Where Does the Solar Rooftop Revolution Leave Metal Roof Installers?

Solar roofing installations have taken the sector by storm in the past few years, especially as integrated systems have come onto the market. Benefitting from the solar boom, more and more roofers are upskilling to install these solar solutions for clay and concrete roofs – but where does that leave metal roof installers – are they being left behind?

This year is set to witness even more growth in the solar roofing market, building on what was already a record-breaking year in 2025.

The installation process for Roofit.Solar steel panels mirrors that of conventional standing seam roofs, requiring minimal additional training for experienced metal roofers.

Galvanised by the government's 'solar rooftop revolution' announced by Energy Secretary Ed Miliband in July last year, the government's Clean Energy 2030 target is 45-47GW of solar capacity in England alone within the next 4 years. Achieving that aim is already underway, and on past performance it means something in the range of a further 3 million more rooftop installations are needed by 2030.

Alongside this, in January the Warm Homes Plan was published with government targets for retro-fitting social housing with rooftop solar and plans for zero-interest loans later this year to cover the cost of solar installations for homeowners and landlords. Industry experts like Ian Rippin CEO of MCS highlight the rapid growth of solar, emphasizing the opportunities for sector expansion, saying the Warm Homes Plan, "represents a fantastic opportunity for the sector to grow".

Additionally, the upcoming Future Homes Standard will embed rooftop solar into building regulations so that nearly all new homes will be constructed with the technology, adding to the rapid growth of installations. "That pace is only going to pick up," comments Chris Hewett, Solar Energy UK CEO. Coupled with the financial incentives of massive energy cost savings for commercial rooftops, the installation of solar roofing is a skillset no roofer can afford to be without.

But where does the solar boom leave installers of metal roofs?

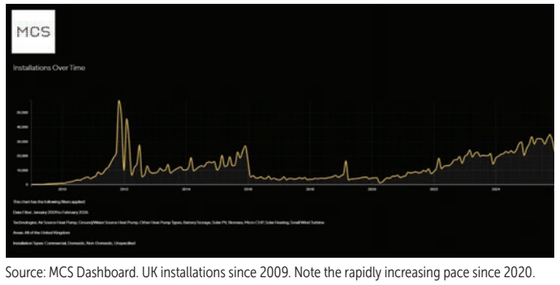
Until recently, standing seam roofs had no integrated solar option. Retrofitting metal roofs with add-on solar arrays is an expensive, unsightly and unappealing option for many building owners.

Enter Roofit.Solar – a traditional steel panel, the solar photovoltaic cells are seamlessly integrated in a coating fused onto the panels that is virtually invisible on the roof once installed and efficiently generates free, clean energy.

A solution for metal roofers and designers, Roofit.Solar combines all the aesthetic appeal of standing seam roofs with the financial benefits of carbon-cutting rooftop solar.

Easy Product Training

The installation process for Roofit.Solar steel panels mirrors that of conventional standing seam roofs, requiring minimal additional training for experienced metal roofers. Each panel is tested by the roofer before push-fitting together its electrical connection with the neighbouring panel's to link up the array. The start and end point cables are left in the roofspace ready for the electrician to connect. |||



Source: MCS Dashboard. UK installations since 2009. Note the rapidly increasing pace since 2020.

Case Study: Albemarle Gate, Cheltenham

PROJECT: A Roofit.Solar standing seam roof.

- Supplied in the UK by Future Tech Solar Ltd.
- Designed and commissioned by MCS registered Cotswold Hill Developments Ltd.
- Installed by Mark Philips, owner of Philips Traditional Metal Roofing Ltd, based in Gloucester.

SPECIFICATION: The Albemarle Gate project involved demolition of an existing bungalow, replaced with a high-end newbuild with a complete rooftop solar system, generating peak 25kW to power EV charging, air source heat pump, swimming pool, underfloor heating and solar battery storage.

As a very experienced roofer of 21 years specialising in metal roofing, there's not much that phases Mark Philips when it comes to installing standing seam roofs. But even Mark admits to feeling 'slightly daunted' at learning about solar roofs.

"The electric element of it was a bit off-putting to begin with, but actually my side of it - checking each panel for connectivity and linking up each panel - is easy, there's nothing to it!

"If you can install a standing seam roof, you can install Roofit.Solar panels. For me, as a fitter, it's literally the same methods used," says Mark.

Mark's first step to upskilling was to visit Roofit.Solar at its Estonian HQ and gain product training. Armed with this knowledge, Mark installed his fifth Roofit.Solar roof on the Albemarle Gate project, completed in October 2025.

Located adjacent to Pittville Park in Cheltenham, this project involved a strikingly modern, elegant design with the integrated solar standing seam roof panels from Roofit.Solar covering around 70% of the roof.

Mark approached the project exactly as he would a traditional metal standing seam roof.

"It all starts with the setting out," Mark explains. "You need to establish your reference point and set out the roof accurately. Unlike normal standing seam panels, you cannot adjust the width of solar panels to work around roof lights or penetrations. It is essential to be precise with your lines to ensure every panel remains square and consistent with the reference points. This is standard procedure for setting out, so, providing the initial measurements are accurate, the installation should proceed smoothly."

If roofers are using the Roofit.Solar system, we want them to focus on their expertise - the roof – and be able to leave everything else to us.

With the setting out completed, the next phase was fabricating and installing aligned fasçias and soffits for the roof's hidden gutters. Working off Greencoat PLX coils, a Lindab high-gloss finish was chosen to match the Roofit.Solar panels' popular black RAL 9005 finish.

Next came the 183 solar panels, installed over a cold roof build up secured with clips onto a 6 x 1 pressure treated timber substrate. As each panel is fitted, the electrical connections are joined up and tested to form a complete system.

Attracting Attention

With the roof taking shape, it began to attract attention from passersby: "people loved the look of it!" says Mark.

"I had some brilliant comments – I even had two police officers come over to ask about it, they didn't believe it was a solar roof – you just can't tell. It's a lovely system, I think it's a brilliant product," Mark adds.

With more solar roof projects already in his order book, Roofit. Solar is boosting Mark's business. "I've seen the growth in solar roofing and now it's escalating," says Mark. "Clients are delighted and I've had brilliant feedback. It's what they want; they want the look of a standing seam roof but they also want solar – with Roofit. Solar they can now have both. It's a game-changer really."

"Clients love it, they fall in love with it almost before it's installed," agrees Scott Seville, Project Director at Cotswold Hill Developments (CHD).

"Roofit.Solar has to be on the radar of metal roof installers and suppliers or they will lose out. As solar energy becomes increasingly present in construction projects, this system enables installers to continue delivering standing seam roofs using traditional methods across the entire roof area."

"It looks like a beautiful seamed roof but with hidden powers!"

Client, Nicky Davies, owner of the Albemarle Gate property said, "We loved the look of Roofit.Solar and it seemed the perfect solution for us. We engaged with Cotswold Hill Developments who have looked after all our renewables. They designed the roof and prepared all the calculations on the potential return we would see.

"We are extremely pleased with the installation and care taken during this process, resulting in a fabulous looking roof that is going to provide a substantial proportion of our energy needs."

Nicky ends, "It looks like a beautiful seamed roof but with hidden powers!"

"Future Tech Solar visited the LSTA to show us Roofit.Solar. The integrated solar panels perfectly complement a traditional standing seam steel roofing project and require the same installation skills. The electrical wiring is simple for the roofer to connect before the system is commissioned."

John Lewis, Director of Training & Operations, Lead Sheet Training Academy

Solar Metal Roof Support Service

Cotswold Hill Developments partners with roofers so that "all they have to do is the roofing, we take care of the rest."

To make it even easier for roofers, CHD is collaborating with Future Tech Solar, the Roofit.Solar UK distributor, to launch the ***Solar Metal Roof Support Service*** (SMRSS).

Scott Seville, Project Director at CHD says "If roofers are using the Roofit. Solar system, we want them to focus on their expertise - the roof – and be able to leave everything else to us. We're here for advice, design, on-site support, electrical connection, MCS registration and will stay involved in the project right through to completion.

"We want metal roofers to be totally comfortable and concentrate on their craftsmanship, to deliver beautiful roofs for the client," Scott concludes.

To find out more about Roofit.Solar, call 07563 143936, email info@futuretechsolar.co.uk or visit futuretechsolar.co.uk.

For all electrical, design and pricing queries, contact Cotswold Hill Developments Ltd on 01242 507 222 or email info@cotswold-hill.co.uk.