

Bristol City Council
Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

November 2019 – Version 3.0



Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

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Introduction

ECO funding provides support to low income & vulnerable households to reduce energy consumption through the installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft insulation & cavity wall Insulation. By installing energy efficiency measures you can reduce the amount of energy consumed and the amount of money you spend heating your home.

Anyone living in Britain can claim ECO funding as long as they meet the Help to Heat Group (HTHG) eligibility criteria. If you're trying to access ECO funding and do not meet the HTHG criteria your local authority may issue a local authority declaration, provided you meet the criteria set out in the Statement of Intent, under the ECO flex eligibility route.

Bristol City Council are committed to working closely with energy companies, installers, homeowners and tenants to maximise ECO - Flexible Eligibility to fuel poor households in Bristol.

Under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) local authorities can set their own eligibility criteria for funding towards domestic energy efficiency measures. This funding stream is aimed at those within Bristol who are deemed fuel poor. ECO - Flexible Eligibility fits with the council's overall aim to reduce carbon emissions and address fuel poverty, specifically:

- [Our Corporate Strategy](#) – tackle fuel poverty by improving home insulation, offer grants and loans to landlords and private home owners. This is measured using the key performance indicators (KPIs):
 - Fewer households in fuel poverty
 - Reduced carbon emissions across the city
- [One City Plan](#) setting out ambitious targets for the future of Bristol, decade by decade up to 2050:
 - Nobody in Bristol will suffer from a cold home due to fuel poverty and/or inability to have the necessary insulation and heating – 2030.
 - The rate of fuel poverty in Bristol will have been halved from 12.9% in 2018 to 6.45% -by 2039.
- [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) chapter on Fuel Poverty provides an in-depth assessment of fuel poverty in Bristol, highlights the current services available to support fuel poor households and recommendations to the Health and Wellbeing Board for tackling fuel poverty.

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Eligibility Identification

The following sets out the criteria of eligibility under Bristol City Council's Statement of intent. Bristol City Council is responsible for issuing the Local Authority Declaration as evidence of eligibility for ECO Flex Funding. It is the responsibility of the funding provider, Installation Company and/or OFGEM to apply for and manage funding levels for the households.

Bristol City Council is responsible for confirming eligibility criteria however this does not guarantee receipt of funding.

Privately rented and owner occupier households are considered eligible for flexible eligibility ECO if:

- there is a risk of living in fuel poverty, in a low income household or
- living in an Index of Multiple Deprivation Area (IMD) 25% most deprived in the UK, with at least one household member vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

Outlined below are the eligibility criteria Bristol City Council will use to identify households. Applicants will need to meet all of the criteria in at least one of the following sections to be eligible for funding under ECO Flex.

- Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
- Fuel Poverty Calculator (FP)
- Low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home
- Property Table
- In-fill criteria

Please note exceptional cases that do not meet the criteria set out below may be considered on a case by case basis.

Bristol City Council maintains the right to audit customer declarations during and/or after application.

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1. Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

The [Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 & Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019](#) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (or neighbourhoods) in England. Properties within the 25% most deprived areas in the United Kingdom, measured by the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), are eligible under Bristol City Council's Statement of Intent.

Bristol City Council's Deprivation webpage includes further information about Index of Multiple Deprivation areas. You can determine eligibility for ECO flex IMD criteria by checking your postcode is in an IMD area ranked 8,211 or below. You can use the [deprivation decile postcode lookup document](#) to check this.

Decile	Decile description	Ranks
1	10% most deprived	1 to 3,284
2	10% to 20%	3,285 to 6,568
3	20% to 30%	6,569 to 9,853
4	30% to 40%	9,854 to 13,137
5	40% to 50%	13,138 to 16,422
6	50% to 60%	16,423 to 19,706
7	60% to 70%	19,707 to 22,990
8	70% to 80%	22,991 to 26,275
9	80% to 90%	26,276 to 29,559
10	10% least deprived	29,560 to 32,844

2. Fuel Poverty (FP)

Primary assessment of eligibility will be made using the Centre for Sustainable Energy's (CSE's) [Community Fuel Poverty Assessment Tool](#).

Applicants must first complete the Fuel Poverty assessment prior to attempting to qualify under the Low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home (LIVC) assessment.

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3. Low income and vulnerable to living in a cold home (LIVC)

Applicants must meet at least one of each following criteria in sections A & B.

A. The annual maximum household income must be equal to or lower than £30,000 . This income is comprised of:

- Income from savings and investments
- Pension
- Benefits income (including. housing benefit)
- Net income (after tax)
- Other income

B. There must be someone living in the property that meets one of the conditions below:

- Is over the age of 60
- Is under the age of 18
- Is an expectant mother
- Living with a limiting long term or terminal illness
- Living with a disability

Exceptional cases, not meeting the requirements above, will be considered on a case by case basis.

4. Property Table

The household must meet the minimum score of 35 for the below table

Where the applicant has failed to pass all of the above eligibility criteria the below table can be used as a final means of assessment.

Question	Response	Score
Does the home use a boiler?	Yes	0
	No	5
Was the home built before 1964?	Yes	25
	No	0
What is the main fuel type?	Gas	0
	Electric	30
	Other	20

The above scoring is subject to amendments, reflecting changes in ECO Flex policy and application.

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5. In-fill criteria

To help encourage multi-property solid wall insulation projects in the private sector, Local Authorities are able to provide declarations for households that are not living in fuel poverty (FP) or living on a low income and are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC), in certain limited circumstances. These properties are known as “in-fill”.

This extra flexibility is only for the purposes of solid wall insulation to private domestic properties and is therefore not available to social housing.

Bristol City Council reserves the right to decide which schemes and how many households it engages with for this eligibility option. Bristol City Council will only consider declarations for projects where the following requirements are met:

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 private property to which it is directly adjoined is eligible for solid wall insulation.
Project consisting of any premises that are contained in the same building (e.g. flats), immediately adjacent buildings (e.g. neighbouring properties) or in the same terrace.	At least two in three properties on the list must be declared by the LA as FP or LIVC (i.e. at least 66% of the properties are FP or LIVC).	The other (i.e. up to one third) of private 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.

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Acting on behalf of another local authority

This is not currently applicable

Joint statement of intent

This is not currently applicable

Governance

Bristol City Council Energy Service manages this document and any applications associated with ECO Flex

Bristol City Council's Statement of Intent has been approved by Patsy Mellow Management of Place Director on 08/11/2019.

Declarations will be signed by Energy Service Project Manager or Project Officer.

Referrals

To be assessed against the listed criteria residents will need to make contact with our Operational Delivery Team on 0117 352 1180 / ecompliance@bristol.gov.uk.

Evidence, monitoring and reporting

1. Each eligible household will be required to sign a self-declaration form confirming how they meet the Eligibility Criteria. This will be stored on Bristol City Council Energy Service Customer Relationships Database (CRM): this is a Council owned database and therefore will be available for any future audit.
2. The number of households eligible for ECO Flexible Eligibility will be recorded and broken down into their respective eligibility routes (fuel poor or vulnerable to the effects of living in cold homes).

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3. The number of ECO Flexible Eligibility funded measures installed will be split by measure and the number households improved. As with 7.2, this will be split by their respective eligibility routes.
4. The Council intends to audit a proportion of household self-declarations to ensure that there is not a high level of non-compliance. Where a high level of non-compliance is identified, this would trigger a review of the flexibility processes in place.
5. Ofgem will be auditing a certain proportion of household self – declarations.
6. Reporting to the Energy Service Director will be on a monthly basis.

Data Protection

Bristol City Council is committed to working within the bounds of the Data Protection Act 1998 (the DPA 1998) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as and when it becomes applicable. This act requires the Council to respect principles of fair processing when handling personal information.

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/data-protection-foi>

Anti - fraud and Bribery

Bristol City Council has a clear commitment and responsibility to minimise the possibility of fraud or other misuse of public money and assets. It pledges to take all action necessary to identify such cases and pursue the recovery of losses and the punishment and those responsible.

An applicant who tries to fraudulently claim support by falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application, may have committed an offence under The Fraud Act 2006.

The Council has implemented a clear network of systems and procedures to assist in the fight against fraud. These arrangements will keep pace with any future developments, in both preventative and detection techniques regarding fraudulent or corrupt activity that may affect the Council's operations or related responsibilities.

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Safeguarding

Bristol City Council is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, by promoting the rights of people who use its services and safeguarding them from harm or neglect.

Bristol City Council's Safeguarding policies are publicly available by request.

Equality and Diversity

The council's Equality and Community Cohesion Policy sets out how the council will eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between communities.

For further information:

- Equalities and Community Cohesion Policy glossary
- Equality Act 2010 information
- Public sector Equality Duty

Signature

Signature: 

Signed by: Patsy Mellow

Position: Director of Management of Place

Date: 8th November 2019

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