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New government, same challenges

Honesty in politics is an important principle. Unfortunately, politicians are wise to the potential risks of being too honest and often try to avoid scrutiny by simply avoiding discussion about what



they plan to do. This means voting with your fingers crossed and, for households off the gas grid, there could be a lot at stake in the next five years.

During the election Labour (and indeed the other parties) gave little away about how they plan to decarbonise heating, but they inherit all the same challenges that the Conservatives struggled with. Put simply, how do you deliver policy recommendations from your climate change advisors that are based on what the boffins say is the best solution, but which voters won't accept, can't afford and, for many off-grid homes, simply won't work?

The right answer is to be pragmatic and accept that there's more than one way to skin a cat (apologies to cat lovers). Yes, heat pumps are important, but other technologies are also needed, and to see off-grid homes as an ideal starting point for their deployment – which many, including the CCC, still claim – would be to simply repeat mistakes that have already been made. However, carbon budgets need not be missed because a solution is already at hand, all they need to do is empower us as an industry to deploy HVO.

This flies in the face of official advice, so it would undoubtably be a brave choice for a new government. But with a huge majority Labour can afford to be brave. Better still, it would send a positive message to the voters in the rural seats they've recently won, that they made a good choice. And, in any case, is it really brave to defy the boffins and give rural households something they've already overwhelmingly said in the Future Ready Fuel poll that they want?

Martin (ooke

OFTEC Chairman

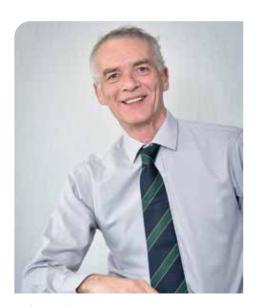
OFTEC staff news

David Knipe appointed Technical and Training Manager

OFTEC is pleased to announce that David Knipe has been appointed OFTEC Technical and Training Manager. Previously OFTEC Training Manager, David will now oversee both the technical and training departments.

David has worked as OFTEC Training Manager for over 13 years, so brings a wealth of experience and industry knowledge to his new role, making him well-placed to

manage both departments going forward



In his new role, David will further build the collaboration between OFTEC's technical and training teams. Working closely with the two teams, he will focus on identifying the industry issues and trends that technicians are facing day to day. These insights will be used to refine the training programmes, technical manual and field guides to ensure technicians have all the support they need.

One of life's optimists, away from OFTEC, David is a passionate Leicester City fan and keen angler. He also plays the bass guitar.

Sam Limer joins the inspection team

OFTEC welcomes Sam Limer, who is joining the OFTEC inspection team. Sam has been an oil heating engineer and plumber since he was 16 and has many years' experience as a heating technician. He will be operating in the north west of England.

Away from work, Sam enjoys trials motorcycling, car track days and loves being a football/dancing dad on a Saturday morning.



John Vinter Inspector Manager, on the right, welcoming Sam to OFTEC

Mark Bingley

OFTEC was saddened to learn that Mark Bingley of Ecoflam UK recently passed away. Now part of the Ariston Group, Ecoflam and Mark have been long-term supporters of OFTEC's work, with Mark actively sharing his vast knowledge at technical meetings and participating in industry events. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this difficult time.



The people have voted - but what does it mean for the heating industry?

The General Election, on 4th July, transformed the UK's political landscape. Before the election, of the 100 constituencies with the most oil heating, 99 were held by the Conservatives. Now, they only hold 42, and the party's MPs no longer have influence over the decisions that affect our industry. That means much of OFTEC's lobbying work must be refocussed.

What are the implications of the new Government for our industry?

The first thing to say is that the timing of the election was unhelpful to us; had the election been held later in the year our recent positive work, aimed at getting the consultation on a renewable liquid fuel obligation launched, may have reached fruition.

Labour's manifesto and recent public statements give little away on what we should expect. There was no mention of off-grid heating, although a specific commitment not to force people to rip out their existing boiler was included. Ed Miliband, the new DESNZ minister, also stated he would scrap the Conservative-proposed 2035 boiler ban. The King's Speech on 17th July – which sets out the Government's business programme – contained no plans on heat policy, but the announcement of a Bill to support sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) production is potentially helpful for the growth of HVO production.

It's worth noting that a significant number of seats where oil heating is popular are now held by Labour MPs, but with slender majorities. This will be helpful for our ongoing policy engagement. Many are also now held by the Lib Dems and, with cross-party support built over the last year, we have strong foundations in place and our overarching renewable liquid fuels policy objectives are unchanged.

A joint letter from OFTEC and UKIFDA, signed by over 100 trade association members, has been sent to Ed Miliband, welcoming him to his new ministerial role and setting out the benefits of renewable liquid fuels such as HVO. We also highlighted the challenges faced by off-grid households and how we can support the Government's decarbonisation ambitions. We have also requested a meeting with Miatta Fahnbulleh, the new Minister directly responsible for clean

The new Labour Government is already under considerable pressure to increase the rate of progress towards net zero. No doubt they will be receiving a lot of advice on what they should do, not least from their formal advisors the Climate Change Committee (CCC). In their latest annual

Help us to build a strong support base!

We need to leave new rural MPs in no doubt that local people want the option to use renewable liquid fuels like HVO. The best way



to do that is to get more oil-heated households to join the Future Ready Fuel campaign. The bigger our support, the more likely we are to succeed.

You can give us vital help by handing all your customers a copy of our Future Ready Fuel flyer. It's free! All you have to do is order copies from OFTEC's marketing team at marketing@oftec.org or phone 01473 626298. Electronic PDF copies are available too if you send out material to customers electronically.

Please help – with a new Government in power, this is a critical year for our campaign.

Have you heard about the government's rural heating plans?

The government plans that, from 2035, you will no longer be able to install a new fossil fuel oil boiler in your home. Most households will be expected to switch to a heat pump – which can cost from £10,000 – £30,000.

We think there's a better option



- HVO is a renewable liquid fuel for your home

- Reduces carbon emissions by up to 909
 Low upfront cost and limited disruption

- Easy conversion for existing all heating system

Visit out website www.futurereadyfuel.info

report, the CCC was critical of the previous Conservative Government's decision to roll back the proposed ban on the installation of oil heating to 2035. Others within industry will also be making similar points, so it's vital we present an alternative view.

What OFTEC is doing

On behalf of everyone in the oil heating industry, and our customers, OFTEC will be on the front foot with the new Government. We'll be making a strong case for why renewable liquid fuels like HVO are needed. We'll explain that decarbonisation can only happen if citizens

buy in to the changes, and this is best achieved if they are fair, affordable and avoid disruption. HVO provides the necessary choice, and we have strong public support – over 88% of households in a recent survey wanted the option to use it – so we have a strong message for Labour: if you want to succeed in decarbonising heating, you'll need our help.

Our lobbying next steps include:

- Engagement with newly-elected Labour and Lib Dem MPs in seats with high oil heating usage.
- Writing to DESNZ ministers to request meetings about the introduction of renewable liquid fuels.
- Engagement with supportive MPs around relevant Westminster debates.



- Attendance at the Labour conference in September where we are holding a fringe event.
- A drop-in event in Westminster for MPs in October.
- Engagement with Parliamentary committees, once their make-up has been announced.
- Ongoing contact with supportive Scottish and Welsh MPs/MSPs and MSs.

We would also like to get a senior Labour minister, or even Keir Starmer, down to Kehelland to view our HVO demonstration project, and to see first-hand what a popular and effective solution it is for oil-heated homes.

It's going to be a busy autumn, so look out for updates in our e-news and future editions of Oil Installer!

Attention OFTEC registrants!



ORDER NOW

OFTEC Direct is an exclusive service for OFTEC registrants. The online shop offers a variety of essential products for heating technicians, including control documentation, warning stickers and tags, date of next service stickers, technical manuals, and the liquid fuel field guide.

Access to the shop is restricted to registered businesses, technicians, and trade association members. Once logged in, you can find a link to OFTEC Direct in the green header on the website.



www.oftec.org/oftec-direct

Scottish MCS certification fund

The Scottish Government and the Energy Saving Trust have partnered to provide an MCS certification fund to support installers of heating systems to transition low-carbon heating systems such as heat pumps.

In Scotland, the transition to net zero emissions will involve changing the type of heating used in more than two million homes and 100,000 non-domestic buildings by 2045.

Scottish businesses working in heating sector will need to scale up to meet anticipated demand.

The Scottish Government's MCS certification fund provides heating engineers with an interest in installing heat pumps (either air, ground or water source) with a grant to become MCS certified on heat pumps.

The grant will pay 75%, up to

a maximum of £1,000, of the certification fees and will run until funds run out or until the end of March 2025, whatever comes first.

Ian Rippin, MCS CEO, stated: "The MCS Certification Fund is also helping hundreds of installers meet industry-expected standards of skill and competence to supply these technologies.

"If we are to reach UK targets of installing 600,000 heat pumps a year by 2028 and match supply with public demand, we need to see more supportive policies just like those in Scotland already."

If you meet the requirements and would like to find out more, please visit: https://mcscertified.com/installers-manufacturers/becoming-certified/.

NEWS IN BRIEF Welsh Heat Strategy published

The Welsh government has published its Heat Strategy for Wales and it can be viewed here: gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-07/heat-strategy-wales.pdf

The strategy was published with supporting information revealing that few changes have been made since the original consultation, held in 2023. Claiming to be based on the Climate Change Committee's guidance, the strategy identifies heat pumps as the primary mechanism for domestic heat decarbonisation in Wales and it now contains a target to install 580,000 heat pumps by 2035 – 43% of all Welsh homes. OFTEC and UKIFDA's response has been completely ignored, as has the challenge of decarbonising the many rural off-grid buildings in Wales. Disappointingly, the supporting material references misleading and already discredited references as justification for ignoring renewable liquid fuels.

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 mean they no longer have the right to display themselves as OFTEC registered.

From 24 April to 18 July 2024 a total of six businesses had their membership revoked*.

The revoked businesses are:



Company No.	Business Name
4829	A M B Boiler Services
500675	AA Cooper Ltd
102414	Frampton Plumbing & Heating Ltd
3213	H & G Sims Ltd
102533	R H Parry
501377	RA Plumber

^{*} Businesses have the right to appeal decisions regarding any sanctions made by OFTEC..

Climate Change Committee annual report criticises current heat policy

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) has published its annual progress report to Parliament. The Committee assessed that 'no progress' had been made on 12 of last year's priority recommendations and was particularly critical of what it sees as backward steps in our industry sector. These include the decisions to exempt 20% of households from the 2035 phaseout of new boilers, the delay in the phase-out of new oil boilers, the delay in the start of the clean heat market mechanism and the decision to not proceed with planned energy efficiency requirements for landlords.

The CCC is likely to have greater influence with the new Labour Government than the previous Conservative administration, so OFTEC will monitor policy developments closely, and promote the role of renewable liquid fuels in heating.

InstallerShow – How do we solve the off-grid heating debate?

OFTEC had a successful InstallerShow and it was great to meet so many registered heating technicians. Our stand was busy throughout the threeday event, and we also participated in a well-attended panel discussion called Great Debate 6: How do we solve off-grid heating? If you missed the discussion – in which our industry was represented by OFTEC's Malcolm Farrow, and Neil Sawers, Commercial Technical Manager of Grant UK - you can still view a video of the event via a link on the OFTEC website events page.

Government officials visit Worcester Bosch to see Heat Training Grant progress

Officials from DESNZ & Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) visited the Worcester Bosch HQ today to assess how the Heat Training Grant has been utilised.

The £5 million Heat Training Grant provides heating engineers with £500 discounts towards becoming a fully qualified heat pump installer. Applicants need to sign up for the training through their chosen provider – with courses available in over 60 locations throughout England including Worcester Bosch - to confirm they are eligible and receive the £500 discount.

DESNZ and MNZH spoke to individuals from Worcester Bosch, as well as installers, to discuss the workings of the heat pump training funding and the effectiveness of Worcester Bosch's training for delegates.



The number of individuals completing training to become qualified heat pump installers saw a significant increase last year, rising by 166% from just under 3,000 in 2022 to almost 8,000 in 2023

Training academies like Worcester Bosch are playing a crucial role in this growth, with 582 delegates having been trained across the company's training facilities in Worcester, Wakefield and Thurrock.

Martyn Bridges, Director of External Affairs at Worcester Bosch, commented: "Today's visit by DESNZ & MNZH to our HQ provided an invaluable opportunity for them to see firsthand how the grant funding is being utilised and assess the effectiveness of the scheme. As one of its approved heat pump training providers, we were able to showcase our training programs and discuss the progress and impact with both our team and installers.

"This direct engagement is crucial for ensuring the continued success and improvement of the initiative and we are looking forward to continuing our close working relationship with DESNZ & MNZH moving forward."



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Trustmark: building trust with your customers

Nicola Waller, membership director at TrustMark, explains the benefits of joining TrustMark, and why the quality mark should be part of an OFTEC registered installer's toolkit to create new work opportunities and grow their business.

TrustMark is the UK's only governmentendorsed quality scheme for work carried out in or around the home, whether that's installing energy efficiency measures or landscaping a garden. Since we started in 2005, we have been working to help drive up standards across the industry, and improve the protection offered to homeowners when having work done. As a scheme provider of TrustMark, OFTEC continues to be a great supporter and has a growing membership of installers who are TrustMark registered.

Who is TrustMark?

TrustMark is a not-for-profit business, focused on customers – tradespeople and homeowners – and not on shareholders. We continually reinvest into the scheme to enhance the support we provide to our registered businesses and scheme providers.

We help homeowners find a tradesperson who is skilled, trained and competent to carry out the work they need through our online search facility, 'Find a Trader'. If you're a heating engineer (liquid fuel), or working with electrical, heat pumps, biomass or solar thermal, you can apply to join our other 17,000+ registered businesses. Our everexpanding online directory helps homeowners to find reliable, quality tradespeople who are all working to the highest professional standard in their local areas.

Licence to operate

TrustMark operates under a master licence agreement, issued by the Government's Department for Business and Trade. This agreement sets out what we do and how we do it.

We licence and work with a network of 38 scheme providers – of which OFTEC is one – and they are all committed to meeting the requirements of our quality scheme. In turn, our scheme providers licence and work with their TrustMark registered businesses to ensure they commit to and maintain the required standards of technical competence, trading practices and customer service. These encompass over 130 different service types from plumbers, electricians and builders to carpet cleaners and pest controllers.

Why join TrustMark?

Adding TrustMark to your OFTEC registration, you will have access to the following benefits:

Access to new work

- We work with third parties to identify and create new work opportunities across all our trades.
- We provide access to exclusive finance and cashback options for your customers from leading financial institutions.
- We are recommended by lenders, local authorities and well-known brands and services.

Build your business

- Customers can easily find you using TrustMark's 'Find a Trader' online directory.
- Your unique TrustMark profile, which you can link to your website, will let you manage customer enquiries, track progress, manage your business presence and build positive feedback.
- Display the TrustMark logo on your letterheads, marketing material, website and vehicles to provide additional assurance to potential customers that you are a quality business.
- Benefit from our marketing initiatives aimed at driving customers to the TrustMark website and gain more exposure for your business.

Making your life easier

- 24/7 access to our business portal. Promote your business with a personalised profile page to showcase your work, collect reviews and build your reputation.
- Access to advice, guidance and

template contracts all based around the TrustMark code of conduct, providing clear legislative support in partnership with Trading Standards.

Protecting you and your customers

 We provide guidance on managing and resolving customer complaints, including access to the independent Dispute Resolution Ombudsman (DRO) service, giving businesses and customers the tools to handle complaints in a smooth and professional manner.

Working with key partners

At TrustMark, we work closely with a number of different partner organisations which share our mission to raise trading standards and improve consumer protection. By working together, we can enhance the work our registered businesses carry out at their customer's home and offer advice and support, ranging from safety online to energy advice.

Our partners span many sectors and range from finance, government, accommodation and charities to consumer protection professionals and energy efficiency, such as Age UK, Airbnb, Citizens Advice Bureau, Energy Saving Trust and Grand Designs.

We have also teamed up with several industry-leading organisations to offer a whole range of exclusive offers and discounts tailored to our registered businesses. These include: AA, ARMD, easyToolhire, Europear, Fergus, Fuel Card Services, Mellor Financial Training, My Staff Shop, Octopus Electric Vehicles and Wickes TradePro.

Want to know more?

For further information about TrustMark, and what the quality mark can provide for your registered businesses, visit www.oftec.org/ technicians/areas-of-registration/ trustmark-registration



Solid fuel heating and air quality – why the detailed data matters

The Stove Industry Association takes a closer look at the important detail within the annual National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) data, and what it tells us about the opportunities to further reduce emissions from domestic combustion.

What tends to be missing from the press coverage of the Government's annual air pollution data is any explanation of the detail behind the headlines. Because of this you are often left with the sense that all wood burning stoves are inherently bad.

Part of the reason is the use of the term" wood burning stoves' – something that can be seen across many mainstream media outlets. The reason this term is problematic is because it is reductive and, while it is very effective at reinforcing a negative narrative around domestic wood burning, it fails to properly reflect the facts within the data.

As reported by the Stove Industry Association (SIA) earlier this year, the latest NAEI data set shows that in 2022 (a record year for stove sales) the total PM2.5 emissions from "domestic combustion" fell by 4% compared to the previous year, and that PM2.5 emissions from domestic wood combustion, specifically, fell by 2.7% – facts ignored by the media.

The reason for this omission may be partly due to the way the NAEI data is presented. Within this summary, the heading 'domestic combustion' is used to cover all combustion activities at home which, as well as the burning of solid fuel in a fireplace setting, also includes the use of gas, oil and LPG boilers, gas cookers, and the outdoor use of coal and charcoal.

As is so often the case, it is the detail that paints the clearest picture and, the NAEI data tables are not short on detail. In fact, when we look closely the category usually referred to as 'wood burning stoves', we can see that this is an amalgamation of no less than 28 different data sets (see table).

To make informed choices on how

we heat our homes and gain a better understanding of how modern stoves are helping to drive down emissions, we need to look at the detail in these categories.

Firstly, it shows us that there was a huge difference between the PM2.5 emissions produced by an open fire compared to an Ecodesign closed stove in 2022; the former being

responsible for 13.3% of total UK PM2.5 emissions, while the latter accounts for just 1.8%.

Secondly, it reveals that the type of fuel we choose to burn has a significant impact on emissions. When looking at wood fuel only, open fires account for 9.8% of total UK PM2.5 emissions and Ecodesign stoves a much lower 1.4%.

NAEI Source Name & Description	NAEI Activity Name
Domestic Closed Stove – Basic (Any closed stove pre EN13240 2001)	Anthracite Coal Petroleum coke SSF Wood – Dry Wood – Seasoned Wood – Wet
Domestic Closed Stove – Ecodesign (Stoves that comply with the Ecodesign standard introduced in 2022)	Anthracite Coal Petroleum coke SSF Wood – Dry Wood – Seasoned Wood – Wet
Domestic Closed Stove – Upgraded (Stoves that comply with the EN13240 standard introduced in 2001)	Anthracite Coal Petroleum coke SSF Wood – Dry Wood – Seasoned Wood – Wet
Domestic Fireplace – Standard (UK open grate fireplaces)	Anthracite Coal Petroleum coke SSF Wood – Dry Wood – Seasoned Wood – Wet

Furthermore, the data also shows the impact that dry wood fuel has on reducing emissions, bringing the figures above down to 1.8% of total UK PM2.5 from open fires and just 0.3% from Ecodesign compliant stove models.

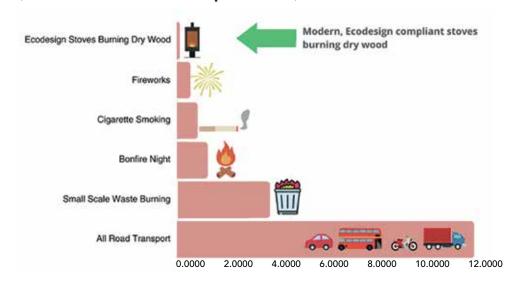
By choosing a modern, Ecodesign stove and only burning dry (at or below 20% moisture content) wood fuel, PM2.5 emissions are minimal.

By way of further context, the NAEI data also shows us that:

- Road transport PM2.5 emissions were 66.7 times higher than Ecodesign stoves burning dry wood in 2022.
- Cigarette smoking caused 4.7 times the amount of PM2.5 as Ecodesign stoves burning dry wood.
- Small scale waste burning produces 22.7 times the level of PM2.5 emissions as Ecodesign stoves burning dry wood.
- The PM2.5 emissions created on bonfire night are 7.4 times higher than Ecodesign stoves burning dry wood.

For those working in the solid fuel heating sector, the data from the NAEI presents a clear message. To reduce emissions and improve air quality, it's essential to adopt a best practice

Ecodesign stoves burning dry wood compared to other localised PM2.5 emission sources 2022 (shown in ktonnes PM2.5 per source)



 $Data\ Source: https://naei.beis.gov.uk/resources/PivotTableViewer_2024_Submission_AQ_v1.xlsx$

approach by recommending to customers the latest stove technology and use of the best quality dried wood fuel.

The Stove Industry Association is the only UK trade association representing all links in the stove industry supply chain. SIA

offers membership options for manufacturers, distributors, retailers, solid fuel appliance and chimney system installers, chimney sweeps and industry bodies, and by signing up you will be playing your part in helping to protect and grow the UK stove industry. To find out more visit https://stoveindustryassociation.org/become-a-member-of-the-sia/



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What else can I get from my OFTEC registration?

It's a question we often get asked and one we are always happy to answer. We know that works notification, receiving technical help, control documentation and the OFTEC brand are the top benefits of being OFTEC registered but, apart from these, do you know what else is available? Here is a quick guide to the additional benefits we have sourced as potentially useful to heating professionals.



Insurance cover you can trust

Public liability insurance is a mandatory requirement for heating businesses (minimum £2 million cover) and, if you undertake design of installations, then professional indemnity is also recommended (minimum £250,000 cover). Insurance can of course be obtained quickly from comparison websites, but do you really know what you are getting? OFTEC has partnered with Trade Direct Insurance, which has been providing tailor-made insurance and support to the construction trade for over 40 years.

To find out more call 01483 521 637 or visit https://www. tradedirectinsurance.co.uk/ourpartners/oftec/#CallMeBack. You can also read more about public liability insurance on page 6.



Fuel cards for discounted fuel (and electric vehicle charging)

We don't need to tell you that fuelling your work vehicle is a big business expense, so any way to lower this expenditure must be good. If you haven't already joined a fuel club to lower your fuel bills then it may be worth talking to FleetMaxx Solutions on 01367 704910, or visit https://www. fleetmaxxsolutions.co.uk/partner/ oftec/ Fuel cards can be used at the major brands and supermarket petrol



Federation of small businesses (FSB)

Probably not something a heating technician thinks about, but when you see the range of services it offers small businesses, you may decide it's worth a chat. Among the business

problems you may encounter that it can help with are debt recovery, legal and health and safety advice, employment advice and workplace pensions.

To find out more, and to get £30 off the joining fee, call 07825 669182 or email richard.george@fsb.org.uk or go online at https://join.fsb.org.uk/ essentials (quoting ÓFTEC30 will get the discount).

Expanding your registration

Once your business is registered with OFTEC, it's then possible to expand into our other schemes that could unlock more potential customers for you. We are now in a world where decarbonising homes will be massive in the years to come, and regional governments have funding available to the heating sector for homeowners to tap into. However, to be eligible, a heating business needs to be certified to certain endorsed registration schemes. This is where OFTEC can help, and we offer registration for the schemes listed below.



Microgeneration **Certification Scheme**

(MCS) - This is a certification scheme for **CERTIFIED** installers of renewable systems. OFTEC is

accredited to offer heat pumps, solar thermal and biomass installer certification and MCS registration is needed so your customers can access the Boiler Upgrade Scheme funding in England and Wales and the Home Energy Grant in Scotland.

To find out more about MCS call our registration team on 01473 626298 or visit https://www.oftec.org/ technicians/areas-of-registration/mcsregistration



PAS 2030 installer scheme for energy efficient measures - This certification scheme is based on the publicly available standard for

installing energy efficient measures

in existing dwellings. Measures are typically heating system components and controls, hot water systems, insulation to prevent heat loss, and water efficient taps and showers. Work funded by the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) requires the installer to be certified to PAS 2030 and relevant measures. This heating and plumbing work is currently available in Great Britain under ECO4 until March

To find out more about the PAS 2030 installer scheme call our registration team on 01473 626298 or visit https:// www.oftec.org/technicians/areas-ofregistration/pas-2030-registration



TrustMark Scheme - is a government-endorsed quality mark for trades performing work in or around homes. The scheme's aim is to give consumers a level of expectation of the way a heating business will work, which must be in accordance with the TrustMark customer charter. In addition, if something goes wrong, TrustMark offers a range of remedies to give further protection to consumers. TrustMark is also a requirement to access ECO4 work.

To find out more about TrustMark registration, please call our registration team on 01473 626298 or visit https://www.oftec.org/ technicians/areas-of-registration/ trustmark-registration You can also read more about TrustMark on page 9.

Here's the small print.

All extensions of registration carry additional fees and an up-front on-boarding inspection or audit before certification. Certification has to be maintained through paying the annual fee and undertaking an annual inspection or audit to ensure you still meet the particular scheme requirements.

Understanding public liability – why you need insurance

Public Liability Insurance is often seen as a necessary evil, but as our trusted partners, Trade Direct Insurance, explain, it offers vital protection for heating businesses.

Working in the various heating industries can pose many risks to you and the public while you're on the job. No matter how much care is taken to manage hazards and make a working area safe, the risk of an accident is always present. Public liability insurance is designed to cover you and your business against claims for injury or damage made by your customers or members of the public.

What is public liability insurance?

Whether an incident happens on your premises, or when you or your employees are out and about, public liability insurance helps to shield your business against unforeseen costs. Even when you do everything right, accidents can happen. Any business can face compensation claims and

legal fees, whether you're a sole trader, or you have your own business and employees. Could your business afford to pay a potentially significant claim? For the cost of a relatively small premium, public liability insurance can give you peace of mind in knowing that your business is covered in the event of a claim.

Do I need public liability insurance?

Public liability insurance can mitigate many of the risks that heating installers and engineers face. It's not a legal requirement, but some larger commercial companies may require your business to have a certain level of public liability insurance before working with you. Likewise, registration bodies, including OFTEC, ask its registered businesses to be fully insured, up to a minimum of £2million/€2.8million.

What does it cover?

Public liability claims can arise from several circumstances. Working on heating systems has risks. If a customer or a member of the public gets injured while you work, public liability insurance offers protection in the case of damage to a customer's property, including any compensation and legal costs which may arise as a result. Public liability claims can have a huge financial impact on a heating installation business. It will even cover claims for simple accidents such as accidentally knocking over a mug of coffee and damaging a customer's laptop.

How much does public liability insurance cost?

We understand that price is an important factor – especially for small businesses – so we keep our policy premiums competitive. We aim to keep tradespeople covered against the risks that could stop them from trading. The cost of a policy depends on several things, including the size of your business and what trade you carry out.

To find out how much a policy would cost your business, talk to their experts on 01483 521 637.



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New role for Martyn Bridges

Worcester Bosch's Martyn Bridges has taken on a new role as Director of External Affairs. He talks to Oil Installer about what it involves, how it came about, and what he would like to achieve.

How does this new role differ from your previous work at the company, or is this more about building on your existing engagement work?

This role is not necessarily a new one, but more of an extension of what I've been doing for many years.

As we're entering a net zero ambition period, government and European legislation is coming at us thick and fast, and so the majority of my role will include – and has included for a while – representing Worcester on the various trade associations, where we are members. With the increasing frequency of these meetings in the lead up to net zero, it became challenging to manage this part-time. So – having recognised the significant importance on our business – we determined that we needed someone dedicated to this role full-time.

Ultimately, the role has changed to enable me to have more time to proactively attend, and prepare for, such meetings and communicate back to the business without other commitments.

Over the last few years, we're seeing some of the major changes in various government departments, which are not really interested in opinions anymore – they want hard evidence. Therefore, a key part of my role includes evidence gathering on, for example, government policy proposals, what impact they have, or if there is any difficulty in the timelines they're proposing etc.

What I hope to achieve in this role is that through collaboration and consultation, the industry and government can reach a harmonious situation, whereby policies being proposed suit both parties and obviously, end up in achieving the desired net zero goal.

As a major heating manufacturer, how is the type of products and services offered by Worcester Bosch involving in line with policy relating to both domestic and commercial buildings?

Policy and regulations have a serious influence on what products we introduce to the market, such as what features they have, their performance, their efficiencies and so on.



On the performance of the appliance, including its consumption and emissions, many of these minimum levels and maximum levels are set by either European or local country regulations. Therefore, it's essential that we're aware of upcoming regulatory changes well in advance, as it can take years to develop products that comply with new policies for both domestic and commercial buildings.

Following the election in July, what are the main priorities for lobbying policymakers that the company will be pushing to enact? What potential is there to build on existing initiatives, and what have been some of the most important commitments over the course of the last two parliaments that are being felt in building engineering?

We're hopeful that, with the new government in place, we will get more assurance on policies and firmer commitments on any regulation changes.

I think it's fair to say, the past government changed its minds more than once on certain aspects of policy. It can be quite a challenging thing to do because much of the policy affects people's homes, their lifestyles, their wallets. Therefore, we have great sympathy for government departments which have to set targets and things in place, while still trying to achieve net zero by 2050.

What would help appliance manufacturers is a firmer position on regulatory decisions, given that the development cycle for appliances can take three or four years.

As a supplier of a range of different technologies such as boilers and heat pumps, how does the company see the balance of supplying these technologies in the timeline of the net zero transition, particularly with some calls for a set date on ending installations?

Well, the UK is primarily a gas boiler market. Despite a drop in installations last year, nearly 1.5 million boilers were still sold. While this number may be slightly lower this year, it's still an extremely healthy market, and the numbers are evident. For the foreseeable future, boilers will still continue to play a significant role in the UK heating landscape.

In fact, the Labour Party announced recently that it is unlikely to ban gas boilers by 2035 – a pledge made by the previous Conservative Government. It's possible we'll see a slower transition from fossil fuels, to other technologies.

But all in all – these are decisions to be made by the Government. We're definitely in this transitional period where electric heating is certainly being promoted, and consequently, we'll continue to develop products that meet these types of policy promises.

Making the conversion

An old church located in Perthshire has undergone a complete renovation to transform it into a home. Andy Smith, National Sales Manager at Grant UK, explains how the installation of an HVO-compatible boiler has provided the homeowner with an efficient heating system today, which is ready to convert to a low carbon liquid fuel in the future.

In 2023, a church near the banks of Loch Tummel in Highland Perthshire began transformation from a place of worship to a beautiful home. The church had kept its traditional features – pews and a pulpit, large stained-glass windows and pitched pine floorboards. But as is typical with so many churches, it had no heating system. This meant a major part of the renovation was to design and install a suitable central heating system that would meet the heating demand of this unique building.



The building materials of the church presented the homeowner with plenty of challenges when it came to minimising heat loss and improving the insulation of the property. Sitting 600ft above sea level, in an area that has a lot of rain and may still have snow in May, the church is built from 3ft thick granite blocks so was extremely cold. In fact, the homeowner once arrived on site on a January day to find all the doors and windows open because the workmen said it was warmer outside than in.

The church was insulated wherever possible, including the attic which has double thickness insulation. There were however, some areas that simply could not be insulated including two large stained-glass windows and the pitched pine floor which had cold air circulating beneath where there were no foundations, just cold earth.

Choosing the right heating system

With no heating system previously fitted in the church, the homeowner had to start from scratch. A number of factors prevented a heat pump system from being feasible



The Vortex Pro Internal Combi installed in the boiler room, located beneath a hinged worktop to allow for easy access during servicing



The converted church which is now being kept warm by a Grant heating system

for the church. Firstly, the homeowner wanted to keep the traditional floorboards and, as these had been put in with deadhead nails, it was not possible to take them out or cover them, so installing an underfloor heating system was not an option. The homeowner also wanted a heating system which would inject quick boosts of heat into the property.

The homeowner was keen to reduce their carbon footprint so, as a heat pump was not considered suitable, they opted for a boiler that could use HVO – but they needed one which could initially use normal kerosene heating oil and then switch over to HVO at a later date when the fuel becomes more readily available.

HVO biofuels

HVO is 100% biofuel. It is created from lipids like vegetable oil, tallow, or used cooking oil and can be used as a dropin fuel' to replace kerosene oil. Compared to kerosene oil, HVO can reduce carbon emissions by up to 88% (SAP 10.2) and can be used in homes that are not currently suited to low temperature heating systems, to reduce their carbon emissions in a cost-effective way. HVO generates fewer pollutants compared to traditional fossil fuels thanks to a hydrotreatment process that removes impurities, so when burnt it produces less carbon emissions. HVO is also known for its high energy content, which facilitates efficient combustion and heat generation in boilers leading to cost savings too. While HVO can currently be difficult to source, this is hopefully changing, with a recent private members' bill proposing to make its supply compulsory by heating oil companies.

All of Grant's Vortex floor standing boilers are HVO compatible, meaning they can be converted to HVO operation in a few simple steps as part of an annual service. The Vortex Pro Internal Combi 21kW was therefore the chosen oil boiler for this church installation.

Quick and easy

The installation of the new Vortex Pro Combi boiler was completed in spring 2024 by Richard Folkes of Rannoch Heating Ltd. It was a quick installation that took less than a day. The boiler is straightforward to use, heats the building well and the homeowner can now control it remotely, helping to reduce bills.

The boiler has been commissioned and the central heating system, which is currently using kerosene oil, is fully operational. The homeowner is planning to convert the system to HVO operation as soon as the fuel becomes available.

Grant expands its sales team

John Pullen has joined Grant's sales team as the Area Sales Manager for Wales and the West of England. John will be providing sales support for all of Grant's products, including its air source heat pumps, oil boilers and complete package solutions.

Comprising of area sales managers, regional sales managers, technical sales support engineers and a spares business development manager, Grant's sales team, which is led by National Sales Manager, Andy Smith, has grown significantly in recent years. Today, Grant is providing its most comprehensive level of support for customers throughout England, Scotland and Wales with the recent appointment of John Pullen, further developing the company's sales support coverage. John will be covering Wales and the counties of Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire in the West of England.

After finishing college, John started his career in 1991 as an engineer in the commercial refrigeration and air conditioning sector. After seventeen years, he made the move into the heating industry, joining a national ground source and air source heat pump heating company working as a commissioning, service and repair engineer.

During this time, John gained invaluable knowledge and experience and, as well as working with heat pumps, he also carried out home surveys and developed his expertise in underfloor heating systems as well. After a decade, John joined a facilities management company as a Regional Supervisor for South Wales and the West, where he managed a team of gas engineers, air conditioning engineers and electricians.

John brings a wealth of experience from the heat pump sector and will be on hand to help local installers, engineers and merchants with their low carbon heating enquiries. As well as providing sales support for Grant's air source heat pumps and other renewable product ranges, John will also be providing customer support for



Grant's Vortex oil-fired boilers. Working closely with G1 installers, heating engineers and merchants, John is looking forward to helping existing and new customers with their enquiries for Grant's products and services.

"As I step into this new chapter, I'm genuinely excited," comments John. I am looking forward to raising the company's profile in my area, building upon existing relationships with merchants and installers and developing new ones. Wales and the neighbouring counties in the West of England hold immense potential and I am glad to be joining Grant at this exciting time, with many new products waiting in the wings."





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Thanks to almost 100 years of experience in the design and production of burners ELCO, part of the Ariston Group, is a leading brand in the development of innovative, efficient and reliable burner technologies with a consolidated presence in the field of low NOx emissions. Wherever a small, medium or high power burner is required, ELCO is the best partner you can rely on.



Grant's 'Kick the Carbon' campaign is a success with local schools

The Kick the Carbon sustainability campaign, jointly rolled out by Grant and Bath Rugby, has been well received by local primary schools. During the spring, ten schools were visited with hundreds of schoolchildren enjoying the engaging sessions which aimed to educate and raise awareness about the environment.

At the beginning of the 2023/24 season, Grant became the Official Sustainability and Grassroots Partner of Premiership rugby team, Bath Rugby. As part of this partnership, Grant is supporting the club as it reduces its own carbon footprint and is also working to raise awareness about sustainability in the local community. This has included the rollout of its Kick the Carbon Grassroots Community Sustainability Programme.

Through the programme, Bath Rugby and Grant visited ten primary schools in Wiltshire, Bath and the surrounding areas where they delivered both classroom-based and rugby-based activities for the children. Each fun-filled session was driven by educational objectives, helping the pupils to understand climate change and the ways we can reduce carbon emissions. In total, over 900 children from key stage 2 attended the sessions.

The feedback shared by teachers and pupils has been incredibly positive, demonstrating an encouraging level of interest from future generations to protect the planet and be more environmentally friendly.



One teacher commented: "The Year 4 children all really enjoyed the time they spent with the Bath Rugby visitors that came to see them last term. The knowledge the children gained about sustainability, and then also having a chance to play some sport that day as well, was a really wonderful experience for them. The children took lots away from it all and for that we are really grateful."

Combining both classroom-based theory with rugby-themed activities ensured each session was engaging for all ages, something the children enjoyed and commented upon. "It was fun and interesting because we had the chance to do a science experiment that showed you about the different materials you can use to keep things warm," said one pupil.

The varied ways in which we can all make changes to reduce carbon emissions resonated with the children with them taking away useful learning and knowledge from each session. "I found it interesting because we learned lots of facts about what to do instead of putting the heating on," shared one pupil. Meanwhile, a Year 3 pupil said: "I really enjoyed learning

about sustainability and how to save the environment."

"We have been very pleased to help Bath Rugby deliver this Grassroots Community Sustainability Programme to children in the local areas close to the club and our Company Headquarters," comments Anna Wakefield, Head of Internal Sales and Marketing at Grant. "Educating the next generation about the environment and what we can do to protect and preserve it is important and our Kick the Carbon initiative has helped raise awareness amongst lots of primary school children. The feedback shared by both the pupils and their teachers has been wonderful to receive, just going to show that there is a real interest amongst the younger generations to make a difference in the future.

Bath Rugby's Partnerships Manager, James Wiltshire, added: "Grant are market leaders in sustainable heating solutions. Being a Grassroots Partner and the club's Official Sustainability Partner, it made perfect sense to bring the two together.

"We worked closely with Grant to build a scheme that engaged and educated children in the local area about the importance of sustainability, whilst also getting them active. The feedback from the children and teachers alike has shown the impact the scheme has had, whilst also highlighting how conscious the next generation are about protecting our planet."

KNIPEX launches Innovation Bundle competition

KNIPEX has announced an exciting competition offering those who enter the chance to win an exclusive tool bundle, packed full of its new innovations for 2024. This competition, which is open until 30 November, features a collection of some of KNIPEX's most innovative and versatile tools, along with practical and durable tool storage solutions. The lucky winner will receive the following prize bundle:

- Modular X18 Tool Backpack (00 21 50 LE)
- Module Bag (00 19 50 LE)
- Module Adapters Set (00 21 50 V01)
- StepCut® XL Cable Cutter (95 18 225)

- TubiX® S Pipe Cutter (90 31 01)
- Stripping Knife (16 50 145 SB)

"We are delighted to celebrate the launch of our innovations for 2024 with this competition. This prize bundle is packed with tools and storage solutions that save time and make the working day easier," says David Barnes, Marketing Manager for

KNIPEX UK. "The backpack and bag also mean you can store your tools



safely when you're on the move and let's not forget – they look very smart and professional. Good luck with your entry!"

How to enter

Entering the competition is simple and straightforward. Visit https://bit. ly/4blcNPp

Terms and conditions apply. The closing date for entries is 30 November 2024.

Testing heating appliances requires the right equipment

Jonathan Kane, Chief Executive of leading UK manufacturer Kane International Ltd, explains the vital importance of using the right testing equipment.

Using the right equipment to test heating systems stops you accidentally causing injury or death – it also leaves the appliance as the manufacturer intended.

Lord Kelvin's phrase, "To measure is to know", applies especially to heating systems, since products of combustion are invisible and odourless – relying on visual signs to check an appliance compromises your defence if it causes injury or death.

Regardless how clean an oil boiler or gas fire looks, it's easy for chimneys & flues to become blocked, allowing dangerous carbon monoxide (CO) to poison anyone living in the home.

Better safe than sorry – always use the right equipment

Analysers testing appliances must meet European Standard EN 50379 for combustion emissions and EN 50543 when testing gas fired commercial catering equipment & ventilation.

Check your existing or new analyser is independently tested: while analyser manufacturers can self-test their designs before launch, it's more rigorous if they're tested independently – that's why all KANE analysers are tested by TUV in Munich, Germany.

Know how to use your analyser: if you forget to change your analyser fuel settings to match the appliance fuel being used, you will see incorrect combustion efficiency & excess air calculations.

Look after your analyser: analysers need fresh air to zero their sensors - always power on and off outdoors and check the water trap and filters are dry and clean. You must also check your probe and tubing are dry

and in good condition as they can cause air leaks, giving you incorrect readings.

Don't leave your analyser outside in a vehicle: cold weather affects analyser performance and battery life and you don't want your vehicle to become a target for thieves.

Analysers are essential instruments and need yearly recertification: choose a supplier making this as easy as possible and check the small print – you cannot afford not to have your analyser.

Award winning service

Further evidencing the importance KANE places on this essential equipment, the manufacturer also delivers KANE CARE, an award-winning service with a money back.

When it is time for annual certification, KANE customers can go to www.kane.co.uk to automatically receive KANE CARE, an annual fixed price, all-inclusive service & recertification programme.

The unique KANE CARE service, delivered by Kane, includes a 10-year all-inclusive warranty, 48-hour turnaround and free overnight tracked delivery. Your analyser, probe, charger, carry bag & printer are replaced if they cannot be repaired, for up to 20 years from new – no other analyser supplier delivers this service.

TOP TIPS

- Check your analyser is independently tested to EN 50379 or EN 50543
- Always power on & off in fresh outdoor air
- Check probe, water trap & filters are dry before use
- Ensure correct fuel settings to avoid combustion calculation error
- Never leave analysers in vehicles overnight
- Check your calibration certificate is up to date
- Choose all-inclusive Service & Recertification time is money



Award nomination for Talon

Talon is thrilled to announce that FlueSnug has been nominated for the prestigious Product Innovation of the Year award at the London Construction Awards.

FlueSnug by Talon is designed to seal pipe exit holes without the need for traditional materials like mortar or sealant. It effectively stops heat from escaping, prevents drafts and keeps out pests and dampness while delivering a clean, professional finish. FlueSnug is compatible with all 100mm boiler flues and can be used both internally and externally.

"We are delighted to be nominated for the award and we're looking forward to the Awards ceremony itself in late September," says Mike Morris, Marketing Manager for Talon.

"FlueSnug is the only all-in-one solution that complies with Part L and unlike traditional materials, FlueSnug does not degrade over time and remains unaffected by adverse weather conditions. It is also infused with a UV additive to protect against sun damage, ensuring longlasting performance. We believe it deserves recognition for the way it has transformed the way flues are installed."

The product's ability to provide a neat, professional appearance without any residue or mess distinguishes it from traditional materials. Its efficiency reduces the need for additional repair work, leading to more savings on project costs. Furthermore, FlueSnug can be installed in any weather, unlike mortar, which cannot be used during rain or low temperatures. This flexibility ensures that construction schedules are not delayed due to weather conditions.



Discover more at navien.co.uk/professional

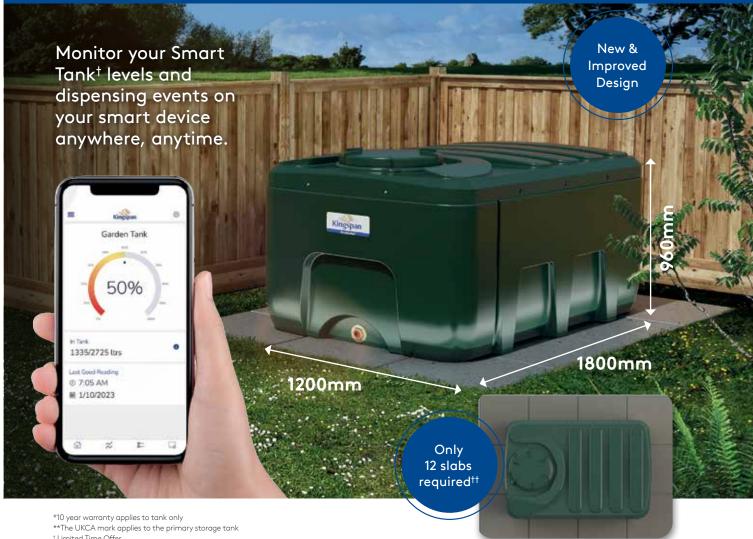








TITAN EcoSafe® ESLP1200 Compact



**TThe number of slabs is required to meet OFTEC installation guidelines and adhere to Building Regulations (300mm clearance around the tank)



CO requirements in privately rented properties in NI

The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, came into effect on 30 May 2024. Technicians working for private landlords, or those who might be landlords, should familiarise themselves with the legislation. A summary is below:

- A smoke alarm must be installed in the main living room and every circulation space on each floor (hallway, landing). Exceptions apply where an open fireplace makes a smoke alarm impractical, in which case a heat alarm may be used. In open plan living areas, a heat alarm in the kitchen can suffice if within 7.5 meters of any point in the room. A heat alarm is required in every kitchen
- A carbon monoxide alarm must be installed in any room or circulation space containing a fixed combustion appliance or flue, including any bedrooms a flue passes through.
- Smoke and heat alarms must be interconnected to ensure



communication; if one alarm is triggered, all interconnected alarms will sound. Installed alarms may either be hard wired, battery sealed or a combination of both.

 Multiple carbon monoxide alarms do not need to be linked with smoke and heat alarms.

The dates for compliance are as follows:

- New tenancies granted on or after 1st September 2024, must comply immediately upon granting.
- Existing tenancies granted before 1st September 2024, must comply by 1st December 2024.





Scan here

Department of Communities website

Scan here

Smoke, heat and CO alarm regulations

Further guidance on the regulations can be found on the Department of Communities website, scan the QR code above left. The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 can also be viewed by scanning the QR code above right.

Martin Hogan retires

In what is truly the end of an era, Martin finally closed his toolbox and retired after 54 years in the gas and oil industry.

Martin worked as a service engineer for Precision heating from 1972 to 2008. He then began providing training and assessment for gas and oil installers and service engineers in the Pulsar premises in Co. Cork, Ireland.

In 2011, a new opportunity presented itself which would enable Martin to provide similar training in Finglas in Dublin, thus avoiding the long commute to Cork each week from his home in Swords.

The European Energy Skills Centre in St. Margaret's Road Finglas had



been in operation since 2004 with the business managed by Aidan McGrath.

The owners of the business wished to move on but were anxious that the building would remain as a training centre for gas and oil installers and service engineers. Martin and Aidan decided to team up and Martin Hogan Energy Training Ltd. began trading in November 2011.

Since then, Martin has provided training and assessment for candidates from across the country with customers returning repeatedly for reassessment.

Martin provided a very personal training service and endeavoured to pass on his vast knowledge and experience in the industry to each trainee to enable them to perform their duties in a safe and proficient manner in accordance with industry, national and international standards.

The number of repeat customers attest to this. His stories and anecdotes from his time in the industry have become legendary.

Martin was always available to answer any questions from former clients and Aidan remembers seeing him on his phone, sorting out a problem for a former customer during his son's wedding speech!

At the age of 76, Martin has decided the time has come for him to take things a bit easier and retire, and it is with some regret that he has decided to close the business.

Is there hope for optimism and a role for sustainable biofuels in the Republic?

It has been an interesting spring and summer. The local elections in the Republic have come and gone with several surprises; both Green MEPs failed to win re-election and the Green Party Leader, Eamon Ryan TD, stood down. Then, a month later, his chief adviser, Paul Kenny moved to start a post with the European Heat Pump Association in Brussels.

In early July, consultants, Ricardo held a virtual workshop on the proposed 'Renewable Heat Obligation' which the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) says will be introduced this year. In early proposals, a blend rate of 2% was discussed which we, as a sector totally opposed as insignificant and informed DECC that a blend rate of at least 20% was required to make any considerable progress on decarbonisation in residential homes.

The good news was two-fold; Ricardo presented blend scenarios at both 10% and 20% and the local consultants who are partnering the project, Byrne Ó Cléirigh, indicated that they believed that there was more than enough biofuel (HVO) to blend into Irish heating solutions.

This is good news indeed, as this has always been a sticking point with civil servants and ministers, and we can now use their own consultants information for our benefit.

We did so at a recent meeting with Darren O'Rourke TD who is Sinn Féin's Energy Spokesperson. He understands our position, and has indicated that the party's position on future heating will be to promote 'mixed technology' which is all we have ever wanted. As the Alliance for Zero Carbon Heating (TAZCH) – an alliance between OFTEC, UKIFDA and FFI – we are currently signing off on a new white paper to promote sustainable and renewable biofuels for heating to the elected members, ahead of an election later this year in the Republic. By the time this article appears, we will have met with all the main parties and hope to have



Meeting with Darren O'Rourke TD (centre)

biofuels firmly on their manifestos ahead of the election.

While the tide is turning, and there is hope for optimism, there are still several hoops to jump through before government introduces a blended heating requirement into legislation. We need an agreed fuel specification, and discussion is already underway with BSI to amend BS2869. We also need clarity on how the scheme will work, and if certificates in the renewable heating obligation will

be interchangeable with the Road Transport Fuel Obligation.

We also want to know where the blending will be done and how this can sit alongside dual-purpose kerosene (DPK), as only one product is brought into Ireland for use in heating and aviation.

While there are still a few barriers to overcome, the direction of travel is extremely positive, and the future looks incredibly green... for biofuels!



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Technology

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Simplicity by design – the Firebird Envirogreen Combi Xceed

Gary Davies, Firebird's UK National Sales Manager shares news of an exciting product launch – the Envirogreen Combi Xceed range.

Crafted by experts, inspired by you

Gary has played a pivotal role in the development of the Combi Xceed range. Here's what he has to say about the company's latest innovation: "Following extensive research and development, Firebird is proud to launch the new Xceed range of combination boilers. By listening to feedback from our installers, we focused on simplicity in design for ease of servicing and maintenance, as well as robust construction."

Key features

- Twin Circulating Pump Design: eliminates the need for specialist diverter valves, simplifying maintenance and increasing reliability.
- No Flow Switch: Water is electronically detected.
- Innovative Lowara Eco Circulation Circulating Pump: a built-in, low



water safety device, eliminates the need for a low-pressure switch and reducing components for enhanced reliability.

- Superior Materials: all components are crafted from brass and copper, with bronze Teflon seals ensuring longevity. No plastic components mean a more durable product.
- User-Friendly Layout: thoughtfully designed pipe and component layout for easy maintenance and servicing.
- Sleek Modern Design: fits perfectly



under worktops, seamlessly blending into any home, kitchen, or garden environment.

- HVO Ready: All models are prepared for Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel, promoting eco-friendly operations.
- Elco Low-NOx Burners: ensures reduced emissions for a greener footprint.
- Multi-Directional Flue System: combined with front access for effortless servicing and maintenance.
- High-Performance Hot Water Delivery: provides reliable and efficient hot water supply.

Peace of mind guaranteed

With Firebird's commitment to quality, the Combi Xceed range comes with extensive warranty options of 5 and 10 years, giving you confidence and peace of mind.

Upgrade to the future of heating

Elevate your home's heating system with the Firebird Envirogreen Combi Xceed. Visit our website or your local merchant to explore the full range and discover how simplicity in design can transform your home's comfort. Embrace innovation, experience excellence.





EVOLINK

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HOME HEATING EVOLUTION



Grant's newest addition to the hybrid range. EvoLink allows an Aerona heat pump to be connected to an existing fossil fuel heat source, including gas, oil, LPG or modulating biomass boiler.



Immediately reduce a home's carbon footprint



Install a heat pump alongside an existing heating system



Cleverly adds supplementary heat using smart technology



Choose preferred mode of operation - Green or Comfort



Manual override facility to operate boiler when boost is required







Expand your business with OFTEC training and registration



OFTEC is well known for its commitment to liquid fuel heating training and registration, but did you know that we offer a range of other options for anyone wishing to work in today's heating industry?

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- Liquid fuel
- Air source heat pumps
- Design of heat pump systems
- Biomass
- Unvented hot water storage systems

Extensions of registration:

TrustMark

MCS

Solid fuel

Ground source heat pumps

Solar thermal

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Non-operative

PAS2030

OFTEC registration enables you to **self-certify work*** and your installations are covered by our free **workmanship warranty**. You'll also be listed on our 'find

a technician' web search, have access to our technical support, and get all the latest industry news, together with a range of other valuable benefits.

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Grant joins New College Swindon's careers programme

Grant has partnered with a local college, joining the Careers Extra Programme at New College Swindon, which is based close to the company's Wiltshire headquarters in Wiltshire. Through this programme, Grant hopes to further support the students at the college who have an interest in the plumbing and heating sector.

In June 2023, a group of plumbing and heating students from the college visited Grant's Training Academy to learn more about air source heat pumps. Since then, Grant has been working closely with the college, delivering additional training sessions to its students and providing equipment to its campus, where the college delivers a broad range of academic qualifications. More recently, Grant became part of New College Swindon's Careers Extra Programme which aims to support students with their careers by opening up opportunities and experiences beyond the classroom.

The Careers Extra Programme provides students with the chance to attend careers and networking events while also opening up opportunities for work experience, industry placements and employer workshops. A number of local businesses support this initiative and as part of the programme, Grant will be opening its doors to students from the college, supporting their career pathways in the plumbing and heating sector.

In June, several more groups of students Grant's Training Academy to attend tailored training sessions on heat pumps. As before, these learning sessions were divided into theory and practical training giving students the opportunity to learn about air source heat pumps, low temperature heating systems and heat pump installations. During the practical part of the sessions, the students were able to get their hands



on the product to see the internal workings of a heat pump and its core accessories. In addition, some of the students also attended a training session on solar thermal hot water systems as well.

"It was great seeing products at work that I have been taught about but not previously seen," commented one student.

"It was good seeing the inside of the heat pump units and Steve, the trainer, demonstrating all the components," writes another.

An apprentice from the college also shared their feedback, writing: "The topic about air source heat pumps was particularly interesting, giving me a wider understanding about how the units operate and work."

"The relationship we have started to build with Grant will be invaluable to the college not only now, but in the future," comments Wayne Eggleton, Plumbing Lecturer at New College Swindon. "We are incredibly thankful to all the trainers who allowed our students to visit the Training Academy over a couple of weeks in early June. The initial feedback from students and staff that attended was great. We are also looking forward to installing Grant products at our premises over the next academic year."

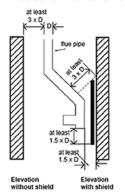
"It was good to welcome more students from New College Swindon to the Training Academy again recently," said Phil Stanley, Grant's Training Manager. "Alongside our delivery of product training and industry qualifications to engineers and installers, we are also keen to extend our training so that the next generation of heating engineers and plumbers can be equipped with new knowledge to support their personal development. We look forward to continuing to develop our partnership with New College Swindon and its students."

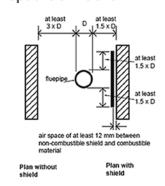
Uninsulated solid fuel flue pipes to combustible material

OFTEC's technical department is seeing an increase of solid fuel stoves being installed in fireplace recesses, where there are wooden lintels spanning the entire opening, or providing the structural support for the above chimney breast. With this type of installation, consideration needs to be given to the minimum separation distances a connecting flue pipe can be installed to combustible material. This can be achieved in one of the following ways:

- by ensuring the separation distance between the flue pipe and the combustible material is a minimum of 3 times the diameter of the flue pipe; or
- by ensuring the flue pipe is a minimum separation distance of 1.5 times its diameter to combustible material and that a non-combustible heat shield (metallic construction) is installed which extends a minimum 1.5 times the diameter of the flue pipe (1 times diameter in the Republic of Ireland). The heat shield should be affixed using non-combustible fixings and spacers, leaving a minimum air gap of at least 12mm (12.5mm in the Republic of Ireland) between the heat shield and the combustible material. The shield should not be affixed directly to combustible material as the fixings could conduct heat, leading to charring and eventual ignition of the combustible material.

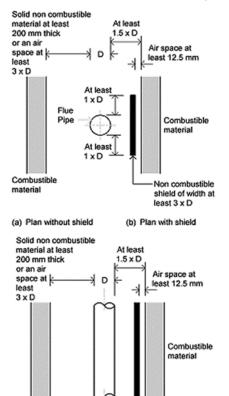
Measurements except for the Republic of Ireland





shields should either;
a) extend beyond the flue pipe by at least 1.5 x D; or
b) make any path between flue pipes and combustible material at least 3 x D long

Measurements for Republic of Ireland only.



Alternatively, a twin wall system chimney could be used as the connecting fluepipe (check regional regulations on minimal designation), which will reduce the transmission of heat to combustible material, with the minimum distance denoted as 'xx' to combustible material as declared by the manufacturer.

Combustible

(c) Elevation without

Appliance manufacturers instructions also need to be adhered to ensure combustible material is located at the distance they specify to protect it from radiated heat.

Book your OFTEC re-assessments early!

Our training department often receives calls from frustrated technicians whose qualifications are about to expire, and who can't find a training centre that can fit them in for re-assessment at very short notice. Centres are quite often booked up months in advance, and for that reason we allow technicians to re-sit their assessments up to six months ahead of the expiry date, similar to booking your car in early for its MOT.

There are over 100 centres across the UK and Republic of Ireland, so if your

local centre is fully booked, there are plenty of others to choose from. A full list of centres can be found at oftec. org/technicians/industry-training/find-your-nearest-training-centre. Simply enter your postcode, the distance you wish to travel, and the course(s) you require, and a list of centres will appear.

Your qualifications last for five years, but don't forget that if you want to take the reassessment courses you will need to do this no later than 12 months after the expiry date of your

current certificate, otherwise you'll have to take the full initial assessment again. In addition, if your qualifications have expired, you won't be able self-notify any installation work, so far better to contact your training and assessment centre early to avoid disappointment.

Non combustible shield

(d) Elevation with

For any training or assessment query, don't hesitate to contact Simon Gray or David Knipe in the OFTEC training department or email training@oftec. org, and they'll do their best to help with any issues you may have.

Decommissioning and removal of liquid fuel storage tanks

Decarbonising buildings off-the-gas grid will require a range of solutions, including renewable liquid fuels and heat pumps. However, this transition throws up some important practical challenges, including the safe disposal of many thousands of plastic and steel fuel storage tanks that have either been replaced or become redundant.

Decommissioning and removing existing fuel storage tanks poses a serious pollution risk, so such work needs to be very carefully planned and executed.

Preparation

Tanks that are decommissioned should always be removed by a business registered as a tank installer with a Competent Person Scheme (CPS), as they will have appropriate knowledge for the task. Others are unlikely to have a working knowledge of relevant legislation and safe working practices.

Prior to work commencing, contractors should as a minimum:

- complete a 'risk assessment' and 'method statement'.
- wear appropriate PPE.
- have appropriate insurance.
- have a means of safely removing all fuel from the tank (if electrically powered pumps are used, these must be suitably rated for use in an explosive atmosphere).
- have suitable robust containers to receive the fuel.
- ensure they have a spill kit ready to deal with any accidental leakage.
- have a waste carriers' licence that covers the movement of hazardous material.

Tank and fuel removal

Tanks should be removed from site as soon as they are decommissioned to prevent inadvertent filling.

Plastic tanks will absorb fuel over time and therefore they should only be sent to a waste disposal site licenced to handle hazardous materials. All tanks, steel or plastic, should not be sent for recycling unless the recycling site is licensed to take hazardous waste.

Due to the weight of steel tanks, it can be tempting to consider cutting them up for easier removal. Dismantling or cutting up any tank is an exceptionally dangerous activity which should only be undertaken by specialist contractors who have the correct equipment, expertise, and insurance. People have been seriously injured or killed during such activities.

Underground tanks

There is a very high risk of pollution occurring during the decommissioning and removal of underground storage tanks. This task should only be undertaken by specialist companies experienced in this field of work.

Other equipment

In cases when a tank is removed completely, the associated fuel supply pipes and appliance will become redundant



and should therefore be removed as well. This equipment should be carefully drained and transported and disposed of in the same manner as the fuel storage tank.

Non-domestic tanks

The size of tanks used at non-domestic sites will likely require far more stringent processes than those described above, including the use of flammable gas detection equipment, fume extraction, cold-cutting techniques, pressure washing, gas-freeing, and post removal soil sampling. Only contractors with the necessary expertise with these processes should undertake this work.



Fuel price commentary

As regular readers of this column will know, the price of heating oil changes broadly in line with world crude oil prices and is less affected by what's happening in the UK or Irish domestic economies. That means it's liable to greater peaks and troughs in running costs than other types of heating fuels but, when averaged out, it has always been, and remains, a highly competitive option.

This is confirmed in the latest release of Sutherland Tables data. It shows the average annual price of oil heating in Great Britain is currently only slightly higher than gas, and cheaper than

all other options. In Northern Ireland and RoI the news is even better – oil heating is the cheapest heating option. Looking at the four-year average price, oil comes out best across the whole UK, and the RoI – so the often-stated idea that oil is an expensive option is shown once again to be a myth.

That isn't to say that oil prices are always low. For example, the most recent peak in June 2022, soon after the war in Ukraine began, saw oil heating cost £1,885 in Great Britain, some 43% higher than it is now. However, what's perhaps most

striking about the last two years is how unstable the price of energy has been generally, with gas and other fuels all fluctuating far more than usual.

The price of crude oil is expected to rise towards the end of this year, as demand increases across the world, but is expected to then fall further next year, so heating oil users can expect prices to stay competitive with other heating types, Although, as always, it should be remembered that oil prices can be affected by negative world events so, with the situation in the Middle East still very tense, the usual caveats apply.

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

GREAT BRITAIN (average)

	Jun-23	Jun-24	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heaters	3430	2752	-£678	-20%	£2,866
Gas condensing boiler	2124	1283	-£841	-40%	£1,283
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	1836	1903	£67	4%	£1,620
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	1296	1319	£23	2%	£1,231
Wood pellets	2689	2356	-£333	-12%	£1,971
Air source heat pump radiators	3220	2284	-£936	-29%	£2,432
Air source heat pump underfloor	2700	2204	-£496	-18%	£2,049

NORTHERN IRELAND						
	Jun-23	Jun-24	Price change	% Difference	4 year average	
Electric storage heaters	3268	£3,201	-67	-2%	£2,571	
Gas condensing boiler	1993	£1,716	-277	-14%	£1,438	
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	2251	£2,231	-20	-1%	£2,062	
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	1190	£1,237	47	4%	£1,161	
Wood pellets	2014	£1,604	-410	-20%	£1,552	
Air source heat pump radiators	2738	£2,698	-40	-1%	£2,227	
Air source heat pump underfloor	2264	£2,231	-33	-1%	£1,858	

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	Jun-23	Jun-24	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heaters	4516	3818	-698	-15%	£3,267
Gas condensing boiler	2836	2153	-683	-24%	£2,025
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	2856	2880	24	1%	£2,595
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	1720	1825	105	6%	£1,640
Wood pellets	2369	2132	-237	-10%	£1,819
Air source heat pump radiators	3798	3236	-562	-15%	£2,790
Air source heat pump underfloor	3187	2729	-458	-14%	£2.367

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.Prices are shown in pounds sterling (£) for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and euros (€) for the Republic of Ireland. 4-year average is based on July 2020 to June 2024.

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SUPPLIED WITH TEDDINGTON FIRE VALVE	NO	YES	NO	NO
SUPPLIED WITH CROSLAND OIL FILTER	NO	YES	NO	NO
SUPPLIED WITH 2 X INHIBITOR	NO	YES	NO	NO
BUILT-IN SHOCK ARRESTOR	YES	YES	NO	NO
24L EXPANSION VESSEL (COMBI)	YES	YES	YES	NO
TWIN CHANNEL PROGRAMMER	YES	YES	NO	NO
BUILT-IN PRESSURE REDUCING VALVE	YES	YES	NO	NO
BUILT-IN DIGITAL DIAGNOSTICS	YES	YES	NO	YES
Y-STRAINER	YES	YES	NO	NO
ERP EFFICIENCY RATING	AA	AA	АВ	АВ

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