

## Community Energy Projects

A [BBC News article](#) earlier this week revealed that there are now over 2000 community energy projects across the UK, many of which choose to invest in solar PV. The government has recently announced the allocation of £15 million to the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF), with the purpose of

*"...helping rural communities access the money needed to carry out feasibility studies into renewable energy projects, and fund the costs associated with applying for planning permission."* (source: [GOV.UK](#))

Interested? The [Energy Saving Trust](#) website is a great place to start, offering how-to guides and support, as well as information about the available funding.

## Panel Cleaning

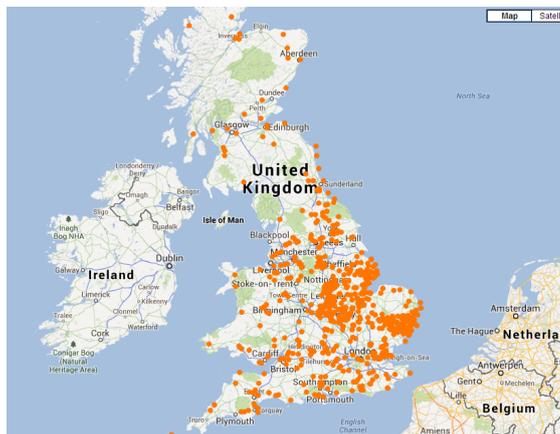
Recent activity on the [forum](#), combined with an email enquiry from a cleaning company, has prompted us to think again about the topic of cleaning PV panels. There seems to be contradictory advice from different installers and manufacturers regarding how one should go about cleaning panels, or if indeed they require cleaning at all. Many panels now claim to be 'self-cleaning', but should they still be



One of our donor's installations, looking out over Sheffield.

cleaned during long periods with no rain? Should we take extra care in hard water areas? The best advice is always to check with your installer and/or manufacturer, but you can also find out more by checking out the [discussion so far](#) on our forum.

## New Donors Needed



As you can see from this map of our installations, our coverage is rather thin in places, particularly along the South coast. If you know anyone with solar PV who might like to join and donate data, please spread the word. You can now download our flyer in the [reports section](#) of the website.

## Additional Data

Many of our donors have contacted us to ask if we're interested in gathering any additional data such as consumption and export figures... yes please! We're not just interested in PV generation here at Sheffield University, we also hope to study energy usage patterns of people across the UK and how best to deploy PV to maximise its contribution to the country's growing energy demands. In the not-too-distant future, we'll be looking to redesign our database to accommodate all sorts of data on the website. In the meantime, if you're collecting any additional data, please send us an [email](#).

## Microgen Forum

Over time, the [forum](#) has developed into a key feature of the Microgen website, so we'd just like to thank all of the active forum users who are on hand to respond to new posts and offer advice on all things solar. In the coming weeks, we plan to dedicate some time to improving the user interface and design of the forum to do better justice to the content being posted, and we'd really appreciate any feedback or suggestions. If you have an idea for a new feature in the forum or any design requests, let us know via [email](#).