**Warm and Well Central Heating fund installer guide**

**What is the Warm & Well Central Heating fund?**

The Warm & Well central heating fund is a funding programme provided by the Department for Energy and Climate Change which is designed to support local authorities to deliver first time central heating systems to their fuel poor households. A winning funding bid was submitted by South Gloucestershire Council in partnership with the individual local authorities in Gloucestershire. The Severn Wye Energy Agency is managing delivery of this funding to privately owned and rented properties in this area.

The key objectives of this funding are to help cut bills and increase comfort in non-gas, fuel poor households who experience some of the most severe levels of fuel poverty.

**Who is eligible for this funding?**

Households in South Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire that:

* **Do not have a central heating system installed** – For the purposes of this funding; this is defined as a heat generator providing heat to several rooms via a heat distribution system.
* **Are at risk of being in fuel poverty** – For the purposes of this funding, this is defined as;
  + Those households meeting ECO affordable warmth criteria
  + Those households who meet a low income and high energy cost criteria as defined by the Severn Wye Energy Agency.

**Households can contact the Warm & Well advice line to confirm scheme eligibility.**

**How much funding is available per household?**

The maximum amount of funding available to each household that can be used in installing a first time central heating system is as follows:

* **Gas, oil, heat pumps and biomass central heating systems - £4000**

This amount is the maximum, and we would not expect that all eligible households will need to claim this amount. All quotations will be checked by the Severn Wye Energy Agency prior to approval

If the total cost of installing the central heating is more than the maximum grant available, the householder will need to contribute. The Warm & Well advice line will be able to advise householders if there are any additional funding schemes that would be able to contribute toward the cost in these cases.

**What heating systems are eligible?**

Eligible Technologies:

* Condensing gas boiler
* Condensing oil boiler
* Condensing LPG boiler
* Air Source Heat Pump\*
* Ground Source Heat Pump\*
* Biomass boiler\*

Installed heating systems must be new (refurbished equipment is not permitted) and they must supply space heating and domestic hot water. Only ‘A’ rated condensing **boilers of 89% efficiency** or above and heat pumps that conform to the **ERP directive** can be installed.

\*Any product from Ofgem’s Domestic RHI product eligibility list: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/domestic-renewable-heat-incentive-product-eligibility-list-pel>

In addition, the eligible heating technology should typically include:

* Eligible heat exchanger
* Distribution pipework (This must be copper, not plastic – unless there are justifiable reasons not to use copper piping)
* Heat emitters (e.g. radiators)
* Heating controls (e.g. programmer, Room thermostat & TRV’s as a minimum)
* Circulation pump
* Expansion vessel
* Air supply and exhaust

The installer must also provide:

* As minimum, a fully inclusive 5 year warranty on the gas or oil boiler and 12 month warranty on the distribution system.
* Documentary evidence that their heating system has been correctly fitted and notified as well as providing an explanation of its operation, as set out in the ‘Benchmark scheme’ code of practice.
* Gas Safe / OFTEC installation registration
* Minor electrical works certificate or Electrical installation certificate
* For any biomass boilers or heat pumps installed, installers should provide a manufacturers guarantee and a workmanship warranty of at least two years as specified within the Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC).

**Customer quotation requirements**

* **All customers will be required to obtain at least two quotes from Link to Energy installers**. The customer will be advised to proceed with the lowest cost quote. If the lowest quote is not chosen, the reason for the choice of installer (and their proposed heating solution) must be agreed by Severn Wye.

**So how will this all work then?**

In a nutshell, this is how the application process will work:

**Frequently asked questions**

**What cannot be funded under this scheme?**

* Electric storage heaters
* The replacement or repair of existing central heating systems
* The provision of central heating systems to new, or self-build properties
* Any associated works that does not generate or distribute heat

**What installers are eligible to access the funding for householders?**

To be eligible to access this funding for householders, the installer must be:

* Registered on the Severn Wye Energy Agency [‘Link to Energy’](http://www.linktoenergy.org.uk) installer directory and have provided a signed copy of the ‘Warm & Well central heating fund installer agreement’
* Registered with Gas Safe, HETAS or other competent persons scheme relevant to the heating system being installed
* If an Air source Heat Pump, Ground Source Heat pump or biomass boiler system is installed the installer must be MCS and RECC accredited

**What about those households that do not have access to mains gas?**

We are working in partnership with ‘Wales & West Utilities’ and ‘Warm Wales’ to connect households to mains gas where possible. Gas connection grants are also available to householders meeting defined criteria.

If you are aware of households that are in areas where mains gas is typically available but they have not yet connected, please refer them to the Warm & Well advice line where an advisor can discuss options with them.

**In what geographical areas is the fund available?**

The house must be located in Gloucestershire or South Gloucestershire and be privately owned or rented. (If it is rented, the landlord must agree to the work being completed).

**If I have customers that I know are eligible for the scheme, can I use the funding to fit their central heating system?**

Yes, as long as the householder is confirmed as being eligible. You will need to ask your customers to contact the Warm & Well advice line where an advisor will explain the process of how to apply. Customers will still be required to obtain at least two quotes for the work.

**Is there a referral fee for completed installs?**

Yes, for all completed installs where the customer has been referred to you via Link to Energy and the Warm and Well advice line you will be invoiced for 3% (+VAT)of the total value of the work. The only exception to this is where you have directed a customer to us, and after obtaining at least two referrals the customer has chosen you as their preferred installer.

**Link to Energy is a charitable service provided by the Severn Wye Energy Agency. Any income generated helps us to continue to provide this service and any surplus will be reinvested into locally delivered energy efficiency, renewable energy programmes and community enhancement schemes.**

**Why is the customer required to obtain at least two quotes?**

There are a number of reasons for this:

* To ensure the customer has been provided with a choice of installer and quotes to inform their decision making process
* Local Authority procurement regulations specify obtaining at least two customer quotes
* To promote equality to different sized installers across the Link to Energy Network

**When does the scheme close?**

The scheme will close either when the funding runs out or at the time DECC has specified that it will run to. Currently this is August 2016. We will notify registered installers if funding levels are close to being exhausted, or close to August 2016 to confirm timescales for the scheme.

**What is the value of the funding provided by the Department of Energy & Climate change?**

The bid submitted by South Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire local authorities was successful in bringing three million pounds worth of funding to the area to be spent on first time central heating systems.

**Can the funding be used to cover the cost of the oil tank, base and associated work if an oil fired central heating system is being installed?**

DECC have stated that ‘All of the parts of the heating system used to generate or distribute heat are eligible for funding including the heat source (e.g. a boiler), the pipework and the radiators.’ Therefore the cost of associated works cannot be included within the available funding.

**If I am installing an MCS accredited heat pump or biomass boiler for an eligible customer, can they also access the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)?**

The householder will be eligible for the RHI, but they must be made aware that the Warm & Well central heating fund constitutes a grant from public funds, so would be deducted from RHI payments. You may therefore want to include this in your calculations so that the customer can understand the impact on their investment.

**Can I fit a first time central heating system into a house with storage heaters?**

In some circumstances this may be possible. If you have customers in this situation, please ask them to call the Warm & Well advice line to discuss an application to the scheme.

**Are homes with single gas fires but not a central heating system eligible for this scheme?**

They may be considered eligible. Householders in these circumstances are advised to contact the Warm & Well advice line where an advisor can ask some questions to assess their eligibility.

**Are park homes included as eligible?**

Yes, any household which meets the fuel poverty eligibility criteria, and has no central heating is potentially eligible.

**As part of my survey I noticed that the house did not have adequate loft insulation or cavity wall insulation. Can this work be funded?**

If you find any properties that have little or no loft insulation, or you suspect that the cavity walls have not been filled, then please ask the householder to call the Warm & Well advice line, or if they agree to, pass contact details to us and we will call them. As you know, reducing heat demand is key to having a warm and comfortable home. We can refer the householder on to companies who can insulate their homes, and in many cases, funding to complete this work will be available.

**Are households with partial heating systems – so only some of the rooms are heated with central heating – considered to be eligible?**

Provided that a central heating system is installed that provides heating to one or more additional rooms, and involves the replacement of the heating source, then these households may be eligible. For example, a system with a solid fuel fire with a back boiler with distribution to more than one, but not all of the property’s rooms would be eligible for replacement and extension. However, any existing central heating system fueled by mains gas is not eligible for replacement or extension under the fund. Householders in these circumstances are advised to contact the Warm & Well advice line where an advisor can ask some questions to assess their eligibility.

**Can any other heating funding schemes be combined with this funding?**

Yes. If you have access to **ECO funding**, we would suggest that the Warm & Well central heating fund could be used to top up any shortfall in the total cost. This will help us to stretch the funding further, to help in benefitting more householders.

If you have access to ECO funding for central heating systems, we urge you to let us know so that we can refer eligible householders to you when appropriate.

**If my quote for a customer is successful, when can I go ahead and fit the system?**

Before going ahead with any work, ensure that the customer has received an ‘offer letter’ from the Severn Wye Energy Agency, and that if the cost of the work is more than the funded amount that the customer has the means to pay this. **The new central heating system should be installed within two months of the offer letter.** If you envisage any issues that may prevent this, please let us know, and ask the customer to contact the Warm & Well advice line to discuss this.

**If the house is being connected to mains gas for the first time, how long will this take and when will I know when I can go ahead and fit the central heating**?

If the customer is applying for a gas connection they will have made this application at the same time as they were referred on to Link to Energy installers for quotes. If a gas connection is possible it should take about a month to connect the home and to get a meter installed. Only after this point

can the central heating system be fitted. We will try to ensure that a householder is eligible for a gas connection before referring customers to installers for quotes for a gas boiler.

**We get very busy at some points during the year, what if we don’t have capacity to quote and install central heating systems for a period of time?**

If you are at full capacity, it is very important that you let us know. We can then put a hold on sending any further referrals until you are ready to take on more. We don’t want householders waiting for long periods of time to obtain quotes and to have their central heating installed. Remember that the installer agreement states that systems should be installed within two months of the work being approved.

If you are at full capacity let us know as soon as you can;

Tel: 01452 835086 Email: [linktoenergy@severnwye.org.uk](mailto:linktoenergy@severnwye.org.uk)

**When will I get paid for the heating system that I have installed?**

The applicant must sign and return the completion certificate once the work has been installed, alongside a copy of their invoice, within five working days of receiving their invoice. Payment will be made to the installer within 21 days (typically sooner). Unfortunately we are unable to provide any interim payments or deposits to installers.

**If you have any further questions about the Warm and Well Central Heating scheme as an installer please contact:**

Neil Towler: [neilt@severnwye.org.uk](mailto:neilt@severnwye.org.uk)

Tel: 01452 835086

**Householders interested in the Warm and Well Central Heating scheme should contact:**

Warm & Well Advice line

Tel: 0800 500 3076 Email: [warmandwell@severnwye.org.uk](mailto:warmandwell@severnwye.org.uk)