



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**Blaenau Gwent**  
County Borough Council

## Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme Via - Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA FLEX)

### Private Sector Housing – Blaenau Gwent CBC

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This statement sets out Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's flexible eligibility criteria for the ECO: Help to Heat programme 2018-2022. The scheme will be subject to funding and may be closed at any time. It aims to support households living in Blaenau Gwent who are most likely to experience fuel poverty and those vulnerable to the effects of a cold home.

**Introduction** – Blaenau Gwent CBC welcomes the introduction of Flexible Eligibility and intends to utilise it for the purposes of reducing fuel poverty within the county. The Council has worked for many years to improve homes across Blaenau Gwent with the aim of increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty.

**What is flexible eligibility** - Local Authorities working with Energy suppliers obligated under ECO, have the opportunity to extend eligibility criteria for energy efficiency measures to households not covered by existing schemes of support.

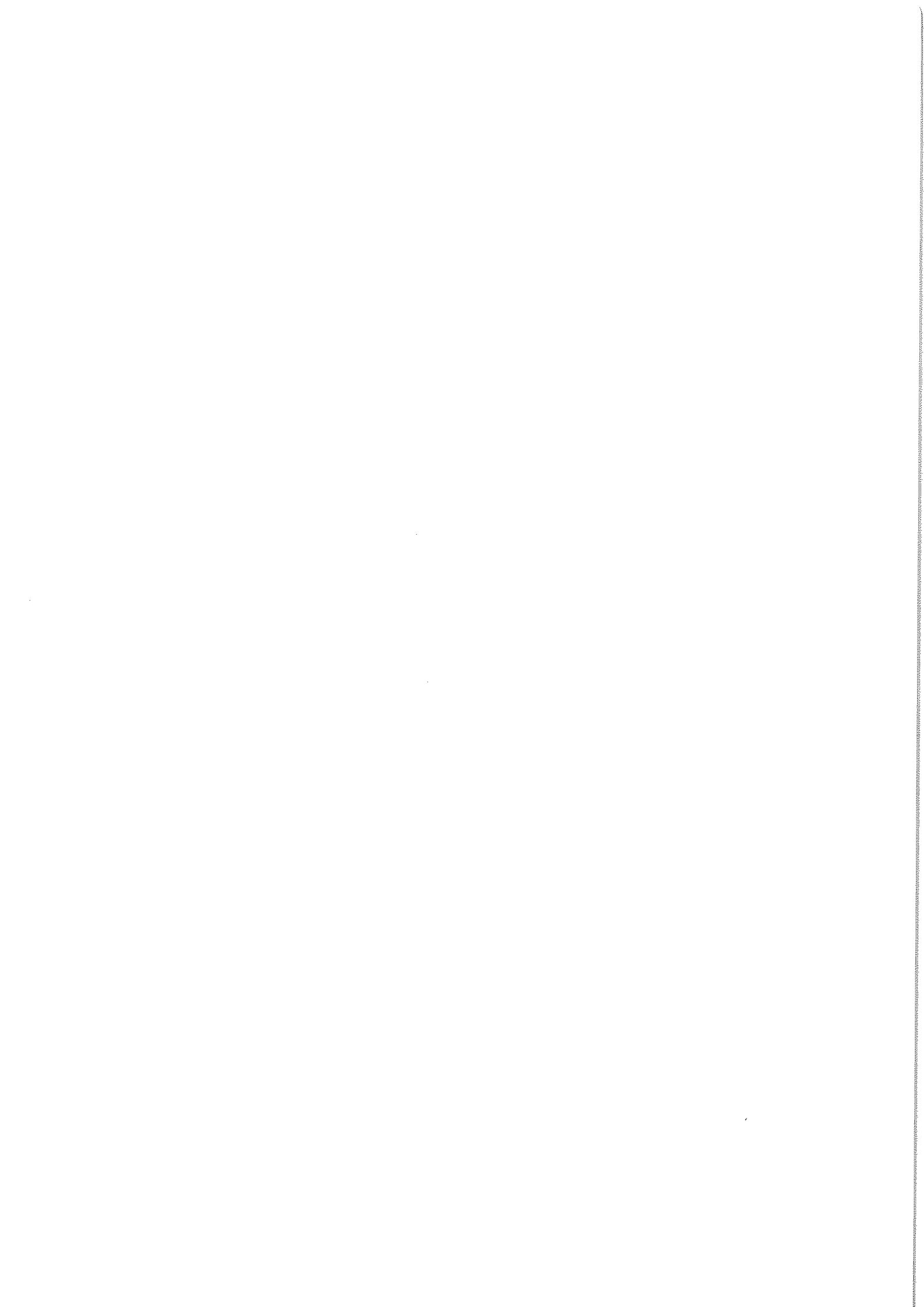
**Identifying households** - Funding available for private owner occupiers and private rented tenants. Qualification of flexible eligibility in Blaenau Gwent is restricted to those **in fuel poverty** (spending more than 10% of income on household fuel) or for households on **Low income that are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home**. There is also a mechanism to include 'in-fill' properties for solid wall allowing adjacent properties to benefit from the same measures in certain circumstances. Eligibility will be determined by using the qualifying criteria and requires a signed declaration by the property owner.

**Qualifying measures** - The energy efficiency measures that can be installed in eligible properties include new central heating systems, heating upgrades and insulation. Although, there are some restrictions within the private rented sector.

**Contractors** - Energy suppliers and/or their agents involved with flexible eligibility surveys and identified works, will be expected to comply with the Data Protection Act. They will need to undertake work in accordance with Ofgem requirements and act in accordance with industry best practice in relation to consumer care and quality standards.

**Cost Associated with Blaenau Gwent Declaration** - The administration charge levied by Blaenau Gwent CBC in providing the declaration necessary for clients to access the ECO Flexible Eligibility scheme is £150. For declaration requiring loft insulation only the fee charge will be reduce to £50. This charge must be paid by the energy supplier or their agent on completion of works and may **NOT** under any circumstances, be passed on to the client receiving assistance via the scheme.

**Final decision** - The decision on whether a household receives a measure under flexible eligibility or other ECO funding streams will be made by the **energy supplier** or their **agent/contractor**. Qualification in the statement of intent or the Declaration by Blaenau Gwent CBC will **NOT** guarantee installation of any measures, as the final decision will **lie with the supplier**.



**Qualifying Criteria:**

- i) Applicant must be living on low income and meet the low income threshold outlined in Table 1.

AND

- ii) the property must have a rating of **E, F or G on an EPC** or have a score of **15 points or greater** in Table 2.

OR

- iii) A member of the household is vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home by meeting any of the criteria outlined in Table 3.

**Table 1: Low income threshold**

Income here is defined as a household's disposable income after they have paid for their rent or mortgage. This comprises income from all sources, such as net earnings (after tax), income from savings and investments, pensions, all benefits (including housing benefit), and net council tax payments.

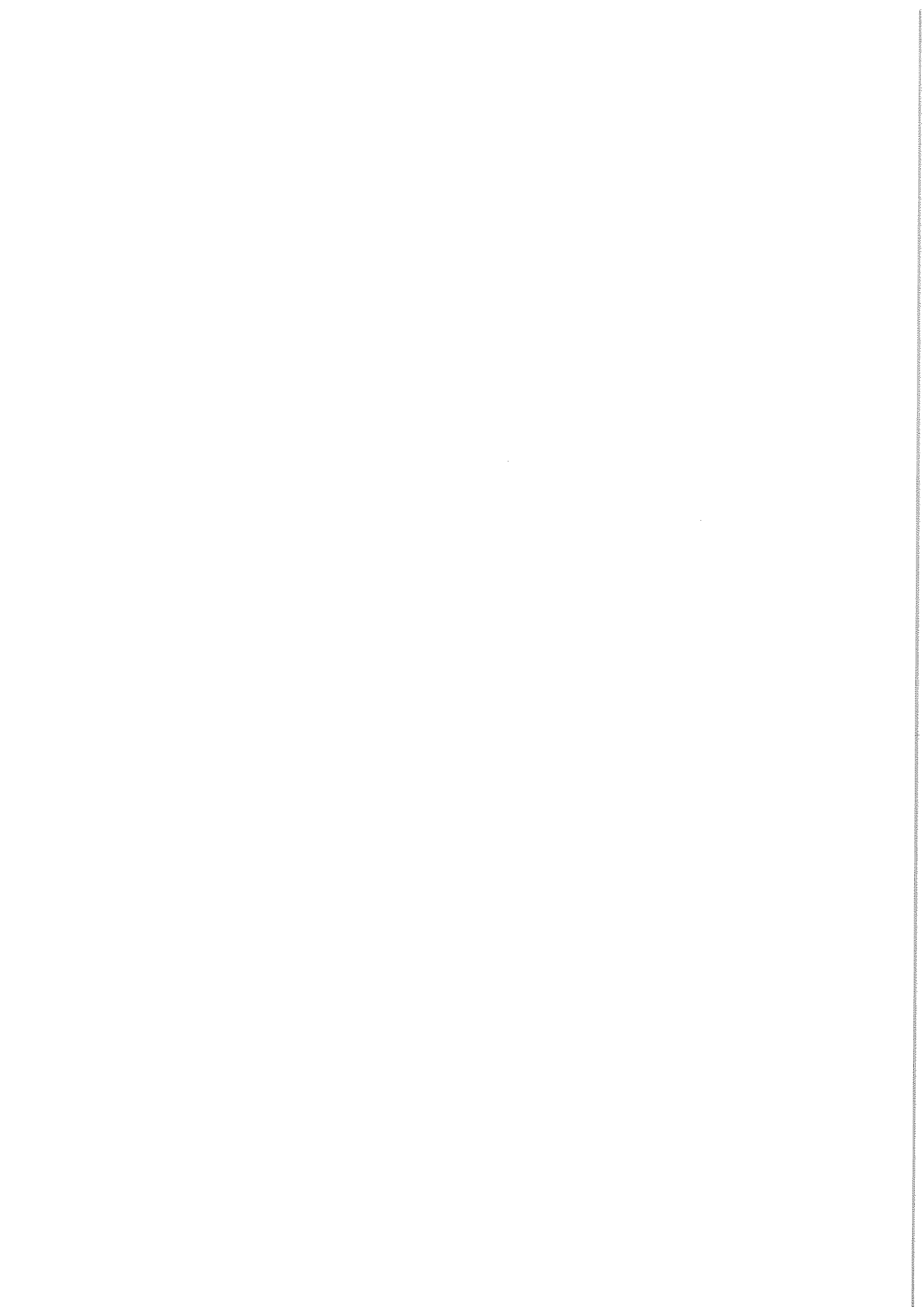
The low income threshold will also be used to determine if the household is in fuel poverty FP.

Household composition	Disposable income (income after rent or mortgage).	Monthly Household Income equivalent
<b>1 Adult</b>	£ 9,300	£775.00
and 1 child	£ 12,200	£1016.00
and 2 child	£ 15,000	£1250.00
and 3 child	£ 18,000	£1500.00
and 4+ child	£ 21,000	£1750.00
<b>2 Adults</b>	£ 15,200	£1267.00
and 1 child	£ 18,200	£1517.00
and 2 child	£ 21,100	£1758.00
and 3 child	£ 24,100	£2008.00
and 4+ child	£ 26,800	£2233.00

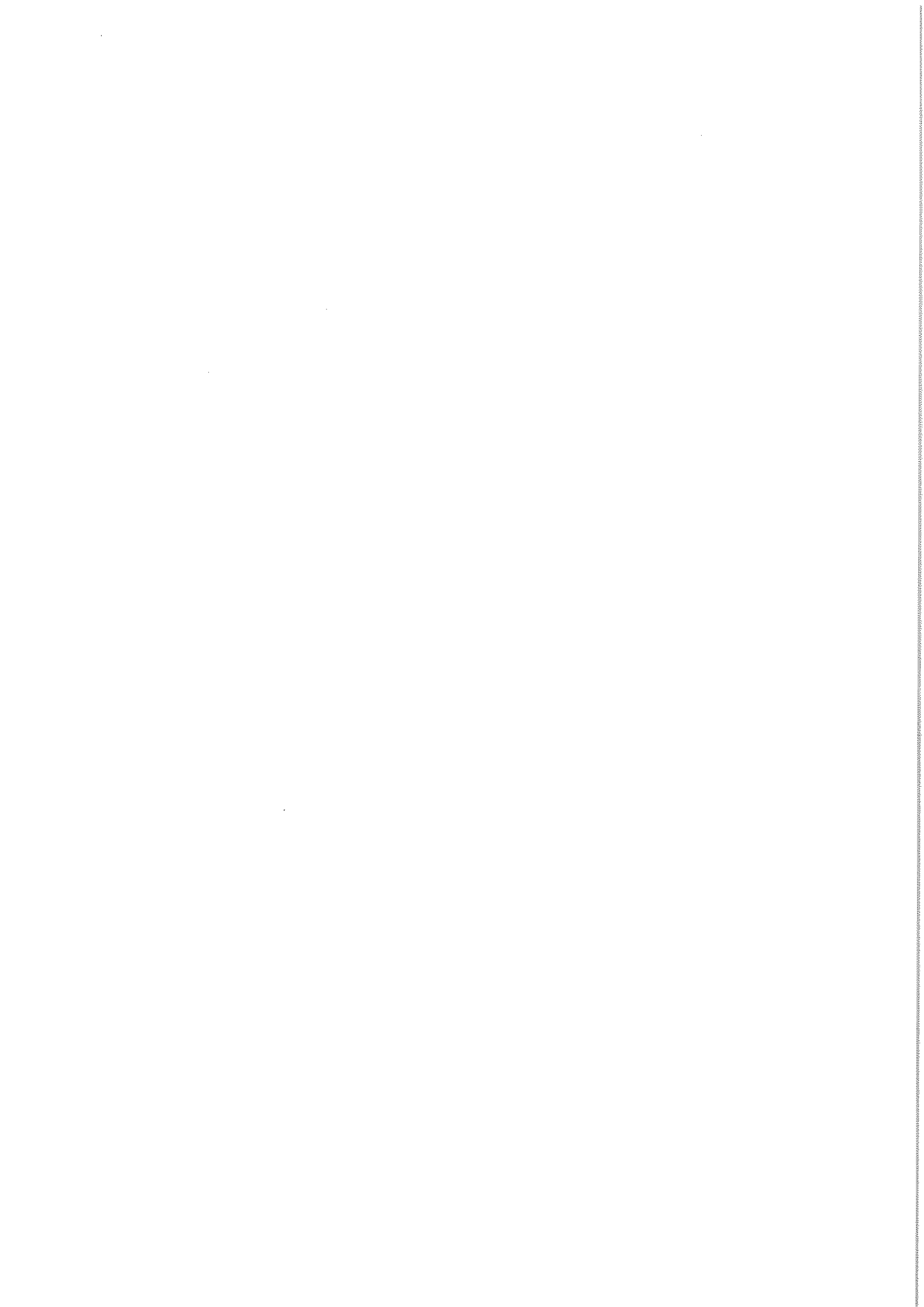
**Table 2 – Determine hard to heat property:**

Property must have a rating of **E, F or G on an EPC** or have a score of **15 points or greater on the table below**

House features	Type	Points	Tick box	Score
Bedrooms	1	1		
	2	2		



	<b>3+</b>	<b>3</b>		
Household occupants	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		
	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>		
	<b>3+</b>	<b>3</b>		
Loft Insulation	<b>None</b>	<b>5</b>		
	<b>Up to 150mm</b>	<b>3</b>		
	<b>150mm and above</b>	<b>1</b>		
Wall Type	<b>System built</b>	<b>5</b>		
	<b>Solid stone/brick</b>	<b>3</b>		
	<b>Cavity construction/Unknown</b>	<b>1</b>		
Wall insulation	<b>External</b>	<b>1</b>		
	<b>Internal</b>	<b>1</b>		
	<b>Cavity</b>	<b>2</b>		
	<b>None</b>	<b>5</b>		
Heating fuel	<b>Mains gas</b>	<b>1</b>		
	<b>Oil</b>	<b>2</b>		
	<b>LPG</b>	<b>3</b>		
	<b>Electric</b>	<b>5</b>		
	<b>Solid fuel</b>	<b>5</b>		
Central Heating system age	<b>Less than 10 years old</b>	<b>1</b>		
	<b>Over ten years old</b>	<b>3</b>		
	<b>Broken system</b>	<b>5</b>		
	<b>No system</b>	<b>5</b>		
			<b>Total</b>	



### **Table 3: Household is vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home**

If it is necessary to demonstrate that householders are at a greater risk to the effects of living in a cold home, Blaenau Gwent CBC adopt the following approach:

Blaenau Gwent CBC will target households containing people from the following list, which reflects the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2015 guidance on excess winter deaths and illness caused by cold homes.

*'Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes' states that: a wide range of people are at greater risk to the cold. This is either because of a medical condition, such as heart disease; a disability that, for instance, stops people moving around to keep warm, or makes them more likely to develop chest infections; or personal circumstances, such as being unable to afford to keep warm enough.*

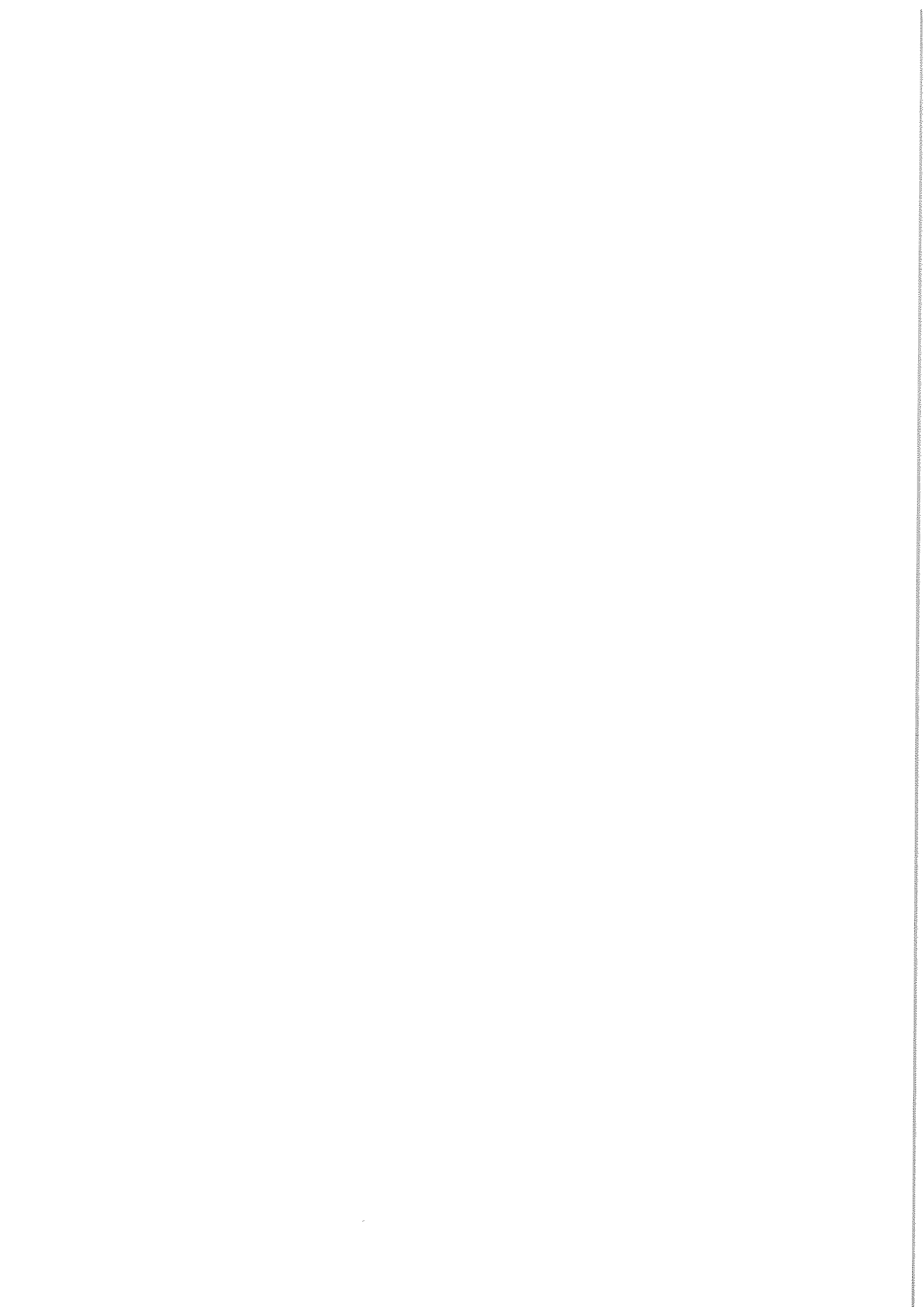
A member of the household is/has

- i. Aged over 60 (proof of age necessary)
- ii. Children under 5 and those in primary and secondary school education or is pregnant
- iii. Respiratory disease (COPD, asthma)
- iv. Cardiovascular disease (e.g. ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease)
- v. Moderate to severe mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)
- vi. Substance misusers
- vii. Dementia
- viii. Neurobiological and related diseases (e.g. fibromyalgia, ME)
- ix. Cancer
- x. Limited mobility
- xi. Haemoglobinopathies (sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)
- xii. Severe learning disabilities
- xiii. Autoimmune and immunodeficiency diseases (e.g. lupus, MS, diabetes, HIV)

**Signed declaration by doctor or health practitioner necessary to confirm any health related issues listed above (iii – xiii).**

#### **OUTCOME:**

- Applicant will be considered in Fuel Poverty (FP) if they meet the criteria outlined in Table 1 and 2.
- Applicant will be considered on low income that are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC) if they meet the criteria outlined in Table 1 and 3.





### “In-fill” properties for solid wall insulation

In order to encourage multi-property solid wall insulation in private tenure, Householders that are not living in fuel poverty (FP) or living on a low income and are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC) may be able to benefit, known as ‘in-fill’ properties. This mechanism is designed to help the delivery of solid wall insulation which particularly benefit from economies of scale. If at least 50% of eligible households receive these measures, an adjacent property can also receive the same measure, as long as the number of these ‘in-fill’ properties does not exceed 50%.

Where a household does not meet the criteria for FP or LIVC, we can declare a household as “in-fill” where they are:

- a) in an immediately adjacent building to; or
- b) are in the same building as a household that does meet those criteria; or
- c) in the same terrace as; or
- d) back to back entire terraces, but only if the back of the actual properties are touching (not back to back garden/ alleyway separates the terrace).

The ‘in-fill’ criteria summarised as follows:

Summary of the requirements for property types under in-fill Property Type	LA declaration requirements	In-fill available
Project consisting of a pair of <b>semi-detached houses or bungalows</b> , or a <b>building containing no more than two domestic premises</b> .	At least one of the two-properties must be declared as FP or LIVC (i.e. <b>50% of the properties are FP or LIVC</b> ).	The other private property to which it is directly adjoined is eligible for solid wall insulation. This is known as the in-fill property.
Project consisting of any premises that are contained in the <b>same building</b> (e.g. flats), immediately <b>adjacent buildings</b> (eg neighbouring properties) or in the <b>same terrace</b> .	All properties that are receiving a LA Flex measure must be covered by a declaration. This applies to LIVC, FP and in-fill properties. Up to 50% of total FP or LIVC combined properties within the project can receive a measure.	The in-fill 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.

### **Governance**

The following Private Sector Housing Officers will be responsible for signing declarations on behalf of the Local Authority -


Service Manager, Public Protection, Team Manager, Environmental Protection and Specialist Environmental Health Officer.

### **Monitoring**

The number of households contacted and eligible for ECO Flexible Eligibility, together with the number of ECO Flexible Eligibility funded measures installed along with numbers of homes improved will be recorded by Blaenau Gwent CBC.

### **Signature**

Signed by: 

Date: 

Version 2

