

Game Energy

SGN in partnership with The SPFL Trust

Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance

July 2024

SGN



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1 Description

Project title	The SPFL Trust – The Energy Team
Funding GDN(s)	SGN
New/Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Date of PEA submission:	18.07.24
Project contact name:	Margaret Hamilton
Project contact number/email:	Margaret.hamilton@sgn.co.uk
Total cost (£k)	£312,136
Total VCMA funding required (£k)	£262,136

2 Problem statement

In Scotland, almost one in five people live in poverty, and for children, the situation is even worse, with one in four affected. This unfortunate reality can lead to increased risks of mental health issues, incarceration, limited access to education and job opportunities, exposure to trauma and abuse, and a shorter life expectancy.

Fuel poverty deeply affects numerous households in Scotland. Shockingly, 31% of Scottish households are currently living in fuel poverty, with 20% experiencing extreme fuel poverty, as reported by Citizens Advice Scotland. These figures underscore the urgent need for effective interventions to [alleviate this hardship](#).

Numerous factors contribute to fuel poverty, including low income, soaring fuel costs, and inadequate home energy efficiency. Those with ongoing health conditions requiring higher energy consumption are particularly vulnerable, as are residents in [off grid or rural areas](#).

In today's economy, families with children face a multitude of challenges that can significantly impact their financial well-being. Factors such as low pay, lack of stable employment, rising living costs, and inadequate social security benefits place immense pressure on households trying to [make ends meet](#).

This situation is further exacerbated for families with a limited employment history due to circumstances such as disability, ill-health, or challenging local economic conditions. With dependent children to support, the household's needs expand, leading to increased expenditure on essentials such as food, clothing, transportation, childcare, housing, utility bills, and education-related expenses. As a result, many families find themselves grappling with the daunting task of managing their finances while ensuring the [well-being of their children](#).

Recognising the severity of the situation, the Scottish government has devised a comprehensive fuel poverty strategy, outlining fifty-five actions aimed at tackling the root causes of fuel poverty. The government has set ambitious statutory targets to be achieved by 2040, including reducing the proportion of households in fuel poverty to no more than 5%, and extreme [fuel poverty to no more than 1%](#).

To ensure progress towards these targets, the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel was established to provide external scrutiny and guidance. The panel works closely with key stakeholders and the Poverty and Inequality Commission to ensure that the government's strategies are effective and adaptive to the evolving challenges [of fuel poverty](#).

In addition to addressing fuel poverty at a national level, the government recognises the importance of local interventions, setting targets for each of the thirty-two local council areas. This decentralised approach reflects a commitment to ensuring that no part of the country is left behind and tailoring efforts to local needs [and circumstances](#).

While the challenge of fuel poverty in Scotland is formidable, the government's proactive measures and commitment to statutory targets indicate a determined effort to address this critical issue. By prioritising energy efficiency, reducing costs, and supporting vulnerable households, Scotland aims to create a future

where fuel poverty is a relic of the past, ensuring that all households can thrive without the burden of [excessive energy expenses](#).

However, Citizens Advice Scotland argues that the current government support is insufficient to cover the rising costs, especially for the most vulnerable households. Despite the recent election of a new Labour-led government for the UK, they insist there is ‘no quick fix’ for the situation and that it is unsustainable for consumers and suppliers alike. It also exposes the unacceptable levels of poverty and [inequality in Scotland](#).

Amidst these challenges, existing and mainstream community services are being cut, exacerbating the situation. The growing impact of stigma means that people are struggling to access the connected community support they need and are often too proud to do so. Organisations must think more creatively and innovatively to reach people in [accessible and effective ways](#).

The SPFL Trust, a registered charity, partners with all 42 **Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) clubs** and their **Associated Trusts and Clubs (ATCs)** to develop community activities. Research indicates that individuals living within ten miles of an SPFL ground are three times more likely to experience poverty.

4.5 million people live within ten miles of an SPFL ground and are three times more likely to experience poverty. The SPFL Trust covers 83% of the Scottish population, working within 27 of the 32 Scottish council areas. The SPFL has the highest attendance per capita of any league in Europe.

In partnership with SGN, The SPFL Trust with its vital links in communities throughout Scotland will reach those who are marginalised or economically disadvantaged—through the power of football. Working together, we will provide education and access to support for households across Scotland to become better informed around energy safeguarding, understanding energy costs and increase awareness around the help available to address fuel poverty challenges.

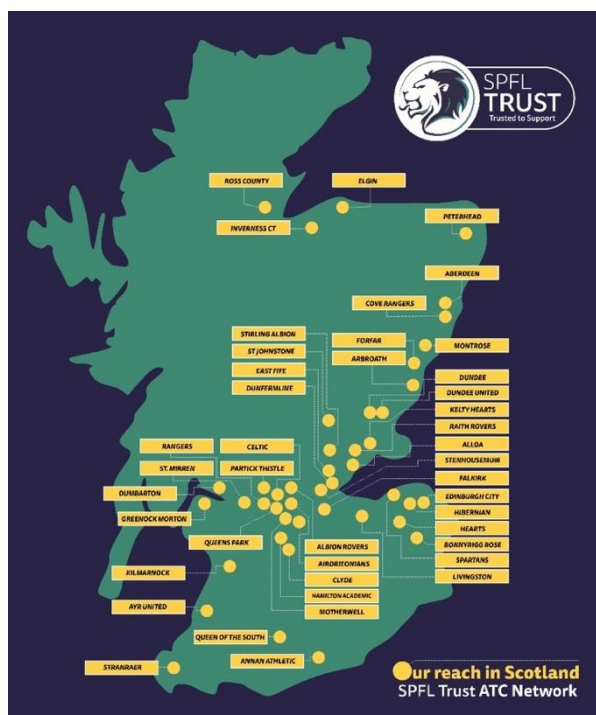
3 Scope and objectives

The football community in Scotland has a profound impact on vulnerable populations, particularly those living in poverty. Football clubs are deeply rooted local institutions that inspire change and unity in communities. They harness the power of football to engage with those hardest to reach, using the influence of clubs, badges, stadiums, and staff to deliver impactful interventions.

Game Energy proposes a new strategic partnership, leveraging collaborative partnership working to deliver messaging, interventions, and support in relation to basic energy efficiency, Priority Service Register, Locking Cooker Valve and Carbon Monoxide awareness to improve lives across Scotland.

The project aims to deliver a multi-layered suite of activities that maximises reach and provides targeted support to those most in need. This initiative is new, and entirely scalable both in terms of strands and the number of individuals reached.

The scope of work is based on experiences within the communities supported, with the intention to expand one of SPFLs Innovation Fund pilot projects and explore new opportunities to extend and enhance development efforts to reach a broader audience.





The project uses a 3-tiered approach that will work to ensure maximization of the partnership and leverage all opportunities to engage with communities across Scotland via the SPFL Trust and network.

Tier One: reaching around 13,000 people

Objective will be to significantly increase the number of people across Scotland who receive relevant information and resource.

- In Strand One, this will involve Associated Trusts and Clubs (ATCs) distributing energy safeguarding literature in programme packs for any SPFL Trust projects, which they deliver throughout the year. In addition, ATCs will be encouraged to share across all other activities they are engaged with. The materials will include information on basic energy efficiency, Priority Service Register, Locking Cooker Valve, and carbon monoxide awareness. Furthermore, the project will establish terms to share this information on ATC websites and social media platforms (as well as project partner) for wider distribution and promotion.

Tier Two: reaching up to 3,000 people

Objective will be to mobilise the network to engage in conversations with stakeholders to increase awareness and understanding of fuel poverty, carbon monoxide awareness, Locking Cooker Valve, and to increase sign up to the Priority Service Register.

- In Strand Two, the focus will be on conducting essential discussions, increasing awareness and a deeper sharing of information and guidance. This involves initiating conversations, especially for vulnerable individuals within Community Teams, Holiday Camps, and Programmes, and delivering presentations on options and referrals for support. All conversations will be documented to enable effective communication and decision-making.

Tier Three: reaching up to 600 people

Objective is to deliver direct support to communities via a network of community hubs at 10 ATCs.

- Our Strand Three focuses on direct delivery through community hubs. The aim is to create community hubs in essential areas directly linked to vulnerable locations throughout Scotland. This approach will ensure we reach those who need us the most supporting areas of greatest need (SGN, VCMA Annual Report 2022) by providing access to direct services through energy safeguarding conversations and information.

The community hubs will be based on The Pittodrie Community Hub at Aberdeen Football Club, which has been a successful model within their 'Innovation Fund.' The aim is to replicate this model across all possible communities in this pilot phase. The community hubs will offer free hot food, tea, coffee, and a range of weekly activities in a family-friendly, relaxed, and cosy space. Moreover, households will have access to board games, newspapers, TV, and free Wi-Fi. Additionally, advice and guidance will be provided by local organisations to assist participants with energy bills, cost of living, and overall health and well-being.

Our aim is to establish ten community hubs, serving 150 families over 18 weeks, resulting in approximately 1800 engagements. By providing proactive guidance and support, our goal is to identify individual needs, join up services, increase CO awareness, tackle affordability and fuel poverty, and ultimately make a positive impact within the communities we serve.

The scope of this initiative covers various vulnerable groups, particularly those living within ten miles of an SPFL ground, who are three times more likely to experience poverty. The hubs will be located in areas identified as Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North, South & East Ayrshire, West Dunbartonshire, Dundee City, North Lanarkshire, Clackmannanshire, the Highlands (Inverness, Caithness, Wick & Thurso), Dumfries & Galloway, and West Lothian/East Lothian/Edinburgh/Borders/Midlothian/Fife.

The initiative will engage with a diverse range of individuals and families who are facing financial hardship, struggling with energy bills, and dealing with health and well-being issues. Target groups include low-income households, individuals with ongoing health conditions requiring higher energy consumption, residents in off-grid or rural areas, and families with dependent children facing financial pressures. By addressing these needs through community hubs, the project aims to provide a supportive and welcoming environment that fosters community spirit and resilience.

4 Why the project is being funded through the VCMA

The Game Energy initiative ensures compliance with VCMA criteria and will provide essential support to vulnerable communities within the reach network available via The SPFL Trust.

The SPFL Trust reach is unique as its football powered, and the network of ATCs share well established connections with many community groups inclusive of various segmented groups all with a connection to football.

All ATCs are registered charities associated with SPFL Clubs that are committed to supporting their communities. This journey will see The SPFL Trust learn, build, test and evaluate how football can play its part in supporting people to thrive. The project has identified approaches that improve lives and reduce the impact of poverty.

The project delivers against SGNs Vulnerability Strategy by providing targeted support to vulnerable communities, providing access to energy safeguards including simple access to the Priority Services Register and other help that addresses fuel poverty tailored to the needs of these communities.

The partnership service aligns to our strategic ambition to support customers in energy crisis, helping those in fuel poverty to access financial crisis support, and other services including the Priority Services Register, awareness of the dangers of Carbon Monoxide and energy efficiency advice, empowering vulnerable households to use energy safely, efficiently, and affordably.

This partnership aligns to the SGN commitment to deliver support services customers aligned to our four strategic pillars:

1. Services Beyond the Meter
2. Supporting Priority Customer Groups
3. Fuel Poverty & Energy Affordability
4. Carbon Monoxide Awareness

This project aligns to strategic pillar 3 (with outcomes in pillars 2 and 4).

5 Evidence of stakeholder/customer support

5.1 5.1 SPFL Trust Annual Report

[The SPFL Trust latest report](#) highlights key activities and measures the impact of programmes in communities across Scotland.

5.2 Winter Response Report

In 2022 The SPFL Trust awarded ten community trusts with funding in response to the challenges facing people across the country this winter. The £100,000 Winter Support Fund was launched to provide clubs with additional funding to deliver projects in their areas.

The Winter Support Fund awarded a total of £74,340 to nine clubs. It engaged 715 unique participants, exceeding the initial goal of 432.

The initiative was supported by 60 local organizations and 43 volunteers who contributed 1,497 hours. Thousands of meals were provided, with notable contributions such as Aberdeen FC CT serving 1,030 meals.

Impressively, 96.5% of participants came from the 30% most deprived areas in Scotland, leading to enhanced community engagement, improved health, and wellbeing, and reduced social isolation.

5.3 SGN's Vulnerable Customer Steering Group

Our VSG has helped shape our vulnerability strategy and priorities for GD2 and how best to utilise the VCMA to help those most at risk of living in a cold and unhealthy home. It is with guidance and support from our dedicated VSG that SGN use data to prioritise and target communities at risk of or living in fuel poverty. This partnership is built on data and covers both geographic areas where there is compelling data that identifies vulnerable customer needs, due to fuel poverty.

As we have progressed our portfolio of projects throughout GD2, our strategic steering group reiterated the vital impact we could have by co-ordinating our activities with others to support those most in need, those most impacted by the cost of living and energy cost crisis. The VSG have recommended that we look at ways in which we can build stronger links with other organisations including collaborating with other utilities, health services and charities to deliver support services that tackle the fuel poverty gap and the underlying causes of fuel poverty.

6 Outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria

6.1 Outcomes

The Game Energy initiative will collaborate with 40 participating Associated Trusts and Clubs (ATCs) collectively and inclusively over the project three-tier approach, with a potential reach of up to 300,000 people via information sharing; support around 13,000 people access services for energy safeguarding; and provide direct support for up to 3,000 people to help them use energy safely, efficiently, and affordably.

Collectively, through the three-tier approach, the project aims to:

- Increase awareness and knowledge around fuel poverty in identified areas.
- Enhance community engagement through direct conversations and interactions.

- Establish 10 community hubs providing essential services and support, reaching 150 families.
- Increase community engagement.
- Increase sense of belonging and togetherness.
- Positively impact community health and well-being.
- Reduce social isolation.
- Achieve a positive environmental impact.
- Increase awareness levels.
- Provide appropriate support.
- Increase referrals for appropriate support.

6.2 Success Criteria

Strand One

Potential to reach 200 people per 40 ATCs (8,000), and 5,000 Festive Friends, with a focus on distribution/information. Sharing over social media and websites, could have a potential reach of up to 300,000 people.

Strand Two

Potential to reach 100 people per 30 ATCs (3,000), with a focus on distribution of information, as well as presentations/conversations. Additionally, sharing over social media and websites with an average reach of 200,000 people.

Strand Three

Reach 150 families, resulting in approximately 1,800 engagements. Additional measurable benefits will include:

- Potential reductions in energy costs
- Improved health and well-being
- Increased community cohesion
- Carbon savings

Expected outcomes:

- **13,000** people accessing basic energy efficiency advice, including CO, Priority Service Register and Locking Cooker Valve awareness through marketing and campaigns
- **5,000** CO safety conversations
- **5,000** CO alarms gifted
- **3,000** people receiving light touch energy efficiency, heating solution and energy saving advice conversations, increased awareness and understanding of fuel poverty
- **3,000** Priority Service Register conversations
 - **1,500** PSR Registrations Water (50%)
 - **900** PSR registrations Energy (30%)

With additional:

- **150** households receiving in-depth energy advice, assistance with energy bills, cost of living, and overall health and well-being.
- **150** Priority Service Register conversations
 - **75** PSR Registrations Water (50%)
 - **45** PSR Registrations Energy (30%)
- **150** Carbon Monoxide Awareness conversations
- **150** households potential reduction in energy costs
- **150** health & well-being conversations
- **150** households referred onto other partners for income maximisation and benefit entitlement review
- **150 households** referred for energy tariff support and fuel debt advocacy,

- **150** households referred for Warm Home Discount applications and other energy efficiency improvements
- **150** households referred for home safety visits
- **50** ATC Advisors trained

In addition:

- 300,000 potential reach sharing information via social media and websites

7 Project partners and third parties involved

The SPFL Trust - The SPFL Trust will lead the implementation of the initiative, leveraging its network of 42 football clubs to reach vulnerable communities. The Trust will be responsible for coordinating activities, distributing information, and managing community hubs. In addition to SGN support, the SPFL Trust will commit funding of £50,000 towards Strand Three of the project to support the implementation of 10 community hubs.

ATCs - (Associated Trusts and Clubs) network, as highlighted in section three, delivering projects in communities throughout Scotland. ATCs include associated community trusts and football clubs from both the SPFL & SWPL.

Following participation in The SPFL Trusts Winter Response Team project, we expect to collaborate with the following partners.

- **CAB / Citizens Advice** will deliver/ host support sessions, post-visit questionnaires, linking in to participating ATC Community Hubs (Strand 2 + 3)
- **Age Scotland** will provide information and advice, and have an active involvement in Community Hubs (Strand 2 + 3) and support referrals

Via local ATCs:

- **Health & Social Care Partnership** - Utilise resources, share power, and incorporate overall project experience. ATCs collaborate to consolidate organisational support
- **NHS - Local NHS in various jurisdictions** - support in referrals & support possibilities at Community Hubs (e.g. Flu Jabs / COVID jabs etc) Support/Advice
- **Scottish Fire & Rescue Service** - Home fire safety visits, provision of smoke alarms, presence, and advice opportunities at Community Hubs
- **Social Work** - Various Health & Social Care Partnerships linked to local authorities, advice & referrals

SGN - SGN recognises that collaboration is key to helping more and more people throughout the country. SGN recognise the need to develop programmes with strategic partners that have extensive first-hand expertise in supporting these specific communities.

8 Potential for new learning

Monitoring and evaluation

The SPFL Trust continuous efforts to improve projects are supported by a comprehensive programme monitoring and evaluation approach. Monitoring and evaluation ensure continual learning throughout delivery, and allows for necessary adjustments to ensure wider success, as required.

The SPFL Trust have well-established relationships with their partners and ATCs and have detailed terms of agreement to ensure that those operating programmes, operate to the highest standard and within specific requirements. This includes robust evaluation, reporting, storytelling, regular meetings, updates, and

discussions. Analysis will also aid in communication efforts to ensure SGN, as a strategic partner, is confident in their programme.

The monitoring and evaluation plan outlines outcomes, outputs, indicators, relevant evaluation tools, and provides guidance on who, how, and when evaluations should be completed. This plan will include a section directly related to agreed outcomes. Evaluation is essential, and The SPFL Trust will produce an annual report detailing funding sources, expenditures, and provide insight into the project.

By regularly monitoring all aspects throughout the project's duration, the necessary adjustments can be made to ensure the needs of those who need support most, are being met. The project is well-positioned to support and empower ATCs nationally to positively contribute to their communities.

Past experience, history, and passion provide an opportunity to engage harder-to-reach communities and make a positive impact.

Learning

The partners are committed to making a positive difference in the lives of people across Scotland, and collaboration is a crucial factor that contributes to success. By working together, the partners can broaden their reach and achieve significant results.

The SPFL Trust is devoted to harnessing the transformative power of football to fulfil its mission and vision, and believe by embracing these values, can make a positive impact in communities.

Working in partnership presents a brilliant opportunity to upscale The SPFL Trust Innovation Fund pilot project and explore how we can work better with the guidance, support, and recommendations of SGN.

The initiative will focus on increasing learning within communities on relevant areas, enhancing understanding of the subject matter, and leveraging our extensive network. By entering into this innovative new partnership, The SPFL Trust aim to learn even more about how they can use their reach in this new way.

This partnership also provides SGN with the opportunity to learn more about the reach SPFL have, their network, and how they might further utilise it to support their own work. Through this collaboration, we aim to strengthen a sustainable pathway to upscale across further ATCs throughout Scotland, widening our network and potential reach even further.

To ensure that our findings and best practices are shared across the sector, we will disseminate learning through various channels:

- **Annual Reports:** Comprehensive documentation of our progress, challenges, and successes.
- **Annual Conference:** A platform for sharing insights, strategies, and outcomes with stakeholders.
- **Quarterly Meetings:** Regular updates and collaborative discussions to align our efforts and strategies.
- **Presentations and Collaborations:** Engaging with other organisations tackling fuel poverty to share knowledge and best practices.

By committing to these initiatives, we aim to create a continued learning platform that not only benefits our immediate communities but also contributes to a broader understanding and more effective strategies for combating fuel poverty across Scotland.

9 Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations

Social Value Measurement

We worked with leading social impact research consultancy SIRIO Strategies to carry out an assessment of the financial and wellbeing outcomes applicable to our services for vulnerable customers incorporated in this partnership using the Industry Standard Social Value Framework and supporting GDN rulebook. Carrying out an in-depth assessment of the predicted outcomes we forecast a positive net Social Return On Investment of £1.28.

Total cost	£305,053.15
Total gross present value	£696,619.63
Net present value	£391,566.48
SROI	£1.28

10 VCMA Project start and end date

The project is scheduled to commence October 2024 and will run until March 2026.

11 Geographic area

Scotland wide with a focus on:

Glasgow City

Celtic FC and Rangers FC are deeply embedded in the Glasgow community and will serve as crucial points for engagement.

Inverclyde

Greenock Morton FC will be instrumental in reaching out to local residents facing fuel poverty.

Ayrshire (North, South & East)

Kilmarnock FC and Ayr United FC can leverage their local influence to support the initiative.

West Dunbartonshire

Dumbarton FC will play a pivotal role in disseminating information and engaging with the community.

Dundee City

Dundee FC and Dundee United FC will help to address the high rates of fuel poverty in the area.

North Lanarkshire

Motherwell FC will be key to engaging with the local community to raise awareness and provide support.

Clackmannanshire

Alloa Athletic FC will support the local efforts to combat fuel poverty.

Highlands (Inverness, Caithness, Wick & Thurso)

Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC will help reach out to the rural population in the Highlands.

Dumfries & Galloway

Queen of the South FC will focus on supporting the local community in this region.

West Lothian, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Borders, Midlothian, Fife

Clubs like Hibernian FC, Heart of Midlothian FC, and Raith Rovers FC will be instrumental in addressing fuel poverty across these diverse regions.

12 Approval

SGN has worked alongside The SPFL Trust to co-design this partnership and ensure that its ambition contributes to the delivery of our Vulnerability Strategy, the guidance from our Vulnerable Customer Steering Group and adheres to the updated VCMA governance criteria.

The SROI has been externally assessed by Sirio using the Industry Standard Social Value Framework and supporting GDN rulebook.

To support the partnership to deliver the success criteria outcomes as detailed, the partners will review progress monthly and quarterly to learn, share best practices and address any delivery issues.

The PEA has been reviewed and approved by the business lead Linda Spence and the Director of Customer Services Maureen McIntosh.

13 Appendix

Prevalence of Fuel Poverty

Approximately 613,000 households (24.6%) were in fuel poverty in 2021.

Scottish Government - [Scottish House Condition Survey 2021 Extreme Fuel Poverty](#)

About 311,000 households (12.4%) were in extreme fuel poverty in 2021.

Scottish Government - [Scottish House Condition Survey 2021 Fuel Poverty in Rural Areas](#)

The prevalence of fuel poverty in remote rural areas was significantly higher at 43%.

Scottish Government - [Scottish House Condition Survey 2021 Impact of Efficiency Measures](#)

Fuel Poverty and the Cost of Living in Scotland

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate in the UK reached 9.4% in June 2022, the highest in 40 years.

Source: [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) Food and Fuel Prices](#)

Challenges and Criticisms

Critics argue that the current government support is insufficient to cover the rising costs, especially for the most vulnerable households.

Source: [Citizens Advice Scotland Long-Term Solutions Needed](#)

Calls for more sustainable, long-term measures such as improved efficiency and investment in renewable sources.

Source: [Friends of the Earth Scotland](#)

Other Reference

SGN-VCMA-Annual-Report-2022

SGN-VCMA-Annual-Report-2023

SPFL Trust Annual Report

SPFL Winter Response Report