

## Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

### Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA) *Inspiring Fitness at Centres for Warmth*

Will Allard– Safeguarding and Community Partnerships Lead

September 2024



**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>	
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 of 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 that 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 that 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, or 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
Project Title	Inspiring Fitness at Centres for Warmth
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Cadent project
Date of PEA Submission	September 2024
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)	Project Costs: £372,620.00 Leaflets: £3,090.00 Project Management: £15,028.40
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£390,738.40

<p><b>Problem(s)</b></p>	<p>The cost of living has hurt the ability of more than a third of adults in England to be active, according to a new report from Sport England, with deprived areas being hit hardest. The report, which surveyed 3,000 people, found that 36% reported they could not afford to be active while 29% said they had less time to exercise, often because of having to work more. People from the most deprived areas and lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to say their levels of physical activity have been negatively affected by cost-of-living increases.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>This link between deprivation and poor diet is not surprising, given the connection between diet and ill health. Furthermore, there is a strong relationship between deprivation and various diet-related health problems, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes.</p> <p>centre</p>
<p><b>Scope and Objectives</b></p>	<p><u>Project scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £390,738.40 of VCMA funding to deliver a 15-month project with Inspiring Fitness to deliver education on CO and information on the PSR during tailored fitness programs to 35 Centres for Warmth across Cadent's network. Inspiring Fitness will work collaboratively with the Cadent Centre for Warmth network to deliver a comprehensive and holistic project.</p> <p>Inspiring Fitness will deliver a fitness programme designed to suit the specific demographics of a selected number of Cadent's Centre for Warmth. Fitness instructors will provide individuals with education on CO and for those most at risk, they will receive a CO alarm. Individuals will also receive information on the PSR and those eligible will be assisted to register. Individuals attending the sessions will also receive education on health and wellbeing plus information on slow cooking and eating a healthy diet on a budget. Those individuals needing more support will be signposted to Cadent Centres for Warmth for specialist advice around carbon monoxide awareness, priority services register, and income maximisation.</p> <p>Each session will be 45 minutes and include appropriate physical exercise for the group, followed by relevant group discussions, advice, and support. This will include support for cooking healthily on a budget and exercising at home.</p> <p>Individuals will also be supported on, breathing practices for relaxation and stress management as well as other topics relating to physical and mental wellbeing. The weekly sessions will be delivered over 15 months and be tailored to suit the audience or group that would be involved. The sessions will be open to all, split into 6-12 people per group with an average of nine individuals attending each session.</p> <p>The Inspiring Fitness project takes an innovative approach by collaborating with Cadent's Centre for Warmth project. The benefits of this collaboration extend beyond just the individuals directly involved. Communities that address both fitness and fuel poverty are likely to see:</p>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2024/jan/11/adults-active-cost-of-living-crisis-fitness-gym#:~:text=%E2%80%9CPeople%20from%20the%20most%20deprived,increases%2C%E2%80%9D%20the%20report%20states.>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Improved Health Outcomes:</b> Increased physical activity can lead to better mental and physical health, which is crucial for families already facing the stress of fuel poverty.</li> <li>• <b>Enhanced Community Cohesion:</b> Joint initiatives foster a sense of community, encouraging social interaction and support networks that are vital for resilience.</li> <li>• <b>Greater Awareness and Advocacy:</b> By working together, Inspiring Fitness and Cadent’s Centres for Warmth can amplify their voices, advocating for policy changes that address both health and energy security in a more integrated manner.</li> </ul> <p>The collaboration between Inspiring Fitness and the Cadent Centre for Warmth project is a testament to the power of holistic approaches in social programming. By recognizing the interconnectedness of health and energy needs, we can create innovative solutions that empower individuals and strengthen communities. As the partnership continues to grow, it holds the potential to not only transform lives but also to inspire a movement towards a healthier, more equitable future for all.</p> <p><u>Project Objectives</u></p> <p>The project will have the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To deliver a 15-month fitness program suited to the specific demographics of the individual centres.</li> <li>• Run the program across Cadent’s Centres for Warmth across the whole of the Cadent networks at 35 centres.</li> <li>• Run a total of 2,000 sessions.</li> <li>• Run sessions with 6 -12 attendees per session (average nine attendees per session).</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with Cadent’s existing Centres for Warmth to signpost fitness class attendees to the centre advisor for more in-depth advice.</li> <li>• Provide individuals attending sessions with health and wellbeing advice, CO education, PSR awareness, and energy efficiency advice.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for individuals to pursue training and development within the fitness industry.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</b></p>	<p>We believe that the project meets all the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project:</b></li> </ul> <p><i>The project delivers a positive forecasted social return on investment. This is based on achieving the target reach for income maximization, registrations to the PSR, and education on carbon monoxide. More information can be found in the relevant section below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. <b>Either:</b></li> </ul>

	<p>i. <b>Provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or,</b></p> <p>ii. <b>Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or,</b></p> <p>iii. <b>Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO.</b></p> <p><i>The project delivers services that meet all three elements of this criteria. For example, the fitness instructors will help individuals with raising awareness of CO and the PSR. For individuals needing more specialist advice regarding income maximisation, the project will sign and post them to the centre for warmth staff.</i></p> <p>c. <b>Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:</b></p> <p><i>Cadent and Inspiring Fitness have entered into a service agreement that will contain the project objective and actions. Further details 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 license 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 license 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>Cadent conducted extensive stakeholder and customer research. High energy prices have damaged the physical and mental health of vulnerable people in Northern Ireland, new research by the Utility Regulator suggests. The regulator commissioned a research company to interview 42 people between November 2023 and January 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It found that many of the participants had adopted "harmful coping strategies" such as skipping meals or drastically reducing their energy use. One of the female interviewees said that "In the depths of January blues, I transferred 90p from my savings account into my current account so that I could top up on electricity. I thought to myself, this is a new low,".</li> <li>• <i>Consideration for Cadent:</i> Sinead Dynan, Head of Consumer Protection at the Utility Regulator, said the work had "provided a glimpse into the stark reality some consumers are dealing with, which further highlights why our consumer protection work is so vitally important"<sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Cadent regularly looks at up-to-date research and engages basis every quarter with stakeholders and customers. By doing this</p>

<sup>3</sup> [Energy bills: Vulnerable people's 'hopelessness' over price hikes - BBC News](#)

	Cadent can ensure that projects stay relevant and serve our customers way most effectively.
<b>Information Required</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Outcomes, Associated Actions, and Success Criteria</b>	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <p>The VCMA project will be delivered in partnership with Inspiring Fitness and aims to support 1,800 individuals with eating on a budget, exercising at home, CO education, and individuals will be supported to register for the PSR. Individuals who require more in-depth advice will also be signposted to Cadent Centres for Warmth for additional advice and support.</p> <p><u>Associated Actions</u></p> <p>Mobilisation Period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cadent to arrange all centre introductions with Inspiring Fitness.</li> <li>• Sessions will be designed and coordinated based on the centres and community needs.</li> <li>• Cadent will train all Inspire Fitness staff on CO, PSR, and energy efficiency advice.</li> <li>• Content will be created for each centre specifically to promote the sessions within the local areas.</li> <li>• Inspiring Fitness will leaflet drop to the communities around the centres, GP surgeries, and schools.</li> </ul> <p>Service Delivery and Project Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiring Fitness will run 2,000 fitness sessions during the 15-month project period.</li> <li>• Inspiring Fitness will run sessions across all five of the Cadent distribution networks. Between June and January, Inspiring Fitness will set up sessions at 35 Cadent Centres for Warmth. The breakdown will be as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ West Midlands – Fifteen Centres</li> <li>○ East Midlands – Five Centres</li> <li>○ East Anglia – Five Centres</li> <li>○ North London – Five Centres</li> <li>○ Northwest – Five Centres</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All inspiring fitness trainers will receive training on CO, PSR, and energy efficiency.</li> <li>• Cadent will provide Inspiring Fitness trainers will materials to be able to deliver the project. These materials will include leaflets and CO alarms.</li> <li>• Every fitness session will include a 15-minute well-being conversation where the staff and group will discuss topics such as healthy eating, CO safety tips, PSR advice, and education on energy-saving measures.</li> <li>• Inspiring Fitness will signpost individuals directly to the centre of those individuals who require more in-depth support such as income maximisation support, and benefit checks.</li> <li>• The project will tackle loneliness and isolation by bringing people together weekly.</li> <li>• Every individual who attends a fitness session will have a wellbeing conversation.</li> <li>• Any individuals that require more in-depth support that Inspiring Fitness is unable to support with, will be directly referred to the centre.</li> </ul>

	<p><u>Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals will report an increased awareness of the dangers of CO and have a reduced risk of harm caused by CO.</li> <li>• Individuals will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage due to an increased knowledge of the PSR.</li> <li>• Individuals will report an increased knowledge of cooking on a budget, healthy cooking, and use of a slow cooker to save on energy.</li> <li>• Individuals will report an increase in physical activity.</li> <li>• Individuals will report an improvement in mental and physical health associated with attending the exercise sessions.</li> <li>• Individuals will report a reduction in loneliness and isolation because of attending the sessions.</li> </ul> <p><u>Success criteria</u></p> <p>The success of the project will be evaluated against meeting the project's objectives. These objectives are for the unique reach of the project. Many of the individuals attending the sessions will have been referred through the Centre for Warmth program. This would account for the number of individuals receiving direct advice being lower as individuals may have received advice from Centre for Warmth staff. So, therefore, we anticipate the overall footfall to be higher due to this. The 10% that has been added to reach to consider additional individuals attending only one session.</p> <p>These objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,800 individuals will receive education about the PSR. 180 individuals were helped to sign up for the PSR.</li> <li>• 1,800 individuals will receive help and education about energy efficiency measures in the home.</li> <li>• 1,800 individuals will receive education and awareness about CO. 300 of the most at risk will receive a CO alarm.</li> <li>• 1,800 individuals will receive education about healthy eating and cooking on a budget.</li> <li>• Inspiring Fitness will also deliver 2,000 sessions across the Cadent network.</li> <li>• 1,800 individuals will attend sessions across the course of the project.</li> <li>• 18,000 individuals to attend sessions. This is based on an average of 9 individuals attending each one of the 2,000 sessions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</b></p>	<p>Inspiring Fitness and the Cadent Centre for Warmth Network</p>
<p><b>Potential for New Learning</b></p>	<p>Every area within Cadent's network sees households suffering the same issues, fuel poverty and low income. These factors in turn have a knock-on effect on the individual's physical and mental health. 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 has set up a forum for the Centres for Warmth. As this project draws on collaboration between Inspiring Fitness and Cadent's Centre for Warmth network, Cadent will continue to seek feedback from centre staff and Inspiring Fitness to ensure that the programme</p>



	<p>is relevant and is helping with individual's mental and physical health.</p> <p>Every quarter Cadent and its project partners will meet. These meetings will discuss various topics, share stories, tips, and best practices.</p> <p>Cadent will continue to listen to our partners to try to improve the support and services where possible, through our Inspiring Fitness and Centre for Warmth partnerships to assist our most vulnerable customers.</p>
<p><b>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV</b></p>	<p><u>The scale of the VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will provide Inspiring Fitness with £390,738.40 in additional VCMA funding to deliver a 15-month project. The project will focus on providing exercise classes and wellbeing advice for individuals. 10% has been added to reach to consider for additional individuals attending only one session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,800 individuals will receive energy efficiency advice = £661,986.00</li> <li>• 1,800 individuals will receive education on the dangers of CO = £15,714.00</li> <li>• 180 individuals will be helped to register for the PSR = £25,900.200</li> <li>• 2,070 individuals will attend sessions to help relieve loneliness and isolation =£1,552,500.00</li> </ul> <p>Total Investment = £390,738.40</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £2,256,100.20 One-year gross present value = £1,382,720.04</p> <p>Five-year net value = £1,865,361.80 One-year net value = £1,070,129.32</p> <p>SROI = £1:5</p> <p><b>*Cadent also ran the project's reach through the new SROI industry calculator, which considered physical health benefits, mental health benefits, and reduced GP and hospital visits as well as the categories measured in the original calculator. With the new calculator, the SROI is £1:2,021</b></p>
<p><b>VCMA Project Start and End Date</b></p>	<p>Start Date: 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024 End Date: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025</p>
<p><b>Geographical Area</b></p>	<p>The project will be delivered across the whole of the Cadent Centre for Warmth Network.</p>

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

In order to ensure that a VCMA project is registered 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: 24/07/24	Review Completed By: Lucy Nembaware
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Data Management Review Completed: 05/02/25	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: 05/02/25	
Step 4: Upload the PEA Document to the Website & a Notification Email 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	