

Aberdulais Falls Visitor Centre, Neath



Aberdulais Falls in the Neath Valley, South Wales is an important industrial heritage site owned and run by the National Trust. For over 400 years these falls provided the energy to drive the wheels of industry, from the manufacture of copper in 1584 to the later tinplate works.

A recent major refurbishment of the water wheel gave scope for implementing the latest hydraulic technology to improve what was the trust's first and largest hydro-electric scheme, generating electricity for the visitor centre and to feed the National Grid.

The Problem:

In 2007 The National Trust realised the need for a new visitor centre and office space at the falls. With a crew of over one hundred staff helping to make Aberdulais Falls a visit to remember, The Trust decided to investigate the possibility of using renewable energy to heat the centre.

The Solution:

WDS Green Energy examined the possibilities of using the power of the water or the land around to provide heat, but both solutions would prove expensive so it was finally decided to install an air source heat pump as the most cost effective solution. This has proved a very successful solution for the centre.

The Benefits:

The Dimplex LA 20 AS air source heat pump with a 200 litre buffer tank now provides under-floor heating to the shop, offices and activity centre.

The system includes a computerised monitoring facility with a display screen so that visitors in the reception area can see the cost benefits and savings in energy being made by the visitor centre's green approach to heating.

