



Home Buyer's Guide to Oil-Fired Heating

A practical guide for buyers, sellers and estate agents handling properties with oil boilers, oil tanks, Aga, Rayburn or Stanley appliances

Prepared by Gloucester Oil Burner Services

OFTEC registered oil boiler servicing, repairs and pre-purchase oil heating inspections across Gloucester, Tuffley and nearby areas.

Call Tim on 07725 972140

Why this guide matters

Oil heating is common in rural and semi-rural homes, but buyers often receive very little practical information before committing to a purchase. A boiler, oil tank or oil supply issue can lead to unexpected costs soon after moving in.

This guide explains what to ask, what to look for, and when to arrange a pre-purchase oil heating inspection before exchange.

1. What oil-fired equipment might be at the property?

A property with oil heating may include more than just a boiler. Before buying, try to identify each part of the system.

- Oil-fired boiler for central heating and hot water
- External or internal oil storage tank
- Oil supply pipework, filter and fire valve
- Flue or balanced flue terminal
- Heating controls, programmer, thermostats and motorised valves
- Oil-fired Aga, Rayburn or Stanley cooker
- Hot water cylinder or unvented cylinder

2. Questions to ask the seller or estate agent

- When was the oil boiler last serviced, and is there paperwork?
- Who carried out the last service?
- Has the boiler had recent faults, lockouts or repairs?
- How old is the oil tank?
- Is the tank single skin or bunded?
- Has the tank ever leaked, split or needed repair?
- Where is the oil line routed, and is it visible?
- Are there any known problems with heating controls or hot water?
- Is there a carbon monoxide alarm near the appliance?
- Are there manuals, service labels or installation certificates?

Buyer tip

If the seller cannot provide service history, budget for an oil boiler service soon after purchase and consider a pre-purchase inspection before exchange.

3. Red flags to take seriously

- Strong oil smell near the boiler, tank or supply pipework
- Visible oil staining on the ground, wall, filter or tank base
- A tank that is bulging, cracked, badly faded, rusty or poorly supported
- A boiler with heavy soot marks, corrosion, staining or missing panels
- No evidence of servicing for several years
- Repeated boiler lockouts or unreliable heating reported by the seller
- Oil tank close to openings, boundaries or ignition risks without clear advice
- Flue terminal blocked, damaged or close to obstructions

4. Home buyer checklist

Use this checklist during viewings or when speaking to the seller, estate agent or surveyor.

Check before you buy	Yes	No	Ask / check
There is evidence of an oil boiler service within the last 12 months.	■	■	■
The boiler make, model and approximate age are known.	■	■	■
The boiler appears clean, accessible and free from obvious oil staining.	■	■	■
The oil tank appears stable, supported and free from obvious cracks or bulging.	■	■	■
The oil tank age and type are known.	■	■	■
The oil line, filter and fire valve are visible or have been identified.	■	■	■
There is a carbon monoxide alarm near the appliance.	■	■	■
The flue terminal is visible and not obviously obstructed.	■	■	■
Heating controls are present and appear usable.	■	■	■
Any oil-fired Aga, Rayburn or Stanley has service history.	■	■	■
The survey has not raised unresolved concerns about oil heating.	■	■	■
A qualified oil heating engineer has inspected any areas of concern.	■	■	■

5. When to book a pre-purchase inspection

A pre-purchase oil heating inspection is worth considering when the property has limited service history, an older oil tank, signs of poor maintenance, a survey comment about the heating system, or an oil-fired cooker that the buyer is relying on.

The inspection can give practical notes on visible condition, obvious concerns and likely next steps. It can also help buyers decide whether to ask questions, request paperwork, budget for repairs or seek further checks before exchange.

Important limitation

A pre-purchase oil heating inspection is not a full building survey, oil tank structural survey, environmental report, electrical inspection or guarantee of future performance. It is a practical visual and operational inspection based on what is visible, accessible and safe to check at the time.

6. What Gloucester Oil Burner Services can check

- Visible condition of the oil boiler and burner
- Signs of leaks, soot, corrosion or poor maintenance
- Basic boiler operation where safe and possible
- Visible oil line, filter and fire valve observations
- Visible oil tank condition and support comments
- Flue and terminal observations
- Service history and label review where available

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- Practical written notes for the buyer, seller or estate agent

Book a home buyer oil heating inspection

Buying a home with oil heating in Gloucester or nearby areas?

Call Tim at Gloucester Oil Burner Services on **07725 972140** or email **info@gloucesteroilburnerservices.co.uk**.

You can also send photos of the boiler, oil tank or estate agent listing before the visit for initial advice.