

Sunderland City Council ECO 4 Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

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This statement sets out Sunderland City Council’s flexible eligibility criteria for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO 4) scheme from January 2023 – March 2026.

The ECO 4 scheme will focus on supporting low income and vulnerable households. The scheme will improve the least energy efficient homes helping to meet the Government’s fuel poverty and net zero commitments.

The flexible approach for Local Authorities (LAs) to identifying fuel poor and vulnerable households who may benefit from heating and energy saving measures is referred to as “ECO 4 Flex”.

The Council welcomes the introduction of the ECO 4 Flex eligibility routes as it helps the Council achieve its plans to improve the homes of those in fuel poverty or vulnerable to the cold.

The Council is publishing this Statement of Intent (SoI), to confirm that each of the households declared will adhere to at least one of the four available routes outlined below:

Route	Qualification Category	Qualification Detail
Route 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross Household Income of £31,000 per year or less <p>-AND-</p> <p>an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band D or E or F or G for owner-occupied households <p>-or-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band E or F or G for private rented sector households 	Gross household income is calculated using the single or joint income of persons over age 18 with permanent residence at the dwelling.
Route 2	<p>An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band E or F or G for owner-occupied and private rented sector households, <p>-AND-</p> <p>meet a combination of 2 of the</p>	<p>Proxy 1*) Homes in England in Lower-layer Super Output Area 1-3 (LSOA) ¹.</p> <p>Proxy 2) Households receiving Council Tax Reduction (support based on low income only, excludes single person discount).</p> <p>Proxy 3*) Householder(s) vulnerable to living in a cold home as identified in the</p>

	<p>following proxies: (* Note Proxies 1 and 3 -or- proxies 6 and 7 cannot be used together.)</p>	<p>National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE Guidance. Only one from the list should be used.</p> <p>A wide range of people are vulnerable to the cold². The term vulnerable refers to a number of different groups including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people with cardiovascular conditions • people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma) • people with mental health conditions • people with disabilities • older people (65 and older) • households with young children (from newborn to school age) • pregnant women <p>Proxy 4) A household member receiving free school meals due to low-income.</p> <p>Proxy 5) A person living at the premises is supported by a LA run scheme that is named and described in their Statement of Intent and established to support people living on a low income and vulnerable to the cold under NICE Guideline NG6 (This proxy is not currently used in Sunderland).</p> <p>Proxy 6) A household referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier of Citizen’s advice, because they have been identified as struggling to pay their electricity or gas bills.</p> <p>Proxy 7) Households identified through supplier debt data. This route enables obligated suppliers to use their own debt data to identify either Non-Pre-Payment meter households (non-PPM), or PrePayment meter households (PPM)*</p> <p>a) Non-PPM customers: These are customers who have been in debt for more than 13 weeks ending with the day on which the declaration is made and are in a debt repayment plan with their energy supplier or repaying their fuel debt through 3rd party deductions.</p> <p>b) PPM customers: Suppliers may also identify PPM households who:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have either self-disconnected or received supplier Discretionary/Friendly credit within the last 13 weeks ending with the day on which the declaration is made; or • are in a debt repayment plan with their energy supplier; or • repaying their fuel debt through 3rd party deductions.
Route 3	<p>An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band D or E or F or G for owner-occupied households <p>-or-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band E or F or G for private rented sector households <p>-AND-</p> <p>an occupant that has been identified by their doctor or GP as low-income and vulnerable and whose health condition(s) may be impacted further by living in a cold home.</p>	<p>These health conditions may be cardiovascular, respiratory, immunosuppressed, or limited mobility related.</p> <p>This is because the Council has identified a positive correlation between households who suffer from long-term health conditions and are living off a low-income, with living in poorly insulated homes.</p> <p>Route 3 applications must be supported by a letter from their GP, Doctor or other medical professional.</p>
Route 4	<p>An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band D or E or F or G for owner-occupied households <p>-or-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPC band E or F or G for private rented sector households <p>-AND-</p> <p>Have a bespoke eligibility request to be considered by BEIS</p>	<p>Bespoke Targeting. Suppliers and LAs can submit an application to BEIS where they have identified a low income and vulnerable household or group, who are not already eligible under the existing criteria.</p>

¹ [The English Indices of Deprivation 2019](#)

² [NICE Guidance](#)

Declaration and evidence check confirmation

All potentially eligible households should apply through the energy supplier(s) or contractor(s) appointed by Sunderland City Council to ensure that they can either benefit from the scheme or be assessed for eligibility under any other relevant programme.

The officer below will be responsible for checking and verifying declarations and associated evidence submitted on behalf of the local authority:

Name: G Stephenson

Job title: Principal Energy Efficiency and Retrofit Officer


Email: scceco.flex@sunderland.gov.uk

Telephone: 0191 5205555

Dedicated responsible person mandatory signature

Sunderland City Council will administer the scheme according to BEIS' ECO4 Order and will identify eligible households via Ofgem's application process. The dedicated person will oversee the process of identifying eligible households under ECO 4 Flex.

The eligibility information will be stored securely in line with the Council's data protection policy, Information Commissioner's Office Data Sharing Code, and BEIS guidance.

Signature:	
Name:	Peter McIntyre
Position:	Executive Director City Development
Date:	27th January 2023

For any general enquires relating to this Statement of Intent please contact scceco.flex@sunderland.gov.uk