

Mansfield District Council ECO 3 Flexible Eligibility

Warm Homes Hub

Statement of Intent

The Council intends to use the Eco Flexible Eligibility scheme to help reduce fuel poverty within the District and improve housing conditions for low income households that are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home. It will do this through working in partnership with the Warm Homes Hub project to deliver first time gas connections and gas central heating to properties currently being heated through inefficient electric heating and where the occupants are in fuel poverty.

This will contribute to the Making Mansfield: Towards 2030 strategy. The strategy focuses on four themes: Place, Growth, Aspiration and Wellbeing.

In particular, the ECO 3 Funding would meet the **Wellbeing** and **Growth** themes;

- Support a good quality of life for those who live and work here
- Understand and respond to the needs of communities and be advocates for support and intervention.
- Develop a better and wider mix of housing across the district to meet the needs and aspirations of existing and new residents

What is fuel poverty?

Fuel poverty is calculated 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 their household residual income below the official poverty line.

This is known as the 'Low Income High Costs' indicator (LIHC). There is an emphasis on heating costs, but the cost of hot water, lights, appliances and cooking are also included. Heating and hot water represent 80% of the cost of energy for most domestic households. This way of estimating fuel poverty reflects both the extent (how many households are in fuel poverty) and depth of the problem (also known as the 'fuel poverty gap') which is defined as the difference between modelled fuel bills and a reasonable cost threshold for each household.

Under the Low Income High Cost fuel poverty indicator, the number of households living in fuel poverty in the district is currently 12.9%. This means that 5506

households out of a total of 45,552 are living in fuel poverty. Across England 11% or 2.5 million households live in fuel poverty.

Mansfield District Council is aware that fuel poverty, and poor health related to a cold home does not only effect those on a means tested benefit. Those on a low income, or those who have to use more heating due to being at home through illness, can also be at risk, and would not normally be supported by ECO.

In publishing the statement of intent, the council wishes to support residents living in properties that are currently being heated through inefficient electric heating and where the occupants are in fuel poverty for whom the availability to access ECO funding, will ensure that they can afford to live in warm, energy efficient homes, which are not detrimental to their health.

It is important to note that inclusion in a declaration made by the Council to a supplier will not guarantee installation of measures, as the final decision will depend on a number of factors including:

- i) A survey carried out by supplier's agents/contractors and the installation costs calculated
- ii) The energy savings that can be achieved for a property, and
- iii) Whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

Identification of Eligible Households

The purpose of flexible eligibility is to identify private households that may be living in fuel poverty but who are not able to access support through the main ECO scheme.

The Council in partnership with the Warm Homes Hub will target households that are:

- i) Fuel poor households as determined in line with the 'Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator;

To be eligible, households must meet the following requirements:

- Be classed as a low income household (as specified in Table 1 below)

AND:

- Meet the requirements of high energy costs

Low income households

Low income households can be identified as those who fall below the income thresholds specified in Table 1 below. Income is defined as a household's net income after they have paid for their rent or mortgage and net council tax payments.

Table 1

Household Composition	Annual Household Income
1 Adult (18 years and over)	<£18,769
and 1 child	<£24,623
and 2 children	<£30,613
and 3 children	<33602
and 4 or more children	<£42,592
2 Adults (18 years and over)	<£28,344
and 1 child	<£33,940
and 2 children	<£39,930
and 3 children	<£45,919
and 4 or more children	<£51,909

Acting on behalf of another local authority

The Council is not acting on behalf of another Local Authority.

Joint Statement of intent

This is not a joint statement of intent with another Local Authority.

Governance

A competitive tendering process has been carried out by the Warm Homes Hub and 50FIVE-(UK) Limited have won the contract. As part of the tendering process 50FIVE (UK) have certified that they are accredited to the standards required by Ofgem to undertake ECO-funded energy efficiency improvement works.

Validity

This SOI will be valid until either it is superseded, or withdrawn.

Evidence, monitoring and reporting

The Eligible Individual will need to evidence to Eon, the scheme administrator:

- Proof of income, this information can be sourced from 'proof of benefit' letters, award notices, annual review award notices, or provisional award notices. These should be on official letterhead depending on the type of benefit from HMRC, DWP/Jobcentre Plus, HM Government or the Pension Service.
- Bank Statements showing official letterhead of a recognised bank operating in the UK will suffice as proof of household income for those qualifying on an income only basis. Bank statements should provide evidence of name and address of the Eligible Individual (their partner, parent or guardian where the Eligible Individual doesn't hold a bank account – i.e. the Eligible Individual is a child, incapacitated or has given power of attorney to a nominated individual(s) for their financial affairs.
- Evidence that the Eligible Individual lives in the property.

Reporting

An annual report will be submitted to BEIS. Information will be collated and recorded as follows:

- Number of households included on declarations (breakdown by LIHC & LIVC)
- Number of households who received flexible eligibility measures (breakdown by LIHC & LIVC)
- Eligibility criteria applied
- Suppliers and installers who the Council has worked with.

Monitoring

The Private Sector Housing Manager, will select 5% of declarations over a 12 month period as a sample for checking:

- The accuracy and completeness of the records;
- Identify any risks to, or shortcomings in, the delivery of the project, and recommend any remedial steps deemed necessary or desirable.