

## **Stroud District Council ECO4 Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent**

**Publication Date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

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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 2 *Declaration and evidence check confirmation*.

This statement sets out Stroud District Council's flexible eligibility criteria for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) scheme from April 2022 – March 2026. This statement is based on draft ECO4 Ofgem guidance and will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect official guidance as and when it changes.

The ECO4 scheme will focus on supporting low income and vulnerable households. The scheme will improve the least energy efficient homes helping to meet the Government's fuel poverty and net zero commitments.

The flexible approach for Local Authorities (LAs) to identifying fuel poor and vulnerable households who may benefit from heating and energy saving measures is referred to as "ECO4 Flex".

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.

Warm & Well on behalf of the local authorities in Gloucestershire will identify households that may benefit from flexible eligibility. The householder must be an Owner Occupier or Private Sector tenant.

The Council welcomes the introduction of the ECO4 Flex eligibility routes as it helps the Council achieve its plans to improve the homes of those in fuel poverty or vulnerable to the cold. The Council is publishing this Statement of Intent (SOI), on the **31<sup>st</sup> March 2023** to confirm that each of the households declared will adhere to at least one of the three available routes outlined below.

Warm & Well 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.

## 1) Eligibility Criteria

**Route 1:** SAP bands D-G owner occupied households and private rented sector E-G households with a combined gross income less than £31,000 (from all sources of income, includes both non-means tested and means tested benefits). This cap applies irrespective of the property size, composition, or region.

**Route 2:** SAP bands E-G for owner occupied households and private rented sector households that meet a combination of **two** of the following proxies:

**Proxy 1)** Homes in England in Lower-layer Super Output Area 1-3 (LSOA)<sup>1</sup> on the English Indices of Deprivation 2019

**Proxy 2)** Household receiving a Council Tax reduction (based on low income only, excludes single person reduction).

**Proxy 3)** Household vulnerable to living in a cold home as identified in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance. Only one from the list can be used, excludes the proxy 'low income'.

**Proxy 4)** A child living at the premises who is eligible for free school meals due to low-income.

**Proxy 5)** A householder supported by a LA run scheme, that has been named and described in their Statement of Intent, as supporting low income and vulnerable to the cold under NICE Guideline NG6.

**Proxy 6)** A household referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier or Citizen's Advice, because they have been identified by the referrer as struggling to pay their electricity and gas bills.

\*Note: Proxies 1 and 3 cannot be used together.

**Route 3:** SAP bands D-G owner occupied households and private rented sector E-G households that have been identified by their doctor or GP, NHS Foundation Trust or by NHS trust as vulnerable, with an occupant whose health conditions may be impacted further by living in a cold home. These health conditions may fall under one of the four umbrella conditions: cardiovascular, respiratory, immunosuppressed, or limited mobility related.

**Route 4:** SAP band D-G owner occupied households and private rented sector E-G households that are referred under Route 4: Bespoke Targeting: Suppliers and LAs can submit an application to ESNZ where they have identified a low income and vulnerable household, who are not already eligibility under the existing routes.

<sup>1</sup> [The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## **2) Declaration and evidence check confirmation**

All potentially eligible households should apply through Gloucestershire Councils energy advice service Warm & Well, in partnership with Severn Wye Energy Agency (SWEA) or one of their approved ECO installers to ensure that they can either benefit from the scheme or be assessed for eligibility under any other relevant programme. Evidence will be required from all applicants.

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 will be required to provide evidence (see Appendix I) and other information such as relevant health conditions to deter fraudulent claims.

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 to six months post installation.


The officer below will be responsible for checking and verifying declarations and associated evidence submitted on behalf of all the local authorities:

**Name:** Maria Hickman

**Job Title:** Housing Renewal Manager

**Email:** [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
Gloucester City Council	Neil Coles	Housing Innovation Manager	<a href="mailto:Neil.coles@gloucester.gov.uk">Neil.coles@gloucester.gov.uk</a>	Neil Coles
Forest of Dean District Council	Paula Massey	Enabling Manager	Paula.massey@publicagroup.uk	<i>PDMassey</i>
Cotswolds District Council	Paula Massey	Enabling Manager	Paula.massey@publicagroup.uk	<i>PDMassey</i>
Tewkesbury Borough Council	Alastair Low	Environmental Health Manager	Alastair.low@Tewkesbury.gov.uk	
Cheltenham Borough Council	Mark Nelson	Team Leader Private Sector Hosing	<a href="mailto:Mark.nelson@cheltenham.gov.uk">Mark.nelson@cheltenham.gov.uk</a>	MGNelson

### 3) CEO or dedicated responsible person mandatory signature

Stroud District Council will administer the scheme on behalf of all the local authorities according to BEIS' ECO4 Order and will identify eligible households via Ofgem's application process. The Housing Renewal Manager of the Council will oversee the process of identifying eligible households under ECO4 Flex.

The eligibility information will be stored securely in line with the Council's data protection policy, Information Commissioner's Office Data Sharing Code, and BEIS guidance.



**Signature:**

**Name:** Brendan Cleere

**Job Title:** Strategic Director of Place

**Date of signature:**

For general enquiries relating to this SOI, please contact [maria.hickman@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:maria.hickman@stroud.gov.uk)