

Four Burrows Solar Park



Commissioned	February 2014
Site area	41 acres
Installed capacity (MW)	8.0MW
Annual production (MWh)	7,693MWh
Households powered per annum	2,481
CO2 emissions saved (tonnes per annum)	3,802 tonnes

Overview

Situated a few miles north-west of Truro, Four Burrows Solar Farm is a ground-mounted, fixed-tilt solar PV plant on 41 acres of agricultural land. Bordered to the west by the main road to Newquay, the land once used for sheep and cattle grazing was considered largely exhausted before the landowner decided to develop it as a solar park. While for 20 years before commission the site was arable, producing mainly barley, the soil structure is now poor. The area therefore provides an excellent opportunity for both renewable energy generation and biodiversity enhancement.

Biodiversity

At Four Burrows it is important to protect the nesting, foraging and shelter habitats provided by the site's hedgerows, particularly for birds, butterflies, bats and small mammals. It's also essential to minimise impact on the area's skylarks, which use open farmland for nesting and are found on grassland and in arable fields. Construction at Four Burrows took account of skylarks' EU-protected breeding habits, creating 3m+ gaps between panel rows wide enough not to dissuade a species which normally bypasses dense crops. To avoid shading the panels, low-productivity grasses and wild flowers onsite are easily cut, while ongoing monitoring will determine how attractive the site is to skylarks (and other 'red list' species recorded in the area) and guide biodiversity management decisions for future sites. With the solar park in operation, beehives are tended to onsite by local beekeepers.