

Northern Gas Networks

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Highfield CO-OP – Supporting Priority Customers

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



 Fuel Poverty and Energy	Carbon Monoxide Awareness 
 Supporting Priority Customer	Services Beyond the Meter 

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Project registration table

Project summary	
Project title	Highfield CO-OP
Strategic Area	Supporting Priority Customers
Funding GDN(s) The GDN(s) which register(s) the project	Northern Gas Networks (NGN)
New/Updated State whether this is a new or updated PEA (indicate as appropriate by removing the option that does not apply)	New
Collaborative VCMA Projects Specific role(s) of GDN(s) participating in a collaborative VCMA Project	N/A
Date of PEA submission This needs to be the initial date of a first project submission	June 2026
Project start and end date	1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027
Project location	Keighley and Bradford
Sectors involved	Distribution Network Operator Gas Distribution Network Consumer Group Charitable Organisation Local Authority Water Supplier Telecommunications Provider Other (specify)
Project contact	
Name	Laura Ratcliffe
Contact details	vcma@northerngas.co.uk
Project partners and third parties involved	
Organisation name	Role
Groundwork Yorkshire	Lead project partner
Costs and funding	
Total cost (£k)	£13,000
Total VCMA funding required (£k)	£13,000
Total BAU vulnerability and CO safety activity baseline allowance funding by activity (£k)	£0

Problem(s)

Communities across Keighley and Bradford are experiencing increasing levels of vulnerability driven by fuel poverty, social isolation, poor mental health, and limited access to essential support services. Many households—including families, older people, individuals living with dementia, and those affected by homelessness, addiction, or low skills—face significant challenges in maintaining safe, warm homes and accessing the advice and resources needed to improve their circumstances.

A lack of accessible community support infrastructures further exacerbates these issues, leaving vulnerable individuals without safe spaces to seek help, connect with others, or receive practical assistance. Digital exclusion is also a key barrier, preventing many residents from accessing online services, support networks, and energy-related information that could help them better manage their energy use and costs.

In addition, there remains a continued risk to household safety due to low awareness of carbon monoxide (CO) dangers and limited uptake of preventative measures such as CO alarms and safety checks. At the same time, awareness and registration for the Priority Services Register (PSR) is insufficient among eligible households, meaning many vulnerable individuals are not receiving the additional protections and support available to them.

Without targeted, community-based intervention, these challenges are likely to persist, contributing to worsening health and wellbeing outcomes, increased fuel insecurity, and limited engagement with essential services. There is therefore a clear need for a coordinated, localised approach that provides practical support, improves safety in the home, reduces isolation, and increases awareness and uptake of available energy support services in line with VCMA objectives.

Scope and objectives

Scope

The project will deliver a community-based intervention through the establishment of a community energy café in the Keighley and Bradford area, operating three days per week. The service will provide an accessible, warm and welcoming environment for priority and vulnerable customers, including families, older people, individuals living with dementia, and those experiencing vulnerability due to life changes such as homelessness, addiction, low skills or health conditions.

Within scope, the project will provide:

- Access to a warm space, hot meals, refreshments, and basic facilities such as IT access and phone charging
- Energy advice and energy-saving guidance to support households experiencing fuel poverty
- Carbon monoxide (CO) safety engagement, including delivery of surveys and distribution of CO alarms

- Promotion of and support for registration to the Priority Services Register (PSR)
- Digital inclusion support, including basic IT skills sessions for digitally excluded individuals
- Signposting to relevant local services where additional needs are identified
- Delivery of measurable outputs, including CO surveys, alarms distributed, and PSR registrations in line with agreed targets

The project will also include monitoring, reporting and evidence gathering activities to ensure compliance with VCMA governance requirements and to demonstrate social and environmental impact.

Objectives

The objectives of the project are to:

- Support vulnerable and priority customers by providing accessible, community-based support that addresses fuel poverty, social isolation, and wider vulnerability
- Improve carbon monoxide safety awareness and reduce risk in the home through education, surveys, and the provision of CO alarms
- Increase uptake of the Priority Services Register (PSR) by raising awareness and supporting eligible households to register
- Reduce social isolation by creating a safe, inclusive space that encourages engagement and community connection
- Enhance digital inclusion by improving access to IT resources and building basic digital skills among digitally excluded individuals
- Provide practical energy advice and support to help households better manage energy use and reduce costs
- Deliver measurable outcomes aligned to VCMA requirements, ensuring all activities and outputs are clearly recorded and evidenced for assurance and evaluation purposes

Project design engagement

Targeting vulnerability support:

The project is designed as a community-based, accessible intervention centred around the delivery of a community energy café, providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for individuals experiencing vulnerability. The model integrates practical support with social engagement, ensuring that individuals can access multiple forms of assistance in a single, trusted setting.

The service operates on a regular, consistent basis, enabling ongoing engagement and relationship-building with participants. By combining warmth provision, energy advice, digital support, and safety

interventions, the project delivers a holistic approach to addressing fuel poverty, wellbeing, and household safety.

The project also incorporates targeted energy-related interventions, including carbon monoxide awareness, surveys and alarm distribution, alongside the promotion of the Priority Services Register (PSR), ensuring alignment with VCMA objectives and regulatory expectations.

Engagement will be delivered through a place-based, community-led approach, utilising the existing reach and trusted presence of Highfield Food Coop within the Keighley and Bradford area. This enables the project to engage individuals who may not typically access formal support services.

Key engagement methods include:

- Open-access provision through the energy café, allowing individuals to self-refer in a non-stigmatising environment
- Proactive outreach and local promotion to raise awareness of available support
- Direct engagement during café sessions, where individuals can receive tailored advice, support and signposting
- Partnership working and referrals to and from local services and organisations to ensure individuals receive appropriate, wraparound support
- Ongoing engagement through repeat attendance, enabling trust-building and sustained support over time

This approach ensures that engagement is inclusive, flexible and responsive to local need, particularly for those facing barriers to accessing traditional services.

The project adopts a broad and inclusive definition of vulnerability, targeting individuals and households who may be at risk due to a combination of economic, health, and social factors.

Primary target groups include:

- Households experiencing fuel poverty and financial hardship
- Older people, including those living with dementia
- Families requiring support with energy affordability and wellbeing
- Individuals affected by life changes, including homelessness, addiction (including gambling, alcohol and drugs), and low skills
- Individuals experiencing poor mental health or social isolation
- People who are digitally excluded, limiting access to support and services

The project will also specifically target:

- Households at risk of carbon monoxide exposure, through the delivery of safety interventions

- Eligible individuals not currently registered on the Priority Services Register (PSR)

By combining open-access delivery with targeted interventions, the project ensures support is both widely accessible and focused on those most in need, with mechanisms in place to identify additional vulnerabilities during engagement and provide appropriate support or referrals.

Evidence of stakeholder and/or customer support:

The design and delivery model of this project is informed by direct engagement with the local community and Highfield Food Coop's established understanding of the needs of vulnerable residents in the Keighley and Bradford area. Through its ongoing community presence, the organisation has identified a clear and sustained demand for accessible, trusted support services that address fuel poverty, social isolation, and wider vulnerability.

The proposed community energy café model reflects feedback and observed need for:

- A warm, safe and welcoming space where individuals feel comfortable seeking support
- Practical, face-to-face advice and guidance on energy use and household costs
- Opportunities for social interaction to reduce isolation and improve wellbeing
- Access to digital resources and support for those who are digitally excluded

Highfield Food Coop's delivery approach demonstrates ongoing engagement with customers who may not typically interact with formal support services, including individuals experiencing homelessness, addiction, poor mental health, and low skills. This indicates that the project has been shaped around real, evidenced barriers to engagement, including stigma, lack of digital access, and limited awareness of available services.

In addition, the inclusion of carbon monoxide safety activity and Priority Services Register (PSR) uptake is aligned with identified gaps in awareness and access to essential safety measures and support schemes within the target population. The project's focus on delivering these elements through a trusted, community-based setting reflects stakeholder insight that individuals are more likely to engage with safety messaging and support when it is embedded within wider, accessible services.

The project also incorporates referral and signposting mechanisms, enabling collaboration with local services and community organisations. This demonstrates an understanding of the wider stakeholder landscape and ensures that customer support is coordinated, appropriate, and responsive to individual needs, rather than delivered in isolation.

Overall, the project provides clear evidence that its design is rooted in local insight, established community relationships, and an understanding of the complex and overlapping needs of vulnerable customers, ensuring that support is both relevant and accessible to those most in need.

Stakeholder project design input:

The project design has been shaped by local stakeholder insight and Highfield Food Coop's direct experience of working with vulnerable individuals within the Keighley and Bradford community. Through its ongoing engagement with residents, the organisation has developed a strong understanding of the barriers faced by individuals experiencing fuel poverty, social isolation, and wider vulnerability, which has directly informed the structure and delivery model of the project.

Stakeholder input has highlighted the importance of delivering support in a trusted, community-based setting, where individuals feel comfortable accessing services without stigma. In response, the project has been designed around a community energy café model, enabling open access to support while embedding energy advice, safety awareness, and social engagement within a familiar and welcoming environment.

Local insight has also informed the inclusion of holistic support services, recognising that vulnerability is often complex and overlapping. As a result, the project integrates:

- Practical energy support and advice
- Carbon monoxide safety interventions
- Digital inclusion support for those unable to access online services
- Provision of warm space, food, and basic facilities
- Signposting and onward referral to specialist services

This reflects stakeholder recognition that wraparound, multi-faceted support is required to effectively address both immediate needs and longer-term resilience.

In addition, stakeholder engagement has identified gaps in awareness and uptake of key services, including carbon monoxide safety measures and the Priority Services Register (PSR). These insights have directly influenced the project's focus on embedding CO safety activity and PSR promotion within routine engagement, ensuring that essential safety messaging and support are delivered in an accessible and practical way.

The project also reflects stakeholder understanding of barriers to engagement, such as digital exclusion, lack of confidence, and limited awareness of available services. By incorporating IT access, basic digital skills sessions, and informal, face-to-face support, the design responds to these challenges and improves accessibility for harder-to-reach groups.

Overall, the project demonstrates that stakeholder input has played a central role in shaping a locally responsive, inclusive and integrated delivery model, ensuring that services are tailored to the specific needs of the community and aligned with VCMA priorities.

Why the project is being funded through the VCMA

This project is being funded through the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) as it directly supports customers in vulnerable situations and delivers targeted interventions that align with NGN's regulatory obligations to provide additional assistance beyond business-as-usual activities. The project focuses on supporting households experiencing fuel poverty, social isolation, and complex vulnerability, including older people, families, individuals living with dementia, and those affected by homelessness, addiction, low skills and poor health. These groups often face significant barriers in accessing support and maintaining safe and warm homes, which aligns with VCMA eligibility criteria for targeted vulnerability support.

In addition, the project delivers carbon monoxide (CO) safety interventions, including awareness raising, surveys, and the provision of CO alarms to at-risk households. This contributes directly to VCMA objectives to improve household safety and reduce the risk of CO exposure among vulnerable customers.

The project also promotes and supports uptake of the Priority Services Register (PSR), ensuring that eligible customers receive additional protections and tailored support from energy networks. Increasing PSR awareness and registrations is a key VCMA priority, particularly for customers who may otherwise remain unregistered and unsupported.

Importantly, the delivery model provides additional, community-based support that would not be delivered through NGN's core business activities, including the provision of a warm space, digital inclusion support, energy advice, and broader wellbeing support. This ensures that VCMA funding is used to deliver enhanced, value-added services that address the wider needs of vulnerable customers rather than duplicating existing provision.

The project also supports VCMA requirements for measurable outcomes and demonstrable social impact, with clear targets for CO safety activity and PSR registrations, alongside wider outcomes relating to reduced isolation, improved access to services, and better energy management.

Overall, the project meets VCMA funding criteria by:

- Targeting customers in vulnerable situations
- Delivering carbon monoxide safety interventions
- Increasing awareness and uptake of the PSR
- Providing additional support beyond business-as-usual activities
- Generating measurable, audit-ready outcomes aligned to VCMA objectives

This ensures that the funding is used effectively to deliver meaningful, targeted support while contributing to NGN's broader vulnerability strategy and Ofgem compliance requirements.

How VCMA funding complements or supplements BAU activities

The project delivers additional, targeted support that sits outside Northern Gas Networks' (NGN) core business-as-usual (BAU) activities, ensuring that VCMA funding is used to enhance outcomes for vulnerable customers rather than duplicate existing services.

NGN's BAU activities focus primarily on the safe and reliable distribution of gas and responding to network-related safety issues, whereas this project provides a community-based, preventative and holistic support model that addresses wider drivers of vulnerability, including fuel poverty, social isolation, and digital exclusion.

VCMA funding enables the delivery of services that would not be provided through BAU, including:

- The establishment of a community energy café offering a warm, welcoming space for vulnerable individuals
- Provision of hot meals, refreshments, IT access and digital support, addressing broader wellbeing and inclusion needs
- Face-to-face energy advice and engagement delivered through trusted community settings
- Proactive outreach and sustained engagement, supporting individuals who may not engage with traditional or reactive services

While NGN delivers core carbon monoxide (CO) safety messaging and emergency response through BAU, this project supplements these activities by:

- Delivering targeted CO awareness sessions in community settings
- Conducting CO surveys and distributing alarms directly to at-risk households
- Embedding safety messaging within wider support services to increase engagement and uptake

Similarly, although NGN promotes the Priority Services Register (PSR) through its existing channels, this project enhances BAU provision by:

- Providing in-person support to identify eligible customers
- Assisting individuals to complete PSR registrations during engagement sessions
- Reaching harder-to-engage groups who may not respond to traditional communication methods

The project also complements BAU by offering a preventative and early-intervention approach, reducing the likelihood of crisis situations by:

- Supporting customers to better manage their energy use and costs
- Improving access to support services and advice
- Addressing underlying factors contributing to vulnerability

Overall, VCMA funding ensures that NGN can:

- Deliver enhanced, community-led support beyond its statutory responsibilities
- Reach vulnerable and hard-to-engage customers more effectively
- Provide holistic, wraparound services that integrate safety, advice, and wellbeing support
- Generate additional, measurable social value outcomes that cannot be achieved through BAU alone

This demonstrates that the project adds value to, rather than duplicates, NGN's existing activities, aligning with VCMA requirements for additionality and targeted support.

For individual GDN VCMA Projects:

Justification for why the project should not be collaborative

This project is proposed as an individual GDN-led initiative due to its highly localised, place-based delivery model, which is specifically designed to respond to the needs of vulnerable communities within the Keighley and Bradford area.

The intervention is centred around a community energy café delivered by Highfield Food Coop, an organisation with an established presence, trusted relationships, and a detailed understanding of local community needs. The effectiveness of the project relies on local engagement, accessibility, and ongoing relationship-building, which are best delivered through a geographically focused approach rather than a broader, multi-GDN collaboration.

The target beneficiaries are location-specific, including vulnerable households experiencing fuel poverty, social isolation, digital exclusion, and complex personal circumstances within a defined community. As such, the project is designed to provide tailored, in-person support within a single locality, limiting the relevance and added value of expanding the model across multiple GDN regions.

Additionally, delivery is closely aligned to existing local networks, referral pathways, and community partnerships, which are specific to the Keighley and Bradford area. Replicating or scaling this model across other GDNs would require separate delivery partners, local infrastructure, and place-based knowledge, reducing the efficiency and immediacy of impact that is achievable through a single-GDN approach.

From an operational perspective, the project is low-cost and targeted (£13,000 over 12 months), with clearly defined outputs such as CO safety activity and PSR registrations. The scale and structure of the project do not necessitate cross-network delivery, and collaboration would be unlikely to deliver proportionate additional benefits in terms of impact or value for money.

Furthermore, the project complements NGN's regional VCMA priorities and stakeholder relationships, enabling focused delivery, streamlined governance, and effective monitoring within a single GDN framework.

Overall, the project is best delivered as an individual GDN initiative because:

- It is place-based and targeted to a specific community
- Delivery relies on local trust, relationships, and infrastructure
- It addresses location-specific vulnerability needs
- The scale and cost do not require multi-GDN collaboration
- A single-GDN model ensures efficient delivery and clear accountability

This approach ensures that the project remains responsive, locally relevant, and impactful, while fully aligning with VCMA requirements.

Outcomes, associated actions and success criteria

Highfield CO-OP and NGN will carry out monthly reporting reviews on measurable outcomes against targets to ensure successful delivery. Quarterly reviews will provide the opportunity for more in-depth analysis and the ability to highlight insights and learnings to share, as well as identify any risks and requirement for any associated actions to mitigate these.

Key outcomes expected from this project:

Outcome	Annual Target
PSR Registrations	50
CO Surveys	120
CO alarms distributed	25

Success Criteria

- Delivery of a community energy café operating as planned, providing consistent and accessible support to vulnerable customers
- Achievement of agreed outputs, including:
 - 120 carbon monoxide (CO) surveys completed
 - 25 CO alarms distributed
 - 50 Priority Services Register (PSR) registrations supported
- Increased awareness of carbon monoxide safety among individuals engaged through the project
- Improved awareness and uptake of the Priority Services Register (PSR) within the target community
- Evidence that customers have accessed energy advice and support, helping them better manage energy use and costs
- Demonstrable reduction in social isolation, with individuals engaging in a safe, inclusive community environment
- Delivery of digital inclusion support, improving access to IT and basic digital skills for digitally excluded individuals

- Carbon monoxide activity delivered safely and appropriately, with clear records of surveys and alarm distribution
- Accurate recording and reporting of all activity, outputs and outcomes, aligned with VCMA monitoring and assurance requirements
- Timely submission of monitoring reports and evidence to NGN, supporting audit and evaluation processes

Potential for new learning

This project offers strong potential for new learning in relation to the effectiveness of community-based, holistic support models in engaging vulnerable customers and addressing fuel poverty, safety, and social wellbeing in a single, integrated setting.

The delivery of a community energy café model will provide insight into how combining energy advice, carbon monoxide safety interventions, digital inclusion support, and wider wellbeing services can improve engagement with customers who are typically harder to reach through traditional channels.

The project will generate learning on:

- Effective engagement approaches for vulnerable and underrepresented groups, including those experiencing homelessness, addiction, poor mental health, or digital exclusion
- The impact of trusted, community-based environments in increasing uptake of key services such as carbon monoxide safety measures and the Priority Services Register (PSR)
- Barriers to accessing energy advice and support, particularly for individuals who do not engage with digital or formal services
- The role of wraparound support in improving wider outcomes, including reduced social isolation and improved confidence in managing household energy use

In addition, the project's monitoring and reporting framework will provide valuable evidence on:

- The relationship between informal engagement settings and measurable outcomes (e.g. CO safety activity and PSR uptake)
- The scale and type of support required by vulnerable customers in a community setting
- Delivery models that can be replicated or scaled across similar communities

Learning captured through this project will support NGN in:

- Refining future VCMA project design and delivery approaches
- Improving understanding of how to effectively reach and support vulnerable customers

- Identifying best practice for integrating safety, energy advice and wellbeing support within community settings

Overall, the project will contribute to a stronger evidence base on what works in delivering inclusive, preventative, and community-led interventions, helping to inform future VCMA investment and maximise impact for vulnerable customers.

Aligning with and supporting wider vulnerability approaches

This project aligns with and supports wider vulnerability approaches by delivering targeted, community-based interventions that complement NGN's broader vulnerability strategy and VCMA objectives, alongside local and national priorities to support customers in vulnerable situations.

The project contributes to NGN's strategic focus on identifying and supporting vulnerable customers by providing accessible, face-to-face engagement within a trusted community setting. This supports wider efforts to ensure that individuals experiencing fuel poverty, social isolation, poor health, or other complex needs are able to access appropriate support and safeguard services.

The delivery model aligns with VCMA priorities by:

- Supporting households in vulnerable situations, including those affected by health conditions, low income, and life changes
- Delivering carbon monoxide (CO) safety interventions, including awareness, surveys, and alarm distribution
- Increasing awareness and uptake of the Priority Services Register (PSR) to enhance protections for eligible customers

The project also reflects wider cross-sector approaches to vulnerability by:

- Providing holistic, wraparound support, recognising that vulnerability is often multi-dimensional and interconnected
- Addressing fuel poverty, digital exclusion, and social isolation alongside energy safety and advice
- Embedding early intervention and prevention, reducing the risk of escalation into crisis situations

In addition, the project supports alignment with local authority, health, and voluntary sector priorities by:

- Working within an established community organisation with strong local networks and referral pathways
- Enabling signposting to specialist services, ensuring individuals receive appropriate and coordinated support
- Supporting community resilience and wellbeing, particularly for harder-to-reach groups

The focus on accessible, inclusive service delivery also aligns with wider industry learning around the importance of:

- Delivering support through trusted community organisations
- Engaging customers through non-digital, face-to-face approaches
- Reaching individuals who may not engage with traditional or statutory services

Overall, the project supports wider vulnerability approaches by:

- Delivering locally tailored, community-led support
- Contributing to national VCMA and Ofgem vulnerability priorities
- Enhancing partnership working and cross-sector collaboration
- Providing preventative, inclusive and evidence-based interventions

This ensures the project not only delivers direct outcomes for participants but also contributes to a coordinated, system-wide approach to supporting vulnerable customers.

Monitoring and evaluation

NGN will work closely with Highfield CO-OP to monitor delivery, track outputs, and evaluate the overall impact of the project. A shared monitoring framework will be used to ensure consistent data collection, quality assurance, and transparent reporting throughout the project.

Quarterly reporting: NGN will compile quarterly updates summarising progress, outcomes, and learning, ensuring transparency and alignment with Ofgem requirements.

Final evaluation report: At project completion, NGN and FCN will produce a joint evaluation summarising delivery, impact, customer outcomes, and recommendations for future activity.

Scale of VCMA project and SROI calculations, including NPV

NGN have applied the Industry Standard Social Value Framework and GDN Rulebook, developed collaboratively, to assess the financial and wellbeing outcomes associated with the project, ensuring consistency and comparability across networks.

Based on forecast outcomes and costs, the project is expected to deliver a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of £6.90 for every £1 invested, demonstrating that the scale of investment is proportionate to the benefits delivered for customers across participating in our network.

Social value measurement

Total cost*	£13,000
Total gross present value	£136,972.89

Net Present Value (NPV)	£124,313.50
SROI	£9.82

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

Internal governance and project management evidence

All VCMA project proposals submitted to Northern Gas Networks are subject to a robust internal review and assurance process to ensure strategic alignment, value for money, and compliance with VCMA eligibility criteria.

Where a proposal meets this required criteria, a Social Return on Investment (SROI) calculation is undertaken in line with NGN’s approved methodology to evidence a positive social impact and value for consumers funding the VCMA programme.

They are then sent to an external governance panel for an independent scrutiny. The panel meets quarterly and consists of sector specialists with a good understanding of VCMA. This ensures the project aligns with NGN’s Customers in Vulnerable Situations objectives and delivers meaningful outcomes for households at risk of fuel poverty and vulnerability.

Following approval, the project is managed and overseen by VCMA Project Coordinators at NGN. Ongoing delivery is monitored through a structured performance management framework, which includes:

- Submission of quarterly monitoring reports by the partner organisation, detailing activity, outputs, outcomes, and progress against agreed targets.
- Regular one-to-one meetings between NGN and the project partner to review delivery, address any challenges, and provide ongoing support and assurance, including any risks on delivery and associated mitigation.
- Participation in regular NGN partner network calls, enabling partners to share best practice, learning, and innovative approaches, while supporting continuous improvement across the network.

This approach ensures strong governance, effective delivery oversight, and continuous learning, while maintaining alignment with NGN’s wider VCMA objectives of delivering positive and measurable social impact for customers and communities.

Initial:

Approver (Name and Role)	Date
Eileen Brown, Customer Experience Director	April 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: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 paragraph b;	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. ii. iii. 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: <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 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