

LEADING GROUND SOURCE HEAT PUMP (GSHP)
SPECIALISTS WELCOMES LORD SMITH'S PLEDGE TO
TRANSFORM PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Environment Agency chairman Lord Smith's call for every new public building in Britain to tap into underground heat has been welcomed by a leading force in ground source renewable energy.

Former Labour environment spokesman Lord Smith said the Government should lead by example in the bid to cut the UK's energy consumption and reduce carbon emissions significantly.

Speaking at the Royal Society of Arts in London, he said all public buildings should be fitted with a range of green technologies - including ground source heat pumps in each new public building.

Lord Smith said: "We do indeed live in extraordinary times. We are in the midst of a major financial crisis; we are on the cusp of a serious energy crisis; and all the while we are stoking the fires of a potentially catastrophic climate crisis."

Describing the climate crisis as the "most intractable", he asked: "So what can and should the Government do in the immediate term? The first and most obvious answer to the question is that it – and the broader public sector – should be leading by example. New buildings should be fitted with ground-source pumps."

Brian Davidson, Chief Executive Geothermal International, the UK's market leader in the design, installation and commissioning of ground source heating and cooling systems said: "It was refreshing to hear Lord Smith, the chairman of

the Environment Agency, advocating that all new public buildings should be fitted with a ground source heat pump system.

“We believe the benefits of such systems are sometimes overlooked. They are suitable for a wide range of buildings, from homes through to schools, hospitals, community centres, offices, sports facilities and even large district heating schemes.

“They can reduce the annual running costs of a building by up to 70 per cent and carbon emissions by up to 50 per cent, and can be used to cool a building in summer months as well as heat it in cold weather.

“They have a better life-cycle carbon saving than alternative green technologies, such as biomass and combined heat and power plants.

“Fitting them in public buildings would allow visitors to see that the technology works, while contributing to cutting carbon emissions, and perhaps persuade them to adopt it in their own homes or business premises.

“I hope the Government takes up Lord Smith’s suggestion.”

Lord Smith’s call came just before the Government announced plans to give householders financial incentives to adopt a range of green technologies, including ground source heat pumps, with home energy makeovers for every home in the UK by 2030.

Geothermal International, based in Coventry, has seen a sharp increase in interest in its products in the past several years as more and more people realise the benefits they deliver.

As well as fitting a ground source heat pump to the iconic Gherkin building in London and to the first carbon-neutral church in the UK, Geothermal International has supplied them to a range of schools, police headquarters, hospitals, offices, retail developments and large-scale residential developments and have designed and installed 80% of all UK GSHP systems within the commercial buildings market.

Ground source heat pumps work by extracting the heat naturally occurring underground where temperatures remain relatively constant all year round. A basic installation comprises a buried earth loop connected to an indoor heat pump unit. Liquid pumped through the loops extracts heat from the ground which is then fed to the pump, which compresses it, raising its temperature, then circulating it to heat the building. It can also be used to provide hot water, as well as space heating. Cooling is achieved by reversing the process.

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