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Green Party leader admits she has gas boiler, not heat pump

Carla Denyer, co-leader of the environment-focused party, said she was ‘in the process of getting quotes’

Genevieve Holl-Allen, POLITICAL REPORTER

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The Green Party leader has admitted that she still has a gas boiler despite her party's commitment to reach net zero by 2040.

Carla Denyer, the co-leader of the Greens, has insisted she is “in the process of getting quotes” for an air source heat pump.

But she told ITV that she had put replacing it “on pause” during the general election and that she would revisit it once the campaign was over.

Ms Denyer, who is standing in Bristol Central, told ITV's The Leader Interviews: “At the moment I have a gas boiler and I'm literally in the process of getting quotes for replacing it with an air source heat pump.

“I've had to put that on pause during the general election as you can imagine, but I, yeah, literally have quotes in my email inbox.”

The Green Party has pledged to invest £9 billion over the next five years for heat pumps and other heating systems to be put into homes and other buildings.

The party will also campaign for house builders to include “low carbon heating systems such as heat pumps” in all new homes “where appropriate”.

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Its manifesto reads: “Our energy bills are far too high because we have the worst-insulated homes in Europe.

“We would bring down bills by reducing the loss of heat from homes, because the cheapest bill is the one you don't have to pay.”

Noisy and expensive

Heat pumps have been criticised for failing to properly warm larger, older properties and for being noisy, as well as being expensive.

A report in July 2022 by the Climate Change Committee found the running cost of a heat pump is 10 per cent higher than that of an average gas boiler, equating to £100 more a year.

Heat pump installation typically costs between £10,000 and £15,000, compared to £2,000 to £4,000 for replacing a gas boiler.

Less than 40,000 certified heat pumps were installed last year, a figure still far short of the 60,000 per year target the Government hoped to achieve by 2028.

It emerged earlier this year that £173 million in potential grants under the boiler upgrade scheme remained unclaimed, with uptake lower than hoped.

Home heating accounts for around 14 per cent of the UK's carbon emissions and the vast majority of homes still run on gas boilers.

Extracting warmth from environment

Air source or ground source heat pumps work on electricity, by extracting warmth from the environment before it is compressed to heat water for radiators and taps.

Ms Denyer said two years ago that “renewables, insulation, heat pumps” and other energy saving measures were needed “right now” as part of an “emergency energy plan”.

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Labour has said it will scrap the current 2035 target to ban new gas boilers, instead focusing on financial incentives to encourage more people to install heat pumps.

Ed Milliband, the shadow energy secretary, told The Telegraph last week that no one will “be forced to rip out their boiler” under Labour.

Manifesto policies

Other environmental policies in the Greens’ manifesto include reaching net zero by 2040 at the latest and phasing out nuclear energy, which accounts for about 15 per cent of the UK’s electricity.

A frequent flyer levy and a ban on short domestic flights are also part of the party’s manifesto pledges to cut emissions by individuals.

Ms Denyer told ITV the transition to a low-carbon economy would mean “certain activities will cost more” but insisted that the other tax changes they would make would mean people were “better off overall”.

She also said that climate change was a factor in her decision not to have children.

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