

Wales & West Utilities Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

Vulnerability Registration Service

Healthy Homes Solutions

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Updated – October 2024

Criteria

Eligibility criteria for company specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)

In order to qualify as a VCMA Project, a project must:

- a) have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project;
- b) either:
 - i. provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or
 - ii. provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or
 - iii. reduce the risk of harm caused by CO;
- c) have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;
- d) go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and
- e) not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.¹

Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing, repair, and replacement

In order to qualify as a VCMA Project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance² servicing, repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:

- a) a GDN has to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role;
- b) the household cannot afford to service, repair or replace unsafe pipework or the essential gas appliance; and
- c) 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 servicing, repair or replacement.

¹ If part, but not full, funding is available through an external funding source for an eligible project, VCMA funding can be used for the remaining amount.

² Essential gas appliances are gas fuelled heating systems (including gas boilers and gas fires), and gas cookers.

Information required for the registration of VCMA projects

Information required	Description
Project title	Vulnerability Registration Service
Funding GDN(s)	Wales & West Utilities
New/ Updates PEA	Updated
Date of PEA submission	03/01/2024 Updated – October 2024
VCMA Project contact name, email and number	Tom Robinson – tom.robinson@wwutilities.co.uk – 07890 315438 Rachele Verdini – Rachele.verdini@wwutilities.co.uk - 07811795210
Total VCMA funding required (£k)	£490,655 Updated – October 2024 Additional allowance £ 509,840 New Total project value is £1,000,495
Problem(s)	<p>Energy affordability and sustainable housing are pivotal for societal well-being. Vulnerable and in-poverty residents require real guided support, with many vulnerable homes grappling with the challenges of fuel poverty, inefficient energy performance, and the broader cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>To ensure customers are able to heat their homes to adequate levels and also to help lift them out of fuel poverty, the four root causes of fuel poverty have to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low household income • The cost of fuel • Energy Efficiency of the home • People’s behaviours and understanding of energy use <p>The key issues identified through HHS programmes are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying vulnerable / homes most in need residents 2. Identifying which homes are eligible for energy efficiency schemes 3. Effective resident engagement and an increase in apathy to schemes/ services 4. Lack of centralised crisis and telephone-based advice and support service 5. A multitude of different services bombarding vulnerable residents creating anxiety and greater stress levels 6. Assumption that vulnerable and most in-need residents know where to turn for help 7. The time taken for vulnerable residents to research, gain trust and apply for services is a key barrier to service registrations 8. Over 68% of 4,000 vulnerable residents surveyed were not aware of the PSR

Criteria

	<p>9. Over 44% of vulnerable and in fuel poverty homes are in an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) of D, E, F and G</p> <p>10. Over 62% of the most vulnerable are in council tax bands A and B and 42% are in a “family profile”</p> <p>This initiative focuses on bringing together the 1) Vulnerable residents and the homes most in need (fuel poverty), and 2) resident eligibility, engagement, and installation delivery for Current Decarbonisation Schemes, for the first time in the UK.</p> <p>HHS know from our programmes that while many are keen to transition towards a greener future or register for additional support and advice, lack the knowledge or means to navigate the maze of information and advice they receive. For this the impact of providing the above services improves resident wellbeing, mental health and scheme adoption and results in real action, ensuring that residents have access to the benefits and welfare support they are entitled to.</p> <p>HHS aim to foster collaboration among service providers and utilities, ensuring vulnerable and in-poverty homes not only receive consistent information but also benefit from a tailored triage service that addresses both energy efficiency and the broader challenges of today's living costs.</p> <p>This endeavour looks to pave the way for a unified platform, harmonising the efforts of different utilities and services to offer a streamlined, accessible solution for homes in need within the WWU communities.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p>This project is primed to launch planning and set up within 8 weeks of funding. The programme would not be starting from a green-field site but enhancing what already exists with the decarbonisation qualification and delivery assignment.</p> <p>The project promises a holistic approach tailored to the needs of vulnerable and in fuel-poverty homes, prioritising not only their immediate welfare but also helping to support them against escalating living costs and environmental impacts.</p> <p>HSS’ mission focuses on delivering an end-to-end solution that includes profiling, engagement and delivery that drives greater awareness and results in significant improvements for the poverty, health digital, carbon and energy issues facing UK homes today.</p> <p>Targeting At the heart of our strategy lies our National Households Database (NHD), a detailed set of information and insights that include the latest census and sonar profiling, that enables HHS to identify and engage with more data driven precision.</p> <p>Campaigns</p>

Criteria

	<p>HSS' outreach initiatives will spotlight the detrimental impact of fuel poverty on health and well-being. Signposting to institutions like NEA, Citizens Advice, Energy Saving Trust, Charis Grants, and Affordable Warmth Solutions. HHS will fully support any local and regional initiatives in which WWU are already liaising with. They will disseminate relevant content and communicate to residents on fuel poverty, energy efficiency, affordable energy solutions, and the specific available support mechanisms through our campaigns and the new CRS & HHS / WWU focused booklet that will automatically be communicated out to the registering residents in the WWU agreed locations.</p> <p>Energy Efficiency Signposting Information Booklet Leveraging our collaborative efforts with their partners, HHS will design and launch a bespoke VRS & HHS WWU focused information booklet. This guide will amalgamate relevant insights and resources from our partners such as PSR, Telephone Preference Service (TPS), DWP checks, CO awareness, CO monitor free despatch service, Friends Against Scams, Free Water Savings Kits, and Broadband Social Tariff. We will also look to the new partners to work with that are 100% aligned with reducing fuel poverty such as: NEA, HACT Fuel Vouchers, Citizens Advice, Energy Saving Trust, and WWU localised partners. HHS's goal with this booklet is multi-faceted: firstly, to provide residents with tangible and actionable advice on reducing their bills and enhancing the energy efficiency of their homes. Secondly, to bolster our communication initiatives by providing a tangible resource for engagement.</p> <p>Triage Service HHS's team looks to understand the challenges faced by households, and to delve deeper into understanding where the team can help the most. Whether it's reducing bills, navigating available assistance, or raising awareness of specific services they may never have heard of or know where to look for them. The team ensures every resident is given the time to discuss their situation and a tailored service that supports each resident in having a warmer, more affordable home.</p> <p>Support Measures Here is a list of the support measures the triage team will provide as part of this holistic programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. PSR Registration2. CO Awareness and access to free alarms3. Vulnerability Registration Service (VRS) Awareness and registrations4. NEA Warm Homes5. DWP Checks and free report6. Energy efficiency measures, eligibility checks and delivery partner introduction7. Telephone Preference Service (TPS) registration
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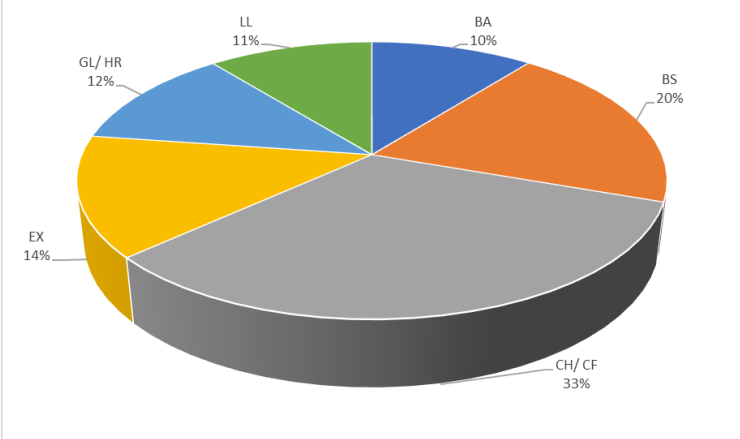
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Friends Against Scams 9. Broadband Social Tarriff 10. Water Saving Kits 11. Scope 12. Alzheimer’s Society 13. Debt Management support via Payplan <p><u>Updated – October 2024</u></p> <p>The expanded programme aims to add an additional 6,000 registrations just from the Welsh postcode areas, totalling 12,000 across the whole of the WWU region by the end of March 2026.</p> <p>The current approved WWU Booklet will be customised to include any additional partner nuances across the WWU region.</p> <p>The current automated decarbonisation eligibility checker will be enhanced for the Welsh postcodes and will be further supported by the Healthy Homes Solutions' established relationships with the Welsh Authority, Net Zero hubs, and the Warm Homes Wales / NEST decarbonisation scheme.</p> <p>The extension will cater to the dual language (English and Welsh) needs of the region with all programme materials, including the recently developed HHS Initiative recruitment video about to be tested across all multi-channel feeds.</p> <p>The ReciteMe accessibility service will also be used to enhance user engagement and ensure inclusivity across all the languages ReciteMe include.</p>
<p>Outcomes, associated actions, and success criteria</p>	<p>The data HHS have within their HHS National Housholder Database (28m records) and our VRS vulnerability database enables us to identify 1.84m data records across WWU locations, with related social-economic, tenure, council tax band, ONS, sonar, EPC, heating, and affordability data by postcode. HHS have identified over 250k vulnerable residents with whom they can engage with to help fast start a successful programme.</p> <p>*(Updated October 2024) This programme will run over a 24-month period with a target of 6,000 registrations to one or more service in the South West of England and 6,000 in Wales, with a fully integrated Current Decarbonisation Scheme assessment, and delivery mechanism.*</p> <p>Enhanced PSR Enrolments: Boost the number of households benefiting from this initiative, ensuring they’re seamlessly connected to a network of services tailored to their specific needs with a target of 4,000 PSR registrations over a 24-month period.</p>

Criteria

	<p>Comprehensive Home Assessments: Leveraging the HHS VRS Initiative model, we will conduct thorough remote assessments to determine the unique needs of each household, pinpointing areas that benefit most from energy efficiency interventions and tailored support services.</p> <p>Decarbonisation Interventions: Homes identified will receive tailored decarbonisation and safety service, from locking cooker valves, access to funding through third party organisations for insulation upgrades (installation measures are not funded directly through the VCMA project), more energy-efficient heating solutions, automated heating controls and CO monitors, all in sync with the prevailing frameworks.</p> <p>Awareness and Education Campaigns: We aim to educate homeowners on the benefits of decarbonisation, its long-term cost-saving implications, and the available support structure, making them properly empowered stakeholder in this transition.</p> <p>Energy efficiency referral funding: Through the HHS profiling and engagement process, we will connect priority households and residents with the appropriate funding stream to help them improve their home's energy efficiency through access to the most appropriate scheme for them.</p> <p>The scheme appropriate to each household will be determined by location, property characteristics, tenure type and householder socio-economic circumstances, matched against available government funded decarbonisation scheme and their specific criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP), Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding (SHDF)• Energy Company obligation (ECO4) / Flex / Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS)• Home Upgrade Grant (HUG)• Wales Warm Homes Programme / NEST <p>As a primary programme, HHS have mapped all the WWU postcodes against the HHS/ VRS vulnerability personalised data by WWU region and will use this data to greatly increase the immediate effectiveness of this programme.</p>
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Criteria

	<p style="text-align: center;">HHS Vulnerability Data BY WWU Region 250k records</p>  <p>A secondary programme will focus on mapping the HHS NHD Database against the propensity model for vulnerable residents and the homes most in need through a decarbonisation eligibility filter to provide a second layer to the targeting and profiling communication plan.</p> <p>To maintain a focus on progress toward the outcomes listed above, WWU and HHS will form a steering group, meeting quarterly discuss and identify ongoing risks and mitigations. WWU would expect to see approx... 12% of each target achieved each quarter. In addition, WWU will request case studies and client testimonials to further demonstrate the success of the initiative, throughout the project term.</p>
<p>Project Partners and third parties involved</p>	<p>This project will be funded by WWU and delivered by HHS.</p>
<p>Potential for new learning</p>	<p>This project offers us an insight into the effectiveness of a targeted, data driven approach to supporting vulnerable households, and how this can be adapted across WWU’s whole VCMA portfolio and business as usual activities.</p>
<p>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI calculations, including NPV</p>	<p>We have taken the forecasted numbers expected by HHS for the two-year delivery period and calculated the following SROI over a 5-year period:</p> <p>Total Gross Present Value = £9,853,109 Net Present Value = £9,374,591 SROI per £1 spent = £19.59</p> <p>Updated – October 2024</p> <p>We have taken the forecasted numbers expected by HHS and calculated the following SROI over the two-year delivery period using the latest GDN shared SROI model:</p> <p>Total Gross Present Value = £7,532,198.36 Net Present Value = £6,545,455.76 SROI per £1 spent = £6.63</p>

Criteria

VCMA Project start and end date	This project will begin in January 2024 and run until the end of December 2025. Updated – October 2024 This project will begin in January 2024 and run until the end of March 2026 with services being rolled out across Wales from October 2024 onwards
Geographical area	This project will support vulnerable households throughout WWU network coverage area.