

Coventry City Council

Energy Company Obligation: Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Version 1 Published 21 December 2017

1) The Energy Company Obligation

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) was introduced in 2013 and is a requirement for energy suppliers to meet Government targets to install carbon and energy saving measures in homes. Suppliers will meet their obligation by installing insulation and heating measures directly, or by using managing agents or contractors to do this.

The Government's latest ECO scheme, called ECO2t, was launched in April 2017 and will run until 30th September 2018. Owner occupiers and private tenants may be able to get help with insulation and heating measures from obligated suppliers under the 'Affordable Warmth' part of ECO2t if they are receiving certain specified types of benefits. Residents in all tenures may also be able to get help with insulation measures but only if a supplier considers that their home can be improved under another part of ECO2t called the 'Carbon Emissions Reduction Obligation'.

For the first time local authorities can now extend the scope of the 'Affordable Warmth' part of ECO2t in their area so that other owner occupier and private rental households, in addition to those receiving the specified benefits, might be helped. This is done under an arrangement called Flexible Eligibility. Before a supplier can consider helping in a local authority's area under Flexible Eligibility, the authority must initially publish a Statement of Intent which describes how Flexible Eligibility will work, and must then subsequently refer the details of the homes that need insulation and heating measures to the supplier in a Declaration document. A local authority can only include a home in a Declaration if the household occupying it meets the criteria set out in the Statement of Intent.

2) Flexible Eligibility in Coventry

The City Council is committed to helping low income and vulnerable households who may not be able to afford to stay warm in their homes. ECO2t insulation and heating measures under Flexible Eligibility will add to the range of help that the Council currently provides.

This Statement of Intent is being published in accordance with Government guidance so that additional households can be considered for help under Flexible Eligibility if:

- i) they don't receive the specified benefits but are nevertheless living on a low income and facing high heating costs, or
- ii) they are living on a low income and are vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home, or

- iii) their home could benefit from solid wall insulation and although they wouldn't be eligible for consideration under i) and ii) above, their proximity to eligible homes and the proportion of eligible homes is such that they can be considered (referred to as "in-fill" in the Government guidance).

The criteria that will be used to decide which households can be considered for help in these three categories are detailed in Section 3 below.

The Council has recently completed a competitive tendering process to select a partner organisation to work with it to provide ECO2t funded insulation and heating measures. Householders who meet the criteria to be considered for help under Flexible Eligibility will be referred by the Council to its partner organisation in a Declaration document.

Inclusion in a Declaration document will not in itself guarantee ECO2t assistance. The final decision on whether a household receives help under Flexible Eligibility will be made by the partner organisation after the Declaration document has been issued to them. Their final decision will depend on a number of things, including i) the practicality and cost of installing the required insulation or heating measure, ii) the amount of energy or carbon savings that can be achieved, and iii) whether any more measures need to be installed to meet the supplier's target.

3) How the Council intends to identify households that may benefit from help under Flexible Eligibility

Criteria for deciding whether a household is living on a low income and facing high heating costs

A household will be considered to be living on a low income if the gross annual income is less than the relevant figure in Tables 1 - 3 below:

Table 1:

Household composition	Gross annual household income
1 adult and no children	£13,200
1 adult and 1 child	£17,400
1 adult and 2 children	£21,600
1 adult and 3 children	£25,800
1 adult and 4 or more children	£30,000

Table 2:

Household composition	Gross annual household income
2 adults and no children	£19,800
2 adults and 1 child	£24,000
2 adults and 2 children	£28,200
2 adults and 3 children	£32,600
2 adults and 4 or more children	£36,600

Table 3:

Household composition	Gross annual household income
3 or more adults and no children	£26,400

3 or more adults and 1 child	£30,600
3 or more adults and 2 children	£34,800
3 or more adults and 3 children	£39,000
3 or more adults and 4 or more children	£43,200

A household will be considered to be facing high heating costs if their home has a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) showing that it is in Band E, F or G.

Where there isn't a valid EPC, the table below will be used instead. If after answering all of the questions in the table a household has a total score of 5 or more, it will be considered to be facing high heating costs.

Question	Response	Score
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	0
	2	10
	3	17
	4	27
	5 or more	36
Are energy payments made by Direct Debit?	Yes	-7
	No	0
What type of home is it?	Semi detached	-4
	Detached	6
	Mid terrace	-10
	End Terrace	-4
	Converted flat	-9
	Purpose built flat, high rise	-20
	Purpose built flat, low rise	-34
	Bungalow	0
Was the home built before 1964?	Yes	17
	No	0
What is the main heating fuel?	Gas	-14
	Electricity	0
	Oil	12
	Other	-10
Does at least one household member spend most of the day at home?	Yes	1
	No	0

In addition to the above, the Council may designate neighbourhoods in the city where providing assistance with insulation and heating measures is a priority. Neighbourhoods to be designated would be identified by the Ward(s) or Lower Super Output Area(s) that they are in and would be publicised on the Council's website. Any household living in a designated neighbourhood will be considered to be living on a low income and facing high heating costs.

Criteria for deciding whether a household is living on a low income and is vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home

A household will be considered to be living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home if i) the gross annual household income is less than the relevant figure in Tables 1 - 3 above, and ii) a member of the household has one of the health conditions listed in A below, or is vulnerable in one of the ways listed in B below.

A - Health conditions

Has a long-term illness from the following list:

- Respiratory illness (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, asthma)
- Cardiovascular disease (heart disease, stroke and transient ischaemic attack)
- Diabetes
- Blood conditions such as sickle cell anaemia or thalassaemia
- Osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis
- Cancer
- Neurological conditions including motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease.
- Mental ill-health e.g. depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, dementia

B –Vulnerability

They are vulnerable in one of the following ways:

- Aged 65 or older
- Have a disability
- Are a child aged up to 18 years old
- Are pregnant
- Reduced mobility with a risk of trips & falls

It is recognised that people who are vulnerable or have a health condition are more likely to spend a longer time in their homes, and may therefore have a higher income requirement because of their increased heating costs. The Council will therefore consider varying the income thresholds in individual cases to allow for this. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

The Council will also consider individual cases that have health conditions and vulnerabilities other than those listed in A and B above. Medical evidence may be required, and again each case will be considered on its own merits.

Criteria for deciding whether a household can be assisted with solid wall insulation even though they are considered not to be living on a low income and facing high heating costs, and not living on a low income and vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home ("in-fill")

A household will be considered for assistance if they meet the requirements summarised in the table below.

Property type requirements	Household requirements	"In-fill" assistance
A solid wall insulation scheme that consists of a pair of semi-detached houses or bungalows, or a building containing no more than two domestic premises.	At least one of the two households in the premises must be considered by the Council to be living on a low income and facing high heating costs, or living on a low income and vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home.	The other private property to which it is directly adjoined can be considered for solid wall insulation.
A solid wall insulation scheme consisting of a building containing more than one domestic premises (e.g. flats), or buildings that are immediately adjacent to each other (e.g. neighbouring properties), or a terrace of domestic premises.	At least 66% of all of the households in the premises must be considered by the Council to be living on a low income and facing high heating costs, or living on a low income and vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home.	The other private properties in the scheme can be considered for solid wall insulation as long as they are in the same building, or are an immediately adjacent building, or are in the same terrace, as the premises occupied by households that are considered by the Council to be living on a low income and facing high heating costs, or living on a low income and vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home.

4) Governance

Declarations will be signed and issued on behalf of the Council by the Domestic Energy Efficiency Manager. In their absence, declarations may be signed and issued by the Affordable Warmth Officer.

Where a household doesn't meet the criteria for living on a low income and being vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home, but nevertheless wishes to

be considered under Flexible Eligibility, their circumstances will be considered by the Council's Consultant in Public Health.

5) Enquiries and referrals for help under flexible eligibility

Owner occupiers and private tenants living in Coventry, and private landlords that own properties in Coventry, can contact the Council's Affordable Warmth Team to ask about help with insulation and heating measures under Flexible Eligibility:

Tel 024 7683 2330

E-mail energy.matters@coventry.gov.uk

To assess whether help might be provided, the Affordable Warmth Team will need an enquiry form to be fully completed and sent to them.

The enquiry form can be accessed by visiting the Council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/energymatters

Where a household meets the criteria, their details will be passed to the Council's partner organisation and they will then carry out a home visit. The final decision on whether help can be provided will be made by the partner organisation.

The Council encourages other agencies to refer households to the Affordable Warmth Team or the Council's website.

6) Monitoring and review

The Affordable Warmth Team will monitor the numbers and types of enquiries received, and the numbers of households passed to the Council's partner organisation.

The progress made by the Council's partner organisation will be monitored by the Affordable Warmth Team. Monthly reports will be submitted by the partner organisation and these will include:

- % of households contacted within 3 working days of receiving details to arrange an appointment to visit.
- Addresses of homes where measures installed in last month, and types of measures installed.
- For each address where measures installed in the last month, amount of any owner contribution required.

The Affordable Warmth Team will ask householders to complete customer satisfaction surveys after the installation of insulation or heating measures, and the results of these will also be monitored.

The Statement of Intent will be reviewed by the Council prior to the end of the ECO2t scheme period in September 2018, with a view to issuing a further Statement of Intent ready for the commencement of the ECO3 scheme.

7) Approval

Signed by: Richard Moon, Director (Project Management and Property Services)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Moon', is positioned below the text. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Date: 14th December 2017