

## **Bluesky urges property owners to get independent solar assessments**

Leicestershire, UK, 22 September 2011 - Aerial mapping company Bluesky is urging property owners to get independent assessments of solar potential following press reports of rogue traders and mis-selling. The consumer watchdog Which? invited certified companies to quote for a domestic solar panel installation and found three quarters overestimated how much energy the panels would produce while most underestimated the time it would take for the installation costs to be recouped.

Bluesky, a specialist in capturing and creating environmental data including solar mapping, advises any individual or organisation thinking about solar energy to obtain an independent assessment of their property's suitability and potential before obtaining quotes for installation.

"Unfortunately when it comes to solar energy potential not all roofs are equal," commented Rachel Tidmarsh, Managing Director of Bluesky. "If a property owner is serious about solar energy we recommend that they undertake a thorough investigation of their own before accepting potentially exaggerated claims."

Bluesky were one of the first companies in the UK to offer property level maps of solar energy potential. They have since gone on to announce a nationwide mapping project and are already working with leading energy companies and solar panel companies as well as commercial property owners, housing associations and government organisations. Bluesky also recently launched an on demand service providing detailed solar suitability reports, including interactive 3D models, aerial images and easy to interpret colour coded models, for individual commercial, industrial, public sector and domestic properties.

"Our reports and maps identify suitable properties and assess the number of panels that each roof element can accommodate," continued Tidmarsh. "We also provide an indication of solar irradiation, taking into account location and other factors, and a detailed shadow analysis highlighting the possible effects of nearby obstructions."

Bluesky has a unique method of generating solar potential maps using photogrammetric techniques to accurately measure and record factors that may contribute to the suitability for solar power. Bluesky calculates the energy potential using high resolution aerial photography combined with 3D data to determine the size, aspect and gradient of individual properties. The suitability of each roof element is then considered taking into account roof shape and other impediments such as sky lights or dormer windows, as well as potential obstructions such as neighbouring properties or trees. Bluesky can also provide measurements for other environmental energy projects such as wind turbines, micro hydro and heat pumps.

### **CONTACTS:**

Website: [www.bluesky-world.com](http://www.bluesky-world.com)  
Bluesky Tel +44 (0)1530 518 518

Editorial enquiries, contact Robert Peel on tel. +44 (0)1666 823306  
Colour separation requests - please fax only to +44 (0)1666 824 668

**Editor's Notes:**

The government supported **Feed In Tariff** was introduced last year and made it compulsory for energy companies to make regular payments to householders and communities who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources such as solar electricity panels or wind turbines. The scheme guarantees a minimum payment for all electricity generated by the system - even that used by the generating household - with an additional payment for energy that is not used at the point of generation and is exported to the National Grid. These payments are on top of the saving that the household or community it making by using energy generated on site.

**Bluesky** is a UK-based specialist in aerial imaging and remote sensing data collection and processing. An internationally recognised leader with projects extending around the globe, Bluesky is proud to work with prestigious organisations such as Google, the BBC and Government Agencies.

Bluesky has unrivalled expertise in the creation of seamless, digital aerial photography, 3D landscape/cityscape visualisations and prints and also runs a national mapping centre, providing digital mapping, satellite imagery and aerial photography including ultra-high resolution imagery of cities and towns.

Bluesky is now leading the way developing innovative solutions for environmental applications including the UK's first nationwide map of solar potential, citywide 'heat loss' maps, 3D maps of trees and their proximity to buildings and historical imagery.

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