

Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Hampshire County Council

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Version 4

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1) Introduction

There are approximately 45,442 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) was Hampshire County Council's response to the guidelines and recommendations of the Cold Weather Plan for England 2012. HTCS continues to support all subsequent published Cold Weather Plan's for England through a response which aims 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 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 ECO3 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 (2018) [Sub-regional fuel poverty, 2016 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 the following categories:

Fuel Poverty (FP)

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

1. Low income

Incomes must be equal or less than the relevant threshold in appendix 1. 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 (25) will be eligible (appendix 2).

In addition hard to treat properties, of a non-standard construction, such as BISF and park homes, are likely to have higher energy costs.

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

This approach will identify households on low incomes, where an occupant/s are vulnerable to living in a cold home:

1. Low Income

Incomes must be equal or less than the relevant threshold in appendix 1. In addition household savings must not exceed £10,000.

2. Health and age vulnerabilities

An occupant with at least one of the following vulnerabilities:

- Aged 65+
- A pregnant woman
- Households with a child under 5 years old
- Households with a child under 18 with a chronic health condition (below)
- Long-term chronic respiratory conditions incl. Asthma, COPD or TIA
- Long-term chronic circulatory conditions incl. heart disease, stroke, diabetes
- Dementia, learning disabilities or mental ill-health that reduces an individual's ability to self-care
- 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

- People with degenerative musculoskeletal or neurological conditions

The Council has identified a number of health and age factors to identify households with an increased vulnerability to the cold. These are in line with the NICE Quality Standard on *Preventing excess winter deaths and illness associated with cold homes* (statement 2) and the 2017 Hampshire [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) and 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 in 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 3).

3) Acting on behalf of another local authority

This is currently not applicable.

4) Governance

Gillian Towler, Commissioning Officer, Adults' Health and Care, 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 funded by Hampshire County Council Public Health and led by the Strategic Commissioning Team within Adult's Health and Care. Support is also provided 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

The Council will identify eligible households through its affordable warmth project Hitting the Cold Spots. Hitting the Cold Spots is available within the Hampshire County Council administrative area and is supported by a broad range of both statutory and voluntary sector partners, with their own wide networks of contacts that enables the project to reach into the community to the most vulnerable. All 11 district/borough councils are active partners in the project.

The Hitting the Cold Spots team can be reached by:

- Freephone – **0800 804 8601** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

- Email – staywarm@environmentcentre.com

6) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

Information will be included in the annual report.

7) Signature

Simon Bryant, Director of Public Health

This is Version 4 of Hampshire County Council's Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent. If you would like a copy of the withdrawn Versions 1 (active 30 Oct 2017 – 24 May 2019), Version 2 (active 25 May 2019 – 11 November 2020) or Version 3 (active 12 November 2020 – 31 May 2021) please contact Gillian Towler via e-mail gillian.towler@hants.gov.uk

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 (gross) for low income household eligibility

Household Composition	Fuel Poverty	LIVC
1 adult	£14,000	£16,100
And 1 child	£18,500	£21,300
And 2 children	£23,000	£26,450
And three children	£27,500	£31,650
And four or more children	£32,000	£36,800
2 adults	£21,000	£24,150
And 1 child	£25,500	£29,350
And 2 children	£30,000	£34,500
And three children	£34,500	£39,675
And four or more children	£39,000	£44,850

Appendix 2: High Energy Costs

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 2: Energy Costs questions and scores for properties without an EPC

Question	Response	Score
Does at least one member of the household spend most of the day in the home?	Yes	1
	No	0
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	0
	2	6
	3	12
	4	21
	5 or more	27
What type of house is it?	Semi detached	10
	Detached	20
	Mid terrace	4
	End terrace	10
	Converted Flat	4
	Purpose built flat	0
Year of construction	Bungalow	0
	Post 2002	0
	1991-2002	3
	1981-1990	4
	1975-1980	7
	1965-1974	12
	1945-1964	13
	1919-1944	18
	1850-1918	24
pre1850	27	
What is the main fuel type?	Gas	0
	Electricity	20
	Other	5
Central heating	Yes –working	0
	other	11
Energy payments methods	Direct debit	0
	Pre-payment	6
	Standard credit	7
Fuel Poverty eligibility score => 25		

Appendix 3: 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 (February 2019, 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 an immediately adjacent building to; or
- b) Are in the same building as a household that does meet those criteria; or
- c) In the same terrace as; or
- d) Back to back entire terraces, but only if the back of the actual properties are touching (not back to back garden/ alleyway separates the terrace).

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. This is known as the in-fill property.
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	All properties that are receiving a LA Flex measure must be covered by a declaration. This applies to LIVC, FP and in-fill properties. Up to 50% of total FP or LIVC combined properties within the project can receive a measure.	The in-fill 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.