



Nottingham City Council Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

This statement sets out Nottingham City Council’s flexible eligibility criteria for the ECO: Help to Heat programme from April 2017 until further notice. It aims to help households living in fuel poverty, living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of a cold home.

1) Introduction

Low income and vulnerable households are at significant risk of falling into fuel poverty, becoming exposed to the effects of living in a cold home and the associated debt. To address this issue Nottingham City Council (NCC) will use the local authority flexible eligibility criteria to implement the Energy Company Obligation (ECO)¹ Affordable Warmth grant. This will allow NCC to deliver energy efficiency measures to fuel poor households, within the city, not covered under the existing criteria, as well as to low income and vulnerable households.

Improving homes to be more energy efficient, thereby reducing fuel bills and fuel poverty, is a fundamental element in improving Nottingham’s housing stock. In addition, these measures will help meet Nottingham’s Energy Strategy to achieve a 37.6% reduction in CO² emissions from domestic energy efficiency by 2020. Furthermore, the Joint strategic needs assessment identifies cold homes as a significant issue to the most vulnerable persons. Excess Winter Death (EWD) rates are a key indicator as to the impact the cold weather has on health. In Nottingham there are approximately 21% more deaths in winter than summer. Fuel poverty and poor housing is widely acknowledged as a key cause of EWD. Nottingham City Council aims to use the flexible eligibility criteria to reduce the cities EWD’s.

NCC has made considerable progress in reducing fuel poverty over the past few years, with the cities ranking improving from 2nd highest English Core City at 2012/13 to 3rd lowest at 2014/15 for low income to high cost households. This significant improvement is due to a number of projects implemented to reduce fuel poverty levels within the city. For example, delivery of the Nottingham Warm Zone by Nottingham Energy Partnership, installing 9,382 energy efficiency measures between 2009 and 2011; Greener HousiNG, jointly delivered by NCC and Nottingham City Homes, which has seen over 6,000 social and private properties benefit from subsidised energy saving measures. Furthermore, the creation of a not-for-profit energy company, Robin Hood Energy, which has seen a reduction in the cost of pre-payment meters. Through the council’s flexible eligibility, NCC will aim to capitalise on the success of previous energy efficiency projects to target the remaining low income and vulnerable households.

As part of the Nottingham City Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020: Happier Healthier Lives aims to:

- increase healthy life expectancy in Nottingham and make us one of the healthiest big cities
- reduce inequalities in health by targeting the neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of healthy life expectancy

¹ Further details about Flexible Eligibility are set out in the Government’s ‘Energy Company Obligation (ECO): Help to Heat’

Document Control	
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Nottingham City Council Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

The core strategy aims to meet these objectives by developing a programme of energy efficiency works, targeting poorly performing homes to reduce the health impacts from cold homes and fuel poverty. Therefore, ECO Flexible Eligibility will directly contribute towards its achievement.

Each Nottingham City resident ² will have their eligibility assessed against the NCC Flexible Eligibility criteria. NCC's referral of any household and subsequent inclusion in a Declaration made by NCC to a supplier will not guarantee installation of measures. The final decision will depend on i) survey carried out by suppliers agents/contractors and installation costs calculated, ii) the energy savings that can be achieved for a property, and iii) whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

2) How the LA intends to identify eligible households

NCC has set parameters to capture households that may benefit from the installation of measures under Flexible Eligibility as *either those that are (a) living in fuel poverty (FP) or (b) living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC)*. Details of how we identify solid wall properties as eligible for installation under the "in-fill" category is also outlined.

The criteria used are as follows:

(a) Criteria for identifying households in fuel poverty (FP)

To identify a household as being in fuel poverty, NCC adopts the following approach and requires that the household must satisfy the following:

Households need to meet Stage 1 (Low Income household threshold) criteria and one of the Stage 2 (household faces high-energy costs) criteria.

(1) Identifying low income households

Referring to the Low Income High Cost indicators in Table 1, using the household makeup in column (i) we identify households with a remaining income (after paying the rent or mortgage, where applicable) as less than the figure in column (iii) per month as "low income".

² To be eligible, households must reside within Nottingham City Council Boundaries. See Appendix 1 for information on Nottingham City Council postcodes and boundaries.

Document Control	
Version	V1.2
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Nottingham City Council Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Table 1 – Income thresholds broadly consistent with those used the Low Income High Costs indicator (2014) inflated to represent 2017/18 prices

Household composition (i)	Annual household income (ii)	Monthly household income equivalent (iii)
1 adult (18 years and over)	£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
2 adults (18 years and over)	£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

* Annual household income after paying rent or mortgage, where applicable.

(2) Identifying High Cost Households

Due to the nature of the fuel poverty definition used for England, identifying high cost properties and combining it with information on that household's income is more effective in targeting the fuel poor than using income information alone.

- The Property's EPC rating of E, F or G
- Properties which have been classified as a category 1 hazard due to excess cold having been identified.

(b) Criteria for identifying low income and vulnerability to cold (LIVC)

To identify a household as low income and vulnerable, NCC adopts the following approach and require that the household must satisfy the following:

- (1) Meet the low income household threshold (Table 1); and
- (2) Determine that the householders are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

Vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home

The NICE guideline 'Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes' states that: a wide range of people are vulnerable to the cold. This is either because of a medical condition, a disability, or personal circumstances.

Households will qualify under the flexible eligibility criteria where they have one occupant or more who is vulnerable to the cold outlined in the NICE guideline and shown below:

- people with cardiovascular conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)

Document Control	
Version	V1.2
Date of publication	15/10/2018



Nottingham City Council Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

- people with mental health conditions
- people with disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- households with young children (from new-born to school age)
- pregnant women

We will utilise existing services such as the Healthy Housing Referral Service, which trains front line staff to identify vulnerable households, and Age UK housing services, but also welcome other referral routes.

- (3) Exceptional cases, which are brought to our attention, not meeting the requirements above, will be considered on a case by case basis.

(c) Requirements for solid wall insulation “in-fill” projects

For some solid wall insulation projects, certain properties may be classed as eligible based on the in-fill classification. NCC recognised the criteria as follows:

Property Type	Requirements	In-fill available
Project consisting of a pair of semi-detached houses or bungalows, or a building containing no more than two domestic premises.	At least one of the two-properties must be declared by the LA as FP or LIVC (i.e. 50% of the properties are FP or LIVC).	The other private property to which it is directly adjoined is eligible for solid wall insulation.
Project consisting of any premises that are contained in the same building (e.g. flats), immediately adjacent buildings (e.g. neighbouring properties) or in the same terrace.	At least two in three properties on the list must be declared by the LA as FP or LIVC (i.e. at least 66% of the properties are FP or LIVC).	The other (i.e. up to one third) of private properties in the project are eligible for solid wall insulation, provided they are either in the same building, an immediately adjacent building or in the same terrace as the ones identified as FP or LIVC.

3) Acting on behalf of another local authority

We are not acting on behalf of another local authority.

4) Joint statement of intent

We are not working in association with another local authority.

Document Control	
Version	V1.2
Date of publication	15/10/2018



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5) Governance

ECO: Help to Heat programme is governed by Nottingham City Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Domestic Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty (DEEFP) sub-group. This group's role is to:

- To coordinate domestic energy efficiency projects across the city
- To reduce inequalities in health by targeting the neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of healthy life expectancy.

(A) Local Authorities Declaration

The declaration of households that meet the NCC's Flexible Eligibility criteria will be valid if signed by a representative from the Housing Strategy team on behalf of the local authority.

Email: housing.network@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

6) Referrals

Additional referrals may come from various sources, including from our Healthy Housing Referral Service. Any undefined sources will be detailed within our Flexible Eligibility review and referrals subject to the same auditing processes.

7) Evidence, monitoring and reporting

The number of households that are contacted and eligible for ECO Flexible Eligibility together with the number of ECO Flexible Eligibility funded measures installed and the number of homes improved will be recorded by Nottingham City Council.

Nottingham City Council's auditing of the eligibility of households will be assessed by a random sample of households on a post-installation basis. If a resident cannot provide the required evidence this will not affect their eligibility; however a high level of non-compliance will trigger a review of the Flexible Eligibility process.

8) Signature

Signed by:

Date: 15.10.2018

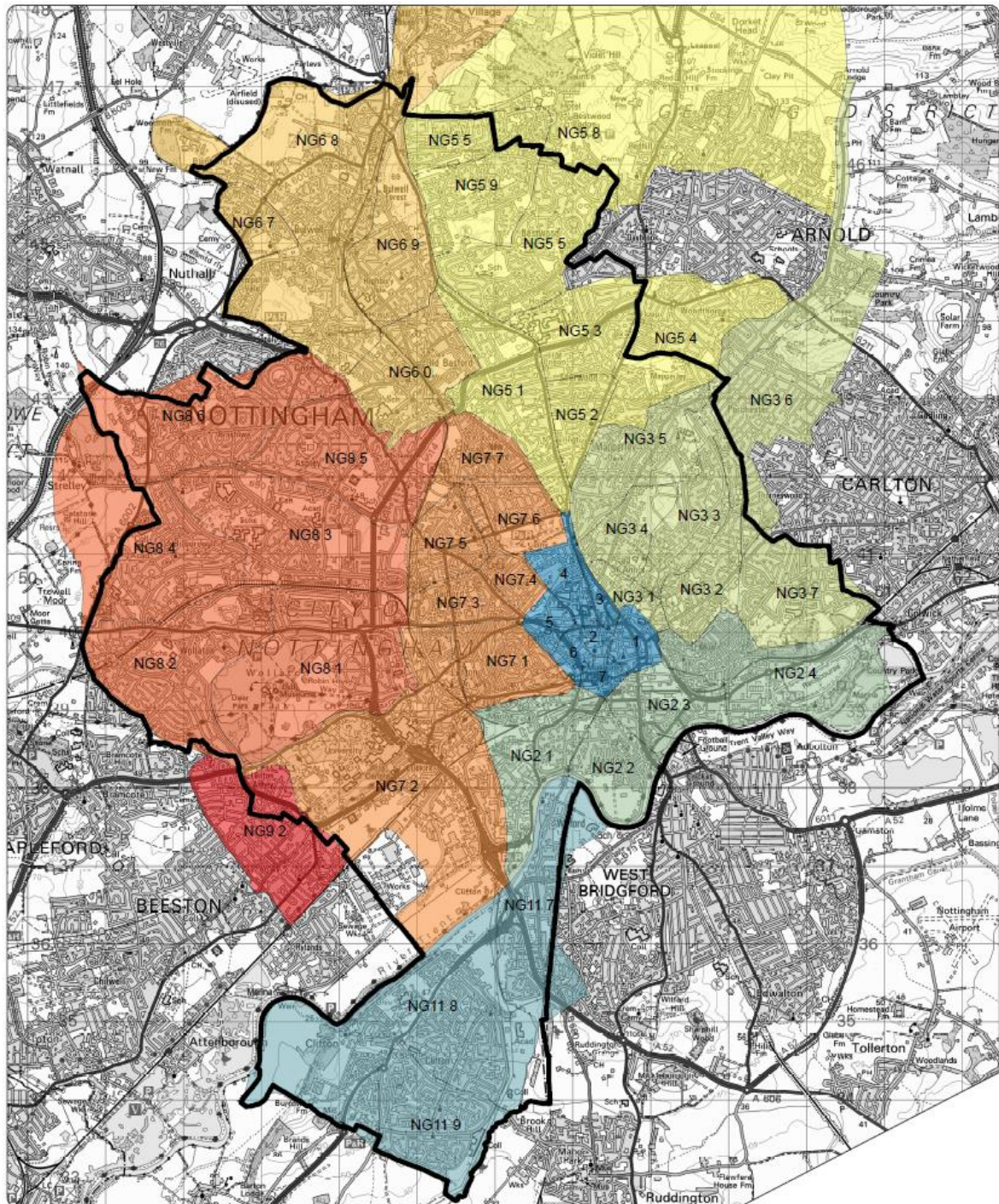
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Document Control	
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Appendix 1 Map of Nottingham City Council Boundaries



Key

- City Boundary
- NG1
- NG3
- NG7
- NG11
- NG5
- NG8
- NG2
- NG6
- NG9

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