

With the money I received from the Henry Morris Trust I was able to buy a 300 watt solar panel for my van conversion project.

Before installing it, I had to make sure that I had everything I needed to install the electrics in the van, which took many hours of research and learning to ensure myself and what I was doing was safe. This ranged from correct wires and the routes they would take to more decorative things such as light fittings. The installation began with securing an old land rover battery under the passenger



seat for the power to go into. The power from the solar panel would travel through a converter and into the battery. The energy stored in the battery would then have to get split into 2 types; DC, which would run to the fridge, water pump and air vent; and AC which goes to the lights and sockets.

This whole process took about 6 months to finish as there were many struggles and difficulties that I hadn't expected to come across as well as the time-consuming nature of the project. For example, one problem that was easily fixed was figuring out how the solar panel would fit on the roof.

I ended up having to move the roof bars on the top of the van to fit the panel in flush at the front so I could then drill a hole in the roof to drop the wires through, which also prevented anything from getting between the van and the panel too.



Converting the van has taught me quite a lot that I wasn't expecting to learn, outside of the physical skills of course! It's made me much more patient and to not expect things to work and be perfect straight away. I also learnt that to get the result I want, I have to put in a fair amount of effort and graft.

Throughout the project I have had a vision of using re-cycled materials as much as possible. The fabric on the old transit van seats was falling apart so I replaced them with seats recycled from a land-rover. The interior of the van is insulated and then clad with wood from re-cycled pallets. The bed will be made using bed slats taken from an old bed.



Some stages of the renovation have been more straightforward and even fun, such as installing the air vent, I found I could easily stand up at some points, that changed when the air vent went into the space.