



Emotionally  
Intelligent  
Communications

**WALES & WEST UTILITIES**

**GAS NETWORK VULNERABILITY AND  
CARBON MONOXIDE ALLOWANCE  
(VCMA) WORKSHOP**

**FEEDBACK REPORT**

**NOVEMBER 2021**



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## INTRODUCTION

On 23 and 30 November 2021, Wales & West Utilities hosted two online stakeholder workshops aimed at representatives of the charity sector. The primary purpose of the workshops was to learn about any projects or initiatives being undertaken by the charities which might be suitable for funding under the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA). This is an allowance given to all Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) to support projects aimed at addressing consumer vulnerability and raising awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO).

The event set out to give stakeholders information about the VCMA in order to assist them with applications for this funding. Owing to the circumstances regarding Covid-19, the workshops were hosted virtually using the Zoom platform, rather than in person.

Participants in the workshops came from a range of backgrounds, including community councils and charities / non-profit organisations. The workshop comprised two presentations given by Wales & West Utilities personnel followed by discussion sessions in breakout rooms.

The workshop was split into two sessions. These are shown below:

- Session One: The VCMA and the types of projects that we're looking for
- Session Two: The application process

Wales & West Utilities instructed EQ Communications, a specialist stakeholder engagement consultancy, to independently facilitate the workshops and to take notes of the comments made by stakeholders. Comments have not been attributed to individuals to ensure that all stakeholders were able to speak as candidly as possible.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Both workshop sessions opened with a presentation by a Wales & West Utilities representative, which was followed by discussions in breakout rooms. This report contains summaries of the findings from the discussion sessions, as well as verbatim comments and written feedback submitted by stakeholders.

### SESSION ONE: THE VCMA AND THE TYPES OF PROJECTS THAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

Whilst the majority of the stakeholders in attendance had projects ready to propose, some did not have a specific idea in mind in advance of the workshops. The projects proposed roughly fell into four categories: CO awareness-raising and safety projects; fuel poverty and vulnerable-customer empowerment projects; projects that support groups with specific conditions; and projects to support carers. All of these projects broadly set out to provide support for a wide range of vulnerable individuals.

Whilst there was a general acknowledgement of the difficulties around data sharing and the potential barriers this places on joint projects, stakeholders expressed a strong desire to collaborate both with Wales & West Utilities and with each other. As a result, many swapped email addresses over the course of the workshop using the Zoom Chat function, with a number of opportunities around sharing expertise, identifying potential project beneficiaries, and creating joint work identified. Stakeholders put forward local, regional and national projects for consideration for VCMA funding, and some had already collaborated with other Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) as part of their work.

### SESSION TWO: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Stakeholders unanimously praised the application process and felt that the form was straightforward and easy to fill in. This was hugely appreciated by the groups in attendance. However, it was felt that Wales & West Utilities could simplify the application process by providing more signposting about how certain costs should be calculated, particularly when they are assumed costs. There were also calls for Wales & West Utilities to set up a dedicated support contact for helping stakeholders through this form.

In addition, stakeholders suggested that Wales & West Utilities should consider how it calculates the social value applied to analysis of the application forms in order not to unintentionally disadvantage any parties. There were also calls from stakeholders around moderating the level of reporting data required from funded projects (particularly ones receiving low levels of funding), so that smaller groups are not discouraged from applying for project funding.

Stakeholders were happy with the level of detail required and were pleased to see that Wales & West Utilities has previously asked for more detail if something was unclear in their application forms. However, there were still doubts regarding how to quantify the benefits of a project in the application form.

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## WRITTEN FEEDBACK

After the workshop, stakeholders were asked to complete a short feedback form. Some of the key findings are shown below. A full breakdown of the feedback can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

- 100% of attendees who filled out a feedback form told us that they found the workshop to be ‘very interesting’.
- 100% ‘strongly agreed’ that they had had an opportunity to make points and ask questions.
- 82% ‘strongly agreed’ and 18% ‘agreed’ that the right topics were discussed on the day.
- 100% thought EQ Communications’ facilitation was ‘very good’..
- 100% felt the online format worked ‘very well’.

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## ATTENDEES

There were a total of 29 attendees from 28 different organisations across the two workshops, which are shown below.

Action for Asperger's	Headway Swindon
Age Connects North Wales Central	Hope4U
Age UK Devon	Landlords South West
Bridgend Carers Centre	Lifeskills
Cardiff and Vale Well-being	Maggie's
Care & Repair Cymru	Mumbles Community Council
Carers Cube	NEA
Catalyst Mutual CIC	Pembrokeshire FRAME
Centre for Sustainable Energy	Rhondda Hub for Veterans
CO-Gas Safety	Shal Housing
Community Energy Plus	South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
DangerPoint	Swansea Carers Centre
Disability Can Do	Wales & West Housing
Forget-me-not Chorus	Warm Wales

## SESSION ONE: THE VCMA AND THE PROJECTS THAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

The first presentation of the day was given by Nigel Winnan, Customer & Social Obligations Manager. After providing an overview of Wales & West Utilities and its operations, Nigel introduced the VCMA to stakeholders. He explained that it is a £60 million allowance available for GDN programmes that address consumer vulnerability and CO safety and that go above and beyond business as usual, with a particular focus on collaboration. He also explained that Wales & West Utilities has been given £5.5m for projects in its geographical area over the next five years, with a further £1.9m available for collaborative projects with other networks.

After introducing the various VCMA guidance documents, he outlined a range of projects eligible for funding, which target customer vulnerabilities, CO and home safety. In addition, he explained that domestic insulation, new boilers and home energy solutions could not be covered under the scheme. After describing Wales & West Utilities' proposed 2022 spend split, he handed over to Elaina Cook, Priority Customer Manager, who presented a video outlining the allowance's impact on local communities and particular projects that have been funded.

These included the Healthy Homes, Healthy People project (Warm Wales) and initiatives by Care & Repair Cymru. Stakeholders were then asked to discuss their proposed projects in the breakout rooms.

**Allowable funding under VCMA**

Vulnerability	CO and Home safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programmes promoting energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty</li><li>• Assistance with repairs to appliances shut-off for safety reasons, due to a gas emergency or our planned gas pipe works</li><li>• Raising awareness of the Priority Service Register and data sharing – working towards a single, joint utility register</li><li>• Additional services and support for people living with age-related and general physical disabilities, mental health conditions, and families with young children</li><li>• Vulnerability and demographic mapping</li><li>• Support for people to decarbonise home heating - transitioning to a net zero society</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carbon monoxide (CO) awareness campaigns</li><li>• CO education programmes - schools and universities</li><li>• Free CO monitors to homes of people most at risk</li><li>• Research on the impact of exposure to CO</li><li>• Influencing government policy and legislation</li><li>• Locking cooker valves to support people living with early stage dementia, autism and learning difficulties</li></ul>

The slide also features a video inset of Nigel Winnan (WWU) and the Wales & West Utilities logo.

The majority of the stakeholders in attendance had specific projects ready to present for funding, such as DangerPoint and the Forget-me-not Chorus. For the most part, they wanted to use the VCMA funding to expand the scope of their current initiatives or employ more people to increase their reach. However, other organisations, such as Care & Repair Cymru, had a number of active schemes that they felt could be eligible for VCMA funding, but were unsure about where to apply their efforts when applying for the allowance. Therefore, they were attending the event for some guidance from Wales & West Utilities regarding which

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projects were suitable for funding and where these would fit within Wales & West Utilities' support framework. Other organisations, such as Bridgend Carers, are engaged in work that falls within the VCMA's scope, but did not have a specific project proposal in mind at the time of the workshop.

Around half of the projects put forward related to CO awareness-raising and safety. Representatives from these groups wanted to increase awareness about the dangers of CO through educational campaigns and disseminating information. Stakeholders hoped that CO awareness-raising campaigns would fill in individual knowledge gaps (such as how to check whether boilers and heating appliances are operating safely) and ensure that people can live safely in their homes. There was also acknowledgement that the lack of widespread knowledge about CO poisoning and its symptoms posed a major challenge in assisting victims at present. As a result, it was felt that any awareness-raising campaigns needed to tap into the expertise available. Stakeholders proposed raising awareness about CO in a number of ways through their projects, such as expert helplines (CO-Gas Safety), leaflets (Mumbles Community Council), direct liaison with their own stakeholders (Landlords South West) and word of mouth (Cardiff & Vale Well-Being and Disability Can Do). School visits and presentations about CO poisoning and gas safety were also at the heart of projects from a number of groups (DangerPoint, Community Energy Plus, Action for Asperger's and Lifeskills). Simultaneously, other groups proposed offering CO alarms as part of their projects, such as Care & Repair Western Bay and Landlords South West. SWFRS proposed going further on this front, by providing vibrating devices, such as under-pillow pads and watches, specifically for deaf families.

A large number of groups proposed projects that targeted individuals in fuel poverty and aimed to empower other vulnerable customers to support themselves more effectively at home in order to break out of the cycle of fuel poverty. This proposed support came in a wide range of forms, such as the advice packages provided by Swansea Carers Centre to carers, comprising fuel poverty, income maximisation, energy advice and assistance with filling out utilities forms. Catalyst Mutual proposed similar support and wanted to build on this by also delivering digital skills training programmes at job centres. Hope 4U and Headway Swindon also both put forward projects around delivering support through income maximisation, tariff switching and debt alleviation, but wanted to provide this support to very specific groups. Whereas Hope 4U wanted to target expectant and new mothers, Headway Swindon was looking to focus on individuals who have recently suffered a brain injury. Landlords South West intended to take a different approach and wanted to use any VCMA funding to strengthen its relationship with its landlords and engage with them around legal home heating efficiency standards. Finally, the Centre for Sustainable Energy was centring its project around helping people to transition to Net Zero and getting connected to new greener heating fuels and technologies.

A small number of projects were also put forward that would support groups with specific conditions. These were mostly targeted towards older people, such as the Forget-me-not Chorus, Age UK Devon and Age Connects North Wales Central. The Forget-me-not Chorus project runs both in-person and virtual choir sessions targeted at individuals living with dementia, as a space for them to enjoy some respite and escapism from their condition. Any funding would be used for buying tablets so that more people could

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access their services digitally. Age UK Devon proposed using any funding towards disseminating energy-efficiency advice to elderly people in Devon, while Age Connects North Wales Central wanted to strengthen its referral partnership network and distribute its information newsletter to more people. By contrast, Pembrokeshire FRAME works to support young people with disabilities, mental health conditions and learning difficulties by providing them with work experience around reusing and recycling donated items. It intended to spend any funding on research and mapping tools to identify suitable people who could benefit from the charity's work. Finally, Maggie's provides support to cancer patients and their families, and will propose a benefits advice service as its project for VCMA funding.

There were also a number of projects proposed for supporting carers by Carers Cube and Bridgend Carers. Carers Cube was looking to support unpaid BME carers, and Bridgend Carers was looking for avenues to keep the carers in its local area healthy through the difficult wintery conditions. However, neither group had devised a specific project for VCMA funding at present. It should also be noted that the Forget-me-not Chorus also targets carers for individuals living with dementia, aiming to provide a place of fun and relaxation for them.

While discussing their projects, stakeholders made it clear that they did not see each other as competitors and wished to collaborate as far as possible and tap into each other's expertise. As a result, many stakeholders shared their email addresses in the Zoom Chat function in the hope of continuing discussions about potential collaboration following the workshop. However, many stakeholders also identified data sharing as a major obstacle to further collaboration on project work. For example, Community Energy Plus noted that a potential collaborative project with the fire service around energy advice in Cornwall was curtailed due to data protection regulations. Stakeholders discussed a range of potential collaborative partnerships during discussions. One such example was based around sharing expertise, as National Energy Action offered to provide fuel poverty training to Swansea Carers and Maggie's. Another type of potential collaborative partnership that was discussed revolved around identifying vulnerable people who could benefit from some of the projects discussed at these workshops. For example, Mumbles Community Council discussed working with Bridgend Carers Centre to identify elderly people in South Wales who could receive CO information. Finally, the scope of regional synergies was also explored. For instance, DangerPoint and Lifeskills identified the crossover in their work raising awareness around CO in North Wales and the South West respectively, and felt that they could work together so that they were not duplicating their efforts.

The proposed projects covered a range of scopes, with many being highly localised and rooted within their communities, such as Pembrokeshire FRAME, with its local showrooms and community fridges. Other projects were more regionalised, such as Age Connects North Wales Central and Age UK Devon, which both support elderly people within their local regions. There were also a large number of national initiatives, such as CO-Gas Safety and National Energy Action, which have collaborated with other GDNs as well as DNOs.

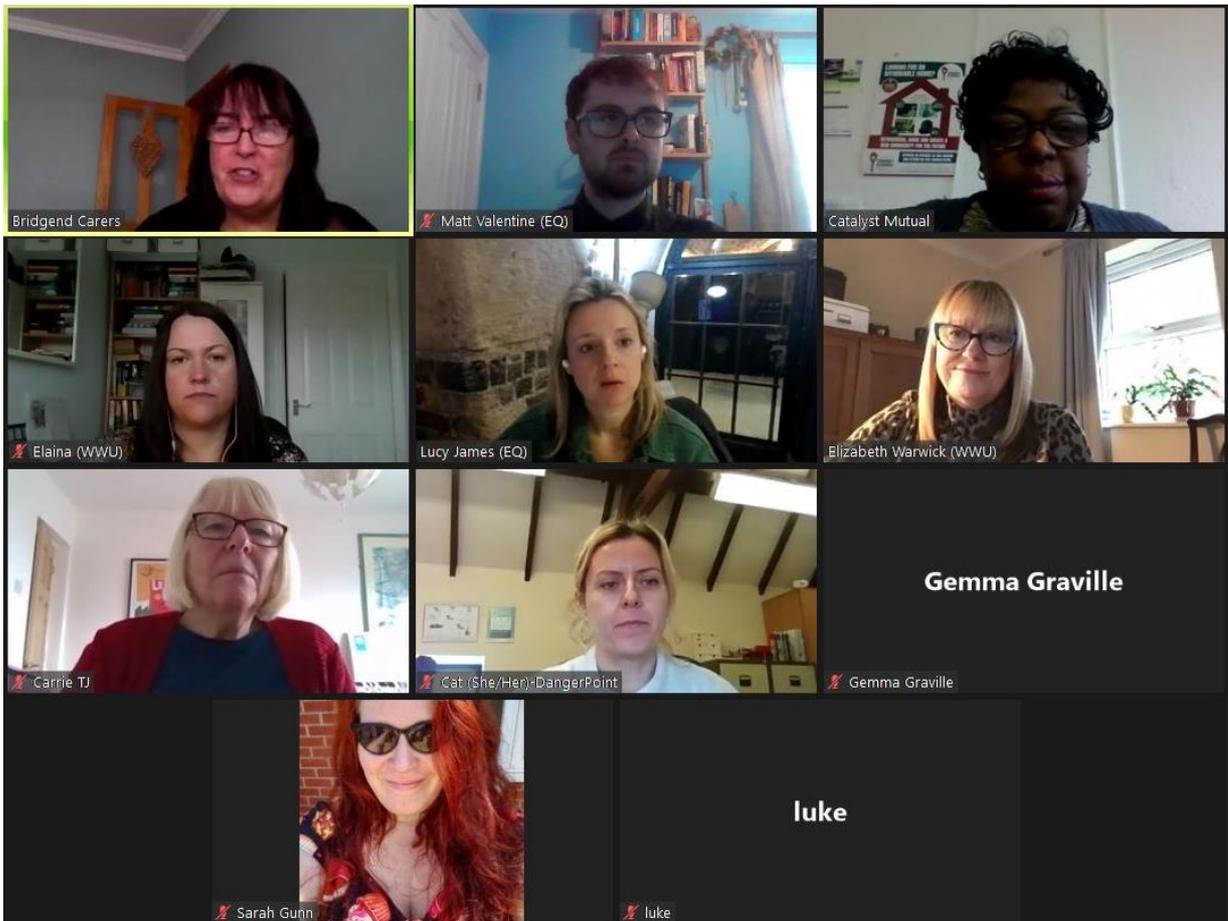
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## FEEDBACK

### 1. Please tell us about any projects you work on that may be eligible for VCMA funding

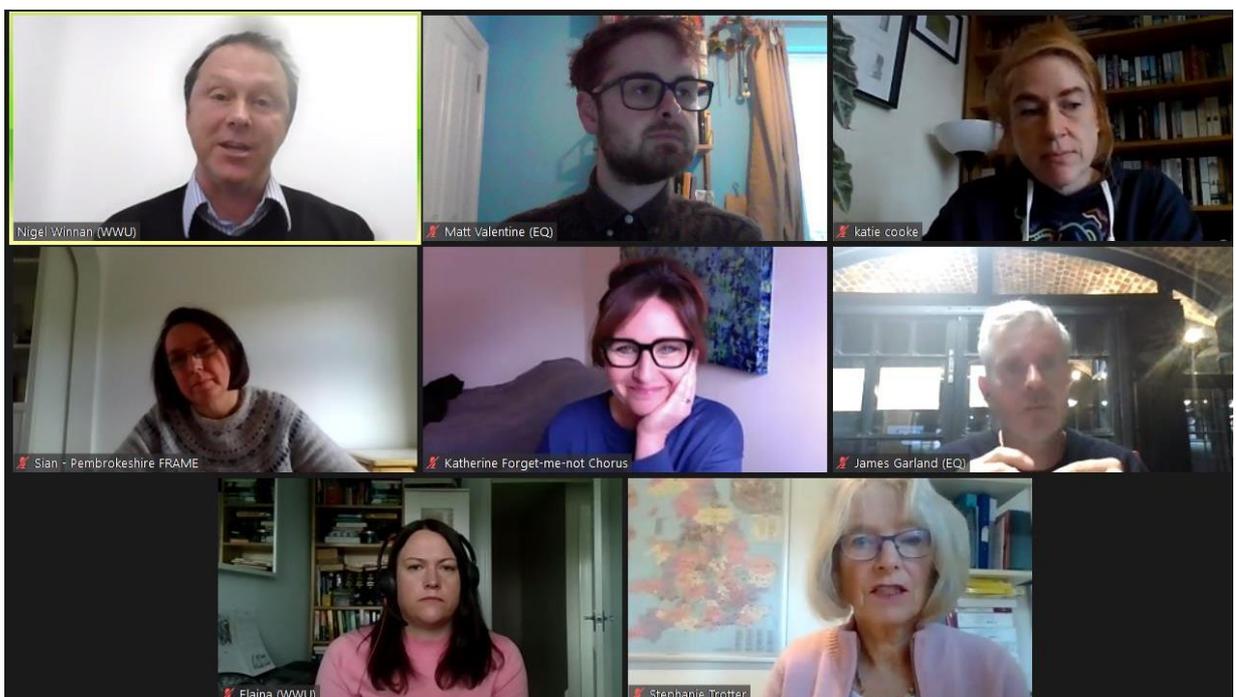
- “I’m from Pembrokeshire FRAME, which is a reuse charity that helps young people with mental health issues. We have a couple of showrooms in Pembrokeshire and we come and collect furniture and bric-a-brac from houses so that it can be sold in the showrooms. We also have reupholstery, painting and upcycling workshops and a community fridge. Today is the first time that I have been aware of your fund. We would use it on grassroots research that would focus on ascertaining the needs of our community in order to find out the fuel poverty needs, and are looking to introduce a new member of the team who could liaise with the community and provide the education required. That means that we could support you and support our community.” Pembrokeshire FRAME
- “We would be solely looking to work across Pembrokeshire. We look to best serve the needs of our community, so any grassroots research would help us to target the people who need the greatest levels of support from us.” Pembrokeshire FRAME
- “I represent Cardiff & Vale Well-Being and we run a community café called The Well Bean Café, which is used by a wide range of people. It operates as a youth forum, a venue for craft groups and as a café for people living with dementia. In addition, we have people with mental health issues and we offer counselling and psychotherapy in the community. We’re also running a science project around air monitoring with Cardiff University, which would help to develop new ways to proactively detect CO levels in homes. Local school children are coming in to help us with that, so it is acting as an effective education piece.” Cardiff & Vale Well-Being
- “This project benefits all café users that I have mentioned, and any additional funds could help us to pick up any new hidden vulnerabilities in the community. It could also help people who have been victims of CO poisoning, as we are looking to roll out a piece on that. As a victim of it myself, there seems to be little knowledge at a public level.” Cardiff & Vale Well-Being
- “We are particularly focusing on the vulnerable end of the spectrum and are working to deliver for vulnerable people in particular.” Cardiff & Vale Well-Being
- “I would be really interested in talking to CO-Gas Safety, as we could collaborate on our CO education process.” Cardiff & Vale Well-Being
- “I’m from CO-Gas Safety, a charity that assists survivors of CO poisoning. I would like to work with other GDNs across the country to tap into the wide range of knowledge available across the country. CO leaks are complicated and don’t just come from one source. The CO could be coming from next door or it could be coming from a wood burner. That expertise is key.” CO-Gas Safety

- “Our focus is prevention, prevention, prevention. We want to make sure that there is an expert helpline in place, managed by someone with expert knowledge of gas networks and CO poisoning in particular. Expert knowledge, maintenance of gas-distribution infrastructure and good alarms will prevent damaging effects of CO exposure. Our helpline helps people who think that they may have been the victim of CO poisoning. For example, the battery in their CO alarm has run out and the alarm is beeping. As there isn’t a set of universal beeping noises they are confused. We try and help them as best as we can, but we need to make sure that experts are in place on the line.” CO-Gas Safety



- “A major challenge for us is expertise. Medics don’t believe that people have been exposed to CO, as there is so little knowledge around it, and they don’t tend to take it seriously. In addition, so few people have been victims of CO poisoning in decision-making. Lots of needs aren’t being met here. So our work to build awareness of the wider effects of CO poisoning is key.” CO-Gas Safety
- “Cadent is running trials on devices to test for CO. We would like to pitch for funding from Wales & West Utilities to help develop something like this.” CO-Gas Safety
- “Our service will benefit everyone, and CO poisoning victims in particular, as people will know the signs to look out for around CO poisoning. If we truly achieve our aims, we will make ourselves obsolete!” CO-Gas Safety
- “It would be great to have people’s emails address from this event in order to swap emails so that we can stay in touch. I think that collaboration with any of the other organisations in the room could be useful.” CO-Gas Safety

- “I am from the Forget-me-not Chorus, which is a choir formed out of an initiative between Glamorgan Council and the Welsh National Opera.” Forget-Me-Not Chorus
- “The choir works to support people with a dementia diagnosis and those who care for them. We run activities in care homes and hospitals. We aim to use song as a shared activity, which is a struggle after diagnosis.” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “Any funding would help us with resourcing and disseminating what we do in order to make people aware of the services that are out there, and providing equipment, such as tablets and dongles.” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “The chorus spans the UK. We were constrained by resource and geography originally when we set things up. We started in the Vale of Glamorgan and then moved more deeply into South Wales and then up to North Wales in 2019. We now have a hybrid service. As long as people have an internet connection and suitable devices, they can access our services. Our reach has expanded far more quickly than I imagined as a result of the pandemic really. It has also made it easier for isolated rural residents to access us. Someone joined us from Texas recently, so local geography is no longer a barrier for us.” Forget-me-not Chorus



- “Before the pandemic, we had seven choirs in South Wales and three choirs in North Wales. However, now we engage with over 600 care homes across the UK.” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “They benefit people living with dementia, as well as their families and carers. Our sessions aren’t sad places and no-one talks about dementia there. We use the power of song for moments of joy; fun escapism. One person described them as a ‘spa for the soul’.” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “I am from Warm Wales and we have already received this VCMA funding from Wales & West Utilities, but there will always be gaps that we will miss, such as failures with older heating devices and patchy voucher systems. The fuel poverty assistance from the Welsh Government is good, but it’s a small amount of money and it’s not easy to get hold of it. In addition, people will not necessarily

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have the money to replace gas appliances early on and that could create wider issues later. Any wider funding could help us in these areas.” Warm Wales

- “I’d really like to chat to the Forget-me-not Chorus representative, as there are nice synergies between our work and the work done by the chorus. In addition, FRAME’s work could nicely complement ours.” Warm Wales
- “I’m from Action for Asperger’s and some of our work involves CO awareness-raising in schools and working with fuel-poor families.” Action for Asperger’s
- “We already work with Wales & West Utilities on raising awareness around the dangers of CO, but there’s more that we can do. We have children’s packs going home from nursery and school and we are also targeting parent focus groups. We just want to be able to keep expanding this work.” Action for Asperger’s
- “We work across the whole of the UK. We mainly deliver projects where we have funding, but can stretch across the whole of Wales, much of England and Scotland. We would be able to disseminate more resources across the UK about carbon monoxide poisoning if we received further funding.” Action for Asperger’s
- “We work with people with disabilities and older people entering conditions of frailty. We’re very localised in that we work in one borough. We reach a lot of the people who are very, very isolated. We work a lot with smaller disability groups and peer support groups, for example. We offer support around advocacy and welfare benefit advice. We do meet people in these extreme situations of vulnerability. I’d be interested to see how much of this funding could drop down to this very localised level. That’s the only way you can get to the people with these kinds of vulnerabilities.” Disability Can Do
- “We do have a whole network and system whereby we have moved as an organisation from using conventional flyers and posters to creating more personal contact. We’re developing a system of making registered visits to loads of smaller local groups, including lunch clubs, hospital settings, falls teams and smaller disability-specific groups. Each of the groups aren’t that big – 20 people or so – but when you put them together there’s hundreds of people who are literally on the fringes. A lot of them fall well within the vulnerability category you mentioned. They aren’t necessarily on the Priority Services Register (PSR) and might know a little about carbon monoxide but not much. There’s an intersection with poverty. Caerphilly as a borough is in the highest level of general indications of poverty. When you put all these factors together, it’s a perfect storm. I’d be interested in developing opportunities. One thing we have found through experience is that if you convince one person who is vulnerable, they tell another ten. There’s a network of word of mouth that happens. We’d be interested in reaching those people, using the ability we have and developing partnerships to enhance our work. I don’t see any value in working in isolation on this stuff, nor would I want to treat this as a competitive process. For me, it’s about focusing on what we can do and finding more effective ways of working together. We could bring our element of reaching the fringes and would be interested in leveraging the capabilities of other partners.” Disability Can Do

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- “I’m a home safety manager and also manage some of our projects. Pre-Covid, we were going into around 18,000 homes per year for safety checks. We do give advice and work with Wales & West Utilities. We are already working with you, but there are probably ways we can enhance that.” SWFRS
  - “We supply CO alarms to the Welsh Government but where there are profoundly deaf families – so where both parents and children in a family are deaf – the CO alarms aren’t always effective. We provide strobes and a vibrating pad, which sits under the pillow in someone’s bedroom, but these are only fitted in one room typically, so it’s no good if there’s a CO incident in the daytime, for example. With a fire, you can see and smell it but with carbon monoxide there is a missing link here. There are some partners that offer vibrating watches, so you can walk around wearing them. Like the stove alarms, this type of thing could be considered on a national scale because the budget for it is minimal, but you would still be targeting the most vulnerable.” SWFRS
  - “We are struggling with data protection. Everything we do has to be done with consent. I’ll give you my email and contact details and we can figure out the details.” SWFRS
  - “I run Community Energy Plus, similar to what Ian does in Bristol, but we cover all of Cornwall. I have been working on Healthy Homes, Healthy People and what preceded that so I’m familiar with it. We do a lot around wider energy advice across Cornwall. I’ve got a specialist advisor helping landlords understand the minimum energy efficiency standards and that’s quite a challenge at the moment. Cornwall is different from the rest of the South West region in that we only have half of our households connected to gas and there are lots of vulnerabilities that this causes for people on and off gas.” Community Energy Plus
  - “We’ve tried to do work with the fire service in Cornwall and got stuck with data protection. It basically closed everything down. We’ve not been able to crack that in Cornwall. Have you worked with other partners before?” Community Energy Plus
  - “We’re already working on the Healthy Homes, Healthy People project and are delivering against outcomes on that, so there’s no need to replicate that. My interest in this session is delivering something new around the education piece. One of my advisors a few weeks ago told me about an old couple where the CO alarm had gone off and they’d decided to put it outside because they couldn’t turn it off. There was a gap in their knowledge, and we had to pick this up immediately. I want to see a more specialist advice service for raising awareness. I like the idea of going into schools. We do a lot of work with lunch clubs, and now they are coming online it’s a great opportunity. This is a good hook for us. For this sort of project to happen, it would build on some of the engagement and community contacts our team already have. As Alan said, as an organisation we work across the whole of Cornwall and are constantly looking for groups to talk to and engage with. Often, it’s that useful thing of if they have a weekly meeting, we can come in on that. A lot of it is an extension of what we are already doing. It’s having the spare capacity.” Community Energy Plus
  - “I’m the Chief Executive Officer of Age Connects North Wales Central. It’s a charity operating in North Wales. We’ve delivered energy projects for a number of funders and organisations in the past.

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A direct result of the pandemic has been that we are working much more closely with others and are developing partnerships so we can offer a holistic approach. As an organisation with limited resources, we've discovered that working in genuine partnership and sharing resources is the way forward. We've been working with a mental health charity, for example, and do direct referrals. If people are suffering with mental health problems, they need longer-term help than we can offer. Sharing the information means we can provide a better service for people and increase our sustainability. I'd be interested to see how this funding could enhance our partnership working." Age Connects North Wales Central

- "Before Covid, we had vehicles called Older People's Forums and had six of those in one county and five in another. Because we had to go online, our audience was difficult to engage – a lot of them don't have internet connections and live rurally. We had to find another way of connecting with these people. We developed a newsletter and the original had 98 recipients. Now it has over 2,000. It's grown exponentially and professionals are requesting it because we have dealt with issues regarding the changes to Covid rules, for example, and have tried to alleviate people's concerns around this. It gave people a chance to be part of something. Even though the restrictions are lifting now, and forums can be re-established, by keeping the newsletter going we will always have a point of contact. It's about using something established. We deal with older people, and while we used to have face-to-face meetings for them, a lot of the guest speakers would cancel at the last minute on them. By having a regularly produced newsletter, people look forward to it. They know that they can contribute and that it's always going to be there. We've found that it's grown so big because they are passing it on to their neighbours. It obviously doesn't do much for the environment, printing all that paper, but we are reaching people that otherwise wouldn't be reached by other media. We would like funding for this newsletter as it's under-resourced at the moment. It's such a good method of contact. When professionals have something to add, they can input into it, too. It covers two counties and there can be nuances there, even between the two places. With the online services that became available, a lot of it was great during Covid but the content tends to be written with younger people in mind. There are several studies from universities – I think Lancaster University is one of them, for example – that show that online interventions made older people feel worse and more isolated. It's about looking at alternative methods." Age Connects North Wales Central
- "We have about 1,000 landlord members, including letting agents. We train landlords and agents to make sure they're doing things right and safely and are meeting their obligations. It's lettings, so we do have access to vulnerable families. We could definitely get on board with this, help people and give them the access to the information they need." Landlords South West
- "With our association, we do have lots of different methods of getting the word out there in a way that is relevant for landlords to help their tenants. A lot of tenants often don't see many people except for their landlords every now and then. The way we communicate with our landlords regarding tenant help tends to be through our quarterly news bulletin, which is posted to every member. Emails will only hit a tiny percentage of people, so we do choose to post it. We pay for the bulletin – we've always done it and it keeps them updated. Any information we can get out there with your guys' help would be great – for example, you may have posters and videos on carbon

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monoxide, which would be great because it means we don't have to put it together from scratch. Also, funding for people who are fuel-poor is a massive thing for tenants. Fuel can be something that tenants can't afford. A lot of tenants use topup meters and have no money left – that puts them in an emergency situation, but what can they do? We are keen on collaborating and seeing what we can do to get access to this. All of our bulletins are posted on our website, so I can send a link and you can look at the topics. Typically, it covers things like new legislation that's been brought in and minimum energy-efficiency standards. The latter is a hot topic at the moment, as properties have to be rated E or above to be let. Some properties are exempt but living in those band E properties would mean you'd be spending a fortune on your fuel. There are also news topics, and basically anything tenancy related. We are always keen on getting new ideas in there and getting the word out to tenants. Re the CO alarms, the legislation is that if you have any solid fuel source in any room, you have to have a CO alarm. If you don't have that, you don't actually have to have a CO alarm. However, we always tell landlords that it's best to have one. A while ago we had access to a load of free alarms for landlords, which went down well and served to raise awareness among them.” Landlords South West

- “We do a lot of work in Wiltshire and Swindon. Our projects are similar to the Warm Wales project. We have a lot of projects that would fit into this VCMA fund. We help 15,000 households a year, the majority of whom are in vulnerable situations. I'm interested in the funding potentially to help people transition to Net Zero. We might look at that area if we were to apply for the funding. Alan spoke very well about his project, particularly the importance of bringing people together, and referring to the right partners for the right support is really key. That's what we try and do. Anyone who switches heating fuel or technology and is vulnerable will always potentially face challenges running their home effectively if they aren't given advice. People who have switched to gas or heat pumps that we've supported have struggled because it's installed and then they are just left with the technology. We help people get connected and are also supporting projects where people are getting heat pumps. We'd be looking for advice.” Centre for Sustainable Energy
- “I'm in charge of our casework team. We promote the PSR and the CO alarms. We also give out CO alarms to vulnerable customers that need them. Our head office in Cardiff gets the funding and spreads it out to all the local offices so we do get some Wales & West Utilities funding, yes. Our projects vary. We've been doing free boiler services when we have had available funding but at this time of year the funding tends to come to an end. We are always looking for new funding opportunities to help people in their homes.” Care & Repair Western Bay
- “We are a constituted group for unpaid BME carers. It's a small group for unpaid carers and the people they support, who often have complex needs. I'm here to see how we can help them.” Carers Cube
- “I'm from the Mumbles Community Council and our project is in an embryonic state at present, as we weren't aware of these initiatives before our clerk forwarded an email about these VCMA projects to us and asked us whether there was anything that we could do.” Mumbles Community Council
- “Our project would be centred around CO awareness-raising. We would empower people by giving them knowledge about CO poisoning and intend to provide them with CO alarms. We want to ensure

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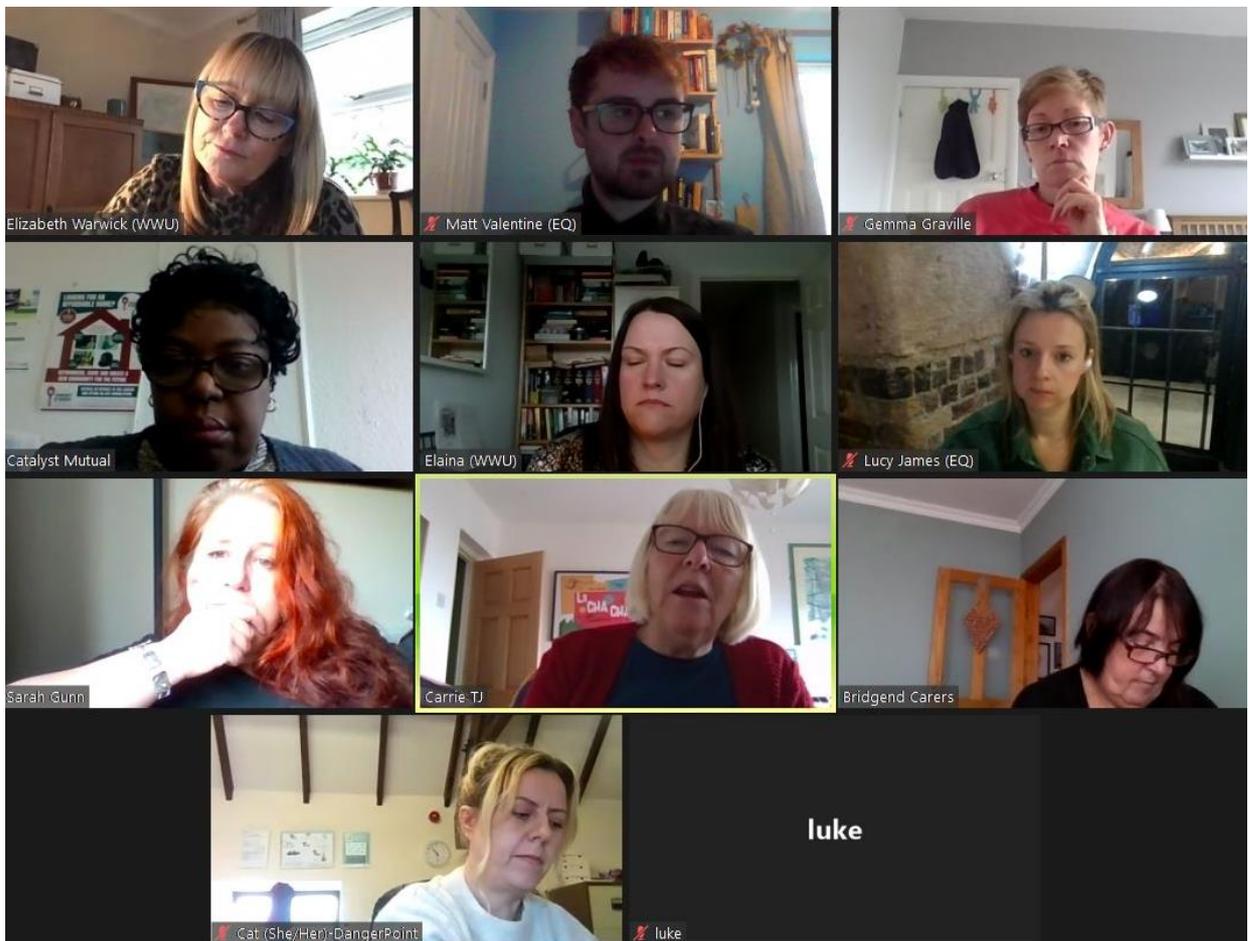
that people know how to check whether their boilers and gas fires are safe and generally throw the spotlight on the help available. This messaging would mainly be delivered through leafleting and social media campaigns. However, as our demographic is rather elderly, they tend to prefer to have a piece of paper in their hand, so we need to make sure that we place our focus there. Therefore, we thought that it would be nice to work with the schools on designing the leaflets, as it would give the leaflets a local feel.” Mumbles Community Council

- “Our first step would be producing leaflets and then distributing them to the 10,000 households in the local area. Around 500 households will really need these services.” Mumbles Community Council
- “Even though our residents are not poor financially, they are isolated and often do not keep up with the technologies required to keep themselves safe. As a result, we intend to work with local area representatives in Swansea to pick up vulnerable people in council and private properties. We are also devising some schools-based initiatives.” Mumbles Community Council
- “If we did something in local schools setting out the dangers of CO, would someone from Wales & West Utilities be available to come in to help us on that?” Mumbles Community Council
- “Could Wales & West Utilities provide alarms themselves for us to give to individuals?” Mumbles Community Council
- “I think that the Starter Carer Centre would be a good specific natural partner for you here. Lots of young people are having to take up the burden with caring for vulnerable people, so giving them some education so that they are aware of the dangers of CO would be invaluable.” Bridgend Carers Centre
- “I agree that carer associations would be a good starting point. We are also intending to target the Swansea Carers and Dementia Group.” Mumbles Community Council
- “I’m from Catalyst Mutual. We’re a public sector mutual and we work to support people in fuel poverty with energy advice. As such, we do home visits and group training for people to make them more efficient in how they use their energy. We have also been working with WPD on these kinds of initiatives.” Catalyst Mutual
- “One project that we have undertaken in recent years is around smart metering, and we established partnerships with fire stations, which involved promoting both smart meters and CO alarms. However, due to insufficient funds, we shifted towards advice around fuel poverty and energy efficiency. If we had some funding, we could bring CO awareness raising back into focus.” Catalyst Mutual
- “We would also like to be able to help people with acquiring digital skills. If we had time and money, we could work with job centres and help equip vulnerable people with the skills that they need to move forward in life.” Catalyst Mutual
- “It would be really useful for us to team up with groups that help people with income maximisation. There are huge links between fuel poverty and income maximisation, and we could help devise solutions for local people together. I would never be able to touch upon income maximisation on my own.” Catalyst Mutual

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- “I’m from Age UK Devon and work to disseminate advice about energy efficiency in Devon. We want to expand the scope of our work through the project funding. We do free benefit checks and work very closely with the Local Energy Advice Partnership and fire services to get safety checks done. We just want to get a holistic approach to improve people’s lives.” Age UK Devon
  - “We’re not sure where exactly we would target the funding, but we would generally like to expand our operations, as demand is huge, particularly with Devon’s elderly population.” Age UK Devon
  - “I’m from DangerPoint, an interactive visitor centre in North Wales, which operates as a safety education and life skills initiative. Our centre is set out like a film set and visitors tour around it and learn new skills in each room. When the first lockdown was announced, we started doing remote centre tours and interactive events, and would like to build on that going forward.” DangerPoint
  - “We’ve been contacted about delivering virtual CO awareness programmes in the North West and have done 90-minute sessions with schools, which have been well received. We are looking to create fun engaging materials incorporating Wales & West Utilities’ Safety Seymour and other Codebreaker characters as part of future materials for schools too. We have a good template, but we want to find a way to reach more isolated and vulnerable people in order to get them too. We know that our model works, we just want to find a way of expanding it as far as possible.” DangerPoint
  - “I’m Gemma and I’m the Manager at Lifeskills. We run an education programme for Year 6 children and children with disabilities about gas safety. I’m interested in how we can work together with other organisations going forward.” Lifeskills
  - “Our project revolves around going to schools to run projects around gas safety. We talk to the schoolchildren and increase their awareness of the dangers of CO and home appliance safety. We just want to expand these initiatives. I want to know more about what Wales & West Utilities is doing with schools and what they really need. We want to be able to support them with something beyond leaflets and talks.” Lifeskills
  - “This is something that we can work on together with you. It looks like we are trying to hit the same thing.” DangerPoint
  - “I’m from Bridgend Carers. Our centre supports someone who is caring for someone, and these carers are often lonely and isolated. Our people support them and find ways to help them maximise their income, which is an area where we can do so much more.” Bridgend Carers Centre
  - “No specific projects come to mind that fit within this VCMA ethos. Generally speaking, we need support to ensure that we can keep our carers healthy over this winter and beyond, as we are stretched looking after the wide range of carers in our area. Some are old, some are young and some are looking after people with cancer. We need to raise more awareness of what we do, but also need to think about how we would target such funding to achieve the best impact.” Bridgend Carers Centre
  - “Bridgend is a coastal area where lots of people have come to retire. We also have the valleys nearby, where there is a large amount of fuel poverty. In addition, there will potentially be huge

pressures this winter with energy costs and the Universal Credit uplift being taken away. So we would need to be able to support the potentially huge needs.” Bridgend Carers Centre

- “We have a close partnership arrangement with Bridgend Care & Repair, and they would be a natural partner for us. That is definitely something that would help us reach out to more people.”  
Bridgend Carers Centre
- “I work for a charity called Maggie’s. We provide independent cancer care support and have 24 centres across the UK. We deliver emotional practical support at any stage of the cancer journey for patients but also for their families and friends. The work we do is heart-breaking – people have been devastated by the impact of the pandemic. We do provide benefits advice and that’s the angle I’d be approaching this from – would Wales & West Utilities’ assistance with this be possible? Benefits advice is often the reason people visit a Maggie’s centre for the first time. The only thing is that I don’t know whether our benefits advice would be specific enough. The advice we give is about maximising household income, making sure people can survive and giving them one less thing to worry about at a very difficult time.” Maggie’s



- “The area that I’d be looking to get funding for is our benefits advice service. In terms of the area Wales & West Utilities covers, we’ve got two centres – one in Swansea and one in Cardiff, whose work extends over South Wales. We have existing projects – could we get funding for these?”  
Maggie’s

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- “I work for Care & Repair. We already have a great partnership with Wales & West Utilities. I’m here to find out more about the stuff going on. We have several programmes on the go. Quite often, people come to us with a health referral – maybe they’ve had a fall, for example. Through our home visit programme, we then often see that people are experiencing other problems, too. We have an over-70s programme and a programme centred around getting people out of hospital into safe homes, helping them live independently and preventing them from having to go into care homes. We also have a programme for people with sensory loss aged 50 and over, a programme for sight loss and a programme for dementia. There’s so much more we do, and I’m just interested to see how we can fit it.” Care & Repair Cymru
  - “We have several different specific projects which are aimed at supporting vulnerable people in specific ways – it could be supporting those in fuel poverty, those with sensory loss or those who have recurrent falls or are admitted to hospital on a frequent basis. Those are the different strands. In general, it’s about making homes safe, so ensuring that they are warm enough, that there aren’t any hazards people can trip over and that people can maximise their income. On that last point, having extra income obviously helps people to pay their bills but it also supports wellbeing so that people don’t have to choose between heating or eating. We also see homes in disrepair. Because we do so much, it’s difficult to pin down what we would use the funding for at this stage. I’d say it would maybe be more on the fuel poverty side because we are seeing such an increase in the number of people struggling to heat their homes and that then has a knock-on effect on hospital admissions.” Care & Repair Cymru
  - “I work for Swansea Carers Centre. We support 12,000 carers in Swansea, including BAME and young adult carers. We tend to do signposting, but we’d like to support people more with fuel poverty. I’d say that 95% of the carers need help with form filling. The Carer’s Allowance is £67.60 a week and often the carer’s utility bills are 10% more than their income. It’s a crazy situation, especially with the £20 per week Universal Credit payment being taken away. That was a lifeline for lots of people.” Swansea Carers Centre
  - “We’d be looking at funding a specific fuel poverty post to support carers. Similar to the Healthy Homes project, it would be around income maximisation, energy advice and helping people to fill in the forms. Our carers tend to be quite anxious about this. Some older carers don’t have access to the internet. I’m in fundraising and when I was office-based, I used to help people change tariffs. It’s so confusing for them with all the different suppliers. I’m also really interested in the cooking valves. We’ve got two members of staff working on our dementia carers projects. Having the valves would allow the carer to leave the house and have a break. I didn’t know about the valves, but I’ll be passing on this information to our staff. We also had a young adult carers project – we gave out small grants for them to spend on household things. A lot of them have spent most of their life looking after their parents, so things like life skills and fuel advice would be great for them. There are so many different aspects. Aside from these ideas, just a normal advice service would be great. We’ve got two welfare benefits advisors and have a four-week waiting list for that at the moment because there are so many people out there who want support.” Swansea Carers Centre

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- “I work for National Energy Action. We’re a national fuel poverty charity. We are delivering with Warm Wales on the Healthy People project. We’re also working with some of the other GDNs on the VCMA. I’m looking to see if any other organisations are looking for a new partner with fuel poverty expertise.” National Energy Action
  - “As a national charity we have our main advice service but also develop bespoke projects with partners, targeting specific groups such as refugees and asylum seekers, young carers, people with poor mental health, and expectant mums. It’s very much partnership projects – we work with community partners who find the right contacts and translators, if necessary, and that way we can target the right people. I’d also be interested in developing a collaborative approach. We have a number of ideas within our research team. One is tenants being forcibly capped – if they could simply top up their meter by £5, they wouldn’t be cut off completely, so it’s things like that. I know that new posts for fuel poverty were discussed earlier by Maggie’s and Swansea Carers Centre. We offer training in these areas, so would be happy to partner if that would be useful. We also have projects funded by other DNOs that could be replicated in Wales, for example, but the research projects would be new.” National Energy Action
  - “We’re a nationwide organisation. We are working with some other DNOs across the country, specifically on a project for expectant mothers alongside the NHS. We help with income maximisation, tariff switching and energy debt alleviation, but their needs extend much further. We do work with housing associations, too, when there is overcrowding, for example. When their babies are born, the mums tend to register on the PSR.” Hope 4U
  - “I would be looking to expand our expectant and new mothers project. We do other work in other emergency areas but the new mothers one has been very successful. Having a baby is normally a happy time but people do underestimate the cost, so we tend to look at income maximisation, utility debt alleviation, grant applications and energy efficiency measures. The energy advice and behaviour changes play a big part. We work with community midwives who have that contact with GP surgeries, so we have an enormous reach. Once a midwife has spoken to a new mother and seen that they need help, they just press a button, and the referral comes straight through to us. It’s good for the community midwives, too, that they’re able to offer an additional line of support. We work with partners too, such as housing associations. We are there to deliver the piece around energy debt, income maximisation, behaviour change and budgeting. We’re working with some networks at the moment who are funding the project because it has the scope to be nationwide. More hospitals are coming onboard but engaging the NHS initially can be difficult. In terms of the social value, we’re working on those figures at the moment but even the financial benefits alone can uplift individuals.” Hope 4U
  - “I’m a Service Development Manager at Headway. I work with a charity that works with adults with sustained brain injuries, be it from assaults, traffic accidents or strokes. We actually had someone who sustained brain damage through carbon monoxide exposure. She was quite young. We’re a day service that provides cognitive therapy and emotional support. We always have lots of projects going and ideas but I’m just here to see what the options are and what others are getting funding for. It’s just to gain a better understanding of the funding.” Headway Swindon

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- “One thing we are looking at getting funding for relates to the period when people first have a brain injury. It’s a catastrophic time for the whole family. Because they can’t work, their income is reduced, there are lots of benefits to apply for, the family dynamic changes and often there’s such a long waiting list for support. I wonder whether we could fund a one-stop-shop looking at their living situation. They’re at home a lot of the time, they’re using more fuel and they’re vulnerable, so it’s looking at those sorts of things. We’re a commissioned service with our local authority but the wait time can be really long. It often takes six months to get an assessment from social services. When you look into those kinds of things, there’s a massive gap for people and their families.” Headway Swindon

## **2. Do you have any questions about the VCMA funding?**

- “I was just wondering whether there was a difference between a project with one GDN and one involving all the GDNs?” CO-Gas Safety

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## SESSION TWO: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The second presentation of the day was given by Tom Robinson, Social Obligations Specialist. To begin with, Tom provided an overview of the applications process, the levels of funding potentially provided and the deadline for application submissions. He then presented the project eligibility assessment form and explained how stakeholders should fill it in. Finally, he provided guidance about how stakeholders should fill in the application form and which information should be included. Stakeholders were then asked to provide feedback about the applications process in the breakout rooms.

A number of stakeholders had previously submitted an application, although others were applying for the first time. Stakeholders did not identify any major difficulties with the application process and generally felt that the short and simple form was easy to fill out and far less intricate than similar forms used within the industry. This was greatly appreciated, as many of the organisations represented were small non-profit groups who do not have the staff in place to spend hours filling in long and complicated forms. Organisations that had not previously applied sought guidance about the process, whilst those that had submitted an unsuccessful application previously wanted to know which boxes they needed to tick in order to ensure that they won funding this time.

In order to simplify the process, stakeholders wanted Wales & West Utilities to be more upfront around how it wants certain costs to be calculated in the application form, particularly when assumed costs and revenue splits are involved. In addition, there were calls for a general support role to be created, which would help stakeholders who had encountered challenges in applying for the allowance. It was felt that these two aspects would ease their uncertainties around the application process and would make the process even more user-friendly. However, questions were also raised about how Wales & West Utilities calculates social value within the application process. There were concerns that using a different calculation method to that of Wales & West Utilities could undermine a group's application from a social value perspective. In addition, Wales & West Utilities was asked to be mindful around the amount of reporting and data-sharing involved with these projects, particularly for projects with lower levels of funding. Stakeholders were worried that small projects would be put off applying for this funding if they were going to be burdened with huge amounts of time-consuming data sharing.

Stakeholders were generally comfortable with the level of detail required and were reassured that Wales & West Utilities asks for more information if it is unsure about an aspect of the form rather than instantly rejecting a project on that basis. However, questions were also raised about how to quantify the benefits of a project on a community. Wales & West Utilities was asked to provide guidance about whether projects should prioritise helping a larger number of people or working towards having a greater impact on their community.

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## FEEDBACK

### 1. Have you had difficulty in applying in the past?

- “I joined Warm Wales after this funding had already been secured, so I don’t really have any comments to make personally. Though, at a general level, I would like to say that my working relationship with Wales & West Utilities is very straightforward and the reporting is to the point.” Warm Wales
- “I wouldn’t say so. The form is very succinct and easy to fill out. As a small charity, we appreciate not having to fill in pages and pages of questions.” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “I have applied for this funding before and on that first occasion, the process was fine. The problem was that the remit excluded what we did. The second time, we didn’t pass the second stage. I’m hoping that it will be third time’s the charm.” CO-Gas Safety
- “We haven’t applied before. It’s obviously the sort of thing that fits in well with what we do. Often projects run out of funding, so my question would be: are you exclusively looking for new projects, or would you consider funding existing projects?” Centre for Sustainable Energy
- “This is absolutely new to us. We are funded by landlords so are a non-profit organisation. As far as I know, we’ve never done any projects like this or applied for funding.” Landlords South West
- “I’ve only been in the post eight months, but I know we have received CO alarms from you. We don’t tend to do this as much anymore, so I don’t have any relevant experience to add, I’m afraid.” SWFRS
- “The form works fine for me. Compared to other applications that I’ve done recently, it’s so much easier. As we’re a community council, we don’t have a huge deal of experience around utilities, so we really appreciate how straightforward the application form is.” Mumbles Community Council
- “It looks an amazingly simple form. Other similar forms can be much more intricate.” Bridgend Carers Centre
- “In 2020, we had a £5,000 grant for six months for young carers, including £1,500 we could give to young carers to cover household essentials. It was me who applied. I think the application was online and I didn’t have any issues with that. It was really quite simple. Because it’s my job to apply for grants, I tend to work in Microsoft Word and make sure I save everything there before uploading my answers. That’s a tip I’d give to others – don’t rely on saving things in an online portal because sometimes you log in and you find that it’s disappeared!” Swansea Carers Centre
- “I’ve noticed that a colleague of mine has applied before so I’m just wondering, given that we weren’t successful, how can we make sure we tick more of the boxes this time round?” Maggie’s

### 2. How can we make the process easier for you?

- “We have to make assumptions based on numbers visiting our community fridges. Are just assumptions enough on the research side? Is that enough to build the outcomes around?” Pembrokeshire FRAME
- “In terms of educating people, if we recruited a staff member, what kind of training would be available to us?” Pembrokeshire FRAME

- “I would say that working out the precise numbers for costings is a little tricky. However, I like the pre-statement of interest in the application approach, as it helps parties both realise whether the project will be the right fit this time. That is so useful. Great things can come from just doing that.” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “Are the applications reviewed as they come in or are they all reviewed together following the deadline?” Forget-me-not Chorus
- “How does the reporting work? Is it annual or quarterly?” Bridgend Carers Centre
- “Say we made a pitch that was all staffing with some marketing material to support engagement activities, if we are distributing monitors would they have to be a separate cost? It’s always the capital revenue split that needs to be clarified with these sorts of applications.” Community Energy Plus
- “A lot of our work, like training and webinars for landlords, is funded by us. Because it’s not something I’ve got an idea of, could I get someone’s email so I can ask questions about the types of things we could apply for? I’d just like some pointers of what we can do. It would be great to follow up with Wales & West Utilities after the session.” Landlords South West
- “It might be worth you and I having a conversation, given that you are in Plymouth. Together with Alastair and Ian, we already work together and being able to pick up the landlord piece with you would be great.” Community Energy Plus
- “We work alongside Plymouth Energy Community and the local authority. We’d be keen to develop more partnerships.” Landlords South West
- “When putting together costings for our project, these would include artwork for Wales & West Utilities codebreakers and material creation. We wouldn’t necessarily know these costs straight away, however. Would we need to provide these costs upfront or could we do this down the line? A bit of support in this area could be good.” DangerPoint

➤ **Is there anything we should consider changing about our processes?**

- “I’d like to ask about social value return. In our organisation, we have a whole host of projects from social prescribers, community navigators and social enterprise that supports people doing things like theatre visits, so it’s personal support rather than care. We have different methods of applying social value return. We’ve worked with Bangor University on how you calculate social value return. We’d like to apply to the VCMA, but we wouldn’t want to disadvantage ourselves by using a different method to you or a method which means that we undervalue ourselves. I don’t want to make wildly inaccurate projections about what we do and wouldn’t want that to hamper our application.” Age Connects North Wales Central
- “Will Wales & West Utilities be providing analysis around the social return on investment or are we expected to calculate it?” Catalyst Mutual
- “Does it matter whether you apply for £5,000 or £50,000? Would you need to provide more information if you apply for £50,000? We wouldn’t want to be in a situation where we’re getting £500

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and then having to provide a disproportionate amount of data all the time, as that would take up lots of time and resources. That could put smaller projects off.” Catalyst Mutual

### **3. How much detail do you require (for Wales & West Utilities)?**

- “I love the idea of Wales & West Utilities asking us more if they don’t understand an aspect. You never know how your form will be understood. It’s very reassuring.” CO-Gas Safety
- “I’m comfortable with the level of detail provided.” Lifeskills
- “The January deadline is good. It gives you a lot of time to put things together and not rush to produce something before Christmas.” Catalyst Mutual
- “I’d be interested in quantifying the numbers of people we help. Is it about helping more people than we already help or having more of an impact on the people we already help?” Care & Repair Cymru
- “Is there a word count for the answers, to make your/our lives easier?” Swansea Carers Centre

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## APPENDIX 1: WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

After the workshop, stakeholders were asked to complete a short feedback form. Some of the key findings are shown below.

**Overall, did you find this workshop to be:**

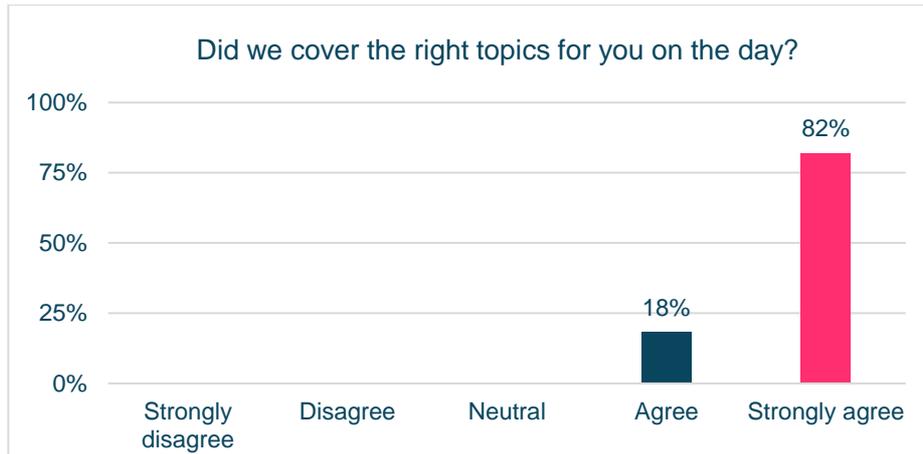


**Did you feel that you had the opportunity to make your points and ask questions?**



- “Very well-managed session with lots of opportunities for input and to ask questions.”
- “The breakout rooms were great, it gave an opportunity to collaborate and share ideas.”
- “There was plenty of time for discussions, the groups weren't too big and the facilitation was good.”
- “I really liked the way that this was run and found all attendees interesting and worthwhile.”

**Did we cover the right topics for you on the day?**



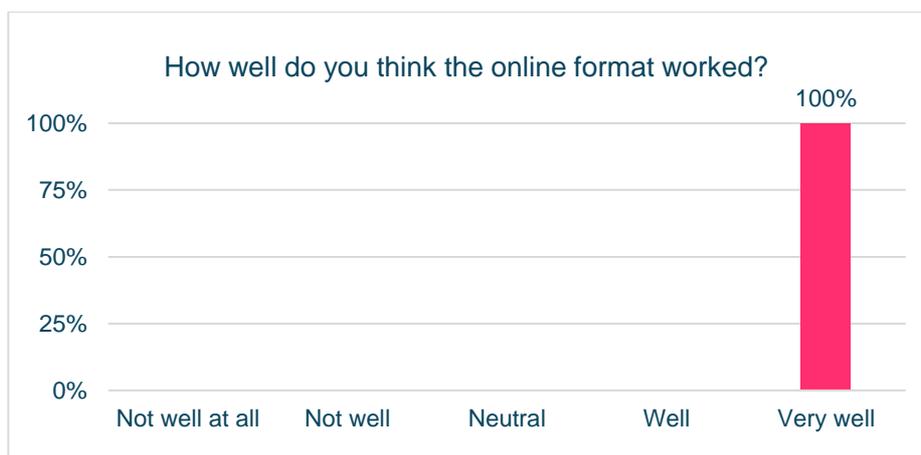
- “All relevant information covered.”
- “All covered, thanks.”
- “All very clear.”

### What did you think of the way the workshop was chaired by your facilitator?



- “Very smooth, approachable and professional.”
- “Really good facilitator.”
- “A very professional and personable facilitator who got a lot out of the group.”

### How well do you think the online format worked?



- “Very smooth and inclusive.”
- “An example of where online works very effectively allowing people from a wide area to attend.”
- “I though it worked well and I got similar usefulness from it as I would, had it been in person I think.”
- “I ran out of battery on my phone and can only apologise for forgetting to turn my camera off while I did some semi acrobatics apparently trying to plug my phone in!”

#### Do you have any other comments?

- “Many thanks for the invitation. This is new to us, we haven't bid for any funding before and the information that we received inspired us to do so.”
- “I really enjoyed the openness of this event and the friendliness. The other attendees were brilliant. My only sadness is the fact that I can't email everyone who attended and keep in touch with them – I put my email address in the chat box and I do hope they get in touch with us.”
- “It was really useful all round. The promotion of the event made it seem more formal than it proved to be I think (that might just be me) and I got the impression that some people might have wanted more information upfront; for example, some of the overview slides sent as an email or something.”
- “It is so very helpful as a trusts fundraiser to be invited to attend such an event. Really appreciate the information provided, the friendliness of the team and wish you all the best with the funding process. Thank you.”
- “Thank you for the opportunity to learn more about this fab opportunity.”



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