

Wrexham County Borough Council Flexible Eligibility

Statement of Intent

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This Statement of Intent is only used on specific energy efficiency projects where 'the Council' is a participating partner. Please note that the Council will only sign declarations for qualifying households that are part of these projects and will not work with any third parties outside of these projects.

1) Introduction

This Statement of Intent (SOI) sets out how Wrexham County Borough Council will work closely with other Councils, Rent Smart Wales, energy companies, managing agents, installers and customers to maximise the potential of the ECO Flexible Eligibility funding stream for fuel poor households across participating authorities in Wales.

Through ECO Flexible Eligibility, local authorities can set their own qualifying criteria to enable eligible homeowners and private renting tenants to benefit from funding for domestic energy efficiency measures. This funding is aimed at residents that are most likely to be in fuel poverty. Energy companies can allocate up to 25% of their full obligation to measures qualified via ECO Flexible Eligibility.

Our approach to ECO Flexible Eligibility is based on the following principles:

- Eligibility criteria is simple and streamlined
- Engagement with energy suppliers and partners is essential
- Funding opportunity to be promoted directly to those who meet the criteria as well as relevant stakeholders (e.g. landlords)

Please note that meeting the Councils ECO Flexible Eligibility criteria does not guarantee the installation of measures. The final decision will depend upon:

- The survey carried out by an accredited contractor and the calculated installation costs
- The energy bill savings that can be achieved for the property
- Whether energy suppliers have achieved their ECO targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets
- The specific WHF project priorities and funding bid commitments

ECO Flexible Eligibility fits with all partners' commitments to reduce carbon emissions and alleviate fuel poverty, tackling fuel poverty and delivering efficient

Wrexham County Borough Council Flexible Eligibility

Statement of Intent and secure energy.

2) How the Council intends to identify eligible households

Households will be considered at risk of fuel poverty if they are assessed to be a low income household and living in a high cost home in relation to energy use (Low Income / High Cost - LIHC) or have a pre-existing condition making them vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (Low Income / Vulnerable to Cold - LIVC).

Households will need to meet Stage 1 (Low Income) criteria **AND** one of the Stage 2 (High Cost / Vulnerable to Cold criteria – these are based on the Government Fuel Poverty Strategy and the NICE guidance NG6 on “Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes”. Published March 2015.

Stage	Eligibility Criteria
1) Low Income	Annual household income (after rent) of £21,000 or less
AND 1 of criteria 2	
2a) High Cost	Property EPC rating of E, F or G
2b) Vulnerable to cold	Property EPC rating of D and a health condition made worse by cold: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chronic respiratory condition, or b. Cardiovascular condition, or c. Musculoskeletal illness, or d. Mental health condition
3c) Vulnerable to cold	Property EPC rating of D and vulnerable due to age or circumstance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Over 70 years of age, or b. A pregnant woman, or c. Have dependent children under 5 years of age

In the private rented sector, occupants / landlords of the property will need to demonstrate that they have a Domestic Tenancy in place. A Domestic Tenancy is defined in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Wrexham County Borough Council Flexible Eligibility

Statement of Intent

3) Governance

The Council will work with other Councils and their delivery partners to identify eligible households as part of the defined marketing strategies for the relevant project. Delivery partners will engage with residents and collect the required evidence to demonstrate eligibility which will be made available to the Council, upon request. They will also liaise with ECO obligated Energy Companies and prepare the declaration forms for the Council to sign.

The Officers responsible for signing valid "Local Authority Declarations" as determined through delegated authority are as follows:

Jacob Jones ,Public Protection Officer

Martin Cumming, Public Protection officer

Referrals

The Council will receive referrals for ECO Flexibly Eligibility in the following ways:

- 1 Self-referrals from residents and landlords
- 2 From other Council teams or partner organisations
- 3 From front line staff within the health and social care sectors and trusted partner agencies
- 4 Other relevant agencies

4) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

The data collected from residents will be sufficient to confirm their eligibility. This will include:

- Name, address and telephone number
- Proof of income – this will be in the form of a self-declaration signed by each member of the household stating their current employment status and providing evidence of income.
- EPC lodged within the last 5 years proving that property is a D, E, F or G rated property
- General Practitioner's letter or prescription
- MATB1 form for pregnant women
- Birth certificate for over 70 and children under 5

Wrexham County Borough Council Flexible Eligibility

Statement of Intent

A data sharing agreement is in place between partners and clients will be made aware of the privacy policy and asked to sign appropriate paperwork to provide permission to share data.

5) Signature



Lawrence Isted,

Chief Officer, Planning & Regulatory Department

Date: 18.8.2020