



A major programme of investment in renewable energy by Westward Housing has resulted in a first for social housing thanks to a pioneering system devised by heating firm Kensa Heat Pumps.

Croft House in Holsworthy, North Devon, is the first housing association scheme in the UK to be retrofitted with Kensa's innovative "ground source heat network" system and has received support funding through a combination of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and a Ready for Retrofit grant.

The innovative 'micro heat network' scheme sees an ultra-quiet Kensa Shoebox ground source heat pump installed in each dwelling and connected to a network of ground arrays, with each pair of flats sharing a communal borehole. The ground source heat pumps, installed within each property's airing cupboard, provide 100% of each property's heating and domestic hot water requirements, in many cases halving the tenants' energy costs compared with the electric heating systems that were replaced.



Croft House's rural location in the South West enabled the works to attract a one-off grant under the Energy Saving's Trust Ready for Retrofit scheme and further financial support from EDF

Energythrough the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), which following recent changes is now able to support ground source district heat networks.

Future schemes are already being planned, and while the Ready for Retrofit grant is no longer available, support funding will be provided through a combination of ECO and the non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) for retrofit social housing heating upgrades.

Kensa's Commercial Director, Chris Davis, said: "With the non-Domestic RHI and the ECO able to sit alongside one another, the financial case is a compelling one, especially when compared with the alternative options. For social housing providers, a retro fit ground source heat network that's able to attract ECO funding, like that at Croft House, will present a solution that is both cost effective and provides a significantly more attractive rate of return under the non-Domestic stream of the RHI than for example fitting individual air source heat pumps under the Domestic RHI."

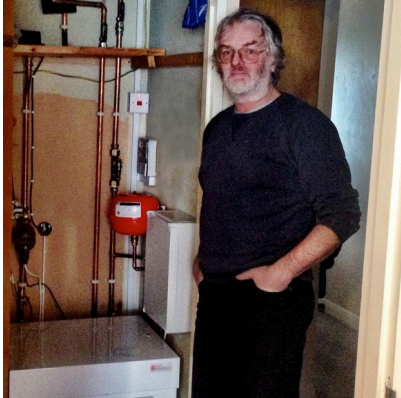


"The micro heat network at Croft House provides Westward with access to unique funding whilst giving tenants complete control over their heating. Each dwelling receives its own electricity bill, so there is no need to apportion costs among tenants; there is no loss of efficiency through heat losses over the 'district'; while Westward did not have to find space for a plant room."

The installations will also be fully monitored over the course of the current heating season using a smart energy monitoring solution developed specifically for use with heat pumps by PassivSystems as part of a DECC sponsored project.

Joshua Jackson, Head of Investment, Westward Housing comments: "Kensa's products have been proven to perform efficiently and effectively and we have already received glowing praise

from our customers regarding the real savings they are making on their electricity bills since the ground source heat pumps have been installed.”



Croft House is a scheme designated for elderly residents. Its vulnerable demographic was seen as a priority for a heating system upgrade due to the poor levels of comfort and high heating bills delivered by the original night storage system.

Customers at the Croft House development have described the process of the installation works as a “pleasure”.

“The work has proceeded very well; any task that needed to be done has been done without question. Congratulations to all – it has been a pleasure,” commented Jean Gregory, 82, who has lived at Croft House for 22 years.

Fellow resident Jim Porter, 57, who has been a Westward tenant for eight months, is excited about the savings that can be made from the new ground source heat pump system and estimates that he can cut his heating bills by 50-60 per cent.



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