

## Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

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

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## 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>
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"> <li>i. Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, or</li> <li>ii. Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, or</li> <li>iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;</li> </ul>	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
<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:	
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
<b>Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects</b>	
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**

<b>Information Required</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Project Title</b>	The Phoenix Community Centre - Centre for Warmth
<b>Funding GDN(s)</b>	Cadent company specific project
<b>New/ Updated</b>	New
<b>Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only</b>	Not applicable
<b>Date of PEA Submission</b>	October 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 Number: 07773 545451
<b>Total Cost (£k)</b>	Centre costs: £95,660.00 Slow cookers costs: 200 x £27.84 = £5,568.00 Project management costs 4%: £4,049.12
<b>Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)</b>	£105,277.12
<b>Problem(s)</b>	<p>The Phoenix Community Centre is a community hub, and home to the Mile Cross Phoenix Children Project. They aim to provide a centre for education, recreation and other social activities for local children and their families. The centre also hosts a variety of local groups, classes, a weekly food bank and a Community Café.</p> <p>The Phoenix Community Centre is in the centre of a government-recognised deprived area called Mile Cross Norwich (NR3). The centre has been supporting the residents of Mile Cross since 1985, originally being a children's centre and gradually offering services to all age groups.</p> <p>Housing is poor and a large percentage of residents are on some form of benefits. The centre has to provide free meals for children during school holidays otherwise the children would go without food. The centre prepares and distributes up to 125 free packed lunches each day to children throughout each school holiday.</p> <p>Most of the adults do not leave the estate and are unlikely to attend the city centre to seek advice. The centre has on occasions been able to bring in advisers, but they are spread thinly across Norwich. The centre is seeing more young people with small children attending the centre to seek guidance, advice and support.</p>
<b>Scope and Objectives</b>	<p><u>Project scope</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £105,277.12 of VCMA funding to deliver a two-year project with the Phoenix Community Centre.</p>

The 2023-2025 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 carbon monoxide (CO) safety, energy efficiency advice and the priority services register (PSR).

The aim of the project would be to engage with as many people as possible from the estate and further afield. This will be achieved by promoting the advisor through good marketing channels and being present within the centre. The aim would be to address each goal with individuals and a follow-up is made to ensure the advice given has been implemented. The advisor would also attend all of the community centre events to ensure the information is spread as far as possible.

The Phoenix Community Centre will team up with its partner The Norfolk Citizen Advice Service, who will provide the advisor for the centre and manage the individual. This will ensure that the best advice is given, and continual training is given as things change around debt. This partnership will also give creditability to the project as the organisation is recognised for the advice and service it offers nationally.

The advisor would also be able to engage with those hiring the centres rooms.

Scope:

- To engage with as many people as possible through centre activities.
- Arrange appointments with clients to explain the project and obtain advice on their needs.
- Give advice around debt ensuring households are claiming what benefits they are entitled to.
- Give advice about energy efficiency and lowering of bills.
- Educate households on the PSR and encourage eligible households to register.
- Encourage free gas safety checks.
- Encourage the use of CO alarms in homes and educate households on the dangers and the signs and symptoms on CO poisoning.
- Run cookery courses to educate people on how to cook a healthy meal on a budget and distribute slow cookers through these courses.

Project Objectives:

CO awareness, income maximisation, energy efficiency advice and PSR awareness will be raised with individuals attending the community centre, via appointments, community centre events, cookery courses, food bank or the community café.

To generate a positive social return on investment - see the below relevant section for more details.

Service(s)	Summary of Service(s)	Expected Number of Customers Reached
Energy advice	Provide accurate and personal advice on how to save energy and signpost to services that might help	600
Educate individuals on carbon monoxide	Advice given on the dangers and why you should have a CO fitted and tested regularly	1200
Provide CO alarms	Offer a CO alarm to those who have gas as a source of energy, ensuring it is fitted correctly and in the correct place	400
Raise awareness on the PSR register	Explain what the PSR is and who it's for. Explain the benefits to them or others they may know. If eligible encourage them to sign up	1200
Sign families onto the PSR	Help via advisor's laptop to sign them up there and then encourage them to tell friends and family about the service	120
Offer income maximisation advice, such as supporting with applying for benefits.	Once established their circumstances ensure they are receiving all they are entitled to	600
Cookery courses	Educate people how to cook a healthy meal on a budget.	200

**Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA**

We believe that the project meets all of the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance eligibility criteria:

- a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project:**

*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.*

- b. Either:**
- 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;**

*The project delivers services that meet all three elements of this criteria. For example, the specialist advisor 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.*

- c. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:**

*Cadent and the Phoenix Community Centre have entered into a service agreement that will contain the project objective and actions. Further detail can also be found below.*

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

	<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><b>e. Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding,</b></p> <p><i>This project will be solely delivered through Cadent's VCMA funding.</i></p>
<p><b>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</b></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"> <li>• 61% of stakeholders (the highest proportion by individual category) supported Cadent increasing its VCMA allocation on projects aimed at tackling fuel poverty.</li> <li>• Over 70% of customers are concerned about the level of their energy costs</li> <li>• Very few customers understand their energy bill</li> <li>• Less than 20% of customers feel as though they understand the range of support opportunities that they may be entitled to</li> <li>• There is very low trust associated with energy companies</li> </ul> <p>This project recognises this feedback by offering vulnerable households essential support with income maximisation and energy efficiency services.</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>This project takes this feedback into account by creating a partnership with a trusted local charity, positioned in an area with levels of deprivation and fuel poverty significantly higher than the national average.</p>
<p><b>Information Required</b></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p>
<p><b>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</b></p>	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u></p> <p>The Phoenix Community Centre - Centre for Warmth project aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p>

- Individuals will report increased levels of household income.
- Individuals will report an increased awareness of the dangers of CO and have a reduced risk of harm caused by CO.
- Provide support to lonely local residents, ensuring that they can access the community centre and the services it offers.
- Provide individuals with energy efficiency advice and CO awareness.
- Individuals will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage.
- Individuals will report an increased knowledge of cooking on a budget, healthy cooking, and use of a slow cooker to save on energy.
- Tackle loneliness and isolation.

#### Associated Actions

The Phoenix 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 specialist benefits advisors.
- A specialist benefits advisor will support households in identifying and accessing previously unclaimed benefits.
- Centre staff will all receive an awareness of the PSR and will help eligible households through the registration process.
- Clients 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 course at a centre.
- Individuals will report a better awareness of energy efficiency measures.
- Individuals will report an improvement in their mental health as a result of attending the centre activities.

#### Success Criteria

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

- 600 households will receive specialist advice on identifying and accessing previously unclaimed benefits.
- 600 households will receive help and support on energy efficiency.
- 1,200 individuals will receive an awareness conversation on the dangers of CO.
- 400 of the most at-risk households will also receive a CO alarm.
- 1,200 individuals will receive an awareness conversation on the benefits of the PSR.
- 120 of the individuals will receive support to sign up to the PSR.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 customers will improve their knowledge of using a slow cooker to help lower their energy consumption.</li> <li>• The activities that the centre will host will tackle loneliness and isolation.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Partners and Third Parties Involved</b>	Cadent will work in partnership with The Phoenix Community Centre and The Norfolk Citizen Advice Service.
<b>Potential for New Learning</b>	<p>We believe that this project offers Cadent the opportunity for new learning in various areas. The project will offer Cadent insight into the extent of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the communities in Norwich, and which services best support them. Through other projects that Cadent have participated in, we have realised that a regional approach to offering advice and support to our customers works well especially the Centre for Warmth model.</p> <p>We continue to listen and learn from our partners to provide what these communities need.</p>
<b>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations</b>	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>Cadent will invest £105,277.12 in partnership with the Phoenix Community Centre Centres over the two-year duration of the project.</p> <p>The project will benefit households in close proximity to the community centre, and those in the wider area through the specialist benefits advisors and centre activities.</p> <p>The reach will be divided as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 600 customers will receive in-depth one-to-one advice on income maximisation</li> <li>• 600 customers will receive energy efficiency advice</li> <li>• 1,200 customers will receive awareness advice on CO</li> <li>• 120 customers will register to the PSR</li> <li>• 200 customers will receive advice on slow cooking and a free slow cooker</li> <li>• 437 customers will report feeling less isolated and lonely.</li> </ul> <p><u>SROI Summary</u></p> <p>Total Investment = £105,277.12</p> <p>Five-year gross present value = £1,850,354.80 One-year gross present value = £527,390.96</p> <p>Five-year net value = £1,745,077.68 One-year net value = £474,752.40</p> <p>SROI = £1:18</p>
<b>VCMA Project Start and End Date</b>	Start date: November 2023 End date: December 2025
<b>Geographical Area</b>	The project will be delivered in Cadent's East Midlands Network, supporting the communities across Norwich.



## 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: 08/11/2023	Review Completed By: Emma Stead
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed: 08/01/2024	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: 08/01/2024	
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: February 2024	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: February 2024	