

SOUTH WALNEY NATURE RESERVE,
CUMBRIA WILDLIFE TRUST

SOLAR THERMAL HOT WATER SYSTEM

Installation date: June 2008
Project value: £12,495
Grant value: £6,247



Image courtesy of
Cumbria Wildlife Trust

Project background

Cumbria Wildlife Trust was formed in 1962 as a voluntary organisation, to conserve the wildlife and wild places in Cumbria. The Trust maintains over 40 nature reserves and operates from three main sites in South Walney, Plumgarths and Lowther.

In 2005, the Trust launched a carbon footprint study to improve the environmental performance of its buildings. A key consumption area emerged in the staff quarters at South Walney which lacked an energy efficient and cost effective hot water supply.

Instead of relying on electricity to generate their hot water, a solar thermal system was identified as the most appropriate replacement technology. The remote location of the building and the accessible south facing roof space in particular would lend itself well to the installation.

Application process and grant claim

Cumbria Wildlife Trust completed the grant application using guidance given on the LCBP Phase 2 website. Some additional technical information was provided by the technology supplier.

Within four months, the installation was complete and the grant was claimed. A display showing the generated energy was also installed for visitors' information.

Development Officer, Michelle Waller said "The LCBP website was helpful and, with guidance, the overall application process was straightforward. We are delighted to have an efficient hot water system which is environmentally friendly. Now we are focussing on other improvements across our buildings."

The installation

The installation received a 50% LCBP grant with further support from Trust funds. The project was in line with the original estimate and no additional costs were incurred.

Six flat solar panels with a combined capacity of 10kW and covering 14m² of roof area were installed in June 2008. The panels are mounted on the pitch roof and deliver 6,160 kWh of energy each year. They will provide free hot water between May and October, however, electricity will still be required during winter to cater for increased seasonal heat requirements.

"It is wonderful that we have been able to install solar panels to heat the water at our South Walney Nature Reserve.

Without the funding through LCBP Phase 2, Cumbria Wildlife Trust would not have been able to afford to do this - so receiving the grant was critical to us.

The solar panels are helping us to keep the Trust's fuel bills down and reduce our impact on the environment. Ultimately this means that more of our valuable funds can be spent directly on helping wildlife."

Michelle Waller, Development Officer,
Cumbria Wildlife Trust

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