

Heating

Electric options

A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

David Garrity, Managing Director of Heat Electric, examines the current debate surrounding climate change and explains why the future is looking bright for electric heating.



Rad-ical solution

Heat Electric's range of electric water filled radiators overcomes this issue by offering consumers a new system in a familiar guise.

While each unit might look like a conventional radiator, a built in boiler, pump and thermostat transforms each into a self contained central heating system. Wall mounted on brackets and plugged into any 13 amp socket, the system requires no pipework and is easy to install.

However, new build is just one sector. By 2050 houses built to the current high efficiency standards will still make up only 30% of total housing and the need for heat in the remaining pre-1990 housing stock will remain substantial. Retrofit systems will therefore be invaluable in bringing older properties up to date, for example replacing inefficient storage heaters, providing a quick and cost effective solution with minimum disruption to residents.

The Government's Climate Change Bill underlines its commitment to reducing UK carbon dioxide emissions by at least 26% by 2020 and at least 60% by 2050.

With heat accounting for around 47% of these the search for a practical, cost effective and environmentally friendly alternative to traditional central heating is gathering momentum.

In January Energy Minister, Malcolm Wicks, launched a call for evidence on the best ways to decarbonise the way we heat our homes and businesses addressing issues such as:

1. How existing technologies for producing heat in a lower carbon way can be developed further
2. Whether new incentives are required to stimulate the development of renewable heat and what form these might take

3. How surplus heat might be captured, transported and re-used rather than going to waste

4. What role there is for low-carbon electricity in heating

5. Which heating options could provide the most cost-effective solutions

The findings, which are currently being analysed, will form the foundations of the Government's Heat Strategy, due to be published alongside its Renewables Strategy in the spring of 2009.

Crucial to the success of any new heating initiative will be the consumer. While new build is the perfect test bed for new technologies these won't necessarily appeal to everyone. Heat is a basic human necessity and consumers want a system that they are comfortable with.



Zone brand

Part L (2006) recognises that sustainability is as much about energy efficiency – and reducing the amount of energy we need to produce in the first place – as it is about using renewable energy. It calls for heating zones to be established in dwellings with separate timing and temperature controls to reflect the different room usage throughout the day and for heat loss from pipework to be limited.



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Heating

Requiring no pipework, the Heat Electric range immediately eliminates this form of energy wastage while its superior controllability ensures heat is only delivered when and where it is needed.

While a plumbed heating system will take a temperature reading in one set location each Heat Electric radiator is fitted with its own built in air thermostat. This constantly monitors the room's temperature against the one it has been programmed to achieve. If a room is too cold the radiator will activate until the desired temperature has been reached at which point it will immediately stop drawing electricity, thereby avoiding overheating and cold spots.

Forward march

Forward thinking developers are installing electric heating systems in their properties as they recognise that a seismic shift in energy is about to take place. Our reliance on fossil fuels is affecting our economy, our environment and, with gas and oil supplies increasingly concentrated in unstable parts of the world, the security of our energy supply.

The Government has already stated its plans to significantly increase the Renewables Obligation – whereby electricity suppliers must obtain a specified and increasing proportion of their electricity from renewable sources – in order to achieve its overall goal of 20% of the UK's power coming from renewable energy by 2020. The message is therefore clear; clean, green electricity is the key to our economic and environmental future while fossil fuels will soon be confined to the past.

The future of electric heating systems has therefore never looked brighter. When combined with low and zero carbon electricity their ability to deliver heat in highly focused areas of a property at specific times of day means they offer a 100% efficient, 100% effective and sustainable solution to the current heating debate.



For more information on Heat Electric's solutions circle readerlink 180