

Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat

Local Authority: Eco Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Local Authority: Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council

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<https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/all-services/housing/energy-efficiency-keeping-warm>



1. INTRODUCTION

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council welcomes the introduction of ECO Flexible Eligibility and intends to utilise it for the purposes of reducing fuel poverty in the Borough.

ECO Flexible Eligibility fits with the Council's overall aim to reduce carbon emissions and address fuel poverty and supports a priority in the Housing Strategy 2016-21; "to promote independence and inclusion to our most vulnerable residents by tackling fuel poverty. This will be achieved by identifying vulnerable households and working with partners to promote energy saving and to fund energy efficiency improvements".

Whilst Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council wishes to utilise ECO Flexible Eligibility 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. A Declaration of Eligibility issued by the Council to a supplier will not guarantee the installation of measures. The final decision will depend upon the;

- 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 requires further measures to meet their Energy Company Obligation targets.

In identifying households as eligible under ECO Flexible Eligibility, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is seeking to enable residents to benefit from funding and will obtain the consent of households to include them in a Declaration. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council expects any obligated energy supplier, or contractor working on their behalf to comply; with the Data Protection Act, 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.

2. HOW NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL INTENDS TO IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS.

Households must be owner occupier/s or rent from a private sector landlord and will be eligible if they are:

- a) living in fuel poverty;

or

- b) living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home;

or

- c) Require the installation of a gas central heating system for the first time

2 (a) Criteria for identifying households in fuel poverty

Households will be considered at risk of fuel poverty if they are determined to be on a specified income **and** are likely to live in a home with high energy costs.

To be eligible for assistance the household income after housing costs (rent or mortgage payments) must fall within threshold levels reflecting household composition indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Household Composition	Gross Household Income.
1 Adult	£30,000
And 1 Child	£34,838
And 2 Child	£39,788
And 3 Child	£44,738
And 4+ Child	£49,668
2 Adults	£37,914
And 1 Child	£42,538
And 2 Child	£47,488
And 3 Child	£52,438
And 4+Child	£57,388

And

the dwelling in question is likely to have high energy costs; which is established by the one of the following methods;

i) the dwelling has an Energy Performance Certificate rating of E, F or G

or

ii) the dwelling has an assessed score to be greater than 25 points following evaluation of the responses to the questions in Table 2 below or

Table 2:

Descriptor	Score
At least one household member at home for most of the day	
Yes	1
No	0
Number of bedrooms	
1	0
2	6
3	12
4	21
5 or more	27
Property type	
Purpose-built flat	0
Converted flat	4
Non-residential building	4
Mid-terrace house	4
End-terrace house	10
Semi-detached house	10
Detached house	20
Year of construction	
Post 2002	0
1991-2002	3
1981-1990	4
1975-1980	7
1965-1974	12
1945-1964	13
1919-1944	18
1850-1918	24
Pre 1850	27
Main heating fuel type	
Gas	0
Electricity	20
Other	5
Central heating	
Yes - central heating working	0
Other	11

or

iii) a judgement by an assessor that the dwelling to be eligible for a heating or insulation measure as determined by OFGEM, in their list of approved measures.

2 (b) Criteria for Identifying Households on low income and vulnerability to the cold

i) the income of the household after housing costs (rent or mortgage payments) must fall within threshold levels reflecting household composition indicated in Table 1 above.

And

ii) one or more members of the household must have one of the following illnesses or vulnerabilities

- Cardiovascular disease (e.g. ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease)
- Respiratory conditions including childhood asthma
- Moderate to severe mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)
- Substance misusers

- Dementia
- Cancer
- Limited mobility
- Aged 65 and over
- Child under the age of 5
- Is pregnant
- people who are terminally ill and people with suppressed immune systems (for example from cancer treatment or HIV).
- people who move in and out of homelessness
- people with addictions
- people who have attended hospital due to a fall
- recent immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees (if living in private tenure)

However, the council reserves the right to review individual cases, and provide a declaration of meeting the flex criteria, where to do otherwise would create unnecessary hardship.

2(c) Criteria for households who require the installation of a gas central heating system for the first time.

The Borough Council is part of the Staffordshire Warmer Homes initiative managed by Staffordshire County Council to deliver funded first time central heating systems across Staffordshire. The 'eligibility' criteria for this is contained within Appendix 1 which is attached.

Gas Mains Infrastructure

The Council has identified several streets in Newcastle-under-Lyme that they would like to extend the gas mains into. These streets have never had access to gas mains infrastructure before, and as such, the residents have never had the ability to upgrade their heating to a gas central heating system. As a result, many of these residents still heat their homes with old, inefficient electric storage heaters or electric plug in panel heaters which are expensive to run, and the quality of heat is poor. Therefore, households on these streets are more likely to be living in fuel poverty than elsewhere.

The following streets have been identified for infrastructure expansion.

- York Street
- Lockwood Street
- Broadmeadow Court
- Kent Grove
- Crofters Court
- The Mill, Enderley Street
- Knightley Madeley

Following infrastructure expansion, the Council will work with partners across Staffordshire Warmer Homes to identify the households on these streets that qualify for ECO support either through Affordable Warmth (HHCRO) or through the Councils Flexible Eligibility criteria which is set out above.

3. GOVERNANCE

The declaration for households who meet the Council's ECO Flexible Eligibility criteria will be dealt with by the Housing Services Section of the Borough Council to be signed off by the Housing Manager.

The officer responsible for signing the declarations will ensure that any property declared will be eligible in accordance with the criteria listed above.

The governance process for the Staffordshire Warmer Homes initiative will be managed by the Staffordshire County Council

The contact details for further information are:

Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council
Housing Services, Castle House, Barracks Road,
Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire ST5 1BL.

Telephone: 01782 717717

Email: housingmailbox@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

4. REFERRALS, EVIDENCE, MONITORING AND REPORTING

We are working in partnership with local charity, Beat the Cold, who will assist in the application process. The contact details are: Beat the Cold, The Bridge Centre Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 8DD. Telephone: 01782 683813.

Householders will be asked to complete an application form to confirm that they meet qualification criteria and give permission for their data to be shared as needed with the council and contractors, in line with GDPR regulations.

Contract management procedures will be agreed with suppliers to provide information on the progress of declared cases monthly to the Council.

To reduce the risk of fraud checks will be made on eligibility. In addition the Council will give declarations directly to energy suppliers and will name the supplier or their intermediary on the declaration.

5. SIGNATURE

Martin Hamilton

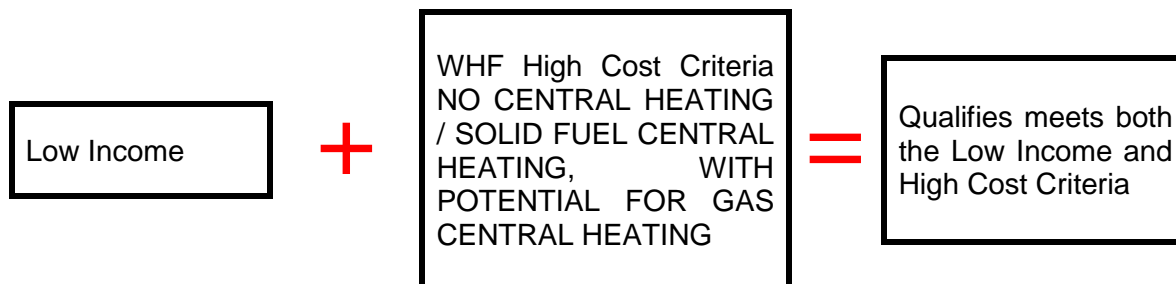
Chief Executive Newcastle –under-Lyme Borough Council

Appendix 1 – Qualification for Staffordshire Warm Homes Fund

Applicants qualifying for the Staffordshire Warm Home Fund (WHF) are subject to alternative qualification criteria, to ensure a consistent approach across the county. The Warm Home Fund is a project enabling householders to receive funding for full central heating and a gas connection, if needed.

Qualification criteria can be summarised as follows:

Fuel Poor (FP)



Low income qualifying criteria

Income is defined as annual gross income from all sources, including housing-related benefits, before tax. This should be determined based on the preceding annual tax year which runs from 6th April to 5th April of the following year.

Households will qualify if they have an income equal to or below those listed in the relevant category of the table, below.

Household Composition	Annual income limit
1 Adult	£17,063
And 1 Child	£22,385
And 2 Child	£27,830
And 3 Child	£33,275
And 4+ Child	£38,720
2 Adults	£25,768
And 1 Child	£30,855
And 2 Child	£36,300
And 3 Child	£41,745
And 4+Child	£47,190

In exceptional circumstances, the local authority may deem a household eligible without the need to meet the above criteria.

Referrals and applications for the Warm Home Fund can be made through Beat the Cold or directly through a Staffordshire Warm Home Fund delivery partner. Applicants will be assessed by E.ON, the main delivery partner of the scheme. Householders will be asked to confirm they meet qualification criteria and give permission for their data to be shared as needed with the council and contractors, in line with GDPR regulations.