

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)
Birmingham Warm Welcome – Thrive
Centres for Warmth

Amanda Jones – Safeguarding and Community
Partnerships Lead

August 2023

Updated: June 2024 (Nikki Trkulja)

Updated: October 2025 (Emma Stead)



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.	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 license 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) Either: 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 document ¹ (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	Birmingham Warm Welcome - Thrive Centres for warmth
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New – August 2023 Updated June 2024 Updated October 2025
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Cadent Specific
Date of PEA Submission	August 2023 Updated October 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 Phone: 07773 545451
Total Cost (£k)	Project funding =£185,206.00 Slow cookers = £5,568 Project management costs= £7,408.24 Total: £198,182.24 Updated June 2024

	<p>Slow Cookers: £41,760.00 Leaflets: £14,700.00 Plaques: £300.00 Project Management Costs: £2,270.40 Additional cost total: £59,030.40</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u> Project funding: £58,096.00 Slow Cookers: 750 x £27.84 = £20,880.00 Leaflets: £3,527.28 Project Management Costs (4%): £3,300.13 Total: £85,803.41</p>
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	<p>£198,182.24</p> <p><u>Updated June 2024</u> £257,212.64</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u> £ 343,016.05</p>
Problem(s)	<p><u>Background</u> As a result of the cost-of-living-crisis increasing numbers of people are seeking support to make ends meet. Thrive and the city council have worked together to respond to the challenge of providing food support, financial advice, and support to address energy costs. Unfortunately, the funding is running out, and more is required to keep the support in place which has become a vital safety net for many people in Birmingham.</p> <p>²Birmingham was ranked 7th most deprived local authority in England in the 2019 IMD report. The city is also the most deprived authority in the West Midlands Metropolitan area. Whilst there are pockets of deprivation in all parts of the city, deprivation is most heavily clustered around the city centre.</p> <p><u>Fuel Poverty</u> A home is in fuel poverty if they are living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D or below and after heating their home to an adequate level of warmth, they fall below the official poverty line. To be considered adequate, the living room needs to be 21 degrees centigrade during the daytime. Fuel poverty continues to pose a serious risk to the health of millions of households across England.</p> <p>The latest government fuel poverty statistics report an increase in fuel poverty from the previous level of 13.1% up to 13.4% in 2022. This equates to an estimated 3.5 million people living in fuel poverty on Cadent's network alone (applying the average UK household size multiplier of 2.4).</p> <p>A household's risk of experiencing fuel poverty is influenced by three factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The price of fuel • The level of disposable household income • The property's energy efficiency/the customer's energy efficiency behaviours

² [INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION \(IMD\) IN BIRMINGHAM 2019 \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com/jaas/index.html)

Rises in the energy price cap have led to increases in households' required fuel costs (the cost of the fuel required to heat a home to an adequate temperature). Additionally, rises in inflation and the cost of living has meant that many households have left disposable income for space heating after paying other essentials such as housing, groceries, and council tax.

As well as being at increased risk of certain respiratory health conditions such as asthma and bronchitis, children's well-being and school performance are negatively affected by living in a cold home.

People that live off grid, utilise electrical heating, and have a specific need e.g., a health condition are at particular risk from fuel poverty.

The National Institute of Care Excellence (NICE) has a list of groups it considers most at risk from living in damp, cold living conditions, these include the following:

- Individuals with respiratory conditions
- Individuals with cardiovascular problems
- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals over the age of 65
- Young children

Birmingham city's population is 863,000 and latest figures show that over 300,000 of those are living in fuel poverty.

Debt

1. Five percent of adults in the UK have unsecured debt equivalent to six months or more of their income, when you consider their financial assets such as their savings, which is commonly used as an indicator of unmanageable debt. When looking at different groups in society, however, the proportions of people with unmanageable debt are far higher. For example:
2. Those in the lowest income group are three and a half times more likely than the highest earning fifth of the population to have debt worth more than six months of their income (7% compared to 2%)
3. 20–29-year-olds are twice as likely than 30–39-year-olds to have debts worth more than six months of their income. (14% compared to 7%)
4. Private renters are nearly twice as likely as those with a mortgage, and five times as likely as those who own outright, to have debts worth six months of their income. (10%, 6%, 2% respectively)

Lack of Awareness on the Dangers of Carbon Monoxide

In England and Wales, approximately 40 deaths and 200 non-fatal poisonings requiring hospital admission are reported each year from high-level carbon monoxide poisoning.

There are around 4,000 attendances at accident and emergency departments for treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning each year in England.

The true incidence of carbon monoxide poisoning is likely to be significantly higher because low-level carbon monoxide toxicity is easily misdiagnosed as the signs and symptoms are often non-specific, and may simulate other

	<p>more common conditions, such as flu-like illness, food poisoning, or depression.</p> <p>Carbon monoxide can be omitted from everyday household appliances, such as poorly maintained or faulty boilers or gas cookers. It is known as the 'silent killer' because you can't see it, smell it, or taste it, which is why it is so important to have an audible carbon monoxide alarm installed.</p> <p><u>Unemployment and low wages</u></p> <p>³Birmingham has the highest unemployment rate in England with the rate of people claiming out of work benefits in Birmingham higher than anywhere else in England and Wales according to ONS data.</p> <p>The relationship between mental health and unemployment is bi-directional. Good mental health is a key influence on employability, finding a job and remaining in that job. Unemployment causes stress, which ultimately has long-term physiological health effects and can have negative consequences for people's mental health, including depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem.</p> <p>Low-wage employment can increase the risk of poverty and financial hardship because many low-paid jobs are insecure and generally low quality, low-paid workers can face several disadvantages. Many low-paid jobs offer no opportunities to progress to better work and wages.</p> <p>⁴The link between low pay and poor mental well-being was made strikingly clearly in the Living Wage Foundation's Life on Low Pay report, which was published earlier this year. The report found that 46% of people working full-time but being paid less than the real Living Wage felt their pay negatively affected their levels of anxiety. Good relationships - key to reducing the risk of mental ill health - were another casualty, with 34% of respondents telling us that their low pay damages relationships with family and friends.</p> <p><u>Updated June 2024:</u></p> <p>Due to the initial success of the partnership with Thrive Together Birmingham we have agreed additional funding for the provision of extra slow cookers. Due to the demographic of the customers that use the centres, many have found the addition of slow cookers useful for saving money and cooking healthy meals. It has been noted that slow cookers are especially useful during religious celebrations such as Ramadan. This is particularly useful for two of the ten centres who are at the heart of a community with a large Islamic presence.</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u></p> <p>The project's sustained success has contributed to significant growth and heightened interest within the community. This increased engagement presents an opportunity to extend the current initiative, enabling Thrive Warm Welcome centres to accommodate a greater number of appointments effectively.</p> <p>According to National Energy Action, Birmingham has the greatest proportion of households in fuel poverty with 23.2% unable to stay warm</p>
--	---

³ www.birminghamworld.uk/news/birmingham-unemployment-rates-4144201

⁴ www.livingwage.org.uk/news/wages-and-wellbeing-link-between-low-pay-and-poor-mental-health

	<p>and safe at home.⁵ Compared to the national average of 13.06%, this difference emphasises the crucial work that Thrive Warm Welcome Centres are doing in their local community. This extension will enable Thrive and Cadent Centre for Warmth to reach more of those vulnerable individuals and provide them with the help and support they require.</p>
Scope and Objectives	<p><u>Project Scope</u> Cadent will provide Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome with £198,182.24 of VCMA funding to deliver a 2-year project.</p> <p>The project aims to provide a comprehensive advice service for all customers and will be delivered across 10 hubs within Birmingham.</p> <p>The VCMA funding will be used for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on benefits entitlement. • Provide debt advice. • Raise awareness of CO and PSR. • Provide energy efficiency advice. • Offer slow cooking classes. • Provide access to food through the social supermarket. • Provide access to employment and training resources. • Provide access to a range of activities tailored to the needs of different age/cultural and gender groups. • Provide money to enhance and extend the services already provided by the 10 hubs. <p><u>Objectives of the project</u> The success of the project will be measured by meeting the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,000 people will receive advice on benefits /income maximisation and debt. - 5,000 people will receive advice on energy efficiency. - 5,000 people will receive advice on Carbon monoxide awareness. - 5,000 people will be given advice on the PSR. - 500 people will be assisted to sign up to the PSR. - 200 people will attend slow cooker sessions. <p>As well as achieving the above forecasts for the number of clients benefitting from the project's services, the partnership will also deliver the following positive indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers will report decreased levels of stress and financial worry due to improvements in the level of disposable household income. - Customers will report improved levels of comfort from being able to heat their homes to a healthier temperature. - Customers will report improved feelings of safety from receiving free CO alarms and improving their awareness on the signs, symptoms, and dangers of CO. <p><u>Updated June 2024:</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £257,212.64 to work in collaboration with Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome to deliver a two-year project. The following amendments have been made to the project costings to include the costs for leaflets, slow cookers and plaques. The income maximisation provision</p>

⁵ <https://www.nea.org.uk/news/fuel-poverty-regional-data-2023/>

of the project has also now been removed due to the centre focusing on light touch activities only such as carbon monoxide education, energy efficiency advice and information and registrations onto the PSR. This change has been made based on identifying the needs within the community and the scope of the project being a 'one-to-many' model ensuring continuity across all 10 centres.

The project aims to provide a comprehensive advice service for all customers and will be delivered across 10 hubs within Birmingham broken down as per below:

Service (s)	Summary of Service (s)	Expected Number of Customers Reached
CO Awareness	Raise awareness of the dangers of CO, encourage the use of CO alarms and give out alarms as appropriate	5,000
PSR Awareness	Raise awareness of the PSR, eligibility and encourage sign ups of those eligible	5,000
PSR Registrations	Register people for PSR	500
Energy Efficiency Advice	Raise awareness of Energy saving tips and hacks	5,000
Slow Cooking Sessions and Advice	Sessions on slow cooker usage, energy saving and healthy meals	1,500

Updated October 2025

Cadent will invest and additional £85,803.41 with Thrive Warm Welcome for a six-month extension. The funding will enable the centre to continue providing the services, as listed below.

- Energy advice workshops to help reduce energy consumption in the home
- Safety talks and devices to aid safety in the home
- Continue to create a warm safe space for the community
- Opportunities for participants to share their skills
- Access to employment and training resources
- Access to a range of activities tailored to the needs of different age/cultural/gender groups including wellbeing and physical exercise

Project Objectives

The success of the project will be measured by achieving the following objectives:

- 1,000 people will receive advice on energy efficiency.
- 1,000 people will receive advice on carbon monoxide awareness.
- 250 people will receive carbon monoxide monitors.
- 1,000 people will be given advice on the PSR.
- 500 people will be assisted to sign up to the PSR.
- 750 people will attend slow cooker sessions receive a slow cooker.

Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA

We believe that the project meets all the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:

	<p>a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project:</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>b. Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p><i>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.</i></p> <p>c. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:</p> <p><i>Cadent and Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome have entered into a service agreement that will contain the project objective and actions. Further detail can also be found below.</i></p> <p>d. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and,</p> <p><i>This method of delivering support to customers in vulnerable situations falls outside of Cadent's BAU activities and other licence conditions.</i></p> <p>e. Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved, or local) funding,</p> <p><i>This project will be solely delivered through Cadent's VCMA funding.</i></p>
<p>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</p>	<p>Cadent conducted and continues to obtain extensive stakeholder and customer engagement on its RIIO-GD2 business plans and subsequent Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) delivery.</p> <p>For instance, 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 our VCMA-funded projects are in the best interests of our customers.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

	<p>fuel poverty significantly higher than the national average. Additionally, the customer demographic of >65 years old can be disproportionately impacted by fuel poverty, due to factors such as being more at risk of cold-related illness, generally having lower levels of household income, and spending a greater proportion of time at home.</p> <p>In terms of customer engagement, we asked customers for their views on which of the below statements best described their health and financial situation in 2022-2023, when compared to 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>60% of participants responded that their households' health or financial situation was worse off this year compared to 2021 levels.</p> <p>This project aims to act upon this customer insight and feedback, through supporting customers in Birmingham impacted by a downturn in their financial health. This will be achieved through offering services such as income maximisation and benefit entitlement check along with a wraparound support service.</p> <p><u>Updated June 2024:</u></p> <p>Cadent conducted a national survey in 2024. The aim of the research was to assess customer/stakeholder opinion on Cadent's allocation of VCMA spend and gain insight on where we should direct VCMA funding in the future. However, we've captured some of the key evidence below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four out of Five are willing to pay £2.70 per year to fund each of the measured tested. • 82% of people were willing to pay the extra £2.70 to help people in vulnerable situations with free repairs and replacements. • 75% of people feel that they understand their gas beyond the overall price. With only 2 out of 5 fully understanding it. • There is very low trust associated with energy companies. <p>This project focusses on tackling fuel poverty by offering energy/income advice to at-risk households.</p> <p>In a recent report published by the NEA, Birmingham is the worst affected area in relation to fuel poverty. The report shows that the fuel poverty situation in Birmingham has got worse over the last year.⁶</p> <p>Cadent work with over 40 strategic partners to continually feed into our strategic thinking and project prioritisation (in support of customers in vulnerable situations). The Centres for Warmth initiative has proven a huge success and receives excellent feedback from charities such as National Energy Action and Age UK. We use the ongoing engagement with these key partners to inform our decision-making, as we have with this project.</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u></p>
--	---

⁶ [New UK Government data reveals Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent are worst affected by fuel poverty - National Energy Action \(NEA\)](#)

	<p>The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero found that 13% of households, or 3.17 million households, were fuel-poor in 2023. In real terms, the average fuel poverty gap of £417 also increased from £348 in 2022.</p> <p>Households in fuel poverty depend on the interaction of key drivers, including energy efficiency measures and income maximisation. Energy efficiency measures lifted 112,000 households out of fuel poverty between 2022 and 2023. Due to income maximisation, low-income households grew faster than the median income in 2023, reducing fuel poverty. Rising housing costs partially offset this. In 2023, energy prices rose, moving 28,000 households into fuel poverty.</p> <p>Cadent continue to work with over 40 strategic partners to support customers in vulnerable situations.</p> <p>Quote from the centre manager:</p> <p><i>"As a result of Cadent support, we have seen these 10 local, small and very hospitable Warm Welcome spaces enhance their effectiveness as we have supported them to develop into better equipped community hubs that provide enhanced services around energy safety and security, access to welfare benefits and finance advice and other crisis support. Through the relationship with Cadent they have had access to resources that have benefitted thousands of individuals and families, most among the poorest citizens of the city but as significantly they have increased their awareness of other opportunities to improve the lives of the people they serve through the partnership members."</i></p>
Information Required	Description
Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <p>The VCMA project will be delivered in partnership with Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome and aims to support a total of 10,000 people with home energy, income, carbon monoxide, and Priority Services Register (PSR) advice over the two-year project duration.</p> <p>The Project aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide project clients with advice on income maximisation and benefit entitlement. - Provide customers with advice on energy efficiency. - Provide project clients with advice on Carbon Monoxide safety. - Provide free CO alarms to customers living in vulnerable situations. - Provide customers with advice on the PSR and assistance to sign up. - Provide project clients with broader advice on Health/wellbeing. <p>As a result of delivering the above project services, customers reached through the project will report the following positive indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers will report decreased levels of stress and financial worry due to improvements in the level of disposable household income. - Clients will report improved levels of comfort from being able to heat their homes to a healthier temperature. - Customers will report improved feelings of safety from receiving free CO alarms and improving their awareness on the signs, symptoms, and dangers of CO.

Associated Actions

Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome will utilise Cadent's VCMA funding to deliver the following associated actions:

- Employ a Development Worker that will oversee and coordinate the project across the 10 hubs.
- Distribute funding to the Hubs to enable them to increase services to include income maximisation, energy efficiency, CO awareness, and PSR.
- Provide hot food and drinks for customers at the 10 hubs.

Success criteria

The success of the project will be evaluated against the meeting of the project's objectives. These objectives include:

- The project will reach 5,000 individuals with tailored advice based on the customers' needs throughout the two-year duration.
- 5,000 people will receive in-depth 1-2-1 advice on income maximisation.
- 5,000 people will receive energy efficiency advice.
- 5,000 people will receive advice on CO safety.
- 500 people will receive support to sign up to the PSR.
- 5,000 people will receive an awareness conversation on the benefits of the PSR.
- 200 people will attend slow cooker sessions.
- Customers will report decreased levels of stress and financial worry due to improvements in the level of disposable household income.
- Clients will report improved levels of comfort from being able to heat their homes to a healthier temperature.
- Customers will report improved feelings of safety from receiving free CO alarms and improving their awareness on the signs, symptoms, and dangers of CO.

The project will deliver a positive social return on investment.

Updated June 2024:

All the above actions will remain the same except the income maximisation service as this will now be removed due to the centre focusing on the Cadent core messaging and them wanting to reach as many individuals as possible.

Success criteria

The success of the project will be evaluated against the meeting of the new project's objectives. These objectives include

- The project will reach 5,000 individuals with tailored advice based on the customers' needs throughout the two-year duration.
- 5,000 people will receive energy efficiency advice.
- 5,000 people will receive advice on CO safety.
- 500 people will receive support to sign up to the PSR.
- 5,000 people will receive an awareness conversation on the benefits of the PSR.
- 1,500 people will attend slow cooker sessions.
- 575 will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness.
- Clients will report improved levels of comfort from being able to heat their homes to a healthier temperature.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers will report improved feelings of safety from receiving free CO alarms and improving their awareness on the signs, symptoms, and dangers of CO. <p>The project will deliver a positive social return on investment.</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u></p> <p>The services listed below will be provided via Thrive Warm Welcome Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy advice workshops to help reduce energy consumption in the home • Safety talks and devices to aid safety in the home • Opportunities for participants to share their skills • Access to employment and training resources • Access to a range of activities tailored to the needs of different age/cultural/gender groups including wellbeing and physical exercise <p><u>Success criteria</u></p> <p>The success of the extension will be evaluated against meeting the project's objectives. These objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000 people will receive advice on energy efficiency. • 1,000 people will receive advice on carbon monoxide awareness. • 250 people will receive carbon monoxide monitors. • 1,000 people will be given advice on the PSR. • 500 people will be assisted to sign up to the PSR. • 750 people will attend slow cooker sessions and receive a slow cooker.
Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	Cadent will work in partnership with Birmingham Thrive.
Potential for New Learning	<p>We believe that this project offers Cadent the opportunity for new learning in various areas.</p> <p>The project will offer Cadent insight into the extent of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the communities in Birmingham, and which services best support them.</p> <p>Through other projects that Cadent have participated in we have realised that a regional approach to offering advice and support to our customers works well especially the Centre for Warmth model.</p> <p>Partnering with local community groups has given Cadent the relationships, with vulnerable groups we would not have had access to previously through our business as usual.</p> <p>We continue to listen and learn from our partners to provide what these communities need.</p> <p><u>Updated June 2024:</u></p> <p>Every area within Cadent's network sees households suffering with the same issues, fuel poverty and low-income. Cadent have learned that each area also has issues specific to them and these are dealt with differently. To help increase cross-network understanding Cadent have set up a forum for the Centres for Warmth.</p>

	<p>Every quarter we will meet and discuss various topics, share stories, tips, and best practice but most importantly resources such as food.</p> <p>Cadent will continue to listen to our partners to try to improve the support and services where possible, through our Centre for Warmth partnerships to assist our most vulnerable customers.</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u></p> <p>This vital support will continue to enable the centre to address fuel and food insecurity, ensure that individuals claim all they are entitled to, and continue to support individuals in whatever way they need.</p> <p>Cadent will continue to listen to the centre's feedback, as we have done with the extension model, by ensuring the funding is more flexible to meet each centre's unique needs.</p>
<p>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV</p>	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent and Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome will enter an initial two-year project.</p> <p>The project aims to support 10,000 households across the project area with a variety of income maximisation, energy efficiency, carbon monoxide safety, and PSR advice.</p> <p>The project's total reach will be divided as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,000 customers will receive advice on income maximisation. - 5,000 customers will receive in-home energy efficiency advice. - 5,000 customers will receive advice on the signs, symptoms, and dangers of CO. - 500 customers will receive support to sign up to the PSR. - 5,000 customers will receive a conversation that improves their awareness of the benefits of the PSR. <p>200 Customers will attend slow cooking sessions to enable them to cook more efficiency on a budget and reduce their usage of fuel.</p> <p><u>SROI Summary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment = £198,182.24 - 5-year gross present value = £10,587,279.00 - 1-year gross present value = £2,117,455.80 - 5-year social return on investment = £10,389,096.76 - 1-year social return on investment = £2,018,364.68 - SROI ratio = £1: £52 <p>Cadent has conducted its own research and has worked with specialists from energy and utilities consultants at SIA Partners to evaluate the gross present value generated by activities typically funded through the VCMA.</p> <p>The SIA Partners-led work offers Cadent a library of average social values that can be used to produce a forecasted SROI in the absence of partner data.</p> <p><u>Supporting households to maximise their income.</u></p>

Cadent worked with SIA Partners to evaluate the average 5-year gross present value of supporting households to maximise their income. SIA Partner's based their analysis on the "actual" data from a 3-month project between Cadent and NEA, and historic data from NEA over the past 3 years.

SIA Partners calculated an average 5-year gross present value of supporting households to maximise their income of £1,717.11.

An average of 5,000 clients will receive this service over the course of the project, equating to a total 5-year gross present value of £8,585,550.

Educating customers on the dangers of carbon monoxide

Cadent also employed SIA Partners to evaluate the forecasted social return on investment of several RIIO-GD2 business plan elements. These elements included CO education, CO alarm distribution and the repair/replacement of gas appliances.

SIA Partners pointed to several factors that influenced the social value generated by educating customers on the dangers of carbon monoxide:

- A reduction in A&E visits linked to CO.
- A reduction in long term hospitalisations linked to CO.
- A reduction in deaths caused by CO.
- A reduction in time of work due to injury caused by CO.
- A reduction in ambulance call outs linked to CO.

SIA Partners calculated the average 5-year gross present value of a Co-educational conversation to be £8.73 - this is based on a 1-2-1 conversation with an 80% retention rate.

Supporting households to register to the Priority Services Register

Cadent worked with SIA Partners to evaluate the average 5-year gross present value of supporting households to register to the PSR. SIA Partner's based their analysis on the DNO proxy bank value for an avoided stress management course.

SIA Partners evaluated an average 5-year gross present value of £143.89 for a single PSR registration.

Updated June 2024:

Scale of VCMA Project

Cadent will invest £257,212.64 in partnership with Thrive Birmingham Warm Welcome in a two-year partnership.

The project will support households with a range of services. The project will benefit households near the community centres, and those in the wider area through the advisors and community outreach workers.

SROI Calculations

The reach will be divided as below:

- 5,000 will receive advice on energy efficiency = £1,838,850.00
- 5,000 will receive awareness advice on CO = £43,650.00
- 500 will register to the PSR = £71,945.00

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,500 will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £354,630.00 575 will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness = £690,000.00 <p>Total Investment = £257,212.64</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £2,999,075.00 One-year gross present value = £806,815.00</p> <p>Five-year net value = £2,741,862.36 One-year net value = £678,208.68</p> <p>SROI = £1:11</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u></p> <p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest an additional £85,803.41 in partnership with Thrive Warm Welcome. For the full duration of the project, including the original and extension, Cadent will invest £343,016.05 over 30 months.</p> <p><u>SROI Calculations</u></p> <p>The reach will be divided as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6,000 will receive advice on energy efficiency = £2,206,620.00 6,000 will receive awareness advice on CO = £52,380.00 1,000 will register to the PSR = £143,890.00 2,250 will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £531,945.00 690 will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness = £1,035,000.00 <p>Total Investment = £343,016.05</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £3,969,835.00 One-year gross present value = £586,967.00</p> <p>Five-year net value = £3,626,818.95 One-year net value = £494,364.00</p> <p>SROI ratio: £1:11</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	<p>Start Date: 2nd October 2023 End Date: 1st October 2025</p> <p><u>Updated October 2025</u> Start Date: 2nd October 2023 End Date: 31st March 2026</p>
Geographical Area	The project will be delivered in the Cadent's West Midlands network across Birmingham.

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: 20/06/2024 Completed: 15/12/2025	Review Completed By: Kerry Doyle Review Completed By: Nicola Campbell
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: January 2026	Review Completed By: Emma Turnbull
Step 3: Director of Sustainability & Social Purpose Sign-Off: Mark Belmega and Phil Burrows	
Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose Sign-Off Date: January 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: January 2026	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: January 2026	