

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)
Kirkdale Centre for Warmth

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

Section 1 - Eligibility criteria for company-specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, a project must:	
VCMA Eligibility Criteria	Criteria Satisfied (Yes/No)
a) 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 	Not applicable

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).	Not applicable
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.	Not applicable

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;	Not applicable
b) Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and	Not applicable
c) Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.	Not applicable

**Gas Network Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)
Governance Document - Project Registration Table 2**

Information Required	Description
Project Title	Kirkdale Centre for Warmth
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	N/A
Date of PEA Submission	01/04/2024
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)	Partner costs: £464,901.62 £6,000 for the thermal bags £8,000 for saucepans to be provided with the bags Total cost: £478,901.62 Project management costs (4%): £19,156.06

Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£ 498,057.68
Problem(s)	<p>Kirkdale is the most deprived ward within the Liverpool Walton constituency. According to research by the charity National Energy Action (NEA) the national average for England and Wales households in fuel poverty is 13.06%, for the Northwest of England it is 14.4% and Liverpool 16.3%. There are and the latest statistics provided by The Dept for Energy, Security and Net Zero identify that in this constituency there are 8,838 households in fuel poverty – as of April 2023 and for every 1000 homes an average of 141.5 received support from the main national energy efficiency programme. ²</p> <p>The people of Kirkdale often grow up in abject poverty, many experience domestic violence, poor parental mental health and/or substance misuse/dependency, they live in unsafe, overcrowded and cold houses and are exposed to criminality, the most prevalent being knife crime and drug-related gang culture.</p> <p>Recently the population of the area has also seen a shift in its ethnic and cultural make up. Once a white-British area, Kirkdale now has a thriving multicultural community. While this has brought the advantages of diversity and inclusion, it has also added further social barriers to the community. That of isolation due to language barriers and further marginalisation of communities.</p> <p>The headteacher at Kirkdale St Lawrence primary school and her staff have identified that the school has become a trusted place for parents to access help, but they do not have the resources to meet their non-academic needs. Many of the family are living in privately rented properties, some of which are not well maintained. This in turn impacts the children living in these homes. For parents where English is a second language do not always understand official communications or understand the importance of ventilation when cooking with gas. There is a need for a community hub which can provide advice on income maximisation, fuel poverty and energy efficiency, an awareness of CO and who to contact in the event of an emergency.</p>
Scope and Objectives	<p>Cadent's VCMA funding will be used to create a community hub within school grounds of Kirkdale St Lawrence primary school but with its own entrance and facilities. It will be open all year including holiday periods and provide a safe space for confidential discussions with appropriately trained professionals. It will also provide a community outreach service and create employment for up to 13 members of the community on a part-time/fixed hourly basis and several volunteering opportunities for parents and Masters students from Liverpool universities.</p> <p>The Head Teacher has identified that many of the parents like to cook</p>

	<p>however, a lack of suitable cooking facilities especially for those in temporary accommodation, combined with the rising costs of energy has prevented parents from providing hot nutritious food for their families. The Thermal Cooking Bag, designed and supplied by a local social enterprise The sewing rooms² is being trialled as a potential solution. It only requires the food to be cooked for 10 minutes, and it is more cost effective than a slow cooker. The Sewing rooms will be running an initial session during a half term camp for children in February 2025 using the school kitchen with a view to it being rolled out more widely over the following months.</p> <p>Its specific objectives are as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Service conversations 2500 individuals • Priority Services registration-- 750 Individuals • Income maximisation advice - 400 Individuals • Efficient use of Appliances – 2500 Individuals • Heating and water controls – 2500 individuals • Alleviate loneliness and Isolation – 287 Individuals • Provide thermal cooking bags and advice on use -300 Individuals
<p>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</p>	<p>We believe that this project meets the required company specific VCMA project eligibility criteria.</p> <p>a. Has a positive, or forecasted positive SROI, including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA project:</p> <p>We believe this project has the deliverables necessary to create a positive social return on investment – see the below section for more details.</p> <p>b. Either:</p> <p>a. Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding,</p> <p>or b. Provide awareness on the dangers of CO.</p> <p>or c. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO.</p> <p>This project will provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations and relate to energy safeguarding. Project customers will access financial advice and realise additional household income, both of which may result in a customer being able to adequately heat their home to a healthy temperature.</p>

² [The Sewing Rooms presents The Sew Fab Thermal Cooking Bag – a product that helps us in the fight against fuel poverty and climate change | Social Enterprise UK](#)

	<p>c. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:</p> <p>This project has clearly defined outcomes and associated actions to achieve them. Further information on the project's outcomes and associated actions can be found in the relevant section below.</p> <p>d. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations;</p> <p>We believe that this project goes outside of activities funded through other price control mechanisms due to:</p> <p>a) the types of support being delivered, and</p> <p>b) the method through which customers are to be engaged (e.g. not through Cadent's BAU (business as usual) activities) e</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>This project will solely be delivered by Cadent's VCMA funding.</p>
<p>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</p>	<p>Cadent has previously conducted and continues to obtain extensive stakeholder and customer engagement on its RIIO-GD2 business plans and subsequent VCMA delivery. 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.</p> <p>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 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</p>

	<p>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 by supporting customers impacted by a downturn in their financial health. This will be achieved through offering services such as income maximisation and benefit entitlement check, energy efficiency advice and CO and PSR awareness to give a wraparound support service.</p>
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p>The Social Brokers are a Community Interest Company (CIC) established in 2024 in response to a demand for a public health approach to inequalities including housing, mental health and welfare within North Liverpool communities. The Directors had previous experience with organisations who focused on sports or/and employability but research from the University of Liverpool including the Child of the North [OEB] suggested early intervention could have lifelong impact on the average life expectation of an individual. The Social Brokers will act as an intermediary between the community and other organisations including DWP, Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and the Liverpool Universities.</p> <p>The objective of the project is to create a sustainable community project which will be supported by community-based employees and volunteers including parents and Masters and Doctoral students from the local universities. Volunteers and staff will be trained to deliver energy efficiency advice and CO awareness via a train the trainer model. In addition to the hub based at the school volunteers and staff will be providing an outreach service into the community and to other schools within the local area.</p> <p><u>Project outcomes</u></p>

	<p>The VCMA project will be delivered in partnership with Kirkdale St Lawrence Primary School and aims to support 2,500 customers with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide income maximisation advice including benefit checks and budgeting. • Provide CO safety advice raising awareness of signs and symptoms of CO poisoning • Provide advice on the benefits of signing up to the PSR. • Provide advice on more efficient ways of using energy and appliances. <p><u>Associated Actions</u></p> <p><u>Kirkdale C4W and Social Brokers will utilise Cadent funding to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>To employ 13 members</u> of the community on part - time/fixed hours contracts and train them to offer advice on various topics. Including Energy Efficiency, Income Maximisation and Education and Healthcare plans. • Offer advice to 2,500 customers across the 2 years of the project. • To create opportunities for volunteering within Liverpool Universities and the community with a minimum of five Educational Psychology Masters students being offered meaningful work placements which will assist them in gaining employment. <p><u>Success Criteria</u></p> <p>The success of the project will be evaluated against the meeting of the projects objectives which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employing 13 staff which will include parents and post graduate students with specialist skills and experience of working within the school • 2,500 customers receiving advice on CO safety. • 2,500 customer receiving advice on energy efficiency. • 400 customers receiving advice on income maximisation. • 2,500 customer receiving advice on the PSR and 750 customers going on to register. • 287 customers alleviating loneliness and isolation. • Offer cooking bags to 300 individuals who do not have cooking facilities.
<p>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</p>	<p>The Social Brokers CIC</p>
<p>Potential for New Learning</p>	<p>This project is unique in that it is creating a purpose-built building using an existing physical safe space to provide a community hub.</p> <p>By adopting a Public Health approach³ to community issues it recognises the impact of poverty and domestic abuse on women and children and the need to provide safe environments, parent and care giver support and economic strengthening. It is building on the existing sense of community to empower parents</p>

to become involved either as employees or volunteers and to become advocates in the wider community.

The Child of the North⁴ report highlighted the differences in life chances for those children born to families where there was economic deprivation. By intervening at primary school level, the expectation is that children will be more prepared when moving on to secondary school increasing their future employment prospects and improving their overall wellbeing.

It has also been identified that many parents feel disempowered and do not trust statutory agencies but have engaged with the Social Brokers. The expectation is that they will become more engaged in peer-to-peer learning through coffee morning and other sessions delivering CO and Energy Efficiency advice and will want to deliver sessions to other parents and community members in similar situations. The Social Switch Programme has been successful in Camden and Islington with those from a similar background.⁵ This type of approach has also been hugely beneficial and successful as part of our C4W programme.

Working with the university of Liverpool this project will be evaluated from the outset to understand which factor have both improved the lives of parents but also had a positive impact on their children. It will also have the support of child psychologists and other professionals who will look to create bespoke interventions for those who struggle with mainstream education. In addition, parents who are refugees or asylum seekers with Masters or Doctorate level qualifications will be given access to courses to improve their spoken and written English and improve their employment prospects within academia.

Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV

Total Investment = £ 498,057.68

1-year gross value = £5,269,218.31
 5-year gross value = £8,304,505.78

1 - year net value = £4,813,390.90
 5-year net value = £7,848,678.38

SROI £17.22

GDN Rulebook
 Latest Version Date: 10-09-2024



The screenshot shows a software interface for project calculation. At the top, there is a 'Load Project:' section with a dropdown menu set to 'GDN - Social Brokers' and a 'Load' button. Below this, the interface is divided into 'Project information:' and 'Results:' sections.

Project information:		Results:	
Name:	SocialBrokers	Cost (discounted):	£455,827.41
WACC:	4.57%	Customer volume:	6450
Year of assessment:	2025	GPV:	£8,304,505.78
Start year of benefits:	2024	NPV:	£7,848,678.38
End year of benefits:	2029	SROI:	£17.22
Attribution:	0.00%		

Below the results, there is a 'Non-standardised activity inputs:' section with a table:

Non-standardised activity inputs:	
Cost (discounted):	£28,983.86
GPV:	£1,404,385.88

At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'Calculate', 'Save', and 'Clear'. A summary bar at the very bottom shows 'Cost 24 / 25' and a total value of '£448,057.68'. A 'Show Previous Years' button is located at the bottom left.

	<p>The following activities have been forecasted using the GDN rulebook:</p> <p>2,500 CO 1:1 conversations 2,500 Energy advice behavioural conversations 1:1 300 Thermal cooking bags and saucepans 50 gas safety check direct referrals 400 1:1 income max benefit conversations 750 PSR registrations</p> <p>Non -standard calculator used : 287 people suffering from loneliness (£50,000 in costs, from total, used to offer activities when calculating this through non-standard) 750 feeling safe due to receiving a CO alarm</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	Start Date 01 April 2024 to 31st March 2026
Geographical Area	Northwest
Internal governance and project management evidence	Description of GDN(s) review of proposal and project sign-off, with details on how the project will be managed.

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

<p>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.</p>	
<p>Stage 1: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team PEA Peer Review</p>	
<p>Date Immediate Team Peer Review Completed: 11/02/2025</p>	<p>Review Completed By: Amanda Jones</p>
<p>Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review</p>	
<p>Date Management Review Completed:12/02/2025</p>	<p>Review Completed By: Gemma Norton</p>
<p>Step 3: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social programmes Sign-Off: Phil Burrows</p>	
<p>Head of Customer Vulnerability Social programmes Sign-Off Date: 18/02/2025</p>	
<p>Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem (vcma@ofgem.gov.uk)</p>	
<p>Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: March 2025</p>	

Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: March 2025