

Solar Panels and Listed Buildings in B&NES

As Bath is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and contains around 5,000 Listed Buildings, installing Solar Panels on Listed Buildings requires Planning Permission/Listed Building Approval. For more information about this requirement, check this B&NES Council webpage <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/solar-panels-planning-permission>.

One of the main concerns, when it comes to installing Solar Panels on Listed Buildings, is the “visual impact” that such an installation could have. So, in order to try to make things easier for Local Households who live in a Listed Building, and are interested in installing Solar Panels, Go Green Widcombe have done research into the number of Planning Applications that have been made for installing Solar Panels on Listed Buildings across B&NES, and have been Approved. Then we also checked how many have actually been installed.

The easiest way to try to find out which Listed Buildings have had Solar Panels installations Approved by the Council is to carry out an “*Advanced Search*” using this link to the Council’s website:- <https://app.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/planning/#advancedSearch>

In the section titled “*Keyword*” we searched for various options, including “*Solar PV*”, “*Solar Panels*” and “*Photovoltaic*”. At the same time we specifically looked for the following “*Application Type*”... “*Listed Building Consent (Alts/exts)*”. One thing that we soon discovered was that not all Listed Buildings that were looking to install Solar Panels, and who had made a Planning Application, would be found in these “*targeted*” searches. So Go Green Widcombe contacted the B&NES Conservation & Planning Dept, and discovered that Listed Building Applicants don’t have to include specific details about any forms of Retrofit that they are aiming to carry out as part of the “*Summary*” on their Application... as long as the specific details are in attached documents. The Council also sent Go Green Widcombe their local “*Listed Building Consent Checklist*”, which had 6

separate items that B&NES Council have added to the National Planning Application Requirements. So Go Green Widcombe asked that the Council include a 7th item on the Checklist, and that was to request that Applicants include key words about any specific Retrofit Plans (eg. Solar Panels, Heat Pumps etc) so that other Listed Building occupants/owners can access applications for different types of retrofit and understand how they are assessed and determined. The Council eventually agreed to this request from Go Green Widcombe (see <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/listed-building-consent-checklist>). This has the potential to make it easier for Households to check on previous Listed Building Planning Applications for Solar Panels etc, and discover what was Accepted and what was Refused.

The most successful approach to getting Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels installed on Listed Buildings in the B&NES area is to get them fitted inside a double pitched roof, so they're not visible from street level. B&NES Council have given examples of such installations as "*Case Studies*", in particular in a document titled "*Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Guidance: For Listed Buildings and Undesignated Historic Buildings*" that was published in 2013... see below.



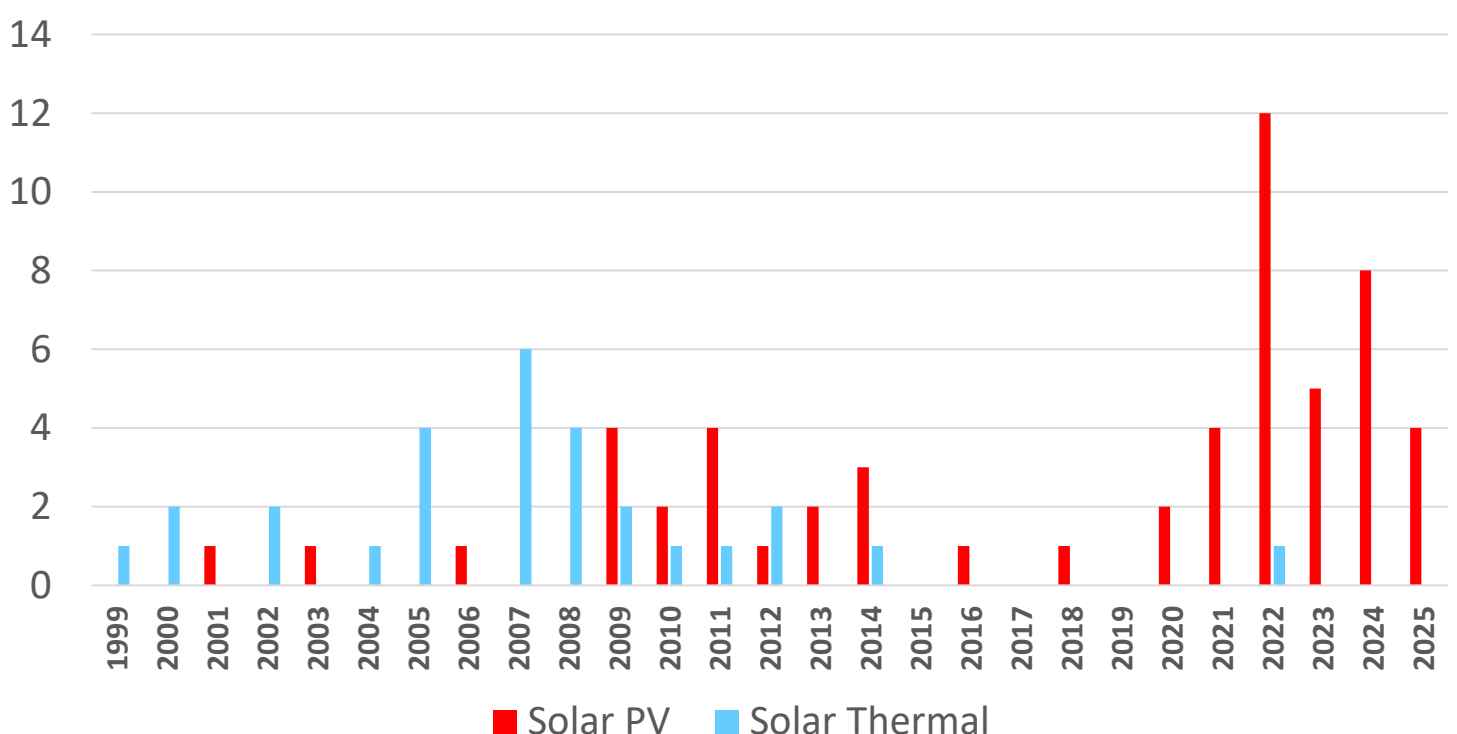
Southerly Facing Solar Panels inside the pitched-roofs of Listed Buildings.

Go Green Widcombe also keeps a regular check on the number of Listed Building Applications for certain projects, including Solar Panels. Using the "Keyword" search option mentioned earlier, Go Green Widcombe have uncovered 84 separate Listed Building

Approval (LBA) Applications on the Council Records. However, these 84 Applications were from 77 separate Properties, as 6 Properties made more than 1 LBA Application. Of these 84 Applications, 55 were for Solar Photovoltaic (ie. providing electricity), 28 were for Solar Thermal (ie. Water Heaters) and 1 was for both types of Solar Panels. What is interesting about the LBA Applications for the two different types of Solar Panels (Photovoltaic and Thermal) is that over the years (from 1999 to 2025) the initial interest in Solar Thermal Water Heating panels has dropped significantly, while the number of Applications for Solar Photovoltaic (PV), to generate green energy, has increased markedly.

As the graph below shows, between 1999 and 2007, Solar Thermal Water Heaters were the main Solar projects that Listed Building Houses were interested in. Then in 2010, the Government introduced the Feed-in-Tariff (FIT) which was designed to encourage the uptake of small-scale renewable and low-carbon electricity generation by paying generators for the electricity they produce and export to the grid. As this applied to Households installing Solar PV Panels, more LBA Applications for Solar PV were being made.

**Solar Panel Applications for Listed Buildings, B&NES
(Numbers of Applications per Year - up to June 2025)**



However, in 2016, the Government slashed renewable energy subsidies with a significant cut to the Feed-in-Tariff (FIT). So for the next few years, up until 2020, the number of LBA Applications for Solar PV Panels remained low. Then, in late 2021, two Solar PV Bulk Buy schemes were launched, more or less simultaneously. These sought to offer Households discounts on Solar Panel installations if a significant number of Households in the same area engaged in these Bulk Buy Projects. One was a local scheme launched by Go Green Widcombe, and the other was called Solar Together, and was launched by WECA (the West of England Combined Authority). Unfortunately the Go Green Widcombe scheme had to close when the Installer we worked with went into Administration. However, the WECA project, called Solar Together (see this link... www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/retrofit-sustainable-buildings-and-places/solar-together/) has now been rolled out on 3 separate occasions since 2021/2022, although it is currently "Closed". It is possible that this will be reopened again later in the year.

The actual number of Listed Buildings in the B&NES area that obtained LBA Approval and have had Solar Photovoltaic (PV) panels installed has also been investigated. The total is 26, of which 16 are in the city of Bath (of these 14 are Households, one is Kingswood School, Lansdown Rd, and another is the Curo Offices, The Maltings, Twerton). This doesn't mean that we've found every Listed Building in the B&NES area with Solar Panels, because, as was mentioned earlier, not all LBA Applications have included the Key Words in the Application Proposal Summary. Thus, our targeted searches won't find applications that don't mention Solar PV (or similar) in that Summary. Nevertheless, within the Widcombe & Lyncombe area of Bath, using National Grid Map data, we have identified that there are 66 Solar Panel installations, of which 3 are on Listed Buildings and have LBA Approval. 2 of these Solar installations are on Church Street, Widcombe... and appear to both be at Widcombe Villa, but in two separate locations (a) the main roof & (b) a side roof extension.

The complete list of 26 Listed Building Applications for Solar Panels that were Approved and have been identified is given below.

Reference:	Date:	Address:
06/03478/LBA	05/10/2006	Middle Hill Lodge, Ralph Allen Drive, Lyncombe, Bath, BA2 5AF
09/04453/LBA	23/11/2009	19 Devonshire Buildings, Bear Flat, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 4SP
09/04501/LBA	26/11/2009	142 High Street, Bathford, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA1 7TN
10/01743/LBA	20/04/2010	The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Newton St. Loe, Bath, B&NES, BA2 9BU
11/04251/LBA	30/09/2011	174 Bradford Road, Combe Down, Bath, B&NES, BA2 5DA
12/02337/LBA	28/05/2012	Somer Community Housing Trust, The Maltings, Rivers Place, Twerton, BA2 1EP
13/02978/LBA	12/07/2013	Valley Spring, Southstoke Road, Combe Down, Bath, B&NES, BA2 5SP
14/03464/LBA	29/07/2014	The Maltings, Mill Hill, Wellow, Bath, B&NES, BA2 8QJ
14/05469/LBA	27/11/2014	Beaufort House , London Road, Walcot, Bath, B&NES, BA1 6PZ
18/02640/LBA	15/06/2018	Methodist Church , 50 Upper Bristol Road, Clutton, BS39 5TD
20/00397/LBA	31/01/2020	Manor Barn, Farm Lane, Wellow, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 8QU
22/00735/LBA	18/02/2022	Kingswood School, Lansdown Road, Lansdown, B&NES, BA1 5RG
22/00802/LBA	21/02/2022	16 Springfield Place, Lansdown, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA1 5RA
22/01172/LBA	07/03/2022	18 Devonshire Buildings, Bear Flat, Bath, BA2 4SP
22/01202/LBA	16/03/2022	Widcombe Villa, 2 Church Street, Widcombe, Bath, BA2 6AZ
22/02458/LBA	16/06/2022	Crossleaze Farm, Woolley Lane, Charlcombe, BA1 8AU
22/03961/LBA	30/09/2022	Ye Grange , High Street, Bathampton, BA2 6SY
22/04417/LBA	02/11/2022	4 Dunsford Place, Bathwick, BA2 6HF

23/03557/LBA	22/09/2023	Woodhill, Bathampton Lane, Bathampton, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 6SW
23/03848/LBA	12/10/2023	Publow Oak Barn , Blackrock Lane, Publow, Bristol, Bath And North East Somerset, BS39 4HZ
23/04613/LBA	11/12/2023	10 Berkeley Place, Walcot, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA1 5JH
24/00337/LBA	29/01/2024	93A Sydney Place, Bathwick, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 6NE
24/02004/LBA	24/05/2024	White Ox Mead Farm , White Ox Mead, Wellow, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 8PN
24/03137/LBA	19/08/2024	Church Farm House , High Street, Wellow, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 8QS
24/03409/LBA	09/09/2024	Clarendon House , Prospect Place, Bear Flat, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 4QP
13/04220/LBA	1/20/2013	19 Sion Hill, Lansdown, Bath, BA1 2UJ

17th July 2025