



# Solar Together – Explored

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# Tray Royd Barn PV Panels





# A Place for Sheep to Shelter





# Solar Together Scheme



- A Group-Buying Scheme
  - leading to economies of scale
- Endorsed by
  - West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and
  - Mayor Tracy Brabin
- Involving
  - an Organiser
  - Local Authority for publicity
  - Installers
  - Customers



# How it Works



- People register
- An auction is held with suppliers
- The cheapest supplier wins
- The supplier provides a 'recommendation'
- You pay £150 for a survey
  - The recommendation may need to be adjusted
- You agree
- They install
- You pay



# What The Organiser Does

- Vets Suppliers
- Partners with Local Authorities
  - West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- Collects Registrations
- Holds Auctions
- Awards contracts with the cheapest supplier
- Puts the supplier in contact with their customers
- Arranges inspections of 1 in 50 installations



# The Organiser - iChoosr



- Founded 2008
- Has teams in 6 countries (~140 staff)
  - US, UK, Netherlands, Japan, Poland, Belgium
- Has been organising schemes in UK since 2013
  - Big Community Switch
- UK Solar Together scheme started in Norfolk in 2015



# Suppliers



- Accredited
  - Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS)
  - A member of either  
The Home Insulation & Energy Systems Quality Assured  
Contractors Scheme (HIES), or  
Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC)
- Financially capable
- Screened in advance on
  - professional experience
  - reliability
  - customer focus and service





# Registrations



- In geographic groups of Councils
- Currently 39 Active Councils in 6 groups
  - Smallest 2, largest 11 Councils
- 3,267 registrations in WYCA (5 Councils)
  - any home owner can register
- 151 past Councils (including London Boroughs)
  - mostly South of England
  - one batch in North West.



# Conjecture and Opinion

- Only large firms are able to participate
- The installers may come from the South of England
  - (almost all past groups have been in London and the South)
  - potentially carbon intensive travelling involved
- The 'cheapest' installers may not be the best
  - (but the vetting process should weed out the worst)



# Pros

- Decisions are largely made for you
- The process is easy
- The cost is relatively cheap



# Cons

- There is less room for you to influence the outcome
  - e.g. You won't be able to choose panels that are a better size for your roof
- Cheapest may not be best
  - suppliers could be cutting corners
- You can't negotiate the installation date



# Advice

- Check the method of roof fixing – particularly for stone slate roofs
  - (the installers may not be familiar with stone slate)
  - Avoid bolts through the slates
  - Some fixing makes do not work with stone slate – I'm told that good fixings DO exist. You may have to ask more than once
- Get the maximum number of panels that your roof can take
  - This may mean an application to Northern Power Grid



# Questions?

- [martin.tallis@gmail.com](mailto:martin.tallis@gmail.com)
- You can register for Solar Together at [www.solartogether.co.uk/west-yorkshire/join](http://www.solartogether.co.uk/west-yorkshire/join)