

# Statement of Intent for ECO4 and Great British Insulation Scheme

## North Hertfordshire District Council ECO4 and Great British Insulation Scheme Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

**Local Authority name: North Hertfordshire District Council**

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This statement sets out **North Herts Council's** flexible eligibility criteria for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) and Great British Insulation schemes which run until March 2026.

The ECO4 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 Great British Insulation Scheme will support the ECO4 scheme in the delivery of predominantly single measures targeted at a wider range of households.

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 "ECO4 Flex" and "Great British Insulation Scheme Flex".

The Council welcomes the introduction of the ECO4 Flex eligibility routes as it helps them achieve plans to improve the homes of those in fuel poverty or vulnerable to the cold. The Council is publishing this Statement of Intent (SoI), on the **15/01/2025** to confirm that each of the households declared will adhere to at least one of the four available routes outlined below. The tick boxes can be used to indicate to households which routes the council is using:

**Route 1:** Owner-occupied and private rented sector households with a gross annual income less than £31,000. This cap applies irrespective of the property size, composition, or region.

**Route 2:** Owner-occupied and private rented sector households that meet a combination of two of the following proxies:

**Proxy 1)** Homes in England in Lower-layer Super Output Area 1-3 (LSOA)<sup>1</sup>, or homes in Welsh provision LSOA 1-3 on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019<sup>2</sup>, or homes in Scotland in “data zone” 1-3 on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020<sup>3\*</sup>

**Proxy 2)** A person living at the premises is entitled to a Council Tax reduction on the grounds of low-income.

**Proxy 3)** A person living at the premises is considered to be vulnerable to the cold under the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance NG6: Recommendation 2, for a reason other than their low-income<sup>4\*</sup>

**Proxy 4)** A child living at the premises is eligible for free school meals, due to low-income<sup>5</sup>

**Proxy 5)** A person living at the premises is supported by a scheme established by the LA/DA that is named and described within their Statement of Intent and established to support people living on a low-income and considered vulnerable to the cold under NICE Guideline NG6.

In North Herts Council, residents may be eligible under this Proxy if they have:

Completed a Warm and Well Assessment carried out by the National Energy Foundation’s (NEF) Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) helpline service. North Herts Council have partnered with BHBH to offer free, independent home energy advice through a Warm and Well Assessment and residents are referred on the basis of being low-income and at risk of or in fuel poverty and considered vulnerable to the cold under NICE Guideline NG6.

**Proxy 6)** A household referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier or Citizens Advice or Citizens Advice Scotland, because they have been identified as struggling to pay their electricity and/or gas bills.

**Proxy 7) [Please note, proxy 7 is for supplier owned debt data and is listed here for information only].** Households identified through energy 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 pre-payment meter households (PPM)\*.

- 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 3<sup>rd</sup> party deductions.

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<sup>1</sup> Published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>. The deciles are published in “File 7: all ranks, deciles and scores for the indices of deprivation, and population denominators”.

<sup>2</sup> Published at <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Welsh-Index-of-Multiple-Deprivation/WIMD-2019>

<sup>3</sup> 2020v2. Published at <http://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020v2-ranks>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng6/chapter/1-Recommendations#recommendation-2-ensure-there-is-a-singlepointofcontact-health-and-housing-referral-service-for>

<sup>5</sup> Under section 512ZB(4) of the Education Act 1996 or section 53 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980

b. **PPM customers:** Suppliers may also identify PPM households who:

- 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 3<sup>rd</sup> party deductions. \*

\* Note proxies 1 and 3 cannot be used together.

\* Proxy 7 cannot be used in combination with proxy 5 or proxy 6.

**Route 3:** Owner-occupied and private rented sector households that have been identified by either a person registered in the General Practitioner Register, a Scottish Health Board, a Welsh Health Board, an NHS Foundation Trust, or an NHS Trust as vulnerable, with an occupant whose health conditions may be adversely affected by living in a cold home. These health conditions must be cardiovascular, respiratory, immunosuppressed, or limited mobility related.

This is because the Council has identified a positive correlation between households who suffer from long-term health conditions and living off a low-income, with living in poorly insulated homes.

**Route 4 [applicable to ECO4 Flex only]:** Owner-occupied and private rented sector households that are referred under Route 4: Bespoke Targeting. Suppliers and LAs can submit an application to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero where they have identified new methods to identify low-income and vulnerable households. Applications need to demonstrate a number of factors, including that the proposed methodology is more effective at identifying households in fuel poverty than the criterion offered under Routes 1 and 2.

## **Scheme eligibility**

All potentially eligible households should apply through Better Housing Better Health on 0800 107 0044, or one of their approved ECO / Great British Insulation Scheme installers, if a list of approved installers is available, to see if they can either benefit from the scheme or be assessed for eligibility under any other relevant programme.

Installer enquiries: Any supplier or installer who seeks a council declaration on behalf of an eligible resident will first need to be registered with the 'NEF Supplier Network'. The Network ensures that councils have information about the standards, practices and accreditations of installers working in their area reducing the risk of fraud, poor quality installations and the exploitation of vulnerable residents that the council is looking to assist via ECO Flexible

Eligibility. For further information about the Network and guidance on how to register, suppliers should contact [suppliernetwork@nef.org.uk](mailto:suppliernetwork@nef.org.uk)

A LA officer (not a 3<sup>rd</sup> party working on behalf of an LA) will be responsible for checking, and verifying evidence, and issuing declarations. For any general enquiries relating to this SoI please contact:

<b>Name:</b> James Lees	<b>Job Title:</b> Climate Change Project Manager
<b>Telephone:</b> 01462 474000	<b>Email:</b> James.lees@north-herts.gov.uk

While the information contained in this SoI is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither the Council, its advisors will accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor will any express or implied warranty be given. This exclusion extends to liability in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in or any omission from, this SoI (including any documentation associated with such) and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted (or otherwise made available). This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by or on behalf of the Council.

If any successful applicant enters into a Contract with the Council, it must rely on its own enquiries and on the terms and conditions set out in the Contract (as and when finally executed), subject to the limitations and restrictions specified in it.

Neither the issue of this SoI, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of the Council (or any other person) to enter into a contractual arrangement.

#### Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

All information supplied by the Council to applicants whether in writing or orally, is supplied on condition that it (including the fact that the applicant has notice of this SoI be kept confidential by the applicant; it must not be copied, reproduced, distributed or passed to any other person at any time (except to advisors for the sole purpose of enabling assessment ) unless the information is already in the public domain.

As a public body, the Council is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3391) (EIR) in respect of information it holds (including third party information). Any member of the public or other interested party may make a request for information. The Council is also subject to various public sector transparency policies and legal requirements.

Applicants should therefore be aware that information provided in connection with this process, may be disclosed by the Council, unless the Council decides (in its absolute discretion) that one of the statutory exemptions under the FOIA or the EIR applies. Requests for information and application of any exemptions shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. By taking part in this process, applicants agree to such disclosure or publication by the Council.

The Council reserves the right to:

Waive or change the requirements of this SoI from time to time without prior (or any) notice being given by the Council.

The Council will not be liable for any costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by applicants in proceeding with or participating in this SoI, including if the process is terminated or amended by the Council.

## CEO or dedicated responsible person mandatory signature.

North Herts Council will administer the ECO4 Flex scheme according to the Electricity and Gas (Energy Company Obligation) Order 2022 (ECO4 Order).

The CEO/ dedicated responsible person of the Council will oversee the process of identifying eligible households under ECO Flex and Great British Insulation Scheme Flex. The Council will notify Ofgem of households that declarations have been issued for via the declaration notification template.

All personal data collected or processed by **North Herts Council** for the purposes of ECO4 Flex or Great British Insulation Scheme Flex will be processed and stored in accordance with: the Council's obligations under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, the Council's data protection policy, the Information Commissioner's Office Data Sharing Code and other guidance, and Department for Energy Security and Net Zero guidance.

<b>Name</b>	Sarah Kingsley	
<b>Job Title</b>	Service Director for Place	
<b>Date</b>	05 December 2024	<b>Signature</b> 