

# Green electricity for residents in Sønderborg: SAB focuses on solar energy

Housing association SAB (SmartEnCity partner) energy renovates seven departments with rooftop solar cells with battery solutions. The residents thus get green electricity. The projects are part of the association's "energy and sustainability strategy", which the main board has adopted. It also includes the establishment of a green ambassador initiative. Residents must help promote the green transition.



*Torben Leth is looking forward to the green*

## **ambassador initiative**

Sønderborg Andelsboligforening (SAB) is changing to "green". This green transition must permeate the entire association with a total of 3,236 leases, which apply to both employees and residents. Since March 2018, all housing associations in Sønderborg Municipality have been working on "HAPPI", an EU project that deals with energy renovation in housing associations and 3 housing associations have been working on SmartEnCity project, Horizon2020 funded. This has resulted in an "energy and sustainability strategy 2020", which the main boards have adopted.

Being environmentally conscious and focusing on energy optimizations is nothing new for SAB - but in step with societal developments, there is a greater focus on reducing CO2 emissions. Since 2007, ProjectZero and the municipality have worked to ensure that Sønderborg will become CO2-neutral by 2029. The new strategy (Roadmap2025) and its ambitious plan is strongly supported by the housing associations.

## **Energy renovations for more than 110 million kroner**

"Therefore, the housing association focuses on sustainability, resource use, waste management and nature and environmental protection, as well as ensuring a continued biodiversity in our nature", says Vivian Engelbrecht, chairman of the main board in of the strategy of the association

The energy renovation will cost all six housing associations 114 million DKK. So far, projects worth 30 million DKK have been initiated. From 130 departments, 67 are included. A total of 3,300 homes will be energy renovated. It should provide a saving in heat of 5.5 million kWh, which corresponds to 2.75 million kroner per year. Additional DKK 2.6 million kWh of savings is expected with the implementation of solar cells and heat pumps. This corresponds to DKK 5.45 million DKK per year.

## **It is a societal task**

"Within the financial framework, we want to be as sustainable as possible. The best thing *that we can do* is to look into ourselves. We want to be at the forefront of the right solutions", referred Vivian Engelbrecht to, for example, recycle building materials and rainwater, but also the use of electric cars. "It is a societal task. That is why I am glad that you are with us *in this journey*.", said the chairman at a meeting with the housing association's residents in September, who would like to be part of the "green ambassador initiative".

Part of the HAPPI project is about the involvement of residents. Ultimately, it is the residents who decide at their annual ward meetings whether the energy renovation projects should be implemented. It really is resident democracy. A total of 7 departments from SAB have said yes to solar cells with batteries. The technical battery storage solution is funded by the SmartEnCity project.

## **Green conversion can begin in the kitchen**

A total of 20 residents from SAB have signed up as green ambassadors. One of them is Jes Jessen. He believes the green transition can begin in the kitchen. He loves to make vegetarian food, like recipes from Asia, with lots of vegetables and fruit.



Jes Jessen supports Vivian Engelbreds statement on biodiversity. He would like to transform green areas into an exciting gathering place for residents of all ages. Instead of grass, useful gardens, raised beds, fruit trees and berry bushes can be made and thus create an event out of the harvest.

Torben Leth is also an ambassador. He is an example of SAB putting actions behind their words about "green transition". Since January, he has been employed as a department inspector. One task is precisely to get the ambassador initiative up and running.

He is looking forward to the ambassadors getting into work clothes. "We bring their good ideas to life. The inspiration goes both ways. When you do not have an idea yourself, there are others who have". He expects from the green ambassador initiative that "we get different perceptions of *the green transition* that we can discuss and turn into green initiatives."

Original article in Danish, written by Ruth Nielsen, can be found [here](https://www.projectzero.dk/artikler/2020/oktober/gr%c3%b8n-str%c3%b8m-til-beboere-sab-satser-p%c3%a5-solenergi). (<https://www.projectzero.dk/artikler/2020/oktober/gr%c3%b8n-str%c3%b8m-til-beboere-sab-satser-p%c3%a5-solenergi>)

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