

Training provider bolsters its green credentials

Petans has taken various steps to minimise the environmental impact of its safety and survival training.

Over the past 50 years, Petans has seen and supported the changing needs of the energy sector within East Anglia and beyond.

The professional safety and survival training provided by Petans must meet various training standards and legislation and numerous outside factors influence not only the training that it delivers but also the way in which it operates as a business.

Businesses operating today must be aware of not only financial but environmental sustainability.

Petans operates as part of the supply chain for a diverse energy sector from oil and gas to nuclear to renewables with numerous other clients including the local authority, the MOD, maritime and industrial fire teams.

“Regardless of the industry we support, the emergency response and safety nature of our training requires an impact on the environment,” said Ian Richards, training and operations manager at Petans. “As part of that delivery and the resources used, we are very aware of the environmental impact we can have and want to do what we can to provide balance.”

As a registered charity, Petans has an ethos of reinvesting into its training facilities. Over the past 10 years, it has invested over £2.5 million in training resources that not only meet the standards and expectations of its clients but deliver in a way that supports the environment, or at the very least lessens the impact.

In 2015, Petans invested in a gas fire module to support internal firefighting training. The module, supplied by Kidde Fire Safety, reduced the company’s local, regional and global impact on air quality, producing fewer carbon emissions and other gases and vapours associated to burning



A gas fire training module, supplied by Kidde Fire Safety, reduced Petans' impact on air quality

Image: PETANS



Ian Richards, training and operations manager. Left, Andie Marshall, business manager

carbonation and liquid fuel for training purposes. Three years later,

Petans installed a second firefighting module with Irish supplier SEFtec, followed later in 2018 by a helicopter prop. In 2019, all of its previous kerosene burning modules were replaced by dual burn props.

“Although Petans had one fully gas firefighting module, the training could still be seen as a slightly sterile environment for firefighter training,” Ian explained. “The advancement in technology allowed for a dual burn module, allowing for a more realistic training environment, by increasing temperature and reducing visibility whilst further reducing the carbon footprint of Petans.”

As well as burning fossils fuels

to produce training scenarios, Petans is conscious of the water needed to produce firefighting media. Earlier this year, it replaced its water treatment system which had been installed in 2012.

“The old one was no longer effective in enabling us to reuse the water collected on site both through rain and through firefighting,” said Ian.

Having looked for a suitable solution, Petans worked with Watermark Projects to install a water treatment plant that removes any solids, firefighting media and fuel, allowing Petans to recycle around 70% of its store water.

Like other businesses, Petans was hugely impacted by the energy price increase following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“We have had solar panels on our site to support our own



Petans recently installed a new array of solar panels to minimise its energy costs and environmental impact

power usage for about 15 years, but the array was no longer efficient enough to meet our needs, and therefore we were not feeling the benefit of them financially,” said business manager Andie Marshall.

“Our fuel bills were eye-watering, and although we started with internal best practice to reduce our energy usage, we wanted to do more both for the environment and our own financial stability.

“Although we are a registered charity, we run with the same commercial constraints as any other business. We want to provide a high-quality product at competitive prices to support the sector that our charitable status was set up to serve.”

Petans talked with local energy broker Indigo Swan, which engaged with Power Different, a commercial solar

panel installer based in Attleborough.

“We know the importance of our sector using us as part of its local supply chain, so we were delighted when we found a local supplier who would work closely with us to find a solar panel design to suit several of our requirements,” said Andie.

“Being close to Norwich International Airport, it is important that our design did not have a negative impact on airport safety, and we wanted enough coverage so we could support export back to the grid to help keep our costs down as well as supporting the environment.

“We look forward to seeing the impact in the coming months.”

For more information, visit petans.co.uk