

Energy Company Obligation (ECO): Help to Heat Local Authority Flexible Eligibility - Statement of Intent (SOI)

Three Rivers District Council [25/05/2021] VERSION 5

1) Introduction

The Warmer Homes scheme supports local households in or near fuel poverty or vulnerable to the cold to receive energy efficiency interventions that improve health and wellbeing outcomes and the fuel efficiency of their homes. The scheme will be used to deliver Local Authority Flexibility. Three Rivers District Council is working in partnership with Yes Energy Solutions.

As set out in the Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) (Amendment) Order 2017 (Art 16 (A) 3(a)) this Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the forthcoming Order 2018: Help to Heat Local Authority Flexible Eligibility ('ECO flex') criteria is only applicable and relevant to private tenure households (i.e. Private rented sector and owner occupier sector). Social housing is excluded from flexible eligibility.

The Warmer Homes scheme contributes towards the following Local Authority priorities:

Three Rivers District Council

This will contribute to the Three Rivers Strategic Plan (2018-2021). Three Rivers District Council's vision is that the District should be a better place for everyone, their neighbourhoods, health, employment and access to services.

The aims and priorities for the Council are outlined below, and we shall work with public, private and voluntary services to achieve them.

1) Better neighbourhoods – we want to:

- maintain high quality neighbourhoods;
- reduce the eco-footprint of the district;
- create access to good quality jobs and employment
- support businesses and the local economy.

2) Healthier Communities – we want to:

- develop and improve access to good quality housing;
- create prosperity for all and access to opportunities;
- to support the most vulnerable people in the District;
- provide a healthy and safe environment;
- reduce health inequalities, promote healthy lifestyles, support learning and community organisations.

It will help fulfil the action in the Three Rivers District Council Home Energy Conservation Authority (HECA) Progress Report 2019-21:

- TRDC will work together with other districts and the County Council to install energy efficiency measures to low income private households. The project is aimed primarily at those living in excess cold with serious health implications.

Three Rivers District Council wishes to utilise ECO Flex to its fullest to help achieve its aims and reach a wide number of residents.

It should be noted that the final decision on whether any individual household will benefit from energy saving improvements rests with obligated energy suppliers or their contractors. Inclusion in a Declaration of Eligibility issued by the Council to a supplier will not guarantee installation of measures. The final decision will depend on:

- i) identification of measures eligible under Help to Heat;
- ii) the supplier's assessment of the cost-effectiveness of installing measures in relation to achieving its obligation; and
- iii) Whether the supplier has achieved their targets or requires further measures to meet their Energy Company Obligation targets.

2) How the Local Authority intends to identify eligible households

To be eligible the applicant must meet criterion 1 AND either criterion a) OR b) in table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria for identifying households living in fuel poverty OR low income and vulnerable to cold

Eligibility Criteria
1. Low Income = Gross household disposable income (after rent or mortgage has been paid) £20,000 or less.
AND either
a) High energy costs Property with at least one of : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100mm or less loft insulation• Unfilled cavity walls• Uninsulated non cavity walls• No working central heating• EPC rating of D or below
OR
b) Vulnerable to the cold = Resident or household member with at least one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) a health condition made worse by the cold (as defined in Table 2)ii) vulnerable to the cold (as defined in Table 2)iii) a home owner or those on a private tenancy agreement (or member of the household) is in receipt of long term health or disability benefit. Eligible benefits :<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Carer's Allowance▪ A Disability Benefit (incl. Attendance Allowance)▪ Disabled Living Allowance▪ Personal Independence Payment

Table 2: Eligible health conditions and those vulnerable to the cold

a) Health conditions made worse by the cold	b) Vulnerable to the cold
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. people with cardiovascular conditions ii. people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma) iii. people with mental health conditions iv. people with disabilities v. people who are terminally ill vi. people with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV) vii. Neurobiological and related diseases (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME) viii. Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Aged over 65, particularly those over 75 ii. Children under 5 and/or pregnant women iii. People with substance addictions iv. People who have attended hospital due to a fall in the last year v. People diagnosed with dementia vi. Recent immigrants or asylum seekers

Source: Adapted from National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Quality Statement and guidance 2015 on excess winter deaths and illness caused by cold

5) Governance

The Assessor, (provided by Yes Energy Solutions) will receive, log and follow-up initial referrals. The Assessor will check if the client is potentially eligible for ECO Flex and request relevant supporting information. Once provided the Assessor will liaise with the relevant Local Authority to obtain a signed 'Local Authority Declaration' confirming eligibility.

Responsible officer

The officer below will be responsible for signing Declarations on behalf of the local authority.

Job title: Claire May, Head of Planning Policy and Projects

Telephone: 01923 776611

6) Referrals

We would expect referrals to be identified through the Warmer Homes scheme. Those outside of this would be expected to meet Warmer Homes agreed quality criteria and should contact the responsible officer for further information.

7) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

Warmer Homes will provide the central administration and management of Energy Company Obligation flexible eligibility in Hertfordshire. The scheme reports on ECO Flex activity including SOI qualifying reason, household information and installation progress. The scheme is able report this activity on a monthly basis.

8) Signature

**SIGNED ON BEHALF OF
Three Rivers District Council
by**



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Signature

Claire May
Head of Planning Policy & Projects