

## **Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)**

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)  
*The Haven- Centre for Warmth*

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Lead



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

<b>Section 1 - Eligibility criteria for company specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)</b>	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, a project must:	
<b>VCMA Eligibility Criteria</b>	<b>Criteria Satisfied (Yes/No)</b>
<b>a)</b> Have a positive, or forecasted positive Social Return on Investment (SROI), including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA project;	<b>Yes</b>
<b>b)</b> Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i.</b> Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, or</li> <li><b>ii.</b> Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, or</li> <li><b>iii.</b> Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;</li> </ul>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>c)</b> Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;	<b>Yes</b>
<b>d)</b> Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and	<b>Yes</b>
<b>e)</b> Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing, repair and replacement projects</b>	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:	
<b>a)</b> 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;	<b>N/A</b>
<b>b)</b> The household cannot afford to service, repair or replace the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance; and;	<b>N/A</b>
<b>c)</b> 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.	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects</b>	
In order to qualify as a collaborative VCMA project, a project must:	
<b>a)</b> Meet the above company specific and boiler repair and replace (if applicable) project eligibility criteria;	<b>N/A</b>
<b>b)</b> Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and	<b>N/A</b>
<b>c)</b> Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.	<b>N/A</b>

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

<b>Information Required</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Project Title</b>	The Haven, Centre for Warmth
<b>Funding GDN(s)</b>	Cadent specifically
<b>Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only</b>	N/A
<b>Date of PEA Submission</b>	November 2023
<b>VCMA Project Contact Name, email and Number</b>	Name: Phil Burrows Title: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery Email: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com Phone: 07773 545451
<b>Total Cost (£k)</b>	Project costs for 2 years = £119,444.00 Project management cost = £4,777.76 100 Slow cookers = £2,784.00
<b>Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)</b>	£127,005.76
<b>Problem(s)</b>	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Wolverhampton is in the top 10% most deprived local authorities in England, with a third of children living in poverty. Sadly, for those living with a perpetrator of abuse, this is often exacerbated by the perpetrator controlling finances and limiting access to basic necessities.</p> <p>The Haven is a charity that supports women and children that are vulnerable to domestic abuse and homelessness.</p> <p>The services offered by The Haven give women and children somewhere safe, warm, and welcoming where they can come to terms with the trauma they have experienced and develop the skills and confidence to take the next step on their journey away from abuse, towards a better future.</p> <p>Fuel poverty is a major challenge for many of those supported by the Haven. Women suffering from domestic abuse often find themselves cut off from financial resources and therefore are left in an even more vulnerable situation. Debt is also a very common challenge, creating huge levels of anxiety. And with the financial challenges, comes a greater risk of harm from gas and gas related products (e.g., carbon monoxide) as appliances are not maintained or serviced, safety devices (alarms) not purchased and generally a family's attention is on other matters than gas safety.</p>
<b>Scope and Objectives</b>	Cadent will provide The Haven with £119,444.00 of VCMA funding to deliver a 2-year project. Building off the success of

other Centres for Warmth, the Haven has established itself as a trusted place to come for some of the most vulnerable members of our society – typically those who can be the hardest to reach.

This two-year agreement will fund specialist Support Workers to provide women and children suffering from domestic abuse with essential financial support and services and will create a positive SROI.

Alongside specialist benefits advice, The Haven will also offer essential information on carbon monoxide, the Priority Service Register and energy efficiency advice to enhance the services they already offer.

### Project Scope

The project will be delivered by The Haven who will utilise the funding to:

- Employ two key workers who will be based in one of five refuges across Wolverhampton.
- Each key worker will have a caseload of four women at one time for four months.  
(Average 24 women over two years.)
- Each key worker will also provide floating support for a further eight women (48 women over two years.)

The services offered by the key worker will include:

1. Benefit /debt advice.
2. Energy efficiency advice.
3. CO awareness.
4. PSR registration.
5. Safeguarding.
6. Group activities to reduce isolation.
7. Support with opening bank account etc.
8. Access to healthcare.
9. Support to access training, education, employment.
10. Signposting to physical, social activities.
11. Legal advice.
12. Support to access small grants when they move on.
13. Support to gain permanent accommodation and transition to independent living.

### Objectives

This project aims to reach approximately 500 women over its two-year duration:

- 500 women will receive in-depth advice and support on benefits, income maximisation, budgeting and debt.
- 500 women will receive advice on energy efficiency.
- 500 will receive awareness advice on CO.
- 300 women will register to the PSR.
- 100 women will receive advice on slow cooking and be given a free slow cooker.
- 200 women will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness.
- A further 13,500 will receive CO, PSR and energy efficiency in the home messages through social media channels.

<p><b>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</b></p>	<p>We believe that the project meets all the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project: <p>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.</p> </li> <li>b. Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or,</li> <li>ii. Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or,</li> <li>iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;</li> </ul> <p>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.</p> </li> <li>c. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these: <p>Cadent and The Haven have entered into a service agreement that will contain the project objective and actions. Further detail can also be found below.</p> </li> <li>d. control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and, <p>This method of delivering support to customers in vulnerable situations falls outside of Cadent's BAU activities and other licence conditions.</p> </li> <li>e. Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding, <p><i>This project will be solely delivered through Cadent's VCMA funding.</i></p> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</b></p>	<p>Cadent conducted extensive stakeholder and customer research in May 2022 following the completion of RII0-GD2 year one.</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.</p> <p>61% of stakeholders (the highest proportion by individual category) supported Cadent increasing its VCMA allocation on projects aimed at tackling fuel poverty.</p>

	<p>The Haven project focusses on tackling fuel poverty by offering energy/income advice to at risk households.</p> <p>Cadent work 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. We use the ongoing engagement with these key partners to inform our decision making, as we have with this project.</p>
<p><b>Information Required</b></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p>
<p><b>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</b></p>	<p>The Haven Project partnership will allow Cadent to provide a holistic approach to supporting women and children suffering from domestic abuse and living in fuel poverty.</p> <p>Clients of The Haven will receive a combination of services such as energy advice for the home, benefits entitlement checks and budgeting advice designed to help increase income and help residents manage their energy usage.</p> <p><u>Project outcomes</u></p> <p>The VCMA project will be delivered in partnership with The Haven and aims to support 500 Women and children over two years.</p> <p>The project aims to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide free advice to customers on benefits, income maximisation and budgeting.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of CO.</li> <li>• Raise awareness and support customers to sign up to the PSR.</li> <li>• Offer slow cooking sessions to educate customers on slow cooking as an alternative to hob cooking for affordability reasons.</li> <li>• Provide various sessions for customers to help alleviate loneliness and isolation.</li> <li>• Provide support for education, training and employment.</li> <li>• Provide an overall support to customers to open a bank account etc.</li> </ul> <p><u>Associated actions</u></p> <p>Cadent's VCMA funding will be utilised to employ two key workers for The Haven. These key workers will have the skills to offer a full holistic programme to clients of The Haven, including benefit checks, income maximisation, debt, housing issues, CO and PSR awareness and general support to help them move on to independent living.</p> <p><u>Success Criteria</u></p> <p>The success of the project will be evaluated against meeting the project objectives which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching approximately 1000 women and children.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 women receiving in-depth 1:1 advice on income maximisation, benefits.</li> <li>• 500 women will receive advice on energy efficiency.</li> <li>• 500 will receive awareness advice on CO.</li> <li>• 300 women will register to the PSR.</li> <li>• 100 women will receive advice on slow cooking and be given a free slow cooker.</li> <li>• 200 women will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness.</li> <li>• 13,500 (3% retention rate = 405) will receive CO, PSR and energy efficiency in the home messages through social media channels.</li> </ul> <p>As well as this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers will report increased feelings of safety.</li> <li>• Improved health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Improved confidence.</li> <li>• Improved feeling of peace of mind due to having advice and a CO alarm.</li> <li>• A decrease in utility bill costs due to energy efficiency advice.</li> <li>• Increase in income due to benefits, income maximisation and debt advice.</li> <li>• A decrease in loneliness and isolation due to joining various sessions.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</b>	This project will be delivered by The Haven in partnership with Cadent.
<b>Potential for New Learning</b>	<p>By Cadent partnering with The Haven, we hope to learn more about the issues and difficulties women and children face when suffering from domestic violence and its relationship with the areas covered in Cadent's customer vulnerability strategy (e.g. fuel poverty, CO and gas safety, PSR awareness and services beyond the meter).</p> <p>There is a direct link with domestic abuse and poverty. An abusive partner tends to isolate the woman from any finances in order to keep control and prevent them from leaving. In some circumstances the abuser also withholds everyday information and support on how to complete simple tasks such as opening a bank account and paying bills.</p> <p>This group of people sit within the most vulnerable in society, so they need expert help and support to get them out of it.</p> <p>Working with The Haven, who are specialists in this field, will educate Cadent on the signs of abuse and how to assist women in these situations if or when we come across this in our business as usual.</p>
<b>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations</b>	<p>The Haven project will deliver support for a 2-year duration. The project will focus on the provision of advice to approximately 1000 women and children.</p> <p>The reach will be divided as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 women receiving in-depth 1:1 Advice on income maximisation, benefits = £858,555.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 women will receive advice on energy efficiency = £183,885</li> <li>• 500 will receive awareness advice on CO = £4,365</li> <li>• 300 women will register to the PSR = £43,167</li> <li>• 100 women will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker = £23,642.00</li> <li>• 200 women will attend group sessions to help alleviate isolation and loneliness = £240,000.00</li> </ul> <p>Total Investment = £127,005.76</p> <p>Five Year Gross Present Value = £1,353,614.00 One Year Gross Present Value = £462,722.80</p> <p>Five Year Net Value = £1,234,170.00 One Year Net Value = £403,000.80</p> <p>SROI = £1:10</p>
<b>VCMA Project Start and End Date</b>	Start Date = 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2023 End date = 30 <sup>st</sup> November 2025
<b>Geographical Area</b>	This project will be delivered on Cadent's West Midlands network and will benefit women and children in Wolverhampton.

## 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: 16/11/23	Review Completed By: Gurvinder Dosanjh
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 09/10/23	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: 20/11/2023	
Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem ( <a href="mailto:vcma@ofgem.gov.uk">vcma@ofgem.gov.uk</a> )	
Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: November 2023	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: November 2023	