



## Fintry Leads the Way

**An amazing 80 plus** households in the Fintry area want to find out more about putting in a better Heating system and reduce carbon usage. Fintry Development Trust (FDT) members were quite taken aback at the turnout to two meetings organized to explain how Fintry could push itself into the forefront in the country of hi-tech energy saving systems.

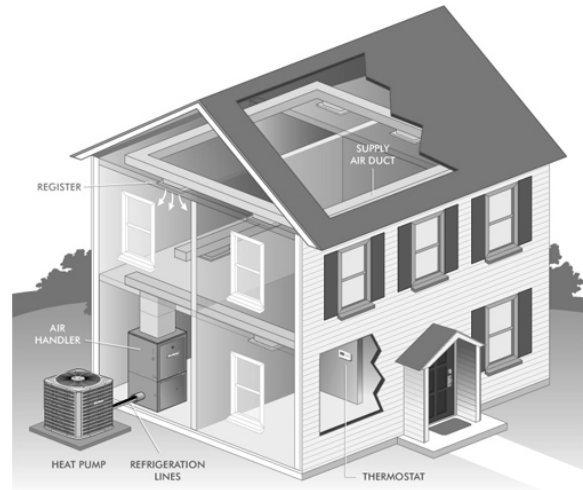
Originally it was explained that grants were sought to subsidise 20 trial home projects fitting 5 types of energy systems: ground source heat pumps, air source pumps, solar panels, wood pellet boilers (also known as bio-mass) and farm-scale wind turbines.



Now the idea has grown beyond anyone's expectations. Almost all of the applicants will be given a chance to proceed, if the plans suit them. The only ones on temporary hold will be the farm-scale wind turbines which will need a specialist route of support.

### Change of plan

In the original plan, the project relied on a 60% grant from CES (Community Energy Scotland). CES has been ambivalent in their



response so far and FDT sensed a considerable delay in continuing on this route.

Now in Plan B, FDT hopes to utilise the 30% grants available from EST (Energy Savings Trust) along with their interest free loan. Major discounts negotiated by FDT with suppliers of kit, (Between 100% and 40%. Additionally, low energy supply tariffs are being considered for electricity and wood pellets and this may mean a reduction of up to 20% of these costs.

### Help at hand

This system means that even more than 80 households can now apply. All will benefit from two dedicated hand-holding forms of support. ESSAC (Energy Saving Scotland Advice Centre) will offer visits to every applicant to help assess which system is best for them. They will give specific help with grant applications and advise on reliable suppliers. FDT also hope to appoint a Fintry-only, full-time Energy Officer to co-ordinate the project and advise as needed.

Some practical examples showed the estimated savings on heating costs. For some

homes they are a clear saving and for some larger-use homes they are likely to be a *very* substantial saving.

Heating systems will all now be owned by the householders and not leased from FDT as the original plan required.

The Government have recently given indicative figures for RHIs (Renewable Heat Incentives) and FITs (Feed In Tariffs).

RHIs should be available from April 2011 and will assist the energy costs of those with renewable heating systems installed. FITs will be applied to those generating energy through Hydro, PV (Photovoltaic) solar panels and other electricity producing kit. This will hugely benefit the homes who are also able to sell excess energy back to the grid.

The figures are currently at the consultation stage and could vary but appear to be much more generous than originally hoped. Figures for each home will be based on its SAP rating (Standard Assessment Procedure) and not actually energy usage.

### **Household grants**

The grant of 30% is available for up to two technologies per household to a maximum award of £4000 per technology. So, for some it is possible to apply for up to £8,000 of grants.

The interest free loan is available over a period of eight years and is subject to credit check.

The next step forward is to hand over contact details already given (a vote was taken to agree this) to ESSAC.

They will then contact and arrange a survey with each interested household which will identify the best system for each home and what other assistance is available.

A code will be given to apply for the 30% grant and further information on applying for the loan for the balance.

FDT will be finalising kit costs for Fintry residents.

During the meeting a range of concerns was explored.

One resident was worried about mess and upheaval created by certain installations. It was felt that contractors will be aware that high standards of care will mean future business and the Fintry work will be very closely monitored and managed.



Others needed to be reassured that assistance and advice would be readily available throughout the process. This was given by reminding the residents that an Energy Officer will be employed to co-ordinate the project and advise as needed. Installers will train local tradesmen to carry out the installations of the project and they will provide a local support and knowledge base for any issues.

### **Telling each other**

FDT suggested that blogging of experiences would assist in ensuring suppliers and installers maintained a high level of customer satisfaction, and would help compile a knowledge base in itself for other residents of Fintry and other communities.

Further 'expression of interest forms' will be made available at the Sports Centre for those who have missed this first stage along with the FDT post box to collect them.

Further public meetings will be arranged by FDT as the project unfolds to offer advice and support.



**More on:**  
**[www.fintrydt.org.uk](http://www.fintrydt.org.uk)**