local schools through a community project.

The total capital cost is about £670,000 but the bulk of the feed-in tariff payments will go back to the community. The schools will get free electricity and education materials – including display meters and a database to record energy output.



### Did you know?

Every tonne of carbon a school saves cuts around £200 from its energy bill – very useful in these tough economic times.

Students at St Columb Minor Primary School on the Cornish coast have been keeping a close eye on the school's wind turbine. "It's performed brilliantly, providing over 100,000 kWh per year of our energy usage," says the School.



Andrew Atkinson

### **How can I fund renewable energy at my school?**

If you can't pay for it outright, you could rent your roof to a company (see page 14) or community project (see opposite) and benefit from free electricity (they'd keep the feed-in tariff). Or you could pay for it over time. Solar4schools provides funding for schools to install solar panels. You pay an initial deposit and then use the feed-in tariff to pay back the installation costs over 15 years, after which you own the panels and keep the feed-in tariff. Find out more at [www.solar4schools.co.uk](http://www.solar4schools.co.uk)

# Community and business

**Could you overhaul your bills by generating clean energy? Or is there scope to help your neighbourhood become more energy clever?**

Check [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) for inspirational ways to transform your community's energy use, including

## Solar PV (8 kW) as a community project

Cost **£25,875**

Payback **approx 8 years**

FIT lifetime **25 years at £2,846 per year**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **6.2 tonnes**

40 per cent of the electricity generated by the solar PV panels at this Birmingham community centre is used on site and the rest is exported to the grid.

As with all solar PV schemes, the inverter may need replacing after 10 years (an inverter for an 8 kW system costs £5,600 and for a 2 kW system, £1,400).

Davyhulme Energy Saving project in Manchester – one of the first 100 congregations to get an Eco Church award.

Businesses can also look at Carbon Trust's Green Growth tips at [www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)

## Micro hydro (100 kW) at a hotel

Cost **£47,700 plus £400 annual operating costs**

Payback **9 years**

FIT lifetime **20 years at £6,169 per year (+ £930 electricity exports pa)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **16.4 tonnes**

There could be as many as 20,000 water mills in the UK with the potential to be brought back to life generating electricity.

## Solar PV (20 kW) for 15 homes with a housing association

Cost **£66,755 plus £400 annual operating costs**

Payback **approx 8 years**

FIT lifetime **25 years at £6,106 per year (+£1,187 electricity bill savings pa)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings **10 tonnes**

Fifteen housing association homes in Manchester now have solar PV on their roofs. The tenants have massively reduced electricity bills and the housing association is earning enough from the feed-in tariff for payback within a decade.

### Did you know?

A community-owned wind turbine can offer good financial returns. The carbon savings for larger wind turbines are better than any other renewable energy and it's a well established technology so there are less practical risks. For more information see [www.energy4all.co.uk](http://www.energy4all.co.uk)

Heron Corn Mill in Beetham, Cumbria, installed a 100 kW hydropower turbine in 2010. The system provides green energy for entire mill complex.



### **Anaerobic digestion (CHP 100 kW) on the farm**

Cost **£1,005,000**

Payback **Under 20 years**

FIT lifetime **20 years at £93,820 per year (+ £81,757 electricity bill savings pa)**

Annual CO<sub>2</sub> saving **350 tonnes**

This is one for farmers and all you Archers fans. Anaerobic digestion breaks down wet waste (eg sewage and food scraps) to create methane gas. This can be injected into the gas network or burned in an engine to generate electricity and heat, and the byproduct used as fertiliser.

It costs £100,000 a year to run but 10 tonnes of compost can produce around 3,000 kWh – enough to meet an average household's electricity needs for a year.

## Use your group buying power

**In a pretty Buckinghamshire riverside town, Philip Ditchfield is making solar dreams come true with the Marlow100 Solar Project.**

“I think the panels look great,” says Philip who reckons the only way to get a disproportionate number of solar panels on Marlow’s roofs is to use group buying power to get the cheapest deal.

“Already 195 families have expressed an interest and if two more actually install the price drops by 15 per cent.

“I think there are four or five good reasons to install renewable energy. You might be doing it to cut CO<sub>2</sub> or because you’re concerned about the environment and want to live more sustainably. Or to save on energy bills, be less reliant on fossil fuels or as an investment. Hopefully more than one reason applies.

“There is quite a bit of confusion about the benefits of the FIT, but my tip is don’t get bogged down by details, just avoid importing electricity from the grid. Use appliances around noon. It helps to be at home to switch appliances on but you could put your washing machine on a timer.

“I go to Germany for work and solar panels are not unusual. With the buying power of the Marlow100 Solar Project I hope that in a few years it would be strange if you don’t have panels on your roof. I’m also encouraging the local primary school to use the FIT. For every £10 a parent donates, the school actually gets £20 over the next 25 years.”

For more information about this project contact [philipjditchfield@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:philipjditchfield@yahoo.co.uk)

### Did you know?

The feed-in tariff is meant to encourage small-scale producers so systems over 5 MW are not eligible. But as 2 MW powers 600 homes, if you live in a windy spot or have a very large roof area (eg barn or a row of houses) you can still install a fairly big system.

### What does the future hold for FITs?

The Government has cut some feed-in tariff rates and is reviewing others. These initial cuts mean schools, businesses and housing associations will be far less able to invest in renewable energy projects in the future, and the review could mean householders are affected from April 2012.



**Young people share ideas at WREN's launch event about how to get their town generating a third of its energy from renewable sources by 2015.**

### Clever ideas to try

Your community can turn the feed-in tariff into a money spinner. In Cornwall a group from Wadebridge hopes to convince 10,000 people and businesses to host solar panels in return for free electricity – a giant rent-a-roof scheme. Wadebridge Renewable Energy Network (WREN) will

then collect a portion of the FIT payments (around £300,000 a year) for community projects around town. It could be used for the youth club or to improve energy-efficiency, whatever the not-for-profit members decide to prioritise. More at [www.wren.uk.com](http://www.wren.uk.com)

Friends of the Earth is campaigning for the Government to up its ambition for the scheme. We think every neighbourhood should have the opportunity to generate its own green energy and benefit from the FIT.

Find out more at [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk) or see page 23 for easy ways to support our work.



## Good Energy's FIT service

**Good Energy pioneered incentives for renewable generators almost a decade ago and we have been offering our own version of the FIT through our award-winning schemes ever since.**

Recognised as specialists in the industry, we were invited by the Department of Energy and Climate Change to share our expertise as the current Government FIT scheme was created. We're proud that every team at Good Energy has expertise in microgeneration and the FIT. It means that from installation to generation, we can be there for you every step of the way.

### **Getting paid for your Energy**

Once your generator has been installed and certified through the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS), we can register you for the FIT with Ofgem, the industry regulator.

We'll help make sure all the paperwork is taken care of so that you are granted your FIT accreditation in a timely manner and that you receive the payment you are entitled to. We know the process inside and out and can support you at every step.

- When you sign up, we'll ask you to submit your initial meter readings. We'll then ask you to send us meter readings at least every quarter.
- We'll use these readings to calculate the amount of electricity you have generated and the payment you are entitled to.
- We'll submit this figure to Ofgem, which then sends your payment to us.
- Once we receive it from Ofgem we will pay you.

It takes around six weeks from us submitting your figures to you receiving your payment.

For more information about Good Energy's FIT schemes and generating your own energy, call us on **0845 456 1640** or visit **[www.goodenergy.co.uk](http://www.goodenergy.co.uk)**

# Easy ways to help change the world



Friends of the Earth

Changing our individual behaviour can help, but we'll have even more impact if we act together to change politics. That's why Friends of the Earth asks you to support us in our work. Here's how you can help:

## Take action and campaign with us

From simple actions to joining groundbreaking campaigns, you can help make the environment better for everyone.

## Make a donation or regular contribution

A regular direct debit is a great way to support our vital campaigns. And there are many other ways you can help us financially. These include getting a Friends of the Earth credit card, signing up to Good Energy for green electricity, shopping with us, or holding a fundraising event.

## Keep your finger on the pulse

Sign up for our email newsletter for the latest news, campaigns actions and greener lifestyle tips delivered straight to your inbox.

Do all this and more at [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk) or phone 020 7490 1555. Thank you.

Friends of the Earth is a charity that gets people campaigning at all levels – in communities, nationally and internationally. Our campaigns are groundbreaking and have been behind laws to protect wildlife in Britain, doorstep recycling for every home and the world's first climate change act.

We believe the environment is for everyone and that a healthy planet and people's well-being go hand-in-hand.

We believe things can get better if we tackle the underlying causes of the threats to our planet – economic and social injustice. And with your help we can do this.

**[www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)**

---

## Directory

### British Hydropower Association

A useful guide to planning small-scale hydro-electric projects.

**[www.british-hydro.org/mini-hydro/index.html](http://www.british-hydro.org/mini-hydro/index.html)**

### Carbon Trust

Tel: 0800 085 2005

**[www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)**

### Co-operative Bank

Provides finance for renewable-energy projects, through Energy Efficiency Advance loans.

**[www.co-operativebank.co.uk](http://www.co-operativebank.co.uk)**

### Good Energy

Switch to a green energy tariff or get advice about generating your own clean energy.

Tel: 0845 456 1640

**[www.goodenergy.co.uk](http://www.goodenergy.co.uk)**

### Energy4All

Information and advice on community-owned renewable energy schemes.

Tel: 01229 821 028

**[www.energy4all.co.uk](http://www.energy4all.co.uk)**

### Energy Saving Trust

Generate your own energy or ask about energy efficiency and grants.

Tel: 0800 512 012

**[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)**

### Microgeneration

Search for certified installers and products.

**[www.microgenerationcertification.org](http://www.microgenerationcertification.org)**

### Solar4schools


Advice on how to fund and install solar panels at school.

**[www.solar4schools.co.uk](http://www.solar4schools.co.uk)**

Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ  
Tel: 020 7490 1555 Fax: 020 7490 0881 Website: [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)

Friends of the Earth is the collective name for Friends of the Earth Trust, registered charity 281681, company number 1533942, and Friends of the Earth Limited, company number 1012357

Editors: Nicola Baird and Vicki Felgate; Picture research: Amelia Collins; Design: Andy Hodge, Deborah Thompson  
Front cover picture: Getty

 Printed on paper made from 100 per cent post-consumer waste, using vegetable-based inks and by a printer holding environmental accreditation ISO14001.

September 2011