



Monmouthshire County Council

Local Authority ECO Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

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<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/>

1) Introduction

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to supporting residents vulnerable to fuel poverty and cold homes. Working with the South East Wales Energy Agency, a local fuel poverty charity, the council has developed the Home Energy Service which acts as a one-stop-shop for all home energy and warmth needs. The service provides advice, support and access to funding aimed at assisting those residents who own their own home or rent privately and are at risk of fuel poverty, or impaired health as a result of living in a cold and/or damp home.

2) Background

Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding is a requirement placed on energy companies over a certain size to help improve domestic energy performance in the homes of the vulnerable. 'Flexible Eligibility' allows councils to set their own criteria to extend the funding outside of the normal rules of ECO (usually based on qualifying benefits).

Monmouthshire County Council see ECO Flexible Eligibility fitting well within the aims of the Home Energy Service and is happy to support its use to provide additional funding for energy efficiency measures to eligible residents in the county.

This Statement of Intent sets out the extended criteria and how householders can make applications to access the funding.

The funding can be used for the installation of an energy efficiency measure ('measures') such as cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, boiler repairs and first time central heating. This list is not exhaustive and the measures available will change over time. Some measures can be fitted for free to eligible households whilst other measures may require a customer contribution. Whenever possible the Home Energy Service aims to find additional funding for eligible households to reduce any customer contribution needed.

3) How the council intends to identify eligible households

Identifying Eligible Households.

Monmouthshire County Council considers that three groups of households eligible for assistance with the installation of energy saving measures under the Flexible Eligibility arrangement:

- I. Where households have a low income and high heating costs
- II. Where households have a low income and have vulnerabilities which make them particularly susceptible to the cold
- III. Where homes are in-fill properties for the purpose of solid wall insulation.

The first two groups of households may be on low incomes, yet not sufficiently low as to be eligible for benefits. Previous ECO and other grant schemes have overlooked these residents and we are delighted to be able to seek support for them under Flexible Eligibility.

Determining Household Eligibility Criteria (Household Groups i and ii).

When determining eligibility all households must satisfy the Criteria 1 (Low Income) and either Criteria 2 (high heating costs) or Criteria 3 (vulnerability to living in a cold home),

I.E. Eligible household = Low Income (criteria 1) + High Heating Costs (criteria 2) **OR** Low Income (criteria 1) + Vulnerability to Cold (criteria 3).

Criteria 1 Eligibility – Low Income is determine by using the monetary values in the table below. Please note that these values may change from time to time. Updated values will be published on our website when applicable.

Household composition	Annual household income after deducting rent or mortgage costs	Monthly household income Equivalent after deducting rent or mortgage costs
1 adult (18 years and over)	£9,300	£775
and 1 child	£12,200	£1,017
and 2 children	£15,000	£1,250
and 3 children	£18,000	£1,500
and 4 or more children	£21,000	£1,750
2 adults (18 years and over)	£15,200	£1,267

and 1 child	£18,200	£1,517
and 2 children	£21,100	£1,758
and 3 children	£24,100	£2,008
and 4 or more children	£26,800	£2,233

At its discretion, the Council may increase these figures in cases where fuel costs are excessively high.

Criteria 2 Eligibility – High heating costs will be assessed either as:

- a. A home with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) in bands E, F or G or
- b. A home that scores 50 or more from the table below.

Question	Answer	Score
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	0
	2	10
	3	20
	4	30
	5	40
	6 or more	50
What type of home is it?	Detached	30
	Semi- detached	20
	Mid terrace	10
	End terrace	20
	Flat	20
	Bungalow	30
Are energy payments made by Direct Debit?	Yes	0
	No	10
Was the house built before 1964 or system built?	Yes	20
	No	0
What is the main heating fuel?	Mains Gas	0
	Electricity	20
	Other	20
Is the property a Park Home?	Yes	30

	No	0
Is the household a High Energy User? (Using over 23,000 kWh of gas or 5,100 kWh of electricity a year.)	Yes	10
	No	0

Criteria 3 Eligibility – To determine vulnerability a full time member of the household must satisfy one or more of the following criterion:

- a) Health can be a major factor in how much heat is required in a property. Therefore, health criteria will be important in assessing flexible eligibility.
 - i. Cardiovascular condition (incl. coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, transient ischemic attack)
 - ii. Respiratory condition (incl. COPD, asthma)
 - iii. Neurological or neurobiological condition (incl. dementia, Parkinson’s disease, MS, epilepsy, fibromyalgia, ME)
 - iv. Musculoskeletal conditions (incl. arthritis, limited mobility, recently attended hospital due to a fall)
 - v. Blood conditions (incl. Sickle cell disease, thalassemia)
 - vi. Cancer
 - vii. Moderate to severe mental illness (incl. schizophrenia bipolar disorder and depression where receiving regular treatment)
 - viii. Severe learning disabilities
 - ix. Autoimmune or immunodeficiency diseases (e.g. lupus, diabetes, HIV)
 - x. Terminally ill
 - xi. Other illness exacerbated by cold (confirmed by GP)
 - xii. A substantial and permanent disability and is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment
- b) Age can also be a factor in how much heat is required to achieve affordable warmth, with older and younger residents being particularly adversely affected.
 - i. An adult aged 60 or over
 - ii. A child under the age of 5

iii. Is pregnant.

Determining Property Eligibility Criteria (Household Group iii - Solid Wall Properties)

Where a property is of Solid Wall or System Built Construction, Monmouthshire County Council would be delighted to support the installation of solid wall insulation. We will therefore agree to complete Declarations for those households (regardless of income or vulnerability) who fulfil the in-fill criteria. Where a household does not meet the criteria for Fuel Poverty (FP) or Low Income Vulnerable to Cold (LIVC), an LA can declare a household as “in-fill” where they are:

- a) in an immediately adjacent building, such as a semi-detached property; or
- b) in the same terrace; or
- c) are in the same building, such as a flat, as a household that does meet those criteria.

In the case of (a) at least one of the two properties has a household group that satisfy the FP or LIVC criteria; and in the case of (b) and (c) 66% of the properties have a household group that satisfy the FP or LIVC criteria.

4) Governance and Process

Monmouthshire County Council work with the South East Wales Energy Agency (SEWEA) to promote energy efficiency advice and the installation of energy efficiency measures to support those in fuel poverty. SEWEA will manage the Flexible Eligibility process on behalf of the Council and its Helpline (01633 223111) will be used to assess householder eligibility against the low income/vulnerability criteria set out above.

All eligible householders will be asked to complete a self-certification form and may be asked to provide documents in support of their eligibility. SEWEA will then seek a signed Declaration from the council which enables the relevant supplier to claim the ECO funding required to enable the requested energy efficiency measure to be installed.

Steve Griffiths, Strategy & Policy Officer, Housing & Communities will sign off Declarations on behalf of the council and will audit 3% of applications to ensure compliance with the published eligibility criteria.

5) Householder Application

Any Monmouthshire householder who believes that they may be eligible for help under flexible eligibility should contact the SEWEA Helpline on 01633 223111 or email advice@sewenergy.org.uk. SEWEA will check eligibility status and will supply an application form that will require the applicant to self-certify their income and secondary eligibility criteria. When approved they will refer the resident to an assessor or installer to take the process further.

Referrals can be made by a third party and would include Care & Repair, Citizens Advice, Credit Union, Care Providers, etc., with the above self-certification also being required.

However, being eligible is not a guarantee that measures will be installed. A final decision on whether any individual household can benefit from energy saving improvements under this strand of ECO will be made by the obligated suppliers or their agents/contractors. Inclusion in a Declaration issued by us does not guarantee the installation of measures.

6) Supplier/Installer Network

Any supplier or installer who seeks a council Declaration on behalf of an eligible householder will first need to be registered with SEWEA. This ensures that the council has information about the standards, practices and accreditations of installers working in the county so reducing the risk of fraud, poor quality installations and the exploitation of vulnerable residents that the council is looking to assist. For further information, call SEWEA on 01633 223111 or email advice@sewenergy.org.uk.

All suppliers, agents and contractors will have to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018.

7) Signature

Signatory for Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "F O'Brien". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'F' and 'O'.

Date: 28/09/2021

Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer, Enterprise

Monmouthshire County Council.