More in Common

The Solar Panel:

How Do We Deliver the Benefits of Solar and Batteries to Homes and Businesses?

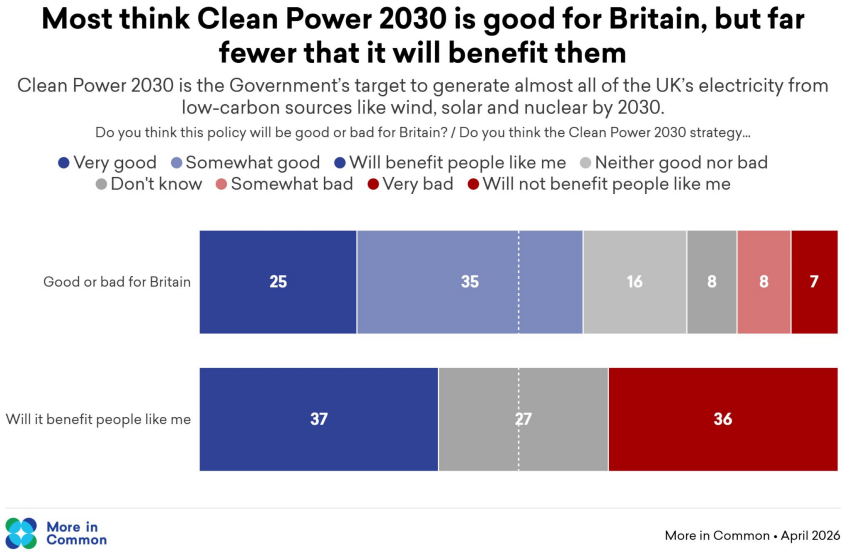
Labour Conference 2026

Britons don't believe that the government's push to reaching clean energy by 2030 will benefit them personally

Britons think the UK's transition towards clean energy is a good thing for the country - 60 per cent say the government's 2030 clean power target will be a good thing for Britain, compared to just 15 per cent who say it will be a bad thing.

However, Britons are split on whether this transition to clean power will benefit themselves personally - 37 per cent say it will and 36 per cent say it will not.

With households on the highest incomes the most likely to own EVs, heat pumps and solar panels, it is vital, for the public consent that is critical for the transition, that policymakers can take action so Britons of all backgrounds believe they are benefiting from the shift to clean power.



Britons' starting points on solar

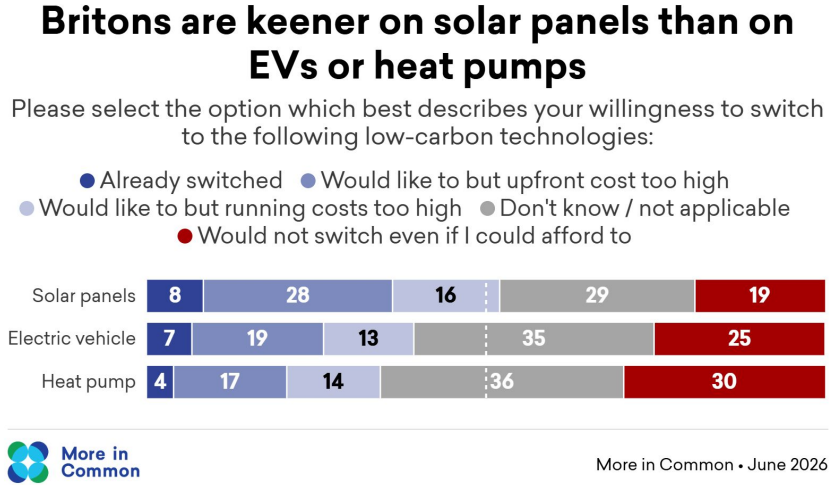
Solar holds unique mass appeal

Heat pumps and electric vehicles are increasingly being dragged into the culture wars with attitudes towards them strongly correlated with views on net zero.

In contrast, Britons from across the political spectrum say they'd be interested in installing solar panels on their homes.

52 per cent of Britons either have installed solar panels or would in theory like to do so - only 35 per cent say the same for heat pumps. There is only minimal partisan variation - 48 per cent of Conservative and 49 per cent of Reform 2024 voters say this.

In focus group conversations, Britons speak of their frustration that more homes and buildings don't have solar panels installed - for many, they seem like an easy climate win.



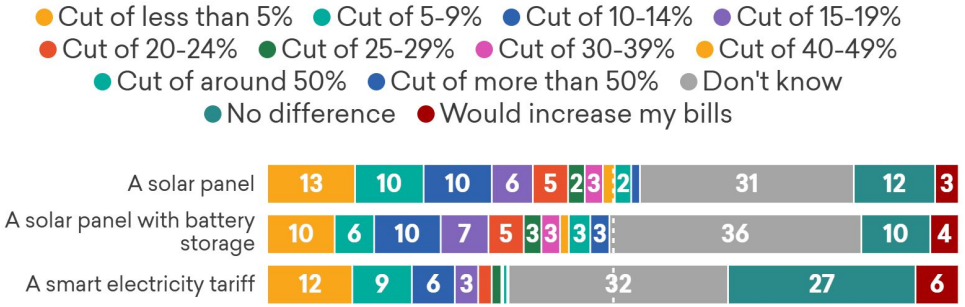
Britons think that solar can deliver them cost savings

While they worry about the upfront costs of installing solar panels, Britons broadly have been convinced of their cost benefits – something that can't yet be said for electric vehicles or heat pumps.

Indeed, a third (31 per cent) of Britons without solar panels think installing them would bring down their energy bills by more than 10 per cent, while 16 per cent think the bills reduction from having solar panels installed would exceed 20 per cent.

Most Britons without solar panels think installing them would cut their bills

If you were to have each of the following installed in your home, by roughly what percentage, if at all, do you think it would change your household energy bills?



More in Common • September 2026. Each item asked only of people who do not already have it in their home. Unweighted bases: solar panel 1,725; solar panel with battery storage 1,689; smart electricity tariff 1,466.

The barriers stopping more adoption

The upfront cost of solar panels is holding people back from making the switch

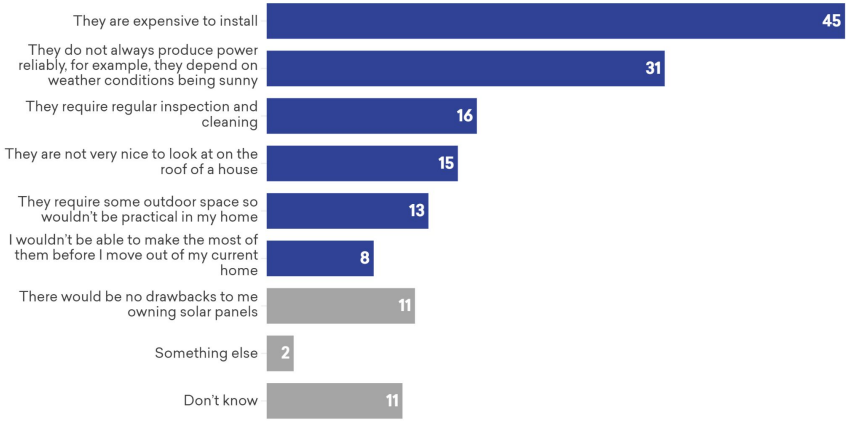
A core barrier preventing people from making the switch to heat pumps and EVs is that they don't think that they will work for their homes/lifestyles.

Solar panels have managed to avoid this pitfall. The share of Britons saying that fears they won't work for their properties are stopping them from making the switch is much smaller than the proportion citing their upfront costs.

45 per cent say the expense of installing them is their top barrier – if installation costs could be brought down, many more Britons would want to make the switch.

Installation cost is the biggest drawback people see to owning solar panels

And again, thinking about you personally, if you owned solar panels, which of the following, if any, would be the main drawbacks?



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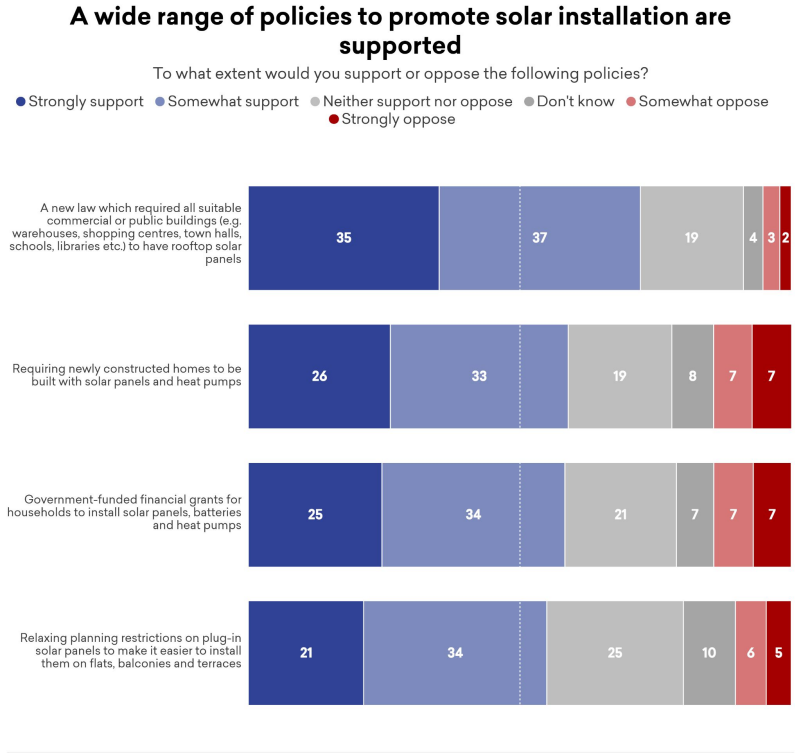
Public views towards policy solutions

Britons are supportive of government action to increase uptake of solar panels

Britons are strongly supportive of government policies to promote the uptake of solar panels.

Majorities support requiring all suitable commercial/public buildings to have solar panels installed on their roofs; requiring new homes to be built with solar panels and heat pumps (Future Homes Standard); government grants for solar installations; and relaxing planning restrictions so people can more easily use plug-in solar panels.

There is cross-partisan support for these measures as well - a majority of 2024 Reform voters support each of these policies.



More in Common • April 2025 – January 2026. Figures from three separate polls: new homes, April 2025; rooftop solar, December 2025; grants and plug-in solar, January 2026.

Britons would react negatively to politicians proposing blanket solar farm bans

45 per cent of Britons say they would view a political party who proposed banning the construction of new solar farms less favourably. Just 18 per cent of the public say this policy would make them feel more favourably towards a political party.

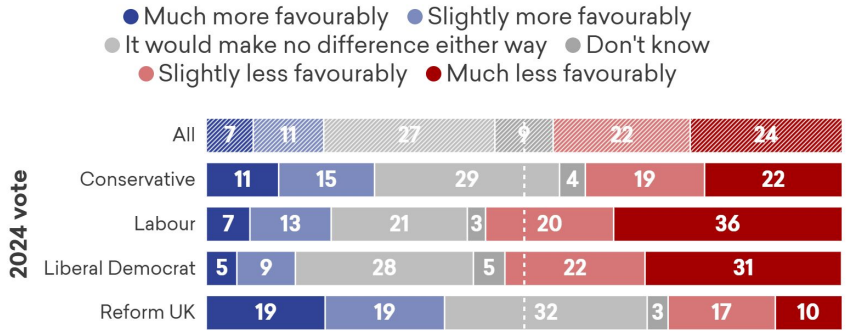
Reform are the only party whose supporters are more likely to feel more favourable to a party with this policy. In contrast, 56 per cent of 2024 Labour voters say they would view a party with this policy **less** favourably.

Britons do hold some concerns about the impacts large-scale solar farms may have on food production and nature, but they overwhelmingly reject proposals to blanket block them.

Britons would overwhelmingly view a party proposing blanket bans on solar farms negatively

If a political party were to commit to the following policies, how would they impact how you view the party? It would make me view the party...

[A ban on new solar farms being built]



More in Common • September 2026. Green, SNP, Plaid Cymru and other-party voters not shown due to low bases (under 100).

Solar expansion presents the government with an opportunity to earn political rewards

In April, we tested how popular and well known some of the government's core climate policies were.

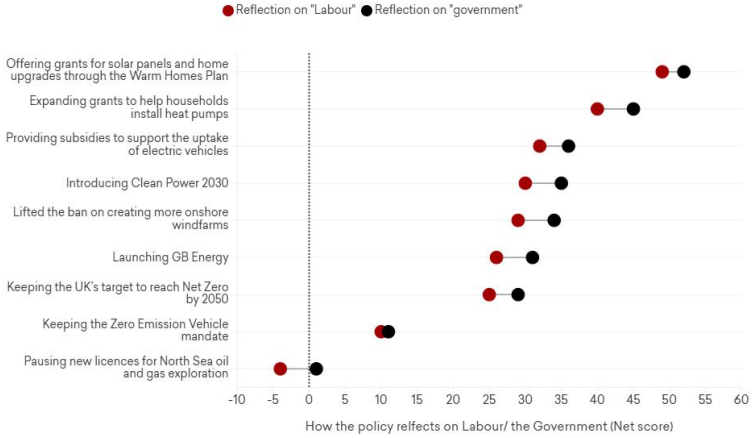
The offering of grants to help Britons install solar panels through the Warm Homes Plan was seen as reflecting most positively on the government - with 2024 Reform voters more likely to say it reflected positively than say it reflected negatively on the government.

However, public awareness of this policy was among the lowest of the government's climate policies.

If it can build awareness of the Warm Home Plan's proposals to provide interest free loans to those installing solar panels, there's a real opportunity for the government to demonstrate it is not only tackling the cost of living but also ensuring the transition to clean energy works for all Britons.

Asking people how policies reflect "on the Labour government" elicits a more negative response than asking people how policies reflect on "the government" in general

Below is the same list of actions that the Labour Party have taken since entering government / Below is the same list of actions that have been taken by government. For each of them, please state whether they reflect positively or negatively on the government? For each of them, please state whether they reflect positively or badly on them?



"Net score" calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents who said "Reflects negatively on them" or "Reflects very negatively on them" from the percentage of respondents who said "Reflects positively on them" or "Reflects very positively on them"
More in Common • Fieldwork 10th to 21st April 2026

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Coming up later today...

Response to the Leader's Speech 2026: Expert analysis of Andy Burnham's speech

17:30 to 18:30

Derwent Arena Room, Secure Zone, ACC

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