

School's Solar Panel Initiative

Chewton Primary School has joined forces with 'The People Solar' to raise funds for a 4kW solar system priced at \$8,000. Panels will be placed to ensure they are producing energy at the time we need it most – in the mornings and through to early afternoon when we heat and cool the buildings during the school year.

We have undertaken a detailed energy assessment, and our assessors have calculated that we will export approximately 25% of all the energy we produce, resulting in around \$1,000 of savings on our energy bill each year, for 25 years.

We want to spend that money in ways that build the students' understanding of sustainability in practical ways and to encourage the further involvement of school families and the community in the sustainability practice of the school. Our goal is for the school to be a beacon of good social and environmental practice.

To start with we want to:

1. Implement to ongoing plan for improved energy efficiency at the school, replacing inefficient equipment and reducing energy use to allow us to re-direct the saving to other educational and sustainability initiatives.
2. Develop other parts of the school for greater community use, including expanding the garden and using the school for adult education

And we want to involve the whole of the community in this project!

The People's Solar is a great way for the school to build on our education program as it will involve parents and other community people and make sure that the children have a sense of community. We want to involve parents and community in this journey – as a way of reinforcing the sustainability message but also to build our community's ability to cooperate and solve problems together.