

# **Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent**

Local Authority: Birmingham City Council

Date of publication:

Version: 1.0

## **1. Introduction**

This Statement sets out Birmingham City Council's Flexible Eligibility Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Criteria to tackle fuel poverty.

The ECO is a government energy efficiency scheme designed to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty. It places an obligation on energy suppliers to help households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions by installing energy saving measures.

Local authorities are responsible for determining eligibility criteria for measures through what is known as a Statement of Intent (Sol) which must be published before any scheme can be implemented. The Sol is intended to state publicly the criteria that a LA intends to use to identify households that meet the criteria under ECO and will need to demonstrate transparency and public accountability.

Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee that any individual household will benefit from energy saving improvements. This decision rests with obligated energy suppliers or their contractors.

The Flexible Eligibility ECO supports Birmingham City Council's ambitions to tackle fuel poverty and provide affordable warmth for low income households across all housing tenures.

## **2. How the LA intends to identify eligible households**

In Birmingham, there are two 'flexible eligibility' criteria identifying households that may benefit from the installation of energy efficiency measures:

- a. People living in fuel poverty (FP) and not in receipt of eligible benefits for standard ECO funding,
- b. People living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC).

### **2.1. Criteria for identifying households in fuel poverty**

The Government calculates Fuel Poverty by taking into consideration both income and costs. Households are in fuel poverty if they have both:

- higher than average required fuel costs; and
- if spending this amount on fuel would push residual income below the official poverty line.

For Birmingham residents to be considered eligible for ECO flexibility funding under this section they must meet **both** parts one (i) and two (ii) and of the criteria listed below and have savings that are less than £8000 (single person household), or less than £12,000 (more than one-person household):

- (i) Resident's disposable household income is less than £27,200 (the provisional estimate of median UK household disposable income for financial year ending 2017 as sourced from the Office of National Statistics). Disposable income is the amount of money that households have available for spending and saving after direct taxes (such as Income Tax and Council Tax) have been accounted for. It includes earnings from employment, private pensions and investments as well as cash benefits provided by the state.
- (ii) Resident has High Heating Costs in accordance with the property qualification table below – a score of 50 points or more is required to qualify):

Question	Response	Score
Number of rooms in the home	1	0
	2	10
	3	30
	4	40
	5	50
	6 or more	60
Are energy payments made by Direct Debit?	Yes	0
	No	15
Property Type	Flat	0
	Terraced	20
	Semi Detached	30
	Detached	30
	Park Home	60
Tenure	Local authority	0
	Owner occupied	0
	Registered Social Landlord	0
	Private Rented	15
Does the home use a boiler?	Yes	0
	No	5
Was the home built before 1976?	No	0
	Yes	25
What is the main fuel type used in the home?	Gas	0
	Other	15
	Electricity	30
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		

## **2.2. Criteria for identifying low income and vulnerability to cold**

For Birmingham residents to be considered eligible for ECO flexibility funding under this qualification they must meet only **one** of the four criteria listed below and have savings that are less than £8000 (single person household), or less than £12,000 (more than one-person household):

- (i) The resident has one of the following illnesses and has an annual household disposable income of less than £27,200 (the provisional estimate of median household disposable income for financial year ending 2017 as sourced from the Office of National Statistics). Disposable income is the amount of money that households have available for spending and saving after direct taxes (such as

Income Tax and Council Tax) have been accounted for. It includes earnings from employment, private pensions and investments as well as cash benefits provided by the state.

- a. Chronic Respiratory Condition e.g. COPD / Asthma / Pneumonia
  - b. Diabetes
  - c. Cardiovascular condition e.g. Coronary Heart Disease, high blood pressure, stroke, heart attack, poor circulation
  - d. Cancer
  - e. Mental Health Condition
  - f. Musculoskeletal conditions (Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis etc.)
  - g. Long Term Illness made worse in Winter (i.e. Arthritis)
  - h. Blood conditions e.g. Sickle Cell Anaemia
  - i. Disability or Restricted Mobility
  - j. Neurological Condition (including dementia, Parkinson's Disease, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy etc.)
- (ii) The resident is aged over 60 and has an annual household disposable income of less than £27,200
- (iii) The resident is pregnant and has an annual household disposable income of less than £27,200
- (iv) The resident has young children under the age of 5 years and has an annual household disposable income of less than £27,200

### **3. Acting on behalf of another local authority**

This Statement of Intent is solely for the use of Birmingham Council and its residents. It is not the council's intention to act on behalf of other authority.

### **4. Governance**

Once households have applied for help through their chosen contractor, provided they meet the Flexible Eligibility criteria, their information will be passed to the local authority to agree a Declaration. The local authority being:

Birmingham City Council  
Waterloo Street  
Birmingham  
B1 1BB

All data received by the Council will be stored and managed in accordance with relevant legislation current at the time of collection.

Contractors will explain to applicant that their information will be shared with the LA for processing and that the LA will hold details for 12 months from the date of registration. A signed applicant agreement evidencing this must be obtained from the contractor and passed to the LA at the same time as the declaration.

Applicants should be aware that any contract or agreement will be between them and the installer, not Birmingham City Council.

## **5. Referrals**

It is anticipated that contractors will undertake their own marketing, although the Council may wish to carry out some high-level advertisement of the scheme. The Council will assist on request by helping to enable effective targeting of areas of the city deemed to be in fuel poverty

Birmingham City Council will confirm with contractors when Declarations of Intent have been approved and signed copies will be returned to them. Referrals will then be passed by the contractor to the Energy Supplier for processing.

## **6. Evidence, monitoring and reporting**

Declarations received by the Council will be recorded and monitored to enable on-going assessment of the effectiveness of the scheme and resident eligibility in terms of both household income, savings and secondary eligibility criteria at the time of approval.

The Council will carry out an audit of approximately 1 in 10 Declarations initially, reducing this to 1 in 20 for contractors that have proven performance and reliability. Residents will be asked to complete a brief satisfaction survey to ensure they are happy with the process.

Contractors will be expected to provide feedback regarding the type and number of measures installed.

## **7. Key performance Indicators – Quarterly Reporting structure**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
Declarations received by Local Authority				
Declarations approved by Local Authority				
Loft insulations completed				
Cavity Wall Insulation completed				
Boiler replacements				
Other measures				
Number of installations audited				
Customer satisfaction forms received				

**In addition to above KPIs annual outcome reports will capture what has been delivered to particular cohorts in identified fuel poor areas.**