

NOTE FROM THE CARBON TRUST

As discussed on the phone earlier, a few comments from CT:

The principle of distributed generation and of micro-generation is something the Carbon Trust supports especially in the context of future intelligent networks and integrating dynamic management of demand and generation from diverse and potentially non-despatched sources. We are keen to see examples installed, operated and monitored to gain an objective view of all aspects of performance. Purely from a carbon point of view, there are already emerging some strong contenders including, as one instance, wind power.

However, though many supporters of distributed generation technologies make claims of exceptional economic, electrical and environmental performance, there is relatively limited operational data from field trials to provide an independent, objective view.

As an example consider small CHP devices. Their predicted carbon saving potential is mainly derived from theory which is not yet validated (other than with very limited, statistically insignificant data). This is why the Carbon Trust is running a major field trial of small CHP technologies. It is interesting to note that whilst some in the industry have made claims about exceptional performance it has been unable to meet its obligations in terms of numbers of units installed. However, the data we do have from the units that are installed is of excellent quality and will show the true performance of the technologies when we have a statistically significant set. Whilst it is always risky to draw conclusions early, what we can say at the moment is:

1. It is essential that the field trial continues in order to meet all its original objectives.
2. Early trends suggest the performance claims made by the micro-CHP industry are generally not supported by the data we have seen.

We have also witnessed the discovery of a number of unexpected technical issues relating to installing micro-CHP in typical homes.

I would suggest that it is inadvisable to make any firm statements about the performance of micro-CHP until full data is available.

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