

BEST PRACTICE



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Solar-powered car parks for the city centre

Exeter, UK – 130 000 inhabitants

Solar energy – Electric vehicles – Smart cities

Exeter Council has installed solar power canopies on the top decks of two city centre car parks, providing clean power, cover for citizens' vehicles and free solar charging for electric vehicles.



Project in a Nutshell

Both car parks feature 150kW systems installed by the company SunGift. The project was financed by the City Council's Invest to Save capital fund (financed by the Public Works Loan Board) as part of a £3 million Renewables and Energy Saving Programme to drive forward the City Council's aspiration to be an Energy Neutral Authority. Solar PV arrays located on other Council buildings also support the expansion of electric vehicles charging infrastructure in the city.

Impact & Next steps

The PV installation will provide an income of over £50 000 per annum over 25 years, generating 285 227kwh of renewable energy, and saving 150 tonnes of CO₂ per year. Additionally, the solar system lowered electricity bills for the municipality and increased the revenue coming from the parking. Solar electric vehicles can be charged thanks to the available stations that are available for free.

Replicability: Challenges & Success Factors

City Council's self-financed investment in renewables and other energy saving schemes, forms an essential cornerstone to achieving emission cuts, whilst safeguarding public services through income generation. In this particular case, Exeter Council approached the problem of parking in an innovative and green way.

Detailed planning and designing of the system has been critically important, with specialist mounting equipment being designed and used to ensure the structural integrity of the car parks.

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www.sungiftsolar.co.uk/project/exeter-car-parks/
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