

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)
The Wishing Well – Centres 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 forecasted positive Social Return on Investment (SROI), including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA project;	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 licence obligations; and	Yes
e) Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN (Gas Distribution Network), including through other government (national, devolved, or local) funding.	Yes
Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing, repair, and replacement projects	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:	
a) A GDN has to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role;	N/A
b) The household cannot afford to service, repair, or replace the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance; and;	N/A
c) Sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including national, devolved, or local government funding) to fund the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance servicing, repair, or replacement.	N/A
Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects	
In order 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	The Wishing Well – Centres for Warmth
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent Company – specific project
New/Updated	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Not applicable
Date of PEA Submission	May 2024
VCMA Project Contact Name, email, and Number	Name: Phil Burrows Title: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Manager Email: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com Number: 07773 545451
Total Cost (£k)	Centre Costs: £296,640.00 400 x large slow cookers: £11,136.00 Leaflet costs: £4,410.00 Plaque costs: £90.00 Project management costs: £12,491.04
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£324,767.04
Problem(s)	<p>The Wishing Well is situated within Crewe Central ward. Despite the town’s many strengths, Crewe has the highest levels of deprivation in the borough of Cheshire East. Unemployment levels are higher than the average for Cheshire East and qualification levels are generally poor.¹</p> <p>People living in this area are more likely to be living in poverty, deprivation and ill health which has a direct impact on quality of life and life expectancy. As well as this, the figures suggest that in these wards people are more likely to turn to a life of crime (often out of desperation) and are more vulnerable to excess alcohol consumption, substance misuse, and addiction.</p> <p>In Crewe and Nantwich there were 380 excess winter deaths over the last five years for which data is available, of which²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 114 can be attributed to cold housing conditions. • 76 can be linked to the coldest 25% of homes in Crewe and Nantwich • 38 can be directly attributed to fuel poverty. <p>The Wishing Well was founded in Crewe in 2002 to tackle health inequalities that were apparent within five wards within the town. A range of community-based projects from parenting courses, youth clubs, drop-in sessions, and lunch clubs for older people</p>

¹ [Community-Plan.pdf \(crewetowncouncil.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Crewe and Nantwich \(theeeig.co.uk\)](#)

	<p>were designed, developed, and delivered to provide local people access to community-based services.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Project Scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £324,767.04 of VCMA funding to deliver a 23-month project in partnership The Wishing Well across 3 of their centres.</p> <p>The 2024-2026 agreement will replicate other Centre for Warmth models, whereby specialist advisors are employed using VCMA funding.</p> <p>The Wishing Well will use the funding to provide a range of services to local individuals living in vulnerable situations. The funding will be used to employ the following staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project manager • Two part-time workshop facilitators and outreach workers • A part-time administrator <p>These members of staff will provide essential information and support on carbon monoxide (CO) safety, energy efficiency advice, and the Priority Services Register (PSR) along with slow cooking sessions. They will offer income maximisation advice to individuals and educate them on money management. Through Cadent's support they will be able to deliver transformative services within their local community.</p> <p><u>Project Objectives</u></p> <p>The Wishing Well will reach 5,000 individuals across the 23-month project.</p> <p>The following objectives will be used to measure the success of this centre for warmth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Cadent project across three centres. • 2,400 individuals will receive energy efficiency advice. • 400 individuals will receive a free slow cooker and learn how to cook affordable, healthy, and efficient meals. • 2,400 individuals will receive income maximisation advice on a range of topics including money budgeting and debt management. • 2,400 individuals will receive advice about the PSR, with the aim to sign up 1,600 eligible individuals to the register. • 5,000 individuals will receive CO education to improve their CO safety awareness. • 3,000 households will also receive a CO alarm. • 575 individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will receive widespread support through the Centre for Warmth.
<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> <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; <p><i>The project delivers services that meet all three elements of this criteria. The project will 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 The Wishing Well centre 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. 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>In February 2024, the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero published a fuel poverty factsheet which summarises the headline estimates of fuel poverty in England in 2023.</p> <p>Energy efficiency measures lifted 112,000 households out of fuel poverty between 2022 and 2023 and rising incomes (although offset by rising housing costs) moved 128,000 out of fuel poverty. A household's fuel poverty status depends on the interaction of energy efficiency, income, and energy prices.</p> <p>Since its inception, the Centre for Warmth model has focused on tackling fuel poverty by enabling energy efficiency advice and income maximisation support to people living in vulnerable situations.</p>
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p>The Wishing Well, Centre for Warmth project will form part of Cadent's wider Centres for Warmth network and aims to reach 5,000 individuals across the three of their centres.</p>

The Centre for Warmth project model relies on the provision of VCMA funding, materials, and resources to a community centre located in an area of high deprivation, fuel poverty, and carbon monoxide risk.

These provisions will enable the community centre to expand its existing support for individuals living in vulnerable situations.

Project Outcomes

The project aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- 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.
- Provide individuals with energy efficiency advice and individuals will report a better awareness of energy efficiency measures and support.
- 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.
- Provide support to lonely and isolated residents, ensuring that they can access the community centre and the services it offers - tackling loneliness and isolation.
- Deliver the Cadent project across the three of their centres to ensure we reach as many individuals as possible.

Associated Actions

The Wishing Well will implement the following associated actions to deliver the project's outcomes through staff employed via the Cadent project:

- Individuals will report increased levels of household income through working with the centre's advisors working on a one-to-one basis.
- Centre staff will receive an awareness of the PSR and will help eligible households through the registration process.
- Individuals will report an increased awareness on the dangers of CO and have a reduced risk of harm caused by CO. This will be achieved through the centre's staff providing CO awareness conversations and distributing CO alarms to the most at-risk households.
- Individuals will report an increased knowledge of reducing their energy usage by using a slow cooker from attending a slow cooking session at the centre.
- Individuals will report a better awareness of energy efficiency measures. This will be achieved through the centre's staff providing energy efficiency advice to individuals.
- Individuals will report an improvement in their mental health because of attending the centre.
- The centre manager will co-ordinate the delivery of the Cadent project and schedule the workshops across all three of the centres.

	<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"> • 2,400 individuals will receive energy efficiency advice including advice on ways to save both energy consumption and costs through behaviour changes, energy-saving measures, and available tools. • 400 individuals will receive a slow cooker with advice and learn how to cook affordable, healthy, and efficient meals. • 2,400 individuals will receive advice about the PSR, with the aim to sign up 1,600 eligible individuals to the register. • 5,000 individuals will receive CO education to improve their CO safety awareness. • 3,000 households will also receive a CO alarm. • 2,400 individuals will receive income maximisation advice on a range of topics including money budgeting and debt management. • 575 individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will receive widespread support through the Centre for Warmth.
<p>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</p>	<p>Cadent will work in partnership with The Wishing Well.</p>
<p>Potential for New Learning</p>	<p>Every area within Cadent's network sees households suffering from 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.</p> <p>To help increase cross-network understanding Cadent have set up a forum for the Centres for Warmth. Every quarter we will meet and discuss diverse topics, share stories, tips, and best practice but most importantly share resources.</p> <p>Where possible, Cadent will continue to listen to their partners to try to improve the support and services provided to customer living in a vulnerable situation.</p>
<p>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations</p>	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £324,767.04 in partnership with The Wishing Well centre. The project will be delivered across a 23-month duration and forecasted to reach up to 5,000 individuals.</p> <p>The project will work to deliver a range of community-based services reaching the communities across South Cheshire, with a specific focus in Crewe.</p> <p>From their three community hubs, the project will be able to deliver advice, guidance, information, and equipment to those most vulnerable, who need it most, and/or are eligible for support.</p> <p>The reach will be divided as per below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,400 individuals will receive in-depth one-to-one advice on income maximisation = £4,121,064.00

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,400 individuals will receive advice on energy efficiency = £882,648.00 • 5,000 individuals will receive awareness advice on CO = £43,650.00 • 1,600 individuals will register to the PSR = £230,224.00 • 400 individuals will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £94,568.00 • 575 individuals will attend the centre to help alleviate isolation and loneliness over the duration of the project = £661,250.00 <p>Investment cost = £324,767.04</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £6,033,404.00 One-year gross present value = £1,419,430.80</p> <p>Five-year net present value = £5,708,636.96 One-year net present value = £1,257,047.28</p> <p>SROI Ratio: £1:17.5</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	Start date: 01 May 2024 End date: 31 March 2026
Geographical Area	The project will be delivered in Cadent's Northwest Network. Supporting the communities across Crewe, Cheshire.

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: 30/05/2024	Review Completed By: Kerry Doyle
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 09/06/2024	Review Completed By: Gurvinder Dosanjh
Step 3: Director of Sustainability & Social Purpose Sign-Off: Mark Belmaga	
Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose Sign-Off Date:	
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: August 24

Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: August 24