

## **Heat Pump Bulletin:** Heat Loss Indicator Flexibility – Designer / Installer Led Approach

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## Heat Pump Bulletin: Designer / Installer Led Approach

Building on the expertise gained by the retrofit industry since 2018, Phase 1 of this initiative aims to widen the grant eligibility requirement for heat pumps installed, as part of a whole house retrofit, under the One Stop Shop (OSS) service, Community Energy Grant programme and Warmer Home Scheme (only when advised by the WHS team).

Since the launch of the heat pump grant in 2018, SEAI has used the Heat Loss Indicator (HLI) as the first step in determining heat pump grant eligibility. To date, this metric, based on the standardised DEAP methodology, has guided the market to focus on reducing heat demand through fabric improvements to optimise performance. Heat pump technology was new to the domestic retrofit sector in 2018, therefore, to manage this risk prior to launching a new heat pump grant, this control metric, based on energy modelling, was introduced to support the market transition to this renewable technology.

In 2025, supported by the analysis of on-site heat pump performance data, across varying heat loss conditions, from the Electrification of Heat Demonstration project in the UK, data presented shows that heat loss ( $\text{W/m}^2$ ) is not the only factor affecting the overall heat pump performance in a home.

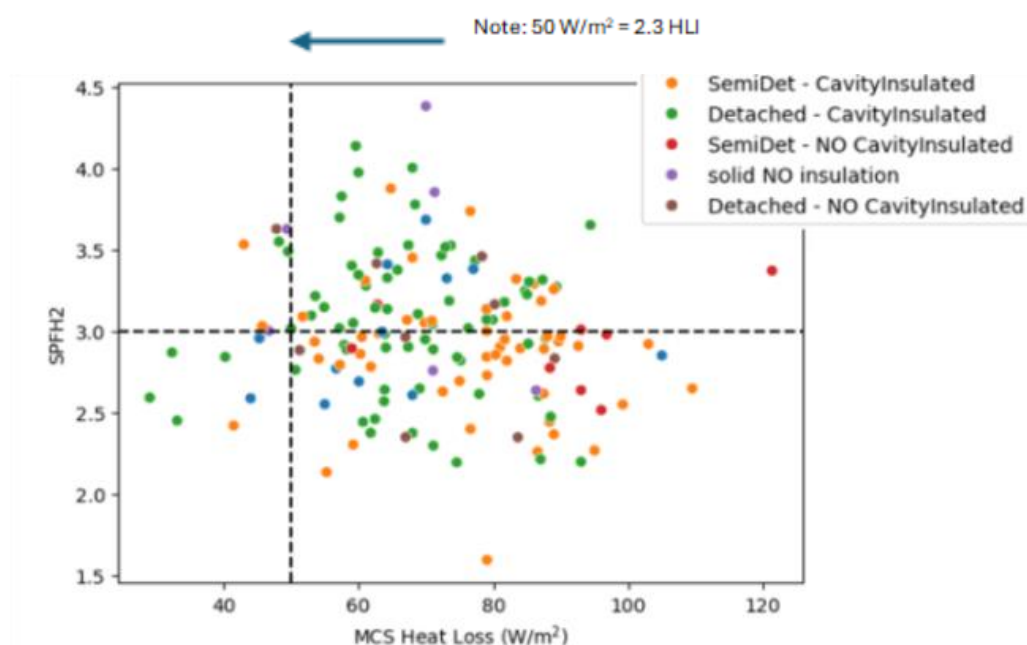


Figure 1: 157 homes with varying  $\text{W/m}^2$  heat loss v Seasonal Performance Factor (SPF)  
Findings from the UK Electrification of Heat Demonstration project

Figure 1 highlights an inconclusive relationship between the calculated peak heat loss and heat pump performance (SPF) on site. This is due to a multitude of factors. It is understood that an improved thermal envelop will reduce heat demand, however, it is evident that factors such as the **sizing and system design, installation, commissioning, the control strategy, maintenance and the occupant's understanding and use** of the system impact performance and system efficiency. Interim findings from the SEAI HLI Research Pilot also indicate a trend where the design, installation, commissioning and control strategy are critical factors to get right to ensure optimal system performance.

Fabric changes will reduce heat demand, which is always beneficial; however, the cost of upgrading the fabric must also be considered, as well as the energy savings (kWh) as a result. Reduced energy consumption achieved through increased efficiencies from an optimised heat pump system when compared to a traditional boiler should also be analysed.

SEAI will support the OSS, CEG and WHS service providers as well as the wider heat pump sector to apply a design led approach. This approach promotes best practice across all stages of delivery including design, installation, and commissioning, and supports service providers to take full responsibility for all aspects of heat pump design and installation under these schemes, including the heat loss assessment. This is supported by their expertise within the sector and approach to quality assurance.



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
**Government of Ireland**

**Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland**

Three Park Place  
Hatch Street  
Upper Dublin 2  
Ireland  
D02 FX65

**w:** [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie)

**e:** [info@seai.ie](mailto:info@seai.ie)

**t:** 01 8082100

