

# A guide to the Building Regulations

## Solar Panels

### What are solar panels?

Solar panels convert sunlight into electricity by using photovoltaic (PV) cells. Solar panels can be used to power household appliances and lighting. Solar panels do not need direct sunlight to work; even on a cloudy day they still generate some electricity.

### What are the benefits of installing solar panels?

There are several benefits to installing solar panels, including;

- cutting your electricity bill,
- selling electricity back to the National Grid,
- reducing your carbon footprint.

### Do I need Planning Permission for installing solar panels?

Fixing solar panels to the roof or wall of a dwelling house is normally permitted development with no need to apply for planning permission provided that the solar panels:

- are not installed above the ridgeline,
- do not project more than 200mm from the roof or wall surface.

However, planning permission will be required if:

- the dwelling is located in a Conservation Area and the solar panels are fitted on a wall that is visible from the highway,
- the dwelling is a Listed Building,
- the dwelling is a flat or a maisonette.
- permitted development rights for Solar Panels have been removed from the property.

If you are unsure about any of the above, please contact the Planning Enquiries Team on **01908 252358** or [planning.enquiries@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:planning.enquiries@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

### Do I need Building Regulation approval for installing solar panels?

Fixing solar panels to a dwelling requires a Building Regulation application because:

- solar panels will increase the load on the building,
- solar panels require new electrical circuits to be installed.

Making a Building Regulation application can be done in one of two ways:

- by submitting an application to Milton Keynes Council,
- by using an installer that is a member of a relevant 'Competent Person Scheme' as detailed under the Building Regulations.

If you decide to use a relevant Competent Person Scheme member, it is important to check the installer will self-certify all parts of the installation for compliance with the Building Regulations. For your own safety it is recommended that you ask the installer for a copy of the following:

- the pre-installation structural assessment – this document should confirm that your dwelling can safely carry the increased loads of the solar panels.
- the post-installation electrical certificate – this document should confirm that the electrical works associated with the solar panels are safe.
- the Building Regulations Compliance Certificate.

Should you have any queries, please contact MK Building Control on **01908 252721** or [building.control@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

