

# Going green in Gateshead - Dimplex communal heat pump system warms apartments

**A stunning development of 85 high specification riverside apartments on the southern bank of the River Tyne, Gateshead, is getting energy efficient heating from a communal system of nine Dimplex 28kW air source heat pumps.**

Each home at the Friars Wharf apartments has underfloor heating with individual time and temperature control, designed to run at low temperatures to maximise the efficiency of the heat pump system. Heat meters log the energy usage in each flat and can be remotely read and billed, ensuring each owner only pays for the energy they use.

For developer Riverside Apartments (N/E) Ltd, the apartment project was an extension of its core business of developing and running care homes, where the consistently rising energy costs of recent years had highlighted the need to include renewables to provide some insulation from future price hikes.

Director Gary Houghton explains: "We'd calculated that an air source heat pump system's capital cost could be recouped in as little as two or three years. So for us it was clear that this type of system could make a significant contribution to reducing running costs in an 85-unit development. The heat pump system, as well as insulating the apartment owners from rising prices, means that we are also protected from sharp cost increases on heating for communal areas.





## Client

Riverside  
Apartments

## Products

LA 28 AS air source  
heat pump

## Partners

Azure Natural Energy  
Systems



"We've also had a lot of support from Dimplex on running the system and communication has been really good. One year on, we've had no problems with the heat pumps at all – and no complaints during the exceptionally harsh winter of 2009-10. The residents' bills are extremely low, below the levels we anticipated.

Gary continues: "We all know that we've got to do our bit when it comes to the environment. At Riverside we ran Carbon Trust studies on several of our care homes last year, to get an accurate picture of our energy use and the potential to reduce it. It just happens that with heat pumps, the environmental targets marry very well with financial goals, so I really believe that big organisations need to be thinking about installing these types of systems."

"In addition, the "green" aspect is a good marketing tool for us. We have the underfloor heating system listed on the apartment specification on our website and potential buyers often ask about what this involves. When they find out how the renewable heating system can keep their bills low, it's a major selling point."

The nine LA 28 AS air source heat pumps are arranged in two separate banks and provide heat to all apartments, which are arranged in three blocks. The innovative solution was specified, designed and installed by Dimplex heat pump installer partner Azure Natural Energy Systems and was completed in late 2009.

Matthew Evans, owner of Azure, explains: "We looked at all the alternative renewable heating systems available, including ground source heat pumps, water to water heat pumps using heat from the River Tyne, biomass and solar thermal combinations. The most cost-effective solution was this communal air source heat pump system to deliver heating to the buildings, with domestic hot water served by individual, electrically heated cylinders."

Communal heat pump systems are growing in popularity for multi-occupancy buildings such as flats, student accommodation and nursing homes. They are a cost-effective means of achieving Code for Sustainable Homes ratings and meeting minimum renewables planning requirements.

**Dimplexrenewables®**

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