

GDN Collaborative Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN)

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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) i. Have a positive, or forecasted positive Social Return on Investment (SROI), calculated in accordance with a model which the GDNs have developed and submitted to Ofgem including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project, and ii. have a positive, or a forecasted positive Net Present Value (NPV);	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 the requirements in paragraph b;	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	
To qualify as a VCMA Project, essential gas appliance servicing must meet the following criteria:	
a) i. 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 makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes; or	NA
b) the household cannot afford to service the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria in the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) Guidance: Delivery document; and	NA
c) sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including a social or private landlord and national, devolved, or local government funding) to fund the essential gas appliance servicing.	NA
Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance repair and replacement	
To qualify as a VCMA Project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:	
a) i. a GDN has had to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or 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 had to condemn unsafe pipework, or an essential gas appliance, following an essential gas appliance service and	NA
b) i. The occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition that makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes and has a household income as per ECO4 Income thresholds, or	NA

ii. the household cannot afford to repair or replace unsafe pipework or the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria in the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) Guidance: Delivery document; and	
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 repair or replacement.	NA
Section 4 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects	
In order to qualify as a collaborative VCMA project, a project must:	
a) Meet the company specific project eligibility criteria set out in sections 1-3 above; and	Yes
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	Caribbean & African Health Network
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent and SGN (Southern)
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Cadent (lead partner) and SGN (Southern)
New/ Updated	New
Date of PEA Submission	July 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)	Total - £275,837.78 Cadent - £67,150 SGN - £208,687.78
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	Total - £275,837.78 Cadent - £67,150 SGN - £208,687.78
Problem(s)	<u>Background</u> The Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN) is an organisation set up in 2017 in Greater Manchester to address long standing health disparities within their community. From humble beginnings with operations solely in Greater Manchester, CAHN is now working at a national level, leading the call to challenge and address the wider social determinants and reduce health inequalities for people of Caribbean & African heritage living in the UK. CAHN work with and for the black community and cross-sector organisations to build community resilience, equitable relationships, and a social movement to reduce health disparities and wider societal inequalities. Many individuals in these communities lack information about carbon monoxide (CO), including how it is produced and the symptoms of CO poisoning. There is also a noticeable gap in knowledge regarding the servicing of gas appliances, which places these

	communities at a higher risk. These issues contribute to the vulnerability of community members, who require support from Cadent and SGN. Additionally, many residents seem to be unaware of available benefits, tariffs, and grants that could help increase their income and alleviate fuel poverty. Cadent and CAHN have been in partnership for two years, from October 2023 to October 2025. Due to the success of this collaboration and CAHN's identification of a significant need for support in South London, it has been decided to expand the project by including SGN, extending it until March 2026. This project will continue to be delivered in Greater Manchester and Enfield on Cadent's network and will now include Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham and Croydon on SGN's network. Manchester is ranked 6 of 326 local authorities in England with 56.4% of households in Manchester classed as deprived.¹ Enfield is the ninth most deprived London Borough and 27% of households are living in poverty. Lambeth is ranked 42 with 25% of people living in poverty. Southwark is ranked 41 with 40% of children living in poverty. Lewisham is ranked 63 and has 1 in 3 households living in poverty, and Croydon is ranked at 108 but is considered the most deprived of the six southern boroughs² as 22% are in poverty. There are patterns of disadvantage among people from minority ethnic backgrounds which need to be acknowledged and tackled. For instance, poverty is higher among all black and minority ethnic groups than among the majority white population. Men and women from some ethnic groups are paid less on average than those from other groups who have similar qualifications.³
Scope and Objectives	Cadent and SGN will provide CAHN with VCMA funding to deliver an 8-month project. The project will focus on tailoring education and awareness advice to members of the Black African and Caribbean community in specific areas of the two GDN networks: <u>Project Objectives</u> a) Educate customers on the dangers of CO and provide free alarms where applicable. b) Raise awareness and facilitate sign-ups to the PSR for vulnerable households. c) Support financial resilience through targeted income maximisation advice and welfare signposting, utilising platforms such as IE hub as a referral organisation. d) Deliver energy-saving guidance and advice that is culturally tailored and practically applicable. The project will be delivered through mechanisms already in place: • Face-to-face via drop-in sessions at the Hub • Culturally appropriate information aimed at Community Forums • CAHN helpline • Social media

¹

www.google.com/search?q=deprivation+in+Manchester&dq=deprivation+in+Manchester&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbwUyBggAEEUYOTIGCAEQRRhA0gEI NTQ0MWowajGoAgCwAgA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

² [what is croydon rank on index of multiple deprivation - Google Search](#)

³ [Poverty and ethnicity: A review of evidence \(jrf.org.uk\)](#)

Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA	The GDNs believe that this project meets all of the VCMA company specific and collaborative eligibility criteria. <u>Company specific VCMA eligibility criteria</u> A. The project is forecasted to have a positive SROI: We believe that the project has the deliverables necessary to create a positive social return on investment (SROI). The GDNs will utilise social value proxies and calculations approved by industry experts. More information on the project's positive forecasted SROI can be found in the relevant section below. B. The project will 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 C. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these: This project has clearly defined outcomes and success criteria, and the associated actions to meet them. Further information on the project's outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria can be found in the relevant section below. D. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and: The GDNs believe that this project goes outside of activities funded through other price control mechanisms due to: a) The types of services being delivered to customer, and, b) The method in which the support is delivered to customers (e.g., through a publicly facing advice line and in person community events) 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 delivered solely through the GDNs' VCMA funding. <u>Collaborative VCMA projects criteria</u> A. Meet the above company specific and boiler repair and replace (if applicable) project eligibility criteria: This project meets the company-specific eligibility criteria - see relevant section above. B. Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and: This project will benefit customers in vulnerable situations living across all nine gas distribution network areas of Great Britain. C. Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies: This project will be funded by Cadent and SGN.
Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support	<u>Cadent stakeholder evidence</u>

	Cadent conducted extensive stakeholder and customer engagement to obtain feedback on its RIIO-GD2 business plans and subsequent VCMA delivery. Firstly, we conducted "Energy Diaries", a piece of research aimed at gauging the customer's attitudes towards the rises in energy prices, as well as the support offered by organisations such as Cadent. The Energy Diaries demonstrated that customers continue to support the key measures that we identified when developing our RIIO-2 plan, with a heightened requirement to support people with the cost-of-living crisis. The partnership with CAHN recognises this feedback by offering vulnerable households essential support with income maximisation services. Secondly, we regularly seek to obtain the feedback of stakeholders such as Citizens Advice and National Energy Action (NEA) to understand the needs of customers in vulnerable situations. These regular conversations allow Cadent to gain feedback on the initiatives we are or should be supporting and ensure that the projects are in the best interests of our customers. Stakeholders have provided consistent feedback on the need for energy networks to focus their funding on supporting households most impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. This project takes this feedback into account by creating a partnership with a trusted local charity, positioned in an area with levels of deprivation and fuel poverty significantly higher than the national average. Finally, Cadent asked customers for their views on which of the below statements best described their health and financial situation compared to 2021: • My current household's health or financial situation is worse off compared to 2021. • My current household's health or financial situation is the same compared to 2021. • My current household's health or financial situation is better off compared to 2021. 60% of participants responded that their households' health or financial situation was worse off this year compared to 2021 levels. <u>SGN stakeholder evidence</u> SGN's Vulnerable Steering Group has helped shape SGN's vulnerability strategy and priorities for GD2 from strategy into delivery. With their guidance we intend to prioritise key initiatives to support our most vulnerable customers. With a data driven approach to identify communities most likely to suffer detriment from living in a cold and unhealthy home, it was identified that we should prioritise programmes for those most in need, including priority customers groups. In 2025 our strategic steering group re-iterated the vital impact we could have by co-ordinating our activities with others to identify and support those most in need, those most impacted by the cost of living and energy cost crisis
Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria	The CAHN project partnership will allow Cadent and SGN to provide a holistic approach to supporting the African and Caribbean community who are living in fuel poverty and navigating the cost-of-living crisis. Clients of CAHN will receive a combination of services such as; • Energy efficiency in the home • Benefit entitlement checks • Income budgeting • CO advice and alarms • Support to sign to the PSR • Heated throws and keep warm items (most vulnerable)

Project Outcomes

The VCMA project will be delivered in partnership with CAHN and will aim to support 7,080 people.

The project aims to achieve the following:

- Provide free advice to customers on benefits, income maximisation and budgeting
- Raise awareness of the dangers, signs and symptoms of CO poisoning
- Raise awareness of the benefits and support customers to sign up to the PSR
- Provide behavioural advice on energy efficiency to help lower usage and bills

Associated actions

The VCMA funding will be utilised by CAHN to support customers with:

- Advice on income maximization
- Advice on energy efficiency
- To raise awareness on CO
- To raise awareness of PSR

The success of this project will be evaluated against meeting the project objectives which include:

- 190 people receiving one-to-one advice on income maximisation and benefits
- 2,400 people receiving advice on energy efficiency
- 4,200 people receiving advice on CO
- 262 people registering to the PSR
- 200 people receiving heated throws
- 200 people receiving keep warm items

As well as the above:

- Customers will report improved health and wellbeing
- Improved feeling of peace of mind due to having advice and a CO alarm
- A decrease in utility bill costs due to energy efficiency advice
- Increase in income due to benefits, income maximisation and debt advice

Cadent – The project aims to reach 600 individuals in total via face-to-face advice and 8,000 customers reached via social media messages. Split as below:

Output	Format	Target Numbers (By Area)	
		Manchester	Enfield
Residents educated on CO	Face to face	437 customers	163 customers
Residents educated on Energy Efficiency	Face to face	437 customers	163 customers
Residents educated on PSR	Face to face	437 customers	163 customers
Residents signed up to the PSR	Face to face	75	25

	Residents supported with Income max	Face to face	75 customers	25 customers	SGN – The project aims to reach 2,700 households (approximately 6,480 individuals) in total via face-to-face advice and 20,000 customers reached via social media messages. Split as below; <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Output Area</th><th rowspan="2">Format</th><th colspan="4">Target Numbers (By Area)</th></tr><tr><th>Lambeth</th><th>Southwark</th><th>Lewisham</th><th>Croydon</th></tr><tr><td>Residents educated on CO*</td><td>Face to face</td><td>675 households</td><td>500 households</td><td>525 households</td><td>100 households</td></tr><tr><td>Residents educated on Energy Efficiency*</td><td>Face to face</td><td>250 households</td><td>250 households</td><td>250 households</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Residents educated on PSR</td><td>Face to face</td><td>500 households</td><td>475 households</td><td>475 households</td><td>65 households</td></tr><tr><td>PSR sign ups</td><td>Face to face</td><td>50 households</td><td>46 households</td><td>46 households</td><td>20 households</td></tr><tr><td>Residents supported with Income max</td><td>Face to face</td><td>30 households</td><td>30 households</td><td>30 households</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>CO alarms</td><td>Face to face</td><td>350</td><td>275</td><td>275</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>Social media messages</td><td>Online/ social media</td><td colspan="4">20,000 reached – CO / Energy Efficiency</td></tr></table> <i>*All individuals in household will receive this advice so individuals reached is the number of households multiplied by the average size of a UK household – 2.4.</i>	Output Area	Format	Target Numbers (By Area)				Lambeth	Southwark	Lewisham	Croydon	Residents educated on CO*	Face to face	675 households	500 households	525 households	100 households	Residents educated on Energy Efficiency*	Face to face	250 households	250 households	250 households		Residents educated on PSR	Face to face	500 households	475 households	475 households	65 households	PSR sign ups	Face to face	50 households	46 households	46 households	20 households	Residents supported with Income max	Face to face	30 households	30 households	30 households		CO alarms	Face to face	350	275	275	35	Social media messages	Online/ social media	20,000 reached – CO / Energy Efficiency			
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Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	This project will be delivered by CAHN in partnership with Cadent and SGN.																																																								
Potential for New Learning	Cadent and SGN are partnering with the Caribbean and African Health Network (CAHN) to better understand the inequalities and challenges faced by communities within their networks. Research indicates a clear connection between unemployment rates, health, and ethnicity. We will work closely with CAHN to understand to ongoing health disparities within their communities and the effects these have on all areas of their lives. As GDN's we can then use these insights to help inform other partnerships in our portfolio.																																																								
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations	The CAHN project will deliver support for an 8-month duration. The project will focus on the provision of advice to 7,080 individuals across Cadent and SGN networks.																																																								

	The GDNs worked with leading social impact research consultancy SIRIO Strategies on the development of the Industry Standard Social Value Framework and supporting GDN Rulebook. We have used that GDN Rulebook to carry out an assessment of the financial and wellbeing outcomes applicable to our services for vulnerable customers incorporated in this partnership. Following an assessment of the predicted outcomes we forecast a positive net Social Return on Investment of £8.99. This calculation was completed using the following: • 935 CO alarms supplied • 4,920 customers receiving 1:1 CO advice and 28,000 interacting with social media posts. • 2,400 customers receiving 1:1 energy efficiency advice and 28,000 interacting with social media posts. • 200 vulnerable customers receiving a heated blanket • 200 customers receiving a keep warm pack • 190 customers receiving 1:1 benefits advice and 2,800 customers interacting with social media posts (10% of the estimated 28,000) • 262 customers signing up to the PSR. Investment = £275,837.78 Gross present value = £2,755,137.00 Net present value = £2,479,299.22 Social return on investment = £8.99
VCMA Project Start and End Date	Start date - August 1st 2025 End date - March 31st 2026
Geographical Area	Northwest, North London, South London
Internal governance and project management evidence	The SROI for this project has been forecast utilising the GDN Rulebook that has been developed as part of the Industry Standard Social Value Framework. Inputting the forecasted outcomes and delivery channels, and the project cost has generated a forecast SROI of £8.99. The project will be subject to quarterly reviews by Cadent and SGN with CAHN to ensure that best practice and the correct customers are being supported. The first of these reviews will take place after 3 months. We will also use this time to review data and address any challenges that may arise.

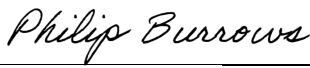
Gas Network Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Governance Document - PEA Control Table

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 Date completed: July 2025 Review completed by:	
GDN:	Name(s):
Cadent	Gurvinder Dosanjh
SGN	Kerry Potter

Stage 2: GD2CVG Panel Review
 Date review completed: August 2025
 Review completed by:

GDN:	Name(s)
Cadent	Phil Burrows
SGN	Maureen McIntosh

Step 3: Participating GDN individual signatory sign-off

GDN	Name(s)	Signature(s)	Date
Cadent:	Phil Burrows		11/08/25
SGN:	Maureen McIntosh		04/08/25

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