

Solar panels the hot new item as Labour launches pay-as-you-save

Energy Get a loan of up to £15,000 to green your house - but the scheme could falter if the government loses the election. Miles Brignall reports

If you want to install solar panels on your roof and take advantage of lucrative new feed-in tariffs but have been put off by a lack of funds, you could soon get a loan to cover the whole cost.

This week the government unveiled plans to offer homeowners 20-year loans of up to £15,000 to allow families to invest in green technologies, safe in the knowledge that their loan would be taken over by the purchaser if they move before it's paid off.

This follows an announcement by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) that it will start paying feed-in tariffs to households installing green technologies, most notably solar water heaters, typically costing £4,000, and electricity generating photovoltaic (PV) systems, which will set you back around £12,500. Households with south-facing roofs able to install a solar PV system will receive payments and savings totalling between £900 and £1,100 a year from 1 April.

Until now households wanting to introduce these carbon-reducing measures had to pay the upfront installation costs, or borrow the money, leading to accusations that they were only affordable for the well-off. Equally, spending



Solar water heaters and PV panels are expected to top most householders' wish list Picture: Andrew Butterson/Alamy

