

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension

Edward Allard - Social Programmes Manager April 2022





N/A

N/A

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

b) Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating

c) Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.

networks; and

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: 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 appliar replacement projects	nce servicing, repair and		
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; 	Yes		
 b) The household cannot afford to service, repair or replace the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance; and; 	Yes		
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.	Yes		
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		



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

Information Required	Description
Project Title	One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent - project delivered across all four Cadent gas distribution network licence areas
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Not applicable - Cadent company-specific project
Date of PEA Submission	April 2022
VCMA Project Contact Name, email and Number	Name: Phil Burrows Title: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery Email: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com Phone: 07773 545451
Total Cost (£k)	£398,134.76
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£398,134.76
Problem(s)	Barriers to reaching customers in vulnerable situations
	Cadent's role as the UK's biggest gas distribution network places many of our staff in the unique position of entering into the homes of thousands of customers living in vulnerable situations each year.
	In many instances, our engineer's main focus is to ensure the property and our customers are safe from the dangers of a gas escape and/or carbon monoxide. However, our interactions with customers can often most severely impact those that are living in a vulnerable situation; for example, when condemning or isolating an essential gas appliance.
	Additionally, through our emergency service and planned mains replacement activities, our employees will often enter into the homes of customers living in vulnerable situations and recognise that the residents may need additional support.
	Customers living in vulnerable situations can often be very hard to identify, and these visits may be the only interaction that a customer has with an organisation equipped to make a positive impact to them, like Cadent. This is often due to a lack of services in a particular area or hesitation from the customer on who to/how to reach out for support, or lack of knowledge that help is available. This situation has worsened with the cost of living and fuel crisis(s), as there are many households newly experiencing hardship and they are unsure on where to turn to for support.
	This project aims to maximise the benefit to customers of each Cadent emergency/planned work interaction by offering our engineers a mechanism for referring customers in vulnerable situations to an expert partner for tailored support.



Customers living in vulnerable situations can be particularly at risk of living in fuel poverty and at increased risk of exposure to the dangers of carbon monoxide.

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is a form of hardship where residents are unable to afford the cost of fuel to adequately heat their home. There are 3 main factors that influence a home's chances of living in fuel poverty: household income, the price of fuel and the household's energy requirements (often linked to efficiency).

The latest government fuel poverty statistics (2022 data) report that 13.4% of English households are currently living in fuel poverty, an increase of 0.3% from last year's level of 13.1%. This equates to an estimated 1.45 million households currently living in fuel poverty on Cadent's network.

The project's gas appliance repair, replace, and servicing services will only be offered to households who qualify under the VCMA governance document criteria; the criteria includes low income households who are unable to afford the cost of the gas appliance repair, replace, and servicing through their own financial means. The government's latest statistics also show the link between low income and fuel poverty. For instance, 44.6% of all homes in the lowest household income decile are currently living in fuel poverty - an estimated 1,117,000 households.

As a form of hardship, fuel poverty can pose serious health risks to affected households. Customers living in fuel poverty do not have the available disposable household income to heat their home to an adequate, healthy temperature. This can increase households' risk of exposure to cold related illness and poor mental health, through living in colder housing conditions and experiencing financial related stress.

At the severe end of the spectrum, cold housing conditions to lead to increased mortality. More people die in the winter than in the summer. 2017/2018 statistics reported that 16,980 excess UK winter deaths were attributable to cold housing conditions.

The One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension project aims to support households living in fuel poverty by:

- Ensuring that low income households whose gas appliance(s) have been isolated and condemned by a Cadent engineer have access to fully funded repairs, replacements, and servicing. This will enable minimal interruption to vulnerable households' sources of heat.
- Issuing tailored in-home energy efficiency advice, supporting customers to access industry funding (e.g. Warm Homes Discount), and assisting customers to maximise their household income. This will result in increases to customers' levels of disposable household income and improvements in their properties' energy efficiency.

The threat posed by carbon monoxide

Around 30 people living in UK die from carbon monoxide poisoning each year. An additional 4,000 people attend accident



and emergency each year as a result of carbon monoxide and 200 people are left hospitalised. Risk of exposure to the dangers of carbon monoxide can be increased by not regularly servicing gas appliances, as well as a lack of knowledge on the signs and symptoms of the presence of carbon monoxide in a property.

Additionally, recent changes to the national landscape have led to a number of barriers preventing households from regularly servicing their gas appliances. The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a national 33% reduction in gas appliance repairs, replacements, and servicing. Furthermore, increased financial hardship attributed to the cost of living crisis has created a further barrier to low income households being able to afford the cost of regular gas appliance servicing, and repairs/replacements when required.

The One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension project aims to support households at increased risk of exposure to carbon monoxide by:

- Raising customer's awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide through referrals to National Energy Action's (NEA) advice service;
- Repairing, replacing, and servicing dangerous essential gas appliances and unsafe pipework in the homes of customers referred to National Energy Action by Cadent engineers.

Scope and Objectives

Project Scope

The project between Cadent and National Energy Action builds on a company specific VCMA programme piloted in 2021-2022. The pilot has been extended to deliver additional support in 2022-2023 and will operate across all four Cadent gas distribution networks between April 2022 and January 2023.

The project extension uses the same model and learning from the 2021-2022 pilot to deliver support to customers in vulnerable situations living in the Eastern, North London, North West, West Midlands networks.

The project will continued to be delivered by national fuel poverty charity - National Energy Action. As mentioned in the Problem(s) section of this document, customers will be identified through Cadent's emergency and planned work visits. The One Number programme offers GDN engineers the ability to refer customers in vulnerable situations to a single point of contact - NEA.

Customers' needs and eligibility will first be assessed by NEA, before the customer is triaged and then provided with the following services (based on customer need and eligibility):

- In-home energy efficiency advice (e.g. supporting customers to tackle condensation/damp and use their appliances more efficiently etc.);
- Assisting customers to access industry funding (e.g. Warm Homes Discount and Energy Company Obligation);



- Helping customers to maximise their household income (e.g. benefit entitlement checks, claims support, and the management/clearing of energy debt);
- Servicing of essential gas appliances;
- Repair/replacement of essential gas appliances and pipework;

Project Objectives

The project has a number of objectives, against which the success of the project will be measured:

- Approximately 600 households will receive tailored inhome energy efficiency advice across the ten month duration of the project.
- Approximately 100 households will receive support to access industry funding across the ten month duration of the project.
- Approximately 100 households will receive help to maximise their income across the ten month duration of the project.
- Approximately 50 households gas appliances will be serviced in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations across the ten month duration of the project.
- Approximately 230 essential gas appliances will be repaired or replaced in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations across the ten month duration of the project.

As well as meeting the above quantitative objectives, Cadent aims to achieve the following qualatative positive indicators:

- Customers that receive support through the project will report reductions in financial stress, due to increases in their levels of disposable household income and receipt of fully funded gas appliance repairs, replacements, and/or servicing.
- Customers that receive support through the project will report improvements in their levels of comfort at home, due to improvements in their properties' energy efficiency and increases in their levels of disposable household income.

Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA

Cadent believes that this project meets all of the VCMA company and essential gas appliance servicing, repair and replacement project(s) criteria.

Company specific VCMA eligibility criteria

A. The project is forecasted to have a positive SROI:
We believe that the project has the deliverables necessary
to create a positive social return on investment (SROI).
Cadent will utilise social value proxies and calculations
approved by industry experts such as SIA Partners. More



information on the project's positive forecasted SROI can be found in the relevant section below.

B. The project will either:

- 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,
 The project will provide support to consumers in
 vulnerable situations, relate to energy safeguarding, and
 reduce the risk of harm caused by CO. This will be

achieved by the issuing of energy efficiency advice, supporting customers to access industry funding, maximising household income, and repairing/replacing/servicing dangerous gas appliances.

C. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:

This project has clearly defined outcomes and success criteria, and the associated actions to meet them. Further information on the project's outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria can be found in the relevant section below.

D. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and:

The GDNs believe that this project goes outside of activities funded through other price control mechanisms due to:

- a) the types of services being delivered to customers, and,
- b) the method in which the support is delivered to customers (e.g. customers identified through emergency/planned work visits and referred for fully funded advice and gas appliance services)
- E. Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding:

This project will be solely delivered through Cadent's VCMA funding.

Essential gas appliance servicing, repair and replacement project <u>criteria</u>

- 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:

 All customers in receipt of essential gas appliance and unsafe pipework repairs, replacements, or servicing will be identified through a GDN emergency/planned work visit. Cadent engineers will condemn and isolate unsafe essential gas appliances and pipework when obligated to do so by policy on both emergency/planned work visits.
- B. The household cannot afford to service, repair or replace the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance, and:



National Energy Action will assess customers' eligibility for
essential gas appliance and unsafe pipework repairs,
replacements, and servicing against a set of consistent
and objective means tested criteria.

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:

National Energy Action will assess customers' access to alternate sources of support to fund the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement. This support will include government funding and the assistance of a landlord.

Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support

Cadent has continued to conduct extensive stakeholder and customer engagement to help shape its VCMA strategy.

For example, Cadent conducted extensive stakeholder engagement to gather the views of organisations on its year one VCMA delivery. Cadent obtained stakeholder feedback on individual projects (e.g. the One Number pilot project) and categories of activities (e.g. tackling affordability and fuel poverty).

With regards to categories of activities, tackling affordability and fuel poverty saw the highest percentages of support for increasing funds, with 61% of stakeholders and 43% of customers supporting an increase in funding when compared to 2021-2022 levels.

Concerning individual year one VCMA projects, 94% of customers and 87% of stakeholders supported, or somewhat supported Cadent's continued funding of the One Number programme. One customer (small business owner aged 50 - 59) commented "I do feel this is a major game changer for people who are on low income or on benefits. It will help them to be able to live a life".

Cadent's engagement also demonstrated customers' attitudes towards the cost of living crisis and their subsequent financial situation.

Cadent asked customers for their views on which of the below statements best described their health and financial situation compared to 2021:

- My current households health or financial situation is worse off compared to 2021.
- My current households health or financial situation is the same compared to 2021.
- My current households health or financial situation is better off compared to 2021.

60% of participants responded that their households' health or financial situation was worse off this year compared to 2021 levels.



	Additionally, Cadent conducted "Energy Diaries", a piece of research aimed at gauging the customer's attitudes towards the rises in energy prices, as well as the support offered by organisations such as Cadent. The Energy Diaries demonstrated that customers continue to support the key measures that we identified when developing our RIIO-2 plan, with a heightened requirement to support people with the cost-of-living crisis. The One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension recognises this customer and stakeholder feedback through offering services that support disadvantaged households to maximise their income, and stay safe, warm, and connected.
Information Required	Description
Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria	Project outcomes Utilising Cadent's VCMA funding, NEA will operate a One Number programme that will provide vital support to vulnerable households visited by Cadent engineers. The One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension project aims to achieve the following outcomes: • Approximately 600 households will receive tailored inhome energy efficiency advice across the ten month duration of the project. • Approximately 100 households will receive support to access industry funding across the ten month duration of the project. • Approximately 100 households will receive help to maximise their income across the ten month duration of the project. • Approximately 50 gas appliances will be serviced in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations across the ten month duration of the project. • Approximately 230 essential gas appliances will be repaired or replaced in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations across the ten month duration of the project. As well as achieving the above quantitative outcomes, the project also aims to deliver the following qualitative outcomes: • Customers that receive support through the project will report reductions in financial stress, due to increases in their levels of disposable household income and receipt of
	 fully funded gas appliance repairs, replacements, and/or servicing. Customers that receive support through the project will report improvements in their levels of comfort at home, due to improvements in their properties' energy efficiency
	and increases in their levels of disposable household income.



Associated actions

Cadent and NEA will perform the following associated actions in order to achieve the project's outcomes and success criteria:

- Cadent will continue to raise awareness on how to recognise signs of vulnerability amongst their field force.
 This will ensure that Cadent engineers make every contact count and maximise the likelihood of vulnerable customers receiving support through the project.
- Cadent and NEA will create a series of referral pathways into the project's eligibility check and triage service. These pathways will include an online form that can be completed by engineers, a dedicated referral phone number, and a drop card that will allow customers to selfrefer following a Cadent visit.
- NEA will operate a team of caseworkers with the appropriate levels of training and experience to deliver effective energy efficiency, income maximisation, and access to industry funding advice.
- NEA will operate networks of local contractors that will possess the necessary qualifications and geographic coverage to conduct essential gas appliance and unsafe pipework repairs, replacements, and servicing across the Cadent footprint.

Success criteria

The One Number Referral Scheme - 10-month Extension project's success will be measured through a variety of metrics including:

- Evaluating the number of customers benefitting from the project's services against the forecasts referenced in the project objectives and outcomes section of this document.
- Measuring customers' attitudes towards the positive indicators listed in the project objectives and outcomes section of this document (e.g. customers will report reductions in financial stress, due to increases in their levels of disposable household income and receipt of fully funded gas appliance repairs, replacements, and/or servicing).
- Evaluating a positive social return on investment on the VCMA funding invested in this project - see below section for the project's SROI forecast.

Project Partners and Third Parties Involved

For this initiative, project partners can be divided into two categories.

Firstly, our principal partner will be National Energy Action (NEA) who will be responsible for receiving, understanding, and processing all referrals of customers living in vulnerable situations. NEA will either retain the customer and deliver services directly (such as energy efficiency advice and benefit entitlement checks) or employ a trusted sub-contractor to deliver gas appliance work.



	Secondly, Cadent will co-ordinate selected key strategic partners that support some of the most vulnerable, fuel poor homes across its footprint. These partners will be encouraged to refer customers living in vulnerable situations into NEA for services such as energy efficiency and income maximisation advice. Use of strategic partners will be in line with the latest VCMA governance document and an agreement is in place with NEA to ensure the governance is applied correctly when processing referrals.
Potential for New Learning	The project is an extension of a 2021-2022 VCMA programme and offers Cadent an opportunity to further refine and learn from the One Number model.
	Firstly, the 10-month extension of the One Number Referral Scheme project coincides with Cadent's expansion of its Services Beyond the Meter programme. Both projects offer fully funded gas appliance repairs, replacements, and servicing to low income households, and a year's sample size of delivery of both projects will offer Cadent learning on:
	The advantages/limitations of both delivery models from a cost, customer journey, and social value viewpoints,
	How to best interlink these programmes for the remainder of the RIIO-GD2 price control, ensuring customer benefit is maximised in readiness for RIIO-GD3 business planning.
	Secondly, the continuation of the One Number programme for a further ten months will offer Cadent the opportunity for additional insight on factors such as:
	customers' energy advice needs, and which particular topics are most frequently offered based on customers' individual circumstances;
	the impacts (if any) of the cost of living crisis on low income, vulnerable households ability to self-fund essential gas appliance repairs, replacements, and servicing works. Cadent's allocation of its future VCMA funding to gas appliance repairs, replacements, and servicing activities may require amending based on learning from this project.
	The above culmination of learning will be especially valuable, in that Cadent believes that the One Number programme has the potential to be expanded as a collaborative VCMA project.
Scale of VCMA Project and	Scale of VCMA project
SROI Calculations	The project between Cadent and National Energy Action builds on a company specific VCMA programme piloted in 2021-2022. The pilot has been extended to deliver additional support in 2022-2023 and will operate across all four Cadent gas distribution networks between April 2022 and January 2023.
	The project extension uses the same model and learning from the 2021-2022 pilot to deliver support to customers in vulnerable situations living in the Eastern, North London, North West Midlands networks.



The project will continued to be delivered by national fuel poverty charity - National Energy Action. As mentioned in the Problem(s) section of this document, customers will be identified through Cadent's emergency and planned work visits. The One Number programme offers GDN engineers the ability to refer customers in vulnerable situations to a single point of contact - NEA. Approximately 1,080 customers will receive support across the project's ten-month duration with a range of advice and gas appliance services.

SROI Summary

- Investment = £398,134.76
- 5-year social return on investment = £947,255.94
- 1-year social return on investment = 1£129,056.62
- 5-year gross present value = £1,345,390.70
- 1-year gross present value = £269,078.14

SROI calculations background information

Cadent employed energy and utilities consultants from SIA Partners to evaluate the social value created by the range of activities offered through the One Number programme. SIA Partners evaluated an average 5-year gross present value for each service offered through the One Number programme.

The average 5-year gross present values were based on three data sources:

- 1. Actual data captured by NEA and Cadent during the first phase of the company specific One Number pilot delivered in 2021-2022,
- 2. Historic NEA data captured between 2018-2021, and,
- 3. Wider industry and public data (e.g. the DNO proxy bank and government fuel poverty statistics).

The gross present value created through providing customers with energy efficiency advice

Cadent and SIA Partners evaluated the social value created by a range of energy efficiency advice topics:

- Efficient use of appliances and behaviours = 5-year gross present value of £367.77
- Heating and hot water controls = 5-year gross present value of £332.33
- Condensation/dampness support = 5-year gross present value of £183.82

Customers will receive advice on a needs basis, and Cadent and NEA have forecasted that each customer will receive advice on two energy efficiency topics on average.

The average value of a conversation on a single energy efficiency advice topic is £294.64, equating to a total average value of £589.28.



Approximately 600 households will receive energy efficiency advice, equating to a total 5-year gross present value of £353,568.00

The gross present value created by supporting customers to access industry funding

Cadent and SIA Partners evaluated the social value created by a range of industry funding advice topics:

- Access to the Warm Homes Discount = 5-year gross present value of £150.00
- Eco Availability and Measures = 5-year gross present value of £803.38

Customers will receive advice on a needs basis, and Cadent and NEA have forecasted that each customer will receive advice on one industry funding topic on average.

The average value of a conversation on a single industry funding topic is £476.69, equating to a total 5-year gross present value of £47,669.00 across 100 households.

The gross present value created through supporting customers to maximise their income

Cadent and SIA Partners evaluated that an average 5-year gross present value of £1,717.11 was created by supporting customers to maximise their household income.

100 households will receive this service across the project's ten month duration, equating to a total 5-year gross present value of £171,711.00.

The gross present value created by servicing essential gas appliances in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations

Cadent and SIA Partners evaluated the 5-year gross present value created from conducting gas appliance safety checks in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations.

SIA Partners evaluated an average 5-year gross present value of £469 per household. This figure was based on the financial savings to customers, the health and safety benefits of avoided gas leaks/suspected CO, and the maintained energy efficiency of the appliance.

50 households will receive support with essential gas appliance servicing, equating to a total 5-year gross present value of £23,450.00.

The gross present value created by repairing or replacing essential gas appliances in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations

Cadent and SIA Partners evaluated the 5-year gross present value created from conducting gas appliance repairs and replacements in the homes of customers in vulnerable situations.



	SIA Partners assessed the financial, societal, and environmental benefits of repairing and replacing essential gas appliances including:	
	Avoided CO related deaths,	
	Avoided time of work due to injury,	
	Avoided long-term hospital admissions,	
	Reductions in cold related illness,	
	Reductions in cold related excess winter deaths, and,	
	Improved energy efficiency	
	Based on historic data, the GDNs and delivery partners have made an assumption that 50% of all repaired and replaced appliances will be a source of heat (e.g. boiler, fire, wall-heater, fire/BBU).	
	SIA Partners evaluated an average 5-year gross present value of £6,512.98 when repairing or replacing a gas appliance that is a source of heat.	
	The project aims to deliver 230 gas appliance repairs and replacements over the project's ten month duration, and approximately 50% of these will be sources of heat - 115 appliances.	
	This equates to a total 5-year gross present value of £748,992.70.	
VCMA Project Start and End Date	Project start date: April 2022 Project end date: January 2023	
Geographical Area	The project will delivered in all four of Cadent's gas distribution network licence areas.	
Remaining Amount in the Allowance at Time of Registration	To be confirmed upon receipt of Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose sign-off.	



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	tage 1: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team PEA Peer Review	
Date Immediate Team Peer Review Completed: 30/03/23	Review Completed By: Kate Clarke	
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review		
Date Management Review Completed: 30/03/23	Review Completed By: Phil Burrows	
Step 3: Director of Sustainability & Social Purpose Sign-Off: Mark Belmega		
Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose Sign-Off Date: 31/03/2023		
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: March 23		
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: March 23		