

GDN Collaborative Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

Mental Health UK – Energy Safeguarding and tackling fuel poverty for people with Mental Health

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Gas Network Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Governance Document - Project Eligibility Criteria

Section 1 - Eligibility criteria for company specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, a project must:	
VCMA Eligibility Criteria	Criteria Satisfied (Yes/No)
a) Have a positive, or forecasted positive Social Return on Investment (SROI), including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA project;	YES
b) Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, or ii. Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, or iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO; 	YES
c) Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;	YES
d) Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and	YES
e) Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved, or local) funding.	YES
Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing, repair, and replacement projects	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:	
a) A GDN has to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role;	N/A
b) The household cannot afford to service, repair, or replace the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance; and;	N/A
c) Sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including national, devolved, or local government funding) to fund the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance servicing, repair, or replacement.	N/A
Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects	
In order to qualify as a collaborative VCMA project, a project must:	
a) Meet the above company specific and boiler repair and replace (if applicable) project eligibility criteria;	N/A
b) Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and	YES
c) Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.	YES

Gas Network Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Governance Document - Project Registration Table 2

Information Required	Description												
Project Title	Energy safeguarding and tackling fuel poverty for people with Mental Health												
Funding GDN(s)	The GDN(s) which register(s) the VCMA project												
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	The specific role(s) of GDN(s) participating in a collaborative VCMA Project Lead: SGN and WWU Supported by Cadent and NGN												
Date of PEA Submission	22 February 2024												
VCMA Project Contact Name, email, and Number	Sophie Shorney Sophie.shorney@wwutilities.co.uk Linda Spence Linda.spence@sgn.co.uk												
Total Cost (£k)	£3,261,100 <table border="1" data-bbox="418 958 1294 1272"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Total cost (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mental Health & Money Advice Service</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>£2,112,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>£1,112,000*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E-Learning Consultancy and Creation</td> <td>£37,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£3,261,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Total cost (£)		Mental Health & Money Advice Service		2023	£2,112,000	2024	£1,112,000*	E-Learning Consultancy and Creation	£37,000	Total	£3,261,000
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Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£667,652.50 <u>Year 1 - £355,000</u> <u>Year 2 - £309,100 *</u> <table border="1" data-bbox="418 1393 1294 1668"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Total VCMA funding required (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mental Health & Money Advice Service</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>£355,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>£309,100*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CO Alarms</td> <td>£3,552.50**</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£667,652.50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*The costs account for inflation in line with the Bank of England but Mental Health UK would seek to provide a more accurate budget for year two once markets have settled. ** This includes cost for CO alarms which is subject to change, with inflation.</p> <p>Funding Breakdown:</p>	Total VCMA funding required (£)		Mental Health & Money Advice Service		2023	£355,000	2024	£309,100*	CO Alarms	£3,552.50**	Total	£667,652.50
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	Network	SGN	WWU	NGN	Cadent	Total
	Training – Yr 1	£7,548	£10,582	£3,774	£15,096	£37,000
	MHMA – Yr 1	£64,872	£90,948	£32,436	£129,744	£318,000
	MHMA – Yr 2	£63,056.40	£88,402.60	£31,528.20	£126,112.80	£309,100
	CO Alarms	£1,015	£0*	£507.50	£2,030	£3,552.50
	Total	£136,491.40	£189,932.60	£68,245.70	£272,982.80	£667,652.50
	*WWU CO alarm costs are £0 as we will supply from our stock which is budgeted for under a separate VCMA project					
Problem(s)	<p>Poor mental health impacts the ability to maintain a safe and warm home</p> <p>Mental Health UK, the only mental health charity operating UK wide, provided the below figures from their MHUK Money Advice service, from July 2021, compared with figures from July 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas and electricity arrears had accounted for around 8% of the total debt in 2021. It now stands at 15%. • The average monthly fuel bill more than doubled from £70 a month to £141 a month. • The number of clients that were in fuel poverty (i.e. spending more than 10% of their income on fuel) tripled from 8% to 24%. <p>Mental Health UK has seen a significant increase in demand for the support in more recent years. In January – June 2023, it saw an 78% increase of people seeking advice on how to apply for Universal Credit, compared to the same period in 2022. As the cost of living continues to increase, the number of people looking for advice on fuel bills has increased by 38% in 2023 compared to 2022.</p> <p>Approximately 7.5 million people in the UK live with a diagnosed mental illness and an estimated one in four of us experienced a mental health problem every year, pre-pandemic. This situation has been worsened by the challenges that the cost-of-living crisis has brought to our communities.</p> <p>To exacerbate matters further, it is widely recognised that, due to the current climate, more people are now experiencing energy arrears.</p> <p>In 2018, Britain Thinks and Citizens Advice completed extensive research and shared insights via a report called ‘The energy market and people with mental health problems’. This report detailed the range of ways in which poor mental health has a known effect on the relationship between energy consumers and energy companies.</p> <p>Key concerns raised from this research included that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs of people living with mental health issues forms a barrier to effective management of accounts • When there is a problem with managing accounts, people experiencing poor mental health are reluctant to proactively address the issue • Dealing directly with an energy company could be the cause of additional stress and anxiety. • Energy safeguarding awareness is low especially around carbon monoxide (CO) awareness and fewer registrations for the Priority Service Register 					

More recently:

- In October 2022, the British Psychological Society found that 1 in 5 people with a diagnosed mental health problem said that worrying about money was making them feel depressed.¹
- The Warm This Winter Campaign conducted research in March 2023 that found 30% of people in energy debt are experiencing anxiety and 12% said this had made them ill²

The additional impact of poor customer engagement has resulted in customers not accessing key support schemes designed to safeguard customers and support households in financial vulnerability, including the Warm Homes Discount and Winter Fuel Payments.

Research from the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute has shown that people with poor mental health still struggle to communicate effectively with [their energy provider](#) and most worryingly, that [44% of adults with mental health problems who fell behind on a bill had considered taking their own life.](#)³

Financial risks within households are not just limited to utilities. Living in poverty can lead to a range of adverse outcomes such as issues in health and housing, being both the victim and perpetrator of criminal activity and substance abuse. Food poverty is on the rise, with the Trussell Trust reporting that they distributed 2.9million food parcels in 2022/23 compared with 61,000 just over a decade ago.⁴ Leading high street banks are also concerned about an anticipated increase in financial risk-taking behaviour such as gambling, and greater susceptibility to romance fraud and online fraud.

Furthermore, living in a cold and unhealthy home can further impact health and [wellbeing](#). This has been significantly detailed in many recognised studies, including the Marmot Review. The relationship between poor mental health and money problems is toxic when taking a whole-person view.

Clients supported are over £4,000 better off after their contact with Mental Health & Money Advice, while 81% have seen their wellbeing improve after intervention. The service also provides information online.

In Quarter 1 of 2022, (April-June) nearly 250,000 people were supported through the service's website and 61% found that their mental health or money situation improved after their visit. Visits to the site are increasing month on month in 2022.

People on lower incomes struggling with poor mental health are often reliant on older boilers, older heaters, or even gas stoves or cookers to heat their homes; either due to financial barriers or because they are reluctant to have people in their homes. National Energy Action and Gas Safety Trust research found 35% of low income and vulnerable households surveyed exceeded the 10ppm threshold for carbon monoxide levels.⁵ People living in deprived areas are also less likely to own an audible CO alarm than homes in non-deprived areas, further increasing the risk of CO poisoning.

With the increase in demand for MHUK Mental Health and Money Advice Service and the issues facing people in fuel poverty, there is a clear opportunity to combine the skills and expertise of Mental Health UK and the four GDN's working in partnership to provide

¹ <https://www.bps.org.uk/news/one-two-people-experiencing-more-anxiety-about-being-able-pay-their-bills-last-year-warns-bps>

² <https://www.warmthiswinter.org.uk/news/rising-energy-debt-creates-mental-health-crisis>

³ [The link between debt and suicide during the pandemic - Money and Mental Health Policy Institute](#)

⁴ https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/06/State-of-Hunger_Exec-Summary.pdf

⁵ Cited on Safelincs blog (2020) [Carbon monoxide poisoning: who is most at risk?](#)

	access to support services to help people living with poor mental health remain safe and warm in their homes.
Scope and Objectives	<p>In 2017, Mental Health UK launched its award-winning Mental Health & Money Advice service. The service is the first UK-wide service to support people both with their mental health and money. The service helps users with claiming benefits, resolving debt issues, signposting to health and social care support and applying to charitable trusts. The staff all receive training in understanding mental health conditions and the mental health system that clients interact with.</p> <p>With such a stark picture of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis will have on people’s personal finance, Mental Health UK in partnership with the GDN’s is advancing its model to allow greater access to their Mental Health and Money Advice service. In addition to the advice and case work provided on referral, they will expand the service and open it to people who wish to self-refer. There will be a free helpline, supported by a team of “Money Navigators”</p> <p>The Money Navigators will triage the self-referrals from clients coming through the website and Mental Health and Money Advice service, and offer a more holistic service to vulnerable people needing support by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing advice to people on simple matters that do not need to be referred to a specialist adviser, for example; completing benefits checks, giving energy efficiency advice, signing up to priority service register, carbon monoxide awareness and providing financial capability advice. • Referring people to the specialist mental health and money advisers for more complex advice, including regulated debt advice. • Signposting/referring to other forms of money advice when the person's mental health needs do not warrant the intervention of this service. <p>This will help lead to long-term reductions in fuel bills, a reduced risk of disconnection and the proliferation of carbon monoxide safety advice to reduce risk to life.</p> <p>Over time the service will form partnerships with organisations including those specialising in gambling harm, food poverty, shelter, and housing for example. With each new partnership, the service will grow its expertise in that topic, continually growing the ability to help the person holistically with their mental health and money needs.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To launch the new support service, ‘Money Navigators’, for customers who utilise MHUK support services, offering energy safeguarding and CO awareness as part of this extended service. • To enable effective referral pathways from GDNs and their partners for customers with poor mental health in addressing pressing challenges with their utility costs; ensuring facilitated access to energy initiatives like the Warm Home Discount scheme, the CO safety programme, supplier advocacy services to address energy debt, and access to key services like the Priority Services Register. • To train all Mental Health & Money Advice Advisors and Navigators as energy specialists, so that anyone accessing the service via any referral mechanism can be supported with their utility needs. • To introduce a new network of partners to support people with poor mental health through joined-up customer journeys, e.g., Gas Distribution Networks, Energy Saving Trust, StepChange, Age UK and Mental Health UK. • To upskill and train GDN engineers and customer experience colleagues on mental health; helping them provide appropriate support and great service to customers experiencing mental health problems.

	<p>Training for Gas Distribution Networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health UK will carry out a need analysis discovery period to determine the specific requirements of GDN colleagues, primarily engineers, regarding mental health and how to support and signpost vulnerable customers with poor mental health and severe mental illness, as well as have to support engineers and wider colleagues with their own mental health. • Mental Health UK will provide awareness training content to meet the needs of engineers and front-facing colleagues. This will be supplied for the adaption to the GDN’s own E-Learning teams/external providers who will format the content to the relevant platforms. The e-learning can be used for the 2-year duration of the project, with an annual license fee to be agreed if the GDN’s wish to use it thereafter. • Mental Health UK will provide a range of learning that will encourage further learning and engagement for all (in the form of physical and downloadable resources), designed to equip engineers with the tools, understanding and knowledge of how to spot the signs of poor mental health, and how to compassionately signpost customers in need of support. <p>Partnership Working across this initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHUK will promote the project by engaging with delivery partners across Britain to raise awareness • MHUK will engage with communities by utilising our delivery partner networks particular the rural forum networks, and services based in areas of high deprivation • MHUK will further promote the project through social media coverage, bespoke blog pieces, a launch announcement in their corporate newsletter (with subsequent follow-up where applicable), and submission to relevant charity awards • MHUK will additionally support GDNs by delivering the agreed training services, providing expert resources, and signposting guidance for colleagues, supporting in the delivery of awareness days and any fundraising campaigns, and updating GDNs of all upcoming workplace strategies and training opportunities. • As gas networks, we encourage partners to work together and refer into each other’s organisations for support. MHUK will also accept referrals from other partnership organisations directly or via the gas networks.
<p>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</p>	<p>This project operates across all the GDN networks and aligns to our collective GDN strategic ambition to support ‘priority customer groups’ most in need of help to maintain a safe and warm home.</p> <p>It will provide support to consumers living with poor mental health in vulnerable situations to tackle fuel poverty and debt issues, and CO safety issues; resulting in a positive Social Return on Investment.</p> <p>The project will provide a holistic suite of services where customers access their dedicated services as well as referrals for debt support, energy efficiency advice and awareness of the dangers of CO, tailored to the needs of each householder to support improved health, financial resilience, and energy safeguarding. It will also have the benefit of increasing CO awareness in harder-to-reach communities.</p> <p>The project will work collaboratively with expert agencies to maximise positive impacts and deliver defined outcomes for vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>In order to qualify as a VCMA Project, a project must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA project

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) either: i. provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or ii. Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO; c) have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these; d) go above and beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and e) not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved, or local funding) <p>This project is being funded through VCMA as per the above guidelines</p>
<p>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</p>	<p>Mental Health UK and SGN pilot partnership March 22 to August 23</p> <p>During 2022, SGN and Mental Health UK piloted the impact and effectiveness of establishing a referral pathway to allow SGN and its partner organisations to direct customers to a dedicated utility specialist within Mental Health & Money Advice. This pilot has included mental health training for their engineers and involved partner organisations. It also involved extending the existing service provided by the Mental Health & Money Advice service to include energy debt advice and access to energy efficiency advice services in cases where SGN and its agreed partners have been unable to provide this due to customers’ mental health.</p> <p>During that period, a total of 224 clients have received services from MHUK. Clients have received the full holistic service that SGN-referred clients get including income maximisation, welfare rights, debt advice, housing advice, energy efficiency, CO awareness and access to SGN additional services.</p> <p>SGN Stakeholder Evidence</p> <p>During the shaping of the SGN business plan we committed to support at least 250,000 vulnerable households to use gas safely, affordably and efficiently over GD2. During 2023, following ongoing engagement with Ofgem, SGN’s Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Group and Vulnerable Steering Group we increased this commitment to support 500,000 vulnerable households, those most at risk of living in a cold and unhealthy home. SGN have used data and insights to develop our programme, this has underpinned how this commitment to support those most in need from a strategic ambition into an extensive partnership-based delivery programme.</p> <p>As we’ve progressed our portfolio of projects throughout GD2 our strategic Vulnerable Steering Group (VSG) has provided ongoing guidance to SGN, reiterating importance of impactful partnerships that co-ordinate activities with others to support those most in need.</p> <p>SGN have an existing partnership with Mental Health UK, this was formed in 2021 our business and VSG have valued the learning and support services the Mental Health UK teams have provided our employees, partners and customers. Through working closely with the Mental Health UK teams we’ve been able to co-design a service that builds skills into our customer facing teams and provide an effective customer and partner referral service that supports people with mental health difficulties with their energy and money advice issues. The learnings from this partnership have formed the foundation of this national partnership.</p> <p>WWU Stakeholder Evidence:</p> <p>Through our business planning for RIIO GD2, priority customer research and stakeholders told us that tackling fuel poverty was a priority for WWU alongside raising awareness of the PSR and the dangers of CO amongst hard-to-reach groups and those who are most in need.</p> <p>Through engagement with our Citizens Panel, customers demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of vulnerability, with a strong emphasis on the mentally or physically disabled and the elderly as their primary concern. The panel were in</p>

	<p>agreement that projects should continue to be delivered through partnership organisations who are experts in delivering support services, such as MHUK.</p> <p>Cadent Stakeholder Evidence:</p> <p>With regards to the customer/stakeholder engagement conducted by Cadent, an insights project was undertaken in May 2023 to support the future delivery of VCMA projects. The project was undertaken by experts from Savanta and consisted of stakeholder and customer interviews, as well as a national omnibus survey. The customer surveys found that tackling affordability and fuel poverty was top of mind. Every customer engaged as part of the project reported affordability as a concern, with many pointing to the mental and physical health impacts that they had directly experienced as a result of the cost of living/fuel crisis.</p> <p>This partnership with Mental Health UK will provide support to customers concerned and impacted by affordability and fuel poverty, through various services including offering tailored advice and access to hardship funding.</p> <p>NGN Stakeholder Evidence:</p> <p>As part of our Health Focussed CIVS workshop, stakeholders told us that one of the biggest concerns was health, specifically the link between living in a cold, damp home and the impact on health. Health projects are a priority for NGN this regulatory year and we have already started engaging with NEA and other partners on this issue. We are also engaging with the charity Noah’s Ark, in relation to financial hardship and mental health.</p> <p>Through extensive engagement with stakeholders, we are seeing a number of key themes coming through consistently in terms of the impact of health and increased risks associated with cold, damp homes. Some notable observations and key areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We're seeing evidence of more expensive fuel costs for those with disabilities and those living with specific health conditions - We're seeing a rise in mental health issues within our network – and acknowledging this as a barrier to engagement in longer term support - We're acknowledging increases in the risk of CO poisoning – and looking at ways to identify and address this
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Over the 24 months, this partnership will both contribute to and grow the Mental Health & Money Advice service in the UK.</p> <p>This partnership with the GDNs will enable Mental Health UK to train their Advisors and Navigators as energy specialists, so that anyone accessing the service via any referral mechanism can be supported with their utility needs.</p> <p>Advice offered will be free, confidential, and non-judgmental. It will be provided on the phone or through video calls. Services to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welfare rights and access to benefit entitlement check ● Income maximisation ● Debt advice ● Warm Home Discount and Winter Payments ● Advice and awareness provided around dangers of carbon monoxide ● Access to free carbon monoxide alarms (Volumes: Cadent 200, NGN 50, SGN 100, WWU 140 – Total 490 Alarms) ● Locking cooker valves and the Priority Services Register

- Energy and Water Efficiency advice and, where required, onward referral to Energy Saving Trust
- Mental health support and services
- Onward referral to health and social care services where appropriate

From accessing the service, we expect clients/gas customers to:

- Have improved awareness of energy efficiency and the dangers of carbon monoxide
- Have more awareness around energy safeguarding and resilience
- Have improved access to financial support including hardship funding, fuel vouchers, crisis support and other benefits
- Feel more knowledgeable and confident in managing their finances, including household utility costs
- Report improved wellbeing and be living in a safe, warm home

Advice Service – Money Navigators

To support at least 4,900 customers per annum, with approximately:

- 500 coming from Northern Gas Networks area
- 1,400 coming from Wales & West Utilities area
- 1,000 coming from SGN area
- 2,000 coming from the Cadent Network area

successfully addressing the issues that would prevent them from maintaining a safe and warm home long term. The GDNs and Mental Health UK aim to support those in need with access to practical help that improves their health and wellbeing and increases their confidence to manage their household utility costs.

Engagement Success Criteria

In addition to the agreed campaign metrics, the partnership will also monitor the indirect reach of the campaign through the impact of the communications and marketing channels. The partners will promote the campaign at key intervals via social media channels and through the use of Mental Health UK’s corporate partner newsletter, as well as any other agreed ad-hoc channels where relevant.

The success of our marketing activity will be measured through the following metrics:

- Number of people reached:
 - No. of unique pageviews on new advice content
 - No. of impressions on social media content
- Engagement and satisfaction with content:
 - High average viewing times on website content
 - High satisfaction scoring on website content (monitored using Hot Jar forms)
- External recognition for the project:
 - Positive media mentions and anecdotal feedback through positive comments and engagement on social media content

Training during the first 12 months of the partnership

Working with the GDN’s, Mental Health UK will deliver training designed to equip staff with the tools, understanding, and knowledge they need to spot the signs of poor mental health when in customers’ homes and signpost them to relevant support services including Mental Health & Money Advice. Mental Health UK will work with the

	<p>GDNs to assess and develop their own mental health and wellbeing policies by making use of strategic analysis tools.</p> <p>In addition to the above subject to a review of the cost of this project, MHUK can provide access to the 'This Can Happen Index', a cost-effective mental wellbeing measurement tool based on robust testing and methodology to help organisations understand ways in which they can support their staff and customers with their mental health. The cost of this model will vary per GDN as it is based on organisation size and will be finalised on an individual basis should GDNs wish to utilise this tool.</p>
<p>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</p>	<p>Details of Project Partners or third-party involvement:</p> <p>ENGLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Rethink Mental Illness – delivery partner in England · Debt Advice Foundation - member of the referral partner network in England · Financial Wellness Group - member of the referral partner network in England and Wales <p>WALES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Adferiad Recovery – delivery partner in Wales <p>SCOTLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Change Mental Health – delivery partner in Scotland · Age Scotland – member of the referral partner network in Scotland · Home Energy Scotland – member of the referral partner network in Scotland · Citizens Advice Scotland – member of the referral partner network in Scotland · Scottish Power Energy Networks – trainer for the Priority Services Register and member of the referral partner network in Scotland <p>OTHER REGIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · StepChange – member of the referral partner network throughout Britain · Money Advice Trust – member of the referral partner network throughout Britain · Nationwide Building Society – member of the referral partner network across Britain · Gas Safe Charity - trainer for the Think CO Awareness training package across Britain · Other Pioneer Partners from lead sectors: MHUK engage with local housing providers, NHS providers, local authorities, and community centres across Britain to promote the service.

<p>Potential for New Learning</p>	<p>Working in partnership with MHUK will help the GDNs better understand the needs of customers who are dealing with mental health and struggling to maintain a safe and warm home.</p> <p>MHUK will conduct ongoing evaluation of the impact of the partnership as well as provide case studies and feedback from beneficiaries of the partnership. This will help MHUK and the GDNs better understand how to support vulnerable households struggling with fuel poverty. The data collected through this partnership will be able to shape future policy change and Mental Health campaigns.</p> <p>This partnership is designed to become embedded within MHUK to ensure it delivers systemic change. Once the partnership with the GDNs ends, MHUK will be able to continue supporting Mental Health and their families that are struggling with fuel poverty. The learnings and evaluation of this partnership can be used as a model for future partnerships the GDNs conduct to ensure the partnerships they set up are sustainable and continue to have a legacy after the funding ends.</p> <p>MHUK will provide outcomes of the effectiveness of the training provided to the GDN’s front line workers and the challenges faced around referring customers most in need. Assessing the training successes and better understanding how to break down the barriers GDN’s face when providing the Mental Health and Money Advice support service to vulnerable households.</p> <p>MHUK will conduct ongoing knowledge sharing activities with the GDNs and their partners to help improve ongoing partnerships that are supporting vulnerable people. MHUK will be keen to have ongoing open conversations with the GDNs and their partners to help us all learn from one another.</p> <p>Following the initial training period and depending on the findings of the need analysis stage and reflections on the E-Learning model, Mental Health UK has the potential to support the GDNs with a greater level of bespoke training.</p> <p>Lessons have been learnt throughout the pilot stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has sometimes been difficult to engage clients at an early stage in the process. MHUK have adapted their referral processes so that they now have a variety of referral methods, including self-referral. Meaning referral partners can refer the client in the way that is most likely to promote engagement. MHUK also send welcome packs and texts for clients who have booked appointments, so they know what to expect. • MHUK have found it difficult to get referrals in directly from the GDNs. So will be running a series of webinars to promote engagement with frontline staff in these services. • Given the different funding streams MHUK operate under, recording and reporting on outcomes could sometimes be difficult due to the requirements of different funders. They have reviewed and streamlined the outcomes we report on to mitigate this as much as possible. <p>MHUK will work with GDN's on any further additional training needs required throughout project.</p>
<p>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations</p>	<p>Using the expected number of customers reached by MHUK and the outcomes provided by their staff, this project is expected to achieve the below Social Return on Investment (SROI):</p>

		5-year Results																						
		Economic	Total gross present value	£32,459,551.45																				
			NPV	£29,236,918.97																				
			SROI	£9.07																				
VCMA Project Start and End Date	<p>Detail start and end date of the VCMA project and, where relevant, the VCMA project that preceded this initiative.</p> <p>VCMA Project start and end date The project will run from February 2024 to March 2026</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">November 23</td> <td>Funding decision by GDNs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feb – March 24</td> <td>Project mobilisation, recruitment of new advisors and navigators</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March – April 24</td> <td>Advisor training in energy debt advice, Warm Homes Discount, and the CO safety programme, supporting people with financial capability and energy efficiency advice etc Engineer and Customer Experience Centre staff trained and onboarded as referral partners First referrals made to the service</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 24</td> <td>Training needs analysis Production of learning resources and distribution</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 24</td> <td>Review of training needs analysis and training recommendations made</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Monthly</td> <td>Project review meetings</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quarterly</td> <td>Stakeholder review meetings</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feb 25</td> <td>Year one review</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feb 26</td> <td>Year two review</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 26</td> <td>Project close out*</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final quarter of reporting will come after project close out 				November 23	Funding decision by GDNs	Feb – March 24	Project mobilisation, recruitment of new advisors and navigators	March – April 24	Advisor training in energy debt advice, Warm Homes Discount, and the CO safety programme, supporting people with financial capability and energy efficiency advice etc Engineer and Customer Experience Centre staff trained and onboarded as referral partners First referrals made to the service	April 24	Training needs analysis Production of learning resources and distribution	May 24	Review of training needs analysis and training recommendations made	Monthly	Project review meetings	Quarterly	Stakeholder review meetings	Feb 25	Year one review	Feb 26	Year two review	March 26	Project close out*
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Geographical Area	<p>Details of where the VCMA Project will take place. If the VCMA Project is collaborative, the Funding Licensee area(s) in which the project will take place should be identified.</p> <p>Northern Gas Networks geographical patch SGN geographical patch Wales & West Utilities geographical patch Cadent Network geographical patch</p>																							
Internal governance and project management evidence	<p>Description of GDN(s) review of proposal and project sign off, with details on how the project will be managed This project is being extended to cover a UK wide footprint in collaboration with all gas networks following the success of a pilot project completed by SGN (detailed above).</p> <p>MHUKs project proposal has been reviewed through various industry working groups including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GDN Vulnerability Working Group (monthly) - VCMA Steering Group <p>In addition to the above, each GDN has their own internal governance structure which involves reviewing project proposals and budget costs with various teams and management levels throughout their organisation including senior managers and at an executive level.</p> <p>This project is also supported by stakeholders (as outlined above).</p>																							

The project will be managed and co-led by WWU and SGN and will consist of:

- Monthly project review meetings
- Quarterly stakeholder review meetings
- Stage gate review after 1 year of delivery
- Ongoing reviews throughout the duration of the project regarding delivery of outcomes - this will feed into lessons learnt and shared best practice to ensure the project is successful in delivering value for money and maximising outcomes for customers and communities

Gas Network Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Governance Document - PEA Control Table

In order to ensure that a VCMA project is registered in accordance with the Ofgem VCMA governance document (incl. project eligibility assessment), the below table should be completed as part of the project registration process.

Stage 1: GDN Collaboration Group PEA Review

Meeting date review completed:

Review completed by:

GDN:	Name:	Job Title:
NGN	Jill Walker	Social Strategy Project Manager
SGN	Linda Spence	Vulnerability Manager
WWU	Sophie Shorney	VCMA Manager
Cadent	Kate Clarke / Kate Ravenscroft	

Stage 2: GD2CVG Panel Review

Meeting date sign off agreed:

Review completed by:

GDN:	Name:	Job Title:
NGN	Eileen Brown	Customer Experience Director
SGN	Maureen McIntosh	Director of Customer Services
WWU	Nigel Winnan	Customer & Social Obligations Strategy Manager
Cadent	Phil Burrows	Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery

Step 3: Participating GDN individual signatory sign-off

GDN	Name:	Job Title:	Signature:	Date:
NGN:	Eileen Brown	Customer Experience Director		06.03.2024
SGN:	Maureen McIntosh	Director of Customer Services	Approved via email	27/02/2024
WWU:	Nigel Winnan	Customer & Social Obligations Strategy Manager		18.3.2024
Cadent	Phil Burrows	Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery		29/02/2024

Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem (vcma@ofgem.gov.uk)

Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: March 24
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: March 24