# Government pledges solar panels on every possible rooftop despite local opposition



An ambitious commitment to harness solar energy has emerged from the government as plans unfold to install solar panels on “every possible rooftop right across the country.” Energy Minister Michael Shanks passionately outlined this vision during a recent parliamentary debate, demonstrating a robust push towards renewable energy sources. He reaffirmed the government’s initiatives, which include mandating the installation of solar panels on all new properties by 2027 and the introduction of innovative solar carports at supermarkets and other commercial locations.

Shanks emphasised the overwhelming public support for solar energy, claiming that recent polls show an impressive 88% backing among the population. This support has consistently remained high, at no less than 80% in prior surveys. Such statistics reflect a growing societal inclination towards embracing renewable energy, which is corroborated by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero’s Public Attitudes Tracker; it confirms that 84% of respondents support renewable sources like wind, solar, and biomass for electricity, fuel, and heat as of Summer 2024.

The government’s advocacy for rooftop solar is set against a backdrop of increasing stakeholder engagement. As observed by various MPs during the debate, there exists a palpable tension between national aspirations for energy growth and local concerns about land use. Labour MP Terry Jermy, representing South West Norfolk, articulated a nuanced stance, underscoring his support for solar as an energy source while raising valid concerns about the siting of solar farms on high-quality agricultural land. Jermy highlighted inconsistencies in the proposals, noting that solar installations disproportionately occupy grade one agricultural land even though inferior grade five land is more abundant in the UK.

This conflict reflects a broader concern about how renewable energy initiatives are implemented at the local level, revealing a gap between governmental plans and community sentiments. Conservative MP Sir David Davis also voiced discontent, criticizing the approval process for a substantial solar farm in his constituency of Goole and Pocklington, claiming it bypassed proper consultation and disregarded local opposition. He questioned the integrity of consultations that felt more like “rubber stamping” than genuine engagement with constituents.

In light of these ongoing discussions, it is important to note the broader parliamentary consensus on the necessity of integrating solar energy into new housing developments. Polls indicate that 82% of respondents support mandatory rooftop solar panels on new buildings, with even higher approval rates among Labour voters. This growing momentum indicates not only a cultural shift but also a critical convergence of political will, as 79% of MPs back making solar panels compulsory for all new builds from 2025 onwards.

Ultimately, the direction taken by the government reflects a significant moment in the UK's pursuit of energy security and net-zero ambitions. While the call for solar panel installations promises to bolster renewable energy outputs, the challenge remains to balance ambitious energy targets with the needs and concerns of local communities. The path forward will likely require a dialogue that embraces both innovative energy solutions and the preservation of vital land resources, ensuring that the transition towards renewable energy is not only swift but also equitable and sustainable for all citizens.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/energy-minister-pledges-to-put-solar-panels-on-every-possible-rooftop-b2751789.html), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/energy-minister-pledges-to-put-solar-panels-on-every-possible-rooftop-b2751789.html)
2. Paragraph 2: [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-summer-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-renewable-energy-summer-2024-uk)
3. Paragraph 3: [[4]](https://www.cpre.org.uk/news/polling-data-shows-widespread-support-for-solar-on-new-buildings/), [[5]](https://www.mcsfoundation.org.uk/news/three-quarters-of-uk-adults-believe-solar-panels-should-be-mandatory-on-new-homes/)
4. Paragraph 4: [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/energy-minister-pledges-to-put-solar-panels-on-every-possible-rooftop-b2751789.html), [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-summer-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-renewable-energy-summer-2024-uk)
5. Paragraph 5: [[6]](https://www.solarpowerportal.co.uk/eight-in-ten-mps-support-mandatory-solar-yougov-poll/)
6. Paragraph 6: [[7]](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-spring-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-renewable-energy-spring-2024-uk)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/energy-minister-pledges-to-put-solar-panels-on-every-possible-rooftop-b2751789.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/energy-minister-pledges-to-put-solar-panels-on-every-possible-rooftop-b2751789.html> - An energy minister has pledged to put solar panels on 'every possible rooftop right across the country'. Michael Shanks emphasized the government's commitment to solar energy, highlighting plans for 'solar carports' and mandatory solar panel installations on new properties by 2027. He also referenced public support, citing that 88% in the most recent poll favor solar energy, a figure that has consistently remained above 80%.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-summer-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-renewable-energy-summer-2024-uk> - The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's Public Attitudes Tracker for Summer 2024 reveals that 84% of people support the use of renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and biomass for electricity, fuel, and heat. This support remains consistent since Spring 2023 and is just below the peak of 88% in Autumn 2022. The proportion of strong support stands at 49%, with overall opposition at 3%.
4. <https://www.cpre.org.uk/news/polling-data-shows-widespread-support-for-solar-on-new-buildings/> - A YouGov poll commissioned by CPRE indicates that 82% of respondents support the installation of rooftop solar panels on all new homes and commercial buildings. This figure rises to 89% among Labour voters. The poll underscores the public's backing for mandatory solar panel installations on new properties, aligning with the government's plans to require housebuilders to fit solar panels to all new properties by 2027.
5. <https://www.mcsfoundation.org.uk/news/three-quarters-of-uk-adults-believe-solar-panels-should-be-mandatory-on-new-homes/> - A YouGov poll commissioned by The MCS Foundation reveals that 74% of UK adults believe solar panels should be mandatory on new build homes. This aligns with the government's plans to require housebuilders to fit solar panels to all new properties by 2027. The poll also highlights that 91% of UK adults support proposals for new homes to be built to the highest energy efficiency standards.
6. <https://www.solarpowerportal.co.uk/eight-in-ten-mps-support-mandatory-solar-yougov-poll/> - A YouGov poll commissioned by the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) Foundation shows that 79% of MPs support making solar panels mandatory for all new-build homes from 2025 onwards. Additionally, 61% of MPs believe that residential battery energy storage systems should also be mandatory in new homes. This reflects a strong parliamentary consensus in favor of integrating solar energy into new housing developments.
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-spring-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-renewable-energy-spring-2024-uk> - The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's Public Attitudes Tracker for Spring 2024 indicates that 84% of people support the use of renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and biomass for electricity, fuel, and heat. This support remains consistent since Winter 2023 and is just below the peak of 88% in Autumn 2022. The proportion of strong support stands at 49%, with overall opposition at 2%.