

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)
Caxton House Community Centre

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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, 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	Caxton House Community Centre
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	April 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: £92,400.00 Large slow cookers costs: 500 x £27.84 = £13,920.00 Plaque cost: 1 x £30.00 = £30.00 Leaflet costs: £1,470.00 Project management costs: £4,312.80
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£112,132.80
Problem(s)	<p>While the London Borough of Islington is often perceived as a “wealthy” and “affluent” area, it is also one of the UK’s most unequal and deprived boroughs. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019, ranked Islington as the 53rd most deprived local authority area in England (out of 317) and the sixth most deprived local authority in London. It has the tenth highest level of income deprivation affecting children, and fourth highest in England for income deprivation affecting older people.¹</p> <p>While the current cost of living crisis affects us all, the impact is disproportionately felt by those who are already struggling to make ends meet and are being pushed further into fuel poverty. Being in fuel poverty means that these individuals are more susceptible to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, being in financial difficulties, and various physical and mental-health related issues.</p> <p>Located in Islington, Caxton House Community Centre provides a diverse range of innovative, highly responsive and community-led services to the local neighbourhood. The centre takes a leading role in the empowerment of deprived neighbourhoods and communities, providing essential information and resources that take a preventative approach and aim to improve a wide range of complex local issues including health inequalities, social exclusion, and employability for residents. As the needs of the communities’ change, so</p>

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

	<p>too must the support they offer. Over the last few years, the centre has seen a dramatic increase in financial and health inequalities, and creative and cultural barriers in the local area, impacting on the wellbeing of the individuals they support. The centre has highlighted that they must adapt their service delivery in response to the needs and current/projected community challenges.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Project scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £112,132.80 of VCMA funding to deliver a two-year project in partnership with Caxton House Community Centre.</p> <p>The 2024-2026 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 income maximisation, carbon monoxide (CO) safety, energy efficiency advice and the priority services register (PSR).</p> <p>This will be facilitated via a range of services provided by Caxton House Community Centre, delivered to residents living in vulnerable situations. Caxton House Community Centre will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with Power Up North London (PUNL), a local community energy group, on a range of energy initiatives and energy saving and advice workshops for vulnerable residents. An advisor will run weekly one-to-one support sessions for individuals as well as quarterly group workshops. The sessions will include advice on ways to save on energy consumption and costs through behaviour changes, energy saving measures, alternative tariffs and accessing available discounts and services. They will also raise awareness of support schemes such as the warm homes discount, winter fuel payments, cost of living payments, PSR and Islington Council's Seasonal Health Intervention Service (SHINE), and CO safety. PUNL has trained volunteer Energy Champions who will support the sessions and workshops, which will also provide these volunteers with practical work experience and skills to assist in entering the job market. Referrals to partners will support residents with advice on debt management and money maximisation. • Host and attend 16-18 community events across the duration of the project. Individuals will receive support through attending the themed events hosted at the centre, as well as through Caxton House Community Centres participation at events taking place across the borough. The events will feature support on topics such as CO safety, energy efficiency advice and the PSR via one-to-one conversations, leaflet distribution and providing resources such as CO alarms (<i>as applicable</i>). • Deliver slow cooking classes and taster sessions to residents, promoting the cooking method as affordable, energy efficient and healthy. Slow cookers will be distributed, and videos produced to post on Caxton House Community Centres YouTube channel showing simple recipes that residents can make or adapt to their tastes. This work will complement other projects run from the centre that are also supporting residents during the current cost of living crisis. <p><u>Project Objectives:</u></p> <p>Individuals who access the services outlined above will be provided with essential information and support on income maximisation, carbon monoxide (CO) safety, energy efficiency advice and the priority services register (PSR).</p> <p>Caxton House Community Centre, Centres for Warmth project has a</p>

	<p>number of objectivities that its success will be measured against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate a positive social return on investment - see the below relevant section for more details. • 4,650 individuals will receive energy efficiency advice including advice on ways to save both on energy consumption and costs through behaviour changes, energy saving measures, alternative tariffs and accessing available discounts and services. • 500 individuals will receive slow cooker advice and learn how to cook affordable, healthy and efficient meals. • 800 individuals will receive advice about the PSR, with the aim to sign-up 200 eligible individuals to the register. • 4,650 individuals will receive CO education to improve their CO safety awareness and the most at-risk households will also receive a CO alarm. • Individuals will receive income maximisation advice on a range of topics including money budgeting and debt management – 50 individuals will be supported internally, while 450 referrals will be made to expert partners. • Individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will receive general 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 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 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 Caxton House Community 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>Cadent conducted extensive stakeholder and customer research in May 2022 following the completion of RIIO-GD2 year one and again after year two.</p> <p>The aim of the research was to assess customer/stakeholder opinion on Cadent's allocation of VCMA spend and gain insight on where we should direct VCMA funding in the future. The results of our research studies, including our Energy Diaries thought leadership programme are available to view on the Cadent website. However, we've captured some of the key evidence below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61% of stakeholders (the highest proportion by individual category) supported Cadent increasing its VCMA allocation on projects aimed at tackling fuel poverty. • Over 70% of customers are concerned about the level of their energy costs. • Very few customers understand their energy bill. • Less than 20% of customers feel as though they understand the range of support opportunities that they may be entitled to. • There is very low trust associated with energy companies. <p>Since then, Cadent has worked 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 a huge success and receives excellent feedback from charities such as National Energy Action and Age UK.</p> <p>A household's fuel poverty status depends on the interaction of energy efficiency, incomes and energy prices. 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. It found that 9.6% of households in South-East England were classified as fuel poor last year, with rising energy prices moving 238,000 households in England into fuel poverty. 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. Since inception, the Centres for Warmth model has focused on tackling fuel poverty by enabling energy efficiency advice and income maximisation support.</p> <p>Thus collectively, the evidence suggests there is a demand and benefit to implementing this project model in partnership with Caxton House Community Centre, to support customers in vulnerable situations.</p>
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p>This project will form part of Cadent's wider Centres for Warmth network and aims to reach up to 4,650 individuals. 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 carbon monoxide risk. These provisions will enable the community centre to expand its existing support for individuals living in vulnerable situations.</p> <p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p>

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 support to lonely and isolated residents, ensuring that they can access the community centre and the services it offers - tackling loneliness and isolation.
- 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.

Associated Actions

Caxton House Community Centre will implement the following associated actions to deliver the project's outcomes:

- Individuals will report increased levels of household income through working with the centre's advisors and referral partners.
- Individuals will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage through being assisted to register to the PSR. Centre staff will receive an awareness on 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 class and taster sessions at a 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 as a result of attending the centre.
- Utilize the training, expertise and resources provided by Cadent.

Success Criteria

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

- 4,650 individuals will receive help and support on energy efficiency including advice on ways to save both on energy consumption and costs through behaviour changes, energy saving measures, alternative tariffs and accessing available discounts and services.
- 500 individuals will improve their knowledge of using a slow cooker to help lower their energy consumption and cook healthier meals.
- 800 individuals will improve their awareness of the PSR. We predict that 200 of the households reached will also be supported to register.
- 4,650 individuals will receive an awareness conversation on the dangers of CO, the most at-risk households will also receive a CO alarm.
- Individuals will receive income maximisation advice on a range of topics including money budgeting and debt management – 50 individuals will be supported internally, while 450 referrals will be made to expert partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals at risk of loneliness and isolation will report feeling less lonely and isolated, as well as any symptoms associated with it.
Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	Cadent will work in partnership with Caxton House Community Centre
Potential for New Learning	<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. For example, the unique character of Caxton House Community Centre and its community such as the demographic and specific service provisions can offer unique learning outcomes.</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 various topics, share stories, tips, and best practice but most importantly resources.</p> <p>Where possible, Cadent will continue to listen to their partners to try to improve the support and services provided to vulnerable customers.</p>
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £112,132.80 in partnership with Caxton House Community Centre. The project will be delivered across a two-year duration and forecasted to reach up to 4,650 individuals.</p> <p>The project will enable individuals close to the community centre, and neighbouring areas within the London Borough of Islington to access essential information and support on energy efficiency, CO safety, income maximisation and the PSR.</p> <p><u>SROI Calculations</u></p> <p>The reach will be divided as per below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 individuals will receive in-depth on-to-one advice on income maximisation internally = £85,855.50 4,650 individuals will receive advice on energy efficiency = £1,710,130.50 4,650 individuals will receive awareness advice on CO = £40,594.50 200 individuals will sign-up to the PSR = £28,778.00 500 individuals will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £118,210.00 535 individuals will attend the centre to help alleviate isolation and loneliness over the duration of the project = £642,000.00 <p>Total Investment = £112,132.80</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £2,625,568.50 One-year gross present value = £717,713.70</p> <p>Five-year net value = £2,513,435.70 One-year net value = £661,647.30</p> <p>SROI = £1:22</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	<p>Start date: 01st April 2024 End date: 31st March 2026</p>

Geographical Area	The project will be delivered in Cadent's North London Network. Supporting communities within the London Borough of Islington.
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**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: 01/03/2024	Review Completed By: Emma Stead
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 10/04/2024	Review Completed By: Gurvinder Dosanjh
Step 3: Director of Sustainability & Social Purpose Sign-Off: Mark Belmega	
Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose Sign-Off Date: 29/08/2024	
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: December 24	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: December 24	