



3P Technik

reaping the benefits of
water harvesting

This is sustainable technology in Mid Wales



International
Business Wales



One of the biggest crises facing developed as well as developing countries is the growing shortage of water. 3P Technik, which has a major base in Cardigan, is helping to lead an environmental revolution - enabling homes and industry to harvest billions of gallons of water.

The benefits aren't just environmental and social but also economic. Britain is not alone in planning to spend billions of pounds in coming decades to satisfy our increasing demand for water. The financial and environmental costs of meeting growing demand by increasing supply, are now being recognised as unacceptably high.

What's more, as Glyn Hyett, MD of 3P Technik UK points out, a much neater solution is readily available. 'Increasing capacity, by building new reservoirs or sinking new boreholes, has major implications for the environment and will simply add to the already growing cost of water. But every home, hospital, school, office and factory can produce enough water to meet a high proportion of its needs... at a fraction of the cost.'

3P Technik UK designs and produces rainwater harvesting systems that collect, filter and store rainwater - from roofs and car parks - and then pump it back into the building for 'secondary', non-potable uses.

It has rapidly established a market-leading position for supplying specialist components that connect to the storage tanks manufactured by major names such as Kingspan and Polypipe.

One key product is a special design of downpipe filter which also separates out leaves, moss and bird droppings to prevent sediment build up.

Catching up with the continent

So how much difference could rainwater harvesting make? The average British householder uses around 150 litres of water a day, but as little as 50% of this needs to be of potable quality. For toilet flushing, washing machines, cleaning and garden watering you can safely use filtered rainwater.

For people on a metered supply - and all new houses are now fitted with meters - the cost savings are considerable. But there are other significant benefits too. Rainwater contains no lime, so up to 50% of washing powder can be saved, and washing machines don't become furred up with lime. Neither does limescale build up in toilets. Plants prefer rainwater because it is not chlorinated.

Environmentally it's a win-win situation too. As well as eradicating the need to sink new boreholes or build new reservoirs, energy use is cut: pumping water long distances is a major user of electricity. The risk of urban flooding, caused by run off during heavy rainfall, is also reduced.

To date Britain has been slow to recognise the benefits of rainwater harvesting: for every system sold in the UK, 40 are installed in Germany. But all that is changing as new building regulations will compel developers to fit harvesting equipment into new homes and commercial buildings.

The road to 'greener water'

While 3P Technik UK's parent company is in Germany, the British design team has been closely involved in the company's next new product: a system which filters and harvests road run off. Road run off contains high concentrations of some very unpleasant substances - notably heavy metals, which come from brake linings and catalytic convertors, as well as organic material which can overload a stream or river.



“ Grants have played a big part in getting us set up here, particularly on acquiring the building and investing in new plant. We have also had help with sales and marketing collateral. ”



'Our new filtering system will take out 80% of phosphates, 90% of hard metals, 98% of ammonia and reduce oil typically from 20mg/litre down to 0.2 mg/litre. What's more, the filters need replacing only once every two to five years.'

Glyn Hyett, who has many years of experience in the water industry working for Hyder Consulting and, more recently, as Director of Celtic Water Management, says the tide towards rainwater harvesting is turning - fast.

'You only have to see the way that this technology is being applied in Europe to appreciate the potential for us here.' Being based in Mid Wales offers major advantages for 3P Technik - as part of an environmental goods cluster that receives enormous support from the Welsh Assembly Government keen to promote and foster the industry. 'Grants have played a big part in getting us set up here, particularly on acquiring the building and investing in new plant. We have also had help with sales and marketing collateral.

'But being in Wales, for myself and the rest of the staff, is also about living and working in a very beautiful place. Quality of life is a big factor for us all ... which is why we're in Cardigan.'



Your next step...

If what you've read here strikes a chord with your business ambitions, then we should be talking.

If you want to explore the possibilities of developing your business in Mid Wales, call us on:

Tel +44 (0)1686 613128

Or email us on infomidwales@wales.gsi.gov.uk

www.internationalbusinesswales.com

