

# **Energy Company Obligation (ECO): Help to Heat Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent**

Kent-wide scheme on behalf of the Kent and Medway  
Sustainable Energy Partnership

**Name of the local authority:** Kent County Council

**Local authorities Kent County Council are acting on behalf of:**

- Sevenoaks District Council
- Swale Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

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**Publication on website (URL):** [www.kent.gov.uk/warmhomes](http://www.kent.gov.uk/warmhomes)

The following Local Authorities are operating under different statements of intent and residents should consult the relevant statement for the area they live in: Ashford Borough Council, Dartford Borough Council, Dover District Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.

## **1) Introduction**

This Statement of Intent (SOI) sets out how the above Local Authorities in Kent intend to identify households who could be eligible for government's ECO: Help to Heat funding, in accordance with guidelines from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). This Scheme is part of the government's Affordable Warmth programme.

Kent Local Authorities welcome the introduction of the Local Authority Flexible Eligibility scheme and intend to utilise the scheme to direct a proportion of funding to residents who struggle to heat their home to a comfortable standard, or who have a specific condition which may make them more vulnerable to the effects of a cold home. Through this scheme the Local Authorities involved intend to reduce fuel poverty and minimise the health risks associated with living in a cold home.

Kent County Council works in partnership with 13 Local Authorities and wider strategic partners (from the health sector, private sector and energy sector) through a number of partnerships including the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership (KMSEP) and the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP).

Kent Local Authorities intend to work with approved contractors and obligated energy suppliers as part of the KMSEP's existing retrofitting framework and energy referral scheme called Warm Homes. Through the Warm Homes scheme Local Authorities

hope to utilise flexible eligibility alongside other local funding schemes where possible, to reduce the installation costs of energy measures for residents as much as possible.

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 Kent Local Authorities, to a supplier or contractor, will not guarantee installation of any measures, as the final decision will depend on:

- i) Identification of measures eligible under Help to Heat
- ii) The contractors or energy suppliers assessment of the energy savings that can be achieved for a property, 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 Flexible Eligibility, Kent Local Authorities are seeking to enable residents to benefit from funding and will obtain consent from households before including them in a Declaration.

Kent Local Authorities expect any obligated energy supplier or contractor working on their behalf, to 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.

## **2) How the LAs intend to identify eligible households**

ECO Flexible Eligibility Help to Heat funding is only available to private tenure households.

Kent Local Authorities will identify households that may benefit from flexible eligibility in a number of ways.

Subject to availability of resources within the Local Authorities and the legal use of data, private tenure households must fit one, or more of the following criteria:

- Living in fuel poverty but not in receipt of benefits
- Low income and vulnerability to cold (LIVC)

These criteria will be kept under review, in relation to levels of referrals made, delivery of installed measures and the practices of other authorities.

### **A. Criteria for identifying 'living in Fuel Poverty, but not in receipt of benefits':**

For those living in private tenure the following will be assessed:

- Households not in receipt of income related benefit will be assessed using the following indicative income thresholds (after rent/mortgage payment is removed):

Household composition	Annual Household Income	Monthly Household Income Equivalent
<b>1 adult (18 years and over)</b>	£8,900	£740
and 1 child	£11,700	£980
and 2 children	£14,400	£1,200
and 3 children	£17,300	£1,440
and 4 or more children	£20,100	£1,680
<b>2 adults (18 years and over)</b>	£14,600	£1,220
and 1 child	£17,400	£1,450
and 2 children	£20,200	£1,680
and 3 children	£23,100	£1,930
And 4 or more children	£25,700	£2,140

Source: Income thresholds based under the Low Income High Costs indicator (2014)<sup>1</sup>

- If a household has an income under these thresholds, depending on composition, then it will be identified as being 'low income'.
- The Council will cross reference data which we hold or can access. Examples include data on: Energy Performance Certificates( rated D, E, F & G)/SAP ratings, pre-payment meters, expenditure on fuel, housing type/age/condition, and heating type)
- Low income households living in energy inefficient housing in the private rented sector will be identified through enforcement activity under the Housing Act 2004.

### **B. Criteria for identifying 'low income and vulnerability to cold':**

Kent Local Authorities will target households containing people with the followings characteristics, which reflect the National Institute for Health and Care Excellences (NICE) 2015 guidance on excess winter deaths and illness caused by cold homes. Specifically these are:

- Older people (aged over 60 and particularly those over 75)
- Young children (under 5)

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<sup>1</sup> These thresholds have been calculated from the 2014 fuel poverty dataset for England – the latest available at present. This has been inflated to be broadly representative of 2017/18 equivalent thresholds

- People with Respiratory conditions (e.g. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and childhood asthma)
- People with Cardiovascular conditions (e.g. ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease)
- People with mental health conditions (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)
- Pregnant women
- People with addictions (e.g. substance misusers)
- People who have attended hospital due to a fall
- People with dementia
- People with neurobiological and related conditions (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME)
- People with terminal illness
- People with autoimmune & immune deficiency diseases (e.g. from cancer treatment, HIV, MS)
- People with disabilities
- Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)
- People with severe learning disabilities
- People who move in and out of homelessness
- Recent immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees (if living in private tenure)

Any referral or enquiry received that does not meet the above requirements will be considered on a case by case basis.

### 3) Joint statement of intent - acting on behalf of another local authority

This is a Joint Statement of Intent. All Local Authorities intend to use common eligibility criteria across their areas.

Kent County Council will make declarations for households on behalf of the following Local Authorities, in conjunction with its work on behalf of the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership (KMSEP) to administrate the Warm Homes scheme:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Authorised Signatory (Name/Position):</b>	<b>Signature</b>
Sevenoaks District Council	Richard Wilson, Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services (Director equivalent)	< redacted >
Swale Borough Council	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration	< redacted >
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Director of Communities and Change	< redacted >

**4) Referrals [this section is optional but best practice]**

Kent Local Authorities will ensure appropriate referral processes are in place while maintaining the protection of personal data. This will include initial identification of eligible households using housing stock conditions data, where held by Local Authorities. We will also work with partner agencies to determine those that may be vulnerable due to living in a cold home, and/or suffering from a qualifying medical condition.

**5) Evidence, monitoring and reporting**

Kent Local Authorities will record key information including the number of referrals made and the number of funded installations delivered for reporting to BEIS.

Kent Local Authorities will inform residents that they may be required to provide evidence of income and medical/health conditions at a later date, in order to deter fraudulent claims.

**6) Governance and Signatures**

This Statement of Intent (SOI) is signed on behalf of Kent County Council by:

**Katie Stewart**

Director of Environment, Planning & Enforcement.

Address: Kent County Council, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX.

Signature:

  
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Declarations will be signed on behalf of Kent County Council by:

**Samantha Simmons**

Environmental Projects Manager (Energy)

Address: Kent County Council, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX

Signature:

  
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