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UK Energy Policy: Energy White Paper

The Energy White Paper and the Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan

Maintaining a forward looking coherent energy policy is a major task for Government. To this end, the Government published on 24 February 2003 the White Paper '*Our Energy Future - Creating A Low Carbon Economy*', setting out a long-term strategy for UK Energy Policy. The full text of the White Paper can be found on the DTI Energy website at: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper

The White Paper has **four overarching goals**:

- to put ourselves on a path to cut the UK's carbon dioxide emissions - the main contributor to global warming - by some 60% by about 2050, with real progress by 2020;
- to maintain the reliability of energy supplies;
- to promote competitive markets in the UK and beyond, helping to raise the rate of sustainable economic growth and to improve our productivity; and
- to ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated.

Within the White Paper are **over 130 commitments** that must be delivered. These have been **broken down into 10 overall work streams**, which are: Climate Change; Reducing UK Emissions; Energy Efficiency and CHP; Renewables; Social; International Energy Relations; Innovation; Education; Skills and Research; Transport; Security of Supply; and Delivery Partnerships.

A **lead department** with responsibility for delivery has been assigned to each of these workstreams, with Defra leading on the workstreams for Climate Change, Reducing UK Emissions, Energy Efficiency and CHP, and Social including Fuel Poverty.

To ensure joined-up Government and efficient delivery of the commitments, a virtual network has been established between departmental policy units, the devolved administrations, regulators and key delivery partners. A full list of the White Paper commitments and more information about the **Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN)** can be found at the SEPN website: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn

Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan

A major underlying theme of the White Paper is the need for the UK to move towards a low carbon economy. To this end, the Government has accepted the RCEP's recommendation that the UK should put itself on a path to a **reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of 60% from current levels by about 2050**, with real progress by 2020.

The White Paper makes clear that **energy efficiency is highly cost-effective** and can deliver big carbon savings across the economy. We expect to achieve about half of the extra carbon savings we need by 2020 through energy efficiency;

The strands of policy set out in the White Paper add up to an ambitious strategy for energy efficiency. Within a year of the White Paper's publication, the Government will publish an **implementation plan** that sets out in further detail how this strategy will be delivered. From then on the Government will report annually, as part of the follow-up to the White Paper, on progress towards achieving the savings set out.


In addition to the implementation plan for energy efficiency, the Government will publish a


strategy to meet its commitment to achieve **10,000MW of Combined Heat and Power** by 2010 - a commitment that is restated in the White Paper. The Government takes the difficulties currently faced by the industry very seriously and will continue to work with them to identify further ways to overcome the problems.

Background

In February 2002 the Cabinet Office's Performance and Innovation Unit published their Energy Review. This took a long-term strategic look at the issues and challenges that will determine the UK's future energy policy, and was used as the basis for an extensive public consultation. The consultation, which closed on 13 September 2002, received submissions from over 6,500 individuals and organizations.

The White Paper was informed by the results from the Consultation, the PIU Review, the 22nd Report from the Royal Commission on Environmental Protection (RCEP), WSSD, and other relevant sources of information and opinion. The White Paper Team, based in DTI, coordinated the development of the White Paper, with input from relevant departments, including DTI, Defra, HMT, ODPM, DfT, FCO and others.

A [background document \(40kb\)](#)  is available explaining the basis on which the Government considers that the energy efficiency improvements set out in the White Paper can be delivered.

Further information is available on our [Help page](#) about downloading or reading *Adobe Acrobat*  documents.

The PIU Energy Review and the Public Consultation

In February 2002 the Cabinet Office's Performance and Innovation Unit published their Energy Review. This took a long-term strategic look at the issues and challenges that could determine the UK's future energy policy. The full text of the PIU Review can be found on the PIU website at: www.piu.gov.uk/2002/energy/report/index.htm

In May 2002, the Government launched a full public consultation on the key issues raised in the PIU Review. The consultation was primarily aimed at energy stakeholders, including consumer organisations, business, unions, environmental groups, and others who have a particular expertise or interest in energy issues. The view of the general public was sought in parallel.

The Consultation closed on 13 September 2002 and helped to inform the production of the Energy White Paper. Further information about the Consultation, including reports from stakeholder events and workshops, can be found on the DTI website at: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/developpe/index.shtml

The Government Response to the RCEP's 22nd Report, 'Energy - The Changing Climate'

The [Government response \(680kb\)](#)  to RCEP's 22nd Report was published alongside, but separate from, the Energy White Paper on 24 February 2003.

The text of the RCEP's 22nd Report can be found on their website at: www.rcep.org.uk/energy.html

Further information and Contacts

Defra, jointly with HM Treasury, produced a consultation document 'Economic Instruments to Improve Household Energy Efficiency' published on 16 July 2002 and closed on 8 October. Further information about this consultation, and an electronic version of the consultation paper, is available on the [Treasury website](#). Responses to this consultation helped to inform the Government's policy development and were considered in the context of the wider process of consultation that led up to the Energy White Paper.

As announced in Budget 2003, following the above initial consultation last year, the Government is now consulting in more detail on specific economic instruments to encourage greater energy efficiency by households. Last year's consultation sought views on the ways in which economic instruments could be used to overcome market failures which prevent improvements in household energy efficiency. Given the generally positive response to the consultation, supporting action in this area, and following the publication of the Energy White Paper and its focus on energy efficiency, the Government is consulting further on specific measures.

This consultation is launched with the aim of gathering further information on the likely impacts and effectiveness of the identified measures and responses will help to inform the Government's policy development in this area. The consultation, which closes on 24 October 2003, can be found on the [HM Treasury Website](#).

Further information on aspects of energy policy for which Defra is responsible can be found on this site under [energy efficiency](#) and [climate change](#).

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