



Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Quarterly Report

Organisation	Yorkshire Energy Doctor CIC
Project start date (indicate if the start date has been delayed)	01/04/2021
Time remaining on project from this quarter	1 month
Funding stream	VCMA
Report date	30/03/2022

Northern Gas Networks (NGN) are keen to know how the VCMA funding makes a difference to their partners and communities and understand the impact.

Quarterly reporting is referenced in schedule 3 of the services agreement that was signed by your organisation. Please therefore ensure that a quarterly report is submitted by the deadline provided by NGN. If you realise there will be a delay in submitting this report, please contact Stephanie Ord sord@northerngas.co.uk / 07704 545200 ASAP. Under VCMA, NGN needs to demonstrate compliance with the governance requirements set by Ofgem.

You will need to refer to your original Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA) document when completing this form, in order to ensure that the funding is being used specifically for the purpose originally intended. Please inform NGN if there is a problem, as we may be able to agree some changes under certain circumstances however, **you must** speak to us in advance.

The timely submission and standard of your reports is likely to affect any future applications to Northern Gas Networks under VCMA.

If you have any problems or need assistance completing this form, please contact Stephanie Ord in the first instance or Jill Walker JWalker@northerngas.co.uk, 07773 390967

Once you have completed this form, please return it to: sord@northerngas.co.uk

1b. Progress update - tell us about achievements to date

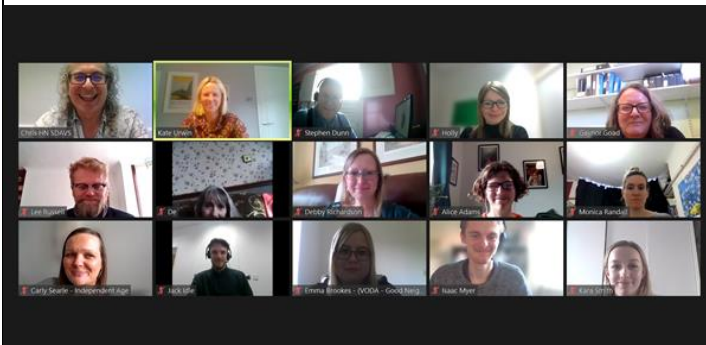
- Delivery against the outcomes and associated actions
- Progress made against success criteria as set out in the PEA / proposal
- Challenges in achieving any of the above
- Are there any changes you have had to make? (for example, slippage in dates etc.)

Delivery against the outcomes and associated actions:

Actions this quarter:

Training

- 2 x Community Energy Ambassadors courses in February and March, attended by 23 individuals



What question(s) would you like answering on this course?				
how bad will it get and for how long?	What resources are available for students specifically to help them with their energy bills?	how warm will our homes be in the future?	Advocacy support for those who struggle to communicate with energy providers	Are these grants / funds being affected or shut down due to rising costs? future rising costs?
What grants are available to those in hardship	How to support people on benefits?	What to do if my energy company ceases trading?	How to use less energy?	What help is available to vulnerable people from energy companies?
Practical steps	What are the new schemes introduced by gov	where to get independent advice?	Grants and funds available both nationally and locally	future of gas
how to keep up to date knowledge?	how many energy companies now?	Sources of support and advice for those really struggling and who already feel they're economising and being fuel efficient.	What help can you get with energy debt?	What is out there for support. Offering the right advice or signposting

The feedback continues to be really positive, for example some comments from our most recent course:

- *One of the most informative and engaging courses I have done. Brilliantly delivered by Kate and assisted by Chris.*
- *Enjoyable and friendly, very informative, very interesting and well presented. Excellent follow up material. Thank you to presenters and funders, much appreciated.*
- *A big thank you. I can find zoom meeting tricky but this was small and friendly, so it was easier to interact.*
- *Very well presented - lively and stimulating*

We have also delivered:

- 3 x 'mini' Energy Ambassadors training courses:
 - Open session run in partnership with York Energy Advice (13 attendees)
 - Foundation (4 attendees)
 - Early Help Team (12 attendees)

We have also continued to link up with the Community Engagement Team from Yorkshire Water to run a third joint training session. They have explained the support schemes available for water bills for low income households and the session was attended by 27 individuals from our partner organisations in Yorkshire.

Annual update event

48 of our Energy Ambassadors booked onto an update event in March that we organised to provide up-to-date information on the energy crisis and how to advise clients. We also included a mini workshop on draught proofing run by York Energy Advice, a service set-up as a result of two people who came on one of our early Energy Ambassador courses.

We did some polls at the event and our Energy Ambassadors told us the following:

What are our Energy Ambassadors finding?

Everyone they speak to are concerned about the energy price rises
(71% are extremely concerned, 29% slightly concerned)

77% have seen an increase in the number of questions they are getting about energy

74% are extremely worried about the price rises for their clients

91% are already hearing that people are choosing to reduce the amount of time their heating is on

1-2-1 follow-up advice

18 individuals have received 1-2-1 advice, either directly via ourselves or via an Energy Ambassador who has come to us for advice about a specific client.

Social media

We have continued to post information and updates on our Community Energy Ambassadors Facebook group and promote the courses, project and specific awareness campaigns through other social media channels (e.g. the New Year Utility Bill Health Check). These have reached 2384 people.

Progress made against success criteria as set out in the PEA / proposal:

Since April 2021:

Training courses: 14 Community Energy Ambassador training courses (target: 10)

Knowledge before course	2.69 / 5
Knowledge after course	4.5 / 5
Course rating	4.9 / 5

Attendees: 148 (target: 100)

Additional training: 11 additional 'mini' Energy Ambassador training courses, reaching a further 116 staff/volunteers

Information sharing: 2780 individuals received information (target: 1000)

- Direct support provided by Energy Ambassadors: 1218
- 1-2-1 advice through ourselves: 125
- Group talks: 119
- CO workshops/talks: 225
- Views of information videos: 752
- Engagement with social media posts: 341

These figures exclude providing flyers.

Cost savings:

Savings identified by Ambassadors = £51,840

Cost savings from our own 1-2-1 support = £5,440

Total savings = £57,280

Media

- Radio York Breakfast Show, 02/02/22
- Radio Leeds Lunchtime Show, 03/03/22
- Radio 5Live Breakfast Show, 03/02/22 (national)
- Radio Leeds Breakfast Show, 28/03/22
- Radio York Breakfast Show, 28/03/22

NB: Audience figures unknown so not included in the reach.

PSR signups = 108 (target: 100)

CO awareness survey forms: 347 (target: 150)

Reach of CO information:

- Training courses = 264
- Groups = 259
- CO video = 149
- Tadcaster Town Council newsletter article = 6000
- Social media = 7329
- Flyers disseminated by Energy Ambassadors = 3750

Total = 17,751

Total project reach:

- Training courses = 264
- Groups = 344
- Youtube information videos = 752
- 1-2-1 = 125
- Direct conversations by Ambassadors with their clients = 1218
- Flyers disseminated by Ambassadors = 3750
- Article in newsletters = 6000
- Social media reach = 8254

Total = 20,707

1c. Case studies

Tell us about a particular individual who has been significantly impacted by this grant (anonymise names if required.) If your project has yet to start work with customers, please state this.

Working with Whitby Disability Action Group (DAG)

Two members of staff from Whitby DAG attended one of our Energy Ambassador courses and have since been extremely proactive in engaging their members on a whole range of energy-related topics.



They have run a CO awareness session for one of their groups and circulated information on topics like the PSR and Warm Home Discount in their newsletters. We have also received 3 referrals for more complex support cases which have generated the following outputs:

Louise*: Broken boiler

Louise had gone in to see Whitby DAG for advice about her broken boiler. From our Energy Ambassadors course they knew there were possible grants available so they referred her to us for help. She received ESA and PIP and had a number of health issues that were made worse by being cold, including heart failure. We referred her to the Council who provided her with 2 oil filled radiators on a temporary basis. We then helped her to access ECO funding for the boiler which was topped up by a discretionary grant from the Council. When we asked what was most useful about our service, the client told us *"Knowing that someone cared and understood how desperate I was feeling"*.

Caroline*: High energy debt with previous energy company

Again they had approached Whitby DAG for support and staff knew about the schemes that energy suppliers have to help with energy debts from our course. We helped Caroline to apply to the OVO Hardship Fund and they have recently confirmed a grant, on the basis she pays her new supplier for 3 months of energy use. This should then result in approximately £2,000 of energy debt being cleared.

Laura*: Faulty boiler, having issues with very high electricity bills

We made a referral to YES Energy Solutions for a new boiler and they also fitted underfloor insulation in a void under the floorboards. We felt that the high electric costs were due to a hot tub but Laura did not think this was the case based on information provided by the installer. They had turned it off a month earlier due to a fault so we accessed their smart meter half-hourly data to review usage and we were able to provide the figures to prove that the hot tub had been using £5.73 per day or approx £170 every month (this resulted in it being fully turned off). We also signed them up onto the PSR due a number of health conditions in the property and made them aware that they are eligible for the Warm Home Discount. They said: *Thank you so much for your help and kindness. It's good to know there are some people who are willing to help.*

These case studies show the value of our network of Energy Ambassadors and the importance of local organisations knowing the schemes available to help people and ensuring that information is cascaded further afield.

Section 2: Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

NGN / Ofgem require updates on performance, to understand the difference made and impact of this project. A number of metrics set by Ofgem are specific to VCMA, therefore we need to measure performance around these areas. Please enter the appropriate numbers / details in the boxes below, to show the direct impact of your project within the different categories. We **do not** expect you to enter a number in every box, only those relevant to your project. If it is not possible to count the exact numbers directly impacted, please provide a reasonable estimate. Please also include the target number that was stated in your PEA document (if applicable), so that a comparison of target v actual can be made.

2a. How many people have directly benefitted from this project to date against target declared on PEA?	1100 (target)	3044
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2b. How many people have benefitted indirectly?	Unknown
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Please indicate:		
	Target from Proposal/PEA:	Actual to date:
2c. Number of people signed up to the Priority Services Register	100	108
2d. Number of CO pre and post awareness surveys completed	150	347
2e. Number of people reached through CO awareness (leaflets, social media)	n/a	17,751
2e. Number of CO alarms provided to vulnerable customers	n/a	126
Please indicate:		
2f. Number of new volunteers	1	
2g. Number of additional grants/donations secured, as a result of this funding including amounts:	£1,500 (for CO alarms)	
2h. Number of people more informed (e.g. attendance at events, workshops)	2,780 (excluding training)	
2i. Number of people trained	264	
Please indicate the number of people in the following categories, who have directly benefitted from this project*:		
2j. People with physical disabilities		
2k. People with mental health conditions		
2l. People living in rural isolation		
2m. People living with a temporary vulnerability		
2n. People facing poverty or financial hardship		
2o. People in education		
2p. Number of people this project has reached	20,707	

Section 3: Additional Information

3a. Description of any new learning achieved – please include in here how the learning has been disseminated if appropriate and also add any stakeholder engagement that has taken place.

We were contacted by Green Rose CIC in Lancashire who had successfully applied by funding to run their own Community Energy Ambassador courses, funded by Electricity North-West. We met to pass on our experiences and information and tips on how we run our own courses, specifically interactive tools like using Jamboards that they were unaware of.

The case study examples that we provided as part of our last report makes it clear that there are so many organisations out there who are doing amazing things supporting vulnerable households. Embedding energy knowledge within these organisations, who are trusted in their communities, just means that so many more people are accessing advice and help than we could ever support.

It has also been clear that running the courses in short blocks over 3 weeks, rather than all in one go on a specific day, has been an excellent way of getting to know people and building rapport with individuals. I believe that this has helped us to build longer-term relationships with organisations and has given us better responses to requests for follow-up information than on other shorter courses.

3b. If you have any additional comments about your project, please state here (otherwise leave blank.)

We are having a big demand for training at the moment with all the changes in the energy landscape and concerns from organisations on behalf of their clients. It is brilliant to have this project to be able to meet this demand.


3c. Have you publicised the VCMA project in any way? Please provide details (social media, newsletter etc.)

Every time we have new course dates we circulate the information to a range of organisations across the NGN patch. We know that link organisations such as VONNE, Hull CVS, York CVS, Cumbria CVS, Bradford CVS, HADCA and Community First Yorkshire also then all share the information further across their own areas. We also put information out relating to the courses on social media (Twitter, Facebook and Linked-in).

If you have any photographs, leaflets, additional case studies etc. that you would like to send to us, please attach them to the email with this report. Please ensure they are anonymised if required

Please see case studies provided with last report.

All of the information contained in this report is factually correct to the best of my knowledge. I confirm that the data contained within the report is accurate and understand that it may be used as part of NGN's project progress reporting to Ofgem. Please see my authorising signature below.

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