

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)
Cadent's Customer Vulnerability Conference

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March 2025



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 a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) and Net Present Value (NPV) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project (GDNs should use a common SROI model.	Y
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; 	Y
c) Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;	Y
d) Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through license obligations; and	Y
e) Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.	Y
Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company-specific essential gas appliance servicing	
To qualify as a VCMA Project, essential gas appliance servicing must meet the following criteria:	
a) Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A GDN has had to isolate and condemn an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role; or ii. A GDN or its Project Partner has identified an essential gas appliance which has not been serviced in the last 12 months in the owner-occupied home of a customer in a Vulnerable Situation where an occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition that makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes; or iii. A GDN or its Project Partner has identified an essential gas appliance which has not been serviced in the last 12 months in a tenant-occupied home of a customer in a Vulnerable Situation where it is the tenant's responsibility to maintain the essential gas appliance, where an occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition that 	N/A

makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes.	
b) The household cannot afford to service the essential gas appliance, which is assessed against criteria consistent with the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) Guidance: Delivery document1 (see Appendix 1).	N/A
c) Sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including a social or private landlord, national, devolved, local government funding) to fund the essential gas appliance service.	N/A

Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for Collaborative VCMA Projects	
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	N/A
c) Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.	N/A

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

Information Required	Description
Project Title	Cadent's Customer Vulnerability Conference
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	N/A
Date of PEA Submission	October 2024
VCMA Project Contact Name, email and Number	Mark Belmega Mark.belmega@cadentgas.com 07500816666
Total Cost (£k)	Partner costs: £104,000.00 Project management costs (4%): £4,160.00 Updated December 2025 Conference costs: £178,182.00 Project management costs: £7,127.28 Ripple Mapping: £3,350.00 Project management costs: £134.00

Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£108,160.00 Updated Total £296,953.28
Problem(s)	<p>GDNs play a pivotal role in connecting customers in vulnerable situations with a wide range of support products and services; much of which is funded through the VCMA or Cadent Foundation, but also a range of government and private led schemes.</p> <p>Stakeholders at the last Annual VCMA Showcase Event challenged the GDNs to think of ways to enhance collaboration across sectors (public, private and charity) to create a greater level of connection, enabling a more collective and strategic UK-wide approach to supporting customers in vulnerable situations.</p> <p>Updated December 2025 The feedback from last year's national conference was that regional organisations can feel isolated. Our local conferences across our network are a great opportunity to share best practice, learn from some of our partners and collaborate. We work with many partners across our networks, and this is often in isolation, so the regional conferences are about bringing partners together to forge connections, create links and collaborate.</p> <p>Considering the valuable feedback, we received and our goal to thoroughly assess the actual impact of the connections established during the conferences, we have decided to collaborate with a specialist in Ripple Mapping. This innovative approach provides a visual representation of how interactions emanate from a single source, allowing us to trace the paths of influence and connectivity. The Ripple Map not only captures the immediate effects of these interactions but also demonstrates the broader network of relationships that have formed as a result. By utilising this tool, we hope to gain deeper insights into how these connections can foster collaboration and drive positive outcomes within our community.</p>
Scope and Objectives	<p>Cadent's customer vulnerability conference was set up as a direct response to this challenge. It brought together over 200 delegates, including senior (decision making) representatives from the UK Government, Ofgem, energy companies, other private businesses, delivery partners and charities.</p> <p>The conference was held in London and focussed on understanding the evolving nature of vulnerability in the UK, especially in relation to energy and energy prices, extensive networking (to create connections and facilitate collaboration), leading onto an outcome-based action planning session.</p> <p>Updated December 2025</p> <p>The primary objective of the regional conferences is to provide a platform for a greater number of organisations to engage and foster meaningful connections with professionals in their local communities.</p> <p>These conferences aim to highlight collaborative efforts and innovative projects that are benefiting the region, thanks to the funding provided through the VCMA.</p>

	<p>We will be hosting four conferences across the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North London: Focusing on the unique challenges and opportunities in this area. - West Midlands: Showcasing initiatives that celebrate the diverse talents and contributions of local organisations. - East of England: Highlighting successful partnerships and programs that are making a difference in the community -Northwest: Exploring the impact of funded projects and the future direction of collaborative efforts. <p>Each conference is expected to attract approximately 100 delegates, providing an opportunity for attendees to network, share insights, and discuss best practices. By attending, participants will gain valuable knowledge about the remarkable work of our partners and how they are leveraging VCMA funding to create positive change in their regions.</p> <p><u>Ripple Mapping</u></p> <p>This process not only examines the immediate effects of an interaction but also explores how one single encounter can lead to a variety of outcomes over time. For this project, we plan to engage with ten individuals who participated in the Northwest conference from the Centre for warmth projects. Our goal is to meticulously map their journeys, beginning with their very first interaction at the event. We will gather insights into their experiences, motivations, and the subsequent actions they took as a result of that initial engagement, thereby illustrating the broader impact of the conference on their personal and professional lives.</p>
<p>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</p>	<p>This project helped to create 100s of new connections across multiple sectors and has directly led to the establishment of new initiatives to support customers in vulnerable situations, along with enhancing many existing projects.</p>
<p>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</p>	<p>The project was designed and developed directly off the back of feedback from multiple stakeholders at Ofgem’s annual VCMA showcase event in 2024.</p>
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p>Over 200 senior (decision making) delegates from Ofgem, UK Government, public, private and charity sectors collaborating with a highly outcome driven agenda over a full day – face-to-face.</p> <p>100s of new connections forged, including those facilitated via an innovated app designed for the conference.</p> <p>Outstanding feedback from the event, including multiple charity partners confirming new investment received and new projects established, directly through connections made at the conference.</p> <p>Updated December 2025</p> <p>The conferences will bring together approximately 100 individuals from different organisations in a specific region. They will work</p>

	<p>together and connect to build relationships to improve the services they can offer as a collective across our network.</p> <p>The Ripple Mapping will visualise ten individual's customer journeys from first contact. This will show how projects and organisations impact customers lives and interweave with each other not only in intended ways but unintended.</p>
Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	<p>The project was delivered with support from Brandwalk.</p> <p>Speakers at the session including Akshay Kaul (Ofgem), Chris Webb, MP, Sir Robin Miller, CBE (Scope), and senior representatives from Citizens Advice, National Energy Action, Alzheimer's Society, Home Start, various Centres for Warmth, the Cadent and Severn Trent charity foundations and many more. Full details can be found on Cadent's website.</p> <p>Updated December 2025</p> <p>Brandwalk will facilitate all four conferences across the Cadent network.</p> <p>The Ripple Mapping will be created by Sam Moon Facilitation Ltd, ten VCMA partners and Cadent.</p>
Potential for New Learning	<p>Ongoing engagement has continued since the event. Future events will be more focussed on specific problem statements.</p> <p>Updated December 2025</p> <p>Following last year's conferences, we have considered feedback regarding hosting regional conferences. Cadent aims to facilitate connections and collaborative efforts with our partners to provide a more comprehensive service to their customers.</p> <p>The Ripple mapping will extend our learnings of the true impact that working with partners has on an individual's journey with an organisation.</p>
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV	<p>It is impossible to attribute a direct SROI benefit to such a wide-ranging project.</p> <p>As a result, we propose to attribute a simple £1 benefit to each £1 invested in the event. We know from feedback of connections made, new partnerships forged and extensions to existing projects (e.g. new services now offered through our Centres for Warmth), which are generating outstanding customer benefits, but to estimate their social value would be impractical.</p> <p>Updated December 2025</p> <p>As above</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	<p>1 September 2024 to end of October 2024 Update December 2025</p> <p>2nd October 2025 - March 31st 2026</p>
Geographical Area	UK wide with the event held in London

	Update Four events one in each network Ripple map NW network
Internal governance and project management evidence	Approved by Mark Belmega (Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose)

**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: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team PEA Peer Review	
Date Immediate Team Peer Review Completed:	Review Completed By: Gemma Norton Update :Kate Clarke
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed:	Review Completed By: Phil Burrows Update: Gemma Norton
Step 3: Director of Sustainability & Social Purpose Sign-Off: Mark Belmega. Update Phil Burrows	
Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose Sign-Off Date: 23 March 2025. Update February 2026	
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 2025. Update: February 2026	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: March 2025. Update: February 2026	