

## **Coventry City Council**

### **Energy Company Obligation: Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent**

**Version 4 Published 12/09/19**

#### **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 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 version of the ECO scheme, called ECO3, commenced in October 2018 and will run until March 2022. Owner occupiers and private tenants may be able to get help with insulation and heating measures from obligated suppliers under ECO3 if they are receiving certain specified types of benefits. Tenants in social housing may also be able to benefit from insulation and heating measures in certain circumstances.

In addition to the above, more people who are owner occupiers or private tenants can potentially be helped through an arrangement called Flexible Eligibility. To enable more people to be considered for help under Flexible Eligibility, the Council must publish a Statement of Intent which describes how it will work. It must also 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, and the final decision on whether help can be provided will rest with the obligated energy supplier or their appointed managing agent or contractors.

#### **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. ECO3 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 current Government guidance so that additional households can be considered for help under Flexible Eligibility.

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

The Council will only issue a Declaration document to an obligated energy supplier to enable a household to be considered for help under ECO3 Flexible Eligibility if they meet these requirements;

- i) They are part of a Council supported scheme for insulation and heating improvements; **and**
- ii) They meet the criteria for deciding whether a household is living on a low income and facing high heating costs; **or**
- iii) They meet the 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; **or**
- iv) They meet the 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").

#### Council supported schemes for insulation and heating improvements

The Council currently supports two schemes, Warmer Homes in Coventry, and Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders.

Householders can enquire about being part of the Warmer Homes in Coventry scheme by contacting Act on Energy. They will be considered to be part of the scheme if they have been subsequently assessed by Act on Energy and their details have been passed to the Council's appointed contractor.

Householders will only be considered to be part of the Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders scheme if they have received a scheme letter from the Council and they have been subsequently assessed by the Act on Energy and their details have been passed to the Council's appointed contractor.

The Council may support other schemes at its discretion.

#### 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
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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.

All households that are part of the Warm and Healthy Homes for Disabled Householders scheme will be considered to be living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

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 Sustainability and Low Carbon 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 Act on Energy to ask about help under the Warmer Homes in Coventry scheme:

Tel 0800 988 2881

E-mail [advice@actonenergy.org.uk](mailto:advice@actonenergy.org.uk)

To assess whether help might be provided, Act on Energy will need an enquiry form to be fully completed and returned to them.

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

[www.coventry.gov.uk/energymatters](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/energymatters)

#### **6) Monitoring and review**

Act on Energy will monitor the numbers and types of enquiries received, and the numbers of households passed to the Council's appointed contractors.

The progress made will be reviewed by Act on Energy.

Act on Energy may ask householders to complete customer satisfaction surveys after the installation of insulation or heating measures, and the results of these will also be monitored.

#### **7) Approval**

Signed by:



Andy Williams  
**Director of Business, Investment and Culture**

Date: 12/09/19