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Heat Pump Readiness Checklist

1. Improve insulation and airtightness

Do these whenever you're decorating or renovating or find a Trustmark registered installer to do it for you:

- **Loft insulation** upgraded to current standard (270 mm or more).
- **Cavity wall insulation** (if applicable).
- **Solid wall insulation** (if applicable).
- **Floor insulation**.
- **Draught-proofing** around doors, windows, loft hatches, floorboards.
- **Upgrade glazing** (double or triple) when single-glazed windows are ready to be replaced.

When installing any type of insulation or draught proofing, it is important that intentional **ventilation** like vents, grilles, or air bricks are **never blocked or sealed**, as air needs to flow in and out of your house to keep it fresh, dry and healthy.

Why: Heat pumps work best in well-insulated, low-heat-loss homes. Making these changes before installing a heat pump ensures the system is designed to the right size and you get maximum efficiency (not oversized due to heat loss). This can save you money on the cost of the system. Even if you don't install a heat pump, insulating your home will reduce your energy usage and save you money on your energy bills.

2. Generate your own electricity

- If you have a south, east, or west facing roof that is not shaded, **consider installing solar panels** to generate free electricity for your home, and help power a heat pump in the future.
- If you already have solar panels, **consider installing a diverter** to channel surplus electricity produced by the solar panels to the heat pump's hot water cylinder.

Why: Solar panels can reduce the running costs of a heat pump by supplying some or all of the electricity needed by the heat pump, minimising the amount of energy you buy from the grid.

3. Arrange a survey

- **Arrange a non-invasive heat pump installation survey (these are often free)** with an MCS accredited installer or a Heat Geek installer to recommend the perfect heat pump for your home.

Why: A survey can identify whether your home is suitable for a heat pump and whether your property might need any adjustments to accommodate a heat pump e.g. bigger radiators, modern consumer units, smart thermostats, unobstructed location for external air-source heat pump unit.

If you are renovating the ground floor of your home, **consider underfloor heating** as this is highly compatible with air-to-water heat pumps.

4. 'Micro-upgrades" you can do anytime

These small, inexpensive changes can prepare your home for a heat pump:

- Fit **thermostatic radiator valves** (TRVs) or a smart thermostat and smart TRVs throughout your home.
- Add **reflective radiator panels** behind radiators.
- **Seal loft hatches and unused chimneys**.
- Whenever replacing appliances, choose **high-efficiency** ones to reduce running costs.

5. Plan for a hot water cylinder

A hot water cylinder stores warm water for showers or for washing the dishes. Heat pumps usually need a cylinder unless you choose a high-temperature system.

- **Identify a location for a hot water cylinder** (airing cupboard, loft, or utility).
- If the current boiler cupboard is small, consider **opening up space** during renovations.

Why: Some homes may already have a hot water cylinder, but if you get a heat pump, you will likely need a new one.

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6. Get information and quotes *before* your boiler fails

This is one of the smartest things you can do, and it costs nothing!

- **Get 2–3 design-level quotes** from MCS-certified installers now, even if you are not ready to install immediately. Ask each installer for a room-by-room heat loss calculation. Keep these quotes on file.
- **Identify a low-cost electricity tariff** to help keep your running costs low.
- **Visit a heat pump:** see a real heat pump in action and get your questions answered by heat pump owners. Find local homes with heat pumps here: https://www.visitaheatpump.com/.
- Know how long the lead time is from order to installation so you can plan and be prepared.

Why: When a boiler fails, most people panic and get another gas boiler. Being prepared allows you to upgrade to a heat pump seamlessly.

7. Funding and finance

- If you are on a lower income or receive means-tested benefits, you might be eligible for the council's **Warm Homes Local Grant** for fully-funded (FREE) heat pumps, solar panels, insulation and more.
- If you don't qualify for the Warm Homes Local Grant, check if you can benefit from the government's **Boiler Upgrade Scheme** £7,500 grant towards the cost of a heat pump.
- **Check if your energy provider offers any deals or incentives** to install a heat pump.
- **Check if your mortgage provider offers cashback incentives** to mortgage customers when a heat pump and/or solar panels are installed (many do!)
- **Explore green home improvement loan options** with your bank or building society, if required.

Energy efficiency measures such as insulation, draught proofing, solar panels, and heat pumps, installed to residential buildings are currently exempt from VAT until 31st March 2027.

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8. Planning permission

- In most cases, heat pumps do *not* require planning permission. Air source heat pumps must meet the requirements listed here to be classed as permitted development.
- If your property is in a Conservation Area, then the heat pump must not be visible from the public highway.
- If your property is Listed you'll need to obtain planning permission and Listed Building Consent to install a heat pump. Your heat pump installation company can usually arrange that for you.

If you require planning permission, or are in any doubt, please seek pre-application advice from Three Rivers District Council's Planning department *before* any works take place.
https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/planning/pre-application-advice