



Case Studies

Jay Hayter and Chris Mead's Eco House and BBC's "It's Hard to be Green"



" We have been able to install our rainwater harvesting with no professional help at all. For Jay and me, two people who have got limited DIY skills, this has been achievable. "

Jay Hayter and Chris Mead are typical young professional Londoners, but then they also have an ambitious streak when it comes to their own house and its renovation. By the time RainWater Harvesting.co.uk delivered their Graf Carat 2700 litre tank kit they had together dug by hand the hole necessary for burying the tank... 2 by 2½ by 2 metres and carted the excess soil off to the dump!

Jay and Chris are interested to see whether environmentally-friendly features like solar heating can be built into a terrace house, and what problems have to be overcome. The task is made more poignant by the presence of the camera crew for BBC's "It's Hard to be Green" presented by Dick Strawbridge for broadcast early in 2009.

The 2700 litre tank would not fit through the stairwell of the house, despite the Carat being shipped in two halves only 80 cms wide... they're 2 metres long. So Chris sweet-talked the neighbours into letting him (and friends) lift the tank halves over four neighbours' walls to get to his back garden. Their 80 square metre roof will collect about 75,000 litres of water a year, enough for clothes washing, toilet flushing and 150 litres a day of water for the garden. The 2700 litre tank will provide this daily amount of water for

a couple of weeks during a drought or hosepipe ban. The cost of the kit including tank, pumps and filter: £1680 including tax and delivery from www.RainWaterHarvesting.co.uk

A home on a water meter will be able to save about 50% of the bill; rainwater replaces half the mains water used, and the charges for sewage disposal would reduce proportionately. So on a water bill of about £400 if the savings will be £200 a year. The top of the range 2700 litre system with Rain Director smart header tank at £1740 will take 8½ years in this case, at present water prices. But those prices are expected to increase by 4 to 8 fold over the next 10 years so most buyers of tanks reckon the payback period will be more like 4 to 6 years.

Chris sat triumphantly on his tank before covering it over with earth and said to camera, "I'm really, really pleased that both of us, Jay and I, have dug this hole, we've had the confidence knowing that what we're doing here is right. We can do the work now, then for years and years to come this will be free water every time we flush the toilet, every time we wash our clothes, we know that we can look skywards and we'll say "Thanks. You know; free water! Great." "I'm over the moon"

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