

**DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ENERGY COMPANY OBLIGATION HELP TO HEAT: – FLEXIBLE ELIGIBILITY
STATEMENT OF INTENT**

LOCAL AUTHORITY: DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Introduction:

Dartford Borough Council (DBC) will use the flexible eligibility (FE) part of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) to reduce fuel poverty in the Borough.

This Statement of Intent (SOI) sets out how households will be declared to be eligible for ECO: Help to Heat funding. This scheme is part of the government's Affordable Warmth programme. This is in accordance with guidelines from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

It should be noted that the final decision on whether any individual household will benefit from energy saving improvement rests with the obligated energy suppliers or their contractors. Inclusion in a Declaration of Eligibility issued by the Council to an ECO provider will not guarantee installation of any works that may help reduce fuel poverty. The final decision will depend on:

- the survey carried out by supplier's agents/contractors and installation costs calculated
- the energy savings that can be achieved for a property
- 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, Dartford Borough Council is seeking to enable residents to benefit from funding and will obtain consent from households before including them in a Declaration.

Dartford Borough Council expects any obligated energy supplier or contractor working on the behalf to 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.

Identifying Eligible Households

Dartford Borough Council will use a variety of methods to identify households with low income and vulnerable residents that may benefit from the installation of measures under ECO Flexible Eligibility. This scheme is available for those who live in private housing (owner occupiers or renting from a private landlord).

The Council will cross reference data which it holds or can access on Energy Performance Certificates/SAP ratings, heating type, prepayment meters, expenditure on fuel, housing type/age/condition

Low income households living in energy inefficient housing in the private rented sector will be identified through enforcement activity under the Housing Act 2004.

In order to be eligible the resident must meet one of the following criteria:

a) 'living in fuel Poverty, but not in receipt of benefits'

Households not in receipt of income related benefit with an income of less than £30,000 after paying for rent and mortgage will be identified as 'low income'

b) low income and vulnerability to cold

Low Income:

The resident is in **receipt of any** income related benefit listed below: Housing benefit
Council tax reduction/support (other than single occupancy)
Child tax credit – no income cap
Working tax credit – no income cap
Universal credit – no income cap
Pension credit (savings credit)
Carers allowance – for the household in which the person who is being cared for lives
Industrial injuries disablement benefits
Severe disablement allowance
War pensions mobility supplement
Armed forces independence payment
Constant attendance allowance
Living in Lower Layer Super Output areas (LSOA) in Dartford

Vulnerability to Cold

The resident:

Is in receipt of disability living allowance, personal independence payment, incapacity benefit or attendance allowance

OR

Is on the Energy Companies' Priority Service register

OR

Has a disability blue badge

OR

Has an invitation for free flu jab for health reasons

OR

Core group Warm Home Discount recipient

Through this scheme the Council is looking to help/support households containing people with the following characteristics, which reflect the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2015 guidance on excess winter deaths and illness cause by cold homes containing people **with any** of the following characteristics:

Health condition made worse by the cold	Vulnerable to the cold
i) People with cardiovascular conditions (ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease)	i) Aged over 60, particularly those over 75
ii) People with respiratory conditions (in particular chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and childhood asthma)	ii) Young children under 5 and/or pregnant women
iii) People with mental health conditions (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)	iii) People with addictions (e.g. substance misusers)
iv) People with disabilities	iv) People who have attended hospital due to a fall in the last year
v) People who are terminally ill	v) People diagnosed with dementia
vi) People with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV, MS)	vi) Recent immigrants or asylum seekers and refugees (if living in private tenure)
vii) Neurobiological and related diseases (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME)	
viii) Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)	
ix) People with severe learning difficulties	
x) People who move in and out of homelessness	

High Energy Costs:

Property **with at least one** of the following:

100mm or less loft insulation

Unfilled cavity walls

Uninsulated non cavity walls

No working central heating

The primary heating source for the home is not mains natural gas

The home is a flat above business premises

The home is a system built property

The household uses a prepayment meter

Where no EPC exists the above questions will be asked that gather information similar to an EPC, which will help assess likelihood of a household having high energy costs.

These criteria will be kept under review, in relation to levels of referrals made, delivery of installed measures and the practices of other authorities.

Being eligible is no guarantee that measures will be installed. A final decision on whether any individual household can benefit from energy saving improvements under this strand of ECO will be made by the obligated suppliers or their agents/contractors.

As part of the Council's commitment to the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy Dartford Borough Council residents may be eligible to additional grants or support from time to time.

Any referral or enquiry received that does not meet the above requirements will be considered on a case by case basis.

Referrals

The Council expects referrals from flexible eligibility to come in three ways:

Self-referrals from residents

Referrals from other council teams or partner organisations

Referrals from Eco providers or installers

Dartford Borough Council will ensure appropriate referral processes are in place while maintaining the protection of personal data. This will include initial identification of eligible households using the BRE Housing Stock Assessment for Dartford. We will also work with partner agencies to determine those that may be vulnerable due to living in a cold home, suffering from a qualifying medical condition.

Declaration will be passed to contractors through a secure data transfer. In turn they will be expected to provide information on the outcomes of the referrals.

Evidence, Monitoring and Reporting

Dartford Borough Council will verify that a resident meets the eligibility criteria before processing a declaration. To evidence eligibility the following information will be documented

Name, address and telephone number/email address

Property, heating type and measure required

Clarification relating to supporting the criteria

To prevent fraud this information will be collected on the application form which residents sign to declare the information is correct. External sources will be sought such as EPC data and gas grid maps to verify answers

Dartford Borough Council will also work with public health and other health professionals to determine those that may be vulnerable to living in a cold home, suffering from a qualifying medical condition.

Applicants will be asked where they heard about the scheme to monitor which promotional methods etc., are being effective

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The ECO providers will provide key information, including the number of referrals made and the number of funded installations delivered.

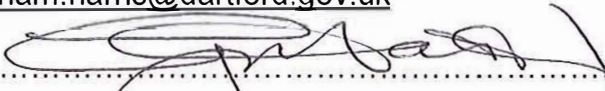
Dartford Borough Council will record key information including the number of referrals made and the number of funded installations delivered for reporting both to BEIS and future Home Energy Conservation Reports.

Governance

This Statement on Intent (SOI) is signed on behalf of Dartford Borough Council by:
Graham Harris, Managing Director, Dartford Borough Council

Telephone: 01322 343434

Email : graham.harris@dartford.gov.uk

Signature: 

All declarations will be signed by:

Sandra Woodfall, Environmental Promotions Officer, Dartford Borough Council

Telephone: 01322 343056

Email: Sandra.woodfall@dartford.gov.uk

Signature: 

This replaces Dartford Borough Council Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent
Version 1 dated 17 May 2017

