

PROTECTING CONSUMERS AND PROMOTING RENEWABLES

Welcome to the Summer newsletter

Dear RECC Members,

Welcome to the summer edition of the RECC Newsletter. I hope you are managing to take a few days off to enjoy the lovely weather with your families.

You will see from the stories overleaf that MCS registered a record monthly number of new installations in May this year, and that Ofgem issued BUS vouchers worth £4 million in June this year. These figures suggest that the level of activity in the sector is astounding and looks set to continue that way.

Congratulations!

Virginia Graham (Editor).



RECC Member wins Installer of the Year Award

AOS Energy Efficient Heating Systems Ltd, RECC Members since 2014, won the British Renewable Energy Awards Installer of the Year for 2022 on 9 June.

The Awards, which were presented at a gala dinner at the Botanical Gardens in Birmingham, celebrate the achievements of the renewable energy industry and recognise individuals and organisations who are leading the sector and helping to drive the country forward to meet our Net Zero commitments.

In the last 12 months AOS has installed over 150 heat pump systems. Consistently highly rated by consumers the company has received an average rating of 4.9 out of 5 stars on Google (out of 87 reviews) and 4.8 out of 5 stars on Trusted Trader (out of 182 reviews).

Director of Consumer Codes, Rebecca Robbins, said after the winner was announced:

‘It is very pleasing to see companies such as AOS Energy Efficient Heating Systems Ltd delivering installations at scale yet managing maintain such high standards of consumer protection. As the numbers of heat pump installations ramp up over the next five years it’s essential that standards are not allowed to drop. Many congratulations to AOS.’



Rebecca Robbins, Director of Consumer Codes (centre), accepts the Installer of the Year Award from host Lucy Siegle on behalf of AOS Energy Efficiency Heating Systems Ltd. Callum Coleman from REA assists.

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As a RECC member, you have satisfied our strict criteria for membership. You now have the opportunity to become TrustMark-registered through RECC.

You can find full details of our streamlined process here:

www.recc.org.uk/trustmark

BUS vouchers worth £4M issued in June alone

Ofgem has published statistics relating to the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) from 23 May to 30 June 2022. They show that 857 vouchers were issued during the period with a value of £4,294K.

The number of vouchers redeemed was 169 and the total value of grants paid was £801,000. The amount remaining in the scheme's budget for its first year up to 31 March 2023 is £145.706 million and for years 2 and 3 from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025 it is £300 million.

Ofgem issued its updated guidance on the BUS scheme for installers and home-owners on 21 July.

You can find the updated guidance here: www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/boiler-upgrade-scheme-bus/guidance-and-resources.

You can also find a range of useful information on RECC's website here: www.recc.org.uk/boiler-upgrade-scheme.

REA campaigns for energy storage to be zero rated for VAT

REAL's parent company, REA, has continued to call for home energy storage systems, which currently attract a 20% VAT charge, to be added to the list of energy saving materials which attract a 0% VAT.

Government announced in its Spring Statement that VAT would not be charged on energy saving materials installed in homes between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2027. The new 0% VAT rate applies to both labour and materials including central heating and hot water controls, insulation, solar panels, heat pumps and wind and water turbines. This announcement was very welcome. (The 0% VAT rating does not yet apply in Northern Ireland.)

Energy storage systems can only attract the 0% VAT rate if they are installed as an ancillary service as part of a larger system, for example a solar PV system which is eligible for the 0% VAT rate. Yet they can have an important impact on decarbonisation, energy security and energy bills by helping homeowners to make the most of their home generation and electrified energy systems.

REA has pointed to recent research showing that a fully flexible energy system, which includes energy storage, could cut the cost of reaching Net Zero by up to £16.7 billion a year.

RECC Membership Benefits

A full list of RECC Member Benefits and Affinity Arrangements available to you can be found here: www.recc.org.uk/join/affinity-arrangements

RECC publishes guidance on vulnerable consumers

Following an update to the Code earlier this year RECC has published guidance for members on working with consumers who might find themselves in vulnerable circumstances.

This guidance, available in the Members' Area of the RECC website, goes into considerably more detail than the previous version. It is designed to provide RECC members with practical advice as to what you should do if you find that you are working with consumers in vulnerable circumstances. In this way we have tried to make it more straightforward for you to comply with the Code.

The guidance lists types of vulnerability and the explains how to identify the circumstances which can trigger vulnerability. It then outlines the specific actions that might be appropriate depending on the circumstance.

We are seeking comments from members on the guidance and we are keen to understand how you have been able successfully to adapt your business when working with consumers in vulnerable circumstances. We will be sending out a copy of the guidance by email along with a short comment form in the next few weeks. In the meantime it is available here www.recc.org.uk/member/documents. (You will need your user name and password to access the document.)

To help develop this guidance further, along with taking account of your comments, we plan to work with the West of England Centre for Inclusive Living (WECIL) to ensure the Guidance is appropriate for a broad range of consumers and that it is capable of implementation by members.

RECC seeks members' views

We have recently sent you a questionnaire asking you to tell us how you find RECC membership, what you like and what you don't like and, in your opinion, what we could do better. Please do take 10 minutes to reply to our questionnaire so we can make sure we are responsive and helpful to you as we can be.

You can find a copy of the questionnaire [here](#) and please submit it once you have completed it. We look forward to hearing from you! Many thanks.



New Report calls for collaboration to meet Net Zero targets



A new report concludes that individual countries must collaborate to reach their Net Zero targets and that the UK can play a key role in reducing worldwide carbon emissions over the coming decades. The UK is already a world leader in areas such as offshore wind and is beginning to make significant progress in carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) and hydrogen but still has much to learn from the experience of other countries.

The report has recently been published by Cornwall Insight and was commissioned by Womble Bond Dickinson. The aim is to encourage global energy leaders to debate the challenges and opportunities facing the energy sector. It sets the UK's issues in a global context and analyses different energy markets and the insights provided by experts around the world.

The report's authors stress that, as decarbonisation gathers pace, ensuring security of supply and affordability for industrial, business and domestic consumers will be challenging. They conclude that the needs of energy security and Net Zero will accelerate the development of UK renewables. Within this scenario, Contracts for Difference (CfDs) will continue to play an important evolving policy role.

They stress that stronger domestic supply chains will be needed to achieve Net Zero and to boost economic growth. They also point to the need to engage local communities involved in the development of land-intensive renewables such as onshore wind and solar PV. One evolving technology they point to is floating offshore wind. They consider that this is expected to develop quickly with the Energy Security Strategy aiming to provide 5GW by 2030.

You can find more information about the report here:

www.womblebonddickinson.com/uk/rebuild-energy-transition?utm_medium=report&utm_campaign=rebuild-britain&utm_content=energy-transition

Renewable installations increase in 2022

The MCS database registered 12,490 domestic renewable installations in May 2022 alone – up 14% from April and more than the average 12,389 for the year. The biggest increases seen were for Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) and Solar Photovoltaic (Solar PV) systems.

If the current trend continues MCS predicts that the number of monthly registered installations could climb to over 15,000 by the end of the year. This is a dramatic increase amounting to 66% more than the number of installations in 2019 and 2020.

MCS reports that there are now 1,302 installers certified for at least one heat technology. Nearly 77% of these certified installers completed between 1 and 10 installations in May.

Electric Vehicle Consumer Code for Home Chargepoints



RECC Members can join our sister code, EVCC, for just £50 for the first year of membership!

We know that many RECC Members already install home chargepoints in consumers' homes, often alongside solar PV and battery storage systems. That is why we set up the Electric Vehicle Consumer Code for Home Chargepoints (EVCC) to sit alongside RECC and set out high standards for installers.

By using these documents EVCC Members will be confident that they are complying with all the complex consumer protection legislation in force and that help is on hand should anything go wrong.

You can find more about EVCC, including how to join, here: www.electric-vehicle.org.uk/installers



Photo: Dominic Marley