

Care home leaders need further support to achieve heat decarbonisation goals, according to Baxi

9 months ago



Baxi surveyed over 400 senior and middle management care home managers in both the private and public sector this summer in an effort to understand the enablers required to help decarbonise the sector.

The survey found a strong appetite for decarbonisation from those who responded. A promising 46% of respondents said they had already decarbonised their heating systems, with 50% indicating they are taking steps to do so.

Care homes are a vital sector to consider as we move towards greener and more efficient homes and buildings. However, despite the positive outlook on low carbon tech among care home bosses, Baxi found that gas boilers are still a prominent technology in the sector, with 42% of respondents listing them as their main heating system.

Baxi's survey revealed a number of barriers that are preventing further exploration of decarbonisation options in the care home sector. The survey also preceded an industry-led focus group, with care home energy managers and a mechanical and electrical contractor, with the aim of exploring the topics raised in more detail.

Running costs were viewed as a key consideration when exploring decarbonisation options for 85% of respondents, meaning that any low carbon solutions will need to consider affordability as a priority. System efficiency and ease of installation were also marked as key drivers of decarbonisation for 42% and 39% of respondents respectively. The focus group emphasised that continuity and reliability of heating

systems are essential.

Baxi's survey indicated that care home managers are keen to find out more about decarbonisation and to access support. 76% of respondents stated they were interested in reviewing their options for low carbon heating and hot water. Over 40% of the survey's participants agreed that technical advice, easier access to funding support, and being granted access to case studies from other care homes would help to accelerate the pace of decarbonisation across the nation's care homes.

The focus group clearly highlighted the need for guidance on both the options available to decarbonise their facilities, and how to develop an achievable plan for decarbonising their heating provision.

In the private sector, respondents experience challenges with funding application processes, and struggle with strict eligibility criteria and resource requirements. In the public sector, care homes tend to struggle more with competition delays to funding and what they felt was 'bias and discrimination' throughout the process.

Policy recommendations

Baxi understands the importance of reliable and efficient heating systems across the care home sector. The heating and hot water specialist has laid out five clear steps for the Government to help ramp up the decarbonisation of the UK's care homes, removing barriers that are preventing some facilities from making the switch.

1. Introduce funding schemes and ringfence specific funding for care home heating system decarbonisation to ensure clarity and funding certainty to care homes
2. Provide specific guidance to care homes to help them to better understand eligibility and application processes for funding
3. Address the specific skills gap in the care homes sector to help deliver heat decarbonisation projects
4. Create databases of contractors and developers with expertise of the care sector
5. Address the imbalance in price between gas and electricity to lower the cost of electrical heating systems by accelerating plans for rebalancing levies

Jeff House, Director of External Affairs and Policy at Baxi, said: "It's encouraging to see from the survey that there is clear appetite among care home leaders to decarbonise their heating and hot water provision, but the evidence of some clear barriers mean there is plenty to be done in order to make this ambition a reality.

"We'd like to see the Government give the care sector some much needed focus through funding dedicated to heating decarbonisation, and specific guidance around eligibility and access. Doing so will not only ensure the sector benefits from clarity and certainty, but will also ensure the wider supply chain can be mobilised in a bid to tackle what has felt like something of a net zero blind spot up to now."

The full findings of Baxi's survey have been published in a report, which can be downloaded [here](#).

For more on Baxi's commercial heating and hot water solutions visit: [Baxi Commercial Heating and Hot Water Solutions](#).