Start date: April 2026
PEA reference: FP-Collab-011a

# Warm Welcome Spaces

**Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)**
Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)








UK GAS DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS

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# Project registration table

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| **Project summary** | |
| **Project title** | Warm Welcome Spaces |
| **Strategic area** | Fuel Poverty & Energy Affordability |
| **Lead partner name** | Warm Welcome Spaces |
| **Lead GDN(s)** | SGN |
| **Funding GDN(s)** | SGN & Cadent |
| **New/Updated** | New |
| **Collaborative VCMA Projects**<br>Specific role(s) of GDN(s) participating in a collaborative VCMA Project | SGN – Lead GDN<br>Cadent – Participating GDN |
| **Date of PEA submission** | April 2026 |
| **Project start and end date** | April 2026 – March 2028 |
| **Project location** | Cadent and SGN network areas |
| **Sectors involved** | Gas Distribution Network<br>Charitable Organisation<br>Energy Suppliers<br>Distribution Network Operators<br>Local Authorities |
| **Project contact** | |
| **Name** | Graeme McLarty |
| **Contact details** | Positive.impact@sgn.co.uk |
| **Project partners and third parties involved** | |
| **Organisation name** | **Role** |
| Good Faith Foundation | Lead delivery partner |
| **Costs and funding** | |
| **Total cost (£k)** | Redacted due to commercial sensitivity |
| **Total VCMA funding required (£k)** | Total = £800,000<br>Cadent budget (50%): £400,000<br>SGN budget (50%): £400,000 (80% South / 20% Scot) |
| **Total BAU vulnerability and CO safety activity baseline allowance funding by activity (£k)** | Redacted due to commercial sensitivity |

# Problem(s)

*This section needs to outline the problem(s) which is/are being addressed by the VCMA project.*

Rising energy costs, fuel poverty and financial insecurity continue to place severe pressure on households across the UK. In England, 36.3% of households, around 8.99 million, spent more than 10% of their income on energy in 2024, with bills still almost 60% higher than in winter 2021/22 and around a quarter higher in real terms than before the crisis. Scotland faces similarly acute challenges. Citizens Advice Scotland supported almost 24,000 people in February 2025 alone and managed £6.4 million in energy related debt in 2023/24, with average debts of £2,300. Across both nations, many households cannot heat their homes safely and are falling into severe energy debt.

These pressures are reflected in the escalating demand for crisis support. Citizens Advice in England supported more than 80,000 people in 2024 with local crisis and welfare assistance, and by 2025 is helping over 20,000 people every month with emergency interventions such as food bank referrals, fuel vouchers and charitable support. People seeking help for energy issues increasingly present with multiple, interconnected problems including rent arrears, wider debt, benefit delays and essential living cost shortfalls. In Scotland, Citizens Advice Bureaux helped almost 24,000 people in February 2025 alone and managed £6.4 million in energy-related debt in 2023/24, with average debts reaching £2,300 well above the UK average. As in England, most people seeking help with energy issues also require support with debt, benefits and housing, highlighting the depth and complexity of the crisis.

Against this backdrop, Warm Spaces have rapidly evolved from an emergency response into a community-led movement. Since 2020, millions of visits have been made each winter to libraries, churches, community centres, cafés and other venues offering free, heated, welcoming environments. The Warm Welcome Campaign has established a still growing network of over 6,200 Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK.

However, Warm Spaces face significant challenges in addressing the underlying drivers of fuel poverty and financial hardship. Many are run by small volunteer teams with limited funding and capacity, and staff often lack specialist training in energy advice, PSR, income maximisation or crisis support and / or have the support around them to ensure the confidence to deliver this information. Opportunities to help people access entitlements, manage energy use safely or resolve energy debt are frequently missed. Accessibility barriers further limit reach to disabled people or those with mobility challenges. Through our work with Warm Spaces, we have learned that building skills and capacity within frontline teams requires tailored, community-led approaches that recognise the diversity of local contexts and volunteer experience.

Warm Spaces have become essential community infrastructure, but they cannot meet growing demand alone. A coordinated partnership initiative is now needed to strengthen capacity, improve access to specialist support and enhance community resilience for the most vulnerable people across the UK.

# 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.*

Working together Cadent, SGN and Warm Welcome Spaces have co-designed our partnership building directly on the learning of a pilot programme led by SGN and Warm Welcome Spaces as well as local warm space initiatives including Cadent's Centres for Warmth and SGN's integrated warm spaces initiatives. Together Cadent, SGN and Warm Welcome Spaces will:

- Identify existing Warm Welcome Spaces within the network to develop the skills and capabilities to provide immediate and longer-term energy safeguarding support using a mix of community and socio-economic data and a gap assessment of otherwise funded 'warm spaces' or 'Centres for Warmth'
- Co-develop a training programme that meets the needs of Warm Welcome Spaces to identify, triage and support people in energy crisis using regional references and resources
- Provide a clear directory of Warm Welcome Spaces that can provide energy safeguarding advice and support via an online directory and mapping tool
- Provide an inclusive energy safeguarding support service within local community settings which provides crisis support, information on carbon monoxide safety, supported access to energy safeguarding schemes including the Priority Services Register
- Integrate this support within the Warm Welcome Campaign's Champions Programme which offers holistic organisational support to a diverse range of community spaces across the UK
- Integration with Cadent's MAC and SGN's Safe and Warm teams to support with engaging events within the Warm Welcome Spaces to support ongoing learning of the volunteer community
- Provide access and onward referrals into Cadent's and SGN's regional partnership network and support services provided by this community
- Provide insight into who is using the Warm Welcome Spaces to better understand the reach and gaps in service provision to households in need.

Overall, the project aims to create a sustainable pathway for grassroots organisations to develop, deepen and share their skills in energy safeguarding. By strengthening the capability of trusted community spaces, the partnership will ensure that vulnerable households are identified earlier, supported more effectively and connected to the full range of help available. The benefits will be felt directly by customers across Cadent and SGN's networks through improved access to advice, safer homes, reduced energy related harm and stronger community resilience.

# 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.*

*Evidence of stakeholder and/or customer support: Information regarding all stakeholder and/or customer engagement which has contributed to the development of the VCMA Project.*

*Stakeholder project design input: How stakeholders were actively involved in the project design, and how their input and feedback were incorporated to shape the project design. Where stakeholders disagree about the project design, justification must be provided for why the current project design is deemed preferable.*

There is growing evidence that Warm Welcome Spaces and similar community warm spaces deliver clear, positive social impact for vulnerable households. Emerging evaluations from charities, local authorities and community organisations show that warm spaces reduce social isolation, improve mental wellbeing and increase people's sense of safety and belonging. They also act as trusted, stigma free access points for energy advice, income maximisation and wider support, helping to identify- vulnerability earlier and prevent crises from escalating.

Over the course of GD2, SGN has worked with a wide range of partners from local authorities to charities, community organisations and grassroots groups to strengthen the capacity of warm spaces across our network areas. Through initiatives such as the Surrey Warm Welcome partnership, our collaboration with South Lanarkshire Council's Money Matters Advice Service, our work with the SPFL Trust, and our support for very

local support services like Dementia Support Hampshire & IOW, we have embedded energy safeguarding, crisis support and community-based advice directly into trusted local settings. In the last two years of GD2, we have been able to fully or partially fund local support services to over 240 warm spaces that not only respond to immediate crisis but also build long term resilience by equipping warm spaces with the skills, resources- and confidence to support vulnerable households. We've learned that this community centred approach has enabled us to reach people who may not otherwise engage with formal services, ensuring that warm spaces become hubs of practical help, safety and connection for those most at risk of fuel poverty and financial hardship. We have also learned that integrating our Safe & Warm community team and our wider Safe & Warm partnership network has amplified the impact of this work, giving local communities access to ongoing learning, stronger networking opportunities and a shared belief that, together, we can support more people and deliver better outcomes for customers based on their individual circumstances.

This project has been co-designed with key stakeholders and informed by direct engagement with community organisations and frontline volunteers within the Warm Welcome Spaces network and the Warm Welcome Champions network.

In 2025, SGN and Warm Welcome Spaces designed a joint pilot to build on previous learning and the experience of supporting local warm spaces, creating a programme to test across Scotland and Southern England. Together, we developed resource packs and codesigned a training offer to onboard selected Warm Welcome Spaces, enabling them to deliver energy- safe-guarding triage and host drop-in sessions with partner organisations such as IncomeMax. Pilot groups were chosen based on local fuel- poverty needs and patterns of warm- space- use and were supported throughout by SGN and the Warm Welcome network. Their feedback and lived experience have directly shaped the scope and design of the full project.

The pilot found that Warm Welcome Spaces were extremely well placed to reach the target demographic groups identified as being particularly vulnerable, both through one-off events and by integrating energy-safeguarding into their 'business as usual' activities. Through shared learning sessions held during the pilot, the Warm Welcome Spaces identified key features that made energy safeguarding events successful, such as taking a guided conversation approach and having private space available for confidential discussions where appropriate. The pilot also successfully trialled an approach to working with smaller and more specialist Warm Welcome Spaces by giving them the chance to engage just through training and one-off events rather than full participation in a more structured and involved programme. One of the challenges identified in the pilot was giving Warm Welcome Space staff and volunteers the confidence to be able to effectively support and signpost guests themselves rather than relying on professionals from SGN and partners to do that work in their Space. This has shaped our thinking in the design of this longer-term project, which will encourage leaders of Warm Welcome Spaces to identify a key 'Lead' volunteers that can be trained and equipped to deliver and cascade support and signposting activity within the Space, so that over time that community venue requires less external engagement and support to deliver energy safeguarding work.

This programme also builds on the experience of the Warm Welcome Campaign in piloting and developing the Champions Programme in partnership with a number of energy companies such as National Grid Electricity Distribution and OVO. The creation of the cohort and the resultant information and experience exchange between spaces and the Warm Welcome national team continues to strengthen confidence around delivery and the support given out in spaces. Through this work we have learned how to embed energy safeguarding work within a wider programme of holistic organisational development for community spaces, encompassing elements such as fundraising, communications, staff and volunteer recruitment and retention, inclusion and community leadership. Energy safeguarding fits perfectly within this 'curriculum' as part of developing the Space's practical support offer for guests. Nesting this work within this wider development programme ensures that energy safeguarding work with Spaces is not transactional or tokenistic, but instead is understood

as part of developing that Space's reach and impact for the long term. The Champions Programme has also helped Warm Welcome to learn how to help multiple partner organisations work together and present a coherent and unified offer of support to Spaces, for example through presentations at in-person and online Champions gatherings. The development of 'Lead Volunteers' within this new project design will further serve to strengthen the Champions programme's way of working as we put mechanisms in place for this group to connect and share learnings and experiences together. Beginning in January 2026, the SGN pilot highlighted the importance of seasonal engagement and support for Warm Welcome Spaces as many spaces were deeply into planned, intense winter delivery when we were working to engage them. SGN's partners and stakeholders have supported the ongoing development of warm spaces as they strengthen local capacity by building volunteer skills, deepening collaboration between agencies and creating lasting community infrastructure that continues to benefit customers beyond the immediate cost-of-living and energy crisis.

Through continuous research and proactive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, Cadent built a deeper understanding of stakeholder needs, expectations and priorities. This insight enabled Cadent to identify the services that matter most, determine which areas require targeted focus, and shape delivery models that are both effective and sustainable.

From the outset, the Centres for Warmth programme has been rooted in addressing fuel poverty and improving CO safety through a targeted, community-based partnership approach. By focusing on capacity building, improving access to advice and support, maximising local resources, and fostering strong collaboration, the project has developed a long-standing model that communities recognise, trust and actively advocate for.

The introduction of the Mobile Advice Centre (MAC) built on this foundation and provided a significant opportunity to generate new learning about how best to support vulnerable and fuel-poor households—particularly those living in rural or isolated communities with limited access to traditional services. By taking support directly into these areas, the MAC initiative enabled Cadent and partners to understand more about the specific circumstances, needs and behavioural drivers of groups that are often underserved. This mobile, flexible, community-centred model also helped identify geographical gaps in provision, emerging vulnerability trends, and the types of interventions that create the greatest positive impact.

Through delivering tens of thousands of tailored conversations, completing thousands of PSR registrations, and providing practical safety interventions such as CO alarms, both projects generated strong evidence about what types of advice lead to measurable behaviour change. It helped highlight which communities require deeper or repeated engagement, and what factors influence a successful customer journey across multiple support pathways.

## 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.

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

- Empower local communities to identify and support vulnerable households with their energy safeguarding needs
- Help more vulnerable households access energy safeguarding services
- Reach communities under-served and most in need of trusted intermediaries to take up support services

It has co-designed with Warm Welcome Spaces and been developed in line with the updated VCMI governance framework, embedding robust oversight, transparency and continuous improvement from the outset. The VCMA eligibility criteria have been met and are detailed within the table at the end of the PEA.

The GDNs' vulnerability strategy under the pillar "fuel poverty and energy affordability" underpins this approach, using data and insights to identify those customers who are both most in need and least likely to access help without tailored provision. By combining this evidence-led targeting with trusted intermediaries and specialist, accessible services, the project is designed to reach people who would otherwise be excluded from essential support.

## 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.*

By working in partnership with Cadent and SGN we'll maintain a robust referral pathway to raise concerns related to key energy safeguarding services with the group. This collaboration ensures that issues affecting vulnerable individuals, particularly those who may struggle to access or navigate utility services are identified early and directed to the appropriate support from their utility companies.

As a trusted organisation, Warm Welcome Spaces and its network is well placed to engage effectively with vulnerable individuals and refer eligible people for BAU funded support. This includes access to carbon monoxide alarms, Locking Cooker Valves, and other measures that help maintain safety and independence in the home.

# 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.*

| Outcome | Annual Target | Target by Network | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Cadent Target | SGN Target |
| Onboard and support 60 local charitable grassroots organisations with workshops and resources to help vulnerable people in need to stay safe and warm | 30 Champion Spaces<br>15 smaller spaces | 15 Champion Spaces<br>7-8 smaller spaces | 15 Champion Spaces<br>7-8 smaller spaces |
| 7,500 households provided with winter resilience, PSR, CO safety and energy advice information (conversation) | 3,750 | 1,875 | 1,875 |
| 750 households supported to register on the PSR | 375 | 188 | 187 |
| 900 households will receive a free CO alarm | 450 | 225 | 225 |
| 1,500 vulnerable guests receive Warm Packs | 750 | 375 | 375 |
| 3,750 customers supported to access personalised energy, debt and/or benefits advice through onward referrals | 1,875 | 938 | 937 |

## Success Criteria

Together we'll build a thriving network of community grassroots organisations supporting communities most affected by fuel poverty are accurately identified using network, community, and socio-economic data that delivers;

- A broad network of organisations that demonstrate strong, trusted relationships with vulnerable or under-served groups in target areas where there are gaps in the GDNs community services
- Energy safeguarding training so organisations understand fuel poverty, energy safety, and crisis identification, leading to measurable knowledge and confidence gains amongst staff/volunteers
- Grassroot organisations are equipped with accessible engagement materials on energy advice, financial support, and gas and CO safety
- Energy safeguarding becomes integrated into existing services, enabling staff and volunteers to effectively identify needs, make referrals, and connect households to available help.

- Regular attendance at workshops and networking sessions to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and peer support across GDN areas
- An accessible resource for customers and stakeholders so that they can identify local warm welcome spaces suitable for a broad range of customer groups highlight that energy advice is available at the venue.

# Potential for new learning

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

This project has been built on a strong foundation of data, insight and the lived experience of communities who have relied on Warm Welcome Spaces throughout the cost of living and energy crises.

Developed jointly by SGN, Warm Welcome Spaces and informed by learning from previous GD2 programmes delivered by both SGN and Cadent, the model reflects what local communities say they need from accessible, trusted energy advice and crisis support. It also draws on insight from local community grassroot partners to ensure the approach complements how these local, often volunteer led services can make the greatest impact and benefit from the training and resources rather than being overwhelmed.

Designed from the outset to be inclusive, community centred and evidence led, the project has been intentionally structured to generate learning that will inform future VCMA activity and strengthen vulnerability strategies across the GDNs.

The insight gathered will be shared across all GDNs and across the other utility networks, with a view of how these community services can be integrated with existing VCMA programmes including SGN's Safe and Warm community team and Cadent's MAC service. We're also looking at how we can develop the online mapping of local Welcome Warm Spaces where we'll encourage the development of a national register of venues across our respective partner networks and ensure that where energy advice is available it is clearly flagged so customers and stakeholders are clear about the support provision offered.

# 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.*

The partnership between Cadent, SGN and Warm Welcome Spaces aligns strongly with the wider energy industry's approach to vulnerability and reflects national and devolved government priorities on fuel poverty, community resilience and early intervention.

Warm spaces have been recognised across England, Scotland and Wales as vital community assets during the cost of living and energy crises, and this project builds directly on that policy direction by strengthening the capability of trusted local venues to deliver inclusive, accessible energy safeguarding support. By using community and socioeconomic data to identify gaps in provision, the project responds to a well evidenced shortfall in local, face to face energy advice, particularly in areas where households in crisis struggle to access formal services.

This aligns with the ambitions of the Fuel Poverty Strategies across the UK and the emerging Warm Homes Plan, all of which emphasise targeted support for those most at risk and the importance of reaching people through trusted community settings.

The project also demonstrates cross sector collaboration beyond the VCMA, drawing on learning from SGN's integrated warm spaces initiatives, Cadent's Centres for Warmth, and the pilot programme jointly delivered by SGN and Warm Welcome Spaces. By co-developing training, linking in with regional referral pathways and a unified online directory and mapping tool, the partnership complements and enhances existing support delivered by energy suppliers, local authorities, charities and other utilities.

Integration with Cadent's MAC service and SGN's Safe and Warm community teams ensures that the model does not duplicate existing provision but instead strengthens the local network of vulnerability support, enabling more coordinated outreach and more consistent customer outcomes across network areas.

The project's focus on insight generation, by understanding who uses warm spaces, what support they need and where gaps persist, we will provide valuable evidence to inform future VCMA activity and wider industry strategies, supporting a more joined up, data driven approach to identifying and supporting vulnerable households.

Overall, this partnership fits within broader approaches to vulnerability by addressing a recognised gap in local energy advice, building community capacity, and creating a scalable, cross-GDN model that enhances the industry's collective ability to safeguard customers in crisis, that integrates with, rather than duplicates, wider national and devolved strategies.

The project offers an opportunity to strengthen the Warm Welcome Campaign's Champions programme and its work to bridge between various energy sector, other utilities and other corporate partner's consumer vulnerability teams and Warm Welcome Spaces. Additionally, Warm Welcome will continue to explore work with key statutory bodies (eg. Local authorities and the Department for Work and Pensions) around how best to work with community spaces supporting vulnerable communities. This work will provide paths to engage and deliver targeted support to both volunteers and guests in spaces.

By working in this way, spaces will be further strengthened to support guests facing multiple disadvantage and interconnected vulnerabilities for longer term impact beyond the VCMA funded period.

These learnings and ways of working have the potential to scale across the national network of Warm Welcome Spaces. The Warm Welcome Campaign will be further strengthened to continue its work to ensure that community spaces are resourced, supported and equipped to provide a responsive offer for their communities.

# 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.*

Warm Welcome Spaces, and the lead GDN, SGN will review monthly reports on measurable outcomes, working together to ensure successful delivery. Each quarter, the core project team will meet to share performance insights, highlight and mitigate any underperformance, and provide structured updates on delivery, risks and emerging outcomes.

SGN as the lead GDN will work with Warm Welcome Spaces to ensure that there is an evidence base through audit and research that seeks to understand how effective the project is effective at empowering Warm Welcome Spaces to support their local communities who are struggling to maintain a safe and warm home and

assess the before and after to better understand the impact of the services provided on the lived experience of beneficiaries.

We will report annually on partnership impact, sharing broadly via collaborative and company-specific reports to showcase outcomes and key learnings and inform future delivery. Additionally, the Vulnerability Working Group will provide performance updates to the National Delivery Group and National Steering Panel (NSP) with both SGN and Cadent disseminating results through their business governance processes, including their respective Independent Steering Groups (ISG).

# 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 £0.59 for every £1 spent

**Social value measurement**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total cost*** | £786,380.08 |
| **Total gross present value** | £1,249,037.64 |
| **Net Present Value (NPV)** | £462,657.55 |
| **SROI** | £0.59 |

*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 SGN 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 need and stakeholder expectations, safeguarding the effective and responsible use of VCMA funds.

SGN has worked closely with Cadent and Warm Welcome Spaces to co-design 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 | Phil Burrows, Head of Social Programmes | 01/04/2026 |
| SGN | Maureen McIntosh, Director of Customer Services | 22/04/2026 |

# 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:<br>i. provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to Energy Safeguarding, or<br>ii. provide support for those most at risk of being left behind in the transition to net zero, or<br>iii. provide awareness of, and education on, the dangers of CO beyond the activities funded as business as usual (BAU) through baseline allowances, or<br>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 'Success 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, it must ensure that its reporting provides sufficient evidence to prevent double funding. | Yes |

## Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing

| **Eligibility Criteria** | **Description** | **Project qualifies Yes / No or N/A** |
|---|---|---|
| Servicing must meet the following criteria: | Either:<br>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<br>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<br>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 |

## Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance repair and replacement

| 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:<br>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<br>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:<br>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<br>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 |