

Students who are in the money when it's sunny

■ National Grid pays for extra energy produced

AMY GLENDINNING

ALANDLORD is helping his student tenants do their bit for the environment by installing solar panels.

And they create so much energy the National Grid pays for the surplus power.

Stephen Beech runs Beech Properties – which has 80 houses in Fallowfield,

Longsight and Rusholme – and is fitting the high-tech photovoltaic panels to the roofs of all its properties.

Along with a modern insulation system, after heating and lighting, the panels create more energy than tenants can use, which is fed into the National Grid.

They then get paid for the surplus energy, on average making £66 a year, as well as having no energy bills to pay.

Mr Beech said: “The panels and insulation cost around £15-20,000 per house to fit, which is very expensive. But the houses with the panels fitted are already rented out until 2011 and the students really like them.

“They are the most energy-conscious people around and obviously bills are very important to them as well.

“I’m thinking that in the future these systems will be the norm, so I wanted to get in there early.”

As well as building a new

development in Rusholme, Stephen is also converting all his existing student homes to be carbon neutral.

“A lot of student homes in south Manchester are the traditional converted Victorian terraces or semi-detached houses,” he said.

“I realised they were the lowest rated for energy efficiency, with students having to shiver through winter.

“Along with the photovoltaic solar panels, we insulate the walls, floors and ceilings.

“The fact that the students get paid for the electricity they don’t use is also a really good incentive for them.”

Dean Jackson, 24, a business student at Manchester Metropolitan University, is moving into one of the flats in September this year.

“It’s a good standard of property and I get money back on the energy the solar panels make, so I’m helping to save the planet,” he said.



➤ **GONE GREEN** Stephen Beech is making all his student properties carbon neutral

Manchester Evening News
14 January 2010