

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)
St Francis Coventry

Will Allard– Safeguarding and Community Partnerships Lead

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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)	
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	St Francis Community Centre
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent
New / Updated	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Not applicable
Date of PEA Submission	August 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)	Centre Costs: £151,752.00 Plaque: £30.00 Leaflets: £1,470.00 Slow Cookers: £1,176.00 Project Management Cost: £6,177.12
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£160,605.12

<p>Problem(s)</p>	<p>St Francis Employability Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is in Radford Coventry. This area falls within the Coventry northwest constituency. 20% of households in this area live in fuel poverty. ²</p> <p>Many of the residents within the Radford area are struggling with rising living costs. Fuel, food, and energy bills have risen, and we know many are struggling to make ends meet. The rise in the cost of living has meant that the St Francis community centre have seen an increase in the number of people accessing support. The community café has seen an increase in people needing to eat, along with a rise in the number of families accessing the social supermarket. Since the beginning of the food support offer in 2020, St Francis have issued over 1,600 foodbank parcels to those in need and 1,120 social supermarket parcels to members. St Francis currently have 60 households attending the social supermarket regularly (this number is capped due to funding limitations), but they also have a waiting list.</p> <p>St Francis are already offering support around income maximisation and employment. The Cadent funding will be used to extend this support and allow the centre to give advice about energy efficiency, carbon monoxide (CO) education and the priority services register (PSR).</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Project scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £160,605.12 of VCMA funding to deliver a 20-month project in partnership with St Francis employability CIO.</p> <p>The August 2024-March 2026 agreement will replicate other Centre for Warmth models, whereby specialist advisors are employed using VCMA funding. The centres will provide essential information and support on CO safety, energy efficiency advice and the PSR.</p> <p>Since the cost-of-living crisis, St Francis have been met with increasing numbers of people accessing support at the centre. The centre will utilise Cadent funding to employ three staff members, who will be delivering vital support to residents through a variety of different methods. St Francis will utilise one-to-one appointments, group sessions and walk-ins to deliver advice on income maximisation, CO, PSR and energy efficiency advice. St Francis will also use a holistic approach to support the centre users which will be accomplished by supporting individuals that attend the food bank. Individuals will be not only given food parcels but will also be offered Cadent services. The centre will also offer employability advice as part of this approach, by doing this St Francis can ensure that they are providing a comprehensive service to help those most in need in the community gain independence.</p> <p>The project will aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that every individual coming through our door (not just those accessing food) has access to onsite support in the form of energy advice, CO awareness, debt advice and support with income maximisation.

² <https://www.nea.org.uk/constituencies/coventry-north-west/>

- Ensure that every individual is supported in looking for work.
- Aim for 25% of our beneficiaries accessing food support through our social supermarket move off support because their financial situation has improved (through employment or other forms of income maximisation)
- The centre will aim to tackle loneliness and isolation in the community by running sessions for individuals to attend. These sessions will include craft sessions, knit and natter groups and a Mums and toddlers' group.
- The centre will aim to deliver community slow cooking courses. These sessions will aim to educate individuals on cooking on a budget, utilising what is in the cupboard to make healthy meals and cooking in a more energy efficient way.
- The centre will aim to utilise the trust it has built with the local community to be able to spread to Cadent message to hard-to-reach communities. This will be done by using local people from those communities that volunteer at the centre. These volunteers will translate Cadent messaging into languages spoken by centre users.

Project Objectives:

Individuals attending the Centres for Warmth will gain knowledge of CO and the PSR. The centre will also provide energy efficiency advice to via a community connector and the funding will be utilised to enhance the income maximisation and employability support the St Francis already provides.

To generate a positive social return on investment - see the below relevant section for more details.

Service (s)	Summary of Service (s)	Expected Number of Customer Reached
Energy Advice	Customer will receive information and advice on energy efficiency including tips to reduce energy bills	500
Educate individuals on CO	Individuals will receive information and education on the dangers of CO.	500
Provide CO alarms	Individuals will receive CO alarms.	500
Raise awareness of the PSR register	Individuals will receive advice and information about the PSR and the benefits it provides.	500
Sign families up to the PSR	Individuals that are eligible will be helped to signed up to the PSR.	450
Offer income maximisation	Individuals will receive income	500

	advice such as supporting with benefits	maximisation advice including information about unclaimed benefits.	
	Slow cooking Classes	Individuals will receive information on healthy eating and energy efficiency through slow cooking classes.	150
<p>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</p>	<p>We believe that the project meets all the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:</p> <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> <p>i. Provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or,</p> <p>ii. Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or,</p> <p>iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO.</p> <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 St Francis Employability CIO have entered into a grant 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 regularly engages with stakeholders and customers to ensure that project remain relevant and specific to the needs of the communities that Cadent work in. A recent customer insight report found that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New data shows the Warm Home Discount — the main support scheme for people at risk of fuel poverty — reached 650,000 more people in 2023/24 than the previous year. However, over the years the Warm Home Discount has fallen behind both energy costs and inflation. • Energy debt is now the most common debt we support people with — this April more than 10,000 people supported with energy debts, a 77% increase compared to April 2021. <p>The partnership with St Francis CIO Coventry focusses on tackling fuel poverty by offering energy/income advice to at risk households.</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 an enormous 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>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p>The partnership with St Francis Employability CIO will form part of Cadent's wider Centres for Warmth network. The Centre for Warmth project model relies on the provision of VCMA funding, materials and resource to a community centre located in an area of high deprivation, fuel poverty, and CO. The increased levels of funding, resource and materials enable the community centre to ramp up its existing support for customers in vulnerable situations.</p> <p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <p>St Francis Employability CIO - Centre for Warmth project aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals will report increased levels of household income. • Individuals will report an increased awareness on the dangers of CO and have a reduced risk of harm caused by CO. Individuals in the most vulnerable situations will also receive a CO alarm. • Individuals attending the centre will report increased knowledge of energy efficiency measures and how they can implement these in their own homes. • Those Individuals that have received education on the PSR will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage. • Individuals will report an increased knowledge of cooking on a budget, healthy cooking, and use of a slow cooker to

save on energy. Individuals who do not have a slow cooker and living in a vulnerable situation will receive a free one.

- Individuals will report feeling less lonely and isolated due to attending sessions at the centre.
- Individuals attending the centre will also have access to employment advice. This will help to get individuals financial independence through employment

Associated Actions

St Francis Employability CIO will implement the following associated actions to deliver the project's outcomes:

- Cadent will fund one full-time role throughout the project. This will be for a Community Connector. The Community Connector will give advice about Energy Efficiency, CO and the PSR to all individuals attending the centre.
- Cadent will also fund two part-time roles. One of these will be an employment advisor. They will give advice to help maximise individuals' income and aid with getting individuals into employment. The other role will be a centre co-ordinator, who will oversee the project and give advice around the four main Cadent messages. This will be done at the centre itself and community events.
- Cadent will provide St Francis staff members and volunteer with training on CO, PSR and energy efficiency advice.
- Cadent will provide St Francis with materials to aid in the delivery of the project. These materials will include leaflets, CO alarms and Slow cookers.
- The centre will also be used to implement the use of slow cookers and slow cooking lessons. These will be designed and coordinated by the centre. This will help the local community to get advice on cooking healthy low-cost meals and provide individuals with an option to cook more energy efficiently.
- The centre will run will use a variety of different sessions for individuals attending the centre. These will be a combination of one-to-one appointments and groups sessions. The community connector will also manage walk in appointments and will provide individuals with light touch advice.

Success Criteria

The success of the project will be measured against meeting the below criteria:

- 500 individuals will receive specialist advice on identifying and accessing previously unclaimed benefits.
- 500 individuals will receive help and support on energy efficiency.
- 500 individuals will receive an awareness conversation on the dangers of CO. 500 of the most at-risk individuals will also receive a CO alarm.
- 500 individuals will improve their awareness of the PSR. 450 individuals will also be supported to register.
- 150 households will improve their knowledge of using a slow cooker to help lower their energy consumption.
- 58 individuals will be helped with loneliness and isolation.

Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	Cadent and St Francis Employability CIO
Potential for New Learning	<p>Every area within Cadent's network sees households suffering 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 assorted 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>
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £160,605.12 of the VCMA in partnership with St Francis employability CIO over a 20-month project.</p> <p>The project will support households with a range of services. The project will benefit households near the community centres.</p> <p><u>SROI Calculations</u></p> <p>The reach will be divided as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 receiving in-depth on-to-one advice on income maximisation, benefits = £858,555.00 • 500 will receive advice on energy efficiency = £183,885.00 • 500 will receive awareness advice on CO = £4,365.00 • 450 will register to the PSR = £64,750.50 • 150 will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £35,463.00 • 58 will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness = £58,000.00 <p>Total Investment = £160,605.12</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £1,205,018.50 One-year gross present value = £264,203.70</p> <p>Five-year net value = £1,044,413.38 One-year net value = £167,840.63</p> <p>SROI Ratio = £1:7</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	<p>Start Date: August 2024 End Date: March 2026</p>
Geographical Area	The project will be delivered in Cadent's West Midlands Network within the Coventry area.

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

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: 20/08/2024	Review Completed By: Amanda Jones
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 18/10/2024	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: 07/01/2025	
Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem (vcma@ofgem.gov.uk)	
Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: January 2025	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: January 2025	