

Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Hampshire County Council

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1) Introduction

There are approximately 47,000 households in Hampshire that are considered fuel poor due to a combination of low household income, inefficient housing and high energy costs¹. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the majority of these households have young children, an older person or someone with a long-term illness or disability living there². Fuel poverty can affect people's mental and physical health and have serious impacts on their quality of life.

Hitting The Cold Spots (HTCS) is Hampshire County Council's response to the guidelines and recommendations of the Cold Weather Plan for England 2012 in order to reduce the number of people who die from the effects of cold weather and to reduce the impact of fuel poverty particularly during the winter months.

ECO Flexibility Eligibility (FE), part of ECO Affordable Warmth, provides an opportunity for Hampshire County Council to improve health and wellbeing in line with its Corporate Objectives, the [Public Health Strategy](#) and recommendations within the 2017 [Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#).

Building on the success of Hitting the Cold Spots in supporting fuel poor and vulnerable households, the scheme intends to work with one or more energy suppliers (or installers) to secure ECO Affordable Warmth funding for home energy improvements in both private and social housing tenures as set out in the ECO2t regulations .

Whilst Hampshire County Council and its partners will endeavour to assist residents in accessing ECO funding it is important to note that the final decision on whether any individual household can benefit from energy saving improvements under ECO Affordable Warmth will be made by the energy suppliers, or their agents/contractors. Decisions will be based on:

- i) A survey carried out by suppliers agents/contractors and installation costs calculated,
- ii) The energy savings that can be achieved for a property, and
- iii) Whether suppliers have achieved their targets under ECO.

¹ DECC (2017) [Sub-regional fuel poverty, 2015 data](#)

² NEA (2016) [Fuel Poverty Statistics](#)

2) How the LA intends to identify eligible households

The Council will identify households that may benefit from the installation of energy efficiency measures under flexible eligibility who fall within one of the following categories:

Fuel Poverty (FP)

This approach will identify households with a low income and high energy costs:

1. Low income

Income thresholds (based on different household compositions) for those not in receipt of the ECO Affordable Warmth benefits (table1, appendix 1).

Incomes must be equal or less than the thresholds to be eligible. In addition household savings must not exceed £10,000.

2. High Energy Costs

Where available, Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data will be used to identify how costly a household is to heat. A household with an EPC band of E, F or G will be eligible.

Where EPC data is unavailable a household will be asked 'Energy Cost' questions and scored. A household with a score equal or greater than the threshold (5) will be eligible (table and scores in appendix 2).

Low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC)

This approach will identify households on low incomes, with high energy costs and where occupant/s are vulnerable to living in a cold home:

1. Low Income

Adjusted income thresholds are set out in table 2, appendix 1. Incomes must be equal or less than the thresholds to be eligible. In addition household savings must not exceed £10,000.

2. High Energy Costs

Where EPC data is available a household with an EPC band of D, E, F or G will be eligible. Where EPC data is unavailable a household will be asked 'Energy Cost' questions and scored. A household with a score equal or greater than the threshold (3) will be eligible (table and scores in appendix 2).

3. Health and age vulnerabilities

The Council has identified a number health and age factors to identify households with an increased vulnerability to the cold (appendix 3). These are in line with the NICE Quality Standard on *Preventing excess winter deaths and illness associated with cold homes* (statement 2) and the Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and are already included in energy efficiency work delivered under the Hitting the Colds Spots project.

Hampshire County Council will use its discretion to consider households who fall outside the 'low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home' criteria in exceptional circumstances.

Solid Wall Insulation "in-fill"

Alongside households classed as living fuel poverty (FP) or living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC) there are limited circumstances for other properties to be declared "in-fill". Eligibility of "in-fill" households will be based on the regulations set out in the ECO legislation as well as the discretion of the obligated suppliers and the Council (appendix 4).

3) Acting on behalf of another local authority

This is currently not applicable.

4) Governance

Beth Richards , Senior Project Officer, Environmental Projects Team, Hampshire County Council , The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UG is responsible for signing "local authority declarations" on behalf of the Council.

Hitting the Cold Spots is commissioned by Hampshire County Council Adults' Health and Care Department and supported by the Economy Transport and Environment Department. The programme is delivered under contract by The Environment Centre, a locally based Environmental Charity.

The Declaration of households who meet the Council's Flexible Eligibility criteria will be signed off by the named officer above and outcomes will be reported on an annual basis in line with BEIS guidance and existing HTCS governance structures.

5) Referrals

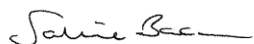
Hitting the Cold Spots is available in the Hampshire County Council administrative area, and is already supported by a broad range of both statutory and voluntary sector partners, with their own wide networks of contacts that enabled the project to reach into the community to the most vulnerable. All 11 district/borough councils are active partners in the project. Indeed the success of the project rests on this partnership approach. These existing networks will be fully utilised for the ECO flex funding.

Final details of the referral routes and the expected information flows with obligated suppliers and their agents/contractors are not confirmed at this stage. Information will be included in the annual report.

6) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

Final details of the evidence, monitoring and reporting arrangements are not confirmed at this stage. Information will be included in the annual report.

7) Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sallie Bacon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Sallie Bacon, Director of Public Health.

Appendix 1: Low Income thresholds

The table below shows the income thresholds for identifying low incomes households. These thresholds refer to gross household income. A different threshold is provided for different types of household composition, reflecting that larger households require larger incomes in order to achieve the same standard of living as smaller ones.

Table 1: Income thresholds for low income household eligibility

Household Composition	Annual household income (Gross)	Monthly household income equivalent
1 adult	£13,200	£1,100
And 1 child	£17,400	£1,450
And 2 children	£21,600	£1,800
And three children	£25,800	£2,150
And four or more children	£30,000	£2,500
2 adults	£19,800	£1,650
And 1 child	£24,000	£2,000
And 2 children	£28,200	£2,350
And three children	£32,400	£2,700
And four or more children	£36,600	£3,050

Where households are being identified under the '*low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home*' category the Council will allow a 10% increase in the thresholds listed above.

Table 2: Income thresholds for low income household eligibility (low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home)

Household Composition	Annual household income (Gross)	Monthly household income equivalent
1 adult	£14,520	£1,210
And 1 child	£19,140	£1,595
And 2 children	£23,760	£1,980
And three children	£28,380	£2,365
And four or more children	£33,000	£2,750
2 adults	£21,780	£1,815
And 1 child	£26,400	£2,200
And 2 children	£31,020	£2,585
And three children	£35,640	£2,970
And four or more children	£40,260	£3,355

Appendix 2: High Energy Costs

EPC data

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data will be used to identify how costly a household is to heat. Under the '*Fuel Poverty*' category households with an EPC band of E, F or G will be eligible.

Where households are being considered under the '*Low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home*' category households with an EPC band of D, E, F or G will be eligible.

Households without EPCs

Where EPC data is unavailable a household will be asked a set of questions and scored developed by BEIS that aim to achieve a balance between simplicity and effective identification of high cost homes.

Table 3: Energy Costs questions and scores for properties without an EPC

Question	Response	Score
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	0
	2	10
	3	17
	4	27
	5 or more	36
	No response	17
Are energy payments made by Direct Debit?	Yes	-7
	No	0
	No response	-7
What type of house 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
	No response	-4
Was the home built before 1964?	Yes	17
	No	0
	No response	17
What is the main fuel type?	Gas	-14
	Electricity	0
	Oil	12
	Other	-10
	No response	-14

Does at least one member of the household spend most of the day in the home?	Yes	1
	No	0
	No response	0

Where households are being considered under the '*Fuel Poverty*' category the score threshold is 5. Households with a score equal or greater than the threshold will be eligible.

Where households are being considered under the '*Low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home*' category the score threshold is 3. Households with a score equal or greater than the threshold will be eligible.

Appendix 3: Health and age vulnerabilities

The Council has identified vulnerabilities in line with the NICE Quality Standard on *Preventing excess winter deaths and illness associated with cold homes* (statement 2), energy efficiency work delivered under the Hitting the Cold Spots project.

List 1: Health and age vulnerabilities

Household with occupants with one or more of the following vulnerabilities will be considered for support:

- Long-term chronic respiratory conditions incl. Asthma, COPD or TIA (a)
- Long-term chronic circulatory conditions incl. heart disease, stroke, diabetes (b)
- Dementia, learning disabilities or mental ill-health that reduces an individual's ability to self-care (c)
- Aged 65+
- A pregnant women
- Households with a child under 5 years old
- Households with a child under 18 with a chronic health condition (a, b or c)
- People in receipt of a disability related benefit
- People who are terminally ill
- People with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV)

Appendix 4: Solid Wall Insulation “In-fill” property identification

The council is able (in limited circumstances) to declare a property as “in-fill” where they do not meet the criteria for FP or LIVC. These circumstances have been outlined in the Energy Company Obligation – Flexible Eligibility, Guidance for local authorities (April 2017, BEIS) and are stated below:

Where a household does not meet the criteria for FP or LIVC, the Council can declare that household as “in-fill” where they are:

- a) In the same terrace as
- b) In an immediately adjacent building to, or
- c) Are in the same building as a household that does meet those criteria.

In-fill is only allowed for solid wall insulation (SWI) projects where a minimum percentage of households for which the LA is providing declarations are FP or LIVC.

Table 4: Summary of the requirements for property types under in-fill

Property Type	LA declaration requirements	In-fill available
Project consisting 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-properties must be declared by the LA as FP or LIVC (i.e. 50% of the properties are FP or LIVC).	The other property to which it is directly adjoined is eligible for solid wall insulation.
Project consisting of any premises that are contained in the same building (e.g. flats), immediately adjacent buildings (e.g. neighbouring detached properties) or in the same terrace	At least two in three properties on the list must be declared by the LA as Fuel Poor or LIVC (i.e. at least 66% of the properties are FP or LIVC)	The other (i.e. up to one third) of properties in the project are eligible for solid wall insulation, provided they are either in the same building, an immediately adjacent building or in the same terrace as the ones identified as FP or LIVC