

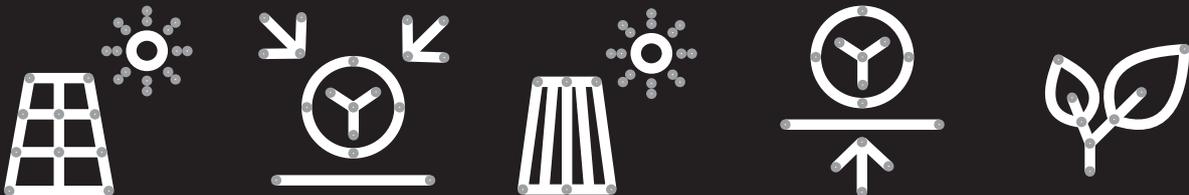


About Renewing Britain:

The Changing Landscape of Home-Grown Energy 2008 – 2021

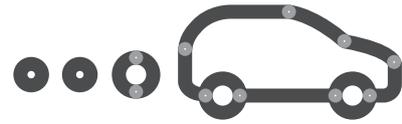
Delivered by MCS (Microgeneration Certification Scheme), this eye-opening report shines a light on Britain's relationship with small-scale renewable technologies over the past 14 years.

Analysing data from the MCS Installations Database (MID), it offers a comprehensive analysis of what has gone before, providing an opportunity for learning and growth in line with Net Zero by 2050 targets.



The landscape

- Since 2008, MCS has registered **1.2 million installations** of the five major renewable energy technologies¹, generating 34,000GWh-plus of energy, and saving nearly 10 million tonnes of CO₂e – equivalent to the electricity consumed annually by 9.65 million homes.
- The data shows the pace of installing small-scale renewables is achingly slow in the context of the 2050 target: **1.2 million installations over 14 years suggests a rate of just 100,000 per annum**, even in a period when solar PV boomed.
- MCS has calculated that, with almost 26.5 million households in England, Wales, and Scotland, **it would take around 250 years** to reach the point where all homes currently without any renewable energy had some form installed.
- The analysis also shows that the path of growth has been volatile, with the number of **installations spiking and dropping in line with changes in government incentives**, notably the Feed in Tariff (FiT) and Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).



Nearly ten million tonnes of CO₂e saved – roughly equivalent to the emissions from half a million cars every year for 10 years

Key findings:

Deserts and forests – renewables in Britain to date

By mapping its own data against official statistics², MCS has identified commonalities in areas where small-scale renewables are particularly prevalent or scarce – creating forests or deserts of renewable technologies³.

- Adoption of renewable heat is strongly correlated to areas where a relatively large proportion of consumers have no access to mains gas or where fuel poverty is prevalent.
- The **Orkney Islands** and the **Western Isles** are the top two areas in Britain for deployment: one in five properties on Orkney have some form of small-scale renewables, while the Western Isles has the highest level of fuel poverty in Britain (36 per cent), and highest proportion of homes with Air-Source Heat Pumps.
- **Rural or semi-rural areas** have predominately led the way on small-scale installations, accounting for 18 of the top 20 local authorities.
- **Cornwall** is a leader in terms of its high number of installations, generating 37 per cent of its electricity from renewables, almost 20,000 Solar PV installations.
- At the other end of the scale are the **urban deserts of London**: the 10 local authorities with the lowest rates of installations for small-scale renewables are all boroughs of the capital – fewer than one in every 127 households.
- Several urban and semi-urban areas buck the trend: **Stirling** and **Peterborough** have the highest levels of Solar PV installations, while urban **Enfield** in London has the eleventh highest percentage of Ground/Water-Source Heat Pumps.
- **Sunderland** – where fewer than one in every 100 homes is designated rural – has one of the lowest average disposable incomes, yet one of the highest rates of Solar PV installations (7.6 per cent).
- Many local authorities have an installation rate of fewer than five per cent of households, including most of Lancashire, West Yorkshire, the West Midlands, and South Wales.



¹ The main focus of this report is on the five major technologies for generating electricity and heat that have been deployed at the largest scale: Ground/Water-Source Heat Pumps, Air-Source Heat Pumps, Solar PV, Solar Thermal, and Biomass.

² MCS worked with data technology specialist, Quanovo, which used MID data augmented with external data from the UK Census and the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

³ A full breakdown of the data by region or location can be found in [page 20 of the report](#).

Recommendations: How do we achieve Net Zero by 2050?

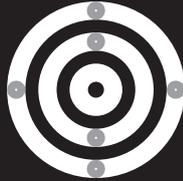
MCS is at the heart of three new government incentive schemes, including the Green Homes Grant, a Smart Export Guarantee in place of the FiT, and consideration of a Clean Heat Grant to replace the RHI from 2022.

Renewing Britain aims to help government and industry learn from thriving markets (forests), and identify barriers in areas where renewables have had little to no penetration (deserts).

In the report, MCS makes these key recommendations to the government:



1. **Learn from the successes** of the devolved administrations and other tiers of government identified in the report: in particular, Scotland's "whole-system" approach, which sets the benchmark on a national level.



2. Use those lessons to **set clear, evidence-driven, and ambitious targets** delivered through long-term incentives to close current gaps and drive an increase in installations.



3. **Devise an integrated package of support** for small-scale renewables that is targeted to people and the areas they live. Cost reduction to improve accessibility and consumer awareness founded on impartial, independent advice should be at the heart of any support package.



3. **Continuation of the redevelopment of MCS** to ensure high standards for the sector and to support new installers to become certified.



4. **Removing VAT on domestic renewables for ten years.** This will reduce costs for consumers and reduce paperwork for contractors. We believe that zero carbon should equal zero VAT.



6. **Changing building regulations so that all new build homes from 2024 have zero carbon heating options.** Building regulations are vital in transforming how new homes are built, the energy efficiency measures and how they are heated.

Ian Rippin, chief executive officer of MCS, said:

"Domestic renewables have come a long way since 2008, when just 43 installations were made. The wealth of data at our disposal that we've distilled into this report paints an invaluable picture of the past to help inform our current path to net-zero."

"The data speaks for itself: Britain is a divided country when it comes to the investment in small-scale renewables, with myriad factors affecting uptake. True change is happening at a local authority level; something which central government should learn from."

"Short, sharp injections of support in the form of consumer incentives have been shown to drive temporary demand. Our core recommendations are centred on the fact we need a carefully considered, long-term roadmap for the quick, broad adoption of renewables and the decarbonisation of our homes."

"MCS and the wider industry are here to continue supporting the government as we move into a crucial period in addressing the climate emergency."

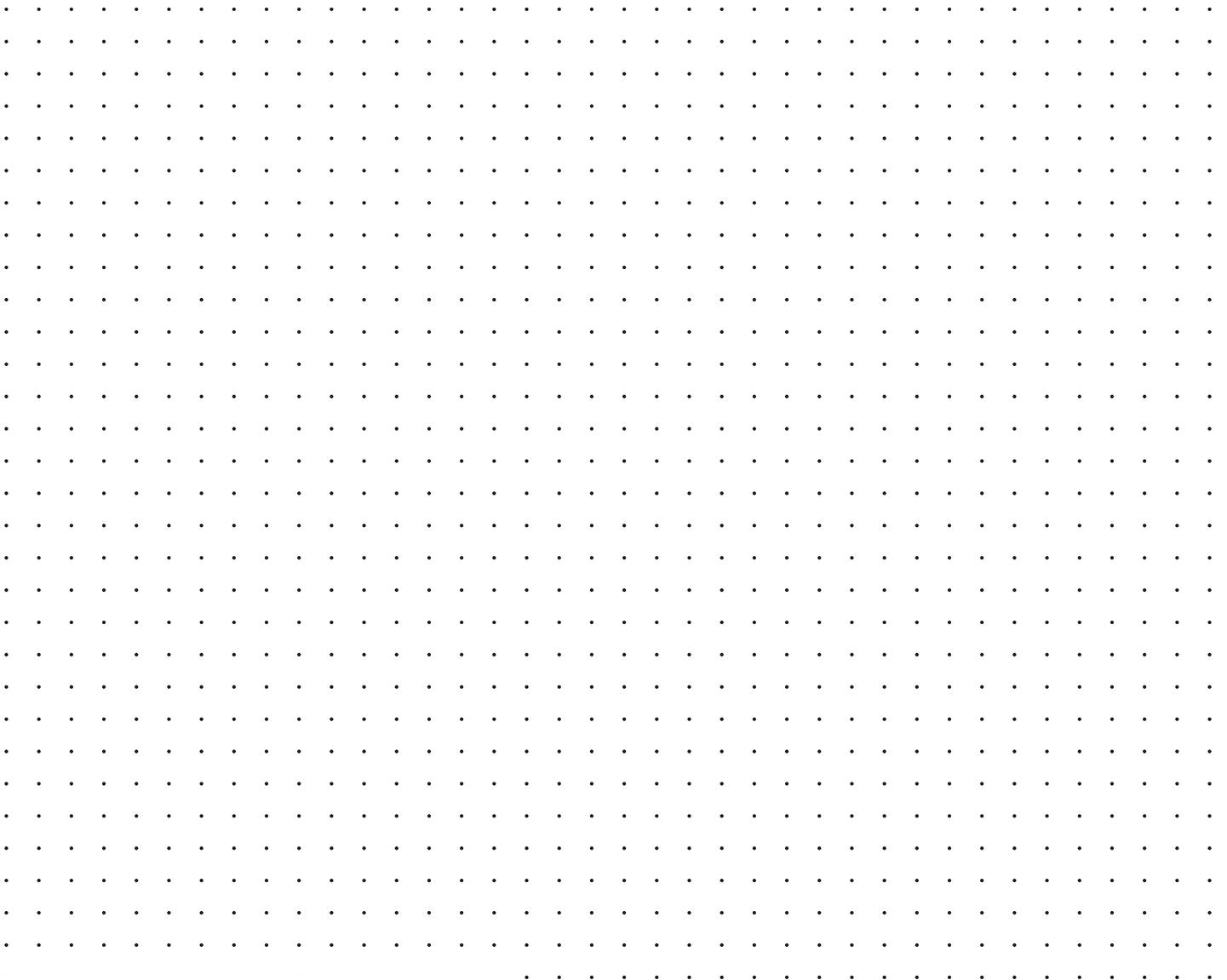


MCS is overseen by the MCS Charitable Foundation, which works to increase public confidence, awareness and access to renewable energy and low carbon solutions across the UK.

Adrian Ramsay, chief executive officer of the MCS Charitable Foundation, said: *"This report will be a really valuable tool to policymakers, researchers and the renewables sector in understanding the trends and patterns of the last 14 years. In turn, it will enable agenda-setting to deliver the transformational change the industry needs to create a greener, more resilient future."*



Find out more at
www.renewingbritain.com



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