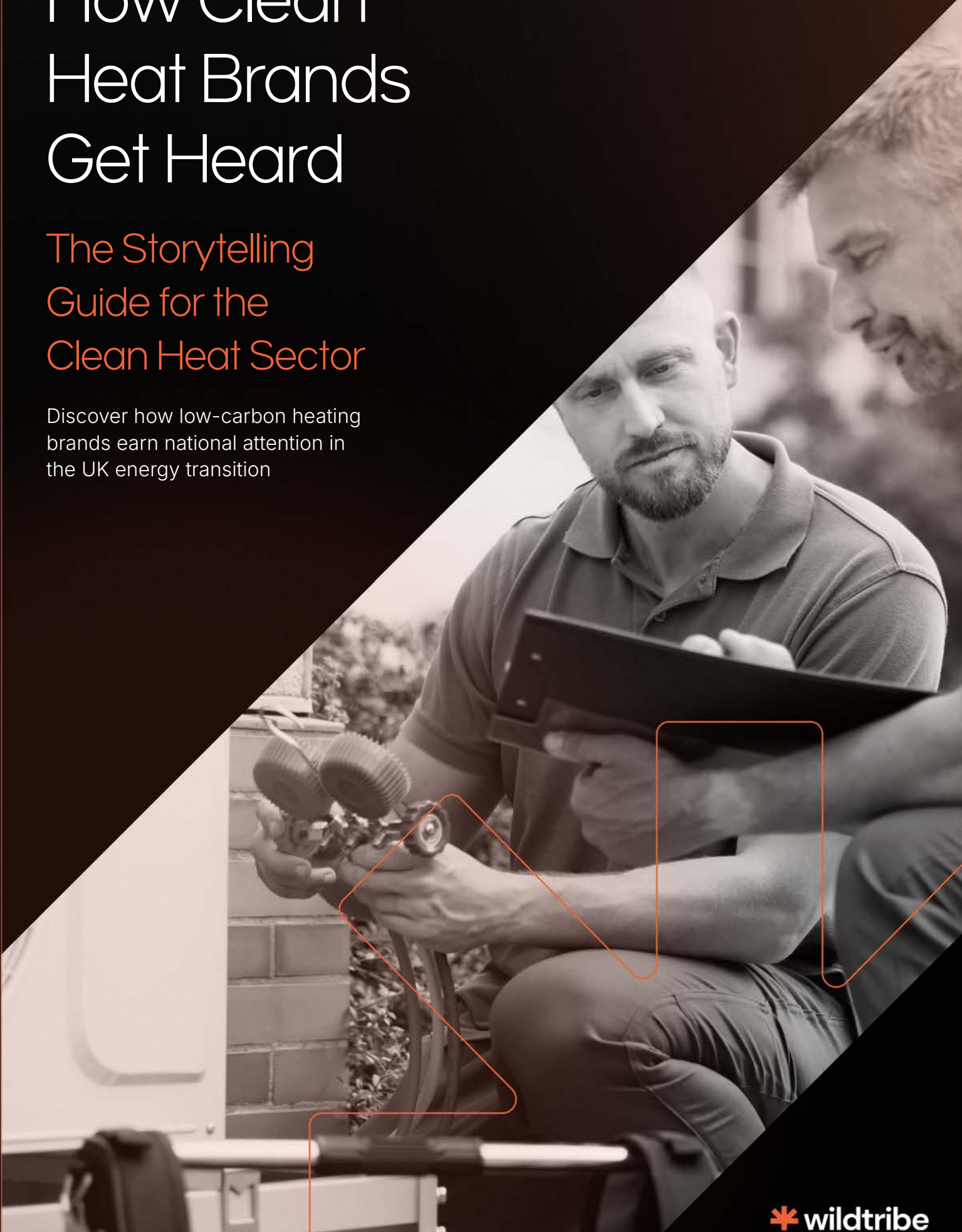


How Clean Heat Brands Get Heard

The Storytelling Guide for the Clean Heat Sector

Discover how low-carbon heating brands earn national attention in the UK energy transition



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■ Introduction

The UK Heat Transition is Entering its Delivery Decade

For years, the decarbonisation of heat has been discussed in policy papers, pilot projects and engineering circles.

Now it is moving into delivery

The year began with stabilised new funding models and strengthened regulation. Deployment is accelerating across heat pumps, heat networks and hybrid systems.

More than 61,000 heat pumps were installed in the UK in 2025, with government-supported installations rising by 38% year-on-year, signalling growing momentum across the sector. The UK government's Warm Homes Plan and related programmes are turning clean heat into mainstream infrastructure.

But scaling markets create a new challenge.

As more organisations enter the sector - manufacturers, installers, consultants, developers, drilling specialists and infrastructure providers - the competition is no longer simply technical capability.

It becomes visibility, trust and narrative leadership.

The organisations that shape the story of clean heat will shape the market that follows.

This guide explains how.

Drawing on insight from government communications briefings, national media trends and our experience working across the energy transition, we explore how organisations in the clean heating value chain can position their work so it resonates with policymakers, journalists and the public.

Great projects alone do not automatically become national stories...

They become national stories when they are framed the right way.

61K heat pumps were installed in the UK in 2025,

38% rise in government-supported installations

■ Section Two

The Hidden Opportunity in Clean Heat Communications

One of the most overlooked realities in the energy transition is this:

Government and media organisations are actively searching for credible clean-energy stories.

But they are not looking for technology explainers, they're looking for **narratives that connect infrastructure to people's lives.**

Stories that show:

- Secure, home-grown energy
- Protection for bill payers
- Jobs, skills and regional growth

These themes sit at the centre of how policymakers are communicating the UK's energy transition. And they determine which stories gain traction.

Projects that align with these narratives are far more likely to attract attention from:

- Policymakers
- Industry bodies
- Regional stakeholders
- National media

The challenge is that many organisations in the clean heat sector communicate primarily in technical terms, which matter to engineers and procurement teams, but rarely translate into stories that resonate publicly.

Bridging that gap is one of the most important communication challenges in the energy transition.

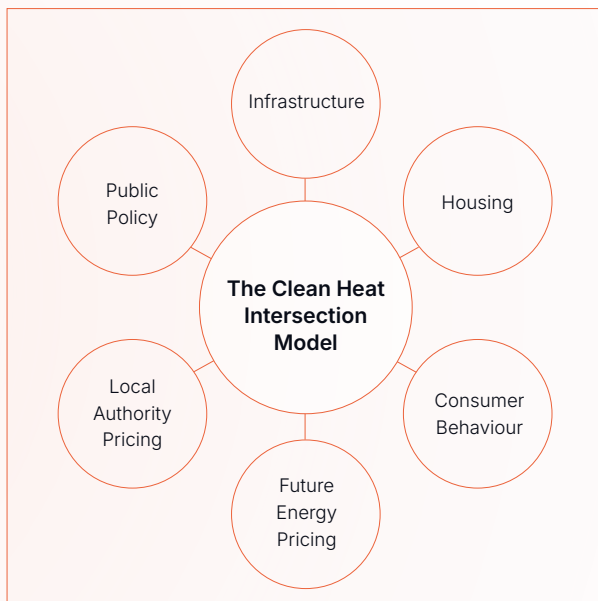


■ Section Three

Why the Heat Transition Needs Stronger Stories

Heating is one of the most complex parts of the net-zero transition.

It sits at the intersection of infrastructure; housing; consumer behaviour; public policy; local authority pricing and - ultimately - future energy pricing.



That complexity makes it easy for misinformation, misunderstanding or political hesitation to take hold. It also makes communication critical.

People do not need to understand every technical detail of a heat pump or heat network. They simply need confidence that:



Their homes will stay warm



Their bills will remain manageable



The technology is reliable



The transition is fair

In other words, the public needs a **clear and reassuring story** about clean heat - not only to adopt it - but to advocate for it in their communities and to others.

Recent research from Cambridge University highlights why this matters.

The study found that UK MPs consistently **underestimate public support for green policies**, including clean energy, energy efficiency and heating reform. **76% of the public support government action on home energy efficiency**, far higher than MPs believe.

The implication is significant.



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When policy-makers believe public support is weak, they are less likely to advocate for ambitious policies

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For sectors like clean heat, renewables and energy infrastructure, closing this perception gap is becoming as important as closing any technical one.

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Clear evidence, confident communication and visible real-world examples help give policymakers the political licence that may already exist - but is not always recognised.

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And that is where strong storytelling becomes essential.

The organisations delivering the UK's clean heat transition are building more than infrastructure. They're helping shape the narrative that determines how quickly that transition moves forward.





■ Section Four

The Three Narratives That Unlock National Attention

The stories government communications teams are actively looking for

During recent communications briefings with government and industry bodies, one message became clear:

Certain types of clean energy stories are far more likely to gain national traction than others.

Departments such as DESNZ and organisations like RenewableUK, and Heat Pump Association (HPA) are actively looking for examples that demonstrate the real-world impact of the energy transition - and they are particularly interested in stories that reinforce a small number of **core national narratives**.

This is the lens through which many projects are assessed when government teams, industry bodies or journalists decide which examples to amplify.

In practice, the stories that travel furthest almost always tap into one of three themes.

These themes translate technical infrastructure into narratives that resonate with policymakers, media organisations and the public.

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Energy Security

The story of secure, home-grown British energy

Projects that strengthen the UK's domestic energy system resonate strongly in the current political and economic environment.

Clean heat infrastructure can be positioned as part of a broader shift towards home-grown, resilient energy systems, reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and strengthening national energy security.

When framed this way, a heat network, heat pump rollout or geothermal project becomes more than a technical installation.

It becomes part of the story of Britain building its future energy system at home.



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Protecting Households and Bill Payers

The story of affordable, reliable heat

Public and political acceptance of new heating technologies depends heavily on perceived affordability.

Stories that show how clean heat infrastructure improves efficiency, stabilises costs or protects households from fossil-fuel price volatility resonate strongly with policymakers and media audiences alike.

This narrative shifts the conversation away from abstract climate targets and towards something people care about immediately: the cost of keeping their homes warm.



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Jobs, Skills and Regional Growth

The story of economic opportunity

The clean heat transition is also a major industrial story.

Across the UK, the shift to low-carbon heating is creating demand for engineers, installers, drilling specialists, designers and manufacturers.

Projects that highlight local supply chains, apprenticeships or regional investment demonstrate how the energy transition supports economic growth and skilled employment. For policymakers and local leaders, this narrative connects climate ambition to economic development.



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■ Section Five

What Makes a Clean Heat Story Amplifiable

The strategic insight

Most clean heat projects already deliver value across several of these narratives.

But many organisations only communicate the **technical dimension** of their work.

When those same projects are framed through the lenses of **energy security, affordability and economic opportunity**, they become far more relevant to the conversations taking place in government, industry bodies and national media.



The projects that do tend to share a number of characteristics. They are:

Local

Grounded in a real place or community. Projects tied to specific places - towns, cities, hospitals, schools or housing developments - help audiences visualise the transition happening around them.

Human

Connected to real people - residents, workers, engineers or trainees / apprentices training or retraining in the clean heat workforce.

Simple

Able to explain their impact in clear, understandable terms: lower heating costs for a community; improved energy efficiency in public buildings.

Relevant

Linked to issues people already care about: bills, jobs, energy security.

Credible

Supported by trusted voices such as local authorities, engineers or public institutions, backed by statistics and proofing points.

These ingredients turn technical projects into stories that journalists and policymakers can easily understand and share.

■ Section Six

Example: The Kind of Clean Heat Story DESNZ Wants

River heat network to warm London landmarks and cut energy bills

15 April 2026, 08:58 BST

Updated 2 hours ago

A new heat network powered by water-source heat pumps in the Thames is set to provide low-carbon heating to several of London's major institutions including the Southbank Centre, King's College London and the National Theatre.

The project will capture low-grade heat from the river and distribute it through a shared network across the district - replacing fossil-fuel heating with a reliable, locally sourced energy system.

Over time, the system could expand to heat large parts of central London.

For the institutions involved, the impact is about more than carbon reduction. Cultural venues, universities and public institutions across the UK are grappling with rising energy costs that place pressure on budgets, staffing and investment in services.

Lower-cost, more stable heating infrastructure has the potential to free up significant funds that can be reinvested in what these organisations exist to do - supporting students, maintaining cultural spaces and delivering public services.

"From an engineering perspective it's a fascinating system, but what really matters is the outcome. If infrastructure like this helps institutions spend less on energy and more on education, research and culture, that's when you know the technology is making a difference."

— Project engineer

Water-source heat pumps operate at higher efficiency than air-source systems in dense cities, making them particularly suitable for district heating infrastructure.

The project forms part of the UK government's wider effort to expand heat networks across the country, with over £1 billion committed to the sector and London targeting 460,000 homes connected by 2030.

Why This Story Works

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DESNZ Priority	How the Story Delivers
Energy security	Uses domestic renewable heat from the Thames
Billpayer protection	Efficient heating infrastructure reduces long-term costs
Jobs & skills	Major infrastructure programme requiring engineers and installers
Local impact	Tied to recognisable London landmarks
Human relevance	Cultural institutions people recognise
Trusted voices	Universities, cultural venues, and public institutions

What the Sector Can Learn

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Notice that the story is not framed around:



Compressor efficiency



Pipe design



System capacity

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Instead it is framed around:



Place

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People

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Public Benefit

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This is the difference between a project announcement and a national story.

■ Section Seven

Would your project make the DESNZ cut?

The Clean Heat Story Scorecard

Score your project across the criteria that government communications teams and national media look for when selecting clean-energy stories.

Give yourself 0–2 points for each question, 2 being the most affirmative.

Category	Question	Score
Energy Security	Does your project contribute to secure, home-grown energy infrastructure?	
	Can the story connect to reducing reliance on imported fuels?	
Billpayer Benefit	Can you show a clear cost benefit (or long-term stability) for households or public services?	
	Do you have simple proof points (e.g. savings, efficiency improvements)?	
Jobs & Skills	Does the project support UK jobs, training, or local supply chains?	
	Can you identify real people benefiting (engineers, apprentices, local workers)?	
Local Impact	Is the story tied to a specific place (town, region, institution)?	
	Can local communities see a clear benefit?	
Human Story	Does the story involve real people or organisations rather than just technology?	
	Can the impact be explained simply?	
Trusted Voices	Are credible partners involved (local authority, NHS trust, university etc)?	
	Would someone outside your company be willing to speak about the impact?	
Score Interpretation		Total

18–24 points You have a story that could travel nationally.

12–18 points You have the foundations - but the narrative needs strengthening.

Under 12 points Your project may be strong technically, but the story isn't yet clear.

■ Section Eight

Why Many Clean Heat Brands Miss the Opportunity

Despite the strength of the sector, many organisations struggle to gain visibility - even with stories that could, under different circumstances, land national attention.

The reasons they miss opportunities they could otherwise grasp, are usually around their communications strategy.



Commercial return is far more likely when the narrative is supported by strong marketing foundations.

Common issues include:

- Fragmented communication across teams
- Unclear value propositions
- Poor brand cohesion
- Weak narrative framing
- Inconsistent storytelling across channels

As the clean heat market grows and matures, these gaps become more visible against competitors. Clear positioning and confident storytelling will increasingly determine which organisations lead the conversation.

The takeaway?

A compelling story may well spark attention, but sustained brand awareness and commercial return are far more likely when that narrative is supported by strong marketing foundations.

■ Section Nine

Turning Projects Into National Stories

Across the UK, organisations in the heating value chain are delivering remarkable work. Engineers are designing sophisticated energy systems, installers are delivering increasingly complex projects, and organisations across the value chain are helping reshape how the UK heats its homes and buildings.

The Carbon Trust estimates that scaling heat pumps could generate £110bn in system savings and £5.7bn in economic value by 2050.

We are watching the foundations of the UK's future energy system being built.

But if the transition is to succeed, those achievements must also become visible and understood.

The organisations that communicate clearly will shape public understanding of clean heat - and position themselves as leaders in the market that follows.

£110bn

in saving from scaling heat pumps

£5.7bn

in economic value by 2050



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Want Your Clean Heat Brand to Be Found, Heard and Grow?

Wildtribe is a specialist marketing and communications agency built for the energy transition.

We work with organisations across the decarbonised heating value chain - from technology providers and drilling specialists to infrastructure developers and consultants.

Our role is simple:

To turn complex energy solutions into clear, confident stories that build trust, influence policy conversations and support commercial growth.

If you're navigating the clean heat market and want your organisation's voice to be heard, we'd love to talk.

Let's shape the story of clean heat together.

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