



Community Energy

SP Energy Networks  
community support case studies

# Fintry Heat Pump

Representative imagery



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Fintry Development Trust have been championing sustainable change in Fintry, Stirlingshire since 2007. In that time they have directly or indirectly supported the installation of 62 air source heat pumps (ASHPs) in the village, and 18 ground source heat pumps (GSHPs) helping to decarbonise over a third of Fintry's domestic properties.

- 62 ASHPs & 18 GSHPs across domestic properties in Fintry
- Supporting decarbonising measures in the village since 2007
- Renewable technologies and energy efficiency measures installed in domestic and community buildings
- Supported community members in fuel poverty with fuel vouchers

Fintry Development Trust (FDT) originates from a relationship being forged with a local windfarm. Income from the windfarm's operation was paid annually to the community as a community benefit which allowed for the trust to be set up. From the outset, the Trust has focused on using the income to assist with decarbonising the village.

Over the years since its inception, FDT has carried out a number of projects related to supporting households in the village installs ASHPs and GSHPs, and have also carried out energy and fabric advice services, community drop in sessions and provided grant support.



Representative imagery

## Fintry Heat Pump (cont.)

To deliver these services effectively, the group has faced many challenges. These include knowledge of the technology within the community, costs of installing the systems compared to like for like replacement of existing fossil fuel heating systems and operational knowledge on how to effectively use the system taking time of use tariffs and mobile apps into consideration.

To overcome these challenges, FDT previously employed an Energy Advisor who was based within the community. This role enabled direct engagement with community members, providing impartial advice on energy technologies, support with completing grant application forms, and practical assistance with the use of new technologies.

Other methods used to overcome barriers to heat pump uptake included providing grants to bridge financing gaps, hosting drop-in sessions that created space for residents to discuss technologies with neighbours and friends, and delivering a two-day Fintry Renewable Energy Show. This event combined practical demonstrations with presentations, supporting community members to better understand low-carbon technologies and make informed decisions.

The group's experience highlighted that, when the Trust began, awareness and understanding of heat pumps as a technology were very limited. By hosting community-based events and creating opportunities for early adopters of domestic heat pumps to share their firsthand experiences, the group helped to build trust, confidence, and acceptance. Hearing directly from local residents about how heat pumps performed in their own homes proved far more influential than examples of installations elsewhere, reinforcing the value of peer-to-peer learning within the community.

Heat pumps are now far more commonplace, supported by national installation campaigns and widespread commercial promotion. Despite this increased visibility, FDT continues to benefit from a highly engaged community that places strong value on locally grounded knowledge and lived experience.

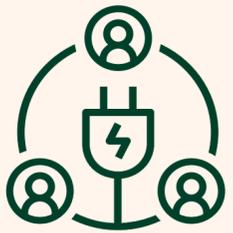
Over the course of its nearly 20-year existence, and alongside supporting the installation of heat pumps within the community, FDT has enabled a wide range of additional low-carbon and energy-efficiency measures. These include insulation upgrades, solar PV, battery storage, biomass heating systems, and extensive fabric retrofit works across both domestic and community buildings throughout the village. Central to this work is the sharing of trusted knowledge and practical advice, complemented where possible and appropriate by the provision of grant funding to help overcome financial and technical barriers to action.

Future challenges which the community group are looking to overcome include how to assist members of the community who were early adopters of heat pumps with replacing aging assets where no funding currently exists. Trying to support community members with whole system retrofit, and not solely focus on heat decarbonisation is another challenge which will hopefully support with addressing fuel poverty issues.

For community groups looking to install their own heat pumps, specific advice that FDT would share includes taking time to consider the potential fabric upgrades necessary before considering heat decarbonisation. The two together can mean an expensive undertaking, and can also be complicated for someone without a background in energy or project management to undertake. Considering any necessary fabric upgrades from the outset may allow for a phased timeline to put in place, and therefore appropriate upgrades can take place in a complimentary fashion.



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