

GDN Collaborative Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

Alzheimer's Society

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April 2025

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

Section 1 - Eligibility criteria for company specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)	
In order to qualify as a VCMA project, a project must:	
VCMA Eligibility Criteria	Criteria Satisfied (Yes/No)
a) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Have a positive, or 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, and ii. have a positive, or a forecasted positive Net Present Value (NPV); 	Yes
b) Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, or ii. Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, or iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO; 	Yes
c) Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve the requirements in paragraph b;	Yes
d) Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and	Yes
e) Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.	Yes
Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing	
To qualify as a VCMA Project, essential gas appliance servicing must meet the following criteria:	
a) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. 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 condition 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; or 	NA
b) the household cannot afford to service the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria in the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) Guidance: Delivery document; and	NA
c) 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.	NA
Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance repair and replacement	
To qualify as a VCMA Project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:	
a) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a 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 and 	NA
b) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 as per ECO4 Income thresholds, or 	NA

ii.	the household cannot afford to repair or replace unsafe pipework or the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria in the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) Guidance: Delivery document; and	
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 repair or replacement.	NA
Section 4 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects		
In order to qualify as a collaborative VCMA project, a project must:		
a)	Meet the company specific project eligibility criteria set out in sections 1-3 above; and	Yes
b)	Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and	Yes
c)	Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.	Yes

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

Information Required	Description
Project Title	Alzheimer's Society
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent, SGN, WWU
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	Cadent is the lead partner alongside SGN (Southern region and Wales & West Utilities (WWU))
Date of PEA Submission	April 2025
VCMA Project Contact Name, email, and Number	Name: Phil Burrows Title: Head of Customer Vulnerability Social Programme Delivery Email: Phil.m.burrows@cadentgas.com Number: 07773 545451
Total Cost (£k)	£1,129,104
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£1,129,104 Cadent £750,000 SGN £179,104 WWU £200,000
Problem(s)	<p>Dementia currently affects 944,000 people and is projected to rise to 1.6 million by 2040. Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia in the UK.¹</p> <p>Dementia is a terminal condition and has a devastating impact. The whole family is affected as they watch their loved one decline and lose their independence. Dementia progressively impairs cognition, speech, mobility, and memory. As dementia progresses, families need to access a wide range of support - emotional, social, and financial - as well as access to care.</p> <p>Overwhelming prevalent in older people, with 90% of our beneficiaries aged 70+ years. Due to their age, and dementia, many of those we support are digitally excluded. Therefore, they are less able to access help, support, and advice online. This leaves them in need of accessible advice services, available on the phone or face to face.</p> <p>People with Alzheimer's spend on average 22 hours per day in their home, making them vulnerable to overconsumption of energy.² Furthermore, a new study states that people who live in poverty are significantly more likely to develop dementia compared to people of higher socioeconomic status, regardless of genetic risk. Understanding the link between poverty and dementia is therefore critical to developing effective strategies to prevent this condition by targeting services for this vulnerable group of people.³</p> <p>It is important to ensure this vulnerable group are registered on to the Priority Services Register (PSR) and their support networks are aware of CO signs and symptoms, and other safety apparatus such as locking cooker valves which would give the vulnerable person greater independence by staying in their own home.</p>

¹ [Local dementia statistics | Alzheimer's Society \(alzheimers.org.uk\)](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/local-dementia-statistics)

² Alzheimer's proposal document

³ [Poverty linked to increased dementia risk - Pen ARC \(nihr.ac.uk\)](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/poverty-linked-to-increased-dementia-risk)

	<p>Alzheimer's Society provide support people living with dementia and their broader community. They employ Community Dementia Advisors who offer face-to-face support to families navigating the complexities of this condition.</p>
Scope and Objectives	<p>Together with Alzheimer's Society the participating gas networks will deliver a one-year project across all their network areas that is tailored to ensuring that people living with dementia can maintain a safe and warm home.</p> <p>The Community Dementia Advisors (CDAs) will offer support and advice to families by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting focussed sessions on energy efficiency and gas safety, CO, and PSR at dementia cafes. • Offering tailored advice on benefits and energy in a home setting where required. • Providing advice on the PSR. • Sharing our messages across social media platforms. • The CDAs will provide face-to-face support to families navigating the complexities of dementia. • The Alzheimer's Society will also work with Energy Project plus to upskill the CDAs with bespoke training on energy efficiency, CO and the PSR. <p>The VCMA funding will be used for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the capacity of the Dementia Advice team. • Upskill/train dementia advisors including those who operate the phoneline with skills in energy safeguarding, benefits assessments, and carbon monoxide awareness. • Provide advice on benefit entitlement. • Raise awareness of CO. • To raise awareness of the benefits of being registered on the PSR. • Provide basic energy efficiency advice. • Offer free gas safety checks for people who are eligible on Cadent networks. • Provide access to the Locking Cooker Valve. <p><u>Objectives of the project</u></p> <p>The success of this project will be measured by meeting the following objectives over a one-year period across Cadent, SGN and WWU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Dementia advisors will undertake the EPP training modules. • 1,927 people will receive advice on income maximisation which will include benefit entitlement. • 19,028 people will receive advice on energy efficiency to help reduce consumption and costs through changes in behaviours. • 19,028 people will have an increased awareness of CO signs and symptoms. • 19,028 people will have an increased awareness of the PSR, and report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage resulting in 1,902 people going on to register. • 500 people will receive advice and support to identify better tariffs. • 500 people will receive advice and support to apply for grants. <p>As well as achieving the above forecasts for the number of clients benefitting from the project's services, the partnership will also deliver the following positive indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers will report decreased levels of stress and financial worry due to improvements in the level of disposable household income.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers will report improved levels of comfort from being in their own home and able to heat it to a healthier temperature and having an increased awareness of energy efficiency measures and support. • Customers will report improved feelings of safety from receiving free CO alarms, safety apparatus and improving their awareness on the signs, symptoms, and dangers of CO. • Customers will report feeling more secure and happy due to being safe and warm in their own home.
Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA	<p>The GDNs believe that this project meets all of the VCMA company specific and collaborative eligibility criteria.</p> <p><u>Company specific VCMA eligibility criteria</u></p> <p>A. The project is forecasted to have a positive SROI: We believe that the project has the deliverables necessary to create a positive social return on investment (SROI). The GDNs will utilise social value proxies and calculations approved by industry experts. More information on the project's positive forecasted SROI can be found in the relevant section below.</p> <p>B. The project will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, and Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, leading to; Reduced risk of harm caused by CO <p>C. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these: This project has clearly defined outcomes and success criteria, and the associated actions to meet them. Further information on the project's outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria can be found in the relevant section below.</p> <p>D. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations, and: The GDNs believe that this project goes outside of activities funded through other price control mechanisms due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The types of services being delivered to customer, and, The method in which the support is delivered to customers (e.g., through a publicly facing advice line and in person community events) <p>E. Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved, or local) funding: This project will be delivered solely through the GDNs' VCMA funding.</p> <p><u>Collaborative VCMA projects criteria</u></p> <p>A. Meet the above company specific and boiler repair and replace (if applicable) project eligibility criteria: This project meets the company-specific eligibility criteria - see relevant section above.</p> <p>B. Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and: This project will benefit customers in vulnerable situations living across all nine gas distribution network areas of Great Britain.</p>

	<p>C. Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies: This project will be funded by three GDNs.</p>
Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support	<p><u>Cadent</u> Cadent conducted and continues to obtain extensive stakeholder and customer engagement on its RIIO-GD2 business plans and subsequent VCMA delivery. For instance, we regularly seek to obtain the feedback of stakeholders such as Citizens Advice and National Energy Action (NEA) to understand the needs of customers in vulnerable situations. These regular conversations allow Cadent to gain feedback on the initiatives we are, or should be supporting, and ensure that our VCMA-funded projects are in the best interests of our customers.</p> <p>Stakeholders have provided consistent feedback on the need for energy networks to focus their funding on supporting households most impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.</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. Additionally, the customer demographic of >65 years old can be disproportionately impacted by fuel poverty, due to factors such as being more at risk of cold related illness, generally having lower levels of household income, and spending a greater proportion of time at home.</p> <p>In terms of customer engagement, we asked customers for their views on which of the below statements best described their health and financial situation in 2022-2023, when compared to 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My current household's health or financial situation is worse off compared to 2021. • My current household's health or financial situation is the same compared to 2021. • My current household's health or financial situation is better off compared to 2021. <p>60% of participants responded that their households' health or financial situation was worse off this year compared to 2021 levels.</p> <p>This project aims to act upon this customer insight and feedback, through supporting customers impacted by a downturn in their financial health. This will be achieved through offering services such as income maximisation and benefit entitlement check, energy efficiency advice and CO and PSR awareness to give a wraparound support service.</p> <p>The partnership with The Alzheimer's Society will enable the GDN's to provide a holistic approach to supporting fuel poor residents who are living with dementia.</p> <p><u>SGN</u> Data from the Alzheimer's Research UK Dementia Statistics Hub identifies three independent care boards operating in SGN's southern region as having higher-than-average estimated numbers of people living with dementia. These are Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Medway and Kent, and Sussex, with between 24,100 and 32,300 people estimated to be living with dementia in each of these regions.</p> <p>SGN's Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Group and Vulnerable Steering Group has provided strategic guidance and helped us progress our portfolio of projects throughout GD2 reiterating importance of impactful partnerships that co-ordinate activities with others to support those most in need.</p>

	<p><u>WWU</u> Alzheimer's Research identifies dementia as the greatest health and social care challenge of our time, impacting 59% of the UK population. It is a significant issue facing Wales & West Utilities customers and communities. Following the pandemic and cost of living crisis, many people with dementia spend nearly all their time in their own homes meaning proportionally they use a lot of energy.</p> <p>Through business planning activities and priority customer research, stakeholders told us they see value to a collaborative approach, working with specialist charities and third sector organisations to provide personalised support, education, and awareness. Stakeholders advised that support should focus on fuel poverty and financial assistance to help households manage their energy costs, particularly when it comes to those most in need.</p> <p>Stakeholders highlighted the importance of targeting specific groups, such as those experiencing fuel poverty, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities and progressive conditions.</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p><u>Project Outcomes</u> The VCMA project will be delivered in partnership with Alzheimer's Society and aims to support a total of 19,028 people with benefit advice, carbon monoxide advice, energy efficiency advice and awareness of the PSR across the GDN networks</p> <p>Alzheimer's Society project aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of their frontline Community Dementia Advisors to upskill them to offer CO, PSR and energy efficiency advice. • Advice to customers on topics including benefit entitlement checks, benefits applications, grant applications and tariff switching. • Energy efficiency advice and safe energy-saving hacks to reduce consumption and costs through changes in behaviours. • Raising awareness of CO signs and symptoms. • Providing customers with awareness of the Priority Services Register and help people register where appropriate • Promote the PSR and CO awareness through AS's existing communication channels. <p><u>Associated actions</u> Working in partnership will increase the capacity and skills of the frontline teams within Alzheimer's Society to be able to deliver;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income maximisation and benefit entitlement. • Energy efficiency in the home. • CO signs and symptoms. • PSR awareness and support to register. • Onward referral where required. <p><u>Success criteria</u> The success of the project will be evaluated against the meeting of the project's objectives which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will reach between 19,028 people with tailored advice based on the customer's needs. • 1,927 customers will receive in-depth one-to-one advice on income maximisation. • 19,028 customers will receive advice on energy efficiency. • 19,028 customers will receive advice on CO to raise awareness. • 19,028 customers will receive advice on the benefits of the PSR. • 1,902 customers signed up to the PSR.

- 500 customers will receive advice on changing tariffs.
- 500 customers will receive advice on grants.

The forecast unique reach is defined in the table below:

GDN	Activity/Delivery	Reach	GDN	Activity/delivery	Reach
Cadent	Income max	1,673	Cadent	ENERGY	15,000
	one-to-one	250		one-to-one	2,250
	Group	233		Group	2,100
	Social media	0		Social media	5,400
	Phone line	1190		Phone line	5,250
Cadent	CO	15,000	Cadent	PSR	15,000
	one-to-one	2,250		one-to-one	2,250
	Group	2,100		Group	2,100
	Social media	5,400		Social media	5,400
	Phone line	5,250		Phone line	5,250
SGN	Income max	158	SGN	ENERGY	1,753
	one-to-one	24		one-to-one	113
	Group	22		Group	113
	Social media	1000		Social media	1,000
	Phone line	112		Phone line	527
SGN	CO	1,753	SGN	PSR	1,753
	one-to-one	113		one-to-one	113
	Group	113		Group	113
	Social media	1,000		Social media	1,000
	Phone line	527		Phone line	527
WWU	Income max	96	WWU	ENERGY	2,275
	one-to-one	14		one-to-one	191
	Group	13		Group	191
	Social media	0		Social media	1000
	Phone line	69		Phone line	893
WWU	CO	2,275	WWU	PSR	2,275
	one-to-one	191		one-to-one	191
	Group	191		Group	191
	Social media	1000		Social media	1000
	Phone line	893		Phone line	893

This project is forecasted to deliver a positive social return on investment.





Project Partners and Third Parties Involved

This project will be delivered by The Alzheimer's Society in partnership with Cadent, SGN, and WWU.

Potential for New Learning

The GDN's have partnered with the UK's largest dementia charity, Alzheimer's Society. This will provide them with valuable insights into the vulnerable group of people who live within their networks. Alzheimer's Society supports over 944,000 people living with dementia in the UK, with most of them residing on one of GDN areas. As one in three people will develop dementia in their lifetime, and one in two people will be affected by it, this partnership will be instrumental in helping people and supporting them during these challenging times. This collaboration will enable the GDN's to increase their knowledge of the most successful ways to support families in these situations and the best methods to deliver their messages. Furthermore, it will enhance their understanding of the disease, which they can then share with their staff, ensuring they are better equipped when dealing with people living in these situations.

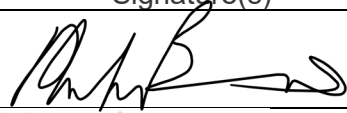

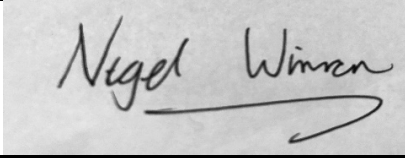
The outcomes will be shared across each GDNs stakeholder network of partners and the GDN Vulnerability Working Group as well as via the VCMA Annual Showcase and VCMA Annual Report.

Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations	<p><u>Scale of VCMA Project</u></p> <p>This collaboration will deliver a 12-month project with Alzheimer’s Society to enable vulnerable customers living with dementia, and their families to access support and advice on income maximisation, benefits, CO, PSR and energy efficiency. This advice is to support people living in fuel poverty. The Gas Distribution Networks 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 the financial and wellbeing outcomes applicable to our services for vulnerable customers incorporated in this partnership. Completing an assessment of the predicted outcomes detailed below we forecast a positive net Social Return on Investment</p> <p>of £2.71/£1</p> <p><u>SROI</u></p> <div><div>GDN Rulebook V2 Latest Version Date: 06-09-2024</div><div> SGN Your gas, our network</div><div> Northern Gas Networks</div><div> WALES&WEST UTILITIES</div><div> Cadent Your Gas Network</div></div> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Project information:</th><th colspan="2">Results:</th></tr><tr><td>Name:</td><td>Alzheimers society</td><td>i Cost (discounted):</td><td>£1,129,104.00</td></tr><tr><td>WACC:</td><td>4.97%</td><td>i Customer volume:</td><td>42885</td></tr><tr><td>Year of assessment:</td><td>2026</td><td>i GPV:</td><td>£4,191,564.22</td></tr><tr><td>Start year of benefits:</td><td>2026</td><td>i NPV:</td><td>£3,062,460.22</td></tr><tr><td>End year of benefits:</td><td>2026</td><td>i SROI:</td><td>£2.71</td></tr><tr><td>Attribution:</td><td>0.00%</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Total Activities forecast:</p> <p>19,028 customers receiving advice on CO safety via 1:1, phone, groups, and social media.</p> <p>19,028 customers receiving behavioural energy advice via 1:1, phone, groups, and social media.</p> <p>1,927 customers receiving 1:1 advice on income maximisation (benefits) via 1:1, phone, and groups.</p> <p>500 customers receiving advice on tariffs via 1:1.</p> <p>500 customers receiving advice on grants via 1:1.</p> <p>1,902 customers signing up to the PSR.</p> <p>SROI = £2.71/£1</p>	Project information:		Results:		Name:	Alzheimers society	i Cost (discounted):	£1,129,104.00	WACC:	4.97%	i Customer volume:	42885	Year of assessment:	2026	i GPV:	£4,191,564.22	Start year of benefits:	2026	i NPV:	£3,062,460.22	End year of benefits:	2026	i SROI:	£2.71	Attribution:	0.00%		
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End year of benefits:	2026	i SROI:	£2.71																										
Attribution:	0.00%																												
VCMA Project Start and End Date	VCMA Project Start Date: 01/04/25 VCMA Project End Date: 31/03/26																												
Geographical Area	The project will be delivered across Cadent, SGN and WWU areas in England, and Wales.																												

Internal governance and project management evidence	<p>The GDN's have worked alongside Alzheimer's Society to co-design this partnership and ensure that it aligns to the delivery of our collaborative Vulnerability Strategy and the VCMA governance criteria</p> <p>The SROI for this project has been calculated utilising the information shared by Alzheimer's Society. Over the 12-month period they support 19,028 customers with benefit, grant, and tariff applications, CO advice, PSR advice and energy efficiency awareness. We have based the SROI on those figures which has generated a forecast 5-year SROI of £2.71 using the GDN Rulebook.</p> <p>The GDN's and Alzheimer's Society will meet quarterly to review outcomes, learn, share best practice, ensure the correct customers are being supported, and address any delivery issues.</p>
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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: GDN Collaboration Group PEA Review Date completed: Review completed by: Job title:		
GDN:	Name:	Job Title:
Cadent	Guv Dosanjh	Social programme Manager
WWU	Sophie Shorney	Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Manager
SGN	Dan Edwards	Social Impact Programme Lead
Stage 2: GD2CVG Panel Review Date review completed: Review completed by: Job title:		
GDN:	Name:	Job Title:
Cadent	Phil Burrows	Head Of Vulnerability
WWU	Nigel Winnan	Customer & Social obligations Manager
SGN	Kerry Potter	Group Social Impact and Vulnerability Manager
Step 3: Participating GDN individual signatory sign-off		

GDN	Name(s)	Signature(s)	Date
Cadent:	Phil Burrows		
SGN:	Maureen McIntosh		24/04/25
WWU:	Nigel Winnan		29/04/25
Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem (vcma@ofgem.gov.uk)			
Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: May 2025			
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: May 2025			