

Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System

Factsheet

Quick Guide

Your Vico Homes property has solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof which generate free electricity for you to use. The PV panels generate electricity during daylight hours with more generated when the sun is stronger. More electricity is produced in the summer and for a greater period of the day than in the winter.

When the PV panels are generating, any electricity being used in the home will use the solar PV electricity first before taking any additional electricity from the grid. This will reduce the amount of electricity you use from the grid and save you money on your energy bills. Your main electricity meter will show how much you have used from the grid.

PV generation meter

There is a PV generation meter fitted in your home which records the amount of electricity in kilowatt hours (kWh) the system produces. We monitor this meter to check that the PV panels are working correctly and identify any faults if they occur.

The amount you save will depend on how much of this free electricity you use, as it does not get stored and any unused electricity goes to the grid. The unused electricity will show as an export reading if you have a smart electricity meter. You should be able to see when you are exporting on your smart meter's In Home Display (IHD) as the arrow will point towards the electricity pylon icon.

If you have a smart meter that shows an export reading in kWh, you can work out how much of the free solar PV electricity you have used. Simply subtract the export kwh from the PV generation kWh.

How to make the most of this free energy

By planning ahead or slightly changing your routine you can use more of this free electricity.

- Use your electrical appliances such as your iron, vacuum cleaner, washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher during daylight hours instead of at night.
- Stagger the use of your electrical appliances so you use one after another, not all at the same time.
- Charge up your electrical appliances during the day.

If you are usually out of the house when the PV is generating most of the electricity, so that you don't miss out on using it, you could:

- Prepare your evening meal in the morning and place in a slow cooker on low.
- Set the timer on your appliances to come on in the middle of the day.

Remember, the electricity produced by your PV panels may not completely power these appliances, depending on the settings you use. For example:

- A washing machine on a 30oC cycle will only use around 1 kilowatt (kWh) an hour (1kWh) which could be fully powered by the PV panels.
- A 40oC cycle would use 2kWh or a 60oC cycle would use 3kWh. So, at higher temperatures you will need to use more electricity from the grid which will cost you more.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Can I switch electricity supplier if I have solar PV on my roof?

Yes. As your solar panels are a separate supply from your mains electricity supply, you can switch to any electricity supplier you want. You do not need permission from Vico Homes to switch supplier.

Can I claim an export or buy-back tariff from an electricity supplier?

No, if you are a Vico Homes tenant you cannot claim an export or buy-back tariff such as the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG). However, if you purchase your home through Shared Ownership or Right to Buy/Acquire you would become eligible to claim the SEG.

Will the PV panels still provide me with electricity if there is a power cut or I run out of credit on my prepayment (pay-as-you-go) meter?

No. If there is no mains electricity supply to your house, the solar panels are unable to provide electricity to use. This applies when there is no credit on a prepayment meter, the mains electricity has been switched off at the fuse box or there is a power cut. This will also be the case if the PV isolation switch has been turned off.

Will the PV panels need isolating if I have any electrical works done in my home?

Yes, the engineer will need to know there are PV panels on the roof and isolate them using the isolation switches before and after the inverter. Check with them before they leave to ensure they have remembered to turn the PV on again!

Further information

You can find further useful information in our guide: 'How to get the most from your solar photovoltaic (PV) system' through the Vico Homes website at:

<https://www.vicohomes.co.uk/about-us/useful-documents/general-tenant-documents/>

If you think there is a fault you can report a repair by calling Customer Experience on **0345 8 507 507** or access your Vico Homes online account and complete the form.

For further information and support please call the Sustainability Team on **01977 788751**.



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