

My working week



Who: Andrew McMullen,
All Clear Energy Services

What: All Clear Energy Services is a renewable energy consulting firm specialising in energy services assessments and consultancy. The company offers energy efficiency solutions ranging from solar power, wind power and geothermal power. The company has a growing customer base which is located throughout the UK, working with both small companies and large organisations to suit clients' green requirements.

Clear winner: Andrew McMullen, All Clear Energy Services describes a typical week

Site surveys, shading issues and weather worries

Monday

I have two site surveys today for solar PV systems. The first property I visit has a large south facing roof but also has a large dormer. Anything that creates shading on the roof has a detrimental effect on the overall performance of any PV installation so I'll have to design the system to maximise the roof space but avoid putting any panels where they will be shaded.

At the second property the customers want to make the most of their east and west facing roof so this one will need a specialist inverter to maximise the output from both the arrays.

Back to the office to design the arrays, work out the quotations and calculate the expected payback periods for my customers. The quotations and supporting documents must comply with both MCS and REAL guidelines so it takes time to prepare accurate paperwork.

Tuesday

Today is day one of a 3.96kW installation in my home town of Christchurch. The weather is preventing us from getting up on the roof but there's plenty of preparatory work to do as the array is going up on an outbuilding and there is some work needed to upgrade the supply, install a consumer unit and install a dedicated earth rod for the property. As a qualified Part P

electrician I can do all my own electrical work.

Got back to the office this afternoon to a message from Clare at New Career Skills, where I trained for both domestic electrical work and more recently the solar PV installations. As my business has been growing so quickly New Career Skills has been putting me in touch with some recently qualified installers who are looking for some work experience.

Wednesday

The sun is out so I'm up on the roof at the property in Christchurch. This is a fairly straightforward installation with two rows of eight Sharp mono panels but, as is often the case, the roof is not exactly level, so I take some extra time levelling the mounting rails and brackets. We are using the Schuco mounting kit and we also need to grind down the tiles to ensure we retain the integrity of the roof and keep it weatherproof. I spend the afternoon carrying out some domestic electrics for one of my regular customers.

Thursday

Today we install the panels and finish off the other works, including installing the inverter and necessary isolators. All the panels are tested individually and then collectively. Once I have completed all the testing I commission

the system and finish up by making sure all the safety labels are in place and clearing up. My customer is over the moon as they have 2kWh showing on the generation meter before I leave the site.

I get home to see a story about how I set up my own business in the local paper. New Career Skills helped me with publicising my company after I trained with them and this is great exposure.

Friday

Spent the morning in the office registering this week's installation and getting the Handover Pack together. There is a fair amount of paperwork for each job and the installation has to be registered with MCS, Napit, Elecsa and the DNO.

Our customers can't apply for the Feed-in Tariff until they have their MCS certificate so we try to get them registered as soon as possible.

I spend an hour on the phone ordering the system for another job and organising some scaffolding. I drop the handover pack in to my customer this afternoon and help them fill in their application for the Feed-in Tariff. Whilst I'm there one of the neighbours knocks at the door, with a view to discussing a system for their own roof.