

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

North Lincolnshire

Will Allard– Safeguarding and Community Partnerships Lead

November 2024



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 standard 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 of 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 that has not been serviced in the last 12 months in a tenant-occupied home of a customer in a Vulnerable Situation. It is the tenant's responsibility to maintain the essential gas appliance, and the 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 (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

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	North Lincolnshire
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent company-specific project
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Not applicable
Date of PEA Submission	November 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: £394,965.00 Leaflets: £1,763.64 Plaques: £600.00 Slow Cooker Costs: £52,200.00 Project Management (4%): £17,981.15
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£467,509.79

<p>Problem(s)</p>	<p>North Lincolnshire residents are more likely to live in fuel poverty than the rest of England, and this gap is widening. In 2018, only 9.8% of North Lincolnshire households lived in fuel poverty, compared to 10.3% in England. However, by 2020, this increased to 16.9% and 13.06%, respectively.¹</p> <p>Local insights and data demonstrate there is a strong correlation between deprivation and fuel poverty, with a higher prevalence of fuel poverty in North Lincolnshire, corresponding with more deprived areas. Additionally, certain groups are also more likely to experience adverse health impacts because of fuel poverty, including children, older people and people living with a long-term disability or illness.</p> <p>Policy in Practice estimates that people in North Lincolnshire miss out on £41,385,343 of unclaimed income-related benefits and social tariffs every year.² Identifying those in need and removing barriers to accessing this support is necessary for enabling households to manage their finances proactively, effectively, and independently.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Project Scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £467,509.79 in partnership with North Lincolnshire Community Vision. The project will bring together voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE) partners to provide a coordinated approach to support people living in vulnerable situations across North Lincolnshire. North Lincolnshire community vision will lead the project.</p> <p>The funding will be used to run 20 Centres for Warmth, and they will be situated in both urban and rural areas. The project will run from 01st November 2024 to 31st March 2026.</p> <p>The project will complement existing provisions and build capacity to deliver a range of interventions across four workstreams. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practical energy efficiency solutions ● Energy efficiency information ● Income maximisation information ● Education and training <p>The project will provide people with practical energy efficiency solutions that will help them improve energy efficiency within their homes. North Lincolnshire Community Vision will do this by visiting people at home and undertaking home energy checks.</p>

¹ [Scunthorpe - National Energy Action \(NEA\)](#)

² [Report: Missing out 2024 - Policy in Practice](#)

These checks will be completed by an expert energy adviser who will assess the low-cost energy efficiency measures already in place within the home and provide advice on additional measures that are available.

North Lincolnshire Community Vision will also advise on reducing energy consumption, improving energy efficiency and managing energy efficiency costs. Energy advice will enable people to:

- Change their behaviour to reduce their energy expenditure.
- Review their energy consumption and help them find the best deal to suit their household, identifying any financial savings they can make.
- Understand their tariffs, bills and fuel options and understand selling methods.
- Communicate with energy suppliers, including correcting bills and making complaints.
- Increase awareness of sources of support for people, including the Warm Home Discount and Priority Services Register (PSR).
- Understand the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) and provide CO alarms.
- Develop the confidence to deal with energy issues in the future.
- North Lincolnshire Community Vision will work collaboratively with six project partners to deliver slow cooking sessions and off-site demonstrations.

Information and advice to raise awareness of carbon monoxide's dangers and support people to address CO safety issues will be delivered as part of their energy advice and home safety check services. Messaging will include:

- Potential sources of CO in the home.
- The dangers of CO.
- Identifying signs and symptoms, and actions if CO is present and/or suspected. The importance of annual appliance testing - including boiler servicing.
- The dangers of not having a working audible CO alarm - including providing one if required.

The project will offer income maximisation and debt advice to households to ensure people receive all the financial support they are entitled to and can manage their expenditures and debts. As a result, people will be enabled to:

- Break down barriers in navigating the benefits system and proving eligibility - we will help people determine if they are entitled to any benefits and allow them to apply.
- Tackle the negative perceptions they feel about benefits and feel able to engage with the benefits system.
- Identify eligibility for sources of financial support such as charitable grants, hardship funds and/or fuel vouchers.
- Apply for other sources of 'one-off' support, including local welfare assistance schemes.
- Deal with and manage debts resulting in reduced household expenditure, enabling better financial well-being - people will fully understand the options available to them and will be empowered to choose the best and most sustainable route out of over-indebtedness for their circumstances.

As part of the project, energy champions from across the sector will deliver education and training, acting as an entry point service to reach out to communities. 'Train the trainer' sessions will be offered and targeted at professionals, community facilities, and local community leaders working directly with vulnerable people struggling to pay their bills and/or at risk of fuel poverty. Links with professionals, community facilities and community leaders will develop the capacity of people across North Lincolnshire to recognise and respond to energy problems. They will actively engage people before they ask for help and energy problems escalate. Energy champions will also utilise the community vision information bus. The bus will travel to hard-to-reach areas to distribute advice on the Cadent key messaging. Additionally, school education and training will engage young people and their families to manage their household finances better and reduce their energy consumption.

Project Objectives

Cadent will measure the success of the project against the achievement of the following objectives:

Service(s)	Summary of Service(s)	Expected Number of Customers Reached
Energy Advice	Free practical information and advice on energy efficiency and energy efficiency solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3,788
Educate individuals on CO	Awareness raising is needed to understand and manage the dangers of CO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3,788 (Direct Conversations) ● 2,056 leaflets ● 2,057 social media.

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 241 831 367">Provide CO alarms</td> <td data-bbox="847 241 1098 367">Provision of CO alarms to keep people safe.</td> <td data-bbox="1106 241 1436 367"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total – 7,901 • 527 </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 378 831 607">Raise awareness of the PSR</td> <td data-bbox="847 378 1098 607">Awareness is being raised so households with extra communication, access, or safety needs can join the PSR.</td> <td data-bbox="1106 378 1436 607"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,992 • 2,099 Leaflets • 2,099 Social Media • Total – 8,190 </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 618 831 757">Sign families onto the PSR</td> <td data-bbox="847 618 1098 757">Supporting eligible households in joining the PSR register.</td> <td data-bbox="1106 618 1436 757"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 501 </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 768 831 943">Offer income maximisation advice</td> <td data-bbox="847 768 1098 943">Free independent advice enables families and individuals to maximise income.</td> <td data-bbox="1106 768 1436 943"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,254 </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="603 954 831 1010">Provide Slow Cookers</td> <td data-bbox="847 954 1098 1010">Provision of slow Cookers.</td> <td data-bbox="1106 954 1436 1010"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,875 </td> </tr> </table>	Provide CO alarms	Provision of CO alarms to keep people safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total – 7,901 • 527 	Raise awareness of the PSR	Awareness is being raised so households with extra communication, access, or safety needs can join the PSR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,992 • 2,099 Leaflets • 2,099 Social Media • Total – 8,190 	Sign families onto the PSR	Supporting eligible households in joining the PSR register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 501 	Offer income maximisation advice	Free independent advice enables families and individuals to maximise income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,254 	Provide Slow Cookers	Provision of slow Cookers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,875 	<p>To generate a positive social return on investment - see the relevant section below for more details on generating a positive social return on investment.</p>
Provide CO alarms	Provision of CO alarms to keep people safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total – 7,901 • 527 															
Raise awareness of the PSR	Awareness is being raised so households with extra communication, access, or safety needs can join the PSR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,992 • 2,099 Leaflets • 2,099 Social Media • Total – 8,190 															
Sign families onto the PSR	Supporting eligible households in joining the PSR register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 501 															
Offer income maximisation advice	Free independent advice enables families and individuals to maximise income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,254 															
Provide Slow Cookers	Provision of slow Cookers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,875 															
<p>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</p>	<p>We believe that the project meets all of 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 homes 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 North Lincolnshire Community Vision have entered into a service agreement that contains the project objective and actions. Further details are available 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>Through engagement and research with various stakeholders, Cadent better understands stakeholder needs and expectations, what is important, what services are needed and how to deliver them most effectively. In turn, Cadent can strategically allocate VCMA spend to support vulnerable individuals and reach the diversity of individuals needing support.</p> <p>Cadent Gas Vulnerability Research</p> <p>In June 2024, Cadent released the research findings from an investigation into fuel poverty, gas behaviour, cost of living attitudes, concerns and behaviours and other key areas. Some of the key findings were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling rising cost-of-living is a top priority for the fuel poor. • People in poverty prioritise addressing immediate needs over long-term planning to cope with the stressors they experience at present. • Knowledge of CO is a key driver for behaviour. <p>Centres for Warmth</p> <p>Our Centres for Warmth partners play an ongoing role in shaping the initiative, ensuring that insights from their experiences are integrated into developing new projects. This includes applying key lessons learned from the successes and challenges the existing Centres for Warmth face. The project continues to receive positive feedback from stakeholders, and its most successful elements will be carried forward into new projects that join the Centres for Warmth network.</p> <p>Collectively, the evidence suggests a need and benefit to working in partnership with North Lincolnshire Community Vision and using the Centres for Warmth model to support vulnerable individuals in North Lincolnshire.</p>
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <p>The project aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p>

- Individuals will report increased household income (and/or reduced debt) and reduced financial pressures and stress, leading to improved mental health and well-being.
- Individuals will report an increased awareness of the dangers of CO and have a reduced risk of harm caused by CO.
- Provide support to lonely and isolated individuals in rural/semi-rural areas, ensuring they can access the community hubs and services offered via the project - tackling loneliness and isolation.
- Individuals will report increased awareness of and engage with other local support services.
- By providing individuals with energy efficiency advice, individuals will report a better awareness of energy efficiency measures and improve their practices.
- Individuals will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage and increased awareness of the PSR.
- Individuals will report an increased knowledge of cooking on a budget, healthy cooking, and use of a slow cooker to save on energy.
- Run 20 Centres for Warmth across the North Lincolnshire area.

Associated Actions

The following associated actions will be implemented to deliver the project's outcomes:

- North Lincolnshire Community Vision will use various methods to support individuals, such as providing one-to-one and group conversations, distributing leaflets, and promoting broader awareness of the PSR, CO, and energy efficiency by sharing themed social media posts with their digital audiences. The partners are expected to work to maximise their reach and engagement with their audience.
- Cadent will provide energy efficiency, PSR and CO training, and resources to the core project delivery team. This will enable individuals to receive advice and support on the project's key deliverables.
- The advisors and the rest of the core project delivery team will use Cadent's training, expertise, and resources to support individuals.
- North Lincolnshire Community Vision will work collaboratively with 6 project partners to deliver slow cooking sessions and off-site demonstrations.
- Individuals will attend the centre to receive support and advice from its advisors and, where applicable, referral partners.

Success Criteria

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

- North Lincolnshire Community Vision will use various methods to support individuals: provide one-to-one and group conversations, distribute leaflets, and promote broader awareness of the PSR, CO, and energy

	<p>efficiency by sharing themed social media posts with their digital audiences. They are expected to work to maximise their reach and engagement with their audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout the project 8,190 individuals will be provided with a warm space to connect and socialise. Individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will be supported. • To improve their CO safety awareness, 7,901 individuals will receive CO education, 3,788 via one-to-one (and group) conversations, 2,056 via leaflets, and 2,057 via social media, and the most at-risk individuals will also receive a free CO alarm. • Individuals will receive in-home energy efficiency advice, 3,788 via one-to-one (and group) conversations. • 1,875 individuals will receive a slow cooker and learn how to cook affordable, healthy, energy-efficient meals. • Individuals will receive advice about the PSR, 3,992 via one-to-one and group conversations. 4,198 individuals will receive the information via social media, leaflets and other media sources. North Lincolnshire Community Vision will aim to sign up 501 eligible individuals to the register. • 1,254 individuals will receive income maximisation advice on various topics, including money budgeting and debt management – external referrals will also be made as relevant. • The project will generate a positive social return on investment, see the relevant section below for more details.
<p>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</p>	<p>Cadent and North Lincolnshire Community Vision</p>
<p>Potential for New Learning</p>	<p>Every area within Cadent’s network sees households suffering the same issues: fuel poverty and low income. Cadent has learned that each area also has issues specific to it, and these are dealt with differently. To help increase cross-network understanding, Cadent has set up a forum for the Centres for Warmth.</p> <p>Every quarter, we will meet to discuss various topics, share stories, tips, and best practices, and, most importantly, share 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>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV</p>	<p><u>The scale of the VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £467,509.79 in partnership with North Lincolnshire Council over a 17-month project.</p> <p>The project will support households with a range of services. Through specialist benefits advisors and community outreach workers, it will benefit households near the community centres and those in the wider area.</p> <p><u>SROI Calculations</u></p>

	<p>The reach will be divided as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,254 individuals receiving in-depth one-to-one advice on income maximisation, benefits = £2,153,255.94 • 3,788 individuals will receive advice on energy efficiency = £1,393,112.76 • 4,972 individuals will receive awareness advice on CO = £43,405.56 • 501 will register to the PSR = £72,088.89 • 1,875 will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £443,287.50 • 941 will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness = £799,850.00 <p>N.B For PSR, CO and energy efficiency, Cadent has factored in an assumption that 25.6% of the individuals reached through the project who receive leaflets will retain and use the information. A retention rate of 32% has been added to account for the individuals reached who will retain the information from social media.</p> <p>Total Investment = £467,509.79</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £4,905,000.65 One-year gross present value = £1,385,630.13</p> <p>Five-year net value = £4,437,490.86 One-year net value = £1,055,623.22</p> <p>SROI = £1:10</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	<p>Start Date: 01st November 2024 End Date: 31st March 2026</p>
Geographical Area	<p>The project will be delivered in Cadent's East Midlands network. Supporting the communities located in North Lincolnshire.</p>

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

To ensure that a VCMA project is registered by the Ofgem VCMA governance document (incl. project eligibility assessment), the table below 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: 28/01/25	Review Completed By: Lucy Nembaware
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Data Management Review Completed: 30/01/25	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: 31/01/25	
Step 4: Upload the PEA Document to the Website & a Notification Email Sent to Ofgem (vcma@ofgem.gov.uk)	
Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: February 2025	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: February 2025	