

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

RAD – Royal Association for Deaf People

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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	RAD – Royal Association for Deaf People
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent Networks
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Not applicable – company specific project
Date of PEA Submission	March 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: 07773545451
Total Cost (£k)	Partner costs - £235,000.00 Project management costs - £9,400.00
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	Total Costs - £244,400.00
Problem(s)	<p>Royal Association for Deaf People (RAD) works with deaf people, particularly those whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). An estimated 1.2 million adults in the UK have hearing loss severe enough that they would not be able to hear most conversational speech.¹ Many have poor reading/comprehension skills in English (their second language) and struggle to access information and advice. Often lonely and isolated due to communication barriers. They are four times more likely to be unemployed so unlikely to have occupational or private pension and almost all rent their homes.</p> <p>Deaf people do not access mainstream media² and therefore are unaware of some benefits, e.g., Pensions Credit (entitling them to Warm Home Discounts). They have difficulty completing forms in English – for benefits, grants or switching energy providers. Deaf people, especially the older generation, hesitate to trust hearing workers – even via an interpreter. RAD uses BSL, understands deaf culture, and can establish rapport quickly. Deaf people and their networks are more likely to navigate to RAD’s website and social media pages for access to this information in their first language. Deaf people are more likely to be unemployed or stuck in poorly paid entry-level jobs, they are disproportionately more likely to be living in poverty.</p> <p>Furthermore, most do not understand the information provided by utility companies or where to find that help to access the information.</p>

¹ [Prevalence of deafness and hearing loss - RNID](#)

² [Reading and Deaf Children - an overview - BATOD](#)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is currently no offer nationally to provide information to deaf people about the rising costs of utilities through a collaboration between an energy provider and a deaf organisation. 2. There is currently no partnership offering nationally that provides information to deaf people about The Priority Services Register (PSR). 3. There is currently no partnership offering nationally to provide information to deaf people about Carbon Monoxide (CO) and its risks to life. 4. There are inconsistencies nationally with the information available to deaf people and limited options on where people can find advice and guidance on financial support from energy companies on the cost-of-living crisis.
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p>This project proposes to create a service that will target the need for PSR promotion among the deaf community, to offer support and advice to deaf people in financial hardship and to address the need to better understand Carbon Monoxide. We will create an advice service gateway for people to present at with their issues and RAD, acting as triage system through the provision of general IAG (information, advice, and guidance) service, can incorporate the three priorities within their assistance to people and identify those who are living with fuel poverty and other safeguarding concerns. In addition, they expect that clients will present directly with issues of debt arising from the cost-of-living crisis, utility issues, and concerns about understanding the news and associated topics related to energy.</p> <p>The project will ensure that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By signing-up to the PSR, Cadent will identify the reasons behind customers' vulnerabilities and take additional actions to support them when delivering key services. 2. The dangers and risks of carbon monoxide, and the importance of installing a carbon monoxide alarm and ensuring appliances are safe. 3. Combating fuel poverty. Making customers aware of the individual services that Cadent offer to help protect them and keep them safe and warm in their homes. <p>Additionally, the added value of this project would be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To provide a wrap-around service. Deaf people can access an information service providing wrap-around support and introduced to other services and/ or funded projects within RADvice, RAD's live chat facility, advocacy, and employment services plus signposting to other ad hoc special projects. 5. Through social media or remote support. RAD uses a variety of social media platforms including, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn - we can also support customers with appointments remotely via video calls in BSL and other methods.

	<p>6. Referral for in-home service. A customer who cannot travel or requires a home visit will be offered a service through a referral process.</p> <p>Once through the triage process, deaf individuals will have support with;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PSR – discussing what it is, and how it could benefit them. Assisting the individual with the registration (where IT skills are lacking), as well as being part of the social media campaign. 2. Carbon Monoxide – providing information through workshops, 121 conversations and social media content on CO poisoning and how to recognise it. 3. Fuel Poverty – providing information and guidance on preventing fuel poverty, as well as signposting to colleagues and services that can support people. Including keeping people up to date with information on the ever-changing environment of energy costs. <p>RAD currently have 16 Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) colleagues who have previously received basic energy awareness delivered by National Energy Action (NEA). A further five colleagues, who would be new to RAD will undertake training within the first few months of the project - creating jobs for deaf people who historically find it difficult to find employment.</p> <p>RAD employees will be aware of any trusts, schemes or benefits that might help people with the rising costs, providing information about saving energy or switching suppliers. Customers will also receive information about installation of carbon monoxide detectors and how to check they are working correctly.</p> <p>These IAG specialists will be managed by a project lead who will oversee the programme, ensuring that information and training are up to date and that we reach the maximum number of customers.</p> <p>RAD will also recruit volunteers as ‘energy awareness ambassadors’ to help with the distribution of information across the regions. Volunteers will help to ensure fairness in the provision of the number of events geographically, and likely more time spent in deprived areas.</p>
<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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project: <p><i>The project delivers a positive forecasted social return on investment. This is based on achieving the target reach for energy efficiency advice, registrations to the PSR (Priority Services Register) and education on</i></p>

	<p><i>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. For example, the workshops will create 1:1 appointments where individuals can get help and advice on income maximisation and benefit checks. 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>The project objective and actions are detailed 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 (Gas Distribution Networks), 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's energy diaries revealed that stakeholders were keen to push initiatives that focused on CO awareness, Priority Services Registrations and Energy Efficiency advice especially with the increase in cost of living. It focuses on those hardest to reach and research shows that the deaf community fall heavily into that category.</p> <p>RAD has said through its reporting to funders it demonstrated that the deaf communities lack of awareness was broader than they anticipated. As they identified this growing need and recognised that more deaf people were without access to this specialist information, they started to introduce elements of this advice into their existing IAG locations.</p> <p>In a recent survey conducted by RAD of their service users, they asked them what they would do regarding rising energy costs and where they would go for help. These are some of their responses:</p> <p>"I don't have enough money to pay my bills!"</p>

	<p>“I will have to use the cooker to heat the room”</p> <p>“I don't know - I need help with this as cost of living going up. If I can get help with this issue, it will help me a lot”</p> <p>“I will have to buy less food”</p> <p>“I will have to turn off both electricity & heating”</p> <p>As well as this they also discovered that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 79% of deaf people surveys did not know what the PSR was 2. 56% did not know what Carbon Monoxide is 3. 89% of respondents said they needed financial advice with their gas bills 4. 21% of respondents said that they needed financial help immediately
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *90% of deaf people who present at a gateway service for standard support, or any workshop will have or receive a meaningful conversation about the PSR • 100% of people having PSR conversations will receive advice about the registration process and where necessary, support to register. • *90% of deaf people who present to the standard service will be made aware of support available to them generally, including how to reduce energy bills. • 100% of deaf people who present to the service with issues relating to energy i.e., financial hardship, to understand their bills - will receive information on Carbon Monoxide and will be directed to one of our Carbon Monoxide workshops and other supporting resources. • 100% of deaf people who present to the service will be made aware of our other services that could support them. <p>*Some people may present at a RAD service in-crisis such as domestic abuse, homelessness, or poor mental health, therefore we cannot say 100% of people accessing would receive support relating to energy topics.</p> <p><u>Success Criteria</u></p> <p>The success of the project will be measured by meeting the below criteria over two years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,120 one-to-one appointments • 2,140 workshop attendances

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,260 receiving CO, PSR & Energy Efficiency Advice via a leaflet. • 1,883 PSR registrations based on sign ups from 1:1, workshops, social media content and leaflets. • 40,000 social media viewers (across multiple platforms, reaching hearing people, professionals working with deaf people, and their families. • 1,500 complex cases (from 1:1 appointments and workshops)
Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	Royal Association for Deaf People
Potential for New Learning	The partnership with RAD will allow us to first hand identify the needs of some of the most vulnerable individuals that would have fallen outside of some of our existing projects due to the lack of accessibility. RAD have the knowledge in this field to enhance collaborative working with many of our existing projects. An example of this is CO awareness, the deaf community have a significantly bigger hurdle to overcome in obtaining the correct equipment to keep them safe in their own homes. Standard CO alarms are not sufficient for the deaf community and this project alone helps us to identify the needs of a large vulnerable group that would need tailored CO alarms to their specific needs. This in turn will then allow us to collaborate with other projects and refer those into the RAD project.
Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest a total of £244,400.00 for a two-year project.</p> <p>The project will benefit households across all our networks as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,120 one-to-one conversations (covering CO, PSR and Energy Efficiency Advice) £1,262,944.80 • 2,140 workshop attendances £866,250.60 • 1,883 PSR sign-ups (from one-to-one conversations, workshops, leaflets, and social media posts) £496,708.28 • 1,500 complex cases (from one-to-one appointments and workshops) £1,703,385.00 <p><u>SROI calculations</u></p> <p>Total investment = £244,400.00</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £4,329,288.68 One-year gross present value = £865,857.73</p> <p>Five-year net present value = £4,084,888.68 One-year gross present value = £816,977.73</p> <p>SROI = £1: £17</p>
VCMA Project Start and End Date	01 st April 2023 30 th March 2025
Geographical Area	Cadent's networks

**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: 07/03/2024	Review Completed By: Gurvinder Dosanjh
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 08/03/2024	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: 08/03/24	
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 2024	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: March 2024	