

Start date: April 2026

PEA reference: PCG-Collab-002a

Cosy homes for later life



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



Contents

Contents 2

Project registration table..... 3

Problem(s) 4

Scope and objectives..... 5

Project design engagement 6

Why the project is being funded through the VCMA..... 8

How VCMA funding complements or supplements BAU activities 8

Outcomes, associated actions and success criteria 9

Potential for new learning 10

Aligning with and supporting wider vulnerability approaches 11

Monitoring and evaluation 12

Scale of VCMA project and SROI calculations, including NPV 12

Internal governance and project management evidence 13

Eligibility Criteria..... 14

Project registration table

Project summary																											
Project title		Cosy homes for later life																									
Strategic area		Supporting Priority Customer Groups																									
Lead partner name(s)		Age Cymru, Age Scotland & Age UK																									
Lead GDN(s)		SGN																									
Funding GDN(s)		Cadent, NGN & WWU																									
New/Updated		New																									
Collaborative VCMA Projects Specific role(s) of GDN(s) participating in a collaborative VCMA Project		SGN are the lead GDN facilitating the national programme and all GDNs are involved in the delivery of local arrangements including in Scotland and Wales where Age Cymru and Age Scotland operate.																									
Date of PEA submission		May 2026																									
Project start and end date		April 2026 – March 2028																									
Project location		GB wide																									
Sectors involved		Gas Distribution Network Charitable Organisation																									
Project contact																											
Name		Margaret Hamilton																									
Contact details		Positive.impact@sgn.co.uk																									
Project partners and third parties involved																											
Organisation name		Role																									
Age Cymru		Delivery partner for Wales																									
Age Scotland		Delivery partner for Scotland																									
Age UK		Delivery partner for England																									
Costs and funding																											
Total cost (£k)		Redacted due to commercial sensitivity																									
Total VCMA funding required (£k)		<table><tr><th>GDN</th><th>Percentage</th><th>Funding</th></tr><tr><td>Cadent</td><td>31.8193%</td><td>£515,466.15</td></tr><tr><td>NGN</td><td>7.4389%</td><td>£120,508.74</td></tr><tr><td>SGN (South)</td><td>12.0367%</td><td>£194,990.97</td></tr><tr><td>SGN (Scot)</td><td>15.4323%</td><td>£250,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>WWU (England)</td><td>4.2614%</td><td>£69,034.14</td></tr><tr><td>WWU (Wales)</td><td>29.0113%</td><td>£469,977.00</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>100%</td><td>£1,619,977.00</td></tr></table>		GDN	Percentage	Funding	Cadent	31.8193%	£515,466.15	NGN	7.4389%	£120,508.74	SGN (South)	12.0367%	£194,990.97	SGN (Scot)	15.4323%	£250,000.00	WWU (England)	4.2614%	£69,034.14	WWU (Wales)	29.0113%	£469,977.00	Total	100%	£1,619,977.00
		GDN	Percentage	Funding																							
		Cadent	31.8193%	£515,466.15																							
		NGN	7.4389%	£120,508.74																							
		SGN (South)	12.0367%	£194,990.97																							
		SGN (Scot)	15.4323%	£250,000.00																							
		WWU (England)	4.2614%	£69,034.14																							
		WWU (Wales)	29.0113%	£469,977.00																							
Total	100%	£1,619,977.00																									

Total BAU vulnerability and CO safety activity baseline allowance funding by activity (£k)	Redacted due to commercial sensitivity
---	--

Problem(s)

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

Older people across England, Scotland, and Wales are facing a deepening crisis in staying warm and safe at home. The combined pressures of the Covid19 pandemic, the ongoing cost of living crisis, and uncertainty around long-term government support have intensified fuel poverty, leaving many older households struggling to meet even basic energy needs. Energy bills remain significantly higher than pre-crisis levels, with average annual costs still around £700 more than five years ago, a 73% increase that disproportionately affects low-income and older households.

Fuel poverty is widespread and worsening. Across the UK, an estimated 6.1 million households live in fuel poverty, with the average fuel poverty gap in England now exceeding £400—almost double the 2020 level. Older people are particularly affected, in September 2025 [Age UK reports](#) that 41% of older people have cut back on heating, often at significant risk to their health, especially for those with chronic conditions sensitive to cold temperatures. Many older people live in inefficient homes, have fixed or limited incomes, and face higher heating needs due to health or mobility issues, making them especially vulnerable to rising costs. Age Scotland’s 2025 housing and energy survey shows a stark increase in older people experiencing fuel poverty.

51% of all respondents of the survey were in fuel poverty, a sharp increase from the 39% who stated this in the previous survey in 2023. More than 1 in 5 live in extreme fuel poverty. In Wales, fuel poverty remains a structural and persistent challenge. Welsh Government data indicates that households headed by someone over State Pension age are disproportionately represented among those in fuel poverty, particularly in rural and post-industrial communities where housing stock is older, less energy efficient and more likely to be off gas. A significant proportion of older households in Wales rely on electric, oil or solid fuel heating systems, which are often more expensive and less efficient.

Energy debt is also escalating. Ofgem reported that by June 2025, domestic consumer energy debt reached £4.43 billion, up 20% from 2024 and 71% since 2023. Around 2 million UK households are currently in arrears on their energy bills, a burden that falls heavily on low-income and older households who have little financial flexibility. Debt not only increases financial stress but also deepens anxiety, reduces wellbeing, and can deter older people from seeking help due to fear of judgement or further financial repercussions.

Despite the availability of schemes such as the Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payment, and local energy support, many older people struggle to navigate the complex landscape of assistance. [The British Gas Energy Trust report 2025](#) highlights that key services are often fragmented, difficult to access, or simply unknown to those who need them most. Digital first systems introduced during and after Covid have further marginalised older people who lack digital confidence or internet access. Research shows that stigma and confusion prevent many from claiming the support they are entitled to, leaving them at greater risk of cold homes and deteriorating health.

A 2025 Citizens Advice report notes that, 40% of UK residents are unaware of CO poisoning symptoms and 27% either lack or are unsure if they have a CO alarm, and we understand from insights form Age Cymru that CO awareness is lowest in owner occupiers in older people.

Trust is another major barrier. Older people are frequently targeted by scams, including fraudulent messages claiming to offer heating allowances or government energy payments. These scams erode confidence and make older people hesitant to engage with legitimate support services.

Insights from Age Cymru's Advice Line indicate that many older callers initially present with a single financial concern, such as difficulty paying an energy bill, but trusted conversations frequently uncover wider vulnerabilities including unclaimed benefits, digital exclusion, health challenges and social isolation. Pride and stigma can prevent older people from proactively seeking help, reinforcing the importance of embedding energy safeguarding within trusted advice services.

Around £3 billion in benefits that older people are entitled to went unclaimed last year. New research from Age UK shows that 1 in 4 older people (about 3.2 million) do not know which benefits they might be eligible for, including Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit, and Council Tax Support - support that could significantly improve life for those struggling.

Age UK's analysis of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) estimates found a rise of 120,000 more pensioners missing out on Pension Credit. The average weekly amount unclaimed increased from £37 to £50, bringing the total amount of unclaimed Pension Credit to £2.1 billion - a 60% increase on the previous year.

Against this backdrop, trusted organisations play a critical role. Older people need clear, reliable, and often need personalised guidance from sources they recognise and feel safe with. Trusted intermediaries can help them understand their benefits and energy bills, challenge incorrect charges, apply for support, and take steps to reduce energy use safely. Without this trusted support, many older people remain isolated, cold, and financially vulnerable.

Scope and objectives

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

Working with the participating GDNs, and Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age UK have co-designed the next phase of our partnership building directly on the learning which is designed to provide meaningful, practical and trusted support to older people across all three nations. It will include:

1) An embedded energy triage service within national advice lines

This enables advisors to quickly identify older people who are struggling with the affordability of household essentials, unable to maintain a warm and safe home, or already in energy debt. By integrating this triage into existing trusted services, we can ensure that older people receive timely, specialist support from someone they already feel comfortable speaking to.

2) Trusted, accessible information tailored specifically for older people

We will provide clear, practical information in a range of accessible formats, print, digital and community-based materials. This will cover essential topics such as staying warm safely, managing energy use, understanding bills, accessing benefits, avoiding scams, carbon monoxide awareness, and registering for the Priority Services Register. The aim is to empower older people with the knowledge they need to stay safe, warm and confident in their own homes.

3) A learning led, nation responsive delivery model

The partnership will continue to share insight, learning and best practice across England, Scotland and Wales, while tailoring delivery to the specific needs of each nation. In Scotland and Wales this will also provide face-to-face, community based, -in-depth support through their networks of local partners. This support will cover agreed areas in Scotland, and Wales, ensuring accessible provision across the full geography of our network areas.

Project design engagement

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

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

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

Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age UK form a trusted and influential network of national charities working to improve the lives of older people across Wales, Scotland and England. Each organisation responds to the specific needs of older people in its nation, but all share a common ambition, to ensure that later life is safe, dignified and fulfilling. Together, they champion the rights of older people, influence policy, and speak up on issues such as income, health, housing, care and energy, ensuring that the voices and experiences of older people shape the decisions that affect them.

Across the three nations, these organisations provide inclusive, tailored and practical support that older people rely on. Their services range from expert information and advice to community programmes that reduce loneliness, improve wellbeing and help people stay warm, safe and independent at home. They are known for offering clear, impartial guidance that cuts through complexity, especially for older people navigating essential services, rising living costs and increasingly digital systems.

Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age UK also act as a vital safety net for older people in crisis. Whether someone is struggling with energy bills, facing isolation or unsure where to turn, they provide compassionate, dependable help through helplines and local partners.

Above all, these organisations are trusted. In a world where scams, misinformation and complex systems can leave older people feeling vulnerable, they provide reassurance, confidence and a reliable source of support in later life.

Building on this shared commitment to helping older people with the support they need to maintain safe and warm homes, the GDNS and Age Collaboration was formally established in January 2023, emerging from a successful regional partnership between Age Scotland and SGN. What began Scotland quickly demonstrated the value of combining national expertise with local delivery, prompting the development of a wider, three nation collaboration. This national partnership has been built on a foundation of genuine cooperation, shared learning and a commitment to strengthening capacity across England, Scotland and Wales, while still respecting and responding to the distinct needs of each nation.

From the outset, the collaboration has been shaped through codesign. Over the past three years, we have actively involved stakeholders, including older people, community partners, frontline advisors and energy industry representatives, in shaping the model, refining the approach and ensuring that the partnership remains grounded in real world experience. Their insights have helped us build a programme that is practical, trusted and responsive to the challenges older people face.

During 2025 Age Scotland undertook extensive engagement with stakeholders and gained valuable insights from our service users and research to support the development of our new 'Action for Change in Older Age' 2025-2030 strategy. It identified the serious financial pressures large numbers of older people face and challenges with heating their homes. This significantly influenced our organisational missions within it, particularly our mission to 'Improve older people's financial security and quality of life' - demonstrating the need for this project which will directly support this mission.

In Wales, Age Cymru's 2025 national survey of people aged 50+ highlights sustained financial pressure and self-rationing behaviour. 46% reported that the cost of living has been a challenge in the last 12 months, with 50% reducing their use of heating and 62% making changes to ensure they can continue to afford essentials. 38% were impacted by changes to the Winter Fuel Payment. Many respondents described significant anxiety linked to rising energy and household bills.

These findings reinforce the need for preventative, trusted, energy-focused safeguarding support that addresses both immediate affordability and longer-term financial resilience.

The Age Collaboration has been showcased at the VCMA Annual Showcase as a flagship partnership, recognised for its unique blend of national ambition and regional delivery. Its ability to unite three national Age organisations around a common purpose, while enabling tailored support in each nation, has been widely praised.

Feedback from stakeholders at each showcase has been overwhelmingly positive, consistently encouraging us to go further, deepen the collaboration and expand its reach. This strong endorsement reflects both the impact achieved so far and the clear appetite for continued joint working to support older people across the UK.

[VCMA Annual Showcase - Age Scotland 2022, Age Collaboration 2023, Age Collaboration 2025]

Throughout GD2, the collaboration has enabled us to deliver a series of targeted pilot initiatives that have brought essential, practical support directly to older people when they needed it most. Working together, we have provided crisis funding, energy and fuel vouchers, warm packs and local energy workshops that have helped older people stay warm, informed and safe during the most challenging winter periods. These interventions have been especially valuable for those facing financial hardship, poor housing conditions or sudden changes in circumstances.

A core part of this work has been funding dedicated benefits advisors who help older people access the financial support they are already entitled to. This has increased household incomes, reduced stress and ensured that older people are not missing out on vital benefits such as Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance.

We have also piloted direct marketing campaigns to raise awareness of carbon monoxide safety, the Priority Services Register and key financial support schemes. These campaigns have proven highly effective in reaching older people who may not engage digitally or who are unaware of available support.

In Wales, project design has been informed by operational insight from Age Cymru's Advice Line, analysis of enquiry trends during GD2 delivery, and engagement with local Age Cymru partners. Data demonstrates a sustained increase in energy affordability enquiries, energy debt concerns and requests for support with the Priority Services Register.

Learning from GD2 highlighted the importance of early energy triage within trusted conversations, particularly where older people do not initially self-identify as being in financial hardship. The Welsh delivery model has therefore been shaped to prioritise proactive identification of vulnerability, integration with income maximisation services and strengthened referral pathways into Welsh Government schemes such as the Warm Homes Programme (Nest).

This approach reflects the distinct policy landscape in Wales while contributing to a cohesive three-nation model.

As we planned the next two years of our shared project, the insights from pilot projects and our core services have been invaluable. They have helped us refine our priorities, strengthen our delivery model and focus our agreed scope on the areas where we can make the greatest difference for older people across all three nations.

Why the project is being funded through the VCMA

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

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

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

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

This initiative was co-designed with Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age UK and been developed in line with the updated VCMI governance framework, embedding robust oversight, transparency and continuous improvement from the outset. The VCMA eligibility criteria have been met and are detailed within the table at the end of the PEA.

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

How VCMA funding complements or supplements BAU activities

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

By working with UK's leading older people's charities the GDNs have an established a referral pathway for any older people they identify who need support from the Age collaborations services. The shared learning and insights gathered from all partners including the GDNs will improve the direct engagement older people have during gas emergencies as well as when raising issues they have that make it difficult for them to access or use services provided by utilities.

As a trusted service the partners can engage more effectively and refer eligible individuals for BAU-funded support, including carbon monoxide alarms, Locking Cooker Valves and where available Easy Assist fittings.

Outcomes, associated actions and success criteria

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

Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age UK and the GDNs 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	Project target	Target by network			
		Cadent Target	NGN Target	SGN Target	WWU Target Households*
Age Cymru - unique households*	5,600				5,600
Advice line triage	3,192				3,192
Benefits calculations	1,050				1050
PSR conversations	320				320
PSR registrations	160				160
CO safety info	800				800
CO alarm	160				160
Energy advice	960				960
Tariff switching	660				660
Water social tariff	660				660
Age Scotland					
Advice line triage	8,625			8,625	
Benefits calculations	8,625			8,625	
PSR conversations	1,625			1,625	
PSR registrations	812			812	
CO safety info	1,200			1,200	
CO alarm	350			350	
Energy advice	1,875			1,875	
Wellbeing support	3,625			3,625	
Scams awareness	1,200			1,200	
Age UK					
Advice line triage	29,700	16,929	3,861	6,534	2,376
PSR conversations	3,000	1,710	390	660	240
Energy advice	7,400	4218	962	1,628	592
Benefits Check conversations	3,000	1710	390	660	240
Online Benefits Cal	400,000	228,000	52,000	88,000	32,000
Benefits forms assist	300	171	39	66	24
'Cost of Living' pack	140,000	79,800	18,200	30,800	11,200

'Scams Awareness' information pack	40,000	22,800	5,200	8,800	3,200
'Winter Preparedness' information pack	90,000	51,300	11,700	19,800	7,200
'Energy Efficiency' information pack	80,000	45,600	10,400	17,600	6,400

Success Criteria

During this two-year project, together Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age UK will support older customers with accessible guidance on their energy matters. Through this support, the project will deliver the following:

- Training to ensure information and advice teams have the skills and capacity to triage and support older people for energy safeguarding risk who come through the service
- Meaningful outcomes related to energy and personal wellbeing for older people who access the information and advice services
- Trusted literature in accessible formats that is designed to ensure information is available beyond digital formats
- Resources to support older customers remain safe, warm and connected, with a reduced risk of self-disconnection
- Improved affordability through debt resolution, billing support and income maximisation
- Increased access to Priority Services Register protections for eligible customers
- Improved customer confidence, stability and ability to manage energy-related issues
- Embedding learning from a long-standing partnership to ensure our organisations are better able to service older customers within our core roles

Potential for new learning

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

The Age Collaboration partnership has been built on a strong foundation of data, insight and the lived experience of older people who have used and shaped the support services provided.

The project is designed to generate learning that can inform future VCMA activity and wider vulnerability approaches, including insight into effective engagement, referral pathways and support models for older people who are currently underserved by existing provision.

In Wales, the project provides an opportunity to test enhanced rural outreach and referral pathways for older households living in off-gas properties, where affordability challenges and limited access to services intersect. We will also evaluate the impact of bilingual carbon monoxide and Priority Services Register awareness messaging, ensuring that communication approaches are inclusive and culturally appropriate.

Learning from Welsh delivery will inform future cross-nation design, particularly in relation to rural energy safeguarding, income maximisation integration and the identification of hidden vulnerability among older people.

Aligning with and supporting wider vulnerability approaches

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

The project provides a dedicated support service for older people who struggle to maintain a safe and warm home and who face barriers accessing essential services such as the Priority Services Register, energy schemes, income maximisation and debt support.

By offering tailored, accessible guidance on home energy efficiency, PSR registration, carbon monoxide safety, unclaimed benefits and energy debt pathways, the initiative directly reflects the principles set out in the Fuel Poverty Strategies for England, Scotland and Wales and aligns with the ambitions of the Warm Homes Plan to target those most at risk.

In Scotland and Wales, the project will complement the work of established organisations such as Home Energy Scotland and Warm Wales, which delivers energy efficiency advice and practical support to households experiencing fuel poverty. Through clear referral pathways and partnership working, this initiative will strengthen the ecosystem of support available to older people, ensuring that those identified through trusted advice services can be connected seamlessly to specialist provision where appropriate.

By working alongside, rather than duplicating, existing third sector and devolved energy programmes, the project enhances the overall Scottish and Welsh vulnerability landscape and maximises collective impact.

It also supports the effective delivery of wider government programmes including the Boiler Upgrade Scheme and funded measures by ensuring eligible older households can understand and navigate complex application processes. In Wales, the project aligns with the Welsh Government Fuel Poverty Strategy and complements the Warm Homes Programme (including Nest), supporting eligible older households to access energy efficiency measures and advice. The initiative also contributes to the ambitions of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act by promoting a healthier, more equal and resilient Wales, particularly for those most at risk of being left behind.

By strengthening referral pathways between trusted voluntary sector services, local authorities and energy networks, the project enhances the wider Welsh vulnerability framework and supports cross-sector collaboration without duplicating existing provision.

The project complements existing vulnerability frameworks used by energy suppliers, networks, local authorities and consumer organisations by focusing on older people who are disproportionately exposed to high energy needs, poor housing conditions and low incomes.

Its holistic, person-centred approach strengthens the wider energy industry's response to vulnerability by providing trusted, one-to-one support that bridges the gap between national schemes and the lived experience of those least able to access them. Built on collaborative delivery with local partners and informed by evidence of clear demand, the model demonstrates innovation and offers a scalable template for cross-sector vulnerability support that integrates with, rather than duplicates, national and devolved strategies.

Monitoring and evaluation

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

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

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

We will report annually on partnership impact, sharing broadly via collaborative and company-specific reports to showcase outcomes and key learnings. Additionally, the CO and Vulnerability Working Groups provide performance updates to the National Delivery Group and National Steering Panel, with all GDNs disseminating results through their business governance processes, including Independent Steering Groups.

Scale of VCMA project and SROI calculations, including NPV

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

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

We've incorporated social value based on the deliverables and associated targets detailed above. Carrying out an assessment of these predicted outcomes we forecast a positive net Social Return on Investment of £36.11 for every £1 spent.

Social value measurement

Total cost*	£1,612,711.69
Total gross present value	£59,854,349.46
Net Present Value (NPV)	£58,241,637.77
SROI	£36.11

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

Internal governance and project management evidence

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

Project oversight for this partnership will be led by SGN on behalf of the participating GDNs, with clear governance arrangements in place to monitor delivery, performance and risk throughout the duration of the project.

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

SGN has worked closely with Age Cymru, Age Scotland, Age UK and the other GDNs to co-design this partnership so that its ambition directly contributes to the GDN's Collaborative Vulnerability Strategy, developed through the Vulnerability Working Group and overseen by the GDN VCMA Steering Group.

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

GDN	Approver (Name and Role)	Date
Cadent	Phil Burrows – Head of Social Programmes	01/04/26
NGN	Eileen Brown – Customer Experience Director	27/04/26
SGN	Maureen McIntosh – Director of Customer Services	02/04/26
WWU	Rob Long - Chief Operating Officer	30/04/26

Eligibility Criteria

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

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: i. GDN has had to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role; or ii. A GDN or its Project Partner has had to condemn unsafe pipework, or an essential gas appliance, following an essential gas appliance service (as described in 3.19 of the VCMA governance document)	NA
Health condition	Either: i. The occupier of the property suffers from a permanent or temporary health condition that makes them more vulnerable to health risks associated with cold homes and has a household income of £31,000 or below in 2025/26 prices, adjusted for inflation using Consumer Price Index with Housing costs (CPIH) 13, or ii. the household cannot afford to service the essential gas appliance, as assessed against the affordability criteria set out in Appendix 1 of the VCMA governance document	NA
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.	NA