Low carbon heating - Solar heated water

Meeting the demand

During the summer there is generally sufficient sunlight to provide almost all the hot water demand. During the winter, solar radiation is reduced and so a secondary heating system will be required which will usually be an electric immersion heater fitted inside a hot water storage tank.

Typical output and cost

A typical hot water demand per household will consume about 3000 to 4000 kWh of energy per year which will cost about £150 - £200 per year. If the solar water modules could supply half this demand then the savings would be £75 - £100 per year.

Both solar electric and solar thermal modules can be roof mounted. However, if roof space is limited, it is more beneficial to invest in solar electric modules as the payback time is shorter.

Further information

Leaflets on these measures and other relevant information is available at www.readingcan.org.uk

After deciding what improvement(s) you need, identify a registered local installer or go to www.simplyenergyadvice.org.uk

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Solar water heating can be considered if your roof is orientated south east to south west. The roof mounted module contains a set of pipes through which water flows absorbing the infra-red portion of sunlight. 3 panels of 2 x 1 metre will provide a family's needs.

Advantages

- The solar modules can be used anywhere sunlight is available
- No pollution and little maintenance required
- Alternative heating source as gas is phased out
- Helps to reduce your heating bill and save carbon emissions