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Winter 2024 Volume 18 No 4

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Advertising

Sales manager: Adrian Major
Media pack on request: adrian@oilinstaller.co.uk

News Desk

Liz Boardman: liz@oilinstaller.co.uk

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Off-grid heating presents an early opportunity for Labour

The new Labour government hasn't exactly gone out of its way to win the hearts and minds of rural voters since it came into power. Announcing that it planned to concrete over the Green Belt to provide new housing, and cover large areas with pylons and solar farms, haven't exactly gone down well. For many older owners of draughty off-grid homes, the loss of winter fuel payments will also have been an unwelcome blow. In the face of these setbacks, what can the new government do to gain the trust of rural voters and show it understands the challenges off-gas grid communities face?



Heating is one area where a potential easy win beckons. The only problem is, many of the new rural MPs didn't expect to get elected and know very little about rural homes or the people who live in them, let alone how they heat them, or what the best way to decarbonise them should be. The danger is that the issue won't be on their radar until the new DESNZ minister publishes Labour's heat policy – at which point it's an uphill struggle to change it if it's not fit for purpose. Far better that we raise awareness of renewable liquid fuels like HVO now, and get these new MPs on our side. To succeed, we need your help. Turn to page 7 to find out how.

Improving the way we communicate with you is a key priority for OFTEC this year. It's fair to say it's not something we have always got right and, as any successful business knows, having a positive and constructive dialogue with customers is important. As part of that, we've recently launched an OFTEC Facebook group, for registered technicians. Already, over 500 people have signed up, and that number is growing every week. If you haven't already joined, please consider doing so, as it's a great place to discuss, and keep up to date with, all the topics affecting the industry.

Paul Rose

Paul Rose,
CEO, OFTEC



Which? Trusted Traders and OFTEC announce new partnership for technicians

Which? is one of the best-known and respected consumer brands in the UK. OFTEC registered technicians can now apply for Which? Trusted Trader accreditation to further demonstrate their credentials in the consumer market as part of a new partnership between the trade association and consumer group.



OFTEC registered technicians who successfully achieve Which? Trusted Trader status will receive a 50% discount on their Trusted Trader membership for the first six months and can display their widely recognised accreditation to consumers. The scheme also offers full access to the Which? app, product reviews and magazine.

Which? launched the Trusted Trader initiative in 2013 to help consumers identify trusted technicians who have been thoroughly vetted. Technicians who apply undergo a rigorous assessment which includes financial, behavioural, competency and reference checks. However, technicians will find they already meet many of the requirements through their existing OFTEC registration.

For more information, visit the Which? Trusted Trader website.

Colin Sutherland

OFTEC is saddened to report that our founder, Colin Sutherland, recently passed away. Colin will be best remembered for his positive, can-do attitude and for his "living to serve others" ethos. Colin leaves behind a huge legacy within the heating and energy industry. Including the setting up of OFTEC, the CIBSE Domestic Building Services Panel, energy reporting tables and participating in numerous committees and standards drafting projects. In 2013, Colin was awarded an MBE for services to the community in Banstead, where he lived. Since 1968, he was an active figure in the scouting movement, still participating in annual camps on the Isles of Scilly well into his 80s. A celebration of his life will take place in the coming weeks. Details of which will be available in due course. Our thoughts are with his children and grandchildren.

Future Ready Fuel update



The big headline following the July General Election in the UK is that there is very little news. So far, Labour has had little to say about its overall policies for decarbonising heating, let alone niche areas such as off-gas grid buildings.

So, what have they said? One important announcement is the intention to continue with Conservative plans to introduce the Clean Heat Market Mechanism (CHMM) The CHMM is a controversial scheme that requires boiler manufacturers to also produce heat pumps at a gradually increasing percentage of their production or pay heat pump manufacturers to make them on their behalf. It is scheduled to begin in April 2025 and the Government hopes it will bring

the price of heat pumps down – although this remains to be seen.

The Government has also committed an additional £1.5bn of funding to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, with support extended from the spring of 2025 to 2028. This is a significant increase over the 450m originally committed for the first three years of the scheme. The support will greatly increase the number of grants available, providing more certainty for installers – no doubt also tempting more to join the sector - and potentially accelerating the deployment of heat pumps significantly. This is in line with Labour's declared thinking, which is to encourage uptake, rather than implementing bans of fossil fuel heating. To that end, the 2035 end

date for the installation of fossil fuel boilers appears to have been scrapped.

There is also some other positive news for the liquid fuel heating sector. In answer to a recent Parliamentary question, the new Minister, Miatta Fahnbulleh, said the Government would prioritise the use of renewable liquid fuels in sectors like aviation, and potentially homes that are not readily suitable for heat pumps, as these offer the greatest opportunity to reduce emissions and have fewest alternative options to decarbonise. She added that the Government would need to ensure they are affordable, and available in sufficient quantities, before making any decisions on whether to support wider deployment, including the introduction of any obligations.

Help us put pressure on the Government with the Future Ready Fuel campaign

If you want to safeguard the future of the liquid-fuelled heating sector, there's never been a better time to help our campaign. Until Labour announces its full heat policy, or publishes a consultation on a fuel obligation, we have a priceless opportunity to influence their thinking. Many of the areas where oil heating is used now have new Labour or Liberal Democrat MPs. We need to bring them up to speed with the challenges facing owners of these hard-to-treat properties, explain that a purely heat pump-based solution won't succeed, and that fuels such as HVO have a vital role to play.

The industry, led by OFTEC and UKIFDA, is already working hard to do this, but our efforts can only take us so far. To put it bluntly, the Government would reply: "Well, you would say that, wouldn't you?". We need to harness the voice of our customers and encourage them to join the Future Ready Fuel campaign.



Please help us

It couldn't be easier to help us succeed. Order a stock of Future Ready Fuel flyers – they're free and you can get them from OFTEC's marketing team by emailing

marketing@oftec.org, telephoning 01473 626298, or contacting us via the OFTEC Facebook group or social media. Once you receive them, simply hand them to your customers. Electronic copies are also available if you want to email them. Then encourage your customers to visit the Future Ready Fuel website and sign up for updates. If they do that, there's a good chance we can convince them to join the campaign and write to their MP using a letter we've drafted.

Add your voice to the campaign too

If you want to help us a bit more, write to your MP too. It only takes a couple of minutes to do it, and we've prepared a letter for oil heating businesses that you can download via the link in our November e-news or from the OFTEC Facebook group.

Thank you in advance for your help.

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DESNZ and MNZH visit OFTEC for heat pump training

In October, OFTEC-approved training centre, Anglia Heating Training (AHT) in Wymondham, Norfolk, hosted a delegation of officials from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH).

The purpose of the visit was to get firsthand experience of the OFTEC heat pump training course and hear directly from the centre's administration team, trainers, assessors and heat pump technicians taking the course.

Anglia Heating Training have been offering the OFTEC heat pump course for some time and have tapped into the Government funding (available in England only) via OFTEC, which provides technicians with £500 towards the cost of the course.

Lorraine Trim and Laura Bidewell gave feedback to the officials on how administering the funding scheme was going and where improvements could be made. David Knipe, OFTEC's technical and training



Mykal Trim (AHT), Frank Malby (DESNZ), Laura Bidewell (AHT), Bargavi Rangaswamy (MNZH), Lorraine Trim (AHT), David Knipe (OFTEC), David Phillips (AHT), Stan Stainsby (MNZH) and Jorge Santana (MNZH)

manager, explained to DESNZ and MNZH how the funding scheme was being received by centres, and trainers Mykal Trim and David Phillips described how heating technicians had embraced the course, found the opportunity to access funding valuable, and taken the first step to diversify their installation businesses.

A tour of the centre and facilities, including seeing live equipment



Jorge Santana (MNZH), Bargavi Rangaswamy (MNZH), Stan Stainsby (MNZH), David Knipe (OFTEC), David Phillips (AHT) and Frank Malby (DESNZ)

in training rooms, was undertaken, giving the DESNZ and MNZH officials confidence that the Government funding was being put to good use, with quality training resulting in a personal certificate being issued to technicians following a successful assessment.

To find out more about the OFTEC heat pump courses, please check the training area of the OFTEC website.

“I didn't know a heat pump was notifiable” is a question OFTEC has been hearing a lot lately

So, what are the facts? OFTEC Registration Services Director Adrian Lightwood explains.

As renewable heating systems are being installed more often, we need to set the record straight so those just starting off installing renewables understand their responsibilities and get it right from the outset.

The Building Regulations 2010 sets out in Regulation 20 that certain works in England & Wales as described in Schedule 3 can go under self-certification by installers who are registered with an accredited competent person scheme.

One such area of work that is listed in Schedule 3, and is therefore exempt from obtaining a building notice, is the installation of microgeneration or renewable sources in building to produce heating, cooling or electricity. Heat pumps and solar will come under this category.

Therefore, the same rules that apply for oil, gas and solid

fuel combustion appliances, also apply to renewable installations. That means you need to self-certify renewable installations through your competent person scheme - but only if you hold that scope of registration with your scheme. If you don't hold the relevant scope of registration, please contact OFTEC to discuss your registration requirements and training needs.

In addition to notifying your renewable installations, please don't forget to include any unvented hot water cylinder work, heating system, external controls and electrical work. The full list of renewable works to be notified under the Building Regulations is detailed below.

Renewables

- Install an air source heat pump.
- Install a ground source heat pump.
- Install a water source heat pump.
- Install a solar thermal system.
- Install a biomass wet boiler, heater, stove, or cooker.
- Install a biomass dry room heater, stove, or cooker.

Heating and hot water

- Install a heating system.
- Install an extension to an existing heating system.
- Install a vented hot water storage vessel.
- Install hot water with vented hot water storage.
- Install hot water with unvented hot water storage.
- Install a hot water system without storage.
- Install an unvented hot water storage vessel.
- Install controls separate from heating appliance.

Data shows liquid fuels cheapest for heating over past four years

Comparative data of the most common heating fuels used in the home has revealed that liquid fuel had the lowest average running costs over the past four years.

The independent findings were published by the Sutherland Tables which compare the annual space and water heating costs for different technologies in an average three-bedroom property.

The latest figures for Great Britain reveal that, between June 2020 and June 2024, the average yearly running cost for a condensing liquid fuel boiler was £1,231. LPG condensing boilers were 31% higher, at £1,620, while electric storage heaters were more than double the cost, at £2,866.

Liquid fuel heating was also slightly cheaper than gas condensing boilers, which averaged £1,283, and was also cheaper than renewable options, such as wood pellets or heat pumps.

In Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, liquid fuel was also the cheapest form of domestic heating over the same period, averaging £1,161 and €1,640, respectively.

Malcolm Farrow, Head of Public Affairs at OFTEC, commented: "These new figures will be welcome news for the 1.7 million UK homes that rely on liquid fuel for their heating, particularly at a time when we have all experienced a squeeze on household spending. Like all energy prices, liquid fuel was not immune to price fluctuations due to the Covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine. However, the four-year average dispels the myth that liquid fuel heating is an expensive option. Prices are also expected to stay competitive with other fuels over the coming months."

The findings have been published as the new Labour Government develops



Malcolm Farrow, Head of Public Affairs at OFTEC

its proposals for decarbonising the domestic heating sector in line with the UK's net zero commitments. In the election campaign, the party committed to scrapping the proposed 2035 date for banning the installation of new fossil fuel boilers.

Affordable, low carbon alternative

It followed concerns from rural MPs about the high costs many of these households could face if they had to transition to other types of heating, such as a heat pump. Off-grid homes are typically older with poor energy efficiency and often require expensive and disruptive changes for the heat pump technology to work effectively.

If these changes aren't made, households could face significantly higher running costs.

To offer more choice, OFTEC, along with industry partners, is urging the Government to support the rollout of renewable liquid fuels by equalising the tax duty with kerosene, when it is used for domestic heating, and setting up a supplier fuel obligation. The trade association argues this will provide an affordable, low carbon alternative for oil heated homes who would be able to transition with minimal cost and disruption.

The renewable liquid fuel Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) has been effectively demonstrated in just under 150 properties over the past two years and reduced emissions by 88% following minor modifications to their boilers. The industry is also assessing a phased approach through blends so the fuel could be rolled out more quickly.

Malcolm added: "While households on oil heating have enjoyed the lowest heating costs over the past four years, we must recognise the need to transition these properties onto a lower carbon alternative to support the UK's net zero commitments.

"Heat pumps are an excellent solution for some properties but, for others, renewable oil may offer a more pragmatic and realistic choice. And, if the Government corrects the current fuel duty disparity and implements a fuel obligation, options such as HVO can provide a long-term, affordable solution for decarbonising buildings in the off-grid sector that currently rely on traditional oil heating."

OFTEC's autumn webinar series was a hit again

OFTEC has now concluded its successful autumn webinar series. But, if you missed them, don't worry, because the recordings are available on the OFTEC website.

The first webinar in the series was specifically designed for Irish OFTEC technicians and focused on government rules and regulations, HVO deployment and the future of Irish heating, along with much more.

The second webinar covered HVO and the future of off-grid heating. The webinar featured an in-depth discussion about the current state of HVO in the UK, the Future Ready Fuel campaign and the current heat policy landscape in Westminster, following Labour's election win, and the situation in Scotland and Wales.

For the last webinar in the series, we took a different approach, hosting a Facebook Live event on the OFTEC technician forum where technicians were invited to 'ask us anything'. We covered a range of questions and further Facebook Live events, and webinars, are planned for the new year, so look out for details.

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

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 the 18th of July 2024 – 21st of October 2024, a total of 13 businesses had their membership revoked*.

The revoked businesses are:

Company No.	Business Name
104492	A1 Plumbing Ltd
105895	Andrew McGaffin
102407	Anthony McAllister
8627	B C Roberts Plumbing & Heating
501027	Cutmore Plumbing & Heating
500642	D R Seale Plumbing Ltd
500260	Dave Truss Plumbing & Heating Limited
11204	Geoff Tremblett Plumbing & Heating
105986	HDM Northern Ltd
104190	Lorcan Kilmurray Plumbing and Heating
502069	Nant Heating
5722	Oxford Pools Limited
103221	PW Boilers Ltd

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

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Grant welcomes new area sales manager

Ryan Johnstone has joined Grant as its newest area sales manager. He will be covering the North of Scotland, providing sales support to installers, engineers and merchants for all Grant products, from its HVO compatible oil-fired boilers through to its latest air source heat pumps.

Working alongside Mike Pryde, Grant's Regional Sales Manager for Scotland and Northern England, Ryan Johnstone has joined the company's sales team and will be supporting customers throughout the counties of Fife, Perth and Kinross, Angus, Aberdeenshire, Moray, the Highlands and the Northern Scottish Isles. He will be working closely with heating professionals, providing them with the sales support they require for all of Grant's efficient heating solutions.

Ryan started his career in the heating industry in 2005, working as a warehouse operative for a national plumbing and heating merchant. Over the years, Ryan has continued to work within the merchant sector in branch manager and key account manager roles before moving to the other side of the counter, working as an area business manager for a boiler manufacturer. Ryan's career has seen him work first-hand with engineers and installers, developing a thorough understanding of the products and support they need as well as the support required within the merchant network.

This appointment sees Grant's sales team, which is led by Andy Smith the National Sales Manager, increase to seventeen representatives. As the new Area Sales Manager for Northern Scotland, Ryan will be helping customers with enquiries and providing support for Grant's air source heat pumps, including the Aerona 290 heat pump range, as well



as its Vortex oil-fired boilers, underfloor heating systems range and hybrid heating technologies.

"I am really looking forward to getting out and about within my role," comments Ryan. "In my area, I am looking forward to using my knowledge gained from working with merchants and installers to build relationships with both existing and new customers. It is an exciting opportunity, growing the sustainable elements of the business for the future and helping customers find the best low-carbon heating solutions for their needs."

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Government to review plans to decarbonise off grid heating following judicial review

HVO could play role in meeting government's carbon budgets when plans are reviewed

What has the UK's carbon budgets got to do with off-gas grid heating? Although it's a very small piece of the net zero jigsaw, the Government's plans to phase out the installation of fossil fuels off-the-gas grid formed part of the Government's Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (CBDP). The CBDP is essentially the UK's road map to net zero.

In 2023, the then Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, announced he was abandoning several green policies from the UK's Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (CBDP), including the off-gas grid boiler phase out, which had been due to be implemented in 2024 and 2026. The TV presenter and naturalist Chris Packham CBE was granted permission to bring a judicial review challenging the abandonment of these policies.

Following the General Election, a legal settlement has been agreed between the Government and Mr Packham, with the current administration admitting that the previous Government had acted unlawfully. And, as a result of a separate legal challenge, the Government also conceded that the abandonment of these policies meant it failed to meet its obligations under Section 13 of the Climate Change Act 2008.

The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (CBDP) will be reviewed in May 2025, and the government must now reconsider the decisions to delay the phase out of off-grid fossil fuel heating and the other cancelled or downgraded policies. In doing so, it is important it doesn't make the same mistakes as the previous administration by simply attempting to force off-grid households down an unpopular electrification pathway.

OFTEC CEO, Paul Rose, comments: "For off-gas grid heating there is a better solution, which is to embrace a technology inclusive approach, press ahead with the renewable liquid heating fuel obligation consultation, and introduce HVO. We know that introducing HVO would meet the carbon budget saving needed for the off-grid sector. Better still, our industry is ready to do it and we know it will be popular with liquid fuel heating customers. It's time for the Government to hold the consultation and let us get on with it."

OFTEC and UKIFDA will continue to lobby for this approach to be adopted through direct engagement with MPs, and our Future Ready Fuel campaign. Your assistance would really help us in the fight to secure a long term future for liquid fuel heating and you can find out how to join the campaign on page 5.



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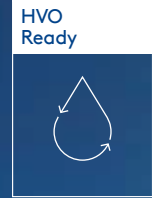
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Biofuel recognition is 'a vital step forward'

Firebird Heating Solutions recently welcomed Minister for Finance, Jack Chambers, who met with the organisation's employees on a flying visit to Cork. During his visit to the Baile Mhic Ire factory, Minister Chambers also met with representatives from UKIFDA, as well as local home heating installers and service engineers.

As part of his visit, Mark Doyle, Managing Director of Firebird, gave Minister Chambers a presentation on HVO and why biofuels need to be part of the solution for home heating for the thousands of homes in Ireland, where retrofitting is not an option. The visit to Firebird's factory comes at a critical time, as Ireland faces the challenge of potentially missing its EU Effort Sharing Regulation target of a 42% emissions reduction by 2030. Organisations like Firebird want to play their part in reaching emission targets.

Mark Doyle stated: "The Government's recognition of biofuels is a crucial step toward closing this emissions gap, protecting thousands of jobs in the heating industry and ensuring that Ireland meets its climate commitments."

As a result of the Government's recognition of biofuels, over 700k homeowners with existing oil-fired boiler homes, would have access to financially viable technology choices that meet their unique needs and allow them to positively support Ireland achieve its climate action targets.

Leading the charge in innovation, Firebird has trialed and tested biofuel, HVO in Ireland and the UK to prove that it can be implemented almost immediately. The conversion requires no modification to existing home heating systems with the 20% blend proposed.

A turning point

Mark Doyle added: "The Government's commitment to retrofitting Irish homes and installing renewable energy heating sources has always been crucial in supporting our national emissions targets for 2030. However, many homeowners have struggled with the high costs associated with these retrofits.

"Minister Chambers' visit and his keen interest in meeting with the industry first hand to learn more about the opportunities for Ireland around HVO, marks a turning point for our industry. Hopefully we are within sight of the Government's formal recognition of biofuels including HVO, and with that we will have a clear path for widespread consumer adoption."



Doyle continued: "This recognition of biofuels would not only secure the jobs of our dedicated team at Firebird but would also protect thousands of jobs across the heating industry. It's a crucial step toward making sustainable home heating solutions more accessible and affordable for Irish homeowners, while also supporting the Government's climate action targets."

For years, Firebird has been working closely with oil distributors, service engineers, and other home heating solution manufacturers to tackle this issue. Together, they have put in significant effort to convince the Government to officially recognise biofuels for heating and to remove the obstacles for their use. This collective effort shows a strong commitment to helping homeowners meet Ireland's ambitious emissions reduction targets and to advancing towards a more sustainable future.



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HWOS catalogue offers exciting new functionality

Heating World of Spares (HWOS), the specialist mail order supplier of oil, LPG, gas and heating spares has recently launched its latest updated catalogue.

James Dawson, Operations Manager, told us: "After a year off, our updated oil, gas, LPG, and heating spares catalogue is back and bigger than ever, with 212 pages of our most popular spare parts, controls, fittings, consumables, tools and equipment."



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James explains the exciting new feature: "We have introduced scannable QR codes in this new edition of the catalogue, to make checking product pricing and stock availability as easy as possible.

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Free on request, you can find all the details on the HWOS website where you can add product SKU 'HWOSCAT2024' to your basket to receive your free copy, or simply click the check box to request a copy at checkout.

The new catalogue can also be requested by telephone (01388 760 333) or by emailing sales@hwos.co.uk

New QR Smart Pre-Plumbed Cylinders from Grant

Alongside the launch of the Aerona 290 heat pump range, Grant UK has added several other new products to its renewables range including QR Smart Pre-Plumbed cylinder models with heat pump controller kits, a new installation pack and an internal volumiser.

The four new Quick Recovery Smart Pre-Plumbed cylinders will be joining Grant's hot water cylinder range. These pre-plumbed cylinders incorporate the Aerona Smart Controller, with the controller's display, wiring centre and cylinder temperature sensor supplied fitted on the cylinder. With their factory-fitted pre-wired controls and pipework, these pre-plumbed cylinder options can speed up installation for installers to make on-site set-up and commissioning easier.

The QR Smart Pre-Plumbed cylinders are available in four sizes – 180ltr, 210ltr, 250ltr and 300ltr – and are compatible with both of Grant's heat pump ranges. Each model incorporates many of the same features as Grant's other QR pre-plumbed cylinders including factory-fitted primary system pipework with heating and hot water 2-port valves, factory-fitted cold water inlet pipework with inlet manifold, and a potable water expansion vessel. In addition, the QR Smart pre-plumbed cylinders have the Aerona Smart Controller touchscreen display fitted, although customers can choose to remove the display and locate this in another room if they prefer. The Aerona Smart Controller wiring centre is also pre-wired and factory-fitted to the cylinder.

Alongside the new QR Smart Pre-Plumbed cylinders, new controller kits will also be available. Each kit will include the Aerona Smart Controller WiFi Hub (which can be mounted to the cylinder using the adhesive pads supplied), an outdoor weather sensor,

water temperature sensors, flexible hoses and isolation valves. Customers will be able to order the appropriate controller kit according to the heat pump model being fitted, with separate kits supplied for the Aerona³ R32 units and the Aerona 290 models.

A new additional heat pump installation pack will also be available which is specifically for use with the QR Smart Pre-Plumbed cylinder models. This pack, which is compatible with both the Aerona³ R32 heat pumps and Aerona 290 heat pumps, includes a flexi-foot kit, magnetic filter, 18ltr system kit and isolator and is designed for use on S-Plan systems.

A new 50ltr internal volumiser will also be available to order. This duplex stainless steel internal volumiser incorporates 50mm polyurethane foam insulation and has a white powder coated finish to suit airing cupboards and other internal environments within the home. An optional cylinder stand, which is designed to be fitted with this new internal volumiser, will be available to order for customers wishing to position the volumiser beneath the cylinder to save space and reduce the footprint of the two products.



"We've been working hard behind the scenes to give our customers ultimate choice and flexibility when it comes to heat pump installations," says Paul Wakefield, Grant's Managing Director. "The addition of our new QR Smart Pre-Plumbed cylinders will be welcomed by installers who want to install a pre-plumbed cylinder with our innovative Aerona Smart Controller. Furthermore, our new controller kits, installation pack and cylinder accessories provide more solutions to suit our customers' different installation requirements. The addition of these new products combined with the Aerona 290 air source heat pumps will make the Grant renewables range its most comprehensive offering to date."

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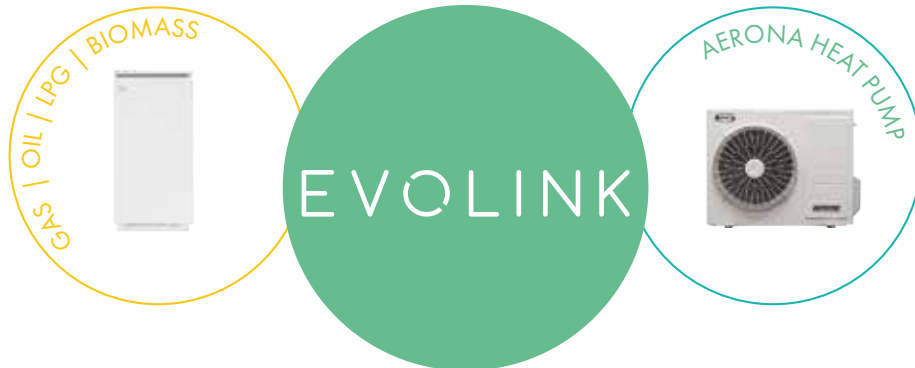


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The Warmflow Zeno R290 – a new era of heat pumps

Heating engineers are always on the lookout for the most efficient, reliable, and environmentally friendly solutions that meet their customers' needs, and offer the best value.

Warmflow's new Zeno R290 air source heat pump has been introduced with these requirements in mind. A state-of-the-art heating solution that combines advanced technology, user-friendly features, and aesthetic appeal, the pump is already proving a popular choice for renewable heating installations.

Key features:

1. High efficiency: The Zeno R290 unit performs impressively, delivering 5kW of heat for every 1kW of electricity consumed. This not only reduces energy costs for homeowners but also aligns with carbon reduction goals.

2. Eco-friendly refrigerant: The pump uses R290 refrigerant, a natural, low-GWP refrigerant that is more environmentally friendly than traditional refrigerants. The Zeno R290 doesn't just deliver an effective heating solution, it also helps to contribute to a sustainable future.

3. Compact design: As one of the only single-fanned 15kW units on the market, the pump is designed to fit seamlessly into a variety of spaces, making it an ideal choice both for new builds and retrofits.



4. Warmlink wireless control technology: The Zeno R290 features Warmlink wireless control, allowing engineers to manage installations wirelessly through a smartphone or tablet. This technology not only enhances the commissioning process, but also provides remote diagnostic capabilities to assist with maintenance and troubleshooting from afar.

5. Aesthetic appeal: The pump comes in a stylish finish, designed to integrate with any property's aesthetic, making it attractive to homeowners and developers.

6. Ease of installation: Equipped with a full-colour touchscreen interface that simplifies installation and operation, the pump offers easier adjustments and settings management, enhancing on-site efficiency. The intuitive controls offer two levels of access – one for the homeowner and another for the heating engineer – facilitating easier set-up and ongoing maintenance.

7. Trusted support: Zeno R290 installers benefit from Warmflow's support team. Assisted setup is a free service for all new customers. Offering expert guidance throughout the installation process, this ensures a successful set-up.

8. Free design service: Warmflow offers a complimentary design service for those specifying the Zeno R290 and Nero heat pump cylinders, which delivers tailored installation recommendations based on your project plans.

9. Qualifies for government grant: The pump qualifies for government incentive grants in England, Scotland & Wales, subject to terms and conditions.

10. MCS assisted sign-off: Warmflow offers assistance with the paperwork and approvals required for government grant funding.

With features designed to meet customer needs and heating engineer expectations, the Zeno R290 combines efficiency, sustainability, and ease of use. A significant advancement in heating technology, the new heat pump enhances a heating engineers service offering by delivering energy savings and environmental benefits to their customers.

Grant continues its partnership with Bath Rugby

With the 2024/5 rugby season well underway, Grant UK is continuing its partnership with local Premiership Club, Bath Rugby. As a long-standing Official Partner of the Club, Grant remains the Official Sustainability and Grassroots Partner of Bath Rugby as well, supporting the club both on and off the field.

For nearly a decade, Grant has been supporting this local Premiership Club developing its partnership over the years. Today, the company is also working closely with club to raise awareness about sustainability and low carbon heating in the local community.

Established partnership

In its second year as Official Sustainability and Grassroots Partner, Grant is helping the club as it continues its own carbon reducing programme at Farleigh House and the Rec. Following the success of their Kick



the Carbon initiative with local primary schools earlier this year, Grant and Bath Rugby are working together in the local community and amongst the Bath Rugby fans to spread the word about the changes we can all make to be more environmentally friendly. With the company's logo on the kit worn by players and supporters, the Bath Rugby community will hopefully not only recognise Grant as a familiar brand at the Rec but also for what it represents.

"Last year's season was such a special one for Bath Rugby, the players, the coaching team and everyone involved in the running of the Club and, as established partners, we hope that this season brings even more success for the team. We are excited to be building upon the positive work we have already achieved together, with fresh ideas and initiatives taking place as part of our Grassroots Partnership."

James Wiltshire, Partnerships Manager at Bath Rugby said, "Grant has become synonymous with Bath Rugby due to our longstanding and successful partnership. This was highlighted by our community campaign last season, engaging local children on the importance and benefits of sustainability, whilst getting them physically active. As the club continues its upward trajectory into, we look forward to the opportunities presented by having Grant alongside us."



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Grant launches fifth generation heat pump

Grant UK's new air-to-water heat pump range, the Aerona 290 is now available, marking yet another landmark chapter for the company. Incorporating the energy efficient R290 refrigerant, the Aerona 290 combines sleek aesthetics with high performance and clever design, providing a low carbon heating solution for the next generation.

The Aerona 290 is the fifth generation of air source heat pump from Grant Engineering. Grant has worked closely with installers throughout the research and development phase, further strengthening its heat pump offering and providing customers with an innovative, eye-catching heat pump to suit many types of homes. The Aerona 290, which will be supplied alongside Grant's award-winning Aerona³ models, is available to order in the 4kW, 6.5kW and 9kW units with the larger outputs of 12kW and 15.5kW coming in early 2025.

The Aerona 290 monobloc heat pump has been developed upon three core pillars – design, performance and peace of mind. Using the energy efficient R290 refrigerant with its incredibly low Global Warming Potential of 3, the Aerona 290 provides an even more environmentally friendly heat pump solution. Using a natural refrigerant which is a pure hydrocarbon, the Aerona 290 signals another step forward in sustainable home heating.

With its modern styling and sleek colourway, the Aerona 290 has not only been designed with its aesthetics in mind but also its acoustics. Featuring a durable, powder coated black



casing, the Aerona 290 heat pump's appearance has been developed following in-depth analysis of customer feedback. Meanwhile, the ultra-low noise levels of the units, which have achieved Quiet Mark accreditation, are the result of innovative sound-reducing features within the unit including acoustic cotton sound insulation in the casing and anti-vibration feet.

The models have an energy rating of A+++ (at 35°C flow temperature) and their outputs have been rated at -5°C air temperature and 55°C water flow temperature, delivering exceptional performance levels. The units can be monitored and managed remotely, giving both installers and their customers ultimate control of their heat pump system and assisting offsite diagnostic support when required. Designed for use with the Aerona Smart Controller, the Aerona 290's operation can be managed with ease through straightforward set-up and commissioning and innovative control thereafter.

Available with a seven-year guarantee when installed by a G1 Installer (terms and conditions apply), the Aerona 290 has been tested to perform in

extreme temperatures from -25°C through to 35°C. To give customers peace of mind, extensive customer support is also provided by Grant's in-house teams of renewables experts. For system design and specification, Grant's design team is on hand to help installers, merchants and other customers correctly size their new system. Meanwhile, on-site technical support is available to assist installers during setting and commissioning.

In support of the new heat pump, Grant's training academy has released a free 1-day training course on the new Aerona 290 models at its flagship Academy in Swindon. The training course will cover operation, performance, installation and commissioning, as well as providing training on R290 refrigerant and the important safety requirements for installation.

"The Aerona 290 has captured much interest since its soft launch at InstallerSHOW earlier this year," comments Paul Wakefield, Grant's Managing Director. "Our fifth generation of heat pump, the Aerona 290 is an exciting addition to our product portfolio and its availability comes as Grant Engineering celebrates fifteen years of being in the heat pump market. With more and more homes making the transition to lower carbon heating solutions, we will continue to support our customers by providing them with the technologies, products and services they need and the Aerona 290 represents our unwavering commitment to continuous product development in the heating sector."

Elco hosts meeting to discuss the role for emerging liquid fuels

Elco, a specialist in burner design and manufacturing, had the privilege of hosting the Eurofuel meeting in Italy in early October, in collaboration with partner F.I.D.A. s.r.l.

Eurofuel, the European Liquid Heating Fuels Association, represents organisations dedicated to promoting the use of liquid fuels for domestic heating across Europe. The event provided an invaluable platform for Elco to discuss the current landscape of liquid fuels, and to engage in constructive dialogue about the future of this business.

In these challenging times for the heating sector, the burner industry can play an important role by leveraging innovative fuels and combustion technologies that are ready for immediate implementation.



"This meeting provided an ideal opportunity to showcase our state-of-the-art facility to our guests," Erica Furin, OEM & Subsidiary UK Director, commented. "We were able to offer an in-depth exploration of our cutting-edge combustion technologies, which are designed to seamlessly operate with emerging fuels such as HVO and biofuels, and can significantly reduce the emission levels of our burners and enhance operational efficiency."

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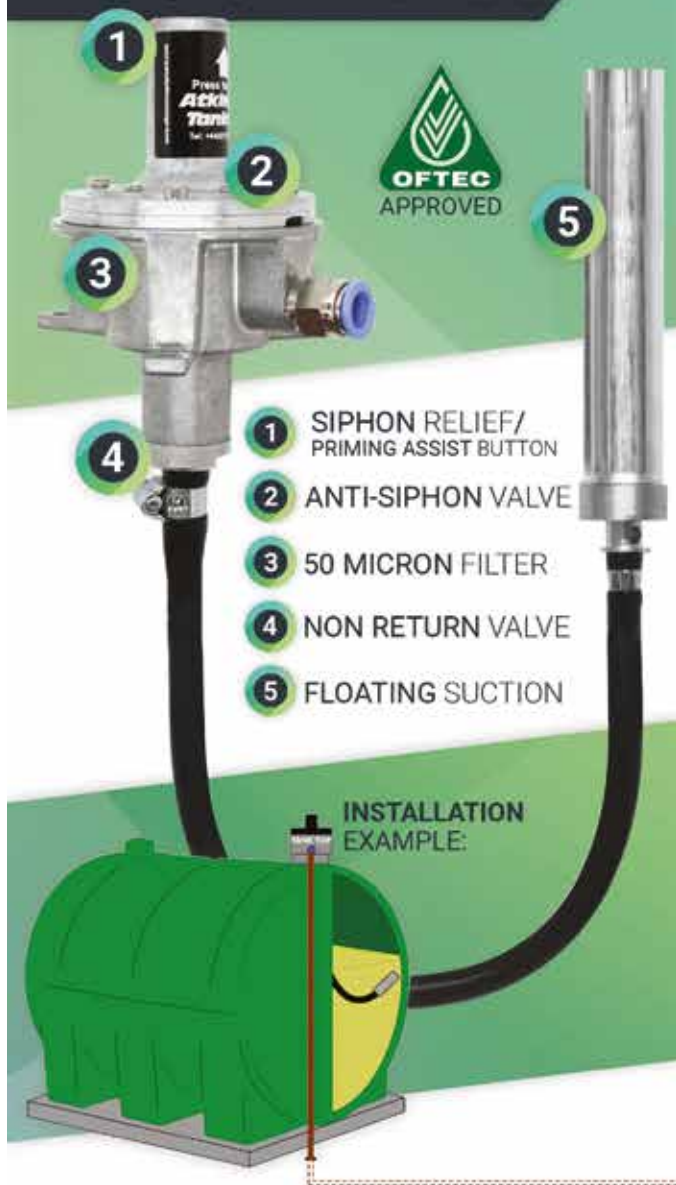
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How to burn solid fuel

Do your customers ever ask for advice about how to get the most out of their wood burning stove? Here, Andy Genovese, looks in detail at wood storage and use.

Several factors need to be considered when trying to get an effective, clean and economical burn, and by no means are they all obvious. Solid fuel most likely means wood. Domestic bituminous 'house' coal sales were prohibited during 2023 in the UK and manufactured smokeless coal is only of minor interest. Also, this means a stove – burning solid fuel in an open fire is another matter entirely.

Log size The optimum log diameter for efficient burning in most stoves is about 125mm/5". With around 3/4 of the fuel locked up in a piece of wood, it has to heat up and then vaporise off the surface as flammable gas. The rest of the fuel is mainly fixed carbon or charcoal. This carbon is what causes the surface of burning wood to glow – once the flames are gone, it becomes glowing embers. A large log has a small surface area relative to its volume, so the flammable gases are given off slowly. As a result, the burning temperature falls and less of the gases burn, which causes inefficient burning and increased emissions.

The critical temperature inside the stove, the liner and chimney is $>114^{\circ}\text{C}$. This is the condensate point of the gases produced during combustion. Below this, the gases will turn back into liquids, tars and solids (soot). As these liquids and compounds are acidic, they will cause iron, steel, stainless and brick to corrode. The solution burns hot and keeps the gasses as gas for as much of the evacuation process as possible. In reality there is usually a condensate band in most chimney liners near the terminal, as most flues drop to around 500°C near the end of a standard 9m run.

Dryness The fuel must be dry. According to Woodsure, the UK's quality assurance body, it must be below 20%. This means the fire will not have to boil off the excess moisture and results in more heat for the room and less condensate in the appliance and flue. Some sources suggest about 81% of the calorific value of the fuel is harvestable at 20%, lower moisture content usually means more heat. This is best checked with a moisture meter.

Appliances Multi-fuel stoves benefit from leaving a bed of ash in the grate. This slows wood consumption by gently restricting the air flow. Most wood stoves will remain hot the morning after a burn, while most multi-fuel appliances will not. This is purely down to greater airflow in a multi-fuel appliance – the payoff is generally that multi-fuel stoves are easier to light. In the same vein, DEFRA-approved appliances with their constant airflow tend to burn hotter (and cleaner) and are easier to light.

Storage Wood stored outside rarely achieves much below 20% moisture content. If stored outside, the optimum storage solution is a south facing open log store, neatly stacked. Failing this, old pallets make an ideal base for wood storage as stacking rather than piling allows optimal airflow (and hence drying). A tarpaulin or board to keep the rain off is recommended. A couple of visual checks to note – dry firewood will be grey with cracks along the edges and much lighter than wet firewood. Wood typically contains about 4-5kWh per kg.

In the next part of this series on solid fuel we will be considering carbon and climate change and comparing wood burning to other heating methods.

Gas, propane and oil – how different are they?

While many in the Oil Installer community deal solely with oil-fuelled heating, it is useful to understand the range of options open to customers that are installing or replacing a heating system. Here, Sean Keleher, technical director at Navien UK, considers what influences boiler choice, and discusses some of the benefits or drawbacks of the fuel that powers it.

We are no strangers to a bitter winter in the UK and Ireland, which is why our home heating systems have evolved to use the best available fuel sources available. While new technologies such as solar thermal boilers and air-sourced heat pumps are starting to appear in homes across the islands, most of our heating systems are still powered by three types of fossil fuel: natural gas, propane and oil.

Each fuel has its own benefits and drawbacks – and it is useful for installers to have knowledge of all three. When armed with this information, you are in a better position to provide the best possible advice to your customers about the right boiler for their homes and the benefits or disadvantages of the fuel that powers it.

Mains character energy

In most towns and cities, mains gas or natural gas is readily available, making it the obvious option. Gas is, comparatively, cheaper to install with no fuel storage costs and modern gas boilers, mainly combi boilers, are also very efficient. For example, a condensing combi boiler captures heat that would otherwise escape through the flue, using it to help heat water and the home, helping to reduce energy bills while also cutting carbon emissions.

Gas boilers can also offer a lot more flexibility as they have a high flow rate and adjusting the temperature of your home heating system is easy – especially if paired with a smart controller. Furthermore, a ‘plug n play’ installation is relatively straightforward,

particularly if you choose a boiler from a manufacturer who factors easy installation into the design of their products.

Oil alternative

For those who live in a region without access to mains gas, then oil has been the traditional alternative – particularly in more rural areas. However, this doesn’t mean these customers have to sacrifice energy efficiency or performance – in fact, oil boilers are typically A-rated or even A+ with additional controls. The reason for this is that heating oil burns at a higher temperature, producing the same amount of heat needed to warm up a home much quicker.

Despite these benefits, there are also a few drawbacks. Unfortunately, in this instance, higher efficiency does not mean lower emissions, as burning oil often creates more carbon emissions than burning gas - highlighting the importance of the industry’s Future Ready Fuel campaign.

Some systems – such as Navien’s range of oil-powered boilers – can burn hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), which is a recycled product, made from waste, that contributes to a significant reduction in carbon emissions. Although it is a low carbon solution, the cost of HVO is significantly higher than the price of traditional fuel and is, currently, less readily available. There are calls for the Government to reduce the cost of HVO so that it can achieve parity with kerosene as a fuel for domestic heating and encourage a rapid adoption of this alternative solution.

In addition, the picture is not as clear when it comes to cost due to a number of variables, such as the cost of burning oil compared to natural gas – which is a key consideration for customers when presented with both as an option. Studies show that, over the last 4 years, the average cost of oil and gas in domestic heating are



comparable, with oil slightly cheaper, but the oil price is prone to greater fluctuation and unpredictability.

However, because oil-fired boilers are so popular in rural areas, oil suppliers must provide a competitive service, so advise your customers to regularly shop around for the best deals. This can be tempered by big fluctuations in the price of oil – unsurprisingly, it has, traditionally, been more expensive during the colder months. But, if the homeowner plans ahead and refills their tank towards the end of summer, they could potentially enjoy significant savings.

Another consideration for homeowners is the added cost required to store the oil and, if an oil-powered boiler is the right option for the property and there's no storage tank in place, this could also mean a higher installation cost when compared to alternative fuels – although many oil suppliers offer the option to lease the tank rather than buy it outright.

The pros of LPG

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) – usually made up of propane or butane gas – is an alternative to oil, in areas with no mains gas provision. As with oil, the



homeowner will need a storage tank and a contract with an LPG supplier.

From an emissions standpoint, LPG is more environmentally friendly than heating oil. It isn't toxic, for example, meaning that a leak would not contaminate water or the ground around the tank. When it burns, LPG produces fewer carbon emissions than oil or natural gas. If sustainability is the homeowner's main priority, they can also source renewable LPG, which can

reduce emissions by up to 38%.

There are also performance benefits over oil as LPG boilers tend to be both quieter and more compact, taking up less space in the property. Beyond that, LPG has similar drawbacks to oil in that fuel prices are subject to fluctuations – and the base level price is higher than for oil. It also comes with the additional admin and costs of a storage tank.

However, it has become much easier recently to benefit from LPG thanks to improvements in LPG conversion kits for standard gas boilers. These now allow a registered gas engineer to quickly convert a boiler to run on propane, with providers like Navien now offering LPG conversion kits in the box as standard.

Informed choice

At present, the best boiler choice and fuel source is probably one of the three we've discussed here. In the future, it might be a hydrogen blend, which is why Navien gas boilers are hydrogen-ready. Or it could even be a solar boiler or heat pump.

The key to a satisfied customer is the ability to give them informed choices.

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SPONSORED FEATURE

Rural properties: The hidden potential of heat batteries

In many rural areas, where homes have long depended on oil-fired heating systems, there is a growing awareness of the need to transition to renewable alternatives. However, for some, this shift is often seen as more of a threat than an opportunity.

The familiarity and reliability of oil boilers can make homeowners wary of new technologies. Yet we are seeing an increasing number of oil-fired customers seeking renewable solutions that work effectively in rural environments. This presents a valuable opportunity particularly for OFTEC installers to broaden their offering and continue serving their customers and growing their business.

As the market for renewable energy expands, rural homeowners and installers are beginning to recognise the potential for innovative solutions, such as heat batteries, to bridge the gap between traditional systems and the new, greener technologies. By presenting renewable tech, like tepeo's ZEB, as a practical and accessible opportunity rather than a disruptive change, the renewable transition can become less of a challenge and more of a benefit.

Rural homes have specific heating needs. Many properties are older and often more difficult to insulate effectively. With no access to the gas grid, many rural homeowners rely on oil boilers, which have long been considered a dependable option for these homes. Yet, the concern of fluctuating and rising fuel costs, coupled with growing environmental concerns, is pushing more people towards renewable alternatives.

A low-disruption solution

However, not all renewable solutions are a perfect fit for rural properties. Heat pumps, for example, are often touted as the go-to choice for renewable heating. But for many rural homes, heat pumps present challenges. They require considerable outdoor space, which some properties may not have, and they work best in homes that are well-insulated and airtight. This isn't always feasible for older, less insulated buildings. Moreover, the initial installation cost of heat pumps can be significant, making them a less attractive option

for homeowners looking for both cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

This is where heat battery boilers, like the ZEB, come into play. Offering an alternative to both oil and traditional heat pumps, heat batteries provide a simple, efficient, and low-disruption solution. Unlike heat pumps, heat batteries can work seamlessly with existing heating systems, such as radiators and underfloor heating, meaning that homeowners don't have to invest in major infrastructure changes.

For rural properties, the benefits of heat batteries are clear. They offer the ability to store electricity as heat, which can then be released as and when needed to meet the property's heating demand, providing the same high temperature heat as a traditional boiler. This flexibility is particularly valuable in areas where grid reliability might be inconsistent or where electricity is more expensive during peak times. By using electricity generated from renewable sources, such as wind or solar power, heat batteries also help reduce carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels.

Additionally, the compact nature of heat batteries makes them a strong option for homes with limited outdoor space. While heat pumps often require large external units, heat batteries are much more discreet and installed indoors. This makes them particularly suitable for rural homes that lack the space needed for other renewable systems.

Opportunity

For OFTEC installers, the shift towards renewables offers more than just an environmental advantage—it's a business opportunity. As more oil-fired customers begin exploring alternative heating solutions, installers who can offer these options will be well-positioned to remain relevant and competitive in an evolving market.

Heat batteries, in particular, represent an attractive option for installers because they are straightforward to install, often requiring minimal changes to existing heating infrastructure. This makes them an easy add-on for technicians familiar with traditional systems, providing a



way to guide their customers through the renewable transition without the need for significant overhauls.

Moreover, by offering heat batteries as a solution, installers can ensure their business stays ahead of the curve, capturing a growing segment of the market that is actively seeking low-carbon alternatives. This shift doesn't just future-proof the technician's business—it also strengthens the trust and loyalty they have built with their customers by offering them practical, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly choices.

The conversation around renewable heating in rural properties is often framed as a challenge, particularly for homeowners who have relied on oil-fired systems for decades. However, by presenting renewable technologies like heat batteries as an opportunity—rather than a threat—this transition can become a positive step forward.

For rural homeowners, heat batteries offer an accessible, efficient, and cost-effective way to transition to renewable heating without the need for significant infrastructure changes. For installers, these systems represent a valuable chance to broaden their offerings and continue serving their customers, no matter what direction the future of heating takes.

Leading the way

As rural communities increasingly seek out low-carbon solutions, heat batteries like the ZEB are proving themselves to be a powerful, flexible option that bridges the gap between traditional systems and the renewable future. By positioning themselves as leaders in this new heating landscape, technicians and installers can help guide their customers through this transition, ensuring that rural properties remain warm, sustainable, and future-ready.

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Repair over replacement: the rise of spare parts



In recent years, there has been a notable increase in the sales of genuine spare parts, reflecting a broader market trend towards repairing rather than replacing products. Graham Barker, Sales & Service Director at Riello Burners in the UK, Carrier RLC EMEA, explains how using original parts for repairs can not only extend the life of burners, but also ensure they operate safely and efficiently.

Increasing demand for spares

The global industrial burner market size was valued at USD 5.83 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach USD 9.85 billion by 2031. The growing demand for spare parts is driven by several key factors and reflects a broader market trend towards repairing rather than replacing products.

Industry insights reveal that customers are increasingly opting for repairs to extend the life of their equipment due to the high costs associated with new installations. The economic pressure on both businesses and consumers has made the repair and maintenance of existing equipment a more viable and cost-effective option, thereby driving up the demand for genuine spare parts.

This trend is further accelerated by the rising awareness of environmental sustainability, as repairing and maintaining existing equipment reduces waste and conserves resources.

Additionally, the increased focus on extending the lifespan of industrial equipment through regular maintenance has highlighted the critical role of high-quality spares in ensuring continuous and efficient operation.

The substantial increase in the cost of living has also played a significant role, pushing both commercial and residential users to prioritise cost-effective solutions like repairs, thus boosting the demand for reliable spare parts.

The importance of genuine spares

The use of genuine spare parts is critical in maintaining the safety and performance of burners. Authentic spares are designed and tested to meet the specific standards of the original equipment, ensuring



compatibility and reliability. The availability and quality of these spares directly impact the operational efficiency and safety of the products.

Genuine spares are subject to continuous research and development (R&D) programs aimed at monitoring and enhancing their quality and performance. This in-house control allows manufacturers to swiftly react to any requirements or improvements as they arise, maintaining the integrity of burners throughout their lifecycle.

This rigorous testing process helps to mitigate the risks associated with non-genuine parts, which may not adhere to the same quality controls and could compromise the burner's functionality and safety.

Non-genuine parts often lack the precision engineering and durability required for optimal performance, potentially leading to increased wear and tear, higher failure rates and even hazardous situations.

Responding to market trends

The increasing sales of spare parts reflect a broader market trend towards repairing rather than replacing products. This shift underscores the importance of genuine spares, to not only extend the life of the burners, but also ensure they operate safely and efficiently.

The use of genuine Riello spares is integral to maintaining the high standards we set for our products. This commitment is particularly critical

in the current market environment, where economic pressures and the rising costs of new installations have driven a significant shift towards repairing rather than replacing products.

Continuous investment in R&D allows for the development of spares that enhance the life of products. With proper servicing and preventive maintenance, many burners remain in operation for over 20 years, still performing efficiently. This long-term reliability is testament to the quality and durability of the products.

The role of research and development at Riello

Our continuous investment in research and development allows us to innovate and respond proactively to market needs, ensuring that our spares enhance the durability and efficiency of our products. For instance, the development of advanced burner technologies to meet stringent emission regulations underscores our dedication to both environmental responsibility and superior product performance.

As we continue to innovate and adapt to the evolving market landscape, Riello remains dedicated to delivering excellence in every aspect of our business. This includes not only the products we manufacture but also the comprehensive support and high-quality spare parts that ensure our customers can rely on Riello's burners for years to come.





Navien launches online tool to better support installers

Boiler and heating appliance manufacturer, Navien, has announced the launch of a new online tool which will help installers find merchants quickly.

The 'Find a Merchant' tool has been designed to make the installer journey easier by sourcing the nearest merchant to their location with Navien's full range of boilers and heating appliances available for purchase.

Commenting on the launch of the web-based tool, Graham Parkes, commercial director at Navien UK, said: "With the demand for Navien UK heating products rising, especially ahead of the heating season, installers need a quick and reliable way to locate merchants.

"The 'Find a Merchant' tool has been designed to save installers time while supporting them in delivering excellent customer service, with easy access to Navien's gas and oil-powered boilers."

Navien recently announced its partnership with APP Wholesale Ltd, which has given installers across the country access to Navien's full range of products at approximately 2,500 independent merchants.

Supporting the installer network

Graham continued: "Our goal has always been to support our installer network by providing them with the tools and resources they need to get the job done right.

"Through our trusted merchant partners, installers can access a wide range of products. This ensures that their customers can benefit from reliable, energy-efficient heating solutions provided quickly by installers."

Warmflow addresses industry volatility with a price freeze

In a bold move that reflects its commitment to supporting customers during challenging economic times, Warmflow, a UK manufacturer of home heating appliances, has announced a price freeze on their Agentis, Zeno and Nero ranges for the remainder of 2024.

This decision comes amidst ongoing market volatility and rising costs across the energy sector, signalling the company's focus on affordability and customer satisfaction.

Given the unpredictability of the current economic landscape, a price freeze is a brave move. The energy sector has been significantly impacted by global inflationary pressures, fluctuating raw material costs, and disruptions in supply chains - factors that have forced many manufacturers to raise prices, putting additional strain on consumers who are already facing higher energy bills and living costs.

Much-needed stability

By holding prices steady, Warmflow aims to ease the burden on both heating engineers & homeowners relying on its heating products, including boilers, renewable heating solutions, and hot water cylinders.

It is a move that underscores the company's commitment to its customers. By absorbing increased costs rather than passing them on, the company is looking to the longer



term and reinforcing its reputation as a customer-centric organization.

"At Warmflow, we understand the challenges our customers are facing in today's economic environment," said Brian Beattie, Director of GB Sales & Marketing. "By freezing our prices for the rest of the year, we are not only supporting our customers, but also demonstrating our confidence in the quality and efficiency of our products.

"We believe this decision will help our customers manage their costs more effectively, without compromising on the quality of their heating systems.

"We have a strong track record of innovation and sustainability, delivering products designed to meet the evolving needs of modern homes and businesses. Maintaining prices will enable more customers to access these advanced technologies, crucial for reducing energy consumption and lowering carbon footprints, as well as enhancing our reputation as a sector leader."

Hounsfield Boilers launches new 'Stand Off' boiler

Hounsfield Boilers, has launched a new 'Stand Off' external wall-hung boiler, based on customer feedback and suggestions.

Increased flexibility

The new 'Stand Off' external wall-hung boiler features casing that is 50mm deeper than the standard Hounsfield wall-hung model. The extra space will give installers increased flexibility for pipework when replacing 'through-

the-wall' style boilers or Thermecon Boilers.

Andrew Hounsfield, MD, Hounsfield Boilers said: "Many installers have said that when they remove an old Thermecon boiler, they want to replace it with one of our trusted high-quality boilers. What sometimes stops them is the lack of additional space for pipework routing in the standard Hounsfield external boiler. This new model is a direct response to the feedback."



Andrew added: "We're a small company but we pride ourselves on producing superior boilers and giving excellent customer service. Part of that is being able to listen to what plumbers want and designing a solution that meets their needs and retains the same high standards that people expect from Hounsfield Boilers."

New magnetic filter from Grant

A new magnetic filter for central heating systems is now available from Grant UK. The Grant Mag One DUO is a universal filter designed to give system protection for both traditional boiler and air source heat pump heating systems by preventing the build-up of non-ferrous debris and magnetite in the pipework.

The Mag One DUO filter, which is superseding the Vortex Mag One filter supplied by Grant, has a 12,000-gauss neodymium magnet and captures non-magnetic and magnetic debris that circulates within a heating system. Compatible with traditional fossil fuel systems, including oil-fired boilers, as well as low temperature air source heat pump systems, the Mag One DUO captures fine particles to ensure maximum system protection. Straightforward to install, simple to clean and easy to drain, the Mag One

DUO can be installed as part of a new heating system or it can be retrofitted to an existing system.

The design of the filter enables finer particle filtration by using a 500-micron mesh gauze to maximise the capture of non-ferrous debris. Using direct filtration, rather than a bypass, the Mag One DUO ensures that 100% of the circulated water must pass through its filter cartridge which in turn increases the overall filtration levels compared to the Vortex Mag One filter. It also has a larger diameter internal waterway which reduces pressure drop through the filter. With a significant improvement to the filtration performance, the Mag One DUO is an incredibly effective central heating filter which can not only improve the lifespan of heating systems but also their overall effectiveness.

"The Mag One DUO is an effective magnetic filter that can suit many types of Grant heating system installations," comments Andy Smith, Grant's National Sales Manager. "With an improved design, the Mag One DUO is not only a solution for protecting a Vortex oil-fired boiler but it is also compatible with all Aerona heat pump systems, giving installers one universal filter to suit many applications. Available to order on its own, the Mag One DUO filter will also be supplied in the air source heat pump installation packs which will be despatched from our Head Office after 1st October 2024."



New Navien alliance set to shake up the UK heating market

Installers can now access Navien boilers within 24 hours, thanks to a new strategic partnership between the leading boiler manufacturer and APP Plumbing and Heating, a UK independent distributor of plumbing and heating products.

Navien is partnering with APP Plumbing and Heating as its exclusive UK distributor, to enhance product availability, improving distribution to benefit installers, merchants and homeowners across the UK.

Graham Parkes, commercial director at Navien, commented: "The partnership between Navien and APP Plumbing and Heating represents a significant move in our plan to expand our presence in both independent and national merchant markets. With APP Plumbing and Heating as our exclusive UK distributor, we're able to maximise our independent distribution capabilities. We have sought a partner capable of providing the flexibility and rapid market response necessary for continued growth."

With a long-term goal to drive growth across all product lines by ensuring widespread availability, APP Plumbing and Heating will be pivotal in building the Navien brand in the UK. A commitment to next-day delivery, and access to approximately 2500 independent merchants, means APP Plumbing and Heating is ideally positioned to increase Navien's current market reach.



Supply chain benefits

Shane Knight, commercial director at APP, remarked: "Installers will significantly benefit from the increased availability of Navien products. The partnership ensures a seamless route to market, enabling independent merchants to take advantage of our next-day delivery, whilst boosting Navien's brand awareness and ensuring installers can access the manufacturer's full product range within 24 hours."

With the manufacturer committed to delivering affordability, Homeowners are also set to benefit from easier access to competitively priced heating solutions. Merchants can also benefit from stable pricing and protected margins which should enhance their confidence in Navien's products.

Independent merchants interested in stocking Navien products can also

join the APP Plumbing and Heating network and become part of the supply chain.

Parkes added: "Through this partnership, we aim to achieve greater sales control and sustained growth. Leveraging APP Plumbing and Heating's extensive experience and customer network will enhance our flexibility and competitiveness in the UK boiler market and its established reputation will help to drive our development, creating a mutually beneficial path for growth."

"Navien is committed to investing in customer service to grow sales and within our market organically. With APP Plumbing and Heating's support, we can expand our reach and deliver exceptional products to more customers."

Knight concluded by saying: "Navien's advanced technology and expertise, combined with our strong partnership with their senior team, create a solid alliance. We're excited to present Navien products to new and existing customers, supported by seamless next-day delivery and rapid stock access."

"We'll streamline product inquiries and purchases, guarantee stock availability and provide robust merchant support. Our strong presence will effectively promote Navien products to a wider audience."

Worcester Bosch launches training offer


Worcester Bosch is offering 50% off all product training courses booked and taken between November and February 2025.



The offer applies to all installers, with additional reductions for Worcester Accredited Installers and Worcester Accredited Partners, who already benefit from some free-of-charge courses.

This promotion is part of its PowerUp campaign, aimed at empowering installers






with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high-quality service. The Worcester Bosch PowerUp campaign is offering participating installers the chance to qualify for an action-packed trip to Porto, Portugal, or win incredible prizes by simply hitting their personalised boiler targets before 31st December.



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Use of fire boards

Many technicians are turning to the use of fire boards to protect external fuel storage tanks, and in many cases, a single sheet of material is being used.

Tanks must be protected from the effects of potential fires. Regional building regulations and British Standards 5410 Parts 1 and 2 state that if a tank cannot be sited the prescribed distance from any hazards, the tank should be protected in one of the following ways:

- construct a suitably sized fire-resistant wall/barrier between the tank and the hazard; or
- if the prescribed distance to a legal boundary cannot be achieved, make the boundary wall fire resistant; and/or
- if the prescribed distance to a non-fire rated building/building opening cannot be achieved, make building walls imperforate (no openings) with suitable fire resistance to internal fire.

The degree of fire resistance needed and the minimum distance that a fuel storage tank can be sited from buildings/boundaries, depends on the capacity of the tank and the type of building that it serves. The OFTEC Field Guide summarises these requirements for domestic sites. Details for non-domestic sites can be found in the technical manual.

What materials/construction types are suitable?

Only materials that will be stable, maintain integrity and provide thermal insulation for the required time period (either 30, 60 or 120 minutes). This is not a matter of guesswork. The material selected needs to have been tested to the relevant parts of BS 476-21, or BS 476-22, or BS EN 1363-1 or BS EN 1364-1. The material must also be declared as suitable for exterior use and should be robust enough to last the lifetime of the tank installation.

OFTEC would always recommend that fire protection barriers should be constructed from suitable masonry or concrete materials, as these



have proven and documented fire resistance and weathering properties.

When alternative materials are being considered, OFTEC advises registered technicians to proceed with caution. Prior to selection and use, confirmation should be requested from the product manufacturer/supplier confirming that it is suitable for external use, has been tested to the standards above and offers the minimum period of fire resistance needed.

If I choose to use fire boards, how should they be installed?

In the same way that they were tested by the manufacturer.

It is helpful to understand how manufacturers have their products tested to achieve a 30, 60 or 120-minute fire rating. This test involves exposing one side of a test sample to intense radiated heat to replicate a fire while measurements and observations are made on the unexposed side. Typically, the manufacturer will build a frame, mount a sheet of fire board on both sides of the frame and may sandwich insulation within the frame between the boards. This composite panel

construction may pass the test even if the sheet of fire board exposed to the heat source is significantly damaged and the frame behind it is badly charred. A pass result is possible because temperature checks and observations are taken from the unexposed face.

If a registered technician were to select a board tested as part of a composite panel, but only use a single sheet of board on a frame of their own design, they could clearly not be confident of providing a suitably fire rated barrier, as the board has not been installed in the same way as it was tested.

Can a firewall/barrier contain combustible material such as timber?

Yes, but only if this is the material specified in the fire board manufacturer's installation instructions e.g. timber studwork.

Can a completed fire wall/barrier adjacent to a tank be supported on timber posts?

No. BS 5410-1 states that combustible material should not

be used to create a structure that supports the completed firewall/ barrier.

Can I attach fire boards to a non-fire rated building/ structure or boundary fence to make them fire rated?

No. A structure that does not have the necessary fire resistance (a boundary fence or shed, for example) will be unable to support the fire board for the required period of fire resistance.

What about eaves?

Fire protection cladding can be attached to non-fire rated eaves at domestic dwellings to achieve 30 minutes fire protection. This is possible because the objective is to protect the eaves should the fuel storage tank be set alight. As above, installers cannot presume that a single sheet of fire board will be sufficient for this purpose.

Can I use a metal sheet alone, instead of fire board?

No. A metal sheet alone will not provide adequate thermal insulation.

Legislation changes affecting the Isle of Man



New legislative changes are coming into effect on the 1st of January 2025 for technicians who work on the Isle of Man.

It will no longer be permissible to install new or pre-used fossil fuel heating system in new domestic or non-domestic buildings. This also includes installing such a system in a new extension. However, it would be permissible to connect onto an existing fossil fuel heating system and run the connecting pipework and install heat emitters in a new extension. The ruling also does not apply to the replacement or installation of new fossil fuel heating system in existing buildings.

For more information on the requirements, including what is classed as a fossil fuel heating system, please visit the Isle of Man Net Zero website which can be viewed by scanning the QR code right.



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Fuel price commentary

Heating oil prices this winter are likely to be dictated by three main influencing factors. The first is rumours, which began circulating in September, that the world's largest oil exporter, Saudi Arabia, was preparing to increase its oil output and abandon its unofficial \$100-a-barrel target for oil prices. If true, this will drive down prices, but it may be counterbalanced by inflationary pressures resulting from any reduction in supply due to the spreading conflict in the Middle East and damage resulting from the recent hurricanes in the US. The Trump effect may also influence prices as he favours increasing US

production and may also impact the value of the dollar relative to other currencies.

It remains to be seen which of these factors proves the most significant for oil heating users in the UK and Ireland, but with world demand for crude oil appearing to fall, relatively stable or slightly lower prices may be the most likely outcome.

Looking now at the Sutherland Tables data, compared to the previous quarter, most energy prices have begun to creep upwards, although there is some regional variation and

some striking changes for some fuels. For example, the annual cost of wood pellet heating has increased by £265 in Northern Ireland, although compared to last year, the annual cost has actually fallen slightly. In Great Britain, the cost of oil heating is similar to both the previous quarter, and a year ago. The same is also true in Northern Ireland and in the Republic, although prices have risen slightly in NI. However, for oil heating customers, the good news is that for the second quarter running it is the overall cheapest heating option – and that's true of the longer-term four-year average too.

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

GREAT BRITAIN (average)

	Sep-23	Sep-24	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heaters	£3,320	£2,688	-£632	-19%	£2,900
Gas condensing boiler	£1,591	£1,282	-£309	-19%	£1,305
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	£1,850	£2,023	£173	9%	£1,648
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	£1,323	£1,277	-£46	-3%	£1,272
Wood pellets	£2,514	£2,390	-£124	-5%	£2,023
Air source heat pump radiators	£2,935	£2,541	-£394	-13%	£2,474
Air source heat pump underfloor	£2,456	£2,181	-£275	-11%	£2,095

NORTHERN IRELAND

	Sep-23	Sep-24	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heaters	3,675	3,201	-474	-13%	£2,643
Gas condensing boiler	2,215	1,782	-433	-20%	£1,492
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	2,166	2,291	125	6%	£2,075
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	1,238	1,241	3	0%	£1,199
Wood pellets	1,991	1,869	-122	-6%	£1,591
Air source heat pump radiators	2,875	2,898	23	1%	£2,296
Air source heat pump underfloor	2,377	2,431	54	2%	£1,924

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	Sep-23	Sep-24	Price change	% Difference	4 year average
Electric storage heaters	€4,516	€3,818	-698	-15%	€3,366
Gas condensing boiler	€2,937	€2,188	-749	-26%	€2,078
LPG Condensing boiler radiators and DHW cylinder	€2,783	€2,949	166	6%	€2,624
Oil condensing boiler, radiators and DHW cylinder	€1,780	€1,847	67	4%	€1,695
Wood pellets	€2,311	€2,309	-2	0%	€1,873
Air source heat pump radiators	€3,798	€3,426	-372	-10%	€2,882
Air source heat pump underfloor	€3,187	€2,919	-268	-8%	€2,452

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.

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