



Anglo-Saxon site showcases latest heat pump technology

A historic Anglo-Saxon site and visitor centre near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk, has cut its carbon emissions by 70% and created more welcoming facilities for visitors, thanks to a heat pump system installed by Finn Geotherm.

West Stow is the site of an early Anglo-Saxon village, occupied from AD 420-650, over 400 years before the Norman Conquest. The reconstructed Anglo-Saxon village attracts visitors from schools, tourists and locals throughout the year. It is surrounded by West Stow Country Park, a stunning 125 acre site featuring trails, heath and woodland.

West Stow's visitor centre and the country park café had previously been heated by an oil-fired boiler, which was inefficient and expensive. With West Suffolk Council committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030, a more environmentally friendly and effective solution was needed.

Finn Geotherm specified and installed two Lämpöässä Eli 60 ground source heat pumps, to provide all the heating and hot water for the visitor centre and café. Heat is collected from the ground using bore holes – Finn Geotherm carefully installed 14 boreholes, each one 147metres deep, near the village's collections building. The boreholes, created in a 'closed loop system', feed the heat pumps which are situated in a purpose-built plant room adjacent to the village's museum. The system is also designed to provide passive cooling, using the ground's temperature to maintain a comfortable environment for visitors in summer.

By installing this renewable energy heating system, West Stow has cut its energy use by 70%, making a significant impact on carbon emissions and heating bills. It has delivered a much more sustainable system, which will last three times longer than a conventional boiler. The installation also qualifies for the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

Glynis Baxter at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village, said: "Our village showcases some of the earliest forms of heating – a fire pit dug in the ground with a hole in the roof of the house to let out the smoke – so it is brilliant for us to have the contrast of a heat pump, the latest in renewable technology, heating our facilities. The new system enables us to maintain a steady warm temperature all year round, which is ideal not only for our artefacts, but for visitors too."

The heat pump installation is a great example of the potential of this technology to provide sustainable, environmentally friendly heating that can be retrofitted in any location – from AD 420-650 to modern day.

Key benefits

- Bespoke system delivering heating and passive cooling
- 70% reduction in carbon emissions and energy use
- Welcoming environment for visitors
- Steady temperature to help preserve artefacts

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info@finn-geotherm.co.uk | www.finn-geotherm.co.uk

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