# HEAT PUMPS TODAY







Reimagining heat pump and renewable energy training for the next generation



What does the Future Homes Standard mean for electrical installers? P20



Women in the heat pump industry: Laetitia Mace





P14



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FOR THE NEXT GENERATION







### Welcome to the October issue of Heat Pumps Today

Future proofing and upskilling are still a main driver for most renewable engineers. Especially with those transitioning from the traditional gas heating sector. This issue provides articles from GTEC, focusing on renewable energy training for the next generation, future proofing by Alex Robinson, Head of Training at NICEIC and we provide the results of the 2025 Installer Skills Survey from the annual Baxi Skills event, which was held on the 2nd of October.

The Future Homes Standard can provide real commercial opportunities and Lee Sutton, myenergi provides an in-depth piece, demonstrating ways for installers to benefit. Laetitia Mace, Residential ASHP Portfolio Manager, Baxi shares her journey from when she discovered heat pumps in 2012, to now, and how we must continue to inspire young people to join the industry.

The not-for-profit ACR & Heat Pump Trainee Awards Luncheon is being held on the 4th of December, at the Leeds Marriott Hotel. With training being at the forefront of this sector, have you booked your places yet? Previous finalists and winners always appreciate the support. Along with the opportunity to network on the day with the movers & shakers of the industry.

As always, I'd like to provide a huge thank you to David Crowson, Digital Editor who has helped enormously with bringing together this month's issue of Heat Pumps Today.

Juliet

Juliet Loiselle FinstR Editor/Publisher

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### **Publishing Editor**

Juliet Loiselle CompCIPHE/FInstR 01778 391067 Julietl@warnersgroup.co.uk

### Digital Editor

David Crowson 01778 391067 david.crowson@wanersgroup.co.uk

### Multimedia Sales Manager

Victoria Liddington 01778 395029 victoria.liddington@warnersgroup.co.uk

### **Events**

Haley Comey 01778 392445 hayleyc@warnersgroup.co.uk

### Design

Development Design

### Production

Viv Lane 01778 392453 production@warnersgroup.co.uk

### Published by:

Warners Group Publications Plc The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincs, PE10 9PH 01778 391000 01778 394748

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### Electrified Heat Transition Tracker: Record interest in heat pumps

The latest Electrified Heat Transition Tracker, which covers progress in the first half of 2025, shows that more people want heat pumps than ever.

### The key takeaways are:

electrified heating.

- Oil-dependent regions poised for heat pump market breakthrough: While many oil-reliant regions are leading the charge on heat pumps, others continue to lag behind.
   In areas like Horsham and Monmouthshire, where oil dependency is high and electrification offers a compelling value proposition through lower bills and less maintenance - there is a prime opportunity to unlock demand for
- High standards for heat pumps are the optimal route to lower bills and higher comfort: Heat pump systems tracked on Heat Pump Monitor have achieved an average COP of 3.6 in the first half of the year. At this performance, households are almost guaranteed bill savings and more comfortable, consistent heating. To meet the objectives of the Warm Homes Plan, these standards must become an industry norm.
- Heat pump demand is flourishing, not faltering: With BUS voucher activity in the first 6 months of 2025 up 56% on the first half of 2024, it is clear that more and more people want heat pumps. Installations are increasing steadily and new government support schemes in the Warm Homes Plan are set to supercharge the market. Despite the headlines, the transition is happening.



To read the report in full visit: www.projectambient.org/data

# Poll finds MPs would back the government on electricity tax cuts

A new landmark study of 111 British MPs reveals cross-party attitudes towards electricity prices and taxes, home efficiency measures and broader understanding



of the Boiler Upgrade Scheme. Heat pump leaders are calling for policymakers to use their influence to better educate people on clean energy-tech solutions, available incentives and to increase accessibility with cheaper electricity.

## Electricity tax reform: The clean energy tech revolution begins

Savanta conducted the study 'Power Politics: Electrifying the Future of British Energy' on behalf of leading clean energy tech company, Aira. The report found that near half (48%) of MPs would agree to reducing electricity costs to make heat pumps a more affordable alternative to gas boilers, with just 17% saying they would disagree. Overall, 34% said that they would remain neutral or would need to learn more about the benefits of cheaper electricity before backing the policy change.

The findings are a boost for campaigners urging the government to invest in more education and to use their policy powers to enable households to move away from fossil fuels.

In the UK, households currently pay four times more for their electricity than for gas, despite a large share of the country's electricity coming from renewable sources such as wind, solar, and nuclear power. British households face some of the highest electricity prices in Europe, largely because about four-fifths of levies are added to electricity bills, with only one-fifth applied to gas bills, making electricity disproportionately more expensive.

The study revealed a stark polarity of views among MPs, with opposition to removing levies on electricity bills driven predominantly by Liberal Democrats - 58% disagree - compared to 22% of Conservative MPs and just 10% of Labour MPs.

## Reducing household emissions: Sustainability starts at home

In response to survey questions about which actions they believe would make the biggest impact in helping their constituents cut household carbon emissions, the majority of MPs pointed to home insulation (71%) and the installation of double or triple glazing (54%) as the most effective solutions.

Nearly one in two MPs felt that installing renewable energy systems such as solar panels (49%) or replacing a gas or oil boiler with a heat pump (45%) would also significantly cut household emissions, showing growing support for clean energy-tech amongst British lawmakers. Helping homes switch from a gas or oil boiler to a heat pump draws mixed views across parties, with 72% of Lib Dems and 50% of Labour MPs positive about the impact, versus just 24% of Conservatives.

To read the story in full visit: www.acrjournal.uk/heat-pumps/poll-finds-mps-would-back-the-government-on-electricity-tax-cuts



### Daikin UK strengthens residential aftersales with Robert Heath Heating

Daikin UK has strengthened its aftersales service by transferring all residential operations in England and Wales to Robert Heath Heating, following its acquisition of the company in January 2024. This ensures customers and installers benefit from stable, long-term support delivered by a dedicated, wholly owned service business at the forefront of low-carbon heating.

Scaling up for the heat pump era

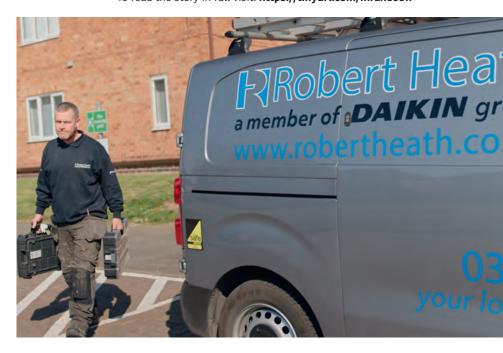
From 10 September 2025, all residential service requests in England and Wales, including heat pump maintenance, repairs and warranty work, are now handled by Robert Heath Heating. Daikin UK continues to deliver residential service in Scotland and Northern Ireland, while focusing its UK service teams on commercial and industrial operations.

Robert Heath Heating brings more than 45 years of residential heating experience, with over 300 service engineers and advanced IT platforms. The company already delivers maintenance and repairs for more than 200,000 households across England and Wales. Customers now benefit from:

- Faster repairs carried out by local engineers
- Clearer communication with text alerts, reminders and updates
- Simple, multi-channel contact options

Daikin UK's experienced residential services engineers have already joined the larger Service team at RHH to offer speedy and professional residential heating services. This strengthens capacity and secures heating and hot water comfort for households in a fast and reliable manner.

To read the story in full visit: https://tinyurl.com/mran85bh



### BEAMA relaunches 'What Should I Do?' with Heat Options Matrix to support Warm Homes Plan

BEAMA has relaunched its paper, 'What Should I Do?', now updated with a new Heat Options Matrix, providing policymakers and industry with a clear framework to identify and support 'the good' in heat electrification. The updated publication strengthens the case for including a wider range of electric heat and hot water technologies across all Government incentive programmes.

With heat pumps already a central focus of Government policy, the Matrix highlights the critical role of flexible thermal storage, and other modern electric heating solutions in delivering a fair and effective Warm Homes Plan. Recognising these technologies not only ensures that the 20% of homes deemed unsuitable for heat pumps are not left behind but also provides a pathway to unlock up to 10GW of flexibility by 2030, far above current projections.

BEAMA has outlined to DESNZ and the Warm Homes Plan team that by following the recommendations in this updated paper, customers can benefit from:

- Immediate energy bill savings through greater system efficiency and storage-based flexibility
- Long-term value from time-of-use tariffs and grid services that only storage-backed solutions can provide The challenge for Government remains clear:

- Use the Matrix to identify and endorse the most efficient, flexible, and scalable technologies, preventing mis-selling and reducing reliance on outdated systems
- Advocate independent advice at the local level to guide customer choice
- Move quickly on VAT
   reform and electricity
   price rebalancing, ensuring inclusivity across all 'good' heat
   technologies
- Ensure fuel-poor households are not excluded from modern, efficient solutions that can deliver immediate benefits

To download the full copy visit: https://tinyurl.com/mtyw5ycb











# It's time to decarbonise

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### Samsung Climate Solutions announces Duftons as latest distributor

Samsung Climate Solutions is delighted to announce Duftons Plumbing & Heating Supplies as the latest official Samsung distributor. Duftons is the largest independent plumbing and heating merchant in Yorkshire, with 13 branches across the region. It is renowned for its extensive product knowledge and its commitment to customer service.

While Duftons has a long-standing relationship with Samsung, the official partnership comes as the demand for Samsung products in Duftons' branches continues to grow, particularly amongst developers. The team at Duftons will now work directly with Samsung's team to provide installers with additional resources and product expertise to meet the continued demand

for high-performance heating solutions. As a result, Duftons will be able to grow the relevant training and technical support it currently provides to customers at both its Leeds and Durhambased training centres.

For Samsung, partnering with Duftons provides an opportunity to expand its presence within the installer community, and ensures the products and support it provides are available to a wider audience. Duftons' ongoing commitment to expanding its heat pump offering aligns with further strategic developments coming from the merchant later this year.

https://samsung-climatesolutions.com/gb/b2c.html

### UK heat pump training surges despite barriers to upskilling

New research shows how plumbers and heating installers across the UK are stepping up to meet the demand for low-carbon heating, but regional disparities remain.

Across the UK, 58% of professionals have already trained or upskilled in heat pumps, with a further 34% planning to do so within the next 12 months, according to findings in City Plumbing's new Taking the Temperature report<sup>1</sup>. Only 8% say they have not been trained and do not plan to train in heat pumps.

Confidence in the heat pump market is growing, with installers citing expected customer demand (37%), the chance to gain a competitive advantage (34%) and personal interest in renewable technologies (38%) as key motivators for training. Practical enablers also matter, with 30% saying they trained because it was convenient to access and 28% were encouraged or funded by their employer.

However, there remain some barriers to upskilling in renewables. Some respondents cited the cost (28%), lack of local offering (24%), difficulty in taking time off work (24%), not enough customer demand (24%) and too much competition (20%) as reasons against

training in renewables. A fifth (20%) said they haven't trained or plan to train as they will retire soon.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents said there are still not enough qualified heat pump installers to meet demand – raising concerns about meeting the Government's target of 600,000 heat pump installations per year by 2028. Alongside this, 85% agree that there needs to be more financial support to help people train or upskill in renewables.

Exploring the research in more detail, several regions are leading the way, with Wales (75%), the East Midlands (74%) and both the North West and Scotland (72%) reporting the highest levels of trained installers. The South West also performs strongly at 68%, giving these areas a robust workforce to meet current demand.

Northern Ireland, despite having the lowest training uptake today (21%), shows the highest growth potential – with more than seven in ten professionals (71%) planning to upskill in the next 12 months. The North East (56%), East of England (47%) and Greater London (39%) also report significant pipelines of planned training, indicating that these areas could quickly close the gap with more mature markets.

City Plumbing surveyed 500 plumbers and heating installers across the UK to find out industry trends, opportunities and threats, which are outlined the report.

### www.cityplumbing.co.uk

### Source

 $1.\ www.highbournegroup.co.uk/industry-insights/taking-the-temperature-report$ 









# Scotland's opportunity to lead the UK on clean heating

Olivia Smalley, Head of Policy and Communications at the Heat Pump Association, shares her expert opinion on Scotland's Heat Pump Policy Momentum.

Scotland has a key opportunity to lead the UK in the transition to low-carbon heating, with the Climate Change Committee projecting that 93% of existing homes will need to have low-carbon heating by 2045¹. With lots of ongoing policy discussions, we have shared our key asks for the Scottish Government to accelerate heat pump deployment².

Earlier this month, the HPA brought working heat pumps to the Scottish Parliament for our "Hear, See and Feel a Heat Pump" event. It was a chance for MSPs to experience the technology first-hand and speak directly with manufacturers and technical and policy experts. We welcomed representatives from 5 different parties to bust myths and raise awareness of the role of heat pumps in providing economic benefits and carbon savings to Scotland.

We are urging the Scottish Government to introduce and pass an ambitious Heat in Buildings Bill before the end of this Parliament<sup>2</sup>. Heat pump installations in Scotland need to rise from just over 7,600 in 2024 to 35,000 by 2030<sup>1</sup>, so the bill must support the rollout of zero-direct emissions heating systems. To get there, we need certainty, investment in skills, and

support for households and businesses to make the switch.

Scotland already produces more renewable electricity than it uses, with the equivalent of over a third exported in 2023. Using that clean energy to heat homes is a strategic win to cut emissions, boost energy security, and keep economic benefits local.

With the right leadership, Scotland has the ability to set a precedent for other UK nations to follow in the journey to transitioning to clean heating.

Info

www.heatpumps.org.uk

### Source

- 1. CCC, Scotland's Carbon Budgets: Advice for the Scottish Government (2025)
- 2. HPA Key Policy Asks for the Scottish Government at heatpumps.org.uk (2025)

# Baxi appoints new Managing Director for UK & Ireland

Baxi, part of the BDR Thermea Group, has announced the appointment of Alstom MD **Jason Baldock** as the new MD for Baxi UK & Ireland. This follows the news that out-going MD and Dutch national **Jan Rijnen** has re-located to head up sister BDR company Remeha, covering the Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg (Benelux) region. Jan will continue to be responsible for Baxi UK&I until Jason

tor Baxi UK&I until Jasor ioins on 1 October

Commenting on his appointment, Jason said;
"I am truly excited to be joining Baxi UK & Ireland and look forward to building on the company's strong heritage and exploring new opportunities as we embrace the decarbonisation agenda."

www.baxi.co.uk





# STIEBEL ELTRON UK strengthens South West team with new Specification Manager

STIEBEL ELTRON UK has strengthened its South West operations with the appointment of a new specification manager who will drive forward the adoption of renewable heating solutions across the region.

**Claire Poole** joins as the Regional Specification Manager for the South West. She will support customers and installer partners with their renewable heating needs.

Helping to promote STIEBEL ELTRON's range of air and ground source heat pumps and ventilation products, Claire will play a key role in strengthening existing relationships and developing new partnerships in the region.

Bringing with her 19 years of sales experience, including 15 years in the HVAC industry, Claire has extensive knowledge of working with a wide array of contractors, consultants, and developers on both residential and commercial projects.

The appointment is part of a wider programme of growth for STIEBEL ELTRON UK, which has recently made several new hires across the specification and sales teams to further support customers and installers nationwide.

www.stiebel-eltron.co.uk



Claire Poole, Regional Specification Manager for the South West, STIEBEL ELTRON UK

# STIEBEL ELTRON

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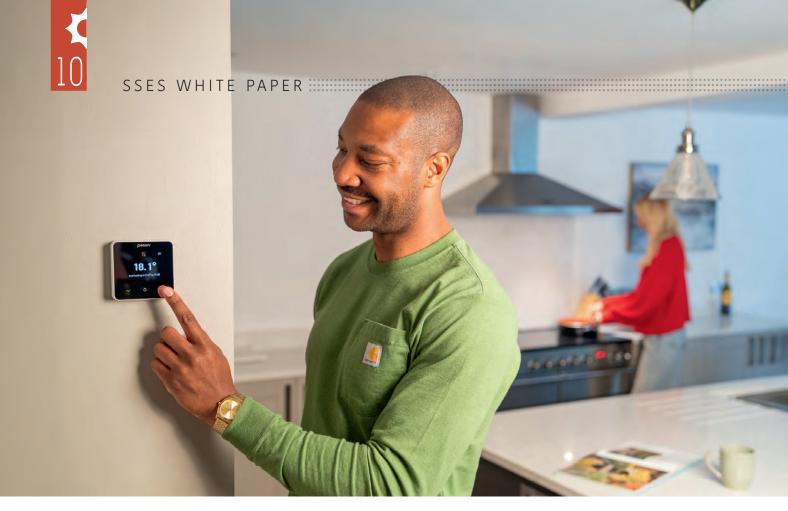
# The future of heat pumps is here



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# Heat pump manufacturers: Getting ready for Smart Secure Electricity Systems Programme (SSES)

We take a look at the latest white paper from Passiv UK, The Smart Secure Electricity Systems Programme (SSES): What it means for heat pump manufacturers, which outlines what the Programme means for your business, including upcoming regulations, compliance timelines, and the technical requirements that will begin rolling out from 2027.

### What is the SSES Programme?

The SSES Programme places requirements on manufacturers, energy suppliers and flexibility providers to support domestic Demand Side Response (DSR) in the UK.

This includes communications, data access and business licensing. Under SSES, all heat pumps sold in the UK must be smart-enabled, and capable of providing DSR by responding to remote signals and tariff information. SSES is an ongoing programme from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). From an initial consultation in 2019 and a follow-up consultation in 2024, SSES is now entering a detailed consultation phase following a response from the government in May 2025. The regulations laid out in the framework are expected to come into effect over the space of several years up to 2030.

### Why is SSES important?

As part of the UK government's net zero targets, DESNZ released the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan in December 2024.

This sets out a targeted pathway for ensuring that by 2030, 100% of UK electricity demand is met through sources of clean generation - up from 56% today. This will require almost trebling renewable generation connected to the grid to 120GW, alongside 30GW of long-duration energy storage.

In order to make the most of this additional renewable energy, we need to change the way we use electricity. Shifting consumption to times of high renewable generation can bring down costs while helping the stability of the grid. This is why the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan forecasts

the need for over 10GW of 'consumer-led flexibility'. The National Energy System Operator estimates that 2GW of flexibility will come from residential appliances, excluding EV charging.

### The aim of the SSES programme

While DSR has been around for a long time, recent years have seen unprecedented participation from domestic and small commercial consumers. The launch of National Grid Electricity System Operator's (now National Energy System Operator) Demand Flexibility Service saw over 1.6 million households take part in DSR. The SSES programme aims to make DSR as accessible and effective as possible through standardisation, regulation, and consumer protection.

Alongside the uptake of renewable electricity, homes across the country are decarbonising traditionally fossil-fuel based services, such as transport and heating. This transition will significantly increase the peak electrical demand of an average UK household. This places a greater strain on both national and local electricity grids, especially when paired with the intermittency of renewable generation. SSES aims to address this by ensuring all new high-power electrical devices being installed are 'smart by default', capable of responding to the needs of the grid automatically, without being dependent on user interaction.

### What does SSES involve?

There are three components to the SSES programme: Energy Smart Appliances, tariff data accessibility and load control licensing. The load control licensing workstream looks at implementing a licensing regime for any organisation remotely managing the consumption of devices in a domestic or commercial property. The tariff data accessibility workstream explores a standardised format for suppliers to share tariff information. This whitepaper focuses on the Energy Smart Appliances workstream.

As part of SSES, DESNZ aims to set out regulations for the operation of Energy Smart Appliances (ESAs). The 2024 consultation defines ESAs as "electrical consumer devices that are communications-enabled and capable of responding automatically to incentive signals... or other

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Upstairs
Upstairs

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more direct control signals... by shifting or modulating their electricity consumption". The intention behind SSES is for all high-power domestic appliances to function as ESAs from the point of installation. This includes electric vehicle charge points, battery energy storage systems and electric heating including heat pumps.

### When does SSES come into effect?

DESNZ have proposed the new regulations on ESA functionality come into effect over two phases.

### PHASE 1: Implementation: Q4 2027

The first phase will introduce minimum requirements for smart operation.

Devices must be able to utilise two-way communications to modulate their output according to signals (price or otherwise). This must be done while providing a user interface and following cybersecurity best practices. There are no specific requirements for timings, control strategies, or modes of operation.

### PHASE 2 Implementation: Q3 2029

The second phase will specify communications standards through which the principles set out in Phase 1 should be achieved. This aims to ensure interoperability between devices and aggregators and suppliers. The original consultation had intended for this standard to be based upon PAS 1878 and OpenADR, but this has not been confirmed.

# What obligations does SSES place on manufacturers?

### Phase 1 Requirements

As part of SSES, manufacturers of certain appliances are required to ensure that their devices are compliant with a 'Smart Mandate'. The Smart Mandate lays out a series of requirements to ensure that any device installed in a UK home is capable of responding to external signals in order to participate in DSR. The section below outlines how each of these requirements are to be implemented.

Communications: All devices should be capable of two-way communications with a third party, such as a supplier or aggregator, collectively known as a Demand Side Response Service Provider (DSRSP). Devices will be required to, as a minimum, report on the current status of the device, including any currently active DSR actions. They must also be able to receive instructions from a DSRSP, including both direct control and pricing signals. There are no specified protocols for

Phase 1, but the devices must retain their smart functionality regardless of the DSRSP with which the customer is signed up.

Time-of-use tariffs: Devices must also be capable of operating according to the consumer's electricity tariff. As time-of-use tariffs become more common, where electricity prices vary throughout the day, devices are required to utilise the variable pricing to lower costs for consumers. As this variable pricing usually aligns with periods of renewable generation, this also supports grid stability through consuming electricity at times of high generation, and avoiding consuming electricity at times of high demand.

**Modulation:** In order to support the previous two use cases, devices must be able to modulate their operation according to consumer tariffs or signals from DSRSPs. This means either modulating the level of consumption for a given time period, or shifting the time at which consumption occurs. This could be either in response to price signals, such as a tariff or a profile from a DSRSP, or direct control signals such as a request to reduce consumption for a specific period. There are no prescribed control methodologies for Phase 1.

Metering: In order to accurately report on electricity consumption, devices are required to include an electricity meter. This meter must be capable of informing both consumers and DSRSPs of electricity consumed for the purpose of DSR; for example, to allow a DSRSP to compare consumed electricity to a baseline during a requested turndown period. SSES includes a 2% accuracy requirement, in line with the requirements for a meter used 'for trade' under the Measuring Instrument Regulations 2016 (MIR).

**Users:** Devices are required to include a user interface through which users can input their DSR preferences. This might include signing up for a different DSR service, or inputting temperature thresholds within which DSR can operate. This can be a local or remote interface. There is also a requirement for DSR functionality to be enabled 'by default'. This means at point of commissioning, devices must be capable of operating according to time-of-use tariffs and, where possible, default schedules must be set up to avoid peak times; for example the heat pump could default to heating at 14:00 to 16:00 rather than 16:00 to 18:00.







### SSES WHITE PAPER .....

Security: The SSES programme follows underlying principles of security and grid stability. Cybersecurity requirements aim to prevent unlawful actors influencing DSR operations in order to disrupt the UK electricity supply. With this goal, SSES mandates use of ETSI EN 303 645 for all ESA and DSRSP communications. In addition to cybersecurity requirements, SSES mandates a 'randomised delay' of up to 10 minutes to certain operations, such as turning on after a shutdown event. This aims to reduce the risk of 'herding' where multiple devices turn on or off simultaneously and risk overloading the grid.

### **Phase 2 Requirements**

While Phase 1 does not require any open standard for communication, Phase 2 will specify designated standards through which to achieve compliance. There are a number of different options still in consultation, such as whether to have different standards for different ESA types and what specific standards to utilise. Whatever decisions are made in the following consultation rounds, Phase 2 will require devices to utilise a standardised, open communications protocol for sending and receiving messages from DSRSPs.

The current leading choice is to mandate a future revision of PAS 1878, a standard for interoperable communication between DSRSPs and ESAs, which utilises the international protocol OpenADR. Other options being considered include EEBus, SG Ready and Matter. DESNZ are also producing a plain language schema which outlines a set of core messages required for DSR operations, intended to feed into SSES regulation.

# How heat pump manufacturers can comply with SSES

The proposals made as part of SSES go significantly beyond the functionality of most heat pumps currently in the market.

While some heat pumps offer internet connected functionality with a level of remote operation, this is very rarely provided as standard. One of the foundational principles of SSES is that DSR is available to customers without any additional cost or action on their part.

To comply with SSES, heat pump manufacturers must integrate with UK flexibility providers in order to receive and process flexibility requirements. Due to the varied nature of UK flexibility markets, effective DSR requires sophisticated

forward-looking control strategies to meet the requirements of DSRSPs without compromising on customers' comfort. This is a step beyond the weather compensation driven control strategy currently utilised by manufacturers.

Other requirements on manufacturers include expanding customer interfaces to include DSR preferences, utilising default settings that avoid peak time operation and following precise cybersecurity principles. SSES also covers the particular case of hybrid heat pumps.

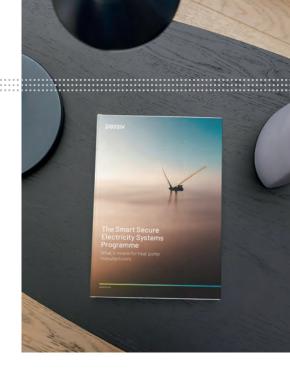
Add-on support: Heat pump manufacturers are responsible for providing a certificate of compliance stating that the devices they have provided to a distributor are compliant with SSES regulations. Distributors are then responsible for ensuring that devices are supplied to installers, developers or other parties with the necessary components for smart functionality.

SSES provides a framework through which manufacturers can achieve compliance in collaboration with third parties. Specifically, SSES states that devices may be sold with "add-on ESA functionality", wherein a bundle of products may achieve compliance when sold together, even if the individual products within that bundle do not. Devices cannot be sold without the smart add-on and retrofitted with smart functionality after installation, but must be sold with all necessary components included. While the government is proposing responsibilities on distributors to ensure these bundles are sold as required, responsibility for compliance certification remains with the manufacturer.

### Smart heat pump controls

For heat pumps, the government proposes that SSES compliance may be achieved via a "smart thermostat connected to an appliance via a communication method, or a smart controls 'box' physically attached to the appliance". This flexible approach opens the door for heat pump manufacturers to work alongside smart controls providers to ensure SSES compliance while minimising cost and ensuring best customer experience.

Smart controls provide a route to compliance without the need for additional development or bespoke regional implementations. Flexibility



markets are often complex and come with specific requirements. Specialist controls can support better responses and DSR participation. In instances where householders are part of a monetised DSR programme, this also enables heat pump customers to maximise any potential revenue from DSR. The add-on allowance within SSES enables heat pump manufacturers to focus on developing the best possible hardware through mutually beneficial collaborations.

### **Passiv Smart Thermostat**

The Passiv Smart Thermostat is the only smart thermostat designed specifically for heat pumps that complies with SSES.

Designed with simplicity in mind, it helps householders on the transition to low-carbon heating while offering a host of cost saving benefits. Users can control their heating using the in-home Programmer and Thermostat or with the Passiv app. With the this ecoHeat function, householders' comfort requirements are always met, while improving heat pump efficiency by 17%, as verified by the Energy Saving Trust. Additional cost saving benefits include optimisation to tariffs and solar generation. Users can also participate in DSR through Passiv's flexibility service, Greener Grid Payments.



To read more about the features of the Passiv Smart Thermostat and white paper in full visit: www.passivuk.com/insight/sses-programme-heat-pump-manufacturers



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# Reimagining heat pump and renewable energy training for the next generation



Griff Thomas, Managing Director at GTEC Training and Heatly - part of United Infrastructure

The UK's push toward net zero is accelerating, with heat pumps emerging as a clear sign of progress. As government targets and incentives align with consumer demand for low-carbon heating solutions, heat pumps are rapidly moving from niche technology to mainstream necessity.

But there's a problem. As it stands, we don't have enough skilled people to design, install and maintain these systems at the scale required. Estimates vary, but most experts agree that tens of thousands of new heat pump installers will be needed in the next few years. So, how do we train them?

If the future of heating our homes is electric, then the future of training must reflect that. We can't rely on ageing frameworks designed for traditional fossilfuel systems. We need training that is practical, engaging, and digitally supported to inspire a new generation of apprentices, career changers, and early entrants into the sector.

### Why training needs to change

Heat pumps are not boilers. That sounds obvious, but it highlights why training methods need to evolve. Unlike gas systems that feature relatively similar

**Griff Thomas**, Managing Director at GTEC Training and Heatly - part of United Infrastructure, shares how we need to train the next generation of skilled professionals to design, install, and maintain heating solutions at the scale required.

technology and need to be installed to standard designs, heat pump installation calls for a more nuanced skillset.

Correctly sizing a heat pump system, designing the pipework, integrating with existing heating systems, and optimising for efficiency all demand a deep understanding of building physics and system design. Installation is not just about connecting components, but delivering a solution tailored to each property.

Traditional training models frequently focus on the "install and go" mentality. For heat pumps, this isn't going to cut it. Poorly designed or installed systems are destined to underperform, and risk-taking consumer confidence in the technology down with them. That's why training must place as much emphasis on design, commissioning and customer interaction as it does on installation.

### The skills challenge

The UK's current installer base is dominated by gas engineers, many of whom have the practical skills and customer experience that make them excellent candidates for retraining. But gas engineers alone aren't enough to fill the gap. We need to place emphasis on attracting young people and career starters who see renewables (and particularly heat pumps) as a future-proof career.

The challenge is twofold:

- **1. Scale**: We need to train thousands more installers, as quickly as possible.
- 2. Quality: Every installer needs to meet high standards, ensuring the performance of heat pumps lives up to expectations and delivers on their environmental promise.

Meeting these challenges requires us to give deep consideration to both the content of training and how it is delivered.

### Making training practical and real-world

Heat pump training must be rooted in practical, hands-on experience. Learners need to work with real equipment, face real-world challenges, and build confidence in their ability to solve problems.

At GTEC Training, we've found that creating training environments that simulate on-site conditions gives learners the skills and resilience they need for success in the field. This includes training focused on system design exercises and troubleshooting live heat pumps, which helps to bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring classroom learning translates effectively into the workplace.

Apprenticeships and early-career pathways are crucial here because they provide the time and structure for learners to develop both competence and knowledge. However, these routes must be carefully designed to avoid overloading learners with too much theory early on. A blended model where learning is reinforced through progressive, practical tasks helps to keep learners engaged and accelerates the development of job-ready skills.

### Engaging the next generation

The trades are not always the first career choice for many young people. While perception is partly to blame, it's also because training isn't always learner-friendly. This generation has grown up with interactive apps, on-demand content, and gamified experiences. If training is static,

text-heavy, or detached from the real world, we risk losing their interest before they even start.

To engage the next generation of heat pump installers, we must consider how training is delivered. Digital simulations, interactive learning platforms, and even gamification can make training more engaging and accessible. Imagine learners practising system design in a virtual environment, experimenting with different layouts, and instantly seeing the impact on performance, or using an app to reinforce theory-based content with short, interactive modules that can be completed on the go.

These tools don't replace hands-on experience, but they can complement it. They help learners prepare before entering the workshop and provide ongoing support after formal training concludes.

### Harnessing digital tools

Digital support is one of the most exciting opportunities in training today. For heat pumps, where design, installation, and maintenance can be complex, digital tools can help learners develop competence and confidence.

One option is Augmented Reality (AR), which overlays digital schematics onto physical equipment to guide learners through installations or fault-finding. One example of this is Heatly's digital tool, designed to support the survey, design, installation and commissioning of heat

pump systems - utilising 2D/3D modelling and AR to create a fully interactive and intuitive system design for ease of installation.

Mobile learning apps could be utilised to support with bite-sized learning, video demonstrations and easy-access troubleshooting guides. Digital twins with virtual replicas of heat pump systems could be an excellent option for allowing learners to experiment with design, commissioning, and optimisation in a risk-free environment. And lastly, online communities with peer-to-peer support networks where apprentices, junior and senior installers can share their experiences, ask questions and access expertise.

Digital tools can also benefit employers. Think digital training records, progression dashboards, and performance tracking to provide visibility over learner development, helping employers offer targeted support and ensure high standards are met.

### Building confidence in heat pumps

For heat pumps to succeed, we need to foster a culture of excellence through training that instils professionalism, customer focus, and pride in workmanship.

Unlike gas boilers, heat pumps often involve significant conversations with customers about how they use their home. Installers must be able to clearly explain how the system operates, set realistic

expectations, and build trust. These "soft skills" are often overlooked in technical training but are vital to ensure the market's long-term success.

If early installations are poorly executed or badly explained, consumer confidence could be at risk. But if new entrants are trained to be both technically competent and customer-focused, they can become ambassadors for the technology, driving uptake and helping to lift the industry's reputation.

### Apprenticeships: A cornerstone for growth

Apprenticeships offer one of the most powerful routes to building the workforce we need. But they must be designed around the realities of heat pump work. That means blending classroom learning with practical site experience to build confidence in real-world settings, embedding digital tools to support ongoing education, and ensuring employers are equipped to mentor apprentices and those early in their careers, with the correct resources and support.

A well-structured apprenticeship builds a professional who is committed to quality, understands the value of the technology, and sees a clear career path ahead.

### A shared responsibility

Reimagining training is not the responsibility of training providers alone. It requires collaboration across the sector from manufacturers, employers, policymakers, and awarding bodies.

Manufacturers should provide easy access to the latest technologies and ensure training aligns with real-world product developments. Employers must invest time and resources into supporting apprentices, early-career entrants and those installers who are keen to upskill. Policymakers must ensure funding and frameworks are fit for purpose, incentivising quality as well as quantity.

If we work together, we can build a training ecosystem that is robust, flexible, and capable of meeting the challenges ahead.

Info

https://gtec.co.uk www.heatly.com











# Future-proof your skills with heat pump training

**Alex Robinson**, Head of Training at NICEIC, discusses why now is the perfect time for electrotechnical professionals to get trained and qualified in heat pump installation and maintenance.

In the 2021 Net Zero Strategy, the government set out a series of policies and commitments designed to help the UK reach net zero by 2050. This will require a major transition to electrification and low-carbon technologies over the next 25 years.

For those considering upskilling in the design, installation and maintenance of heat pumps, there are several reasons why this might be the perfect time to do so. The sustained growth in heat pump installations looks set to continue as they become an increasingly attractive option for householders. Whether you are an experienced professional or an apprentice, becoming competent in heat pumps can open up a range of career or business growth opportunities.

### The government backs heat pumps

In 2021, the government made a series of commitments as part of its Net Zero Strategy, which included targets to reduce carbon emissions by electrifying heating systems in domestic properties, with heat pumps being a central part of the plan.

As part of these commitments, the government plans to not only grow the heat pump market to 600,000 installations per year by 2028 but also make heat pumps as cheap to buy and run as their gaspowered predecessors. To achieve this, the government is considering cost reductions of 25-50% by 2025¹, with the aim of delivering a heat pump offering that is comparable in price to gas-powered boilers by 2030.

Further supporting these commitments is the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, which offers grants of up to £7,500 for homeowners switching to low-carbon heating systems. Launched in 2022, the scheme has now been extended and is expected to run until at least 2027.

### Demand among consumers is high

Consumer uptake of heat pumps has been steadily on the rise for a number of years. Statistics from the Heat Pump Association show the government's approach is working, as air-to-water heat pump sales rose by 63% in 2024, with more than 98,000 units sold<sup>2</sup>.



Applications to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme also surged in 2024, with 78%³ more vouchers issued in December 2024 than in the same period the previous year. For tradespeople with the right skills, this means more enquiries and more installations.

### Future-proofing your business

By 2025, the UK's renewable energy and clean technology sectors are set to see a surge in value to £41bn, up from just over £24bn in 2022/23.

This is a clear demonstration of how the low-carbon and renewable heating industry is accelerating at pace, and why professionals should be growing alongside it by upskilling to meet consumer demands. In fact, professionals across the heating and hot water industry are already taking notice. A 2023 study from Vaillant, one of Europe's leading heating and hot water appliances manufacturers, found that over half (56%) of installers who don't currently install heat pumps said they were interested in upskilling in the field, with a further 31% said that they may be interested. The main motivator for this was to futureproof their business, followed closely by the financial benefits of a broader heating solution offering, as well as the environmental benefits.

Figures from the Heat Pump Association (HPA) show that a rising number of installers are following through on their upskilling intentions. The number of individuals who completed a recognised heat pump training qualification, such as those offered by NICEIC, increased by an unprecedented 15% in 2024<sup>5</sup>.

More installers are choosing to upskill in renewables, to set themselves apart from the competition and help ensure their business is moving with a shifting landscape.

### Play a role in tackling climate change

Recent years have ranked among the hottest on record in the UK. Extreme weather events such as storms and droughts have been increasing in severity over the past decade, and domestic heating remains a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to lead to around 250,000 additional deaths globally each year<sup>7</sup>, meaning more must be done in the mission to help decarbonise and electrify domestic heating.

Electricians skilled in renewable heating are able to make a meaningful difference by installing, commissioning, servicing and repairing heat pump systems properly. The work matters not only commercially but socially and environmentally.

### Why NICEIC

NICEIC's heat pump training is built to meet industry standards, combining classroom theory with practical learning.

NICEIC is a Heat Training Grant training provider, giving those looking to upskill in heat-pumps up to £500 off NICEIC's heat pump training course. The three-day course covers installation and maintenance, including theory and hands-on work such as installation, testing, commissioning, servicing and fault diagnosis.

Start your upskilling journey with NICEIC, by visiting: **www.niceic.com/training**.

#### Source

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### A D V E R T O R I A L

# STIEBEL ELTRON launches innovative internal air source unit with integral MHVR

STIEBEL ELTRON have launched the LWZ 07.1 Premium HKL 230 as part of their hpnext generation of heat pumps which also includes new monobloc air source and ground source units.

Billed as a "plant room in a box" the new unit offers heating, cooling, ventilation and air purification out of the box, whilst taking up minimal floorspace.

Hot water provision just requires the addition of your choice of hot water cylinder



to match your project, allowing for maximum comfort and space and energy efficiency.

Cooling is available as standard through the emitter system (underfloor and fan coils) but can also be achieved via the MVHR with the addition of an accessory fitted neatly to the top of casing, so that no additional footprint is required in your plant room (see installed image).

Behind the elegant casing of the LWZ lies the latest technology for top-class efficiency. Heat in the extract air (that is usually wasted in standard MVHR systems) is used to increase efficiency of the Heat Pump, defrosting processes are minimized and energy requirements are reduced to an absolute minimum. A preheat of the fresh air using a byproduct of energy from the Heat Pump system further elevates the efficiency of the ventilation system.

As well as integration of Solar PV/ Thermal systems the LWZ is compatible



with energy management systems for photovoltaic integration to increase efficiencies even further.

Installers will be glad of the flexible installation options (right or left-handed) and the quick installation of the outside and exhaust air ducts using hose sets with adapter plates.

The LWZ 07.1 offers a heat output at A-7/W35 (EN 14511) of 6.42 kW and cooling capacity at A35/W7 of 2.69 kW. It can achieve heat recovery up to 92% and supply an air/exhaust air volume flow of 80-300 m³/h. At a sound power level (EN 12102) of 50 dB(A) it delivers whisper-quiet operation and the advantage of no outdoor equipment being needed.

www.stiebel-eltron.co.uk/hpnextlaunch







# Breaking into the heat pump market



**Iain Bevan**, New Business Director – Residential at Daikin, urges heating and plumbing professionals to take advantage of the increasing business opportunity offered by heat pump installation and the different training paths that exist for breaking into the industry.



The UK heating industry stands at an unprecedented crossroads. Within the next three years, the sector must expand its qualified heat pump installer workforce by 900% to meet government targets of 600,000 annual installations by 2028. For heating and plumbing professionals, this represents both a significant challenge and perhaps the greatest commercial opportunity of their careers.

The transformation isn't driven by policy alone. Rising energy costs, environmental awareness among homeowners, and the practical reality of Net Zero commitments have created genuine market demand for low-carbon heating solutions. Not to mention that roughly 14% of UK greenhouse gas emissions comes from domestic heating, making residential properties a critical battleground in the fight against climate change.

### Understanding the market dynamics

The heat pump installation target represents a twenty-fold increase from pre-2020 levels – a scale of expansion that would challenge any industry. However, several factors suggest this is both realistic and sustainable.

Energy security concerns continue to make homeowners increasingly receptive

to heating systems that promise greater independence from fossil fuel markets. Simultaneously, improving heat pump technology and falling equipment costs are making these systems accessible to a broader range of properties and budgets.

The government has backed these market forces with substantial financial support. Training programmes now benefit from significant funding streams, removing traditional barriers that prevented heating professionals from acquiring new qualifications. This combination of market pull and policy push creates conditions unlike anything the industry has experienced in decades.

### Leveraging existing skills

For established heating and plumbing professionals, heat pump installation doesn't require starting from scratch. The core competencies that define successful heating engineers – understanding system design principles, managing complex installations, and maintaining customer relationships – translate directly to heat pump work.

Experience with water circulation systems, pressure management, and system balancing provides the foundation for understanding heat pump hydraulics. Knowledge of control systems and electrical connections proves invaluable when integrating heat pumps with existing heating infrastructure. Perhaps most importantly, the ability to diagnose heating problems and explain technical concepts to customers remains central to heat pump service delivery.

The transition represents skill enhancement rather than career reinvention, adding expertise to an existing professional foundation.

### **Navigating training options**

The heat pump training landscape has evolved dramatically over the past two years. Multiple pathways now exist, each designed to accommodate different learning preferences and business circumstances.

Intensive bootcamp-style programmes offer rapid skill acquisition for professionals seeking quick market entry. The Heat Pump Bootcamp offered by Daikin for example, is completely free (fully government funded) and offers five days of expert-led training. These typically combine essential qualifications – including Water Regulations Assessment and Level 3 Heat Pump Installation Awards – with hands-on experience using operational equipment. The emphasis on practical application over theoretical study suits experienced heating professionals who prefer learning by doing.

Modular approaches allow gradual skill development while maintaining existing business operations. These programmes recognise that established professionals cannot simply abandon their customer base for weeks of training. Instead, they structure learning into manageable blocks that can be completed alongside ongoing work commitments.

Effective training programmes now extend beyond basic product familiarisation. Look for courses that provide comprehensive business development support, recognising that technical knowledge alone doesn't guarantee commercial success.

Lead generation systems help connect newly qualified installers with potential customers, addressing one of the biggest challenges facing professionals entering new market segments. Marketing support, including co-branded materials and digital presence enhancement, helps establish credibility in an unfamiliar field.



Financial incentive programmes provide tangible rewards for early adopters while supporting business cash flow during the transition period. These might include installation bonuses, performance-based rewards, or preferential pricing on equipment and certification.

The progression pathway should be clear and achievable. Initial certification typically enables immediate installation work under manufacturer guidance. After completing supervised installations, access to installer directories and lead management platforms follows naturally. Advanced certifications unlock enhanced support levels and premium pricing opportunities.

Hybrid system training deserves particular consideration for gas-qualified engineers. These systems combine high-efficiency air-to-water heat pumps with traditional gas boilers, intelligently selecting the most efficient heat source based on external conditions and system demand. For properties with existing gas infrastructure, hybrid systems offer improved efficiency and reduced emissions without requiring complete heating system replacement.

This technology provides a natural bridge for gas engineers entering the heat pump market. The systems integrate with familiar boiler technology while introducing renewable heating concepts in a manageable context. Installation often requires minimal disruption to existing pipework and radiator systems, making the proposition attractive to both installers and homeowners.

### Technical support infrastructure

Perhaps the most critical aspect of any training programme is ongoing technical support. Priority access to specialist helpdesks ensures that complex installation challenges don't compromise customer satisfaction or professional reputation.

Expert commissioning assistance proves particularly valuable during early installations. Manufacturer support during system startup and optimisation builds confidence while ensuring proper system operation. Free commissioning support for initial projects removes financial risk while providing valuable learning opportunities.

Manufacturers like Daikin have developed sophisticated training ecosystems extending far beyond basic product orientation. The Sustainable Home Network¹ offers structured learning pathways allowing gradual skill development while maintaining existing business operations.

Effective programmes combine theoretical learning with practical experience using operational heat pump equipment. This approach proves essential when mastering the complexities of different technologies across varying property types and electrical configurations. Seek programmes offering discounted professional certifications, including MCS accreditation, eliminating financial obstacles to recognised renewable energy qualifications.

For those smaller businesses that have been held back by the cost of MCS certification, HPIN Direct<sup>2</sup>, launched by EDF Heat Pumps in partnership with Daikin UK, makes heat pump installation accessible and hassle-free<sup>3</sup>.

Meanwhile, comprehensive warranty coverage demonstrates manufacturer commitment to both product quality and installer support, important factors when building customer relationships in a new market segment.

### **Business considerations**

The financial reality of heat pump installation work favours early market entrants. Current skills shortages enable qualified installers to command premium pricing while the market remains undersupplied. As more professionals enter the sector, competitive pressures will inevitably increase, making early positioning advantageous.

Modern training programmes accommodate existing business operations rather than requiring immediate wholesale changes. You can diversify your service offering strategically while maintaining established revenue streams. This approach reduces business risk while building expertise in a growing market segment.

The integration potential with existing services shouldn't be overlooked. Heat pump installations often require associated electrical work, system upgrades, and ongoing maintenance – all areas where experienced heating professionals possess relevant skills.

### **Looking Forward**

The UK's heating transformation represents more than technological change – it's a fundamental shift in how we think about residential energy systems. Professionals who position themselves effectively now will benefit from sustained business growth as market demand continues expanding.

The window of opportunity for establishing market position remains wide open. Training infrastructure is now mature, government support remains strong, and customer awareness continues growing.

For heating and plumbing professionals considering their next career move, the question isn't whether the heat pump market will develop – it's how quickly you can position yourself to benefit from this unprecedented opportunity.

The transformation is happening with or without you. The choice is whether to lead it or follow from behind.

### www.daikin.co.uk

### Source

- l. www.daikin.co.uk/shn
- 2. www.daikin.co.uk/en\_gb/installer/the-heatpump-revolution.html
- 3. The scheme allows qualified installers to fit Daikin heat pumps without holding their own MCS certification, while still giving customers access to Boiler Upgrade Scheme funding of up to £7,500. EDF takes care of the system design, commissioning and certification, removing the administrative burden. With straightforward bundle pricing and no subscription fees, HPIN Direct offers a low-risk way for businesses to enter the growing heat pump market and build experience.









# What does the Future Homes Standard mean for electrical installers?

**Lee Sutton**, co-founder and chief innovation officer at myenergi, looks into impending government policy surrounding the energy performance of new build properties and explains why installers should see the change as a serious commercial opportunity.

The way new homes are built and powered is about to fundamentally change, thanks to the Future Homes Standard (FHS) – a government policy that will apply to all new homes built in England from Autumn 2025. Its main aim is to significantly reduce carbon emissions from housing by ensuring that all developments are energy-efficient, low-carbon and future-ready.

Bringing together EV charging, solar generation, battery storage, heat pumps and smart controls into a seamless, efficient, and future-ready system, the FHS has the potential to unlock significant opportunities for electrical installers. With preparation, it will open the door to new business models, deepen customer relationships and enable installers to take a frontline role in the LIV's green transition

### FHS 101: What installers need to know

The FHS will soon be written into UK law, after which point there will be a transition period until December 2026, with compliance required for all new build homes from 2027 onwards. This approach aims to give housebuilders a grace period, while also providing sufficient time to make necessary preparations.

From this point, every new home in England must meet a stringent new benchmark for carbon emissions and energy performance. This includes a ban on gas boilers, with air- and ground-source heat pumps now becoming standard, as well as mandatory solar panel installations for approximately 90% of new homes.



This supplements existing legislation from 2022 which says that all single dwellings with a driveway must have a fully-functioning, smart-enabled EV charger installed that's capable of responding to time-of-use tariffs and managing grid load.



zappi GLO, the latest solar-compatible EV charger from myenergi, is the perfect solution for meeting these new requirements. The eco-smart device offers out-of-the-box energy tariff integration and automated solar compatibility as standard. This means users can harness energy from their own microgeneration or take advantage of smart energy tariffs. In addition, smart devices like zappi GLO offer interconnectivity with other home energy technologies, such as heat pumps and water cylinders. Together, these devices can form part of a complete home energy ecosystem which offers users more control over how and when they consume energy - a real step towards true energy independence.

### Why does the FHS matter?

With the removal of gas as a primary heating fuel, new homes will rely almost entirely on electricity for their heating and hot water. When you add in the new requirements for EV charging, there will be more demand, more complexity and more opportunity for the skilled electrical installer.

The future of smart technology surrounds integration, with the ambition of heat pumps, solar PV, battery storage and EV charging all working together as an interconnected energy ecosystem. As such, housebuilders will rely on installers that can understand and deliver systems that balance the electrical load from heat pumps and EVs; optimise solar generation and self-consumption; integrate smart controls, sensors, and tariff-based automation; and that can future-proof homes for bi-directional energy flows, such as vehicle-to-grid (V2G).

Success for the savvy installer may sound complex, but the opportunity is clear. To take full advantage, the perfect match of technical readiness, product knowledge and collaborative planning with developers, builders, and energy assessors is key.

### Four ways to prep for the Future Homes Standard Step 1: Think big

Future-ready homes won't just have an EV charger or solar inverter, but a fully integrated energy system. For installers, that means going beyond single-point installations and thinking holistically. Whether it's combining heat pumps with solar PV, linking EV chargers with battery storage or configuring smart controls that respond to off-peak tariffs, these systems must now work together.



Understanding how different technologies interact both physically and digitally is critical. At myenergi, for example, we've developed an ecosystem where products like our zappi EV chargers, eddi power diverter and libbi home battery integrate seamlessly through our app, enabling efficient, automated energy flows that simplify smart home management for the end user.

### Step 2: Know the regulations inside out

Being FHS-ready isn't just about knowing the technologies available, it's about understanding the rules that shape the build. Key sections of Building Regulations underpinning the FHS include Part L (energy performance), Part S (EV charging provision), Part O (overheating mitigation), and Part F (ventilation).

These regulations are interlinked and a misstep in one area can cause problems in another. For example, the placement of equipment affects not only performance but also a building's ability to meet overheating standards. Installers who understand how these elements work together can offer valuable input at the design stage and avoid costly last-minute changes on-site.

### Step 3: Train, upskill and partner

The technologies that underpin the FHS are evolving fast and installers who are well-prepared will be able to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded. That's why ongoing training and manufacturer engagement are more important than ever.

Whether it's learning the latest in heat pump installation, understanding battery storage management or getting to grips with smart energy automation, upskilling is a direct investment into the business.

At myenergi, we offer training courses and hands-on technical support to give installers complete confidence, while also supporting with marketing and lead generation Partnering with trusted suppliers who understand the market and the challenges facing their customers, far beyond simply making sales, can help installers gain that real competitive edge.

### Step 4: Look to the long term

Modern eco-smart systems can generate valuable performance data to help homeowners track their usage and optimise energy habits. By adopting smartenabled, data-compatible technologies now, energy consumers can better prepare their homes for an increasingly connected and interoperable future.

For installers, this also presents an opportunity to offer long-term value through monitoring, aftercare and system optimisation services. By helping clients understand how to maximise self-consumption, time-of-use savings or EV charging efficiencies, installers can build trust and open the door to recurring revenue – whether through callouts, upgrades, or service contracts. In a world of connected homes, customer relationships no longer end at job completion.

### Looking ahead to 2027

The FHS is a bold step forward towards decarbonising UK housing. While certainly presenting challenges to housing developers, it presents a huge opportunity for installers. As every new home becomes a virtual power station – generating, storing, and consuming its own clean energy – electrical expertise will quickly become more important than ever. 2027 will roll around in the blink of an eye, so getting ahead of the curve now is key to reaping the biggest and best rewards.

www.myenergi.com







# WONEN INTHE HEAT PUMP INDUSTRY

**Laetitia Mace**, Residential ASHP Portfolio Manager, Baxi, shares her journey from discovering heat pumps in 2012 to championing them as a clean alternative to fossil fuels, while stressing the need to inspire young people to join the industry.



Back in 2012, I was actually renovating my home when I first came across heat pumps. Who would have thought that this would spark a whole new career!

Back then, I was focused on refurbishing the existing heating system in the house we had just bought. The house is off the gas grid, so that pushed me to explore a whole series of options to arrive at the best solution to meet our needs. And that's when I discovered heat pumps.

The technology itself might not be new, but at the time it wasn't commonplace in the UK. I remember struggling to find an installer who felt confident about installing a heat pump. They all kept recommending fossil fuel products – anything, it seemed, rather than a heat pump.

I remember their concern that the technology wouldn't work – and yet here we are, more than a decade later, and heat pumps are widely seen as a strong alternative to boilers. Ten years ago, people raised their eyebrows when they heard I'd decided to

install a heat pump. Now, I'm bombarded with questions at my local pub about what it's like to live with one! It's not just my neighbours either: an increasing number of people across the country today consider them a real and viable alternative to fossil fuel.

My background is in Sales and Marketing, but I got into the heat pump industry because I am a passionate advocate of the technology and truly believe in its efficiency. I want to make a difference to the heating market, see more homeowners make the switch, and make sure that the heat pumps we at Baxi provide are a serious and simple alternative to boilers.

It's the best job I could possibly have because work simply doesn't feel like work.

### What does your role involve?

As Baxi's Residential ASHP Portfolio expert, my role involves planning, developing, launching and managing the residential air source heat pump (ASHP) solutions that Baxi launch onto the market.

A key part of my role is to ensure that the product development process follows our rigorous quality testing procedures and is compliant with all the latest regulations. As such, my job requires a good knowledge of the market as well as the related legislation. It's also essential to understand who the customers are – from installers and merchants to property developers – while identifying precisely their needs and those of the homeowner or tenant end user.

In short, this means investigating and analysing the best products we can create that will follow the market trend and comply with legislation while developing a product that will fulfil all customer and end-user requirements. To help me in my

role, I'm fortunate to have the support of a fantastic expert team of Baxi engineers.

As the overriding aim is to offer the best product for the market, we naturally involve our customers extensively in the product design process, seeking and evaluating their feedback on the various propositions we put forward.

Reliability and quality of our products is always at the forefront of what we do, while making it affordable for our customers. This means my focus is always on offering our customers the best value ASHP for their money. My role is also to follow the product through its life cycle. This means understanding how it performs and evolving it where possible to a next generation model if we see room for improvement. It is a role that requires working closely with most functions of the business and even closer with our end users and customers. Launching the product and receiving the feedback from our customers is hugely rewarding.

# What do you see as the challenges facing the industry?

The way we heat our homes and buildings has to change if we are in the UK are to achieve our legally-binding net zero target by 2050. This energy transition, the move away from fossil fuel technologies to renewables is the biggest challenge the industry faces.

Unfortunately, not everyone embraces changes readily. For this reason, education is vitally important.

We need to upskill gas engineers so that they are able to design and install heat pump solutions. We have created a series of training courses to help installers do just that, available across the country in our training centres. Installers can enrol on our



Laetitia working at an exhibition

initial one-day product awareness course before progressing to our in-depth Installer Heat Pump course that covers design and application, installation, commissioning and fault finding.

We also need to educate homeowners on how heat pumps operate most efficiently.

As we know, heat pumps work differently to boilers. With boilers we are used to turning them on and off depending on the time of day and occupancy, and to having piping hot radiators. Heat pumps, in contrast, work better when run for longer periods, using a setback temperature control for when the house is unoccupied or at night. We need householders to understand that running the heating system at lower flow temperatures will still deliver an agreeably consistent temperature – even though the radiators aren't scolding hot.

Space is another potential challenge: an air source heat pump solution typically requires more space than a traditional boiler as it needs a hot water cylinder inside the property, and sufficient space outside for the unit to extract the heat from the ambient air.

In the UK, space can be at a premium which can make finding a suitable location for the ASHP less straightforward. To help overcome this, Baxi is working hard to design products that are more compact as well as faster and easier to install, while still delivering the same high performance. Baxi's new prewired, pre-plumbed cylinder is one such example.

# Did you have any mentors or anyone in particular who inspired you?

Simon Sinek is someone that I like to listen to. Remembering the power of the 'why' is key to all we do.

I also have a mentor outside this industry: Fabio Ferrari. He taught me the value of empowerment and how, by offering support, you can transform an industry and inspire people to give their best. In an industry that is undergoing a radical transformation, this is hugely relevant.

# What would you say to other women who are considering coming into the heat pump industry?

Come and join us! We need more women to join this industry, bringing their diverse skills and perspectives and helping fill the skills shortage across multiple disciplines from engineering to product management. As a member of the Construction Inclusion Coalition (CIC), created to improve



Laetitia looking after the bees

equity, diversity and inclusion across the sector, Baxi is a committed advocate of encouraging more women into the industry. Our partnership with not-forprofit organisation Primary Engineer is just one example of how we are introducing young girls as well as boys to STEM in the classroom. In this way we hope to inspire an interest in the heating and heat pump industry from an early age.

# What do you like to do outside of work?

I love to spend my free time looking after my children, tending my kitchen garden and cooking the produce, and helping my husband look after our bees. Whether I'm harvesting my own vegetables and the honey from our bees at home or harnessing renewable energy to deliver clean heating systems at work, sustainability is the common thread. For me, it's all about living in balance with nature.







# The installer's guide to freeze-proofing heat pumps

As heat pump adoption gathers pace across the UK, freeze protection has become more than just a seasonal concern - it's now a year-round priority for installers. While the threat of freezing heat pumps may feel distant in warmer months, system reliability must be considered from the outset of every installation. **Neil Stead**, National Specification Manager at Intatec, outlines why addressing freeze protection early is essential to long-term system performance, safety, and customer satisfaction.

Frozen pipework or components can lead to major issues, from cracked pipes and damaged valves to full system failure; often resulting in costly repairs, callouts, and unnecessary downtime. These problems not only affect the homeowner but can also undermine trust in low-carbon heating technologies at a time when confidence in heat pumps is key to wider adoption.

In line with this, recent updates to the MCS Heat Pump Best Practice Guide and changes to UK Building Regulations have confirmed what many in the trade already recognise: freeze protection is no longer an optional extra. It has become a core element of best practice in professional heat pump installation.

Anti-freeze protection isn't just a winter task - it's a crucial part of heat pump design that should be considered all year round. By addressing it at the installation stage, installers can avoid costly callouts and system failures when temperatures drop and demand for emergency repairs spikes. Getting it right early means peace of mind for both the homeowner and the installer when winter hits.

## The challenges with traditional freeze protection methods

Freezing occurs when water in external pipework drops below a critical temperature, usually around 3°C. Traditional solutions have often relied on ambient air temperature sensors to trigger a response, but this method can be unreliable.

It frequently results in premature discharge, wasting water unnecessarily, or worse, delayed activation that leaves systems exposed when it matters most. The future of anti-freeze valve technology lies in precision. Best practice now favours valves that respond directly to system water temperature. This targeted approach ensures discharge only happens when truly needed, preserving system pressure, avoiding nuisance drainage, and reducing wear on components.



This level of precision is especially important as more systems are installed using R290 refrigerant. Praised for its low environmental impact and high efficiency, R290 is also flammable, meaning all system components must meet stricter safety standards.

In these systems, even small fluctuations in pressure or temperature can affect performance and safety. That's why freeze protection valves must operate predictably and only activate when genuinely needed. Valves that respond to system water temperature - rather than ambient air - reduce the risk of false activations, help maintain stable system conditions, and minimise unnecessary intervention. For installers, this ensures safer, more compliant systems and fewer callouts in colder months.



### Installation challenges: Insulation and drainage

Insulation and drainage are two further considerations that are often overlooked. Under Part L of the Building Regulations, external pipework must be fully insulated to meet energy efficiency targets. However, not all anti-freeze valves are designed to function properly when insulated.

This creates a challenge for installers, who must balance regulatory compliance with operational reliability. It's essential to select components that are independently tested and proven to work effectively even when enclosed in insulation. This ensures freeze protection doesn't become compromised in pursuit of meeting another standard.

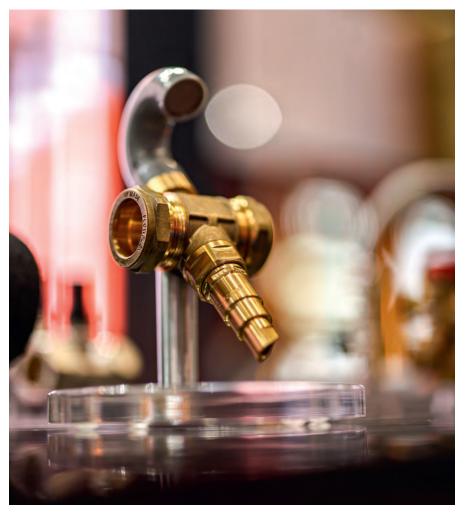
At the same time, water discharged from freeze protection valves must be directed appropriately. Ice forming on driveways, footpaths or public access areas presents a real hazard, so drainage must be part of the design process from the start. Soakaways or dedicated discharge points should be factored into every installation, whether domestic or commercial.

## Planning for exposure and longevity

Outdoor conditions present yet another challenge. Valves positioned externally are exposed to dirt, leaves, and debris - all of which can hinder performance or block mechanisms. Opting for models with self-cleaning functions or built-in debris protection can make a real difference, particularly for systems located in wooded or exposed areas.

Fortunately, the market has responded to these needs. A new generation of anti-freeze valves has emerged, featuring direct water sensing, improved seals, insulation compatibility, and anti-blockage technology. Products such as the Inta Zero Anti-Freeze Valve are leading this evolution, combining practical features with installer-friendly designs that no other anti-freeze valves have - helping reduce callbacks, extend system life, and meet regulatory demands without overcomplicating the job.

The Inta Zero Anti-Freeze Valve offers smart, reliable protection by activating only at 3°C system water temperature. Built for durability, it's fully tested for insulated systems and compatible with high-temperature R290 heat pumps. With



a zero-drip outlet to prevent ice plugs and optional Zero-Guard for added protection, it delivers reliable freeze defence without compromise.

# The small detail that makes a big difference

Ultimately, while freeze protection may seem like a small technical detail, it carries far greater significance than many realise. A single frozen pipe or component failure can compromise an entire system, leading to costly repairs, downtime, and dissatisfied customers. For installers, that risk extends beyond the immediate call-out: it can impact their professional reputation, undermine customer trust, and result in lost future business.

As the heating industry raises its standards and embraces more advanced, sustainable heat pump technologies, attention to details like freeze protection will increasingly distinguish good installations from truly great ones. These are the systems that not only perform as expected on day one but continue to

operate reliably and efficiently through years of changing weather conditions.

By incorporating freeze protection into every project from the design stage onwards, installers demonstrate foresight, technical expertise, and a commitment to long-term customer satisfaction. With careful planning, the right choice of components, and adherence to recognised best practice, systems can be delivered that are not only fully compliant with regulations but also robust, efficient, and genuinely future-ready.

In other words, freeze protection is not simply about avoiding problems in winterit is about ensuring year-round resilience, supporting the credibility of the installer, and building confidence in heat pump technology as the UK moves towards a low-carbon future.

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The **Hydratech Services** division provides specialist engineering and maintenance services to customers installing, commissioning, operating or optimising heat pump systems.

By combining expertise in water treatment chemistry, fluid thermodynamics and mechanical engineering, **Hydratech Services** delivers a fully integrated fluid selection - fluid monitoring - fluid management approach to process and hydronic system optimisation. This in-turn helps to ensure long-term system efficiency and deliver significant energy savings.





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# Baxi unveils 2025 Installer Skills Survey at annual event

On the 2nd of October, **Juliet Loiselle**, Publishing Editor of Heat Pumps Today, attended a Baxi skills event at Baxi Solutions Academy, Warwick. The event unveiled the results of its fourth annual Installer Skills Survey, conducted in partnership with green supply chain consultancy Talan (formerly Gemserv).

The findings from nearly 400 installers who participated in the survey, conducted in July and August discussed installer readiness, training progress, hybrids and paperwork barriers all offer timely, practical insight for those preparing for decarbonisation.

This included shifting installer attitudes towards heat pumps and what they see as the main barriers to heat pump progress.

These are the key findings and comments from the extremely interesting and informative presentations.

More than half (59%) of UK heating engineers are either already or likely to work with other companies to develop heat pump competencies. Despite this interest in being prepared, a lack of consumer demand remains the number one barrier to heat pump uptake – with 60% of installers citing this as the main barrier, highlighting the challenge of converting installer interest into real-world installations. The survey

showed that attitudes of some segments of the heating engineer population are becoming more sceptical of heat pumps and towards net zero more broadly, reflecting the increasingly divisive narratives on the topic from across the political spectrum.

### Confidence growing as training makes its mark

The study found that 59% of installers are either already developing the skills to fit heat pumps or intending to do so within the next few years. As the majority of installer operators are either sole traders or very small businesses with just two or three employees, the trend is to partner with other companies that can provide complimentary services, such as system design, installation support or financing.

The number of installers citing a lack of training as a barrier has fallen by 18 percentage points compared with 2024, suggesting that industry investment in training is beginning to pay off. Baxi alone has seen over 1,000 installers attend its own heat pump training courses over the last 12 months.

When asked what drives them in their work, heating engineers most frequently cited providing a good service to customers (85%), solving technical problems (62%), and getting things right from a technical perspective (50%). According to Baxi, this sense of professionalism partly explains why some installers hesitate to recommend new technologies until they feel fully competent.

"Installers clearly want to do the right thing for their customers," said **Ian Trott**, Head of Training at Baxi UK.

"Many take pride in their technical ability and won't compromise on service until they've built real hands-on experience with the technology. Training for a qualification is one thing – but training for competence is what's really needed to move the needle on installer engagement."









### Hybrids seen as a practical bridge

The survey also found that 35% of installers have or would be somewhat or extremely likely to move to fitting heat pumps as part of a hybrid system, where a heat pump works alongside an existing combi boiler, rather than as a full heat pump only replacement. Unlike a stand-alone heat pump system, hybrids typically do not require a water cylinder making the installation lower cost, quicker, less disruptive and with less complexity for the installer.

"Hybrids can be a powerful transitional step," Trott said.

"They are often more attractive to installers because they're easier to fit, and to customers because they require less cost and disruption. Research shows a well-installed hybrid can cut a home's heating carbon footprint by around 70% a year or more. Supporting hybrid options would give more installers valuable real-world experience and help homeowners see the benefits earlier."

## Paperwork and demand still holding the sector back

While attitudes to heat pumps have shifted positively, consumer demand is developing more slowly. Although many households continue to prefer a straightforward likefor-like boiler replacement, 2024 was still a record year for UK heat pump sales.

Almost half of respondents – 46% – named the paperwork involved in government schemes as a major obstacle to installing heat pumps, saying it slows down projects and can deter customers from making the switch.

To help ease this burden, Baxi will launch its own MCS Umbrella scheme later this year, designed to reduce the administrative workload for smaller businesses and sole traders. The company has also expanded its hands-on training programme and increased online and video-based educational resources produced at its Warwick Solutions Academy.

## Generational divide and industry dynamics

A recurring theme in the annual surveys has been a generational divide in attitudes to retraining. Installers approaching retirement are generally less inclined to invest in developing new skills, while those earlier in their careers are more open to diversifying their expertise.

The survey also noted that a large proportion of UK heat installers work either as sole traders or in very small teams. This structure can make it more difficult for them to take time out for training or to manage the additional paperwork that often accompanies low-carbon installations. Many respondents said they expect to collaborate or partner with other

service providers to meet future demand for clean heat technologies.

"These findings show that despite some hardening of opinions most gas boiler installers aren't dogmatic about technology and just want to do a good job for their customers.

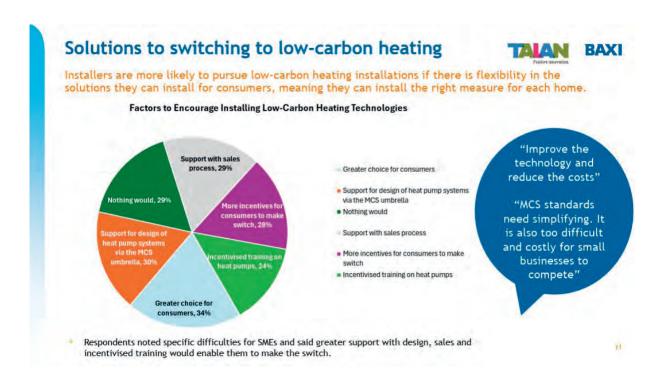
"Many installers are preparing for the future, with plans to prepare for the uptake of heat pumps and develop their skills. As a result, more installers are comfortable talking to their customers about energy efficiency and fewer say that training is a barrier than in last year's study.

"It shows that the work the sector is doing to encourage training is working," said **Will Taylor**, Principal Consultant at Talan."

### The role of installers in decarbonisation

Home heating is responsible for around 18% of the UK's carbon emissions, and approximately 85% of households still rely on natural gas boilers. As the transition to cleaner heating accelerates, installers are expected to play a central role in guiding customers through their choices and in ensuring new technologies are fitted competently and to a high standard.

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### Fernox launches new mobile app and web portal for smarter water testing

Fernox, has announced the launch of its newly refreshed mobile application. This powerful update delivers a smarter, faster, and more intuitive experience for installers and heating engineers, offering a range of upgraded features designed to streamline on-site system, postal testing, and reporting.

Building on Fernox's dedication to innovation and installer support, the enhanced app is engineered to save time and boost efficiency with real-time tools for water testing, treatment recommendations, and easy access to technical documentation.

The new Fernox App Includes:

**Secure multi-user access:** Easily invite team members, managers, or other parties to view and download water test reports.

**Customisation options:** Handy personalisation tools let engineers tailor the app experience to their specific workflow.

**Company & address finder:** A comprehensive global address finder tool, with the capability of company name searching for quick and clean sample entry.

**Professional reporting tools:** Generate and share comprehensive reports directly from the app.

**Instant product recommendations:** Receive personalised treatment guidance based on test results, ensuring the right Fernox products are matched to each system's unique needs.

**Offline submissions:** Users can now submit water samples without the need for Wi-Fi or mobile data access.

"The updated Fernox app was designed with the installer in mind – providing practical tools that make testing quicker and more convenient on-site," said **Mike Skivington**, UK & Ire Sales Director at Fernox. "This upgrade reflects our mission to deliver smarter solutions that support heating engineers in maintaining system health and performance."

The new Fernox App is available for download now from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store, click here: https://fernox.com/download-app

To find out more, watch Fernox's Instant System Test Demo, click here: https://fernox.com/app/instant-system-test/



### Carrier Solutions UK's AquaSnap 30AWH-P achieves Quiet Mark Certification

Carrier Solutions UK has announced that its recently launched AquaSnap 30AWH-P monobloc air-to-water heat pump has achieved Quiet Mark certification for its outstanding low-noise operation. Carrier Solutions UK Ltd (formerly Toshiba Carrier UK Ltd) is a part of Carrier Global Corporation (NYSE: CARR), global leader in intelligent climate and energy solutions.

Quiet Mark is the independent global certification programme associated with the UK Noise Abatement Society charitable foundation, recognising best-in-class acoustic design across multiple industries. Only 10–20% of the quietest products in each category receive the certification.

The AquaSnap 30AWH-P combines innovative design and environmental stewardship, using ultra-low GWP R290 natural refrigerant and quieter operation for residential and light commercial applications. End users benefit from low sound levels, further reduced in night mode, as well as flexible installation options across outputs from 4 to 14 kW. From a distance of 5m, the 30AWH-P features a low sound pressure level starting at just 24dB on the smallest size, thanks to the acoustic insulation on the metal panels around the hydraulic and refrigerant modules.

"Innovating key features that provide important benefits been central to the development of the AquaSnap 30AWH-P," said **David Dunn**, Managing Director, UK&I, Carrier CSE-R. "Earning Quiet Mark certification highlights the success of our design in delivering low noise alongside responsible performance, providing real benefits for end users."

For more information on the AquaSnap 30AWH-P, visit: www.carrier.uk/en/products/heat-pump/aquasnap-30awh-p.html





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