

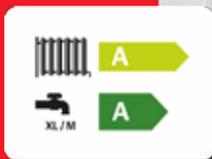
Oil installer

News and views from an evolving heating world



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Winter 2022 Volume 16 No 4

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Government must change course on decarbonisation plans

The recent UK political turmoil has brought into sharp focus the severe financial challenges we face as a nation.

We're seeing the State tightening its belt, with little funding likely to be available for non-essential policies, and more limited help with energy costs after April next year. Our latest fuel price commentary discusses the current energy costs on page 38.



However, most clouds have a silver lining if you look hard enough. We have not yet seen the UK Government's response to last winter's consultations on plans to phase out the installation of high carbon fuels off-the-grid. However, one thing is certain, they cannot realistically go ahead as originally proposed. The plans were prepared in a relatively positive economic situation, far removed from the one we are now in, so a rethink is essential.

For example, with inflation now at over 10%, the Government's far too optimistic predictions of heat pump cost reductions will not be achieved. The average cost is now around £13,000 and, with most rural households and businesses strapped for cash, most simply won't be able to afford them. To go ahead with the proposed regulations would be unfair and unpopular, which is clearly something the Government cannot afford to risk.

However, the Government must make progress with decarbonisation because it's a legal obligation, so some common-sense ideas are urgently needed. Support for energy efficiency is a good place to start. Targeting heat pump grants to areas where installation costs are easiest to reduce – so new builds and suburban housing developments rather than rural homes – would make sense too. And, here's the silver lining for us, support for HVO, which would cost the Government next to nothing, would also be a good way to make progress quickly. OFTEC is committed to making the case for HVO, and you can help us – find out how on page 5.

Paul Rose

CEO, OFTEC

OFTEC's rules for registration updated

The OFTEC rules for registration booklet (Ref R100) provides registered technicians, and those considering becoming registered, with information about OFTEC's registration schemes. This includes the responsibilities and conduct expected while performing installation and commissioning work under a scope of an OFTEC registration.

The aspiration of the OFTEC registration schemes is that customers employing the services of an OFTEC registered technician can be confident that the work will be performed to high standards and comply with relevant Building Regulations, British Standards, manufacturers' installation requirements, industry codes of practice, and provide consumer protection.

The rules are reviewed annually and updated (if required) so they are kept in line with the various government schemes we run. The latest version is now out and supersedes any previous version.

The main changes are:

- OFTEC training courses/qualifications have always been renewed after five years, but the OFTEC scheme committee now require that other qualifications for scopes such as renewable technologies also have a five-year renewal for continued registration. This change comes about following the release of the new MCS Competency Standard MCS025, which recommends re-assessments every five years after initial qualification or personal certification.
- Your work notification certificates can now be emailed to your customer next day if you provide their email address upon uploading the details of the work to the OFTEC Portal.
- If you have a break in registration for 12 months or more, you will be placed on a temporary probation period until an internal desktop review is conducted on any significant changes in your business. If not, then the joining process will continue and re-certification will happen behind the scenes. However, if significant changes are identified then re-registration can only be completed once an on-site evaluation audit is undertaken by an OFTEC inspector. This has changed from six months.
- OFTEC will reserve the right to publish the identity of revoked businesses and/or technicians in its industry magazine.

The rules for registration is an important document for registered businesses and acts as the certification agreement between you and OFTEC. It is available to download free of charge from our website www.oftec.org/media/35ohxpkp/r100-rules-of-registration.pdf#r100

Catch up with OFTEC's autumn webinar series

OFTEC has now concluded its very successful autumn webinar series. Following the hugely popular first webinar, which provided valuable insight into the hot topic of energy conservation and legislation (Part L) (England Scotland and Wales), the next webinar covered Part L, calculation tools and an in-depth discussion with the directors behind the ingenious software that is Heat Engineer Ltd.

The final webinar was focused on HVO, what benefits it offers, and whether it is the only biofuel option for heating. We also included a brief history of previous biofuel work, the current HVO demonstration project, why we think consumers will want to switch to HVO, and why it's so vital for the future of the industry.

All webinars are still available to view through the OFTEC portal, an exclusive benefit for OFTEC registered technicians.

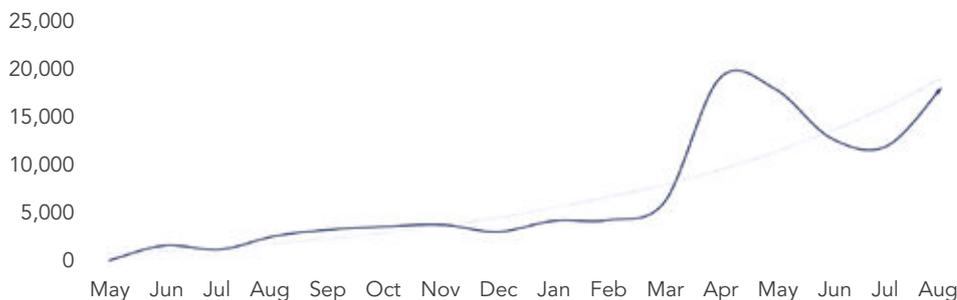
Future Ready Fuel campaign

OFTEC and UKIFDA's Future Ready Fuel campaign has continued to make progress throughout the summer. The campaign began in May 2021 with the launch of a dedicated website www.futurereadyfuel.info and an accompanying digital marketing campaign was rolled out in August 2021.

The website has achieved significant visitor growth since it was launched. A more user-friendly design was introduced in July 2022, and a review of content is currently in progress. Usage has increased significantly since March, which is clearly due to the more direct messaging style we now use, based on the Government's own proposals for off-gas grid decarbonisation.

Astonishingly, some visitors to the site have accused us of exaggerating, or even lying about the Government's plans – it comes as quite a shock when they discover that what we're saying is true! In total, well over 130,000 users have now visited the website, but what really matters is conversions – campaign jargon for people actually

Monthly Unique Visits to Microsite



doing something as a result of their visit.

Here we're seeing lots of good results – as shown in the table below – and something we are really pleased about. It means we have active supporters for our plans to introduce HVO, who are taking our message to MPs and, hopefully, telling others to do the same.

Email list sign-ups	3,693
Survey completions	5,032
MP template letter downloads	3,454
Other actions*	4,174
Total	16,353

* Other actions include clicking links to the Heat & Buildings Strategy, the consultation phase that followed, and OFTEC and UKIFDA's industry response.

The Future Ready Fuel consumer survey has been useful because it provides us with lots of useful data on the views of liquid fuel heating users and their concern about the Government's decarbonisation plans.

For example:

- 87% of respondents would choose to convert their existing boiler to renewable liquid, while just 6% would choose to install an air source heat pump.
- 89% of respondents are concerned that off-grid properties will be treated unfairly under the Government's current heating plans.
- 95% believe there should be a greater choice of affordable heating technologies available to households.

We use the data to support our ongoing campaign messaging, including the letters we write to MPs.

Please help us – add your voice to the campaign

With a General Election no more than two years away (and possibly much sooner) rural MPs will be concerned about any policies that are unpopular, and likely to support ideas that enable progress to be made with decarbonisation that aren't costly or disruptive. HVO ticks the right boxes and a letter from you would really help our campaign – and could ensure the long-term future of the liquid fuel heating industry.

In the December e-news, OFTEC provided a template letter for you to send, and a link to find your MPs contact details. It's very easy to do, and sending the letter will take no more than five minutes. If you haven't already done so, please do it today!

OFTEC launches heat pump system design course

Following the successful introduction of OFTEC's course covering installation, servicing and commissioning of air source heat pumps, we can now offer a course in the design of heat pump systems (OFT21-504D).

The course follows the requirements of the Minimum Technical Competencies and MCS document MIS 3005-D – The Heat Pump Standard (design).

Put together by a group of industry experts (including manufacturers, certification bodies, heat pump system designers, and approved training and assessment centres), the course covers, among other subjects, health and safety and safe systems of work,

low carbon and low temperature central heating systems, principles of heat pump selection and system design, sizing and selecting heat pump systems and components, open and closed loop ground source system design, and air source system design.

The working group which put the course together worked closely with MCS to ensure that it will be able to be used for MCS registration.

The Government's current view is that by 2028 the UK will need 600,000 heat pump installations each year to meet home heating decarbonisation targets, and that means around 30,000 installers will need to be trained to meet this demand and gain the

qualifications required for MCS registration – a large increase on the current number.

A course covering installation, servicing and commissioning of ground source heat pumps is expected to be available early next year.

For further details, or to find a centre offering the OFTEC heat pump courses, please contact David Knipe dknipe@oftec.org.



OFTEC compliance

OFTEC's compliance team works hard to ensure that all registered businesses and technicians uphold the highest standards. However, each quarter a few are suspended or have their registration revoked. This can be for various reasons and means they no longer have the right to display

themselves as OFTEC registered.

From the 9th June 2022 – 11th October 2022 there was a total of 103 suspended and 30 businesses had their membership revoked*.

The revoked businesses are:

Company No.	Business Name
2846	A Jones & Son T/A Oil Boiler Servicing & Repairs Ltd
500357	ASC Plumbing & Heating Ltd
1594	Brin Williams Plumbing & Heating
500388	Call the Plumber Ltd
103070	Collis Plumbing and Heating Ltd
500546	CRB Plumbing and Heating
102270	Culford School
4755	D & A Oil Tanks
12038	Darren Dunning Plumbing & Heating
102462	GES London Ltd
105761	InterCounty Plumbing & Heating Ltd
12765	Johnstones Plumbing & Heating
103545	JSF Building Contractors Ltd
103563	L York Plumbing and Heating Ltd
102502	L.E.A Building Services Limited
102648	Law Plumbing and Heating Ltd
104111	M Percy & Son Ltd
103838	MCG Heating Solutions
102966	MEB Services Ltd
500153	Newquay Wood Burners
500484	Phil Green and Son
104425	Reeve Property Restoration Ltd
103787	S C Duncan Plumbing & Heating Ltd
3126	S J Hurds Heating + Plumbing
7923	Scotheat 2000 Ltd
8380	Stephen Duncan Heating & Plumbing Services Ltd
101510	Swan Plumbing & Heating Ltd T/A Swan Services UK Ltd.
13638	T.S. Gas
9225	The Heat Source Lincolnshire Limited
104265	Thermo-Fix Ltd

*Businesses do have the right to appeal decisions regarding their status.

Office anniversary

It has officially been six months since OFTEC moved! OFTEC relocated offices to a new development in Melton, Suffolk. The move has been a great success and has proved a very beneficial change for the company.

Fittingly, given the drive to reduce the emissions from buildings, the move meant we replaced our old offices with new energy efficient, low carbon heated offices, the perfect home for the trade association and competent person scheme provider as we look towards a net zero future.

HVO field trial update

The HVO field demonstration project, led by OFTEC and UKIFDA, has continued to grow with around 150 properties now using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), each one adding to the weight of evidence that this is an excellent low carbon solution for oil heated homes. Over 300,000 litres of HVO have been freely distributed by 15 distribution companies since the trial began in 2020. The carbon reduction benefits amount to c770 tonnes of CO2 saved.

It is hoped that we can continue the project over the winter. From a purely technical perspective, most of the key learning outcomes have now been achieved. However, continuing the project provides further data on real life, long-term use, and the work also has significant benefit in generating support. HVO conversion has worked well in all the demonstration locations – almost all of which are existing oil heating systems – and we are extremely confident now about its suitability.

Alongside the field work, OFTEC and UKIFDA continue to work on how the transition to HVO can be supported by government, and to build the supporting evidence around its sustainability and suitability.

Could you be an OFTEC inspector?

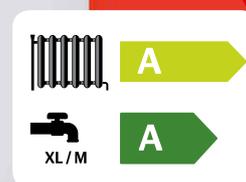
Inspectors will play a critical role as we begin the transition to renewable heating and alongside our traditional scopes, OFTEC is seeing rapid growth in heat pump registrations. It means we need to expand our team of contracted regional inspectors and build on their skills and experience to meet the challenges of a changing industry. It's not a glamorous role, but it is essential for an organisation committed to high standards and encouraging continuous improvement.

Ideally, inspectors have at least five years practical heating experience, but no longer work on the tools, which helps avoid any conflicts of interest. They work on a contract basis under a service level agreement which provides opportunities for flexible working. Experience in renewables, the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) or solid fuel would be an advantage. For more details contact John Vinter at jvinter@oftec.org

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Changes to MCS competency requirements

In September, the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) released a new Competency Standard Ref MCS 025 issue 2.0. This detailed some significant changes in which renewable technology installers demonstrate initial competence to join the scheme and then prove ongoing competence to continue with their registration.

Gone is the option of the general experienced worker route, which allowed installers to enter the scheme without any regulated qualification or formal training.

To replace this, there is now a requirement for nominated technical persons (i.e. technicians) to hold regulated training, qualifications or personal certification, which have to be approved by MCS and are listed on its website at <https://mcs-certified.com/skills-and-competency/find-a-training-course/>

This means the new OFTEC heat pump courses, run in accordance with ISO17024 personal certification at OFTEC approved training centres, are now an official entry route for installers to attain MCS registration. See the OFTEC website for more information about heat pumps courses.

Another change is that if a qualified technician was to cease their

association with an MCS registered business, or the individual was otherwise unable to fulfil their role, the MCS business must make immediate plans for a replacement. These plans can include the recruitment of a new qualified technician by the business and that they can demonstrate their competency as the replacement nominated technical person. The businesses must not undertake any future installation work without a qualified technician and any work must be delayed until such a time as a replacement is found and notified to their certification body.

MCS also acknowledges in its new document that legal obligations under Building Regulations must be met by installers in their particular region and, for those operating in England and Wales, that will mean belonging to a competent person scheme like OFTEC, so self-certification can be undertaken.

For more information about MCS registration please see the OFTEC website <https://www.oftec.org/technicians/areas-of-registration/renewables-mcs-registration> and to download a copy of the new MCS Competency Standard please visit

<https://mcs-certified.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/MCS-025-Issue-2.0-Final.pdf>

Work notifications – making them easier for the consumer and the environment!

Until recently, for every one of the nearly 50,000 installation work notifications made to OFTEC every year, an individual consumer certificate was produced, printed, and dispatched via the OFTEC administration team.

To make our self-certification system more efficient we introduced an option for certificates to be emailed to your customers within 24 hours of you completing your notification. It's already proving popular and, currently, 50% of certificates are now being emailed, with the homeowner receiving an electronic copy which they can print, or store on their computer.

Our aim is to have all certificates emailed to consumers in the future, cutting down on the amount of paper used, and enabling OFTEC to take a significant step to being more environmentally friendly. We would encourage all installers to do their bit for the environment, and help

their consumers, by filling out the homeowner's email address, to make use of this new electronic feature.

Unfortunately, consumer certificates cannot be emailed to you as Building Regulations require that they are sent direct to the homeowner/occupier, but you can obtain a copy free of charge via your OFTEC portal account, once the local authority have been notified.

If, in the future, the homeowner needs a copy, you can retrieve it from your account on the OFTEC website portal. Alternatively, they can do it themselves by using the certificate find service in the consumer area of our website www.oftec.org/consumers/order-certificates.

We would highly encourage all installers to fill out at least the homeowner's email address, so that certificates can be emailed to your customers within 24 hours of you completing your notification.



OFTEC is attending InstallerShow 2023

Following on from a successful event this year, OFTEC is looking forward to exhibiting at next year's InstallerShow 2023. InstallerSHOW, is the UK's biggest heating, plumbing and electrical trade show and will take place on the 27th-29th June 2023 at the NEC in Birmingham.

Paul Rose, OFTEC CEO said, "OFTEC is delighted to participate again at this important event for the wide range of professionals who work in the heating, plumbing and electrical industries. We are attending to promote the highest professional and technical standards for technicians and businesses working in the UK."



OFTEC website updated – improved user experience

After feedback from technicians and other users of the website, OFTEC is excited to announce the completion of a major website refresh. The refresh is designed to improve users experience on the platform, simplify navigation, and make processes easier. For example, simplifying the user home screens, so that both consumers and technicians alike can effectively and efficiently find relevant information and tools.

There were no major changes to the structure of the website and users can still use their current login details and accounts. If you are having trouble logging into your OFTEC account, or would like to discuss the refresh, please contact OFTEC's marketing team at marketing@oftec.org.

Grant kicks carbon into touch with Bath Rugby

Grant UK and Bath Rugby Club have unveiled their 'Kick the Carbon' campaign, which aims to highlight the different ways we can all make changes in our day-to-day lives to help reduce carbon emissions.

As a corporate partner of Bath Rugby Club, Grant was keen to raise the profile of sustainable home heating, as well as showing the other ways in which the Club, its players and supporters can reduce carbon emissions.

The 'Kick the Carbon' digital campaign features a series of short videos in which some local school children join forces with Josh McNally, Tom Ellis, Will Spencer, Will Butt, Josh Bayliss, Beno Obano, Mike Williams and Miles Reid from Bath Rugby to take part in some fun-filled challenges. The children also interview the players to find out what they as individuals are doing to reduce their impact on the environment, as well learning more about what Bath Rugby are doing as a Club to be more sustainable.

The goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions is a big challenge but the campaign aims to show how even the smallest of changes to daily routines can make a difference. The enthusiasm of the school children combined with the entertaining antics of the Bath Rugby players delivers the campaign's important messaging in an engaging and accessible way. From opting to hang laundry on the washing line instead of using a tumble dryer, through to making more efficient heating choices within



the home, there are multiple ways in which everyone can Kick the Carbon!

"We are very excited to roll out this campaign which aims to put low carbon changes at the forefront of people's minds," comments Anna Wakefield, head of marketing at Grant.

"The 'Kick the Carbon' challenges were great fun to create with Bath Rugby as sustainability is incredibly important for both Grant and the Club. As a company, Grant not only supplies low carbon heating solutions, such as air source heat pumps, but we are also making big changes within our business to be more environmentally friendly. Similarly, Bath Rugby, who we have

been a proud sponsor of for seven years, are also striving to lead the way in making greener, more sustainable choices as a Premiership Rugby Club. Our 'Kick the Carbon' videos are not only great fun to watch but they relay important advice that everyone can take away."

Tom Giles, Bath Rugby's head of business development added: "We are delighted to have worked with Grant on this campaign, with a powerful message at the heart of the entertaining content. Grant's strategic vision to reduce carbon footprints is something Bath Rugby is aligned to and hugely passionate about, so it's great to raise awareness of the small changes we can all make in our everyday lives."

Warmflow hits the road

Warmflow is taking its Zeno air source heat pumps range on a renewables roadshow across the UK.

The Warmflow renewables van and technical sales team will be available in a number of merchants across the UK showing off its uniquely designed Zeno Air Source heat pumps, which are highly efficient and include a host of innovative features. With outputs ranging from 8kW to 20kW and using R32 gas which has a low

GWP, the units are anthracite grey in colour and feature Warmflow's innovative Warmlink remote control technology which enables engineers to commission, control and monitor the heat pump from anywhere in the world. In addition, it provides full and complete diagnostic information meaning callouts to site can be reduced, saving time and money.

The heat pumps also include a low noise, high efficiency Panasonic



rotary compressor at the heart of the system and are Quiet mark approved with super quiet operation.

Grant UK's Head Office move allows for continued expansion

Grant UK has moved to new premises with the company's Head Office, warehousing and Training Academy now based in Swindon, Wiltshire.

For over 25 years, Grant UK has been supplying award winning heating products and developing its range of customer support services. During this time, the company has grown significantly and, after trading in Salisbury for a number of years, Grant UK moved to Devizes, Wiltshire where it has been based since 2003. Nearly two decades on, after further expansion, Grant UK has moved to the new Swindon site which was formally opened on 3rd November 2022.

The new facilities are considerably larger, totaling over 80,000sqft. In addition to providing greater office spaces and significantly increased on-site storage capacity, the Training Academy has also been expanded.

The official opening of the new site by Tim Pollard, Principal of Pollard and Pollard, was the culmination of a ten-month renovation project with



significant investment to transform the premises into the impressive facilities they are today. The project involved the entire site, installing state of the art new racking in the warehouses, creating engaging workspaces and transforming one of the units into training rooms and practical assessment areas for the Training Academy. The resulting facilities will meet operational requirements both today and in the future.

Integral to the renovation project was sustainability, with numerous environmentally friendly measures implemented throughout the site. A biomass heating system has been installed which is providing the heating

and hot water. In addition, 768 solar panels and storage batteries have been installed as part of the 303kWp Solar PV system fitted on the roof of both units, which will meet the company's electricity demand while also feeding renewable electricity into the grid. Materials used throughout the office spaces have been chosen for their sustainability credentials.

"Our move to Swindon marks an exciting new chapter for Grant UK," comments Paul Wakefield, Grant UK's managing director.

"Moving premises is a significant step for any business to make, but the hard work that has gone into creating our new larger facilities will enable Grant UK and the team to settle into a site which will support our continued growth for many, many years to come. The road to a cleaner, low carbon future will be full of opportunities and this move to new facilities will ensure that we as a company can continue to deliver the high-quality products and services that our customers have come to expect from Grant."

Navien launches revolutionary combi boiler range

Leading global boiler manufacturer, Navien, has launched its new, NCB combi boiler range, featuring three new models.

Revolutionary space-saving technology

An efficient, futureproof method of prioritising year-round hot water performance, the NCB500 ON and the NCB700 ON feature Navien's revolutionary ON technology which maximises comfort and eliminates the need to wait for hot water.

ON maximises the recirculation of domestic hot water (DHW) while significantly reducing water wastage, ensuring the rapid delivery of hot water, consistency in temperatures, and enough hot water to run up to three showers at once – all without the need for a hot water cylinder.

Jason Davies, national business manager at Navien UK, said: "We are delighted to launch our new NCB range with ON technology – the first boiler range of its kind on the market. The NCB range can deliver constant and rapid hot water to multiple rooms simultaneously meaning that the days of waiting for the shower to heat up and dodging cold spells while someone else is washing the dishes



are over.

"For installers, the NCB 500 ON and 700 ON remove the need to fit system boilers in larger homes. By removing the cylinder and requirement for pre-heating water, the NCB range not only reduces installation times but returns valuable space to homeowners."

Reduced running costs

This new approach to heating and hot water offers a host of savings as it is more economical to use than system or regular boilers, with homeowners able to save up to 7,787 litres per year and up to 38% of gas on average per year compared to system boilers and regular boilers.

Thanks to Navien's Navircirc technology, the NCB range negates the need to pre-heat large volumes of water or keep water heated to temperature when outlets are not

in use. This means homeowners can deliver hot water to showers and taps more quickly than system or regular boilers and create extra space in the home by removing existing cylinders.

Davies continues: "As a business, we identified an opportunity within the industry to take home heating to the next level by eliminating the need to wait for hot water. With premium styling, an intuitive control panel and intelligent self-learning to deliver hot water on demand, we have designed this range with revolutionary technology to deliver unrivalled hot water performance whilst still bringing savings and low running costs to our customers."

Sized to suit

All NCB boilers are compatible with Navien's Smart Plus control. Controlled by the user's smartphone – the thermostat can help homeowners improve the boiler's energy efficiency rating even further.

The three new models that make up the range are all 20% hydrogen-blend-ready but each caters for a different size home and comes with a 12-year warranty as standard. The details can be found on Navien's recently updated website.

Navien launches comprehensive new website

Navien has launched its brand-new website, showcasing the company's full range of high efficiency heating and hot water products. The site can be viewed at www.navien.co.uk and features dedicated areas for heating industry professionals and end users, as well as essential product literature, news, downloads and technical support.

Visitors to the site can view essential details of every product Navien has to offer in the UK, from its LCB700 Blue Flame oil units to the recently introduced NCB range of high efficiency gas boilers, which focus on maximising hot water comfort. There is also information on the company's Smart Plus controls and internationally-renowned NPE gas water heater.

In addition, the 'professional' section includes downloadable technical literature, brochures and installation guides for all Navien gas and oil boilers, water heaters and smart controls, as well as the latest case studies showcasing the company's products in action. Installers can also log-on and find details and locations of the latest oil and gas training courses, with the site allowing them to select and book their place(s) online. Plus, there is the option to undertake the company's latest online training programmes, as well as

register for the Navien Choice loyalty scheme.

The 'homeowner' part of the website includes a 'find a boiler' feature, allowing end users to select the best product suitable for them courtesy of a series of filters. This is in addition to a dedicated support area containing product manuals and FAQs, as well as the facilities for users to find their nearest Navien installer and book a boiler service.

Both professionals and homeowners will also be able to obtain all the key contact details for servicing, sales and enquiries, as well as read a comprehensive timeline and history of the company, detailing its renowned provenance around the world. There are also handy links to all of Navien's social media channels.

Commenting on the new site, Jason Davies, national business manager at Navien, said: "Having established ourselves as a leading heating and hot water brand around the world, it was only right that we updated our UK website to reflect this. Now, following many months of hard work, we're incredibly excited to reveal the new site, which encompasses a wealth of design features, usability improvements and upgrades that will benefit installers and homeowners alike."



Worcester Bosch opened its doors for National Manufacturing Day

Worcester Bosch opened the doors of its state-of-the-art facility to the public for National Manufacturing Day. The event coincided with the company's ongoing 60th birthday celebrations.

National Manufacturing Day showcases Britain's leading suppliers of consumer and industrial goods, as well as promoting the many highly skilled and well-paid job opportunities in industries that are in perpetually high demand for manufacturers and engineers.

The tour included the production area where 250,000 A-rated boilers are produced annually, the training facility where 15,000 heating engineers upskill each year, as well as a look at the future of fuel innovations that are currently in development. Also included was a meeting with the company's STEM ambassadors.

Martyn Bridges, director of technical services commented: "By opening our doors to visitors for National Manufacturing Day we hope to show the fantastic craftsmanship and engineering, as well as the research and development that has been going into our products since we formed 60 years ago.

"We're excited to have shone a light on the future of the industry and the steps we are taking to achieve support net zero goals in the country, as well as hopefully inspiring a new generation of engineers!"



Worcester Bosch says goodbye to sales and marketing director

Worcester Bosch's sales and marketing director, Steve Lister has taken early retirement after holding the position for nearly 20 years.

Steve first entered the heating industry in 1977 as an apprentice heating engineer for Scottish Gas. Joining Worcester Bosch as an area sales manager in 1994, he quickly moved up the ladder to director of sales in 2003 – a role that later evolved into sales & marketing director – before being named a board member in 2013.

During his time at the company, Steve studied for two degrees, taking night school classes for four years to complete one of them.

While in his role in Worcester, Steve helped the company adapt to the 2005 legislative change mandating condensing boilers as well as helping map out the initial steps as Worcester Bosch shifts – even to this day – towards a low carbon future, through industry-leading technology innovation.



Known for his honesty and commitment to his team, Steve's larger than life personality was hailed a big contribution to the company by many fellow employees.

Steve commented: "It's been an

honour to be a part of this historic company and watch it evolve and change over the last near three decades to the industry leader in heating it is today. I have made some truly great friends – colleagues and customers – during my time here.

"I'm particularly proud of how the company has grown its investment into local communities and charities over the years. I'm now looking forward to spending some quality time with my family, whilst keeping a close eye on how the company and industry will continue to evolve towards a low carbon future."

Carl Arntzen, Worcester Bosch's CEO praised: "Anyone who knows Steve knows what a character he is within our business and indeed our industry. He is a key part of our company's 60-year history. We would like to thank Steve for his outstanding contribution to the unparalleled growth of Worcester Bosch during his career with us and I'm sure the industry will join us in wishing him every happiness in his retirement."

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Crisis? What crisis?

Times are getting tough, so it's time to make sure your business isn't a victim of the recession

The current dire economic situation means that many customers are tightening their belts. This has significant impacts for heating businesses, which could see declining orders for new installations, or customers wanting to postpone even routine work like annual servicing. Worse still, business costs are also rising fast, so it's not surprising that many companies are beginning to feel squeezed.

When times are tough it's important to be proactive and there are lots of things you can do. To help, we've put together a few suggestions. Some are specific to heating technicians while others should be cornerstones of any successful business. We hope that all of them will help to give you a competitive edge.

1. Don't neglect the marketing

For some businesses, marketing is normally unnecessary – work usually comes in by word of mouth. If your order books are healthy, perhaps there's nothing to worry about. But these are not normal times and if the phone has stopped ringing – or worse still, if people are calling to cancel or delay work – now would be a good time to start promoting your business. It doesn't need to be costly or time consuming. A simple website and regular posts on social media may be enough to get you noticed.

For companies that do use advertising, it's often seen as discretionary spending and something to cut when things get tight. However, you do this at your peril. Research shows that businesses that invest in marketing when

Research shows that businesses that invest in marketing when times are tough do better than those that cut back.

times are tough do better than those that cut back. Even if you spend just one hour a week on marketing it can pay dividends. In a competitive world, it's just important to be proactive – remember if you don't promote yourself, no-one else will!

2. Reach out to your customers and use technology to your advantage

If you have mobile telephone numbers or email addresses of your customers, then use this technology to your advantage. Send them messages either via text, WhatsApp or email with offers, reminders or tips, to make the most of the technology available.

But how do you reach people you don't have a relationship with? Most consumers now use the internet to search for local services so a good website and active social media presence will make it easy for clients to find you, check your experience, and make contact. Your van is also a critical marketing tool – think of it as a mobile billboard to advertise your company and emphasise your competence. ▶

3. Emphasise your competency

Don't forget to highlight your OFTEC registration and emphasise your competency by using the OFTEC logo on your marketing materials, social media feeds, website and vehicle. Customers looking to save money will often consider using cheaper firms – which are often cowboys. Promoting your competence will help to reassure them that you deliver a quality service that is worth paying for and better value for money.

Your van is also a critical marketing tool – think of it as a mobile billboard to advertise your company and emphasise your competence.

4. Diversify your business

The more you have to offer, the more useful you'll be to your customers. Homeowners are increasingly demanding flexible heating systems, such as adding a solid fuel stove or mixing renewables with their existing oil heating systems.

To help you stay one step ahead of the competition, OFTEC now offers scopes of registration in solid fuel stoves, heat pumps, biomass and solar thermal. Unvented hot water, MCS, and Part P electrical is also available, and adding additional scopes is straightforward and relatively inexpensive. So why not diversify today?

5. Keep your equipment in good order

First impressions are important, so it's good to look professional. A clean van is just one of many under-appreciated details that help you make a good first impression on your customers when you arrive at their door.

One thing that's often forgotten is to keep your test equipment's calibration up to date. It's best to put a note in your diary at least a month before the expiry date as the turn-around can often be slow.

6. Make sure your contracts are watertight

Providing clear, written terms and conditions of service for your customers should be standard procedure for all businesses working in the heating industry. By setting out your business terms everyone knows where they stand. This protects your interests and gives your customers confidence that they are dealing with a reputable business.

7. Top up your knowledge and let legislation be your friend

Knowledge is power and the more you know, the more your advice will be sought. You can't expect your customers

Knowledge is power and the more you know, the more your advice will be sought.



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put their trust in you if you don't have a firm grasp on what's needed to operate safely and legally. For example, are you completely up to speed with all the recent Park L changes? OFTEC produces a huge range of information to help registered technicians improve their knowledge and be more effective in their work, which you can find on our website, along with a free technical helpline to answer any urgent questions. Look out for OFTEC's webinars series and our monthly e-newsletters too.

When times are tough it's important to be proactive.

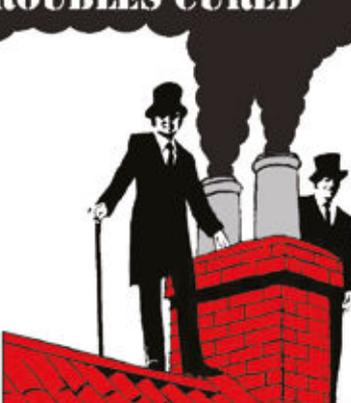
8. Keep your costs down with a fuel card

Transport is a major cost for mobile businesses such as heating companies, so it makes sense to make savings if you can. OFTEC works with The Fuelcard People to make its discount card scheme available to registered technicians. Through the scheme, you can receive a discount from your fuel card, which can provide savings of up to 10p per litre on a purchase. Instead of paying each time you refuel, the bills are settled monthly and an itemised breakdown is provided, making it easier to calculate transport costs for tax purposes. The Fuelcard People offers a wide range of cards that are valid at 7,000+ pumps nationwide. The scheme is entirely voluntary and can be tried for an initial trial period free of charge, and thereafter for a small annual fee. To find out more call 0844 808 2097.

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Support for MCS certification costs in Scotland

Over the summer the Scottish Government, in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust, launched the MCS Certification Fund. The Fund is a new grant scheme to support Scottish businesses and installers who are working in the low carbon and energy efficiency sector and need to scale up their business to meet anticipated demand in renewable low carbon heating systems.

This comes after the Scottish Government released its Heat in Buildings Strategy for achieving net zero emissions in Scottish buildings. This stated that, by 2045, all Scottish homes and buildings must have significantly reduced their energy use, and almost all buildings will need to switch to a heating system such as a heat pump. At current rates around 3,000 households per year install low and zero emission heating in Scotland, but this needs to grow rapidly with at least 64,000 per year in 2025 and to peak at over 200,000 per year in the late 2020s according to the Energy Saving Trust.

The scheme will aid this increase in installers by providing a grant of up to 75% towards the MCS certification fees (first year fees) for air, ground or water source heat pumps. The scheme is on a first come first served basis, however, and the funding is capped, so will only be available until the end of March 2023 or the funds run out, whichever is sooner.

To be eligible to apply for the scheme, you must:

- Be an SME in accordance with European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC (i.e. have fewer than 250 FTE employees and a turnover not exceeding £42 million) and/or a balance sheet total not exceeding £36 million.
- Have at least one registered office in Scotland.
- Conduct heating installations in Scotland.
- Not be currently MCS certified for any kind of heat pump technology.

To find out more information regarding the scheme please visit the Energy Savings Trust website <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/grants-and-loans/mcs-certification-fund/>



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HVO hybrid heating explored as part of Northern Ireland retrofit trial

In 2021, as part of a European programme called Rulet, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) looked at what interventions in off-grid rural homes could provide tenants with improved energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and, potentially, reduce running costs.

The Rulet programme is jointly funded by Ulster University's SPIRE 2 Project and NIHE. It aims to reduce or eliminate the risk of low-income households being left behind in the transition to clean, smart, integrated energy systems.

As part of the programme, six houses in Omagh, Co Fermanagh were chosen for the pilot project and the aim was to improve the thermal envelope, with non-intrusive measures at a cost of less than £10,000. These could include cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, passive house fitted double glazed windows and non-intrusive air tightness measures. The existing houses had SAP Ranges of 51 (Band E) – 57 (Band D) and the aim was to improve this to a Band C.

On the heating side, three of the houses with an existing oil boiler had a 6kW air source heat pump installed and linked to the existing liquid fuel boiler as a hybrid system. To further reduce carbon emissions, these boilers would run on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), a renewable liquid fuel manufactured from waste that offers an immediate c.88% reduction in carbon emissions over kerosene. The others were fitted with a mix of air

source heat pumps, electric battery, solar PV, and electric immersion systems.

The project has completed one year in operation and the results are currently being compiled and reviewed by the project management team. However, Patrick Keatley from Ulster University gave us an update pre-publication and explained: "During the trial we monitored the performance of both standalone heat pumps and hybrid systems, which work alongside either gas or HVO-burning boilers. Most of the learning has been around cost-effectiveness for both the landlord and the tenant, as well as understanding how the tenants interact with unfamiliar technologies and tariffs. The idea has been to try to "fit the technology around the tenant," rather than vice versa.

"Technically, in the right situation, all the systems can perform well, but in terms of CO2 emissions, HVO-fired boilers delivered the most rapid and significant reductions, while requiring the least behavioral change by the tenant, or retrofit by the landlord. While there are challenges around cost and supply at scale, it's clear that HVO could be an effective decarbonisation solution for some houses and some tenants. Government support for HVO as a low-carbon heating solution could make it a relatively straightforward and cost-effective option for decarbonising 'hard to treat' off gas grid homes."

This statement is very encouraging and adds to the body of emerging



Hybrid ASHP and HVO in situ

evidence that HVO has a useful role to play in decarbonising off grid homes, building on the current 150 building demonstration trial underway in Great Britain.

The installations were done by H&A Draperstown, the first MCS registered company in Northern

OFTEC's David Blevings said: "It's great to see HVO performing well as part of these independent trials and gives us confidence that our proposed move to low carbon liquid fuels is the correct methodology for decarbonising off-grid homes. We've said it before and will say it again – a mix of solutions is required to decarbonise the housing stock in Ireland, and we need to up the installation standard across the board as we move to renewables. We look forward to the detailed results from this

trial, which we will use as further evidence that government should formally include fuels such as HVO as a viable option in next year's NI energy strategy.

"MCS is the accepted standard for renewable installs and H&A is leading the way as OFTEC's first / MCS certified company in Northern Ireland. We would be confident that any funding for renewable heating technologies in NI will require MCS certification and encourage existing technicians to consider joining OFTEC's MCS certification scheme. This will help to develop your reputation and support the growth of your business in this increasingly competitive field."

Further information on MCS certification and heat pump training can be found on OFTEC's website.



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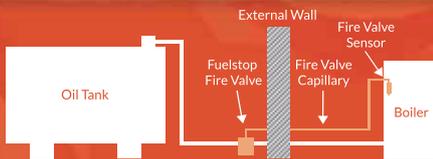
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Firebird's Slimline Combipac solves space issues in Shropshire

Firebird has recently developed and delivered a tailored, environmentally friendly heating package for a private property in Shropshire.

Gary Davies, the company's national sales manager describes the project: "The key requirement was to upgrade from an old solid fuel appliance to an efficient combi boiler and as space was limited, we delivered the perfect solution. New to the sustainable product range is our Envirogreen Slimline Combipac – it's the smallest external combi on the market with multidirectional flue options. Our product development team designed the Combipac to reduce obstruction to customers' gardens and provide installers with an easy installation, which was the case here."

He continues: "While this product features cutting edge HVO ready low NOx liquid fuel burner technology, the Envirogreen Slimline Combipac beats European NOx levels with results as low as 60mg per kW/h. Available in three outputs 20kW, 26kW and 35kW, our latest innovative technology ensures excellent hot water performance. Firebird manufactures the most efficient oil fired boilers on the market at 97.5% efficiency, future-proofing home heating while saving on energy costs and being kinder to the environment."



Andy Allmark, AM Systems Engineering Ltd

Firebird engineers partnered with VIP Firebird installer, Andy Allmark of AM Systems Engineering Ltd in Shropshire, a long-time, loyal customer.

Andy explains how beneficial the

Envirogreen Slimline Combipac was for this home: "Having worked with Firebird for many years, the company was the natural choice to partner with when this project came up, because of its high-quality technical support, which is always just a phone call away, and the quality of product. Also, there are no issues with availability of stock which can be the case with other manufacturers.

"After learning the homeowner was keen to move to a more efficient and economical heating system and given the challenge of the very restricted space to the exterior of the building, I knew the Envirogreen Slimline Combipac was the perfect solution."

According to Gary, the needs of customers and the expectations of installers have evolved dramatically. Efficiency is a key driver, not only in terms of the environment but also in terms of service and installation time.

"Without a doubt, there's an increasing demand for green energy heating systems and customers' requirements are greatly influenced by environmental responsibility and performance.

"For Firebird installers, the focus is on quality, service and ease of installation."

Deliver an efficient home heating system this christmas

Deliver to your customers with Warmflow's highly efficient Agentis oil fired boiler range – the ultimate Christmas gift for homes this year.

"The Agentis range includes some of the most efficient boilers on the market, including our Combi boiler, which is the UK and Ireland's only AA rated combi boiler," says head of sales, Brian Beattie. "Agentis boilers can also save homeowners up to five litres per week compared to other



brands. Designed with installers in mind, they have multi-directional flue options included as standard and the Warmflow Agentis Professional range can save engineers up to two hours installation time, as well as including over £250 worth of factory fitted

accessories."

All Agentis boilers are designed and manufactured in the company's 150,000 square foot state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Lisburn, Northern Ireland.

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Blue flame remains the greenest off-grid heating option

With sustainability becoming an increasingly important part of the heating agenda, Sean Keleher, national technical manager at Navien, looks at the benefits of using blue flame boiler technology in off-grid properties.

Decarbonising heat from off-the-grid homes is vital in terms of achieving net zero. Back in 2015, the heating sector alone accounted for 32% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. There are four million homes in the UK not connected to the gas network – and 1.5 million of them are fitted with oil boilers.

With rural properties heavily reliant upon oil for heating and domestic hot water, it's important for installers to ensure their customers benefit from a cost-effective and efficient product capable of meeting their requirements. Oil installations take up little space in or outside a property and, compared to other fuels, provide an excellent heat release-to-cost ratio. As a result, blue flame oil boilers should be the off-grid heating option of choice, given their many advantages over the alternatives.

Blue flame burner technology has actually been around for a number of years, although has really come to the forefront since sustainability moved to the top of the heating agenda. Blue flame burners offer exceptionally low NOx emissions, allowing oil installers to offer a truly future-proof form of heating.

The premise behind blue flame technology is simple; heating oil is converted into a high pressure, vaporised spray. This is then premixed with the air required for combustion, before being drawn in through the burner, producing a blue flame with much lower NOx emissions when compared to traditional, yellow-flamed models. A longer, slotted blast tube inside the combustion chamber lets gases mix with the oxygen drawn in through the burner, resulting in a much cleaner flame. This enables installers to then offer their customers a more sustainable option, especially in terms of a like-for-like boiler replacement.

Despite a difference in colour, a

blue flame burner is identical to its yellow flame counterpart in terms of commissioning and servicing, but that's where the similarities end.

Consider our own LCB700 Blue Flame oil boiler, for example; all models are comparable in price with yellow flame units, yet all installation and servicing processes remain the same – and there's a 10-year warranty provided as standard. In fact, we only manufacture oil boilers utilising blue flame technology, ensuring they are highly efficient (with ultra-low NOx emissions of 57mg/kWh), as well as "OpenTherm" ready for immediate access to the latest heating control technology. Indeed, our advanced manufacturing facilities enable us to produce 200,000 blue flame models per year, resulting in products that are more competitively priced and accessible to end-users.

Blue flame oil boilers can also be sited inside or outside a property, depending on the pipework, electrical points and space available. When fitting an external unit, a hard stand or plinth is also required. Siting is aided further by oil boilers' ability to flue through chimney breasts and run over long distances; this versatility is aided by our units boasting industry-leading flue lengths of up to 21 metres.

Of course, controls also have a role to play when considering an oil heating system – particularly in the case of modern blue flame units. Boilers equipped with a smart display panel offer ease of commissioning and servicing, while allowing all essential information to be available at the touch of a button. An air pressure sensor (APS) will also maintain stable combustion and put safety first. Furthermore, the latest high-quality units are either supplied with smart technology straight out of the box, or can be easily upgraded with the manufacturer's latest smart controller for remote access to the heating and hot water system via a smartphone. This advanced level of control further



aids efficiency by helping prevent energy being wasted unnecessarily.

Now, as the heating industry looks towards 2050, further steps are being taken, with the development of biofuels. HVO is a second-generation biofuel which uses hydrogen during its production.

With the UK looking to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, HVO could play a key part in helping home heating systems make this transition during the coming years. It's important for oil boiler manufacturers to bear this in mind, although the most adept will have already futureproofed their products to ensure they are compatible with this alternative fuel source. Doing so will play a key part in helping home heating systems to transition to net zero in line with the set target date. (In fact, all Navien LCB700 Blue Flame boilers are compatible with HVO, in line with decarbonisation targets. This will contribute to reducing carbon emissions and lead the way of lowering NOx levels.)

So, as we move towards a greener, more sustainable future, off-grid homes will be reliant upon energy efficient and economical oil heating systems. Astute installers can utilise and recommend the latest blue flame boilers as the futureproof products of choice. Not only do these units boast low levels of emissions along exceptional reliability, they provide end users with substantial savings on their fuel bills. Considering all these advantages, blue flame oil boilers are set to lead the way towards net zero and remain the smart choice for many years to come.

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HVO ready and futureproofed

Navien's LCB700 Blue Flame boilers are all compatible with Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), in line with the Government's decarbonisation targets. As the UK looks towards achieving net zero, utilising HVO will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions and lead the way towards lowering NOx levels.

HVO is a fossil free fuel, sustainably produced, renewable paraffin that comes from used cooking oil and vegetable oil processing waste. It makes an excellent replacement for heating oil (such as kerosene), requiring relatively simple and inexpensive changes to heating systems – while it can cut emissions by 88%.

Navien's LCB700 Blue Flame boilers can be easily modified to burn HVO simply by installing different nozzles. This will have no impact on the performance of the boilers, as HVO can provide CO2 savings of 88%, as well as reduce NOx emissions – making the LCB700 the only domestic oil boiler capable of achieving an ErP A+ energy rating.

Assessing the benefits of HVO, Sean Keleher, Navien's national technical manager said: "With a lot of people – especially those in rural areas – still reliant on oil-fired boilers, it's vital for manufacturers and industry groups to join together and embrace HVO as a more environmental fuel. HVO is safer to handle due to its lower flashpoint, plus it's biodegradable.

"Converting properties from using heating oil to HVO is a simple



process – and considerably cheaper in comparison to how much it costs to install a brand new, low carbon heating system. For off-gas homes in particular, renewable technologies like heat pumps wouldn't be an effective or ideal alternative. Given these benefits, HVO should be an attractive, futureproof proposition for the industry (and government) to get on board with."

Fully HVO-ready and available as either a regular, system or combi boiler, in both internal and external models, Navien's LCB700 range is lightweight (with lift weights from only 67kg), easy to handle and optimised for simple, fast and cost-effective installation.

Each boiler also benefits from a full text-driven, smart control panel; this adds aesthetic appeal, while being simple to program and use. This is supplemented by a built-in 'Intelligent Mode' – a self-learning function that monitors DHW usage, ensuring there is always ample hot water available for an end user's daily routine.

Finally, when combined with Navien's Smart Plus controls, all LCB700 Blue Flame oil boilers offer unrivalled levels of usability, end user comfort and sustainability – while raising a heating system's effectiveness and efficiency to ErP A+.

Warmflow takes oil boilers to the next level

Warmflow's constant focus on innovation and product development continues at pace, with its Professional oil boiler range proving a hit with both service and installing engineers alike.

The Professional range combines the requirements of installers with the needs of homeowners. In today's rapidly changing world with escalating costs, Warmflow's range of oil boilers can help through innovative technology and cost-saving installation techniques.

Engineers can save time thanks to a number of pre-fitted components such as an Adey Magnaclean Pro 2 filter



and a Grundfos circulating pump. In addition, the installation kits contain all the extras an installer needs to complete a successful installation.

This includes an oil line installation

kit comprising a Crossland oil filter, Teddington fire valve with 9mm capillary, a 1/2" gate valve and an improved condensate drain installation kit made up of a 1.5m flexible pipe and pipe clips.

"The range is available in all models and outputs, including the combi oil boiler which is UK and Ireland's only AA rated combi oil boiler and is up to 30% more efficient on hot water heating than other leading oil boiler brands on the market today. Our AA rated combi oil boiler can save a household up to 5ltrs of fuel per week," says Brian Beattie, head of sales.

HVO – liquid fuel for the future

Warmflow's head of sales, Brian Beattie discusses the benefits of HVO.

With growing concerns about the future of our planet and the legacy the current generation is leaving our children, we're committed to reducing our carbon footprint and have taken significant strides to futureproof our product ranges.

Being a responsible company, reducing our carbon footprint is an important priority for the business and recent initiatives have included heating the factory entirely using products from our Zeno renewable heating range, generating electricity for the site through 550kW of solar panels and recycling the water used in testing.

We have also introduced a range of environmentally friendly ground and air source heat pumps under the Zeno brand. The Zeno is one of Europe's most efficient heat pump ranges in Europe, with market leading efficiencies, which have helped homeowners reduce their carbon footprint over the past decade.

In recent years we have continually increased the efficiency of our Agentis oil (liquid fuel) range, which includes the UK & Ireland's only AA rated

combi boiler. However, despite these efficiencies, we still need to push towards a way of heating our homes with net zero carbon emissions.

Unfortunately for many existing properties, heat pumps are not a suitable option so we have been working extensively with government and industry agencies, test centres and colleges to pioneer a solution to replace existing oil and gas appliances.

For the highest level of carbon reductions, a switch to a 100% renewable fuel is required, in particular, HVO. While this may be relatively unknown fuel to many, it has been used throughout the world in various applications. It is a renewable liquid fuel made from certified waste fats and oils and manufactured by a synthesised process with hydrogen to create a greener, cleaner fuel.

As a result of substantial and significant ground-breaking research and investment, we're delighted to announce that all Warmflow Agentis oil boilers are HVO compatible and will be able to run on the renewable fuel with some minor recommissioning. This will give almost a 90% cut in carbon emissions immediately.



Navien endorses FlueSnug

Navien has endorsed FlueSnug, the universal flue seal that removes the need to mortar or use sealant around pipework and helps installers quickly and easily comply with Part L of the Building Regulations.

FlueSnug fits a 152mm core drilled hole and can be installed in seconds, ensuring a building's fabric is impenetrable to draughts, water, pests and insects. It can be used externally and internally and is flexible enough to be pushed through a core drilled hole, eliminating any health and safety risks or the need for expensive equipment when working at height.

"We see the benefit FlueSnug brings for our customers, with its strong rubber seal that sits flush against the fabric opening after core drilling," says Sean Keleher, national technical manager for Navien. "FlueSnug ensures the building's air tightness is not compromised and it's also aesthetically pleasing."

Alex Lever, PipeSnug director adds: "We're delighted Navien has endorsed our products and we look forward to seeing more FlueSnugs being fitted as part of Navien boiler installations."



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Impressive landmark for Teddington's KBB valve

Teddington's fire safety valves have stood the test of time, as a recent discovery in Ireland demonstrates.

One of the company's customers has just replaced a 50/60-year-old KBB fire safety valve, which has worked faultlessly on his AGA cooker through the decades.

He commented: "I have replaced what must be quite an early Teddington Fire Valve, which was fitted in the oil feed pipeline of our old AGA cooker and stamped 'Patent Applied For'. The cooker was converted from solid fuel to oil, I'd guess around 50 odd years ago, and the valve would have been fitted then."

The industry-standard valve safeguards properties against the risk of fuel being fed into a fire, which has originated somewhere than the heating appliance.

The company is urging heating engineers to ensure that any KBB fire-safety valves they have fitted are in good working order when are servicing boilers this winter.

Mick Wilkinson, Teddington's sales manager, said: "This is testament to the build quality at our UK manufacturing site in St Austell, Cornwall, where a very similar practice is still in place, ensuring the best quality of fire valve for hopefully the



next 60 years. Furthermore, we need to ensure that our customers' annual services are maintained so they get the very best from our KBBs.

"British Standard 5410-1:2014 sets out the code of practice for oil-fired appliances up to 45kW output used for heating and hot-water supply purposes. Section 16.4 on the Oil Supply System states oil-supply fire valves need to be inspected and checked for proper operation,

including testing their reset function where appropriate, at least once a year. Where leakage is suspected from an oil-supply line, pressure testing should also be carried out."

Michael added: "The non-electric valve should be installed by an OFTEC-registered engineer and has a failsafe should it be damaged, but it is essential that it is checked using appropriate electronic test equipment."

Connect this Christmas

Connect this Christmas with Warmflow's Connect Installer Scheme.

Earn rewards for you or your family by installing Warmflow boilers and registering them through Warmflow Connect. Gift the family this Christmas with an Ooni Pizza Oven or even a Playstation 5. For every boiler you register on the scheme you will earn points, which you can then use to redeem for a reward of your choice.

Free product training is also available through Connect at one of the company's seven training centres around the UK and Ireland. Registered members will also be able to benefit from bespoke advice and lead generation, as well as extended warranties.

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New Harlequin app makes life easier for installers

We caught up with Jon Jones, product category manager, Fuel Products, for Harlequin Manufacturing to talk about their newly launched oil tank app.

Harlequin is a leading manufacturer of innovative polyethylene storage tanks and systems. One of the fastest growing manufacturing companies in Northern Ireland where it is headquartered, the company has a 40-year heritage and exports to over 10 countries internationally. With a team of over 110 employees committed to doing the best for their customers, Harlequin Manufacturing has developed a diverse and innovative product range. One of the company's core values is to continually question and, if there is a better way to do something, to be willing to change and that is borne out in one of its most recent innovations – the new Harlequin Tank Centre app.

Born out of a desire to engage more with their installers, the app also makes their life easier by giving easy access to product information, regulations, installation specifications and warranty registration.

Why did you decide to launch the app?

Looking at what oil tank manufacturers offer through their apps, we realised that our only direct interaction with installers, other than phone calls to our office, was through engagement with the local area sales managers. It became clear that we needed to develop something that improved the level of interaction and

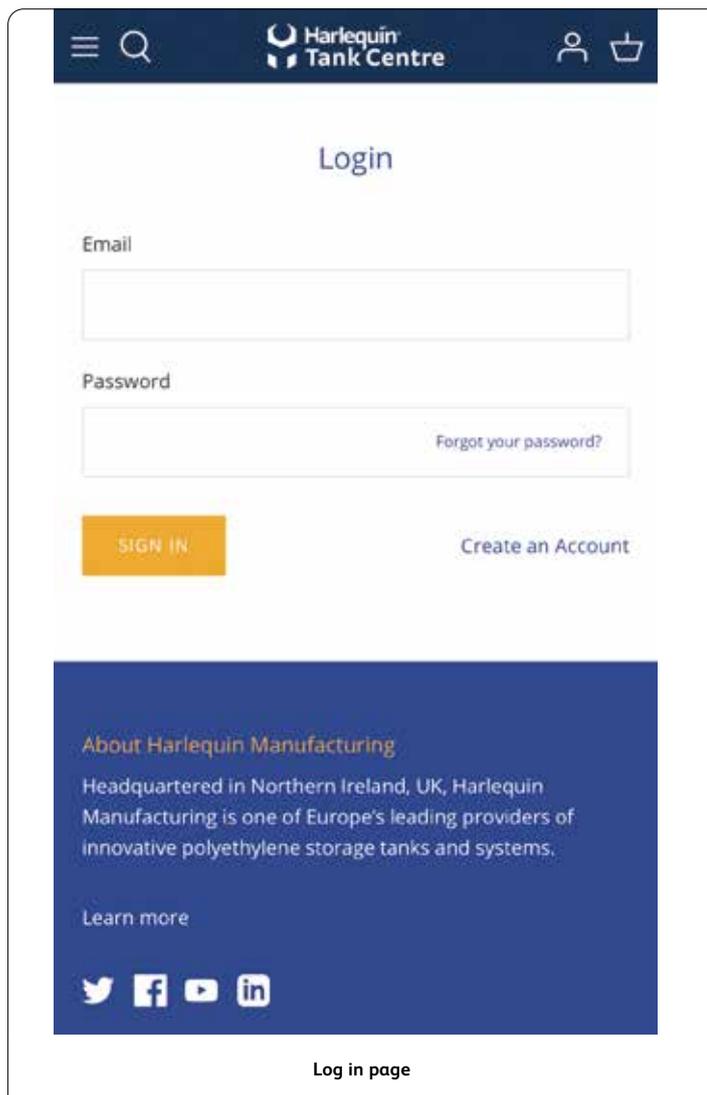
gave them instant and easy access to all the relevant information required for the successful completion of their job and staying connected with us.

It also brings the opportunity for insight from those involved in installing the tanks.

It's about being even more customer-focused and moving with the times to take advantage of technology to be closer to our installers.

What are you hoping the app will provide?

Many of our installers are not solely tank installers; they're also heating





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We recently installed Tuffa's Steel FirePro. It's a lovely, slimline tank with good capacity. The Watchman is a great bonus. – Amelia Lovegrove

The steel Tuffa FirePro is the best tank on the market. Good quality paint finish and nice to have both a mechanical gauge and Watchman. – Jonathan Poile, BRC Heating



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engineers. With a gas boiler, they know the regulations because it's something they're doing day in, day out. When it comes to an oil tank, it's much more infrequent so there are questions on regulations, or the size of the base needed.

We developed the app so that this information is readily available. They can just log onto the app via the phone, and everything is there without them needing to call our team for the right information.

You obviously had a clear idea of what you wanted so how long did it take to develop?

We knew what we wanted to achieve with it but finding the right format was the key. After doing intensive research, we decided to go with a web-based app. It took us around five months to develop and launch the app.

We launched, initially, by meeting with our installers face-to-face so that we could explain why we were doing this, show them how it worked and invite them to use it.

What are the key features of the app?

The main purpose of the mobile app is to provide relevant product information and make it easy for the installer to register the warranty while on site.

Key benefits include:

- Product information at the click of a button
- Quick Access to technical specifications including base sizes
- Ability to register product warranty while on site

The app has 2 main parts to it – product range and warranty registration as well as FAQs and the ability to contact us.

Product range

We have our standard domestic range of Bunded Oil Tanks up to 3500 litres, Diamond Tanks and Underground Oil Tanks listed on the app. You can click on any product to view the relevant information including dimensions, capacity, weight, base sizes, product features and videos. You can also download the specification sheet for future reference or share with your customers. If a specific product is of interest and you'd like to place an

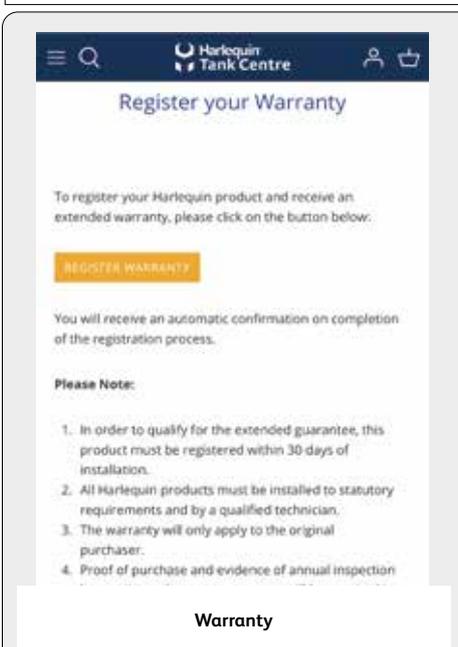
enquiry, you can do so via the app and someone from our team will get in touch with you.

Warranty registration

Warranty registration was never this easy.

You can register your warranty via the app as well. All you do is go to the warranty tab, click on register warranty which takes you to our warranty registration portal where you can register it while on site. It won't take you more than 3 minutes.

By the time an installer has finished a job, filled in all the customer paperwork it's easy to forget the warranty registration so that became a key component of the of the app. Once the installer completes his job, he can register the warranty on the phone while on site, so it's all done in one go.



Would you say the app is still evolving?

Absolutely. The app is constantly evolving.

Once the product information and warranty registration parts of the app were up and running, we added concrete base size required for varied sizes of the tank, videos of the tanks, merchandise etc... As the app gets more engagement from installers there will be opportunities for further development. Maybe a loyalty scheme.

We value the installers that work with our products, and this is our way of giving something back to them in the form of a useful tool to help them do their job faster and better.

We plan to do promotions for our registered installers only and ensure that, for any new products or information, these are the installers that are going to be in the know first.

With all these highlighted benefits, how do installers get onto the app?

It's quite simple. Visit <https://harlequin-plastics.myshopify.com/> and create an account.' All you do is enter your name, e-mail address, phone number and create a password. Once we get the request, we activate your account after which you can log in using your account email and password. You can add a shortcut to the app onto your phone home screen giving you instant access to the app whenever you need it be it on or off site.

The app can be accessed on any mobile device – apple or android.

Have you had any feedback from installers?

The installers that I've had feedback from so far are in love with it because it gives them easy access to product information and warranty registration. It also saves them time and effort taken to call our team or search for more information because it's all at their fingertips. They felt that the app worked especially for products they haven't fitted previously as they won't have the information handy. All they need to do is log on to the app and get all the product information required to help them plan for their job.

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Grant products installed at Staffordshire Training Services centre

A selection of Grant's heating products, including Aerona³ air source heat pumps, have been installed at the facilities of Staffordshire Training Services Ltd, where it runs a range of renewables training courses and assessments for heating professionals.

Located in Stafford, Staffordshire Training Services has refurbished its premises, a project which has included the installation of new products for its course delegates to use to complete their training. A number of Grant products have been installed including two Aerona³ air source heat pumps, one of which is part of a working system and one which is a mobile unit, as well as a Quick Recovery hot water cylinder. In addition, Staffordshire Training Services is also building a solar thermal roof installation, which will feature in-roof and on-roof Grant solar thermal collectors and is due to be completed later this year. A selection of Grant's HVO biofuel compatible Vortex oil boilers will also be installed during a later phase of the redevelopment project.

As an LCL Awards Approved Centre, Staffordshire Training Services runs



both the Level 3 Installation and Maintenance of Air Source Heat Pumps Systems and the Low Temperature Heating and Hot Water Systems in Dwellings courses at its premises. Heating engineers who complete either of these qualifications at the centre will now be able to gain hands-on experience with Aerona³ heat pumps, completing their training on these units and developing their knowledge and understanding of working with this low carbon technology.

In addition, the installation of Grant's heat pump, solar thermal and boiler ranges at these premises will allow the Grant UK Training Academy to run its own product specific training courses at the Staffordshire Heating Services'

centre. Towards the end of this year, Grant's Training Academy will be able to run its Air Source Heat Pump two-day product training course from this centre. Furthermore, once the solar thermal roof installation and Vortex oil boilers have been installed, Grant's trainers will then be able to offer the company's solar thermal range and oil-fired boiler product training courses from these facilities, when Staffordshire Training Services will become an official training partner of the Grant UK Training Academy.

"We have been working closely with the team at Staffordshire Training Services to help them choose the right selection of products to suit its requirements," comments Phil Stanley, Grant's training manager.

"The Aerona³ heat pumps now installed at the centre are already being used for the LCL Awards Level 3 courses that Staffordshire Training Services is hosting. We are also looking forward to the centre becoming one of our official training partners, enabling the Grant Training Academy to increase the number of Grant product training courses we offer to installers up and down the country, working alongside our existing facilities in Wiltshire at our Headquarters and with our other training partners in North Yorkshire and West Lothian."

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Changes affecting England regarding carbon monoxide (CO) alarms

In England, from the 1st of October, changes were made to Building Regulations Approved Document J. It is now a requirement to install a carbon monoxide alarm when installing or replacing a fixed-combustion fuel-burning appliance in a dwelling, this excludes gas appliances used solely for cooking.

The alarm should comply with BS 50291-1:2018, be provided in the room where the appliance is located and be powered by a battery designed to operate for the working life of the alarm, it should also incorporate a warning device to alert users when the working life of the alarm is about to expire. As an alternative, a mains-powered alarm with fixed wiring (not a plug-in type) conforming to BS EN 50291 of the Type A type may be used, providing they are fitted with a sensor failure warning device.



Further guidance and recommendations on the installation of carbon monoxide alarms are available in BS EN 50292:2013 and from manufacturers' instructions.

Building Regulations Approved Document J

Winter service checks and stock essentials

The impact of rain and low temperatures can pose problems for fuel storage, so it is important to be aware of this during a service visit. It is important to check for water in a liquid fuel storage tank during the service. Loose filling and vent caps, sight gauges and damaged float gauges are common problems and can result in the ingress of water. If this is overlooked, and we experience extreme drops in temperature, it can be a lot more difficult to resolve once frozen, leaving customers without heat or facing unnecessary repairs. Also, visual inspection of the tank for cracks, distortion or leaks is important. Checking flue terminals for leaves, clutter and items being stored too close is also something of which to be conscious.

As many of you will be aware, it is common to attend a service visit and be faced with additional requests or problems from the customer, so stocking up on common items is a good idea. For vulnerable customers, changing the batteries on battery-operated thermostats, telemetry for fuel level gauges and checking CO alarms are jobs that can be really appreciated, even the setting of the time clock can be helpful.

When a service is carried out it is important to record any non-compliances or required remedial work on your CD/11 liquid fuel servicing and commissioning report and, where necessary, advise of any potential or immediate risks on a CD/14 warning and advice notice.

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Heat loss calculations

One of the most common questions OFTEC's technical team receives from technicians when installing a liquid fuelled heating system that is either part of a new system, or is a replacement component, is "what calculation method can, or should, I use?"

A recent survey showed 50% of OFTEC registered technicians were not aware of the recent changes made in England to Approved Document Part L (ADL). So firstly, we will provide some information about regional changes.

The changes made to ADL came into effect on June 15th 2022, whereby six documents were split into two Building Regulation 2010 Approved Document Part L volume 1: Dwellings and volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings. Other regional effective dates regarding energy efficiency requirements are shown in the table below.

Region	Document	Effective date
England	Approved Document L	
	Volume 1: Dwellings	15 June 2022
	Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings	15 June 2022
Wales	Approved Document L	
	Volume 1: Dwellings	23 November 2022
	Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings	29 March 2023
Scotland	Technical Handbooks	
	Domestic Building services compliance guide	1 December 2022
	Non-Domestic Building services compliance guide	1 December 2022
ROI	Technical Guidance L	TBC
NI	Technical Document F1 F2	June 2022
Guernsey	Technical Standards L1 L2	TBC
Jersey	Technical Guidance Part 11	TBC

The following text from the current Approved Document L, V1 (England), states:

Sizing space heating systems

5.8 The specification of space heating systems should be based on both of the following.

- An appropriate heat loss calculation for the dwelling.
- A sizing methodology that takes account of the properties of the dwelling, such as the CIBSE Domestic Building Services Guide.

Systems should not be significantly oversized.

Sizing domestic hot water systems

5.11 Domestic hot water systems should be sized for the anticipated

domestic hot water demand of the dwelling, based on BS EN 12831-3 or the Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering's Plumbing Engineering Services Design Guide. Systems should not be significantly oversized.

NOTE – For temperature limits to control legionella bacteria in domestic hot water systems, see Approved Document G.

This means that methods previously used, such as the whole house boiler calculation method CE54, are no longer acceptable and a suitable calculation, based on the aforementioned, should be used. A room-by-room heat loss calculation is important for demonstrating that the system is not significantly oversized and will provide compliance. A record of this must be retained by the installer and a copy provided to the customer.

In relation to the question "what calculation method can, or should I use?", There is no one answer to this question. Industry professionals, manufacturers, software developers, and app designers are all currently creating tools to help technicians. OFTEC would encourage technicians to:

- Watch our webinar with Heat Engineer Software Ltd (available on the OFTEC website).
- Familiarise yourself with the appropriate regional requirements (QR codes below).
- Pursue further training on heat loss and low-temperature heating design courses.
- Obtain a copy of the Domestic Heating Design Guide.

Non-domestic building services compliance guide for Scotland



Domestic building services guide for Scotland



Approved Document L Volume 1 Dwellings – Wales



Approved Document L Vol 1 Dwellings and Vol 2 Buildings other than dwellings – England



Fuel price commentary

The latest set of fuel price figures presented below make grim reading for all heating users. With the exception of LPG, the current annual costs are all well above the long-term average and the increases we're seeing will stretch budgets for many households and businesses this winter. Fortunately, in the UK, the cost of oil has fallen, and only increased slightly in the RoI.

The Sutherland Tables look at average annual heating costs, so there's always a lag in their figures compared to prices today. For example, the figures quoted above do not include the latest increases for gas and electricity that came in in October, so the comparative cost of oil looks

worse than it would now. But what comes through very clearly when you compare the current price to the four-year average, is that the cost for all technologies except LPG (which was already high) have risen steeply. When the figures are next published, we'll see the full impact of those October gas and electricity increases – which will be higher for oil and gas in the UK, despite the new price cap.

The support for gas and electricity reduces the actual unit cost, so these users will benefit in direct proportion to the energy they use. By comparison, the the flat £200 payment for oil users seems less generous. However, the value of the £200 payment. However, it seems the

value of the £100 payment may have been based on the energy usage of an 'average UK home', rather than an average oil heated home which tend to be bigger, older, and detached, and has a significantly higher heat demand than a gas heated equivalent. We can conclude that some oil heated homes and businesses are probably getting significantly less help than those on gas.

We've adjusted the figures this month to compare the latest data with that from the last quarter – reflecting how quickly prices are changing. However, we've kept the long-term average to provide a broader comparison.

Comparative space and water heating costs for a three-bedroomed home In Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

GREAT BRITAIN

	Jun-22	Sep-22	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heater	3550	3882	332	9.35%	2403
Gas condensing boiler	1345	1414	69	5.13%	974
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	1591	1630	39	2.45%	1533
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	1885	1846	-39	-2.07%	1081
Wood pellets	1819	2249	430	23.64%	1570
Air source heat pump radiators	2850	3111	261	9.16%	2024
Air source heat pump underfloor	2390	2606	216	9.04%	1620

NORTHERN IRELAND

	Jun-22	Sep-22	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heater	2420	3206	786	32.48%	2050
Gas condensing boiler	1392	1970	578	41.52%	1041
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	2218	2293	75	3.38%	2038
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	1792	1783	-9	-0.50%	1035
Wood pellets	1446	1715	269	18.60%	1228
Air source heat pump radiators	2112	2679	567	26.85%	1798
Air source heat pump underfloor	1748	2215	467	26.72%	1424

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	Jun-22	Sep-22	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heater	2994	3387	393	13.13%	2371
Gas condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	1955	1955	0	0.00%	1416
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	2637	2758	121	4.59%	2441
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	2371	2386	15	0.63%	1466
Wood pellets	1757	2020	263	14.97%	1425
Air source heat pump radiators	2684	2878	194	7.23%	2062
Air source heat pump underfloor	2286	2878	592	25.90%	1711

Notes. The tables above are based on quarterly data published by the Sutherland Tables. They show the annual average cost of a range of heating options for a typical pre-1980 three bedroomed semi-detached home with a heat requirement of approximately 16,000 kWh.



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