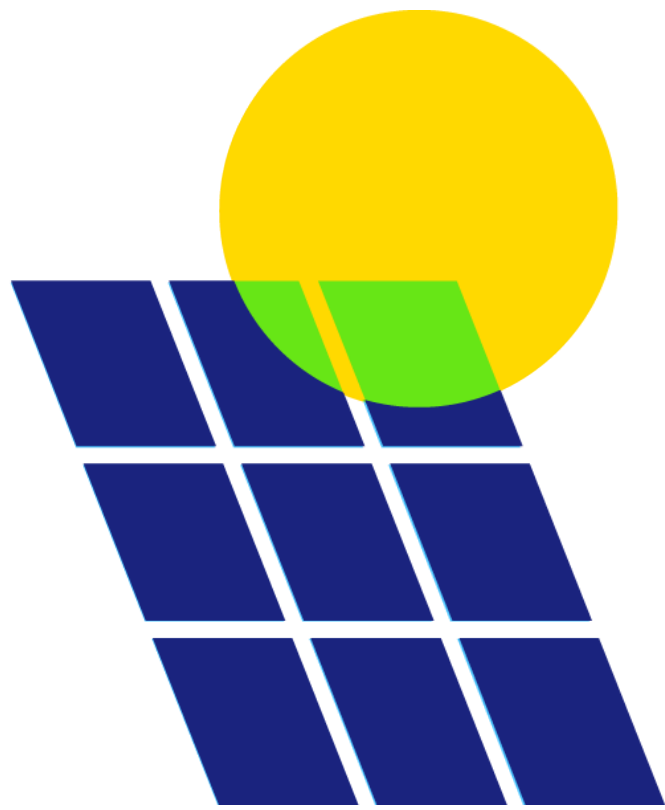




# Scotland's fair share

## Manifesto 2021



# Solar Energy Scotland Manifesto 2021



Over the course of the last decade, solar energy technologies have become enduringly popular owing to their low costs, ease to install and applicability to a wide range of sectors. They are one of the cheapest forms of new energy generation, touting a 14GW capacity generated by over 1000 solar parks and a million installations on buildings across the UK.

## Bottom of the league

Scotland comes bottom of the league when compared to its neighbours, contributing to just 2.5% of total deployment across the UK, and it's not simply down to geography – the country is comparable to Denmark in terms of population size and latitude, but has less than a third of its solar capacity. Today, solar energy accounts for just 3% of all Scottish renewables.

Below are five ways in which Scotland can climb out of the relegation zone.

### 1. Give power to the people

Where Scotland does lead is on new housing standards, which have seen 4/5 of all new homes built with solar over the past few years. The country can go further, elevating standards for existing housing stock and requiring the installation of low-carbon technologies for rented homes, to lower energy bills and help tackle fuel poverty. To encourage homeowners, local authorities and housing associations to retrofit solar we need to expand financial support.

### 2. Help businesses go green

The non-domestic rates system punishes businesses that take steps to cut carbon emissions by installing low-carbon technologies. In some instances, more than 40% of cost savings are leached by this excessive tax, unnecessarily inflating the cost of going green for Scottish businesses. The next Government must end punitive taxes on clean energy tech.

### 3. Update the planning system

Scotland currently caps permitted development at 50kW (0.05MW) for solar projects which has created an unnecessary hurdle for potential deployment. The practice of assuming permitted development for solar projects of up to 1MW as is the case in England would remove a major hurdle for businesses seeking to procure rooftop systems, and should be lifted as part of the country's commitment to clean power. Increasing the cap to 5MW would show real leadership in the UK.

### 4. Decarbonise agriculture

The Scottish agricultural sector is facing increasing pressure to cut emissions and solar parks offer a superb option. Where farmers and landowners opt to host a solar park, they should be entitled to receive payments under the Basic Payment Scheme where land is also used for sheep grazing or biodiversity enhancement.

### 5. Create a smart grid

With an abundance of renewables needed to support the coming electrification of heat and transport, now is the time to get to create a smart grid so that it is ready to manage the levels of solar power, wind power and battery storage required as part of a green transition. Solar energy needs to be a central consideration of strategic grid investment to significantly improve system efficiency.