Cadent
Your Gas Network

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

Earlham Community Shop, Norwich

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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: **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	**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	Earlham Community Shop - Centre for Warmth
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent company specific project
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Not applicable
Date of PEA Submission	November 2025
VCMA Project Contact Name, email and Number	Name: Phil Burrows Title: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery Email: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com Number: 07773 545451
Total Cost (£k)	Centre costs: £4,883.00 Large slow cookers costs: £1,392.00 Plaque cost: £30.00 Leaflet costs: £881.82 Project management costs: £287.47
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£7,474.29
Problem(s)	Earlham Community Shop is a community-driven organisation committed to improving the lives of residents in Earlham, Norwich - an area ranked among the top 10% most deprived areas in the UK[1]. Through its community shop, the organisation provides affordable food and household essentials to families facing financial hardship and at risk of food and fuel poverty. Beyond this, it serves as a vital hub where residents can build social connections, access advice and practical support, and take part in community activities such as budgeting workshops and cooking classes. For the last few years, the UK's economic and social conditions have forced many individuals to live precariously and put individuals at risk of even greater levels of poverty and deprivation. Fuel poverty, in particular, has become a pressing issue. Living in fuel poverty makes individuals more susceptible to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, prolonged financial difficulties, and various physical and mental health-related problems. In this case, low literacy levels and widespread unemployment or unstable, low-paid work further prevent individuals from accessing the information and opportunities they need to improve their situation. Cadent's VCMA funding will enable the charity to provide essential information and support on carbon monoxide (CO) safety, energy efficiency and the priority services register (PSR), while providing a safe, warm space this winter. The community will be able to build the knowledge, tools, and confidence to stay safe and resilient – unlikely without funding.

[1] https://deprivation.communities.gov.uk/about-your-neighbourhood/E01026867?postcode=NR58DB

Scope and Objectives	<u>Project scope</u> The project will run as a four-month trial, with the potential for extension if it is successful. Cadent will invest £7,474.29 of VCMA funding to deliver a partnership project from December 2025 to March 2026, in partnership with Earlham Community Shop. The project will replicate other Centre for Warmth models, whereby Cadent provides VCMA funding, resource, and training to enable the delivery of vital information and support on CO safety, energy efficiency, and the PSR within a community setting. The project will be delivered in Earlham, Norwich from the Community Shop and incorporate outreach support in partnership with other community partners. Earlham Community Shop is a members-based service open to families with children at Earlham Nursery School and Norwich Primary Academy, as well as those that live on a selection of listed streets. Membership is £3 for the year. The project investment and outreach element will enable the charity to open its doors to non-members (for advice and support) – increasing the potential reach and impact. The hub manager and existing volunteers will be trained to deliver advice and support to members of the community. The services that they will deliver include: • Hosting weekly coffee mornings – providing a warm space for individuals to access advice and support. • Delivering monthly outreach sessions in local community spaces, offering advice and support beyond their core audience. • Posting social media content linked to CO, PSR and energy efficiency. • Developing a community led slow cooker cookbook, containing local recipes and key home safety and energy tips. <u>Project Objectives:</u> Cadent will measure the success of the project against the achievement of the following objectives: • To generate a positive social return on investment - see the below relevant section for more details. • 500 individuals will be reached over the course of the project - individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will receive general support through the Centre for Warmth. • 500 individuals will receive energy efficiency advice including advice on ways to save on energy consumption and energy bills. • 50 individuals will receive a free slow cooker and learn how to cook affordable, healthy and energy efficient meals. • 500 individuals will receive advice about the PSR, with the aim to sign up 275 eligible individuals to the register. • 500 individuals will receive CO education to improve their CO safety awareness, and the most at-risk households will also receive a free CO alarm. • Increased public awareness of the PSR, CO safety, and energy efficiency by sharing themed social media content across digital platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, and mailing lists etc.), actively working to maximise reach and engagement. This objective will not be captured in the Social Return on Investment due to the inability to accurately forecast the engagement statistics.
Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA	We believe that the project meets all of the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:

	a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project: *The project delivers a positive forecasted social return on investment. This is based on achieving the target reach for income maximisation, registrations to the PSR and education on carbon monoxide. More information can be found in the relevant section below.* **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;** *The project delivers services that meet all three elements of this criteria. For example, the specialist advisors will help households maximise their income, enabling residents to afford the cost of heating their home to an adequate level. The project will also raise awareness of the dangers of CO and promote registration to the PSR.* **c. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:** *Cadent and Earlham Community Shop have entered into a service agreement that will contain the project objective and actions. Further detail can also be found below.* **d. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and,** *This method of delivering support to individuals in vulnerable situations falls outside of Cadent's BAU activities and other licence conditions.* **e. Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding,** *This project will be solely delivered through Cadent's VCMA funding.*
Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support	Connecting with various stakeholders and research helps Cadent to understand what customers and stakeholders want and expect, what's important, what services are required and how we can provide those services in the most effective way. **House of Commons – Fuel Poverty Report** In April 2025, The House of Commons Library published a report on fuel poverty. Many of the points highlighted in the report align with the key objectives that the Centre for Warmth project aims to achieve: • Many consumer groups argue that the pandemic has worsened fuel poverty and more needs to be done. • Fuel poverty spans energy, income, housing, and health policies. • It highlights the need to harness and empower trusted intermediaries and independent advice providers to support clarity around information. **Norwich City Council – Local Authority Fuel Poverty Commitment**

	Likewise, Norwich council have listed a set of fuel poverty commitments on their website and state that "Fuel poverty is a scourge on our communities. It harms the physical and psychological health, welfare and quality of life of our residents." As one of its commitments, it recognises the importance of exploring ways to reduce fuel poverty that involve the whole community, including community groups. **Centres for Warmth** In June 2024, Cadent's Centres for Warmth team hosted their annual 'Share the Vision' webinar, to bring together its Centres for Warmth partners. It provided an opportunity to explore ideas to develop the Centres for Warmth project, based on existing centre challenges, learnings and successes. As part of this, partners were asked "What more do you think Cadent can do to support the project?". Support with food poverty and insecurity were commonly highlighted, with one respondent stating "Support around the wider issues of food poverty. Food poverty is a byproduct of bigger issues." Collectively, the evidence suggests there is a demand and benefit to implementing this project model in partnership with Earlham Community Shop.
Information Required	**Description**
Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria	<u>Project Outcomes</u> The project aims to achieve the following outcomes: • Individuals will report an increased awareness on the dangers of CO and have a reduced risk of harm caused by CO. • Provide support to lonely and isolated individuals, ensuring that they can access the community centre and the services it offers - tackling loneliness and isolation. • Individuals will report increased awareness of and engagement with other local support services. • Provide individuals with energy efficiency advice and individuals will report a better awareness of energy efficiency measures and support. • Individuals will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage and increased awareness of the PSR. • Individuals will report an increased knowledge of cooking on a budget, healthy cooking, and use of a slow cooker to save on energy. • Individuals will have greater awareness of the PSR, CO safety, and energy efficiency through engaging with themed social media content across digital platforms. <u>Associated Actions</u> The following associated actions will be implemented to deliver the project's outcomes below. The hub manager and volunteers will: • be trained and utilise the training, expertise and resources provided by Cadent to provide CO, PSR and energy efficiency advice. • work closely with the wider community and community partners to design and plan a series of outreach sessions that meet local needs and demand. • create a warm welcoming space, where individuals will report an improvement in their mental health as a result of attending the centre and engaging in sessions.

	Success Criteria The success of the project will be measured against meeting the below criteria: • The project will reach 500 individuals over the project period - individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will receive general support through the Centre for Warmth. • 500 individuals will receive energy efficiency advice including advice on ways to save both on energy consumption and costs. • 50 individuals will receive a free slow cooker and learn how to cook affordable, healthy and energy efficient meals. • 500 individuals will receive advice about the PSR, with the aim to sign up 275 eligible individuals to the register. • 500 individuals will receive CO education to improve their CO safety awareness, and the most at-risk households will also receive a CO alarm. • Individuals who have access to social media will have greater awareness of the PSR, CO safety, and energy efficiency through engaging with themed social media content.
Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	Cadent will work in partnership with Earlham Community Shop
Potential for New Learning	By integrating Earlham Community Shop's existing services with the Centres for Warmth initiative, this project offers Cadent valuable insight into how different approaches can address wider issues such as food poverty, while complementing Cadent's other key areas of support. The delivery model and outcomes will provide learning that can be applied across projects, helping to identify both the benefits and challenges of similar approaches and informing the design of future VCMA projects. The initiative also underscores the vital role of collaborative partnerships in supporting individuals in vulnerable circumstances. Cadent will continue engaging with partners to enhance the support and services offered to vulnerable individuals. This collaboration will also create opportunities for cross-network learning, ensuring that best practice is identified, shared, and embedded across future initiatives.
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations	Scale of VCMA Project Cadent will invest £7,474.29 in partnership with Earlham Community Shop. The project will be delivered from December 2025 to March 2026 and is forecasted to reach up to 500 vulnerable individuals in close proximity to the centre. SROI Calculations The reach will be divided as per below: • 500 individuals will receive advice on energy efficiency = £183,885.00 • 500 individuals will receive awareness advice on CO = £4,365.00 • 275 individuals will register to the PSR = £39,569.75 • 50 individuals will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £11,821.00 • 500 individuals will attend the centres and be alleviated from isolation and loneliness = £11,600.00 Total Investment = £7,474.29 Five-year gross present value = £251,240.75 One-year gross present value = £82,728.15

	Five-year net value = £243,766.46 One-year net value = £60,305.28 SROI Ratio = £1:33
VCMA Project Start and End Date	Start date: 1st December 2025 End date: 31st March 2026
Geographical Area	The project will be delivered in Cadent's East of England Network, in Norwich

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: 09/12/2025	Review Completed By: Nicola Campbell
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed:10/12/2025	Review Completed By: Emma Turnbull
Step 3: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Sign-Off: Phil Burrows	
Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Sign-Off Date: 15/12/2025	
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: December 2025	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: December 2025	