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## CASE STUDY:

### Peace Marsh helps Youth Hostels Association implement renewable energy project

*Youth Hostels Association, Matlock, Derbyshire*

**T**he Youth Hostels Association (YHA) has a rich history of providing affordable accommodation for young people in major cities and attractive rural locations over the past 80 years.

Contributing to the care of the environment is extremely important for the organisation since many of its properties are situated in remote and picturesque locations. Driven by this value, as well as the recognition that rising utility costs pose a threat to future running costs, the YHA has developed an in-house scheme called 'Green Spirit'. The Green Spirit initiative outlines its commitment to investing in renewable energy supplies and managing energy usage.

Some hostels are particularly high consumers of electricity due to their high occupancy rates. The YHA therefore wanted to install renewable energy technologies in these selected properties to make them more energy efficient. In order to gain practical advice, they turned to the renewable energy consultancy Peace Marsh. After some initial studies of YHA's energy usage across their hostel portfolio, the energy specialist recommended the installation of solar PV panels.

As a recognised supplier of the Energy Efficiency Financing (EEF) scheme,



Peace Marsh was able to help YHA source financing from the scheme for the renewable energy project. The scheme, a joint initiative between the Carbon Trust and Siemens Financial Services Limited (SFS), is designed to provide finance for energy-efficient equipment for organisations, where the expected savings in energy costs offset the monthly equipment finance costs, effectively making the investment zero net cost or even cash positive.

Prior to finance being approved, the EEF scheme provides an independent energy savings assessment for organisations,

managed by energy specialists at the Carbon Trust. The YHA evaluation confirmed that the energy savings estimates made by Peace Marsh on the hostels were accurate and that optimal technologies were selected for the investment. Finally, four hostels with particularly high occupancy rates were chosen for the renewable energy project, along with the YHA's head office in Matlock, Derbyshire.

The installation of the solar PV panels selected typically reduces energy consumption by 10-15%. Taking into account subsidy from government-set

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Feed-in Tariffs, expected total savings can amount to 25% of the previous electricity bills. The five solar PV installations will cut carbon emissions by over 50 tonnes per year.

Jonathan Dempsey, Head of Safety, Health, Environment and Quality of the YHA, commented, "Preserving the environment has always been a core value for us. It is underlined by our sustainability strategy which places great emphasis on the use of renewable energy and efficient energy management. As energy prices are showing an upward trend, we need to be proactive in implementing energy efficiency measures in order to secure financial sustainability of our organisation. The EEF scheme has given us the much needed financial support in our aspiration to go green. We would definitely turn to EEF to finance further projects in the future."

Andrew McBean, Director at Peace Marsh, commented, "It's notoriously difficult to get funding from banks in the current economic climate. So working together with the EEF scheme has unlocked some great opportunities for us, especially since many companies are reluctant to invest the capital up front. The interest rates of the scheme are very competitive and it is an ideal vehicle

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to fund large scale renewable energy projects which our clients wouldn't have been able to execute otherwise. These projects usually have very attractive return on investment and payback periods but companies are often put off by the capital requirements. The EEF scheme removes the budget concerns and enables us to proceed with projects very quickly.

"Our dealings with the EEF scheme have been absolutely stress-free and the scheme has practically transformed our business. Many of the projects we have in the pipeline with our commercial clients can be funded by the scheme, which is really making a massive difference to our business." [www.peace-marsh.co.uk](http://www.peace-marsh.co.uk)  
Tel: 01483 306688.

### **Peace Marsh and the EEF scheme**

With many years of experience in renewable energy, Peace Marsh takes a holistic approach to every project, concentrating on all aspects of energy



efficiency as well as the renewable energy factor. Leveraging their technical expertise and in-depth knowledge, the energy consultancy has helped their customers from both commercial and private sectors improve energy efficiency in their facilities.

Valuing the benefits of the EEF scheme, Peace Marsh quickly applied to become a recognised supplier of the scheme when it was launched. Since EEF provides businesses with an affordable alternative to outright cash purchase of green equipment, thereby removing any capital budget restrictions, Peace Marsh can now offer customers energy-efficient solutions that best meet the individual business requirements. The energy consultant also has the ability to provide an integrated solution combining financing and technology, enabling it to close more deals. In addition, fast payments of invoices are made direct to the supplier by SFS, usually within 24 hours of receipt of post-installation documentation, meaning improved cash flow for the supplier.



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