

## **Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat**

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

#### **Local authority:**

Warm & Well is managed by Severn Wye Energy Agency on behalf of the Local Authorities in Gloucestershire:

- Gloucester City Council
- Forest of Dean District Council
- Stroud District Council
- Cotswolds District council
- Tewkesbury Borough Council
- Cheltenham Borough Council

Stroud District Council has been legally appointed lead authority for the Warm & Well programme and as such will take the lead on the Statement of Intent and the assignment of Declarations. All other Local Authorities have delegated powers to Stroud District as evidenced in Section 3 Governance.

**Date of publication:** 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019

**Version:** 5.0

**URL:** <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/energy-efficiency>

#### **1) Introduction**

The local authorities of Gloucestershire welcome the introduction of Flexible Eligibility (FE) and intend to utilise it for the purposes of reducing fuel poverty in the area.

The local authorities of Gloucestershire are committed to achieving affordable warmth and alleviating fuel poverty. Together with South Gloucestershire Council, the local authorities have displayed their commitment in this field through funding the Warm & Well scheme since 2001. The Warm & Well scheme is a key delivery mechanism as part of Severn Wye Energy Agency, to reduce fuel poverty, reduce excess winter deaths, increase rates of retrofit of energy efficiency measures, and stimulate the local economy. In 2017, the local authorities extended their commitment to the scheme by a further three years, to fund the project until 2020.

The local authorities strive to enable vulnerable people to live affordably and comfortably in their own homes, independently for longer, thus reducing costs to social care budgets. This Statement of Intent covering just Gloucestershire will assist in meeting government targets in carbon emissions, as well as increasing the comfort of residents in their homes, provide savings to the NHS and reduce the rates of fuel poverty.

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 local authority 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 require further measures to meet their Energy Company Obligation targets.

In identifying households as eligible under flexible eligibility, Warm & Well is seeking to enable residents to benefit from funding and will seek the consent of households to including them in local authority declarations. All the authorities expects any obligated energy supplier, or contractor working on their behalf, comply with the Data Protection Act, to fully follow Ofgem requirements for the Energy Company Obligation Help to Heat, and to act in accordance with industry best practice in relation to consumer care and quality standards of any works that may take place. These are covered in a separate memorandum of understanding between the Council and the obligated party.

## **2) How the authorities under Warm & Well intends to identify eligible households**

The Warm & Well scheme has been running across Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire since 2001 and aims to improve energy efficiency in the home and reduce the risk of fuel poverty and associated health problems by addressing central issues such as the links between energy efficiency, affordable warmth, cold living conditions and health risks and condensation damp related respiratory illness.

Warm & Well on behalf of the local authorities in Gloucestershire will identify households that may benefit from flexible eligibility. The householder has to be a Private Sector tenant or an owner occupier.

Warm & Well on behalf of the local authorities will keep the criteria below under review, in relation to the number of referrals made, delivery of installed measures and the practices of other authorities.

Residents will be eligible for Flexible Eligibility where they meet the following criteria:

- I. Low income, High Costs but not in receipt of benefits
- II. Low income and Vulnerability to Cold
- III. Living in areas of high deprivation, but not in receipt of benefits
- IV. Solid Wall insulation (SWI) 'in-fill'

Warm and Well and the Local Authorities will reserve the right to flexibility when determining eligibility around the thresholds and criteria set out below, where the Council has evidence that residents are struggling financially.

## I. LOW INCOME + HIGH COSTS

Households must have an annual income under these thresholds **AND** an EPC rating of E, F, G (or equivalent) to be eligible.

Definition: Low Income thresholds (disposable income after paid rent or mortgage. All income from all sources savings and investments, pensions, all benefits incl. housing benefit).

| Household composition |                    | Number of Dependants |           |           |           |           |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                       |                    | 0                    | 1         | 2         | 3         | 4         |
| One Adult             | Annual Net income  | £10,000              | £12,500   | £15,000   | £17,500   | £20,000   |
|                       | Monthly equivalent | £833.00              | £1,042.00 | £1,250.00 | £1,458.00 | £1,667.00 |
| Two or more Adults    | Annual Net income  | £16,000              | £18,500   | £21,000   | £23,500   | £26,000   |
|                       | Monthly equivalent | £1,333.00            | £1,542.00 | £1,750.00 | £1,958.00 | £2,167.00 |

### **AND**

An **EPC OF E,F,G** (where there is no EPC rating for the property then use guidance below). Households that reach or exceed a score of **6** points will be deemed to be high cost.

| Question                                 | Response                   | Score |
|--|----------------------------|-------|
| How many bedrooms are there in the home? | 1                          | 0     |
|  | 2                          | 1     |
|  | 3                          | 2     |
|  | 4                          | 3     |
| What type of property is it?             | Flat                       | 1     |
|  | Mid Terrace                | 2     |
|  | Semi-detached/ End Terrace | 3     |
|  | Detached House             | 4     |
|  | Park home                  | 5     |
| Was the home built before 1964?          | Yes                        | 1     |
|  | No                         | 0     |
| What is the main wall type               | Solid - uninsulated        | 4     |
|  | Solid - insulated          | 0     |
|  | Cavity - not filled        | 4     |
|  | Cavity - filled            | 0     |
| What is the main heating type?           | Gas Central Heating        | 0     |
|  | Gas Room Heaters           | 2     |
|  | Oil/LPG                    | 2     |
|  | Electricity                | 3     |
|  | Other                      | 3     |
| Heating system completely broken down?   | Yes                        | 6     |
|  | No                         | 0     |

## II. EXPANDED LOW INCOME + VULNERABILITY

Households must have an annual income under these thresholds **AND** a 'Vulnerability' (listed below) to be eligible.

Definition: Low Income thresholds (disposable income after paid rent or mortgage. All income from all sources savings and investments, pensions, all benefits incl. housing benefit).

The income threshold figures below are based on additional costs required for heating an inefficient property during the day and living with a health condition.

| Household composition |                           | Number of Dependants |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                       |                           | 0                    | 1                | 2                | 3                | 4                |
| One Adult             | Annual Net income         | £16,000              | £18,500          | £21,000          | £23,500          | £26,000          |
|                       | <i>Monthly equivalent</i> | <i>£1,333.00</i>     | <i>£1,542.00</i> | <i>£1,750.00</i> | <i>£1,958.00</i> | <i>£2,167.00</i> |
| Two or more Adults    | Annual Net income         | £22,000              | £24,500          | £27,000          | £29,500          | £32,000          |
|                       | <i>Monthly equivalent</i> | <i>£1,833.00</i>     | <i>£2,042.00</i> | <i>£2,250.00</i> | <i>£2,458.00</i> | <i>£2,667.00</i> |

### AND

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Vulnerability defined as: | Aged over 65, and particularly those over 75                                   |
|                           | Children under 5 and pregnant mothers  |
|                           | Respiratory disease (COPD, asthma)   |
|                           | Cardiovascular disease (e.g. ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease) |
|                           | Moderate to severe mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)       |
|                           | Substance misusers   |
|                           | Dementia   |
|                           | Neurobiological and related diseases (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME)                   |
|                           | Cancer   |
|                           | Limited mobility   |
|                           | Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)                        |
|                           | Severe learning disabilities   |
|                           | Autoimmune and immunodeficiency diseases (e.g. lupus, MS, diabetes, HIV)       |

### III. AREAS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Local authorities will be able to nominate postcode/LSOA areas where additional need has been identified, for example areas with a high percentage of fuel poverty.

### IV. SOLID WALL INSULATION (SWI) “IN-FILL” PROJECTS

To increase the economies of scale of SWI projects, solid wall homes which are not ‘fuel poor’ will be eligible for Flexible ECO funding, where they are co-located with a minimum percentage of households assessed to be fuel poor or LIVC.

Criteria will be:

- Semi-detached houses/bungalows – at least 50% of properties in an SWI project must be FP or LIVC
- Same terrace – at least 66% of properties in an SWI project must be FP or LIVC
- Same building – at least 66% of properties in an SWI project must be FP or LIVC
- Adjacent properties - at least 66% of properties in an SWI project must be FP or LIVC

### 3) Governance

*Responsible officer*

The SOI will be signed on behalf of all the local authorities by the Strategic Head of Development Services of Stroud Council that in turn leads the Steering Committee for the Warm & Well scheme.

Name: Barry Wyatt

Job title:

Telephone: 01453 754210

Email: [barry.wyatt@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:barry.wyatt@stroud.gov.uk)



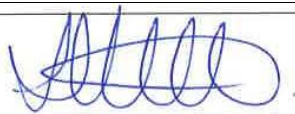
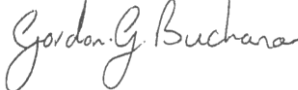

Declarations will be signed by the lead officer of the Warm & Well steering group on behalf of the local authorities.

Name: Maria Hickman

Job Title: Housing Renewal Manager

E-mail: [Maria.Hickman@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:Maria.Hickman@stroud.gov.uk)

List of the designated officers at the time of the declaration hereby giving consent to Stroud District Council to make determination on whether a household meets the eligibility criteria of this scheme:

| Local Authority                 | Name                | Job Title                         | E-mail   | Signature   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Gloucestershire City Council    | Philip Thorneywork  | Housing Team Leader (interim)     | <a href="mailto:philip.thorneywork@gloucester.gov.uk">philip.thorneywork@gloucester.gov.uk</a> |  |
| Forest of Dean District Council | Michael Hinchcliffe | Disabled Facilities Grant Officer | <a href="mailto:michael.hinchcliffe@fdean.gov.uk">michael.hinchcliffe@fdean.gov.uk</a>         |  |
| Cotswolds District Council      | Sarah Whitcombe     | Housing Team Lead                 | <a href="mailto:Sarah.Whitcombe@WESTOXON.GOV.UK">Sarah.Whitcombe@WESTOXON.GOV.UK</a>           |  |
| Tewkesbury Borough Council      | Gordon Buchanan     | Environmental Health Manager      | <a href="mailto:gordon.buchanan@tewkesbury.gov.uk">gordon.buchanan@tewkesbury.gov.uk</a>       |  |
| Cheltenham Borough Council      | Mark Nelson         | Enforcement Manager               | <a href="mailto:mark.nelson@cheltenham.gov.uk">mark.nelson@cheltenham.gov.uk</a>               |  |

#### 4) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

Warm & Well will capture and store all relevant information during the initial enquiry to determine the relevant course of action for the household. Warm & Well will inform residents that they may be required to provide evidence of income and medical/health conditions and other information such as any relevant health conditions at a later date to deter fraudulent claims.

Auditing of eligibility of claimants will be assessed by a random sample of households on a post installation basis.

Warm & Well will provide key information. The data above will include details of households assessed, how many were deemed eligible and ineligible, and how many received heating and insulation improvements.

All households for whom Declarations were made will be contacted three months post installation.

#### 5) Signatures



Barry Wyatt

Director of Development Services