

## Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

*Cadent & Home-Start Cookbook*

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

<b>Section 1 - Eligibility criteria for company-specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)</b>	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, a project must:	
<b>VCMA Eligibility Criteria</b>	<b>Criteria Satisfied (Yes/No)</b>
<b>a)</b> 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.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>b)</b> Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i.</b> Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, or</li> <li><b>ii.</b> Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, or</li> <li><b>iii.</b> Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>c)</b> Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;	<b>Yes</b>
<b>d)</b> Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through license obligations; and	<b>Yes</b>
<b>e)</b> Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company-specific essential gas appliance servicing</b>	
To qualify as a VCMA Project, essential gas appliance servicing must meet the following criteria:	
<b>a)</b> Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i.</b> 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</li> <li><b>ii.</b> 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</li> <li><b>iii.</b> 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</li> </ul>	<b>N/A</b>

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

<b>Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for Collaborative VCMA Projects</b>	
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
<b>Project Title</b>	Cadent & Home-Start Cookbook
<b>Funding GDN(s)</b>	Cadent only project
<b>New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)</b>	New
<b>Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only</b>	N/A
<b>Date of PEA Submission</b>	November 2024
<b>VCMA Project Contact Name, email and Number</b>	Name: Phil Burrows Title: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery Email: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com Number: 07773 545451
<b>Total Cost (£k)</b>	Production Cost: £11,373.81 Printing costs: £55,865.50 Media costs: £14,000.00 Project management costs (4%): £3,249.57 Total: £84,488.88
<b>Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)</b>	£84,488.88

<p><b>Problem(s)</b></p>	<p>The UK's food poverty rate is among the worst in Europe and the cost-of-living crisis has made it harder for individuals to afford to eat. Millions of individuals are being pushed below the breadline as food prices soar, with many struggling to feed themselves and their families.</p> <p>As a closer insight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food prices increased by 19% in the 12 months to March 2023, the sharpest rise since August 1977.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• The <a href="#">Trussell Trust</a> saw record numbers of people seeking help between April 2022 and March 2023, with more than 760,000 people forced to turn to the charity's food banks for the first time- that is more than the population of Sheffield.</li> </ul> <p>It has been reported that sitting down together as a family for dinner is incredibly powerful. Nourishment, connection and closer bonds can be found by eating dinner together as a family. Research also shows that eating dinner together as a family at least three times a week has a positive impact on child development. Mealtime conversations boost vocabulary even more than being read aloud to. For the older children, regular family meals are linked to higher self-esteem, better academic performance and improved mood.</p> <p>Within this, although slow cookers have been identified as being a useful tool in supporting with some of the issues linked to food poverty, Cadent has identified that a lot of communities have never used a slow cooker or know what to cook in them. From the feedback we have been hearing not all communities know what a slow cooker is, let alone have ever used one.</p> <p>Cadent's VCMA projects are providing free slow cookers to vulnerable individuals as a cheaper alternative way to cook and eat and we recognise that some projects are providing slow cookers without recipe cards. Therefore, it has been identified that we need to offer further support and education on how to use this tool to ensure that individuals are using it to its full potential.</p>
<p><b>Scope and Objectives</b></p>	<p><u>Project Scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £84,488.88 of VCMA funding to develop, create, and promote a cookbook aimed at families living in vulnerable situations. The cookbook will be distributed across all VCMA-funded projects and will be promoted through various methods during the remainder of the current price control.</p> <p><u>Project Objectives</u></p> <p><i>Production and distribution of the Cookbook of 50,000 copies:</i></p> <p>The overall aim of the project is to design and produce a slow cooker cookbook that can be distributed and used across all VCMA funded projects where Cadent have provided a slow cooker.</p>

<sup>1</sup> [Food poverty in the UK: The causes, figures and solutions](#)

	<p>Slow cookers are great way to promote healthier, budget friendly cooking, require minimal preparation and are a more energy efficient way to cook. They are suited to both cheaper cuts of meat and cheaper varieties of vegetables. The hands-off-cooking allows individuals to spend more time with their families. It is also great for batch cooking which saves time and effort.</p> <p>Sadly, we're finding that many of our customers are struggling to feed their families and heat their homes due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Many are telling us that they are unable to afford healthy food and often, don't know what recipes to cook on a budget. Therefore, the demand and need to provide individuals with a free slow cooker and education them on how to effectively use it as a tool, is there.</p> <p>On the back of the Home-Start Centres for Warmth project, Home-Start will create a cookbook to help support individuals living in the most vulnerable situations. This amazing cookbook, with tried and tested recipes from across Home-Start centres will help individuals learn a variety of new skills, understand how to cook cheaper cuts of meat and cheaper varieties of vegetables and, encourage families to eat together around the table.</p> <p>With busy lives, meals play a central role in bringing individuals together and this cookbook is aimed at reducing what we hear gets in the way of families doing this more often. As well as being tasty, all the meals are cost-effective and designed to be quick to make.</p> <p><i>Communications to promote the Cookbook:</i></p> <p>A campaign will be launched to publicise Home-Start's cookbook – marketed as a collection of recipes created, shared, and recommended by families that attend the Home-Start Centres for Warmth, based on easy-to-cook, budget-friendly meals.</p> <p>The work will include all consultancy to best set up the story; end-to-end project management; managing all aspects of the research; writing a full broadcast news advisory; full selling to all target national, regional and local TV &amp; radio outlets to set up unlimited interviews; manage all interviews; full reporting including links to coverage; the pre-recording of a 30" report to run across news bulletins on 340 local commercial radio stations including full reporting of these results too.</p>
<p><b>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</b></p>	<p>We believe that the project meets all of the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:</p> <p><b>a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project:</b></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. <b>Either:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or,</b></li> <li>ii. <b>Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or,</b></li> <li>iii. <b>Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;</b></li> </ul> <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. <b>Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:</b></p> <p><i>Cadent and Home-Start UK 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. <b>Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and,</b></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. <b>Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding,</b></p> <p><i>This project will be solely delivered through Cadent's VCMA funding.</i></p>
<p><b>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</b></p>	<p>Stakeholder feedback provided via our existing VCMA projects helps us 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.</p> <p><u>Centres for Warmth</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Below are quotes from various Home-Start Centre for Warmth attendees, following receiving a slow cooker or/and attending a slow cooker lesson led by Home-Start:</p> <p><b>Home-Start Blackpool, Fylde &amp; Wyre</b>  "The slow cooker from Home-Start has been really helpful. It's easy to use and clean which is what you need when busy and strapped for time with children. It's good you can chuck all your</p>

ingredients in the morning and get on with your day and have a nice tea later ready for you. Firm favourite in our household is chilli, girls love it and so does my husband. The other bonus is it's cost effective too."

**Home-Start, Norfolk**

"It's like having an extra pair of hands taking care of dinner while we take care of everything else. Mealtimes are much less stressful now"- one of our families who received a slow cooker from the Cadent project

**Home-Start Mansfield**

"My slow cooker is brilliant, when I cook in it, it lasts me all week. My granddaughter loves coming here to the group and I even come on my own for the company when I'm not looking after her." - Grandma of 1

"My slow cooker brings all the family together as I am not cooking 5 different meals anymore". - Mum of 4

"As a single parent who works, the slow cooker has been a godsend. I make a beef stew, and it lasts a few days, and it's giving me more time with the kids." - Mum of 2

**Opinion Matters research**

*The research was conducted by Opinion Matters. The research was from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> January of parents of children aged between 12 months and their 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. There were 2002 responses:*

92% of parents often felt short on time when it comes to preparing family meals. For 57%, this occurs regularly or always.

99% of parents believed having an evening meal with their child or children was valuable with 75% thinking it "very valuable".

65% of parents said they tend to cook the same recipe(s) over and over because they know it's quick and cheap.

26% have had to choose between cooking a meal or having the heating on.

48% agree that rising bills have made it difficult to feed their family nutritiously.

48% have skipped a meal in order to ensure they feed their child/children. 32% have done so multiple times.

45% of parents say they have used their oven less because of the cost of energy.

41% of parents agree that they have cooked fewer meals from scratch as they can't afford the ingredients as often.

45% say it has been cheaper to opt for pre-packaged and/or readymade meals than to cook from scratch.

	63% of parents regularly use slow cookers and/or air fryers to reduce energy costs.
<b>Information Required</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</b>	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <p>The project aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals will report an increased knowledge of cooking on a budget, healthy cooking, and use of a slow cooker to save on energy through utilising the cookbook alongside their existing free slow cooker</li> <li>• Families will report an increased connection with each other through cooking and eating together.</li> <li>• Families will also report that they have better energy efficient awareness for using appliances around their homes.</li> </ul> <p><u>Associated Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home-Start will collate family favourite recipes from the Home-Start Centres for Warmth.</li> <li>• Cadent and Home-Start will design and produce a cookbook that can be used by the whole family.</li> <li>• Marketers will write a full broadcast news advisory; full selling to all target national, regional, and local TV &amp; radio outlets to set up unlimited interviews; manage all interviews; full reporting including links to coverage; the pre-recording of a 30" report to run across news bulletins on 340 local commercial radio stations including full reporting of these results too.</li> <li>• Home-Start will produce case studies of individuals who contributed recipes to the cookbook.</li> <li>• Cadent will distribute 50,000 copies of the cookbook across all VCMA-funded projects.</li> </ul> <p><u>Success Criteria</u></p> <p>The success of the project will be measured against meeting the below criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A slow cooker, budget-friendly cookbook will be produced</li> <li>• 50,000 copies of the cookbook will be distributed and utilised - individuals who receive the cookbook will learn how to cook affordable, healthy and energy efficient meals.</li> <li>• The marketing campaign will reach its intended audience through the pre-recorded audio (1 x 30" News Bulletin – running at least 3x across 345+ radio stations), broadcast interviews (uncapped number of interviews across national, regional and local radio and TV) and its other key elements.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</b>	Cadent and Home-Start UK
<b>Potential for New Learning</b>	The uptake in messaging and the number of actions/views from the Cookbook promotion will help inform Cadent of the most effective channels of engagement with our customers.



	<p>Also, the response and feedback from our partners through the current VCMA-funded projects will ensure that we are targeting the correct audience and supporting them in every way we can. We want to be able to provide all of the tools and materials when a partner distributes and promotes a slow cooker, to ensure individuals can successfully feed their family in a healthy, budget-friendly, energy efficient way.</p> <p>This newfound understanding will help shape future projects aimed at engaging customers on VCMA-related messaging.</p>
<p><b>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV</b></p>	<p><u>The scale of VCMA project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £84,488.88 in the design, creation and promotion of the cookbook. This VCMA project will be distributing 50,000 copies across all VCMA-funded projects for the remainder of the current price control.</p> <p><u>SROI Summary</u></p> <p>12,800 individuals will practice efficient use of appliances and behaviours: £18,388,500.00</p> <p>Total Investment = £84,488.88</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £4,707,456.00 One-year gross present value = £941,491.20</p> <p>Five-year net value = £4,622,967.12 One-year net value = £857,002.32</p> <p>SROI Ratio = £1:55</p> <p>The SROI is calculated based on applying a retention rate of 25.6% due to uptake in people receiving and using the cookbook.</p> <p>This retention rate has been agreed across all GDNs to be applied to all literature provided to individuals.</p>
<p><b>VCMA Project Start and End Date</b></p>	<p>Start date: 26/11/2024 End Date: 31/03/2026</p>
<p><b>Geographical Area</b></p>	<p>The cookbook communications and distribution of the book will be across Cadent's five networks.</p>
<p><b>Internal governance and project management evidence</b></p>	<p>Approved.</p>

**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: 09/12/2024	Review Completed By: Lucy Nembaware
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 08/01/2024	Review Completed By: Gurvinder Dosanjh
Step 3: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programmes Sign-Off: Phil Burrows	
Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programmes Sign-Off Date: 08/01/2025	
Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem ( <a href="mailto:vcma@ofgem.gov.uk">vcma@ofgem.gov.uk</a> )	
Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: February 2025	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: February 2025	