

Solar Together Wiltshire

Briefing Note No. 22-11

Service: Climate Team

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We wanted to update you on an innovative scheme that Wiltshire Council is driving forward locally called Solar Together Wiltshire.

We are working with independent experts iChoosr and Swindon Borough Council to give homeowners the opportunity to invest in renewables through a group-buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage.

This is a group-buying scheme which will offer solar panels with optional battery storage and EV charge points, as well as offering battery storage for residents who have already invested in solar panels and are looking to get more from the renewable energy they generate, as well as increase their independence from the grid.

Given the current cost of living, significantly impacted by the surge in energy prices, we feel this scheme will be worth consideration from eligible households and help provide longer term savings.

It is free to register and there is no obligation for people to go ahead with an installation. All residents living in the Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council areas who own their own house (or have permission from the landlord to install a solar PV system) can register for the Solar Together group-buying scheme. Small and medium-sized enterprises (non-domestic) and community buildings meeting this requirement can participate as well. Planning permission may be required in some cases and we are directing people to this page for more information – <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-permission>

The scheme works as follows:

- **Step one:** From 9 May - 14 June, Wiltshire householders can register online to become part of the group for free and without obligation. Invitation letters will be sent to 60,000 Wiltshire households w/c 23 May. However, any eligible household/business/community building can apply irrespective of whether they receive a letter
- **Step two:** Pre-approved UK solar PV suppliers participate in an auction. They are able to offer competitive pricing as the volume and geographic concentration makes it possible for them to make greater efficiencies, which they pass onto customers
- **Step three:** After the auction, registered households will be emailed a personal recommendation later in June that is specific to the details they submitted in their registration.
- **Step four:** If they choose to accept their recommendation, the specifics of their installation will be confirmed with a technical survey, after which a date can be set for the installation of their solar PV system.

People can accept or decline their personal recommendation. If they choose to go ahead and accept with Solar Together, a £150 deposit is required, which is conditionally refundable.

As stated earlier, iChoosr will send out a letter from the week of 23 May to a selection of properties in Wiltshire that are likely to be eligible for the scheme to give them all the information they need to consider participating should they wish to. The scheme will be promoted using all the available council communication channels prior to this as well, including social media, press releases, newsletter articles and posters at public facing council buildings. There will be no selling by phone or doorstepping of residents.

Our [Wiltshire Climate Strategy](#) is very clear that as a county we need to reduce the energy we use as well as using low carbon forms of energy. Within the strategy we aimed to encourage installation of renewables through group buy schemes and we're pleased to offer this opportunity to residents to consider

If you are contacted by residents who want more information about this, people can visit www.solartogether.co.uk/wiltshire, email wiltshire@solartogether.co.uk or call 0800 048 8113. iChoosr are responsible for managing and rolling out the scheme and all enquiries about it will be going via them.

For those residents not eligible for this particular scheme, but who still want ideas on lowering their carbon footprint or information on how to access support or grants for energy efficiency in their homes, then there's more information available at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/climate-change-individual.

If you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact climate@wiltshire.gov.uk

We'd welcome and encourage you to share any council communications, such as social media posts and press releases, with your contacts and the local community to help spread the word about the scheme.

We'll keep you updated on the progress of this scheme.