

Energy

Kyoto

In December 1997 representatives of Governments from around the world met to negotiate in Kyoto, Japan, attempting to reach agreement on actions to deal with the most serious environmental problem facing the world: climate change.

The European Union (EU), which had a key negotiating role at the conference, has agreed a 15% reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2010. The UK has argued that the EU should go further, and is committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20% by the same date.

Key Facts

- * Carbon dioxide emissions account for 6% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions.
- * The UK is committed to reducing its carbon dioxide emissions by 20% (on 1990 levels by the year 2010).
- * Energy efficiency can help to meet a fifth of the UK's target.
- * Total UK domestic sector carbon dioxide emissions grew by 4% between 1990 and 1996.

The Home Energy Conservation Acts 1995 and 1996

The Home Energy Conservation Acts of 1995 and 1996 (HECA) have required local authorities, as energy conservation authorities, to focus their attention on improving the energy efficiency of the housing in their districts.

Authorities should be looking at measures which, (when compared with the situation as at 1st April 1996), will lead to a 30% improvement. Substantial progress towards achieving this target is expected over the next 10 year period.

The first energy conservation reports were required to be submitted by 30 November 1996 and updated annually. All Hertfordshire Authorities have submitted reports.

HECA states that energy conservation measures should include:

- * Information
- * Advice
- * Education (including staff training)
- * Promotion, as well as making grants and loans, and
- * Carrying out works.

Potential Indicators

The EQUAM model

The Hertfordshire Energy and Air Quality (computer) model is not yet available but will provide a number of indicators by the year 2000/01. The outcome of a bid for EU funding for developing the model was not known at time of publication. Some preliminary indicators which can be used to study trends in energy consumption should be available in 1998.

HECA

The legislation requires that a progress report is made on the reduction in CO2 emissions as a result of action in residential property by each local authority. The potential for collating these reports to give an accurate and valid indicator of trends in CO2 emissions from housing is being examined.

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