

Ernest Fenton is an arable and sheep farmer in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Not only does Ernest run his own farm, he is also the owner of an ice rink for curling. In early 2012, Ernest came into contact with Bowler Energy after a quick comparison found they were able to provide the most reasonable price.

An on-site assessment by advisor Eddie Chadfield revealed that the best way for Ernest to optimise his energy was through a 50kW roof mounted system on a purpose built barn. Constructed at the optimum angle, Ernest would be able to obtain the maximum output from the PV panels whilst benefiting from extra storage space.

After the initial recommendation, Bowler Energy ensured a quick installation process by overseeing the whole operation. All in all, the entire process from initial contact to completed and commissioned PV system was just five months.

“Electricity consumption is heading in the right direction” Ernest says highlighting that his PV system was installed at just the right time, “The feed-in tariff has helped to support the farm, which has been a godsend during these last few months. We would be in a very different positions now, if it wasn’t for that.”

Ernest has been very pleased to see the benefits of his new PV system. It has lowered his reliance on electricity from the grid, ultimately reducing the cost required to maintain his ice rink. The result of this has enabled him to extend the opening season of his rink to include the spring and autumn.

A full, twelve months after the installation, Ernest has the figures available from his system to compare with others. “I have a friend on the south coast who has an installation the same size as mine on one of his dairy buildings. We compare output readings and every month so far mine has beaten his by atleast 10%, sometimes even 15%.”

Also delighting in the benefits of a PV system from Bowler Energy are Stephen and David McGuffie, commercial soft fruit and asparagus growers in Staffordshire.

After deciding to protect their business against the unknown effects of future electricity prices, they felt that renewable energy was the way forward. The roof mounted system was able to power the cold stores on the farm whilst supplying additional electricity to the offices on site.

The total benefit of the PV system installation over the first twelve month period has been £19,888. This is coupled with the panels producing 12.9% more kWh than they were originally predicted.

“I am delighted with the installation and it is worth noting that one of the best points is that the return on capital is as a passive investment.”