

Shareenergy's Essential Guide to

Community Energy Pre-Registration and Pre-Accreditation timescales

With the deadline of 1st Oct 2015 now confirmed as the date when pre-registration and pre-accreditation will be removed, if you have a pipeline project which has NOT applied for one of these schemes yet, here are some helpful timescales and information to help you decide if it is still worth pursuing these.

Pre-registration

This is open to PV installations of under 50kW and gives you 12 months to install and commission

All you need to do for this is:

- Complete the relevant Ofgem form and return it to Ofgem, along with,
- Energy performance certificate (EPC) & EPC Reference number (allow at least 1 week to get a certificate issued from the date of your assessors visit; plus make sure you have a full EPC and not a display EPC), and
- Evidence supporting community status – e.g. certificate of registration – see below.

It is possible to apply to a relevant 'FiT licensee' directly for non-community installations but the building will need to have a band D EPC at the point of accreditation. Please note, the ability to transfer pre-registration from an individual or company to another person or to a community group is unclear and may not be possible. A list of FiT licensees and contact details is available on the Ofgem website.

Pre-accreditation

Accreditation is required for ALL projects over 50kW who wish to claim FiTs. This is done by setting up an Ofgem account and completing a pre-accreditation application.

To set up an Ofgem account - can take up to 72 hours, typically 24 hours – start here:
www.renewablesandchp.ofgem.gov.uk/default.aspx

You will need a letter on headed paper from the applying organisation giving you authority to be the Super-User (example at end). You may be asked for proof that you are linked to the organisation if your email address is not clearly from that organisation.

For the actual pre-accreditation – it normally takes about 2 hours to complete if you have all the information to hand. Will take longer if you are unfamiliar with the system. You can partially complete an application up to the point where you have all the evidence ready to submit. You can post evidence rather than upload it, if it is not available at the time you want to submit, but please note that Ofgem are very fussy about dates of the evidence being BEFORE you click the very final submit (there are about three submit buttons).

You will need

- Confirm with your installer / a suitably informed person the specification of your system, including the Total Installed Capacity and Declared Net Capacity of the generating equipment, as well as the type, voltage, and quantity of generating equipment and associated equipment (such as transformers, isolators).
Hint: If you don't know for certain, put in the best information you have and note that this can be amended to a certain extent later – e.g. you can change manufacturers etc. Just be careful if you are close to a tariff band to declare your capacities as just below those eg. 249kW not a 250kW PV system and that any large jumps in installed capacity may result in your later accreditation application being rejected.
- Documentary **evidence that you have been granted planning permission (application process of 6-8 weeks +)** for the installation, or that planning permission is not required (allow 2-4 weeks, but could be quicker). In both cases the documentary evidence must have been **issued on or before the date of application** to Ofgem. A decision notice from your planning authority will usually demonstrate that this requirement has been met; the decision notice can take anything from 24 hours to a week to be issued from the point your project is determined and will be dated the day on which it is issued.
- A **grid connection offer (GCO) - typically it takes 65 days from application to the relevant DNO. It is unlikely that you will get a connection offer in time if you have not already applied for one. Ofgem may request a copy of this EVEN if you have been told by your DNO that no upgrade work is required.**
 - PLUS - Signed acceptance of that offer
 - AND - Evidence **that any specified acceptance payment has been received in full** by your DNO **before your application date** - some Ofgem employees ask for a copy of the receipt, others may be happy with invoices.
- You must provide a schematic diagram (SLD) showing the electrical layout of the installation (although Ofgem don't specify, this really needs to be done by an electrician; you do not need the import/export MPAN number for the SLD at this stage). – *Typical timescale – allow 24-48 hours – but you can post this on or upload later.*
- You will also need evidence that you have community status, if you wish to apply for the extra 6 months build time.

Community Status

For both of the above, you will need to be registered as either a Cooperative, Community Benefit Society, or Community Interest Company to claim the community timescales – this provides an extra 6 months of time to complete build and accreditation for pre-accredited projects. All pre-registered projects get 12 months to build.

New Community Benefit Society – time from application to FCA approval, typically 6-8 weeks

New Community Interest Company (CIC) – similar to a company, so typically 24 – 72 hours if done online but you then need to apply for the CIC 'wrapping' which can take an additional 2-3 weeks.



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If your project can be delivered within the shorter time frames, you can go ahead and register as a standard company through Companies House and pre-register / pre-accredit as a non-community project. You would then need to convert this company to your preferred ownership structure at a later date.

Shareenergy can help – if you have a project which is ready or nearly for applying to one of these schemes but lacks community status, please talk to us.

Please note, this advice is based on information currently available from Ofgem, our experience in supporting other community projects and from previous experience in the renewable energy sector. It does not comprise complete advice on the process, which may change, and we strongly recommend reading the relevant information on the Ofgem website (www.ofgem.gov.uk) and talking your options through with your installer and other support providers.

Letter of Authorisation (to be submitted on Company headed paper)

Comment [LS1]: This letter is only needed for setting up a new Ofgem account for pre-accreditation.

We understand that the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority ("Ofgem") carries out administrative functions in respect of the Renewables Obligation Order ("ROO") Climate Change Levy ("CCL") Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin ("REGO") and Feed-in Tariff ("FIT") schemes and (in pursuance of such functions) requires the submission and provision of data and information from participants in those schemes by use of the Ofgem Renewables & CHP Certificate Registry IT system. We understand that to facilitate the provision of such data and information (name of participant) should nominate an individual, who has legal capacity (a "Superuser") to sign any declaration on behalf of the participant on the Ofgem Renewables & CHP Certificate Registry IT system.

We nominate the following person

Name:

Job Title:

Email address:

Contact Telephone Number:

as the Superuser of (name of organisation/participant of scheme) and confirm that [full name as above] is authorised to act on behalf of the participant in respect of the functions listed below and in addition has the legal capacity to make any declaration required of the participant by the Ofgem Renewables & CHP Certificate Registry IT system.

- register and authorise additional contacts who will act on behalf of the participant on the Ofgem Renewables & CHP Certificate Registry IT system
- to specify and authorise what tasks may be completed by any additional contacts on behalf of the participant
- administer the ROO, CCL, and REGO accreditation of generating stations for which the Organisation is the operator
- administer applications made in the names of owners of generating stations for ROO-FIT accreditation
- sign relevant declarations (only SuperUsers will be able to sign declarations on behalf of the Organisation)
- submit output data, including where appropriate fuel measurement data
- receive, transfer, redeem and allocate certificates
- submit sales data and compliance reports

We understand that this Letter of Authorisation will have effect until Ofgem has received notice in writing¹ that the person named above as SuperUser no longer has authority to act on behalf of (name of participant)

For and on behalf of [Participant Name]

Signed.....

Full name (PRINTED).....

Position².....

Date.....

¹ This can be done by either uploading a letter onto the IT system, or by sending the letter by post or fax

² Please note that this letter should be signed by someone seen as legally representing the participant e.g. (if the participant is an incorporated body) a Director