Aico and Solar Panel FAQ's

What is an Aico system?

Aico systems are environmental sensors. These are wireless sensors will keep an eye on CO2 levels, temperature and humidity in your home. They'll alert us to potential problems like condensation, damp or mould. To keep everything connected, we'll need to install a small Gateway Hub, which will be wired to your fuse box.

Where will they be located in my house?

They will be fitted in your bathroom, kitchen and lounge. A Gateway Hub shall also be located near or close to your fusebox.

What is it monitoring?

Environmental sensors measure the indoor environment to see if there are any risks of conditions such as condensation, damp, and mould by measuring temperature, CO2 and humidity levels.

Also, if you have a Smart Meter (or get one in the future) Hafod and the Welsh Government would like to monitor your energy usage. In this case so we can see if there is a reduction in electricity usage as a result of the solar energy being produced. This data is invaluable as it will ensure we effectively spend our money on retrofit measures that reduce energy usage in the future.

What happens to my data?

The data will be sent to the Welsh Government.

Why does the Welsh Government need it?

Hafod needs to install the environmental sensors as a condition of the funding we are receiving from the Welsh Government to reduce the carbon emissions of our customers' homes. They need this information so they can analyse it to find the best value for money and returns on their investment. They will also use it to calculate the reduction in carbon emissions from the Optimised Retrofit Programme.

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This programme and data is also being used to model the best measures for private sector housing. The government will be able to advise customers on typical costs and the best energy efficiency measures based on real data.

We would like to collate this information as we are committed to providing warm and affordable homes and need to measure how we are achieving this, as we are receiving the Welsh Government grant. Hafod will also use the data to calculate the budget required to meet our Welsh Housing Quality Standard targets by 2034 and our Net Zero target by 2050.

We would really like this to be done with the help of our customers and with data from your homes.

We have finished a check to see how safe our data is. This check shows that the data will help us understand how healthy a home. It will help us find and fix problems early that could affect people's health and safety. Aico/HomeLINK looks at the environmental data to give us information about the house's condition. They find areas which might need improvement to help us keep the homes in good shape. Including:

- Damp and mould
- Heat loss
- Indoor air quality
- Cold homes
- Excess heat
- Draught

Who is going to be installing it?

A qualified electrician will install the environmental sensors and they take between 30 mins to an hour to fit them.

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What are the benefits of the solar panels?

Home's rooftops are commonly used to install solar panels, which convert sunlight into electricity. The panels work during the day when there is sunlight. They do not need direct sunlight to work and can even work on cloudy days. The stronger the sunshine, the more electricity generated.

What else is installed?

An inverter will be installed in your loft space. This turns the solar energy produced from the panels into electricity suitable for your home. We will also fit bird mesh around the panels to prevent birds from gathering on the roof.

Why are solar panels so good?

Free electricity

You can use the free electricity produced by the solar panels around your home. It is worth trying to stagger the use of large appliances where possible to make the use of this free electric.

They can help save you money

You use the electricity produced from the solar panels in your home first which can save you money. This means that you should buy less electricity from your energy provider. We will let you know the largest kilo watts your Solar Panels will produce on a sunny day, so you have an idea of how much electric it produces. It is important to note that utility prices and electricity use go up and
down and Hafod have no control over this.

It is a renewable source

Solar panels generate low-carbon renewable energy. This means it comes from a natural source and does not create greenhouse gas emissions that are harmful to our environment. To find out more, visit: Solar panels: a comprehensive guide - Energy Saving Trust

Will solar panels damage the roof?

Our contractors will check your roof and tiles before installation to ensure everything is strong and watertight before installation.

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Will it cost me to have solar panels and the Aico environmental sensor fitted?

There is no cost for having solar panels fitted to your home.

The environmental sensors and service are completely free to use, however the gateway hub uses a small amount of electricity to run, whilst the sensor devices are battery powered. This is approximately £4.00 per year on average, however if we are putting in energy efficiency measures, the cost will be more than covered.

How long will the process take?

The average timescale for the appointments and completion of the solar panel installation is approximately 6 – 8 weeks, however it is difficult to give a specific timescale here as it is dependent on what works we are doing. Please be assured the contractors will be working to Hafod's code of conduct for contractors and will always leave your home clean and tidy.

Who can I speak to if I have more questions?

There are plenty of options to get in touch with us. You can:

- Call our Customer Experience team on 0800 024 8968
- Email our Decarbonisation Engagement Officer Justine: Justine.Williams@hafod.org.uk
- Email Assets Management team: Asset.Management@hafod.org.uk
- Drop us a Facebook message @HafodHousing or visit our website www.hafod.org.uk for more information