Start date: 1st August 2026

PEA reference: FP-Collab-008a

Warm Homes Network

Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)







UK GAS DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS

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Project registration table

Project summary	
Project title	Warm Homes Network (WHN)
Strategic area	Fuel Poverty
Lead partner name	Lightening Reach (Single Point of Contact-SPOC)
Lead GDN(s)	Cadent
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent Northern Gas Network (NGN)
New/Updated **(indicate as appropriate)**	New
Collaborative VCMA Projects **Specific role(s) of GDN(s) participating in a collaborative VCMA Project**	Cadent Gas and Northern Gas Networks will provide VCMA funding to multiple delivery partners (Lightening Reach, YES Energy Solutions, Turn2Us, Citizens Advice Manchester,) to deliver a range of services such as needs assessments, income maximisation, energy efficiency advice to customers living in a vulnerable situation.
Date of PEA submission	August 2026
Project start and end date	1st April 2026 – 31st March 2028
Project location	The project will operate across both Cadent and NGN networks.
Project contact	
Name	Phil Burrows
Contact details **Email and phone number:**	Email address: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com
Project partners and third parties involved	
Organisation name	**Role**
Lightening Reach	Single point of contact digital platform
Yorkshire Energy Solutions (YES)	Providing energy efficiency advice
Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM)	Providing income maximisation
Turn2us	Online benefit and grant search tool
Costs and funding	
Total cost (£k)	

		Cadent	**NGN**
	Partner Costs	£7,160,003.69	£814,863.12
	Sundries	£40,000.00	NA
	Sub-total	£7,200,003.69	£814,863.12
	Total	**£8,014,863.12**	
Total funding required (£k)	£8,014,866.81		
Total BAU vulnerability and CO safety activity baseline allowance funding by activity (£k)			

Problem(s)

[1]Fuel poverty in England remains a critical issue with approximately 11-12% of households (3 million) people affected. Despite many government strategies to improve energy efficiency in homes, high energy prices have caused fuel poverty to "flatline" or rise, with it affecting millions who are spending over 20% of their income on energy.

Fuel poverty can have wide-ranging adverse impacts on residents' health and wellbeing. A recent National Energy Action (NEA) article highlights several potential consequences:

- Households may adopt unsafe practices to ration energy use.
- Customers may choose to self-disconnect from their energy supply.
- Fuel poverty can increase the risk of health conditions, including heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma.

At the most severe end of the spectrum, fuel poverty can contribute to early mortality and excess winter deaths. In England and Wales, more people die in winter than in summer, partly because more residents are exposed to cold housing conditions. Statistics for 2017/2018 indicate that 16,890 excess winter deaths in the UK were attributable to cold homes. Separate government estimates place the economic cost of a single death at £1,897,129.

A household's likelihood of experiencing fuel poverty is principally driven by three factors:

- fuel prices
- household income
- the energy efficiency of the property and household behaviours.

Recent cost-of-living increases have reduced many households' disposable income, making it harder to meet essential energy costs. In parallel, increases in the energy price cap have driven up fuel prices. Many commentators expect these combined pressures to increase levels of fuel poverty.

Both customers and funders experience barriers when accessing or delivering fuel poverty support. These challenges often lead to duplication, where customers receive overlapping or inconsistent messages and funders inadvertently invest in initiatives that mirror existing national or local programmes.

Rising living costs and increases to the energy price cap have prompted many regulated and nonregulated organisations to allocate more funding to address fuel poverty. However, funders continue to face difficulties in ensuring that this additional support reaches the households who stand to benefit most.

In addition, more than £24 billion in benefits goes unclaimed each year, largely because many people are unaware of their eligibility or the support available to help them access what they are entitled to. A significant contributing factor is low awareness of existing assistance schemes. Despite government interventions such as the Energy Price Guarantee, which provided bill reductions for direct debit customers and vouchers for prepayment meter users, millions of households continue to miss out on

[1] Fuel Poverty Strategy for England: Technical annex - GOV.UK

available support. For example, although voucher redemption rates improved in early 2023, almost a quarter (24%) of prepayment meter vouchers remained unclaimed, highlighting the ongoing challenge of ensuring support reaches those who need it most.

This project has created a collaborative community of organisations that jointly design and deliver initiatives to support customers. This collaborative model places emphasis on effective communications and marketing, partnership with trusted local organisations, and compliant approaches to data sharing.

Building on the model from last year, the WHN will now offer customers a single point of contact when seeking advice and support regarding energy efficiency, income maximisation, and debt. They will complete their details once, in the Lightening Reach system and these will be shared with the relevant organisations to support them.

Scope and objectives

Outline the scope and objectives of the VCMA project linked to the problem statement above. This should be clearly defined including the benefits which would directly impact customers on the participating GDNs' network(s), and where the benefits of the VCMA Projects lie.

WHN provides a single point of access to a wide range of advice and support services, simplifying customer journeys and reducing duplication across organisations. Instead of multiple agencies separately engaging the same customer, one referral can connect individuals to several specialist partners. Available by phone or digitally, the service enables seamless warm transfers, ensuring customers receive coordinated, expert support.

The WHN will consist of four partners working together to create an ecosystem of support for customers. This will include:

Lightning Reach – A single point of contact platform that all partners will use to create customer profiles and make referrals between services, ensuring customers can access the support they need through a streamlined process.

Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM) – Will provide in-depth income maximisation support, including benefits checks and assistance with benefit applications.

YES Energy Solutions – Will deliver tailored energy efficiency advice and support customers to access appropriate energy-saving measures.

Turn2us – Customers can use the Turn2us Benefits Calculator and Grants Search tool to check their eligibility for support. Turn2us will also signpost and refer customers into the wider partnership network where additional assistance is required.

The ecosystem brings together multiple partners under a single operating framework, with:

- Clear allocation of partner roles and service responsibilities.
- Standardised referral and handover processes

- Centralised oversight and reporting for Cadent

The model is designed to minimise customers time, avoid duplication of effort, and ensure consistent visibility of delivery activity and outcomes.

Customers may enter WHN through multiple routes (digital, phone, or partner-led engagement), but should experience WHN as a single, cohesive service. Regardless of entry route, a customer record is created (or matched) in the WHN (SPOC) system, and a minimum data set is captured once and reused as needed, with consent, across all services.
A referral is a request, issued via the WHN SPOC, for a partner to deliver a defined in-scope service to a customer. A cross-referral (also referred to as an onward referral) is a referral from one WHN partner to another where the customer's needs extend beyond the referring partner's capabilities or contracted responsibilities.

A warm handover is a supported transfer between partners (or between service channels) used where customers are vulnerable, have low digital confidence, or require continuity of support. Warm handovers should include:

(i) a confirmation that the receiving partner has accepted the referral;

(ii) transfer of customer relevant context so that the customer does not have to repeat themselves; and

(iii) clear next steps and timelines explained to the customer.

WHN will have multiple digital entry points;

- Turn2us chatbot
- Direct link to Lightening Reach
- Citizen's advice website
- YES Energy Solutions website
- Cadent's website

There will also be phone-based entry points;

- Citizen's advice helpline
- YES energy helpline
- Cadent Helpline - This service will be delivered by a dedicated team comprising one Team Leader and four Call Handlers. The team will manage all inbound calls from customers and engineers, create and maintain customer profiles on the Lightning Reach platform, and undertake an initial assessment of each case.
- Following this assessment, customers will be triaged and referred to the most appropriate support services and partner organisations. This approach will ensure that individual needs are identified promptly and that customers can access the right support at the right time. By providing a streamlined referral pathway, the service will help deliver effective, efficient, and

person-centred support, improving outcomes for customers who may be experiencing vulnerability, financial hardship, or other challenges that impact their safety and wellbeing.

We anticipate three types of customers:

1. Digital customers will have the option to self-serve if they are confident to navigate the journey.
2. Digital customers who require assistance in the journey will have human support via the Cadent call centre.
3. Partner navigated customers who rely on an ecosystem partner to progress their journey.

CAM

CAM is intended to serve as the lead provider of income maximisation and financial advice for WHN customers, supporting customers with complex needs and lower digital confidence. CAM will also route customers into other WHN services through referrals where additional needs are identified.

- Deliver income maximisation advice, including assessment of circumstances and identification of benefits entitlements.
- Support completion and submission of benefits applications and wider financial support applications where within scope.
- Support assisted onboarding where customers cannot self-serve (including creating customer profiles in the SPOC – subject to agreed permissions and training).
- Initiate cross-referrals to other partners (e.g., energy efficiency, grants search) where additional needs are identified.
- Record interactions, referral status, and outcomes in the SPOC, including evidence to substantiate reported benefits and outcomes.
- Provide customers with signposting to relevant Priority Services Register (PSR) information, Carbon Monoxide (CO) awareness guidance, and accessibility-related support, in line with agreed WHN standards.

Referral points

- Receives referrals from other partners and from Cadent-approved entry routes for income maximisation.
- Issues cross-referrals to Turn2Us for grants search/benefits checks and to YES Energy for energy efficiency support.
- Uses warm handovers where a customer requires assisted support to engage with the next service.

Objectives

- Maximise household income for vulnerable customers by identifying and securing all eligible benefits and financial support.

- Provide tailored, accessible advice to customers with complex needs and low digital confidence.
- Ensure customers receive holistic support by identifying wider needs and facilitating seamless referrals across the WHN.
- Improve customer outcomes by supporting successful completion of benefit and grant applications.
- Strengthen engagement with hard-to-reach groups through assisted onboarding and personalised support.
- Maintain accurate and robust data capture within the SPOC to evidence outcomes, track impact, and support programme evaluation.
- Promote customer safety and wellbeing through consistent signposting to PSR, CO awareness, and accessibility services.

Yes Energy Solutions

YES Energy is intended to serve as the lead delivery partner for energy efficiency advice and support, delivering energy efficiency assessments and interventions for eligible customers. YES Energy will also route customers into other WHN services through referrals where additional needs are identified.

- Provide energy efficiency advice (telephone and/or in-home where agreed) tailored to the customer's property and circumstances.
- Conduct energy efficiency assessments where contracted and record recommended measures and next steps.
- Support assisted onboarding where customers cannot self-serve (including creating customer profiles in the SPOC – subject to agreed permissions and training).
- Initiate cross-referrals to other partners (e.g., income maximisation, grants search) where additional needs are identified.
- Record interactions, referral status, and outcomes in the SPOC, including evidence to substantiate reported benefits and outcomes.
- Provide customers with signposting to relevant PSR information, CO awareness guidance and accessibility-related support, in line with agreed WHN standards.
- Providing advice outside contracted scope (e.g., regulated financial advice).

Referral points

- Energy efficiency advice and assessment: 54,380 customers supported through WHN-related energy efficiency advice and assessment pathways.

- Ecosystem progression: 20% of customers onward referred to other WHN partners for additional support (e.g. income maximisation or other services).

Objectives

- Improve energy efficiency of homes by providing tailored advice and conducting assessments for eligible customers.
- Enable customers to reduce energy costs and improve comfort through practical, property-specific recommendations.
- Identify and address wider customer needs by facilitating referrals to other WHN partners (e.g. income maximisation, grants).
- Support vulnerable customers with low digital confidence through assisted onboarding where required.
- Deliver measurable impact at scale, supporting high volumes of customers through advice and assessment pathways.
- Ensure accurate recording of advice, interventions, and outcomes within the SPOC to demonstrate benefits and programme value.
- Promote customer safety, resilience, and awareness through PSR signposting, CO safety guidance, and accessibility support.
- Drive ecosystem collaboration by referring customers onward and contributing to integrated service delivery across the WHN.

Lightning Reach

This partner will provide the WHN SPOC platform that will enable customer onboarding, triage, referral coordination, case tracking, and consolidated reporting for Cadent.

- Operate and maintain the SPOC platform, including availability, user management, and role-base access controls.
- Enable platforms to create/manage customer records and referrals, and to record management information and outcomes against WHN cases.
- Provide MI dashboards/reports and support reporting and data quality checks at an agreed-upon cadence.
- Hold regular reporting touchpoints with all Tier 1 partners (cadence to be agreed) to support the accurate and timely reflection of WHN-funded activity and customers within the SPOC platform, including addressing data quality, attribution, and reporting issues as required.
- Enable customer communications (e.g., automated notifications) as required.
- Provide customers with signposting to relevant PSR information, CO awareness guidance, and accessibility-related support, in line with agreed WHN standards.

Referral Points

- Provides system interfaces and reporting outputs for Cadent programme oversight.
- Supports partner training and ensures the minimum dataset and MI requirements are configured in the platform.
- Facilitates workflow for warm handovers and cross-referrals but does not 'own' the casework.

Objectives

- Provide a reliable, secure, and user-friendly digital platform to enable end-to-end coordination of WHN services.
- Enable seamless customer journeys through effective onboarding, triage, referral management, and case tracking across all partners.
- Support integrated service delivery by allowing partners to efficiently create, manage, and update customer records and referrals.
- Deliver high-quality, timely management information and reporting to Cadent to support performance monitoring, accountability, and strategic decision-making.
- Ensure data accuracy, consistency, and integrity through regular quality checks and partner engagement.
- Facilitate collaboration across WHN partners by supporting regular reporting touchpoints and resolving data, attribution, and performance issues.
- Enhance customer engagement and experience through effective communication tools (e.g. automated notifications and updates).
- Provide robust access controls and system governance to ensure data security and appropriate user permissions.
- Demonstrate programme impact by capturing and consolidating outcomes to support evaluation, including SROI reporting.
- Promote customer safety and wellbeing by embedding consistent signposting to PSR, CO awareness, and accessibility support within the platform.

Turn2us

Turn2Us is intended to provide the digital access route into WHN, providing self-service and assisted support for grants search and benefits calculation support. Turn2Us will also route customers into other WHN services through referrals where additional needs are identified.

- Operate digital grants search tools to help customers identify relevant schemes, eligibility, and next steps.
- Provide benefits calculations/checks (digital and/or advisor-supported where agreed) and explain results to customers.
- Support assisted onboarding where customers cannot self-serve (including creating customer profiles in the SPOC – subject to agreed permissions and training).
- Create WHN referrals (cross-referrals) into other partners (e.g., income maximisation and energy efficiency) where needs are identified.
- Record interactions, referral status, and outcomes in the SPOC, including evidence to substantiate reported benefits and outcomes.
- Provide customers with signposting to relevant PSR information, CO awareness guidance, and accessibility-related support, in line with agreed WHN standards.

Referral Points

- Receives referrals from other partners and from Cadent-approved entry routes for grants/benefits support.
- Issues cross-referrals to CAM for income maximisation casework and to YES Energy for energy efficiency support.
- Uses warm handovers where a customer requires assisted support to engage with the next service.

Objectives

- Provide an accessible digital front door to the Warm Homes Network, enabling customers to self-serve or access assisted support for grants and benefits.
- Increase customer income and financial resilience by identifying relevant grants, benefits, and support schemes.
- Empower customers to understand their financial entitlements through clear, accurate benefits calculations and guidance.
- Ensure inclusive access by supporting customers with low digital confidence through assisted onboarding and support.
- Identify wider customer needs and enable seamless onward referrals to other WHN partners (e.g. income maximisation and energy efficiency services).
- Drive engagement and progression across the WHN ecosystem by acting as a key referral gateway.
- Maintain high-quality data capture within the SPOC, ensuring accurate recording of interactions, outcomes, and evidence for impact measurement.

- Promote customer safety, wellbeing, and resilience through consistent signposting to PSR, CO awareness, and accessibility support.

Project design engagement

Targeting vulnerability support: This must describe how the GDN(s) identified the vulnerability need being addressed through the VCMA project, including the use of consumer research, stakeholder engagement, and data and technology

The Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) work in partnership with a wide range of charities and specialist organisations to identify and support customers who may be vulnerable, particularly during a gas supply interruption. Alongside this, increasing levels of fuel poverty have highlighted the need for more accessible, coordinated support for households struggling with their energy costs and wider financial challenges.

Historically, customers often needed to engage with multiple organisations to access the full range of support available to them, creating additional barriers for those already experiencing vulnerability. Recognising this challenge, the GDNs collaborated with CAM, Turn2us, YES and Lightning Reach to develop a holistic, person-centred service designed to simplify access to support and improve customer outcomes.

Each delivery partner brought specialist expertise to the design and development of the programme. Together, they created an integrated referral pathway that addresses the multiple and often interconnected challenges associated with fuel poverty, including financial hardship, energy affordability, energy efficiency, carbon monoxide (CO) safety, and Priority Services Register (PSR) enrolment.

Over the past two years, the project has demonstrated significant success, providing support to more than 64,000 customers across the GDN footprint. Through a coordinated partnership approach, customers have benefited from:

- Income maximisation support, including benefits checks and access to financial assistance.
- Energy efficiency advice and practical measures to reduce household energy consumption.
- CO safety education and awareness.
- PSR advice and referrals.
- Access to wider support services tailored to individual customer needs.

The project has delivered tangible benefits for customers by increasing household resilience, reducing the impact of fuel poverty, and improving awareness of available support services.

Evaluation of the pilot phase highlighted that, while outcomes were positive, customers would benefit from a more seamless and integrated journey through the support landscape. Feedback from both customers and delivery partners identified opportunities to reduce duplication, improve referral processes, and create a more streamlined experience.

Feedback from engineers highlighted a lack of clarity around the referral process into the Warm Homes Network (WHN), including uncertainty about the most appropriate referral route and available support pathways. In response, Cadent invested in a dedicated call centre team to provide a consistent and accessible referral mechanism for both engineers and customers. The team supports customers throughout the onboarding process, helping to reduce barriers to access and improve engagement with the service.

To further strengthen the customer journey, the GDNs invested in the development of a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) model. The SPOC approach provides a simplified and coordinated gateway to a wide range of support services, removing the need for customers to navigate multiple organisations independently. By enabling effective triage, streamlined referrals, coordinated case management, and enhanced partnership working, the model helps ensure that customers receive timely, tailored support that meets their individual needs. This not only improves the customer experience but also increases the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery across the network.

By adopting a SPOC model, the GDNs have strengthened the customer experience, increased accessibility to essential services, and enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of support delivery for households experiencing fuel poverty and other forms of vulnerability.

Why the project is being funded through the VCMA

This should include an explanation of why the VCMA project meets the VCMA eligibility criteria, and how it aligns with the GDN's VCMA collaborative strategy.

This project meets this eligibility criteria, as the project aligns with the GDNs collaborative vulnerability strategy, in which we have a clear ambition to keep our communities safe and warm, and to support those most in need by helping vulnerable households not just today but as we invest in a green energy future.

To achieve our strategic ambition and realise our objectives, we've set four priority delivery areas:

1. Providing direct services for customers
2. Reducing carbon monoxide harm
3. Supporting priority vulnerable groups
4. Tackling fuel poverty and affordability

This project aligns with all of the objectives of our collaborative vulnerability strategy:

How VCMA funding complements or supplements BAU activities

Where the VCMA Project is being delivered alongside a BAU vulnerability and/or CO safety activity or activities funded through the GDN's baseline allowance, the GDN must provide sufficient evidence that the VCMA Project complements or supplements the BAU activity or activities to prevent the risk of double funding.

VCMA funding complements, rather than duplicates, the GDNs' business-as-usual (BAU) responsibilities by enabling an enhanced level of vulnerability support that goes beyond what is required or funded through baseline allowances. While CO awareness and PSR registrations form part of our BAU activity, VCMA funding allows us to deliver a significantly deeper level of specialist advice including detailed CO risk identification, tailored guidance on symptoms and mitigation strategies which core operational staff are not trained or resourced to provide as part of standard BAU delivery.

Similarly, although GDNs complete PSR sign-ups as part of BAU, many customers, particularly those living with dementia, require additional time, specialist communication approaches and more intensive support to ensure the process is safe, accessible, and effective. These enhanced needs fall outside the scope of BAU activity and cannot be met through baseline allowances. VCMA funding therefore enables us to provide the necessary person-centred support while ensuring no risk of double funding.

Income maximisation support is not included within GDN BAU responsibilities and cannot be delivered through baseline funding. VCMA funding therefore fills a clear gap by enabling the provision of income related support for customers living in fuel poverty, ensuring households receive holistic assistance that would not otherwise be available through BAU activities.

Outcomes, associated actions and success criteria

Details of the VCMA Project outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these, interim milestones and how the Funding Licensee will evaluate whether the project has been successful. Each action should have a proportion of the funding allocated.

The VCMA WHN collaborative project will be delivered in partnership with CAM, Turn2us, Yes Energy Solutions and Lightening Reach and aims to support individuals with Income maximisation and benefit checks, energy efficiency advice and grants, PSR and CO awareness.

The table below shows a breakdown of the total reach for partners and GDNs:

Support over the 2 years	Cadent	NGN
CAM - Income maximisation	31,937	7,292
YES - Energy efficiency	50,000	4,380
Turn2us - benefit checks	114,000	54,000
Onward referrals to CAM & YES	6,640	3,040

Deliverable totals	Target	Associated Actions
Energy efficiency advice	54,380	Enable reduction in energy costs
Income Maximisation /benefit advice	39,229	Average and total financial gains secured (£) % increase in customers' household income post-intervention
Benefit and grant search	168,000	Total number of benefit/grant calculations reached.
CO advice	93,609	Raise awareness of CO signs and symptoms Supported behaviour changes to reduce CO risks in the home
PSR advice	93,609	Raise awareness of the benefits of the PSR

Success Criteria

The success of the project will be measured by reaching the targets agreed and accessing the impact of the project on individuals who are living in fuel poverty by reviewing actual case studies.

- 168,000 individuals will complete a benefits/grant check on Turn2us and will be referred to partners for in depth support
- 39,229 individuals will receive in depth advice and support on benefits /income maximisation and debt.
- 28,401 referrals between three partners.
- 54,380 individuals will receive one-to-one advice on energy efficiency and support to claim grants for energy efficiency measures.
- All individuals will receive one-to-one advice on CO signs and symptoms.
- All individuals will be given one-to-one advice on the PSR and we would predict that 10% of the individuals reached would then be signed on to the register.

This project will deliver a positive social return on investment.

Potential for new learning

Provide details of the GDN(s) expect(s) to learn and how learning will be disseminated

Through the delivery of the Warm Homes Network (WHN), the project offers significant opportunities for new learning around the effectiveness of a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) model in supporting households experiencing fuel poverty. By integrating multiple partner organisations into a unified ecosystem, the project will generate valuable insights into how streamlined referrals, shared data standards, and warm handovers can reduce customer friction and improve outcomes for vulnerable

households. The learning will demonstrate whether this coordinated model provides a more efficient, person-centred approach compared to traditional fragmented support pathways. Insights gained will help the GDNs understand how multi-agency collaboration, consistent customer records and aligned service standards can enhance both operational delivery and customer experience, informing future programme design and wider vulnerability strategies across the sector.

Aligning with and supporting wider vulnerability approaches

Details of how the project supports or aligns with approaches to vulnerability taken by the wider energy industry, other utilities and/or consumer organisations; local, national or devolved governments; or evidence innovation or a gap in vulnerability support provision. For example, this could include evidence of collaboration beyond the VCMA, non-VCMA joint funding of the initiative, or identified gaps in the provision of vulnerability services which the project seeks to address. The GDN should show how the project fits within broader approaches to vulnerability.

This approach aligns closely with the wider strategies adopted by other energy providers, who similarly emphasise coordinated referral pathways, customer centred case management and warm-handover practices to ensure vulnerable households receive seamless support. By integrating income-maximisation services, energy efficiency expertise, and grant access guidance into a connected model, the strategy reflects sector-wide commitments to reduce fuel poverty, promote energy resilience, and improve customer outcomes. The focus on trusted partnerships and clear referral mechanisms also mirrors industry best practice, helping ensure that customers are not passed between services but instead receive timely, accessible and holistic assistance.

Monitoring and evaluation

Details of how the GDNs will work with their project partners to monitor the impact of the VCMA project and evaluate its effectiveness and success.

This project features co-designed success criteria underpinning its Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework, with clear reporting and insight requirements from mobilisation through to delivery.

The WHN partners and both GDNs will continue to review monthly reports on measurable outcomes, collaborating to ensure successful delivery, while each quarter the core project team will come together to share performance insights, highlights and mitigations for any underperformance and drive opportunities for continuous improvement.

We will report annually on partnership impact, sharing broadly via collaborative and company-specific reports to showcase outcomes and key learnings.

Scale of VCMA project and SROI calculations, including NPV

Justify the scale of the VCMA project – including the scale of the investment relative to its potential benefits. As part of this, the Funding Licensee(s) should provide the SROI calculation, including NPV. Note: The value in numbers of the SROI and NPV must be provided, rather than confirmation of positive impact.

Together with the other Gas Distribution Networks we worked with leading social impact research consultancy SIRIO Strategies on the development of the Industry Standard Social Value Framework and supporting GDN Rulebook. We have used that GDN Rulebook to carry out an assessment of financial and wellbeing outcomes applicable to our services for vulnerable households included in this partnership.

We've incorporated social value based on the deliverables and associated targets detailed above. Carrying out an assessment of these predicted outcomes we forecast a positive net Social Return on Investment of £13.28 for every £1 spent.

Social value measurement

Total cost*	£7,876,574.35
Total gross present value	£112,408,548.47
Net Present Value (NPV)	£104,531,974.12
SROI	£13.27

*Accounting for inflationary factors over the term of the project.

Internal governance and project management evidence

Provide a description of GDN(s) review of proposal and project sign off, with details on how the project will be managed.

Project management for this partnership will be led by Cadent with clear governance arrangements in place to monitor delivery, performance and risk throughout the duration of the project.

A structured contract framework will ensure that any material changes remain aligned with customer needs and stakeholder expectations, safeguarding the effective and responsible use of VCMA funds.

Cadent has worked closely with the other GDNs and the WHN partners to codesign this partnership so that its ambition directly contributes to the GDN's Collaborative Vulnerability Strategy, developed through the Vulnerability Working Group and overseen by the GDN Steering Group.

The PEA has been reviewed and approved through each network's internal governance processes and formally signed off by the relevant senior leaders.

GDN	Approver (Name and Role)	Date
Cadent	Mary O'Shaughnessy, Safeguarding Specialist	18th August 2026
Northern Gas Networks	Laura Ratcliffe, Head of Social Strategy	27th August 2026
Cadent	Emma Turnbull Social Programmes Manager	2nd September 2026

Update

GDN	Approver (Name and Role)	Date

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility Criteria	Description	Project qualifies Yes / No
Positive SROI	Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) calculated in accordance with a model which the GDNs have developed and submitted to Ofgem including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project	Yes
Positive NPV	Have a positive, or a forecasted positive Net Present Value (NPV)	Yes
Support Criteria	Either: i. provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to Energy Safeguarding, or ii. provide support for those most at risk of being left behind in the transition to net zero, or iii. provide awareness of, and education on, the dangers of CO beyond the activities funded as business as usual (BAU) through baseline allowances, or iv. reduce the risk of harm caused by CO	Yes
Defined Outcomes	Have specific, measurable, and time-bound outcomes which align with relevant Consumer Vulnerability Strategy objectives to achieve the requirements set out in 'Support Criteria' above;	Yes
Beyond Other Funding	Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s), including baseline allowance funding, or required through licence obligations	Yes
Support or Align	Support or align with approaches to vulnerability taken by the wider energy industry, other utilities and/or consumer organisations, and local, national and devolved government, or evidence innovation or a gap in vulnerability support provision;	Yes
No Other External Funding	Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding	Yes
BAU vulnerability and CO safety activities	Where a GDN's BAU vulnerability and CO safety activities are funded through baseline allowances, these are not suitable for funding through the VCMA. The GDN is permitted to use VCMA funds to supplement or complement its BAU activities, however,	Yes

	it must ensure that its reporting provides sufficient evidence to prevent double funding.	

Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing

Eligibility Criteria	**Description**	**Project qualifies Yes / No or N/A**
Unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:	Either: i. GDN has had to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role; or ii. A GDN or its Project Partner has had to condemn unsafe pipework, or an essential gas appliance, following an essential gas appliance service (as described in 3.19 of the VCMA governance document)	n/a
Health condition	Either: i. The occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition that makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes and has a household income of £31,000 or below in 2025/26 prices, adjusted for inflation using Consumer Price Index with Housing costs (CPIH) 13, or ii. the household cannot afford to service the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria set out in Appendix 1 of the VCMA governance document	n/a
Funding	Sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including national, devolved, or local government funding) to fund the unsafe pipework or the essential gas appliance repair or replacement.	n/a

Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance repair and replacement

Eligibility Criteria	**Description**	**Project qualifies Yes / No or N/A**
Servicing must meet the following criteria:	Either: i. A GDN has had to isolate and condemn an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role; or ii. A GDN or its Project Partner has identified an essential gas appliance which has not been serviced in the last 12 months in the owner-occupied home of a customer in a Vulnerable Situation where an occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition12 that makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes; or iii. A GDN or its Project Partner has identified an essential gas appliance which has not been serviced in the last 12 months in a tenant-occupied home of a customer in a Vulnerable Situation where it is the tenant's responsibility to maintain the essential gas appliance, where an occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition that makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes	n/a
Affordability	The household cannot afford to service the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria set out in the VCMA governance document	n/a
Funding	Sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including a social or private landlord and national, devolved, or local government funding) to fund the essential gas appliance servicing	n/a