

Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat

Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent



Local authority: Teignbridge District Council

Version: 1 Date of publication: 14.9.17

Version: 2 Date of publication: 09.10.17

Version: 3 Date of publication: 21.11.17

Version: 4 Date of Publication: 03.05.18

URL: See our 'financial help' webpage: www.teignbridge.gov.uk/housing

1) Introduction

Teignbridge District Council welcomes the introduction of Flexible Eligibility (FE) and intends to utilise it for the purposes of reducing fuel poverty in the borough.

National data indicates that there are 6,626 dwellings (11.7% of the total stock) in fuel poverty within the district. This compares to 13.2% in Devon, 12.2% in the South West and 10.6% nationally. 6% of dwellings are likely to have an excess cold hazard with a further 11% having a risk of a cold hazard.

The council runs a number of loans and grant schemes, as well as being a part of Devon-wide schemes and initiatives to tackle fuel poverty and improve housing conditions for those who are particularly vulnerable to the cold in the private sector. One of the primary objectives of the council is to remedy category 1 hazards, excess cold being one which is particularly focused on and is the result of lack of heating and insulation. Teignbridge District Council is taking advantage of this new Flexible Eligibility scheme so that as many residents can benefit as possible, and so that those who don't qualify through existing schemes but are in fuel poverty can obtain financial help to install key energy measures. The council's existing grant schemes can also be accessed by residents who are eligible for Ecoflex but where there is a shortfall in grant funding.

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 Council 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 Teignbridge District Council is seeking to enable residents to benefit from funding and will seek the consent of households to including them in a Declaration. Teignbridge District Council 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 Teignbridge District Council intends to identify eligible households

Subject to availability of resources within the Council and the legal use of data the Council will target those most in need having regard to BEIS guidance on targeting, including:

a. Identifying fuel poverty

Private homeowners qualify to apply through ECO flexible eligibility subject to meeting category 1 and category 2 eligibility criteria below (**Table 1**)*:

Table 1

1. Low income household eligibility	AND	2. High cost household eligibility
a. Have an overall annual household income below £30,000 OR		a. Energy performance rating D, E,F,G OR
b. In receipt of a means tested benefit, including housing benefit, council tax support, income support and pension credit		b. If no EPC and score 80 or over after answering high cost questions in Table 2

All private rented properties that have an EPC of D E, F or G rating will be targeted regardless of income, or benefit receipt. Similarly, if a property has no EPC and scores over 80, after answering high cost questions in **Table 2**, it will be eligible.

All park home owners qualify regardless of low income or high cost household eligibility.

*Eligibility does not guarantee funding.

Table 2 High cost household eligibility, if no EPC

Question	Response	Score
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	0
	2	10
	3	30
	4	50
	5 or more	70
What type of house is it?	Semi detached	15
	Detached	15
	Terrace	10
	Bungalow	50
	Flats	10
Was the home built before 1964?	Yes	30
	No	0
What is the main heating fuel?	Gas	0
	Electricity	30
	Oil	30
	LPG	30
	Other	15
	Boiler has broken down or been condemned.	30
Does at least one member of the household spend most of the day in the home?	Yes	30
	No	0

b. Identifying low income and vulnerability to cold

Teignbridge District Council will target households containing people with the following characteristics, which reflects the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2015 guidance on excess winter deaths and illness caused by cold homes and who meet low income household eligibility.

- i. Aged over 60, and particularly those over 75
- ii. Householders with children under 5
- iii. Pregnant women
- iv. Respiratory disease (COPD, asthma)
- v. Cardiovascular disease (e.g. ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease)
- vi. Moderate to severe mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)
- vii. Substance misusers
- viii. Dementia
- ix. Neurobiological and related diseases (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME)

- x. Cancer
- xi. Limited mobility
- xii. Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)
- xiii. Other health condition made worse by living in a cold home
- xiv. Severe learning disabilities
- xv. Autoimmune and immunodeficiency diseases (e.g. lupus, MS, diabetes, HIV)
- xvi. Anyone else who has a health condition which is made worse by the cold

c. Solid wall insulation “in-fill” projects

Where potential works have been identified households will be supported to take advantage of “in-fill” projects where the minimum number of vulnerable households is met. Reference will be made to the guidance.

3) Governance

Responsible officer

The officer below will be responsible for signing Declarations on behalf of the local authority.

Zoe Farmer

Job title: Home Energy Officer

Telephone: 01626 215764

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4) Referrals

Teignbridge District Council will ensure that referral processes used comply with data protection. Initially referrals will be made as a result of identifying eligible households using the Home Analytics Database. The council will also identify households through analysing EPC data. Contact will be made with those who applied through previous energy schemes but were unsuccessful due to ineligibility, i.e. the Central Heating Fund will also be targeted and referred. We will also work with partner services and organisations, i.e. Teignbridge Citizens Advice, Homemakers SW, Kingscare to determine those that may be vulnerable and those with health conditions. We will also target people who are in receipt of disability/carers benefits who have been means tested in the past.

Eligible households will also be identified through routine inspections which officers in housing services carry out. Private tenants and private homeowners will be identified and referred to the scheme.

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

5) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

- a. Anonymised data on the characteristics of households reached through Flexible Eligibility will be reviewed
- b. The data above will include details of households assessed, how many were deemed eligible and ineligible, and how many received heating and insulation improvements

6) Signature

Amanda Pujol

Business Lead (Housing and Health)