

# Home Energy Conservation Act 1995

## Dorset Councils Draft Combined Progress Report March 2017

Progress Report for the Housing Authorities of Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, prepared pursuant to a request by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change using powers contained in Section 5 (1) (b) of the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995

## Introduction

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) recognises local authorities' ability to use their position to significantly improve the energy efficiency of all the residential accommodation, including owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing, in their areas.

In July 2012 the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) published a request under HECA for all local authorities in England to report on the measures they propose to take to achieve this aim.

The guidance accompanying the request recognises that reports may have some commonality, and therefore a consortium of authorities may produce combined reports. Since Dorset District and Borough councils have been working together with local partners to improve the energy efficiency of local housing stock for a number of years, this is a logical and cost effective way to report on plans and progress.

The first of these reports, known as a Further Report, was published in March 2013. Progress Reports are to be published at two-year intervals after publication of the Further Report. Reports are available at [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk)

All Dorset Councils have endorsed the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan: This is being updated and the fuel poverty targets will be aligned with the current national targets and timescales. Home energy efficiency features in each authorities' housing strategies and private sector housing survey reports. Dorset Councils' shared website, [dorsetforyou.gov.uk](http://dorsetforyou.gov.uk), features information on energy efficiency, fuel poverty, healthy homes, and sustainable energy, and provides links to other relevant organisations. Dorset councils actively promote subsidised insulation and heating offered by fuel suppliers, and have used a fund of last resort to enable the most cost-effective types of insulation to be installed free of charge in the homes of Dorset residents most vulnerable to the effects of cold and damp housing, through the Public Health Dorset-funded Healthy Homes Dorset programme. Dorset Councils have successfully bid and supported funding bids to a variety of sources to supplement their own funding to develop and expand this work. Dorset councils have also been at the heart of closer working and cooperation between the Housing Authorities, Public Health Authorities, BEIS and Public Health England, particularly in relation to housing and health, and have adapted plans and ambitions in the light of the guidance and Quality Standards on cold homes issued by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

### **1.1. Energy efficiency progress**

The average energy efficiency of Dorset homes is improving due to several factors. The most significant of these are:

- Insulation measures: The most cost effective measures are the installation of cavity wall insulation and loft insulation. Fuel suppliers have been subsidising insulation for a number of years to fulfil legal obligations placed on them, and Dorset councils, alongside Dorset County Council and Public Health Dorset, have encouraged residents to take up the offer of subsidised insulation, and have match funded projects aimed at specific groups of residents, types of housing and tenure, and areas.
- Home improvements, such as double glazing and efficient new boilers. These are generally paid for by residents and landlords, and in some cases by third parties, such as Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.

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- The construction of new homes, which are by law built to ever higher standards of energy efficiency, and to a lesser extent the demolition of older homes, which tend to be less energy efficient.

## Where are we now?

Although significant progress has been made in improving home energy efficiency, much remains to be done

### Dorset homes insulated 2008-2012

Dorset Council	Homes in Location	Homes with Cavity Wall Insulation Installed 2008-2012	%	Homes with loft insulation installed 2008-2012	%
Christchurch	23,005	2,595	11	2,729	12
East Dorset	38,730	4,028	10	4,879	13
North Dorset	29,814	2,196	7	2,504	8
Purbeck	21,568	1,521	7	1,948	9
West Dorset	48,109	5,006	10	5,066	11
Weymouth and Portland	29,747	2,154	7	2,035	7
Total	190,973	17,500	9	19,161	10

### Measures installed under ECO up to December 2015:

ECO measures by ECO obligation by administrative area, up to end December 2015						
	Obligation					
	Carbon Saving Target CERO	Carbon Savings Community CSCO	Affordable Warmth HHCRO	ECO measures installed	Households with at least one usual resident <sup>3,4</sup>	ECO measures per 1,000 households
Christchurch	568	50	280	898	21,851	41.1
East Dorset	784	130	346	1,260	38,314	32.9
North Dorset	408	176	192	776	29,468	26.3
Purbeck	349	41	178	568	19,855	28.6
West Dorset	751	381	338	1,470	45,322	32.4
Weymouth And Portland	787	512	579	1,878	28,892	65.0
Total	3,647	1,290	1,913	6,850	183,702	37.3

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## 1.2. Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty can cause low income households to live in cold homes which have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. This is particularly the case for vulnerable residents with a cold related illness. Fuel poverty in Dorset has risen from 15,052 in 2012 to 20,074 in 2014 (using the Low Income High Cost definition). Currently 10.6% of households in Dorset are fuel poor: a figure similar to the national average:

Dorset Council	Estimated number of households		Estimated number of Fuel Poor Households		Proportion of households fuel poor (%)	
	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Christchurch	22,139	22,566	1,456	1,954	6.6	8.7
East Dorset	38,744	39,516	2,397	3,281	6.2	8.3
North Dorset	29,582	30,181	2,497	3,587	8.4	11.9
Purbeck	20,207	20,631	1,694	2,187	8.4	10.6
West Dorset	45,782	46,699	4,233	5,521	9.2	11.8
Weymouth and Portland	29,435	30,031	2,775	3,544	9.4	11.8
Total	185,889	189,624	15,052	20,074	8.1	10.6

## 1.3. Public Health: Excess Winter Deaths

Cold housing is a key contributing factor to excess winter deaths, which are mainly from respiratory and cardiovascular problems. Although the number of excess winter deaths varies widely from year to year depending on the severity of the winter weather and the severity of seasonal flu, the overall longer-term trend is a gradual decline.

Table 1.2: Excess Winter Deaths 2008-2013

Dorset Council	Number of Excess Winter Deaths 2010-2011	Number of Excess Winter Deaths 2011-2012	Number of Excess Winter Deaths 2012-2013	Number of Excess Winter Deaths 2013-2014	Number of Excess Winter Deaths 2014-2015
Christchurch	30	10	40	10	70
East Dorset	40	50	90	10	110
North Dorset	10	20	30	20	50
Purbeck	20	40	10	10	40
West Dorset	10	90	130	20	100
Weymouth and Portland	20	60	30	20	60
Total	130	270	330	90	430

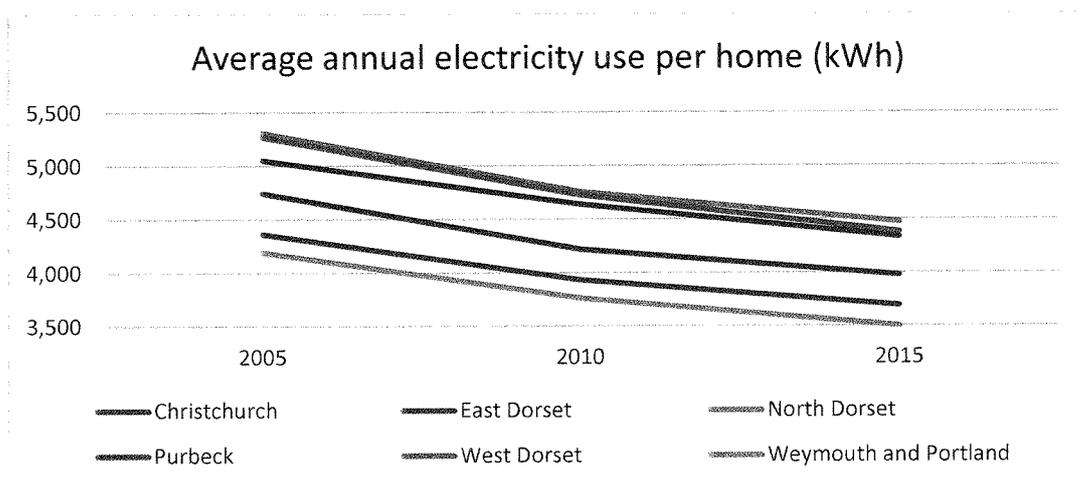
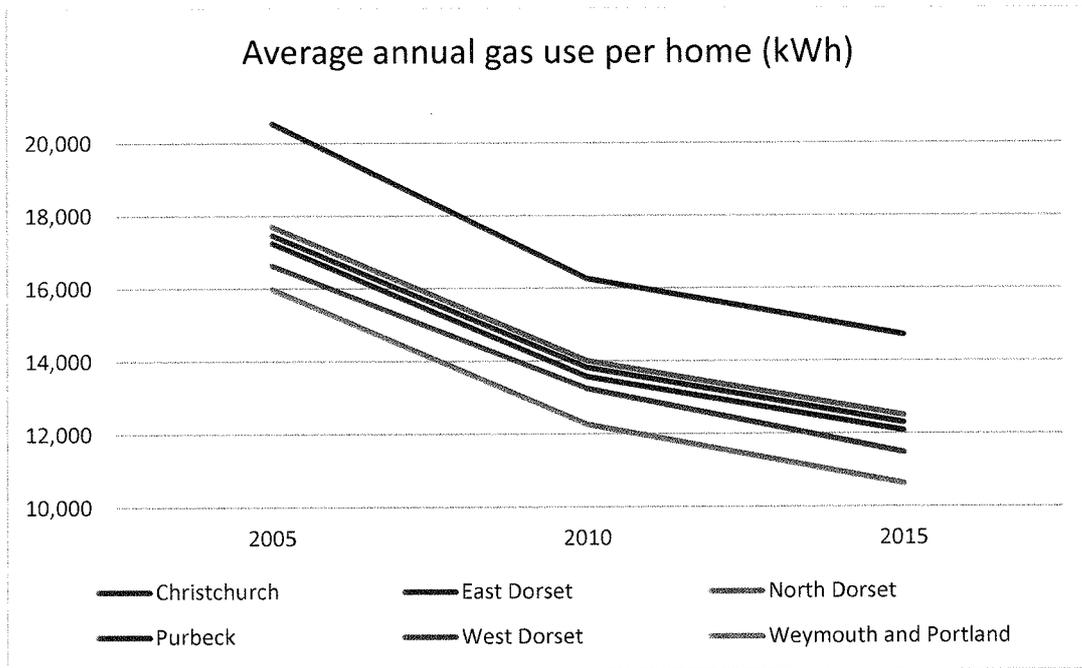
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### 1.4. Domestic energy use

Usage of gas and to a lesser extent electricity fluctuates depending on the need for heating in winter, but there is an overall trend for gradually decreasing levels of gas and electricity use, due to improvements in home insulation, heating and lighting.

Home electricity bills cost Dorset residents approximately £100 million a year, gas bills are similar

Average energy use per household 2005-2015:



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Table 3.3: Domestic gas use 2005 - 2015

Dorset Council	Homes in Location	Average 2005 gas use per home (kWh)	Average 2010 gas use per home (kWh)	Average 2015 gas use per home (kWh)
Christchurch	23,005	17,467	13,830	12,299
East Dorset	38,730	20,536	16,268	14,718
North Dorset	29,814	17,707	14,011	12,506
Purbeck	21,568	17,247	13,575	12,080
West Dorset	48,109	16,636	13,249	11,490
Weymouth and Portland	29,747	15,985	12,263	10,639

Table 3.3: Domestic electricity use 2005 - 2015

Dorset Council	Homes in Location	Average 2005 electricity use per home (kWh)	Average 2010 electricity use per home (kWh)	Average 2015 electricity use per home (kWh)
Christchurch	23,005	4,364	3,934	3692
East Dorset	38,730	5,053	4,640	4333
North Dorset	29,814	5,307	4,758	4474
Purbeck	21,568	4,745	4,220	3975
West Dorset	48,109	5,270	4,728	4381
Weymouth and Portland	29,747	4,194	3,764	3501

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### **1.5. Housing stock characteristics**

There are many types of housing across Dorset, most of which are found throughout England, however there are three types of housing to which special consideration should be given:

#### **1.5.1. Early cavity wall construction**

Cavity wall construction was adopted relatively early in many parts of Dorset. This is important, as many organisations offering and advising on cavity wall insulation operate using a national “rule of thumb” that homes built before 1918 (and in some cases 1930) must have solid walls and therefore cannot have cavity wall insulation installed. This means that Dorset residents may be living in un-insulated homes because they have been incorrectly advised that their home has solid walls when it does in fact have cavity walls that can be cost-effectively insulated.

#### **1.5.2. Park homes**

Park homes are found in several areas of Dorset, and pose special challenges. Differences between park homes and conventional “bricks and mortar” homes include the legal status of park homes as “chattels” rather than real estate, the construction of the homes, and the distribution of gas and electricity to the homes frequently being in the hands of a licensed site owner rather than a regulated fuel supplier. There is also a lack of established industry-standard warranties for the sector. Although fuel supplier-funded schemes have not historically covered park homes, some work has been carried out by Dorset councils and ECO funding is now becoming available.

#### **1.5.3. Vulnerable buildings**

Dorset has a rich heritage of historic buildings, including many which are listed.. Buildings of special character need special consideration to ensure that improvements in energy efficiency do not damage the building fabric or character. Some energy efficiency measures are inappropriate, although in many cases alternatives are available.

## Action Plan

Action	Example	Timing	March 2017 Progress Update
i. Local Energy Efficiency Ambitions and Priorities			
	<p>Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (Dorset Councils) have all endorsed and are working towards delivering the targets in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve a 30% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2020, relative to 2005, in line with national targets.</li> <li>To seek to eliminate fuel poverty in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole by 2016, specifically:</li> <li>To work in partnership to achieve an average SAP rating of 65-70 in the housing stock by 2016</li> <li>To ensure that there will be no dwelling with a SAP rating of 35 or less in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole by 2016</li> </ul>	<p>2020</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2020</p>	<p>On track</p> <p>Pending revision of the Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan, Dorset partners are working to the current national fuel poverty strategy, targets, and metrics: Priority is to improve E, F, and G-rated properties where cost-effective.</p> <p>By March 2016, 5.5% of total energy was generated from renewable sources, up from 0.95% in 2011.</p> <p>The Dorset Sustainability and Transformation Plan, Our Dorset, includes improving homes of people vulnerable to the cold as a strand of its actions on prevention at scale</p>

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	<p>Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council have also endorsed the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Renewable Energy Strategy, and Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council are working toward the target of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 7.5% of Dorset's energy needs (electricity, heat and transport) to be met from local renewable energy resources by 2020</li> </ul> <p>The Housing Authorities of Dorset, supported by Dorset County Council and local Health and Wellbeing Boards will work through the Dorset Energy Partnership and affordable warmth partnerships to meet these aims.</p>		
<p>ii. Measures that take advantage of financial assistance and other benefits offered from central Government initiatives, to help result in significant energy efficiency improvements of residential accommodation.</p>			
<p>Energy Company Obligation (ECO)</p>	<p>In order to maximise benefit to local residents and enable ECO delivery organisations to deliver the ECO as effectively as possible, partner local authorities will:</p> <p>Make access to all relevant housing data that is not personal data as</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2013</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>All private sector house condition surveys available free of charge</p> <p>Relevant pages on <a href="http://dorsetforyou.gov.uk">dorsetforyou.gov.uk</a> are regularly updated</p>

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	<p>simple and cost effective as possible. As a rule it will be made available free of charge on dorsetforyou.com and partner websites.</p> <p>Provide regularly updated information on home energy efficiency and central government initiatives including ECO Affordable Warmth, Carbon Saving Communities, and Carbon Saving</p> <p>Raise awareness of central and local government initiatives through local authority communications, Signpost local residents to sources of ECO-funded energy efficiency measures</p> <p>Ensure competitive ECO-funded measures are available to local residents</p> <p>Signpost to relevant local and national sources of independent advice, Conduct regular reviews of the most suitable sources of signposting relevant advice</p> <p>Agree approach to ECO-Flex</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2013</p> <p>2013</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Articles regularly published in both in-house publications and space in local magazines</p> <p>Online and offline resources signpost Healthy Homes Dorset.</p> <p>Healthy Homes Dorset, funded by Public Health Dorset, includes a fund of last resort for use where ECO funding does not cover the whole cost of insulation installation.</p> <p>Dorset Councils' Statement of Intent for ECO Flex is an appendix to this Progress Report</p>
Feed-in tariff (FIT)	<p>In order to maximise benefit to local residents and renewable energy businesses, partner local authorities will :</p> <p>Provide regularly updated information on domestic renewable energy and central government initiatives</p> <p>Signpost local residents to local and national sources of information</p>	<p>2013</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>Printed and online information available</p> <p>Online and offline resources signpost local and national sources of information</p>

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Renewable Heat Incentive	In order to maximise benefit to local residents and renewable energy businesses, partner local authorities will : Provide regularly updated information on domestic renewable energy and central government initiatives Signpost local residents to local and national sources of information	2013 2014	Printed and online information available Online and offline resources signpost local and national sources of information
EPCs	Partner local authorities will develop a business case for acquiring bulk EPC data	2014	Bulk EPC data acquired in 2013. National government initiatives likely to make EPC data more widely available from 2018.
Private rented sector	In order to improve thermal comfort and energy efficiency for local residents in private sector rented homes, partner local authorities will continue to encourage private sector landlords to improve insulation and heating, especially by taking advantage of central and local government initiatives	2013	Dorset Councils encourage and signpost landlords on an on-going basis. Targeted match funded projects and enforcement action also improve energy efficiency.
iii. Measures we propose to cost effectively deliver energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation by using area based/street by street rollout:	In order to maximise benefit to local residents, partner local authorities will: Evaluate potential for "free" insulation schemes in ECO Carbon Saving Communities areas Pilot potential schemes with delivery partner(s) Evaluate results and refine future projects based on learning	2013 2013 2014	Area-based approaches have proved no more cost effective than other approaches where stock is not controlled by one landlord: Fuel poverty affects people, not areas. Latest central government fuel poverty strategy makes no reference to them.
iv. Timeframe for delivery and local and national partners:	Working with other Local Authorities: Share knowledge, experience, and best practice through the Association of Local Energy Officers (ALEO)	2013 2014	Dorset Councils attend and participate in regional and national networks on an on-going basis and are closely involved in the

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	(formerly Carbon Action Network and HECA UK), National Energy Action, and Energy Efficiency Partnership for Buildings Explore opportunities for working more closely with neighbouring authorities		ever closer working between central government and Public Health England at national level, and between Public Health Dorset and Environmental health and Housing at a local level.
	Local partners: Continue to raise awareness of economic, social and health benefits of warm homes among partners including NHS and Local Economic Partnership	2013	Public Health Dorset is seeking to build on learning from previous Department of Health funded projects in Dorset, and work with Public Health England and DECC to ensure on-going projects contribute to the national knowledge base.
	Value of work: Investment needed from ECO Carbon Saving Communities: c.£60,000,000 Investment needed from ECO Affordable Warmth: c.£1,000,000 Investment needed from ECO Carbon Saving: c.£4,000,000		Data is not available on spend per administrative area but by 31/12/2015 5,333 measures installed. ECO revised significantly since 2015 report. Dorset Councils working together on ECO Flex pilot.

Submission of progress report due: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

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For Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council:

Signature:



Name: DAVID MCINTOSH  
Position: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
Date: 9/8/17

For North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council

Signature:



Name: MATT PROSSER  
Position: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
Date: 13.7.2017

For Purbeck District Council

Signature:



Name: STEVE MACKENZIE  
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## **Appendix 1: Dorset Councils Combined Eco-flex Statement of Intent:**

Dorset County Council

Acting on behalf of Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council

Publication date: [01/08/17]

Version number 1.1

**Published:** <http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/housing>

### **Introduction**

#### **Dorset's ambitions for Flexible Eligibility (FE), and how this fits with local policies and priorities:**

Fuel poverty in Dorset has risen from 15,052 in 2012 to 20,074 in 2014 (using the Low Income High Cost definition). Currently 10.5% of households in Dorset are fuel poor which is comparable to the national average.

Evidence shows that poor housing conditions cause accidental injury, make existing health conditions worse, make treating health conditions difficult and have a huge social impact upon the ability of individuals to achieve their potential in education or employment. Healthy Homes are particularly important to Dorset as it has far more older people than most areas in England.

ECO flexibility will support Dorset's delivery of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan, and the Dorset Sustainability and Transformation Plan – "Our Dorset" - and will be delivered as an enhancement of the Healthy Homes Dorset Programme. This programme - funded by Public Health Dorset, managed by Dorset County Council in partnership with local Housing Authorities - aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Dorset residents vulnerable to the negative health effects of living in cold homes. This programme is a key component in the local authorities' work to improve housing stock and enable people to live in their own home for longer. ECO flexibility will enable more Dorset residents that are fuel poor or vulnerable to living in a cold home to access the support they need.

#### **The role of Dorset Councils is to identify residents eligible for ECO Flex.**

Dorset County Council will take reasonable steps to ensure eligible residents are correctly identified according to the criteria set out in the Statement of Intent. However, **Dorset County Council, Public Health Dorset, and the Housing Authorities of Dorset have no role in deciding whether fuel suppliers decide to fund work or not, and are not responsible for funding any heating or insulation improvements.** The decision on whether a household receives an ECO measures is made by the energy suppliers or their agents/contractors. Inclusion in a Declaration made by the Local Authority to a supplier will not guarantee installation of measures, as the final decision will depend on i) surveys 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

#### **How the Local Authority intends to identify eligible households**

ECO Flexible will be available to private sector households, both owner occupiers and private tenants, in line with Government guidance<sup>1</sup>. All potentially eligible households will be encouraged to apply through Healthy Homes Dorset in order to be assessed, based on the criteria described below. Referrals from public, private, and third sector workers and self-referrals are the primary routes for identifying relevant households. Dorset Councils may, at their discretion, publicise the offer to specific relevant groups, such as those in receipt of council tax benefit or users of assisted bin collection schemes.

### Criteria for identifying households in fuel poverty

The criteria for identifying households in fuel poverty are (1) Low income and (2) Likely high heating costs with potential for cost efficient improvement.

Income:

Dorset will use the Help to Heat income thresholds with no requirement for an accompanying tax credit.

The rates are broadly comparable with the reference rates as stated in BEIS guidance but using the Help to Heat thresholds removes the need to assess eligibility for complementary schemes twice. The Healthy Homes Dorset Steering Committee will approve changes based on any updates to BEIS guidance and/or evidence that the suggested rates are not appropriate.

**Table 1 – Income thresholds consistent with those used under the Help to Heat criteria.**

Household composition	Annual household gross income	Monthly household gross income Equivalent
1 adult	£13,200	£1,100
and 1 child	£17,400	£1,450
and 2 children	£21,600	£1,800
and three children	£25,800	£2,150
and four or more children	£30,000	£2,500
2 adults	£19,800	£1,650
and 1 child	£24,000	£2,000
and 2 children	£28,200	£2,350
and three children	£32,400	£2,700
and four children	£36,000	£3,000

Indicators of high heating costs with potential for cost-effective improvement:

While it is the responsibility of the local authority to identify eligibility, not whether improvements can be carried out cost-effectively, it is in the interests of councils, residents, fuel suppliers, and their contractors to identify residents who are not only eligible but also likely to receive help through ECO: There is little benefit in identifying residents who are eligible but unlikely to receive help as there are no cost-effective improvements available. For this reason Dorset residents that meet the income criteria will be eligible for Eco Flex if their homes also meet the following requirements, which are indicators not only that heating bills are likely to be above average, but also that a cost effective improvement is likely to be available<sup>2</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> ECO: Help to Heat Flexible Eligibility

<sup>2</sup> See 2015 fuel poverty marginal abatement cost curve for reasoning behind these measures at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/211137/fuel\\_poverty\\_strategic\\_framework\\_analytical\\_annex.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/211137/fuel_poverty_strategic_framework_analytical_annex.pdf)

Home requirements: At least one of the following:

- i. The home has a valid EPC rating of E, F, or G
- ii. Cavity wall insulation is not installed in cavity walls
- iii. Solid walls are not insulated and heating is not by mains gas
- iv. Under 100mm loft insulation is installed
- v. Functioning mains gas central heating is not installed where mains gas is available in the property or within 23 metres of the property
- vi. The main heating system is not functioning adequately
- vii. The home is in the Lower Super Output Areas of: Melcombe Regis Town Centre; Melcombe Regis Park District; Melcombe Regis Carlton Road; Melcombe Regis Lodmore Hill

This is aligned with the Government's long-term fuel poverty strategy to ensure no fuel poor household home is band E or below by 2025.

The Healthy Homes Dorset Steering Committee will approve changes based on any updates to BEIS guidance and/or evidence that the suggested criteria should be amended.

Criteria for identifying low income and vulnerability to cold:

While data on residents' health conditions will be requested, this will not be used as a criteria since low income is in itself a key identifier of vulnerability, as stated in the NICE Quality Standard. The criteria are therefore the same as above.

Any details of scheme requirements for SWI "in-fill" projects:

The Healthy Homes Dorset Steering Committee will keep a watching brief on the situation and approve changes based on evidence of demand and BEIS guidance.

Acting on behalf of another local authority:

Dorset County Council is acting on behalf of the following Housing Authorities:

- Christchurch Borough Council
- East Dorset District Council
- North Dorset District Council
- Purbeck District Council
- West Dorset District Council
- Weymouth and Portland Borough Council

Joint statement of intent:

The following Authorities are signatories to this joint Statement of Intent:

- Christchurch Borough Council
- Dorset County Council
- East Dorset District Council
- North Dorset District Council
- Purbeck District Council
- West Dorset District Council
- Weymouth and Portland Borough Council

Governance:

The Healthy Homes Steering Group, chaired by Rachel Partridge, Assistant Director of Public Health, Public Health Dorset, will oversee ECO flex declarations in Dorset. Responsibility for signing local authority declarations will be delegated to Jon Bird, Programme Manager, Healthy Homes Dorset, Dorset County Council, except in circumstances where there is a

potential conflict of interest, in which case they will be referred to the Steering Group for authorisation. The Group will also periodically review the Statement of Intent, and amend it as appropriate.

The signature of declarations will be based on information collected by the organisation contracted to deliver Healthy Homes Dorset: (Currently the Centre for Sustainable Energy, Bristol). Dorset County Council will take reasonable steps to ensure residents are correctly identified according to the criteria set out in the Statement of Intent. However, Dorset County Council, Public Health Dorset, and the Housing Authorities of Dorset have no role in deciding whether fuel suppliers decide to fund work or not, and are not responsible for funding any heating or insulation improvements.

#### Referrals:

Referrals from public, private, and third sector workers and self-referrals are the primary routes for identifying relevant households. All potentially eligible households will be encouraged to apply through Healthy Homes Dorset to be assessed. Dorset Councils may, at their discretion, publicise the project to specific relevant groups, such as those in receipt of council tax benefit or users of assisted bin collection schemes.

Referrals for ECO Flex are expected to come from the same sources as referrals to Healthy Homes Dorset: From a wide range of public, private, and third sector organisations, including health and social care organisations, citizens advice bureaux, energy advice providers, food banks, and partners of the Safe and Independent Living (SAIL) multi-agency referral scheme. Referrals can be made electronically ([healthyhomesdorset.org.uk](http://healthyhomesdorset.org.uk)), by phone (0300 003 7023), or by post (Healthy Homes Dorset, Centre for Sustainable Energy, 3 St. Peters Court, Bedminster Parade, Bristol BS3 4AQ).

In the interests of maximising uptake of Eco Flex and encouraging fair competition, while minimising the risks of encouraging rogue traders and cold callers taking advantage of Eco Flex, Dorset Councils will work with the supply chain to allow bona fide organisations to apply for declarations of eligibility independent of Healthy Homes Dorset. During the pilot phase of Eco Flex, organisations that have supported delivery of the current phase of Healthy Homes Dorset<sup>3</sup> will be able to do this. If Eco Flex or its successor(s) become longer term initiatives, the Steering Group will work to expand the eligibility criteria. Dorset County Council may suspend or remove this element of the pilot at any time.

#### Evidence, monitoring and reporting:

The Healthy Homes Dorset contractor will check eligibility in their initial conversation with the resident; they will also check that the resident gives permission for their data to be stored and shared with relevant third parties. As part of this assessment residents will also be invited to complete a Safe and Independent Living (multi-agency referral service) form. The eligibility information will be recorded on a secure customer record management system (CRM). The contractor will present recommendations for Declarations to be issued alongside the relevant data. The Council will issue regular Declarations to its contractor setting out those households eligible. The Contractor will pass this information onto their ECO supplier according to the ECO application process.

Healthy Homes Dorset will use its secure CRM to collate information on households which are eligible for ECO flexibility. The contractor will provide Dorset County Council with a monthly

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<sup>3</sup> Happy Energy (Company number 07744789) and Ridgewater Energy (Company number 10585852)

report detailing eligible householders and the reasons for approval. The following summarises the information to be collated to confirm eligibility:

- The EPC if already present for the householder
- Safe and Independent Living (multi-agency referral scheme) form if used for referral
- A self-declaration form signed by the householder confirming their income

The self-declaration form will be designed to prevent fraud. The data protection authority form will inform applicants that the Council may carry out further checks with HMRC to confirm their eligibility, and may take action if a claim appears fraudulent. This self-declaration and fraud prevention system is analogous to that used for medical prescriptions.

The energy supplier that provides ECO funding is still required to collect all evidence associated with the necessity for a measure e.g. that the cavity wall is appropriate, the boiler is broken etc. The declaration of eligibility is not a substitute for this evidence and Dorset County Council would expect this information to be collected and made available to Ofgem on request.

Signatures:

For Dorset County Council:



Date: 6th July 2017

For Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council:



Date: 9/8/17

For North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council, and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council:



Date: 13th July 2017

For Purbeck District Council



Date: 13-7-17

