



### Client

Aragon Housing Association

### Products

Dimplex solar water heating

#### Dimplex makes solar savings for housing association

Aragon Housing Association is planning for the future and is trialling solar water heating in thirteen of its electrically heated properties with a Dimplex solution that has saved an estimated £1,000 per installation on each property, and with the capacity to provide more than half of each household's hot water.

The original plans were to equip each house with four solar collector panels on opposing East and West facing slopes but the Dimplex renewables team suggested using single arrays of three West facing panels which reduced the trial's installation costs by over £13,000.

Aragon Housing Association, based in central Bedfordshire, is aware of the impact of increasing energy prices on its residents' household budgets, particularly those of people living in older properties.

Aragon has a large number of these properties in rural locations where mains gas is not available, and the houses that made up this small trial are of that category. They are near Biggleswade, were built in the late 1920s with solid external walls and house a mix of tenants that includes older people and young families.

Perimeter walls had previously been insulated externally with phenolic foam behind a specialist render finish and the thickness of loft insulation had been increased to 270mm. Aragon wanted to employ renewable energy to further reduce running costs and decided that solar water heating would be easily integrated with the properties' existing electric-fuelled wet central heating systems.

Property manager, Barry Gissing explains: "We considered three suppliers for the solar systems, but the Dimplex kits were ideal for this project. Other manufacturers could have provided customised solutions but the Dimplex standard packs were immediately available and fitted without alteration, making ordering, installation, warranty and maintenance straightforward."

Once Dimplex was selected, its team arranged a T-Sol report. The report demonstrated three collector panels in a single West-facing array to be only slightly less productive than four panels in an East/West configuration. And with one fewer collector panel, less associated pipework, a simpler controller and pump and less scaffolding, the single arrays greatly reduced costs and time on site.

The solar systems incorporate Dimplex's unvented direct cylinders with on- and off-peak immersion heaters for supplementary water heating. However, since installation in March 2009, residents haven't used the immersion heaters: the solar panels have provided plenty of hot water.

Barry Gissing comments: "Dimplex's help in designing the systems and reducing costs was excellent customer service. We've since specified the Dimplex kits for other properties."

The Dimplex solar thermal hot water system is available in a choice of 15 pre-packaged kits, with each of the system's components carefully selected for its quality and suitability for the UK's climate. It's a complete off-the-shelf solar hot water package, including 2, 4 or 6m<sup>2</sup> flat-plate collector kits, heat transfer system, a full range of installation accessories and a choice of purpose-designed solar hot water cylinders with high efficiency coils in a range of sizes from 175 to 305 litres, fully optimised for solar water heating.



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