

Solar Brief - Freshford Energy Group open day

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We had an oak framed garage built in 2014 and it was always our plan to install solar panels on its roof at some point. For this reason we ensured that the roof faced South/North. Our property is 25 years old and was formerly a barn and converted by the previous owners.

We have gas fired central and underfloor heating. Sadly our insulation is not appropriate for an air-source heat pump.

In August of this year our pressurised hot water cylinder failed and so we thought it was a good time to install solar. So we did a good amount of research on how systems can operate, obtained three quotes - all from recommended contractors - and went ahead with the installation in early September. We used Generation Solar. They are based in Bude but, due to other recommendations, now have at least five installations in Freshford and Limply Stoke. The actual installation process took only two days and involved very little disruption. 90% of the install is wall-mounted in our garage. The connection into the house is via one elec cable nicely tucked away in corners or buried underground. We did require a small new circuit box in the house. That said, we have also ordered an iBoost. Once installed this will send power to our hot water tank once the house and battery are full. Any additional power then gets sold back to the grid.

The whole installation can be monitored via the Solaredge App. We did experience a few technical glitches in the first month but Solaredge and Generation Solar were able to sort these very quickly.

We have 12 solar panels. Six facing SSE and six facing NNW. We have a 10k Solaredge battery. On a lovely sunny day we can go from 0% to 100% within about 5 hours. Despite half of the panels facing NNW, these panels still generate a good amount of power, even now when the sun is lowering in the sky. The 10k battery ensures any electricity generated during the day can be used later in the day/night but we do try to use the larger power-using electrical appliances during the day whilst the battery is charging. During the six or so weeks that we have had the system, we have been able to sell back to the grid on many days. And so, on those days, we simply pay the Standing Charge and have a zero elec bill. Fantastic.

All in all it has been a great decision. Zero maintenance, easy install, simple monitoring and, more importantly, zero electricity costs on days even with cloud cover. Furthermore solar install should add value to your property whilst helping to protect the environment. A win, win, win!!

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