

Thousands of new solar panels helping prisons go green

- more than 16,000 new solar panels to be installed at 19 prisons
- investment will cut 1,300 tonnes of carbon and save over £800,000 a year
- greener prison estate contributing to government's net zero target

The installations are expected to cut more than 1,300 tonnes of carbon from the earth's atmosphere and provide 20% of each prison's electricity – a significant saving as the gworks towards its ambitious net-zero target and a move that will save around £800,000 a year.

In total over 16,000 new ground mounted panels will be switched on across the prison estate, with HMPs Bullingdon, Erlestoke and Wayland lighting the way in the next few months and work ongoing to power the remaining 16 from Spring next year.

Prisons and Probation Minister, Alex Chalk, said:

As we build back safer and greener from the pandemic, our prisons are playing their part in the Government's ambitious environmental plans.

Alongside our wider sustainable action across the estate, including new all-electric prisons, we will ensure our jails are good for the pocket and the planet.

This unprecedented expansion of solar energy follows the [announcement in May](#) that the government's four new prisons – a vital building block in the drive to create 10,000 new modern prisons places that cut crime – will operate as zero-carbon in the future.

The prisons will use an all-electric design that eliminates the need for gas boilers and will in time produce net-zero emissions.

Solar panels, alongside heat pumps and more efficient lighting systems will reduce energy demand by half and cut carbon emissions by at least 85% compared to prisons already under construction.

The environmentally friendly drive accompanies wider government action to build back greener with more than £12 billion in green investment to help achieve its net zero commitment.

This will include hydrogen and carbon capture technology, greener homes, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, walking and cycling infrastructure, flood defences and backing offshore wind to power every UK home by 2030.

Notes to editors

- Ground mounted solar panels have recently been installed at HMPs Bullingdon, Erlestoke, and Wayland.
- Panels are now being installed at HMPs Eastwood Park, Ford, Guys Marsh, Haverigg, Isle of Wight, Leyhill, Lindholme and Moorland, Littlehey, New Hall, and Onley, Stocken, Werrington, Whatton and Whitemoor.
- Work is ongoing to facilitate panels at HMPs Bure and Full Sutton.
- The project will cost around £12 million, to be recouped through annual savings. Combined, the prisons will generate more than 7000kW of capacity per year.
- The first of the [four new prisons](#) will be built next to HMP Full Sutton in East Yorkshire and work is underway to investigate locations for a further prison in the North-West of England and two in the South-East.
- The MOJ is seeking to achieve the gold-standard 'outstanding' rating in Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) for its four new prisons. BREEAM is an independent scheme which assesses the sustainability of infrastructure projects.
- The UK is a global leader on tackling climate change which is why we've committed to reach net zero by 2050.