
Sustainability & Energy Efficiency Policy



**April 2026 | This policy relates to Elmbridge Borough
Council Residential Properties**



Elmbridge
Borough Council

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1. Introduction

Elmbridge Borough Council is committed to providing safe, warm, and energy-efficient homes for our residents. Improving the sustainability and energy efficiency of our homes helps reduce carbon emissions, supports residents in managing their energy costs and reducing the risk of fuel poverty, ensuring we meet our legal and regulatory responsibilities.

Energy efficiency forms part of our responsibility to maintain homes in accordance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety and Quality Standard and the Decent Homes Standard, which require homes to provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort and be safe and suitable to live in.

The UK Government has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 under the Climate Change Act 2008. Improving the energy efficiency of housing plays an important role in supporting this national target.

The Government has also established an expectation that social housing providers should improve homes to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030, where reasonably practicable. We will work towards this objective through planned maintenance and investment programmes, taking into account technical feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and available resources.

We will take a planned and proportionate approach to improving the energy performance of our homes, recognising the size and profile of our housing stock.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out our approach to improving the sustainability and energy efficiency of our housing stock
- Ensure we meet our legal and regulatory responsibilities as a social housing provider
- Support compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and the Decent Homes Standard
- Support national and local objectives to reduce carbon emissions and improve sustainability

- Work towards improving our homes to EPC Band C and above where reasonably practicable
- Support residents to live in homes that are safe, warm, and affordable to heat
- Provide a framework for planning, managing, and delivering energy efficiency improvements

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All homes owned by Elmbridge Borough Council, including communal areas
- All tenants and residents living in our homes
All employees, contractors, and managing agents involved in managing, maintaining, or improving our homes

4. Regulatory and Policy Framework

We will comply with all relevant legislation, regulations, and regulatory standards relating to sustainability and energy efficiency, including:

- Climate Change Act 2008
- Housing Act 2004
- Energy Act 2011
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Environment Act 2021
- Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards)
- Fuel Poverty (England) Regulations 2014
- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards, including the Safety and Quality Standard.
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- The New Decent Homes Standard 2026
- Warm Homes Plan 2026

In addition, the council will have regard to emerging national policy on energy efficiency in social housing. This includes the expectation that homes should achieve a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of Band C by 2030 where

reasonably practical, and anticipated reforms to the EPC framework. These reforms are expected to move towards a broader, multi-metric approach to assessing energy performance, including factors such as building fabric, heating systems, carbon emissions, and energy costs. The council will take account of these developments when planning future investment to ensure homes remain compliant, energy efficient, and affordable to run.

5. Understanding Our Housing Stock

We maintain accurate and up-to-date information about our homes to help us understand their condition and energy performance and to plan improvements in a proportionate and evidence-based way.

This information includes:

- EPC ratings
- Stock condition survey data
- Heating systems and controls
- Insulation levels
- Property construction type

Maintaining accurate stock data supports effective asset management, regulatory compliance, and informed investment planning.

As of April 2026, we own 105 residential properties. All of our homes have a valid EPC, which provides information on their energy efficiency.

Our current EPC profile is as follows:

- 44 properties have an EPC rating of C or above
- 44 properties have an EPC rating of D
- 17 properties have an EPC rating of E

This information helps us understand the current performance of our housing stock and identify homes that may benefit from improvement. Our short-term objective is for all homes to achieve EPC Band C or above by 2030 where reasonable practical, with a longer-term ambition to go beyond this standard and deliver continued improvements in energy efficiency.

We use EPC data, stock condition information, and asset management planning to prioritise improvement works, with a focus on improving homes with lower EPC ratings, taking into account any technical, structural, or other limitations that

individual properties may have.

This approach enables informed investment decisions and supports effective long-term asset management.

6. Delivering Energy Efficiency Improvements

We improve the energy efficiency of our homes through planned maintenance, improvement works, and long-term asset management programmes.

We will ensure that homes provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort, enabling residents to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature in a cost-effective and energy-efficient way. This includes ensuring properties have an appropriate primary heating system capable of heating the whole home and that residents are able to control their heating where practicable.

We will ensure properties meet and, where practicable, exceed minimum energy efficiency requirements at the point of letting, unless a valid exemption applies.

Energy efficiency improvements will be considered taking account of key performance factors expected to form part of future EPC assessments, including building fabric, heating systems, and energy use. Measures may include:

Building fabric:

- Installing or upgrading insulation where required
- Improving windows and doors where appropriate

Heating systems and Smart Readiness controls:

- Installing or improving heating controls and smart technologies where appropriate to support efficient energy use
- Installing or improving heating controls to support effective use

Energy use and cost:

- Installing energy efficient lighting, including replacement of lightbulbs during void works where appropriate
- Supporting the use of appropriate energy tariffs, such as dual fuel or off-peak tariffs, where suitable and practicable

Where possible, improvements will be delivered alongside planned maintenance works to ensure cost-effective delivery and minimise disruption to residents.

We will prioritise improvements to homes with the lowest EPC ratings. This risk-

based approach focuses resources on the least energy efficient homes and supports continuous improvement in the overall energy performance of our housing stock.

We will assess opportunities to improve energy efficiency when properties become vacant. Delivering works during void periods allows improvements to be carried out with minimal disruption to residents and can be more cost-effective, as works can be coordinated alongside repairs, compliance works, or planned upgrades.

Undertaking energy efficiency improvements at void stage also enables us to:

- Improve the energy performance of homes before re-letting
- Reduce future reactive maintenance and retrofit disruption
- Target properties with lower EPC ratings in a managed and practical way
- Support incoming tenants to move into warmer, more affordable-to-heat homes

We will embed energy efficiency and sustainability within our asset management strategy and planned investment programmes to ensure improvements are coordinated, financially sustainable, deliver value for money, and aligned with long-term asset planning.

We will ensure contractors delivering improvement works comply with relevant regulations, standards, and Council requirements.

7. Funding & Investment

The council will invest in energy efficiency improvements to its housing stock to support the delivery of safe, warm, and sustainable homes.

We will seek to maximise the use of available resources by aligning energy efficiency works with planned maintenance and wider asset management programmes, ensuring a coordinated and cost-effective approach to improvement.

The council will also seek to maximise external funding opportunities, including government retrofit programmes such as the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund, where available. This will support the delivery of improvement works across a greater number of properties and, where practicable, enable the council to exceed minimum energy efficiency standards.

Investment decisions will be informed by stock condition data, EPC information, and wider asset management priorities to ensure works are targeted where they will have the greatest impact.

8. Supporting Residents

Improving energy efficiency helps residents by improving comfort, reducing energy costs, and improving the overall quality of homes.

We will take a proportionate approach to identifying residents who may be at risk of fuel poverty and provide signposting or support where appropriate, including advice on energy usage, heating, and available schemes.

We will provide residents with clear information about planned improvement works, how they may benefit, and what to expect during delivery. Works will be carried out safely and with minimal disruption wherever possible.

9. Monitoring and Performance

We will monitor the energy performance of our homes and review progress in improving energy efficiency.

This includes monitoring:

- EPC ratings
- Progress towards increasing the proportion of homes achieving EPC Band C or above
- Delivery of planned improvement works
- Compliance with regulatory requirements

This helps ensure we maintain safe, efficient homes and meet our responsibilities as a social housing provider.

Responsibility for monitoring performance under this policy sits with the Housing Contracts & Compliance Manager. Performance will be reviewed and reported on an annual basis to track progress, inform future investment planning, and support continuous improvement.

10. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every three years, or sooner if laws, regulations or best practice changes. Responsibility for monitoring its implementation lies with our Housing Services team.

From April 2027, following Local Government Reorganisation, responsibility for

reviewing this policy will be transferred to the successor authority, which may also consolidate this policy with wider housing policies.