

Leicester City Council's Salix Programme Newsletter



February 2022

Welcome to the late February edition of the Salix Programme newsletter. This time, we bring you some top tips on how to keep your decarbonisation technologies in good shape, and check out the works taking place at sites across Leicester.

Top tips for maintaining your new technologies

In order to maximise the efficiency of your newly installed decarbonisation technologies and to ensure quality performance, it is important to carry out regular maintenance. We have brought to you some top maintenance tips on how to keep your technology in good shape. Detailed site specific guidance and training will be provided in the upcoming months, along with advice on how to reduce your energy bills whilst maintaining a Covid-19 safe environment as part of the handover process.

Solar PV panels

After the installation of solar panels, regular check-ups are needed to reap long-term benefits. It is important that the system is regularly serviced to ensure maximum functionality. Alongside the servicing, some basic maintenance will help you get the most out of the PV system. Here are some tips which may be undertaken by your team or external contractors :



- **Remove any obstructions and clean the panels**

Since solar panels are usually positioned on the roof, there's a high possibility that they will accumulate dirt and dust over time. This blocks the panels from receiving sunlight, affecting the overall efficiency and therefore should be cleaned regularly.

- **Avoid shading on panels**

Prior to installation, surveyors will have conducted a site analysis to install the panels in a place that will allow exposure to maximum sunlight. However, with time, there may be external factors such as the growth of trees or other external structures that may cast a shadow on the panels and prevent sunlight from reaching them.

- **Monitor the system**

Monitoring your solar panel system will help you to understand the panels' current level of performance. You should establish whether or not the energy your building is using is being generated from the solar panels. You should also monitor the amount of energy being produced. We are developing a schools offer to do this for you.

Air source heat pumps

Most heat pump systems come with a warranty of a varying number of years, though different manufacturers will offer different levels of care. In most situations, heat pump systems are expected to operate for at least 20 years, though they do require regular scheduled maintenance. Air source heat pump servicing can improve the longevity and durability of your system.



Inspection and maintenance of air source heat pumps will need to be carried out by authorised and qualified HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) engineers, and ideally before the winter heating season. These are some of the things that engineers will do:

- Cleaning and/or swapping out filters
- Cleaning coils and fans if necessary
- Ensuring proper air flow is not impeded by debris such as leaves, dust, etc.
- Cleaning the supply and return registers inside the building
- Checking fan blades whilst the unit is powered off (ideally before winter)
- Checking ducts and repairing if necessary
- Checking refrigerant levels and pressure
- Checking electrical contacts to ensure they are protected from the elements
- Ensuring moving belts and motors are working correctly

Windows and doors

Windows can have a large impact on the look and comfort of your building. Windows guard against water, dust, pollen, extreme temperatures and provide security, and so regular maintenance will help to keep your windows functioning and looking clean for years to come. Here are some basic maintenance tips:

- **Cleaning** – Ensure abrasive cleaners or chemical solvents are not used, as this is likely to damage or scratch the surface material. Remember to clean the window casing and the surrounding wall, as well as the window panes. If your building has wooden windows, you should wipe them using a dry cloth, as moisture from the material will cause windows to rot or destroy the wooden finish.
- **Sealing** – Check for gaps or cracks around the windows. This can cause issues with heating or air conditioning, and therefore heating or cooling systems have to work harder, consequently increasing your energy bills. Regularly check and replace any worn-out rubber seals around windows to avoid air flow in and out of your building.
- **Locks** – Regularly check locks and opening mechanisms for problems, repairing or replacing anything of concern immediately to reduce issues further down the line.



Completed works

Fenestration (windows and doors)

Before half term, we visited Barnes Heath House Children's Home in Evington, to see their brand new windows installed by Ashe Construction. We were joined by staff from Barnes Heath House, Ashe, Pick Everard, and also Cllr Deepak Bajaj, who is a councillor for the Evington Ward. Check out photos of their new windows below.



Completed works

Air source heat pumps

Over the recent half-term break, Ashe Construction were able to successfully land two brand new air source heat pumps (ASHP) on the grounds of Beaumont Lodge Primary School, in Beaumont Leys. This is one of the first sites to receive air source heat pumps as part of Leicester's Salix public sector decarbonisation scheme. Check out the photos below which show the ASHP being lifted into place, onto the previously laid concrete base.



Completed works

Solar PVs

Works to install solar PV panels are underway at several of our Salix project sites across the city. See some photos of two of these below.

PV installation by Energy Saving Lighting at Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School



PV installation by Feed It Green Ltd at Catherine Junior School



If you would like to share any feedback on project progress at your site, please get in touch using the email address below.

Contact us

Each site has a dedicated project manager (Alan Evans or John Squires), however if you have a general question or need to get in touch with the Salix Project Team email us at Salix.Project.Team@leicester.gov.uk