

# Energy Company Obligation - Flexible Eligibility Criteria

## Durham County Council ON GAS GRID Statement of Intent

Date of first publication: 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019

Version: 6

URL: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2876/Housing-energy-efficiency-improvements>

### 1 Background

Durham County Council welcomes the launch of the Energy Company Flexible Eligibility Criteria (ECO Flex) and intends to utilise it for the purposes of reducing levels of cold related ill health and fuel poverty in County Durham.

The County Durham Affordable Warmth Action Plan is central to the coordination and delivery of a wide range of actions to assist the reduction of countywide levels of fuel poverty and provision of energy efficient homes. The action plan is linked to the County Durham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/media/9935/County-Durham-Joint-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2016-2019/pdf/JHWS20162019.pdf>

In identifying households as eligible under the ECO Flex Durham County Council (DCC) is enabling residents to benefit from ECO Flex grant funding from the energy companies. The energy company or their appointed contractor must obtain consent in writing from the household before any measures are installed. This consent is to be confirmed using the DCC ECO Flex **Verification Form A** and ECO Flex **Health Verification Form B** (available on request from DCC).

### 2 Eligibility under ECO Flex

It should be noted that the final decision on whether any individual household will benefit from ECO Flex funded energy efficiency improvements rests entirely with obligated Energy Supply Company and their appointed contractor/s. This decision will be based on the information provided to them by the client household at time of survey. Any Declaration of Eligibility issued by the Council is not to be taken as a guarantee that the eligibility criteria has been met or that funding is available. It is the duty of the Energy Company and/or their appointed contractor to fully ensure that the ECO Flex criteria shown in Section 3 below has been met.

The final decision on eligibility will depend on the following:

- Identification of energy efficiency measures eligible for ECO Flex funding from an Energy Company
- Energy Company's assessment of the cost-effectiveness of installing measures in relation to achieving its obligation
- If the Energy Company will fund the energy efficiency measures
- Note: Durham County Council will not be providing funding for ECO Flex measures

Durham County Council requires all obligated energy suppliers (and contractors working on their behalf) to:

- Fully comply with the General Data Protection Regulations
- Fully comply with OFGEM requirements and guidance for the Energy Company Obligation Flexible Eligibility Criteria
- Act in accordance with industry best practice in relation to consumer care and quality standards of any works that may take place

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### 3 ECO Flex eligible households

To receive ECO Flex grant assistance a household must be in fuel poverty or must be low income and vulnerable to the cold. The energy company or their nominated contractor must ensure that all eligible households fully comply with the following criteria:

Customers must match one or more of the FOUR options shown below	Qualification Category	Qualification Criteria
Option A	Low Income and / or Health Condition/Disability	Households in receipt of:  Housing Benefit <b>AND / OR</b> Council Tax Reduction Benefit <b>AND / OR</b> Pension Savings Credit  <b><i>Note: All Option A applications MUST be accompanied by DCC's Verification Form A</i></b>
Option B	Low Income and NOT in receipt of Benefits	Households who are <b><u>not in receipt of Benefits</u></b> must have a Total Gross Household Income not exceeding <b>30,000 p.a.</b> (Employed and/or Pensionable income)  <b><i>Note: All Option B applications MUST be accompanied by DCC's Verification Form A</i></b>
Option C	Health Condition and NOT in receipt of Disability Benefits and Low Income	Households <b><u>not in receipt of any benefits</u></b> but with a member of the household diagnosed with one of the following Health Conditions / Disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respiratory disease (COPD, asthma)</li> <li>• Cardiovascular conditions</li> <li>• Moderate to severe mental health conditions</li> <li>• Substance misusers</li> <li>• Dementia</li> <li>• Neurobiological and related diseases</li> <li>• Cancer</li> <li>• Limited mobility</li> <li>• Haemoglobinopathies</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe learning disabilities</li> <li>• Autoimmune and immunodeficiency diseases</li> <li>• People with disabilities</li> </ul> <p><b>AND</b> Total Gross Household Income does not exceed <b>£36,000 p.a.</b></p> <p><b><i>Note: All Option C applications <u>MUST</u> be accompanied by DCC's <u>Verification Form A</u> &amp; <u>Verification Form B</u> signed by relevant Health Practitioner confirming the applicants Health Condition / Disability</i></b></p>
<b>Option D</b>	<b>Exception Applications</b>	<p>Durham County Council reserve the right to approve applications where in exceptional circumstances the household total income slightly exceeds the total income thresholds in Options B and C or where a resident is need of assistance, but does not meet the eligibility routes outlined within the Statement of Intent.</p> <p>Each Exception Application will be reviewed on an individual case by case basis by Durham County Council. All Exception Applications must be accompanied by a detailed application explaining why an Exception is being sought. All approvals are solely at the discretion of Durham County Council</p>

### 4 ECO Flex Applications and Declarations

All ECO Flex applications submitted to Durham County Council for review must include the following documentation:

- 4.1 Letter from the Energy Supply Company funding the ECO Flex measure/s confirming that the contractor making the ECO Flex application is acting directly on behalf of the Energy Supplier and has authorisation to install ECO Flex measures on behalf of the Energy Company.
- 4.2 All ECO Flex applications under Category A & B must use Durham County Councils **Verification Form A** (available on request from DCC) fully completed and signed by the contractor and household.

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- 4.3 Applications under Category C must use Durham County Councils Household **Verification Form A and Form B** (available on request from DCC) fully completed and signed by the household and a Health Practitioner.
- 4.4 Copy of the Certificate from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) showing the organisation making the ECO Flex application has a valid ICO Registration Number in the name of the company and has fully complied with all requirements under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- 4.5 Organisations submitting ECO Flex applications are required to sign Durham County Councils ECO Code of Conduct and Information Sharing Agreement (both available on request) and supply references from two Local Authorities.
- 4.6 Applications under Category D (Exception Applications) must provide all relevant information to support the exceptions application.
- 4.7 It is the responsibility of the ECO Flex contractor to keep a photographic record of all documentation relevant to the application including the householder's financial information. Any false declarations will be reported to Trading Standards and may be liable for prosecution should they be found to contain falsified information. Local Authority Declarations must not be passed onto a third-party organisation.

### 5 Governance

Durham County Council reserve the right not to issue declarations where the above criteria have not been fully complied with. Any breaches in ECO Regulations will be reported to Trading Standards. By signing an ECO Flex Declaration, the council does not endorse the organisation making the ECO Flex Declaration and does not accept any liability for the works carried out.

The officer below will be responsible for receiving and authorising ECO Flex Declarations on behalf of Durham County Council.

Name: Cliff Duff  
Job title: Housing Project Manager  
Telephone: 03000 265262

### 6 Evidence, monitoring and reporting

- The data above will include details of households assessed, how many were deemed eligible or ineligible, and how many received heating and insulation improvements
- Where resources allow, we reserve the right to contact the householder regarding the ECO Flex Application and measures installed.

### 7 Signature



Signature:

Name: Amy Harhoff

Position: Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Growth Durham County Council

Date: 01/10/2020

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<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Authorisation</b>
Version 1 (ECO2t)	Date: 19.2.2018	Authorised by: C Duff
Version 2 (ECO2t)	Date: 12.3.2018	Authorised by: C Duff
Version 3 (ECO2t)	Date: 16.4.2018	Authorised by: C Duff
Version 3A (ECO2t)	Date: 11.5.2018	Authorised by: C Duff
Version 4 (ECO2t)	Date: 24.5.2018	Authorised by: C Duff
Version 5 (ECO3)	Date: 22.1.2019	Authorised by: C Duff
Version 6 (ECO3)	Date: 01.10.2020	Authorised by: C Duff