**Cadent questions. Worcester Community Trust**

**The impact the VCMA has had on the communities you serve and the work you deliver?**

WCT Cadent contract started in January 2023. Since that time, we have provided 2936 interventions and supported families with all aspects of managing their debt, energy and budgeting needs.

WCT’s ethos is to empower cohesive communities to recognise their strengths to reach their full potential, and become connected to one another to live happier, safer, and healthier lives.

Through Cadent funding, WCT has been able to provide trauma informed, person centred, solution focused support which includes the following:

* Wellbeing support and confidence building
* Budget management and income maximization
* Benefits advice / support
* Housing support
* Energy Advice
* Accessing grant funding

WCT supports clients to understand the risks of CO2, and how to safely monitor this within their own home. WCT also provides advice on the PSR register and proactively works with any individuals who meet threshold for registration. Since Jan 2025, WCT has signed 54 families onto the PSR.

WCT also provides educational sessions on energy saving. In additional WCT has developed a bespoke Slow Cooker course which includes advice and support on healthy cooking on a budget, and energy saving tips- which has become very popular within our male empowerment project.

We are currently receiving 30 referrals each month from a variety of organisations which includes, local schools, mental health teams, GPs, CAB, local Support Workers, including hostels, DWP, Onside advocacy, Welfare to work providers, and Worcester Council.

Of these10% are self-referrals, which is a testament to the reputation of the staff team and the support they provide.

This funding has enhanced WCT wider offer, 15% of referrals into this service come from other WCT projects including female and male empowerment groups, community wellbeing, domestic abuse projects and youth projects.

Across Worcester this funding has enabled us to provide a service in many of our own centres which are located in areas (IMD 1 & 2 ) of multiple inequalities, and intersectional barriers in health, educational attainment, housing and employment.

This funding also impacts the wider community in that WCT provides an outreach service which includes providing sessions in community venues such as schools and other charities including Sight Concern, providing an excellent and highly valued county wide service.

Please see attached Case Study.

**Is the proposed funding level appropriate? Do you request it is higher/lower?**

Based on information in the report and the increase in the amount of people in fuel poverty, which is an increase 11.2%, then I feel funding needs to be higher or at least stay the same. We know that there will be more people in fuel poverty which in turn means that more people will need the support of the team. To fund this vital service the funding would need to stay the same or increase so that we could potentially help more people in fuel poverty.  The other part of this funding is the slow cooker which is a massive help to people during the winter months. This course also helps with people being able to batch cook, which means they can save on their weekly or monthly food bills.