

<b>FOI REF:</b>	15708
<b>RESPONSE SENT:</b>	03/07/25

## Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request information regarding your current and planned usage of solar energy across your estate.

Please could you provide responses to the following questions:

### 1. Governance & Responsibility

- o Do you have a dedicated person or team responsible for solar energy investment and/or sustainability energy initiatives within your organisation?
- o If so, please provide their role/title (personal names are not required).

### 2. Current Solar Deployment

- o How many solar panel installations (PV systems) do you currently operate across your estate?
- o What is the total installed capacity of these systems (in kWp)?
- o What proportion of your organisation's energy usage is currently provided by solar generation?

### 3. Investment & Strategy

- o Does your organisation have a documented investment strategy for expanding the use of solar panels or increasing on-site renewable energy generation?
- o If so, please provide a copy of or link to the relevant strategy or plan (or summarise key points if not published).

### 4. Solar and Net Zero Commitments

- o Does solar energy form part of your organisation's Net Zero / Carbon Reduction Strategy?
- o If yes, how is progress against this strategy communicated to the public (e.g. via website, reports, dashboards, etc.)?

### 5. Future Plans

- o Are there any planned solar panel projects or expansions within the next 3 years? If yes, please provide high-level details (e.g. number of sites, scale of deployment, approximate timescales).
- o Have you conducted any feasibility studies on increasing solar capacity in the past 3 years? If so, can these be shared?



## 6. Procurement & Partnerships

- o Does your organisation currently use any third-party companies or frameworks to deliver solar energy solutions or manage installations? If yes, which ones?
- o Are there any upcoming procurement exercises planned relating to solar energy or wider renewable energy solutions?

## 7. Battery Storage

- o Do you currently use battery storage alongside your solar panels?
- o Are there plans to invest in battery storage in future?

## 8. Funding

- o Has your organisation accessed or applied for any external funding to support solar energy projects (e.g. SALIX, Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, LEP funding)?

## 9. Barriers

- o What are the main barriers your organisation faces to further adoption of solar energy (e.g. funding, planning restrictions, roof suitability, internal resource)?

## Response

Please see answers below to your questions.

1. We do not have a dedicated officer or team responsible for solar energy investments or energy initiatives within the council. However tackling climate emergency and our greener faster priority are at the centre of the council's plan. Multiple teams are responsible for delivering various solar and energy initiatives across our estate and the wider district. This includes Estates, Sustainability and Natural Environment, Retrofit and Green Economic Development Strategy.
2. The council operate 8 PV systems across our corporate portfolio. This totals to 582.8kWp of installed capacity. In 2024/25 these panels generated 312,755kWh of electricity, during this period grid electricity usage was 2,223,456kWh. Therefore solar generation represents 12.3% of the total electricity demand. Across our housing portfolio there are a further 104 PV systems installed and 8 solar thermal systems. This total to 740 panels, the exact capacity in kWp is unknown, but is in the region of 220kWp.



3. Increasing on site renewable energy generation in the form of installing more solar PV is included within the council's Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP). This is in line with two of CNAPs key pathways of reducing energy consumption and increasing renewable energy generation. Please see link below to CNAP. [Carbon Neutrality Action Plan - Winchester City Council](#)
4. As per the answer to question 3, investing in further solar energy is part of the council's CNAP. Solar PV will be key to the aim of the council creating a carbon neutral district by 2030. Solar is included in a number of strategies and reported documents. This is communicated via the council's website. We publish the council's CNAP, annual carbon emissions, green economic development strategy and various case studies which can all be found here: [What we're doing - Winchester City Council](#)
5. Yes, there are plans to install/expand solar on four WCC buildings, totaling up to 1,020kWp. As part of the solar for business scheme the council aim to install 8000kWp of solar PV across the district. The four buildings mentioned above have had feasibility studies done to assess viability.
6. We have worked with multiple solar contractors in both installing solar systems and on the feasibility of PV systems. Currently we are working closely with Portsmouth City Council on thier multi-contractor framework for the design, supply, and installation of solar photovoltaic.
7. Only one of our PV arrays currently uses battery storage, there is battery capacity of 25kWh. Plans to invest further are considered on case by case basis. Generally though we would not look to not install batteries alongside solar PV due to the higher upfront costs and the additional space requirements. We typically target sites with higher electricity demand, reducing the need for batteries. Battery systems are more common on our housing PV installs.
8. Yes, our council has received Salix PSDS funding which was spent on improving energy efficiency across our estate.
9. Solar energy is something we are exploring across departments as generally speaking we find it a viable renewable energy solution. There are some barriers, for example:
  - the internal resource involved in the monitoring of solar PV on our housing properties.
  - relative lack of available roof space or unsuitable roof space on our corporate estate has resulted in us investigating more expensive options such as solar canopies, where costs are more likely to be prohibitive.

