



# **Good Practice Guide**

January 2011

## Good practice guide contents

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## **Section 1**

### **1. Introduction – about this guidance**

This good practice guide updates previous good practice guidance published in 2002. It describes the current operational context of Care and Repair services in Scotland, considers contemporary issues facing the Care and Repair movement, and promotes best practice in respect to the activities of Care and Repair teams across the country.

The Scottish Government publication, ‘Reviewing Care and Repair in Scotland 2009: Report of the findings of the review of Care and Repair’<sup>1</sup> recommended that current good practice guidance should be reviewed and reissued.

This good practice guide has been written in response to the Scottish Government review findings and is intended for use by those involved in all aspects of the service, that is, Care and Repair managers, Care and Repair officers, management committees/advisory boards, and other stakeholders. The guide builds on existing good practice in respect to Care and Repair services and is not intended to be prescriptive or to have a regulatory context – readers should take from it only what they need and make use of the other resources signposted within the sections of the guide.

Not all sections of the guide will be relevant to every Care and Repair service and the advice and good practice examples should be taken on board if they are relevant to local circumstances. Care and Repair Scotland does not wish to hold back innovation or distract Care and Repair teams from defining what services or approach to service delivery is required locally in response to communication between Care and Repair staff and clients. However, the National Standards for Care and Repair services apply to all Care and Repair Services and these are set out in section 11 of this guide.

The good practice guide is available to view on the website of Care and Repair Scotland <http://www.careandrepairsotland.co.uk/> and in loose leaf format. It will be updated regularly to reflect changes in policy and in response to developments within the Care and Repair movement.

### **2. Summary of good practice guide contents**

The good practice guide is comprised of eleven sections, a summary of which is given below –

#### **Section 1 - Introduction**

This section provides an overview of the good practice guide and gives a summary of contents.

#### **Section 2 - Care and Repair services in Scotland**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/281672/0085086.pdf>

This section gives the background to Care and Repair services in Scotland, gives a description of the Scheme of Assistance, examines the debate around wider planning for an ageing population, defines the respective roles of local authorities and Care and Repair services, and gives a definition of core Care and Repair services.

### **Section 3 – The management and governance of Care and Repair services**

In this section the Care and Repair manager's role is considered, best practice in employment and management of staff is summarised, best practice in governance and governance structures are explored, guidance is given on business planning, and the Health and Safety responsibilities of Care and Repair organisations are outlined.

### **Section 4 - Delivering Care and Repair services to clients**

This section summarises key services delivered by Care and Repair, defines the core client group served by Care and Repair offices, explores systems for prioritising access to Care and Repair services, discusses managing outcomes, examines customer feedback systems, and gives guidance on managing complaints.

### **Section 5 - Information and advice**

General guidance on information and advice services provided by Care and Repair is given in this section along with a guide to quality assurance frameworks for information and advice providers.

### **Section 6 - Best Practice in Adaptations and Occupational Therapy Services**

In this section there is an exploration of partnership working between Care and Repair services and Occupational Therapy services, a summary of Scottish Government guidance on adaptations, and consideration of the role of Care and Repair services assisting local authorities discharge their responsibilities under the Housing (Scotland) 2006 Act.

### **Section 7 - European Union (EU) procurement rules**

This part of the good practice guide describes the legislative background to European Union procurement legislation, considers contracts that are covered by Care and Repair services and how they may be affected by EU procurement rules, clarifies tendering procedures, and gives an overview of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE).

### **Section 8 - Developing Care and Repair services**

This section examines how Care and Repair services can be developed and diversified in response to funding changes and the challenges that lie ahead, and includes case studies describing innovative Care and Repair initiatives.

### **Section 9 – Social Enterprise**

This section defines what social enterprises are, describes the issues facing Care and Repair services should they choose to become social enterprises, considers business planning for social enterprises, and examines procurement and tendering for public sector contracts.

## **Section 10 - Diversity and Equality**

This part of the good practice guide describes the obligations Care and Repair services have in respect to equalities legislation and provides links to further information about best practice in respect to diversity and equality.

## **Section 11 – National Standards for Care and Repair services**

In this section the National Standards for Care and Repair services are set out. This constitutes a statement of the standards to which Care and Repair organisations in Scotland should operate in relation to the delivery of core Care and Repair services. Guidance and sources of support to meet the standards are given.

## Section 2

### Care and Repair services in Scotland

#### 2.1 The background to Care and Repair service provision in Scotland

Care and Repair Services originated in the early 1980's, firstly as a pilot in two areas of Scotland before being established in 8 local authority areas in 1987. These services evolved in response to concerns that there were a significant number of older owner occupiers living in poor housing conditions who did not have the financial resources or technical expertise required to deal with problems of housing disrepair. The first Care and Repair services were established by Age Concern Scotland and Shelter (Scotland) following which further services were subsequently set up, with Scottish Homes and some local authorities as funders.

From 1993 Scottish Homes provided a central support function to Care and Repair organisations, including the establishment of Care and Repair Forum Scotland. Following a reorganisation of Care and Repair services in 1995, Care and Repair organisations were then coordinated by Scottish Homes' regional offices, a function that then passed to Communities Scotland on its establishment in 2001. By this time there were 33 Care and Repair services operating in 24 Scottish local authority areas with joint funding being provided by Communities Scotland and partner local authorities. In the years that followed, further pilots were established in areas that did not have a service.

In 2011 there are currently 37 Care and Repair teams providing Care and Repair services across all local authority areas in Scotland. Although the Scottish Government's Care and Repair review report notes that there are some gaps in geographical coverage and core services offered,<sup>2</sup> service provision can be considered to be national. Nonetheless it remains a challenge to the Care and Repair movement to address any geographical gaps in service provision and to ensure that there is a consistency of service provision across the country.

While the main objective of a Care and Repair organisation is to offer a property based service providing assistance to older and disabled home owners with adaptations and repairs in order to enable them to continue to live independently in their own homes for as long as is practical and safe to do so, the range of services provided and the client group served has evolved in response to local circumstances and has adapted in the context of the funding arrangements within the local authority area that the service operates.

Traditionally, Care and Repair teams have delivered information, advice and project management services to clients in respect to major repairs, improvements, and adaptations, with other services such as small repairs being developed as time went on. Although funding has historically come from a variety of sources such as Scottish Homes and local authorities, Care and Repair core funding has in recent

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<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government 2009. *Reviewing Care and Repair in Scotland 2009 : Report of the findings of the review of Care and Repair.*

years been received by the Care and Repair service provider indirectly from the Scottish Government through Private Sector Housing Grant paid by local authorities to the Care and Repair service or the managing agent responsible for the service. This arrangement has come to an end as a result of Private Sector Housing Grant ceasing to be a ring fenced budget (a budget set aside for a certain purpose that cannot be used for any other use) from the financial year 2010/11.

The requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (Scheme of Assistance) Regulations 2008 have influenced the funding and service delivery context of Care and Repair in Scotland. The impact of this legislation is considered below.

## **2.2 Scheme of Assistance**

The main purpose of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 is to address housing condition issues in the private sector, that is, the owner occupied sector and the private rented sector. Under part 2 of the 2006 Act, local authorities must make a 'Section 72' statement which sets out the local authority's strategy for providing assistance to owner occupiers and private tenants. The Section 72 statement sets out the way in which a local authority will deliver a 'Scheme of Assistance' to owners.

Schemes of Assistance reflect the view that although owners are responsible for maintaining their home, help from a local authority may be available. Local authorities are now required to engage with owners in a way that places an emphasis on encouraging such responsibility and they must focus public funds towards assisting those who are unable to instruct repairs to their homes through their own financial arrangements.

Care and Repair services are well placed to make a significant contribution to the delivery of a Scheme of Assistance in the local authority area in which they operate. The person centred ethos of Care and Repair services, characterised by putting the client in control of decisions, is consistent with the duty held by local authorities to assist older owners and disabled persons while ensuring that clients themselves take responsibility for the maintenance of their properties. Joint working with local authorities will allow Care and Repair services to fit strategically into the Scheme of Assistance.

Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 Act ends the previous arrangements for improvement and repair grants that were set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The 2006 Act places an emphasis on the provision of advice and information. Practical help through mandatory grant assistance is now only available in respect to alterations to meet the needs of disabled persons or the provision of standard amenities.

The circumstances in which mandatory grant may be awarded will depend upon the the local authority's interpretation of the assistance they require to give to a client under the Act. Furthermore, an assistance package will be dependent upon the individual needs of each applicant.

The Housing (Scotland) 2006 (Scheme of Assistance) Regulations 2008 set out the duties placed on local authorities in relation to the types of assistance that require to be provided, the minimum levels of grant that can be awarded, and the client's contribution.

Statutory guidance for local authorities in respect to the Scheme of Assistance stipulates that local authorities should consider making greater use of their local Care and Repair service in facilitating the provision of adaptations<sup>3</sup>. The ways in which Care and Repair services can support local authorities to discharge their responsibilities under their Scheme of Assistance are explored in the sections below.

The 2006 Act, the 2008 Regulations, and the Statutory Guidance for local authorities can be accessed at the following links –

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2006/asp\\_20060001\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2006/asp_20060001_en_1)  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/draft/sdsi\\_9780111000182\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/draft/sdsi_9780111000182_en_1)  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/265347/0079485.pdf>

### **2.3 Wider planning for an ageing population and the reshaping care for older people programme**

In 2007, the Scottish Government published a three volume strategy outlining the issues associated with planning for the future needs of older persons. This document, *All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population*<sup>4</sup>, was written in the context of older people forming a greater proportion of the population in the future. From a demographic point of view, by 2031 the number of people aged over 50 is projected to rise by 28% and the number aged over 75 is projected to increase by 75%<sup>5</sup>. This presents a significant challenge to the Scottish Government and to public service providers such as Care and Repair. Expanding current services to support a much greater number of older people is clearly unsustainable and other ways of providing sustainable and affordable care systems need to be explored. A summary of the strategy can be found at the following link –

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/08125028/1>

The strategy acknowledges the role of Care and Repair in supporting older people with services that enable them to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible through the provision of adaptations that meet their changing needs, and via other means such as carrying out small repairs or through home safety or home security measures.

The Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, and local authorities are presently working under the heading of 'Reshaping Care for Older People' to consult with voluntary

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<sup>3</sup> The Scottish Government 2009. *Implementing the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Parts 1 and 2 – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, Volume 5, Scheme of Assistance.*

<sup>4</sup> Scottish Government 2007. *All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population: Volume One: Summary and action plan*

<sup>5</sup> General Register Office for Scotland 2006

organisations, charitable bodies and clients on the best way to develop a care system and care services in the future. The Reshaping Care for Older People programme forms part of the Scottish Government's Wider Planning for an Ageing Population workstream.

The aim of the Reshaping Care for Older People programme is for the Scottish Government to collaborate both locally and nationally on developing a strategy that ensures that older people who need care are less dependent in the future on formal care systems. Such a strategy is likely to be focussed on ensuring that older people with health and support needs live independently at home for as long as possible.

If a measure of the effectiveness of a new system of care in Scotland is the proportion of older people living independently at home and not dependent on formal care systems, then Care and Repair services are well placed to make a major contribution to achieving this outcome. Personalised and client focused services provided at home which prevent and avoid the requirement for clients to access formal care services, are at the heart of what Care and Repair services deliver at present.

#### **2.4 The roles and responsibilities of local authorities and Care and Repair services at present**

Care and Repair services are well placed to assist local authorities with their obligations in respect to the Scheme of Assistance. Care and Repair services go beyond the provision of information and advice, for example, by providing practical assistance to owners by project managing works.

Local authorities, through their Local Housing Strategy, interpret the 2006 Act in order to deliver improved housing quality standards in the private sector. The Scheme of Assistance operated by a local authority in its area of operation embraces the concept that homeowners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of their homes. This concept is central to the way a local authority discharges its duty towards assisting owner occupiers, and in turn the way it makes best use of public funds directed at owners.

A 'delivery partner' such as Care and Repair can be used by a local authority to assist older and disabled owners who require help through the Scheme of Assistance. This can be done through the provision of advice which allows owners to make informed decisions about investment in their properties. More specifically, Care and Repair Services can provide practical assistance in relation to the delivery of a Scheme of Assistance by identifying required works at the owner's property, by assisting the owner through the process of tendering and appointing contractors, and by project managing the works.

Statutory guidance on the Scheme of Assistance encourages local authorities to contract with Care and Repair services to directly carry out certain types of adaptation work for disabled people. Although some local authorities view adaptations as one element of an overall package of support for disabled persons, Care and Repair services can play a crucial part in assisting local authorities deliver an adaptations service under their Scheme of Assistance.

In developing a Scheme of Assistance, and with particular reference to the provision of practical assistance to owners, local authorities may examine the options in regard to introducing and expanding local services such as home safety or home security. Care and Repair services can be at the forefront of providing these local services and have a role in developing new services that support the local authority's Scheme of Assistance.

## **2.5 Core Care and Repair services**

The principal objective of Care and Repair services operating in Scotland is to offer independent advice and assistance on repairs, improvements and adaptations to owners and private tenants who are over the age of 60.

The range of services provided by Care and Repair teams in Scotland vary according to the priorities of each local authority, the funding arrangements in the local authority area that Care and Repair operates, and the local circumstances affecting the client group that receives services from Care and Repair.

In general, Care and Repair services in Scotland provide the following core services-

- Information and advice on property related issues.
- Major repairs and adaptations – assistance with identifying repairs and improvements, preparing specifications, obtaining quotations, and monitoring works.
- Handyperson services – assisting with straightforward small repairs.
- Small repairs services – assistance with small repairs that require more specialist skills and knowledge.

Examples of best practice in these areas of activity are given in section 8 of the Good Practice guide.

In keeping with the objectives set out in the Scheme of Assistance operated by local authorities, Care and Repair teams offer a broad range of services that assist home owners, private landlords, and tenants residing in the private rented sector. In addition to these services, Care and Repair teams can provide locally based services such as home safety, home security and energy saving measures. Other initiatives such as trusted trader schemes and preventative repairs projects are also operated by Care and Repair services.

Balancing service provision with the demand for services remains a challenge for Care and Repair teams in the current funding environment. Pressures on funding and the continuing demand for Care and Repair services mean that decisions may require to be made regarding eligibility criteria in order to manage demand and target those in need. This issue is considered further in section 4.



## **Section 3**

### **The management and governance of Care and Repair services**

#### **3.1 The Care and Repair manager's role**

Care and Repair managers are passionate about the work that they do and the clients they serve. The role of Care and Repair managers may vary in accordance with the local circumstances of the Care and Repair project, with a Care and Repair manager who works for an independent Care and Repair service having a slightly different management responsibility from the manager of a service overseen by a Housing Association. The extent to which Care and Repair managers are involved in day to day casework may also vary from organisation to organisation, with services that have a smaller staff complement requiring the manager to be involved in day to day casework in addition to his or her other duties.

In essence however, there is a commonality among Care and Repair managers in that their principal objective is to deliver an efficient and responsive service to their clients.

Managers of Care and Repair projects have the responsibilities and objectives that follow –

- To deliver the goals, visions and objectives of the organisation
- To supervise and manage Care and Repair officers and other staff involved in delivering the service
- To ensure the organisation's growth
- To deliver alternative courses of action in response to problems that may occur

Good managerial practice includes adoption of the following skills –

- Leadership skills – giving direction so that Care and Repair staff can perform effectively and form a productive, goal oriented team
- Communication skills – facilitating clear channels of communication and ensuring that the vision of the organisation is communicated to staff
- Interpersonal skills – developing the trust and confidence of the Care and Repair staff team through coaching and supervision
- Planning skills – clarifying organisational and team goals and assigning strategies for achieving these goals
- Appraisal skills – evaluation of processes and procedures and deciding on the best course of action to produce the best outcome
- Decision making skills – Prioritising decisions in accordance with the importance of the issues facing the organisation

The performance of the Care and Repair team depends upon the Care and Repair manager's ability to support, empower and develop team members. The performance of team members will depend upon their motivation, and it is the

manager's responsibility to ensure that staff members are coached in a positive and supportive manner to achieve continuous improvement in the work they carry out for the organisation.

### **3.2 Employment and management of staff**

The business performance of Care and Repair services and good people management practices are closely linked. If best practice in employment is followed, then the abilities of employees are maximised to ensure that Care and Repair is a successful service.

The basic principles of good practice in employment are as follows –

- Employees should be recruited fairly, equally, and in accordance with the law
- Every staff member will have a contract of employment and a staff handbook summarising employment policies affecting the employee
- Job descriptions and person specifications will be in place for all posts
- Job descriptions and person specifications will form the basis of recruitment of new staff
- New staff will be given a comprehensive induction at the beginning of their employment with the organisation
- All staff will be subject to disclosure checks
- Staff will be provided with ongoing training and support including regular appraisals

Staff development through a supervision and appraisal process ensures that staff performance is up to standard, organisational targets are met, and staff are developed and supported in their roles.

To ensure that Care and Repair services are delivered effectively and efficiently, employees require to have clearly set out work programmes, attend regular training sessions on topics that are relevant to their role, and receive regular feedback and support from their manager in relation to their performance.

Ideally, Care and Repair staff should work in an environment where they can continually develop their skills and receive support when work difficulties arise. Supervision sessions between staff members and their line manager held every 6 to 8 weeks can contribute to achieving this. Supervision sessions allow the staff member and their manager to review current work issues, for current and future work issues to be planned and prioritised, for the employee to receive feedback and to be supported in their work, and for the training and development needs of the employee to be identified and met. Issues that are discussed during supervision sessions can be linked back to objectives that were agreed during the employee's appraisal.

A skills and training framework is essential to ensure that Care and Repair staff are equipped to carry out their responsibilities. Staff members are the most valuable asset of Care and Repair services, and as such, staff development and training is an important area of activity.

The training needs of staff can be identified through a training needs analysis or through the appraisals process. Training courses can be either in house or external, and training outcomes should be monitored to establish whether the training needs of employees are being met.

### **3.3 Governance structures, constitutional models, and the roles and responsibilities of committee and advisory board members**

Governance refers to the way in which a Care and Repair service is led, directed and controlled.

Most local authorities in Scotland use public sector housing budgets to engage a managing agent to deliver Care and Repair services. The managing agent is most commonly a Registered Social Landlord. Some local authorities elect to run the Care and Repair project themselves, while a small number of Care and Repair services are independent.

Care and Repair Scotland is the national co-ordinating body for Care and Repair services in Scotland. It has responsibility for promoting the Care and Repair movement and for providing a training and information resource.

There are a number of governance structures and constitutional models that are relevant to the delivery of Care and Repair services in Scotland. Care and Repair services operated by a Registered Social Landlord acting as a managing agent is the most common delivery model, but some Care and Repair services are delivered in house by a local authority, or are independently governed.

The Care and Repair review findings recommend that 'where practicable, all Care and Repair projects become self governing',<sup>6</sup> operating either as a standalone project or as a subsidiary of a Registered Social Landlord. The main advantage of an independent model of self governance is the existence of a separate governing board comprising independent board members who can focus on the best interests of the Care and Repair service.

The review report findings stress that a 'national model' should not be forced on Care and Repair services and that there should be flexibility in the model of governance. A decision about the advantages of independence set against the benefits of delivering Care and Repair services within a larger organisation requires to be made within the context of local circumstances and the best interests of the service. The governance model proposed by a Care and Repair service or any change to the model of governance currently followed should form part of the business planning process carried out by the organisation. Business planning is considered later in this section.

Care and Repair committee member responsibilities are defined by the type of managing organisation that has responsibility for the Care and Repair service. If the

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<sup>6</sup> Scottish Government 2009. *Reviewing Care and Repair in Scotland 2009 : Report of the findings of the review of Care and Repair*, p 29

Care and Repair service is managed by a housing association then the management committee of the housing association will have responsibility for strategy, policy, financial control and monitoring. Care and Repair services that are run in house as part of a local authority will be subject to the management structure of the local authority. Care and Repair services that have an independent governance structure will have their own independent management committee or board of trustees.

The provision of additional support and advice by an advisory group can ensure that local priorities are met, although the function of such an advisory group should be clear. This form of governance allows the service to be supported and developed by independent members of the community. An advisory committee assists with advice on the day to day running of the service and represents a link between the managing organisation, Care and Repair staff, and the needs of the local community. An advisory group acts exclusively in the interests of the Care and Repair service and typically consists of representatives from organizations working in partnership with the service. It is important that advisory boards have members with the correct mix of skills and that they are able to constructively contribute to the development of the Care and Repair service.

### **3.4 Governance reviews**

It is best practice for committees or advisory boards to periodically review their governance arrangements and to compare their systems against existing Codes of Governance such as the Good Governance code published by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations which can be accessed at the following link –

<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/codeofgovernance>

Codes of governance such as the one published by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations are intended to be a resource that can be used by organisations to improve their governance structures by giving examples of efficient governance and by providing guidance on how committees and advisory boards can govern successfully.

Governance reviews may be necessary in order to refocus the priorities of the Care and Repair service, to reframe the vision that the committee or advisory board has for the service, and to demonstrate to funders and other stakeholders that the service is well governed and efficient. Ultimately, good governance is critical to how Care and Repair organisations operate and are held accountable. A governance review should take place approximately every three years.

The following guidance sets out some issues a Care and Repair service should consider prior to and during a governance review -

- The purpose of the review should be clarified by the Care and Repair service
- A timescale for the review should be determined by those involved
- A consultation process should be undertaken with other stakeholders
- A governance review sub group comprising board members and some individuals independent of the board should be set up if comprehensive review of the service is taking place

- The issues that emerge during the review should form part of an action plan which should in turn set out short and long term actions in response to the review findings
- The action plan should comprise recommendations for change

The end outcome of a governance review should be a clearer role for the management committee/advisory board and more empowerment to the staff team.

After the governance review the following principles should be adopted –

- The role and remit of the service should be established and documented
- The services offered should be publicized and applied
- Governance arrangements should be reviewed regularly and in accordance with the needs of the organisation.

It is important to note that the Scottish Government’s Review of Care and Repair services recommended that Care and Repair organisations should be self governing if practicable. If a governance review concludes that self governance is not the way forward then it may be beneficial for the Care and Repair service to clearly document why this governance review outcome emerged.

### **3.5 Best practice in governance**

The following key principles should be followed by management committees or advisory boards in the pursuit of good governance –

- The committee/advisory board should ensure activities are directed towards achieving the strategic objectives of the organisation
- The committee/advisory board should ensure that the organisation’s assets are used effectively.
- Financial accountability should be demonstrated through annual accounts prepared by an independent auditor
- The best interests of stakeholders should be represented by the committee/advisory board
- A committee/advisory board should be able to demonstrate to stakeholders that it works effectively
- The Committee/Board requires to have a set of responsibilities that are distinctive from those held by the organisation’s management team
- The Committee/Board should be able to oversee the organisations activities in an effective manner
- Committee/Board members should be elected on the basis of their skills and experience
- Committee/Board members should have access to ongoing training

### 3.6 Business Plans

Care and Repair services are operating in an increasingly complex environment, both in an operational and a funding context. Care and Repair organisations will increasingly be affected by public funding constraints, and in the future difficult decisions will have to be made by management committees/advisory boards about use of resources and the future direction of the service.

In response to these changing circumstances, Care and Repair services require to set out their strategic aims and objectives in a business plan. The business plan is an important planning tool for the service, both in regard to running the organisation and achieving the organisations objectives.

Business plans should comprise the following –

- A statement of the strategic objectives of the service – what core and ancillary services are to be delivered to the community
- Analysis of local markets – what services are currently being provided or require to be developed in the local authority area
- Identification of target markets – clarification of the client groups that services are to be directed towards
- Operational targets – the outcomes that the service aims to achieve
- Financial projections – the costs of running the service and the viability of the organisation
- Risk assessments – identification of factors that could endanger service delivery or the viability of the organisation and the development of a strategy to respond to these threats

The business plan describes the route that the Care and Repair service intends to take now and in the future. It is a mechanism for senior staff and the management committee/advisory board to agree on strategic goals and objectives and to measure whether these have been met. It also provides stakeholders such as local authorities and the Scottish Government with reassurance that the service is meeting its objectives and is financially viable, in addition to presenting evidence in relation to how they can provide cost effective use of local authority and health service funding.

To create an effective business plan, Care and Repair services in each local authority area require to –

- Clearly set out the strategic objectives of the service following consultation with staff, board members, and other stakeholders
- Identify measurable outcomes and indicators of success
- Carry out analysis of the demand for services among older and disabled persons by examining local house condition survey data, local population trends, and the local housing strategy published by the local authority
- Detail the organisational objectives that define the future vision of the service
- Identify the resources that are available to deliver the service and to confirm other sources of income that can contribute to service delivery

The business plan should be translated into an operational plan for the organisation and in turn into individual performance targets for staff members to work towards. This way, ownership of the business plan occurs at every level of the organisation's staffing structure.

Business plans should be subject to regular review and testing. Scenario planning (exploring what may happen to affect the Care and Repair service and working out possible responses), and stress testing (the impact on the organisation's business plan should there be major changes to a number of variables) should take place.

An annual performance review will compare organisational performance against the existing plan and will provide an opportunity to revisit the organisation's vision and objectives in the context of the coming year's plan. Approval of the business plan can coincide with budget approval for the coming year.

Ultimately, a business plan acts as a tool by which Care and Repair organisations can monitor their performance. Targets for organisational objectives set out in the business plan, along with the individual staff member objectives aligned to the overall objectives of the Care and Repair service, can be measured on an annual basis during the business plan review.

### **3.7 Health and Safety**

Care and Repair services have an obligation to ensure that they implement Health and Safety laws and regulations that are applicable to the organisation's activities. Health and Safety obligations extend to full time employees, part time employees and to volunteers. The principal health and safety duty of Care and Repair organisations as an employer is to safeguard the health, welfare and safety of their employees and to provide a safe working environment for their staff. Health and Safety responsibilities extend to protecting individuals who visit the Care and Repair office, that is, clients and other members of the public.

To ensure that Care and Repair offices are safe places to work and to demonstrate that Health and Safety responsibilities are adequately discharged, Care and Repair services are required to provide information and training on Health and Safety matters to their employees. The promotion of safe working practices and focusing on the employee's role in maintaining a safe working environment are important parts of a Care and Repair organisations strategy for ensuring that health and safety requirements are met.

Health and Safety responsibilities however, are a two way responsibility. Employees are required to take care of their own and their colleague's health and safety, and must co-operate fully with their employer in respect to complying with health and safety matters.

Care and Repair services must have a written Health and Safety policy. Some Care and Repair services may choose to adopt the health and safety system operated by their managing agent or follow their local authority's process. Independent Care and

Repair organisations are likely to develop their own health and safety management system.

A health and safety policy statement will identify who is responsible for health and safety in the organisation and what the systems and procedures for maintaining health and safety are. All staff members will be aware of their health and safety responsibilities, be alert to hazards in the work place, and maintain good standards of housekeeping. In particular, staff will be conversant with first aid, accident reporting, fire safety, and have a working knowledge of the risk assessment process. Care and Repair organisations may wish to develop specific health and safety policies covering topics such as lone working and home working, fire safety, and manual handling.

Additional information on the management of health and safety (and on health and safety topics generally) can be accessed on the website of the Health and Safety Executive

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

### **3.8 Best practice examples**

#### **East Lothian Care and Repair - Setting up a Charitable Trust**

##### **Introduction**

East Lothian Care and Repair has set up a Charitable Trust to support older and disabled people who need repairs or adaptations to their home, but do not have the money to fund this. Staff at East Lothian Care and Repair found that it could be difficult to source financial help for their clients when there was a shortfall in the grant funding available for repairs and adaptations. Although there were many existing charitable sources, criteria could be quite specific. As a result, East Lothian Care and Repair explored the possibility of setting up its own Charitable Trust. This would allow it to raise funds, and distribute these to older and disabled people.

##### **Setting up the Charitable Trust**

The idea of a Charitable Trust was first considered by East Lothian Care and Repair in 1998 and it took two years for the Trust to become operational. Care and Repair worked through a process to set up the Trust involving appointing Trustees, preparing a Deed of Trust and the preparation of a Constitution.

The Manager of East Lothian Care and Repair led the process, supported by the Director of East Lothian Housing Association who are the managing agents for Care and Repair services in East Lothian. Legal assistance and advice was provided by the Housing Association's solicitors, particularly in relation to preparing the Deed and Constitution. East Lothian Care and Repair also received some help and advice from Aberdeen Care and Repair. One of the Trustees of the Charitable Trust was a solicitor, which helped to make the process fairly easy.

### **The role of the Trust**

The Charitable Trust was officially set up by East Lothian Care and Repair in 2000. It has an overarching aim 'to promote the welfare of older and disabled people with regard to housing and related matters'. The Trust provides grants to older and disabled individuals in need of financial support in order to undertake repairs or adaptations to their homes. It is a registered Scottish Charity, and is managed by a team of Trustees drawn from the community and from East Lothian Housing Association.

The Trust generates income through fundraising activities including applications to other charitable organisations, fundraising events such as dances and raffles, and encouraging donations from clients. Clients of both the Small Repairs Service and Core Service can make donations to the Trust. Clients often use this route as an opportunity to express their gratitude for the service. This is particularly positive as clients can feel that they are able to make a contribution, however small, to others who are unable to pay for the service. During the financial year 2009/10 the Trust attracted £4,165 of income from donations and fund raising activity, and £5820 was awarded by the Trustees to successful applicants.

### **Providing grants**

The Trust provides grants to Care and Repair clients aged 60 and over and disabled people who live in East Lothian who require repairs and/or adaptations to their home. Clients must have limited income/capital and there should be no other source of financial help available. Clients can generally receive up to £500, and in exceptional circumstances a larger contribution of up to £1,000 may be made.

Applications to the Trust are made by Care and Repair Officers, on behalf of their clients. Each application is considered by the Trustees before a decision is taken to make a financial award. The Trustees consider issues including income, savings, age, health and urgency of works to be carried out. Work undertaken recently includes roof, window and plumbing repairs and installation of level access showers and stairlifts.

### **Outcomes**

The activities of the Charitable Trust ensure that repairs and adaptations are carried out which would not be possible without additional financial help. The Trust is used as a last resort, when funding cannot be obtained any other way.

A valuable outcome of the Charitable Trust's activities is that the repairs and adaptations carried out help people to feel safer, more confident, healthier and more independent. It allows people to continue to live in their own home with an improved quality of life. Care and Repair service users are able to show their appreciation of the service by contributing to a fund which helps others to make repairs or adaptations to their homes.

### **Issues to be considered**

It is important to acknowledge that the Charitable Trust Trustees give their own time and energy to raise funds and that Care and Repair staff also put their own time into fund raising activities. It would not be possible for the Charitable Trust to operate and to benefit clients without the commitment of all these people.

The Trust and its fundraising activity also acts as a good marketing opportunity to promote the Care and Repair service, and East Lothian Care and Repair plan to continue raising money for the Trust to ensure that its clients benefit in the coming years. The Charitable Trust has proven invaluable where all other funding options have been explored and there is still a shortfall.

## **Lochaber Care and Repair - Establishing Care and Repair as a subsidiary of a Registered Social Landlord**

### **Introduction**

Lochaber Care and Repair is the first Care and Repair service in Scotland to be set up as an independent subsidiary of a housing association. Lochaber Housing Association had acted as the Care and Repair managing agent for over ten years, but in 2005 future options for the service were considered resulting in Care and Repair becoming a subsidiary organisation within Lochaber Housing Association's group structure in 2006. The company is wholly owned by Lochaber Housing Association.

### **Background**

As managing agent of the Care and Repair service in Lochaber, Lochaber Housing Association had been successful in delivering its objectives in terms of accessing grants for older and disabled owner occupiers. However, as the nature and extent of Care and Repair services was changing, the Association was no longer adequate to provide services to older and disabled people who were dependent on the local authority grant regime. Services needed to be holistic and innovative, dealing with a range of needs that included an increasing focus on smaller repairs, improvements, and adaptations as well as considering alternative funding routes for clients who were ineligible for grant assistance. The service increasingly involved partnership working, the provision of more extensive and co-ordinated advice and signposting including energy advice, small repairs and handyperson services, and working with hospital discharge teams. At this time it was agreed to carry out a review of the provision of Care and Repair services in Lochaber in order to refocus service delivery, to facilitate future diversification, and to enable financial transparency.

### **Outcome of the Review**

**Funding** – the Association assessed the costs incurred in running the Care and Repair service. Taking into account the cost of staff time in direct service provision and other overheads including office costs and external fees, the service was operating at a financial deficit. The Care and Repair service was also supported by financial and management services provided by Lochaber Housing Association staff, the cost of which was not included prior to the assessment. A greater need for financial transparency was also identified. One further challenge was the need to overcome the difficulty in accessing alternative and additional funding streams.

**Staffing and skills** – Operationally, the Care and Repair service was delivered by a Technical Officer and Technical Administrator, both of whom also had other Housing Association responsibilities. It was felt that separation of Care and Repair and Housing Association duties would utilise staff skills more effectively and would also be more conducive to the proposed changes in strategic direction.

## **Governance**

Three alternatives for the shape of the future service were identified –

### **Lochaber Care and Repair services remaining an integral part of Lochaber**

**Housing Association** – Lochaber Care and Repair would continue to operate as a ‘department’ of the Association, with dedicated staff delivering the Care and Repair service.

### **Lochaber Care and Repair becoming a wholly-owned subsidiary company –**

Care and Repair would be set up as a company owned by Lochaber Housing Association which would manage the business of running the Care and Repair service.

**Care and Repair established as an Independent Charity** – Care and Repair would be set up as an independent charity outwith the Association’s structure of Governance. The standalone company would have a governing body comprising of representation from stakeholders including Lochaber Housing Association and The Highland Council.

## **Advantages of separation**

The review concluded that separation between Care and Repair and Housing Association activity would derive additional benefits from separation. It would -

- ensure greater clarity of purpose for the Care and Repair service
- give the service an improved identity and customer focus
- provide better opportunities for developing the strategic direction of Care and Repair
- enable more effective performance management of the agency’s activity
- enable better management of costs by the Association through the separation of operational and accounting activity
- allow for improved transparency in relation to the use of revenue funding provided by the local authority and other funders

Lochaber Housing Association’s Management Committee considered the alternatives and identified their preferred option to be setting Care and Repair up as a wholly owned subsidiary company and as a separate registered charity. This would allow Care and Repair to develop service delivery whilst also retaining a close strategic link with the Association. Charitable status would allow the company to pursue alternative funding streams in its own right.

## **Consultation**

The Association undertook a consultation exercise with associated stakeholders, including the local authority and NHS Highland. The feedback received was positive and supportive.

## **Change in Governance**

In order to proceed towards establishing Lochaber Care and Repair as a wholly owned subsidiary of Lochaber Housing Association and registered charity, the following governance arrangements were considered.

**Lochaber Housing Association’s Constitution** - Lochaber Housing Association has a constitutional objective to facilitate support with ‘home maintenance, repairs, and improvement services for such people who are poor, old, sick or who have a

physical or learning disability'. The Housing Association is able to engage in 'anything which is necessary and expedient to help achieve these objectives', thus enabling Care and Repair to be set up as a subsidiary organisation.

**Companies House** – Lochaber Care and Repair was registered with Companies House as a not for profit company limited by guarantee and as a subsidiary Company of Lochaber Housing Association.

**Setting up a Management Committee** – A separate Management Committee to oversee governance and strategic direction and to provide operational support was set up. Representatives from Lochaber Housing Association, Age Concern, Lochaber Action on Disability, The Highland Council Housing and Social Work Departments, local authority elected members and NHS Highland were invited to form a Committee. Lochaber Care and Repair Management Committee is made up of 9 Directors and 6 Advisors from stakeholders including NHS Highland and The Highland Council.

**Memorandum and Articles of Association** – The Memorandum and Articles of Association setting out the objectives of the Company were compiled and validated by the Management Committee at their first meeting. These can be reviewed and amended if required subject to the agreement of the Management Committee

**Independence Agreement** – An independence agreement was drawn up setting out the operational arrangements of joint working between Care and Repair and Lochaber Housing Association. Essentially this gives powers to the Management Committee to take operational responsibility for running the Care and Repair service.

**Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)** – Lochaber Care and Repair was also registered with OSCR as charity and as a separate entity from the Housing Association.

## **Conclusion**

The creation of Lochaber Care and Repair as a subsidiary organisation has overall been successful. To date, it has realised its aims in terms of financial transparency, effective performance management and creating a clearer identity for the organisation. More importantly Care and Repair has also successfully diversified its service which now encompasses the delivery of Handyperson Services and operation of a Joint Community Store on behalf of NHS Highland and the local authority.

The key success in setting up Care and Repair as a subsidiary has been achieving autonomy and independence within a secure setting. The new arrangements mean that the Management Committee can focus on the strategic direction of Care and Repair while the organisation's governance arrangements have been strengthened.

## **Advice for others**

The process of setting up a subsidiary company is relatively simple. It can create real benefits in terms of autonomy and strategic direction. It also creates more transparency in funding arrangements. Setting up a subsidiary demonstrates that the Care and Repair service does not need to sit directly within the Housing Association to receive support from it.

### 3.9 Further resources and information

The Good Governance Standard for Public Services was published in 2005 by an Independent Commission established by the Office for Public Management and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. It is based on the Nolan principles for the conduct of individuals in public life and sets out six core principles of good governance for public service organisations. The standard can be accessed at the following link –

<http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/governance/govpublications/goodgov.pdf>

The Scottish Housing regulator publishes guidance on governance which, although focused on registered social landlords, is relevant to Care and Repair services. The guidance can be accessed at the following link –

[http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/shr\\_quickfind.hcsp?shrsearch=code+of+governance](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/shr_quickfind.hcsp?shrsearch=code+of+governance)

Governance Works is an organisation providing consultancy and training to the voluntary sector. Their website contains resources on governance and can be accessed at the following link –

<http://www.governance-works.org/resources.php>

Although focused on housing associations, business planning guidance written by the Scottish Housing Regulator can be accessed at the following link -

[http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/shr\\_businessplanningguidanceoc.pdf](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/shr_businessplanningguidanceoc.pdf)

Further information on the employment and management of staff can be obtained on the website of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development -

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/onlineinfodocuments/factsheets.htm>

Staff training/development information (and other management and personal development related information) is accessible at the following link –

<http://www.businessballs.com/traindev.htm>

## **Section 4**

### **Delivering Care and Repair services to clients**

#### **4.1 Key services**

Care and Repair services help older, disabled and other vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes by assisting them to repair, improve, or adapt their properties. Care and Repair services are locally based non profit making organisations that are managed either by a registered social landlord, are operated in house by a local authority, or are independently governed.

The three principal client services that Care and Repair teams deliver to their client group are as follows –

- Advice and information

Care and Repair teams will normally visit the client at home in order to assess the client's needs, and offer advice and information in respect to repairs, maintenance, improvements and adaptations. The client will be assisted with the completion of relevant application forms, and further advice will be offered in regard to the client's housing options and benefit entitlements.

- Help with funding options

Clients will be given information by Care and Repair teams about the financial options open to them including grants from local authorities and from other organisations (including charitable trusts). Advice will also be offered in respect to accessing loans and pursuing other means of raising funds for carrying out repair works such as using savings and participating in equity release schemes.

- Advice and assistance with technical issues

Technical advice will be offered to the client by the Care and Repair service. Guidance on the likely work costs and practical assistance with project management – tendering, appointing a reputable contractor, and entering into a contract – will be given by Care and Repair staff.

In summary, clients are offered the following –

- Professional information and advice relating to repairs, improvements and adaptations
- Practical assistance in respect to pre tender specifications
- Help with identifying funding options and determining the availability of grant funding
- Advice and practical assistance with associated application forms
- Assistance with income maximisation through benefit claims
- Practical assistance focused on co-ordinating the building contract and the provision of follow up services

Care and Repair teams provide a range of additional services and projects that complement the above and broaden service provision. Although it is important to note that Care and Repair services will not provide all of these services, the range of additional services across the Care and Repair network in Scotland include –

- Small repair services
- Handyperson services
- Trades referral/trusted trader service
- Home from hospital services
- Telecare installations
- Affordable warmth projects
- Home safety initiatives
- Home security initiatives
- Adaptations for disabled persons
- Garden maintenance

#### **4.2 Key principles**

The review of Care and Repair services commissioned by the Scottish Government in 2009 involved interviews with Care and Repair service managers and other stakeholders. The review included a report on stakeholder consultations and within that part of the report stakeholder perception of the service is detailed.

Stakeholders and Care and Repair managers described Care and Repair as a 'person centred, trusted, approachable and flexible service that works to meet the needs of its service users'.<sup>7</sup> Following on from this description the key principles of a Care and Repair service can be characterised as follows –

- Care and Repair is an independent, confidential and non judgemental service
- Care and Repair services are responsive to the needs of individual clients and offer a holistic approach to service users
- Care and Repair staff listen to and aim to meet the needs of their clients
- The service offers flexibility and choice to clients
- Clients value the privacy and trust that Care and Repair services bring
- Service provision embraces equality and diversity

#### **4.3 Core client group**

The core client group receiving Care and Repair services varies across local authority areas in Scotland. Although the principal client groups served by Care and Repair are older and disabled persons, there is diversity in the client groups catered for by the service. Some projects provide assistance to specific groups such as victims of domestic abuse in addition to their traditional customer base.

The Scottish Government review document published in 2009 calls for agreement in respect to identifying and defining core client groups. This can be contrasted with the

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<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government 2009. *Review of Care and Repair Projects*.

first National Standards for Care and Repair document published in 2004<sup>8</sup> which acknowledges that access to Care and Repair services vary across the country. Although the traditional core Care and Repair target group is older persons over 60 and disabled persons, the differing operational context of Care and Repair services demands that the client group served will largely be defined by local circumstances.

Ultimately, it is essential that eligibility criteria focus on those in greatest need within the local community. Decisions about core client groups will be made by Care and Repair services on a local basis in accordance with local priorities and available resources, and may include additional client groups such as younger disabled persons.

#### **4.4 Access to services**

There is a requirement for Care and Repair service providers to manage demand where the demand for services offered by the Care and Repair team exceeds supply and available resources are limited. Where demand for the service is high, priority may be given by Care and Repair teams to repair work that has a health and safety or home security implication for the client. The prioritisation of client cases can also lead to a more efficient and effective delivery of Care and Repair services as the collation of a waiting list will contribute towards the needs of clients being better known to Care and Repair staff.

Although Care and Repair organisations may be concerned about the implications of excessive demand affecting the capacity of the organisation to deliver services to clients, it is essential that this does not lead to certain client groups being excluded from receiving services. While the management of demand is a better alternative to clients not receiving services, prioritisation systems should be transparent, understandable to the client, demonstrably fair, and must be efficient in their operation. A prioritisation system can also improve access to the service while targeting those most in need, as analysis of structured waiting lists will place a stronger focus on the most vulnerable and socially excluded client groups.

Waiting list systems can fall into the following system types (or a combination of these). These systems (and their advantages and disadvantages) can be summarised as follows –

- *Date order waiting lists* – These lists operate on a first come, first served basis and while simple to operate, they do not measure client need.
- *Waiting lists based on a points system* – Such lists are collated by awarding points in respect to housing and health factors that are weighted according to the importance of the factors. For example, the highest points can be awarded in respect to serious disability and property disrepair factors. It is important that such a system includes criteria that are relevant to the measurement of a client's priority and that the weighting accurately reflects that priority.
- *Waiting lists based on group systems* – Waiting lists based on this system are characterized by clients being placed into group priority where each group represents a differing degree of need. For example, a high priority group may

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/26800/0023526.pdf>

comprise clients with severe health problems, a medium priority group may be made up of clients with health problems that are debilitating but do not significantly affect their day to day activities, while a low priority group may be characterized by clients with low level health difficulties. The order of priority within each group is then decided by waiting time. This system has the disadvantage that priority within the group is not determined by housing or health need factors

- *Waiting lists based on group plus points systems* – A waiting list based on this system draws on the advantages of the points and group systems described above. Client priority is determined by weighted housing and health criteria. For example, within a high priority group comprising clients with serious disability or property repair issues, a higher award of points is made to clients with severe mobility problems or repair issues that put the client at risk. This way, those most at risk of being unable to live independently in their own homes can be prioritized.

It is important that clients are aware of the rules accompanying the prioritisation system used by the Care and Repair service. Similarly, it is crucial that Care and Repair staff are familiar with the prioritisation system and can provide clients with clear information on the likely time it will take for their case to be prioritised and the work carried out.

Regular reviews of the waiting list should be undertaken to ensure that the list is as up to date as possible and to advise clients of the estimated time they will have to wait.

#### **4.5 Casework management**

Care and Repair organisations offer a diverse range of services to clients who would have had to have accessed a number of different service providers if Care and Repair was not available to act as a single point of contact.

Staff managing cases that arise due to the complex needs of their clients will subscribe to a customer centred focus that has the aim of achieving the best possible outcome for the client given their unique circumstances and needs.

Advice and practical assistance offered to clients by Care and Repair staff is characterised by the following service standards –

- At all times clients will know what services and support Care and Repair can provide.
- Clients will be encouraged to articulate what their needs are.
- Information on likely works costs will be given to the client at the earliest possible opportunity
- Consultation with clients will take place regularly in order to involve them at all times in the decision making process
- Through the above actions, owners are encouraged to take responsibility for their properties

#### **4.6 Management and measurement of outcomes**

Care and Repair Scotland are presently commissioning consultants to identify approximately 12 performance indicators that can be used to benchmark the performance of Care and Repair services across the country. These performance indicators will be set within the context of the development of a reporting framework which will be shared by all 37 Care and Repair offices covering outcomes, efficiency and effectiveness, and adherence to the National Standards for Care and Repair services.

While outputs from Care and Repair activities have been collated nationally in the past, the measurement of outcomes in relation to the performance and achievements of Care and Repair organisations will allow performance levels to be quantified. Moreover, continuous improvement in the delivery of services will be demonstrated through comparing performance levels against benchmarks such as the 12 performance indicators.

The collation of reliable and credible information on outcomes will allow Care and Repair services to make strong bids for funding while retaining the confidence of local authorities, the Scottish Government, and the clients that Care and Repair organisations serve.

#### **4.7 Customer feedback and customer satisfaction surveys**

Customer satisfaction levels in respect to Care and Repair services are a measure of how effective Care and Repair services are and provide a basis for continuous improvement in the work that Care and Repair teams are involved.

Care and Repair services can have a range of systems for determining client feedback. These can include feedback forms, surveys and customer forums, all of which allow service users to comment upon current service standards and contribute towards the future development of service delivery.

Consultation with customers is also important to ensure that service delivery standards are being met and maintained. Satisfaction surveys should measure the gap between a client's expectations and their view on the level of service that they have received.

#### **4.8 Managing Complaints**

If complaints are handled well, there can be benefits to the Care and Repair service and to the client. Care and Repair staff can benefit from the complaints process by directing learning from the complaints management experience towards improving future service delivery, and in turn, contribute to continuous service improvement. Complaints can highlight aspects of service delivery that Care and Repair staff were not aware of previously, and the opportunity arises through the complaints process for weaknesses in service delivery to be addressed.

Clients benefit from a well managed complaints process by receiving redress in respect to their complaint and will ideally, in common with other clients, benefit from better service delivery in the future.

For the complaints process to work well, an effective complaints procedure requires to be in place. The Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) has published a set of principles on which public services complaints handling should be based<sup>9</sup>. The SPSO propose that an effective complaints handling process should be –

- focused on the service user
- easily understood and accessible to the client
- a quick and simple process with as few stages as possible
- objective and transparent in the sense that it is impartial, independent and accountable
- consistently fair, treating complainants equally
- aimed towards resolving complaints quickly
- a mechanism for driving forward service improvements

The Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman is currently responsible for developing model complaints handling procedures, a responsibility that is set out in the Public Service Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. The model complaints handling process, standardised for each sector of public sector activity (health, housing etc), is being developed by the SPSO on the basis of the principles set out above. As a result, most Care and Repair projects will in future require to have a complaints handling procedure that conforms to the model set out by the SPSO.

The model complaints procedure proposed by the SPSO has three distinct stages –

- Issues are resolved by frontline staff with action being taken to deal with complaints quickly
- More complex issues should be thoroughly investigated by senior staff within the organisation, with a formal response on the outcome of the complaint being made to the complainant within 20 days
- Issues that have not been satisfactorily resolved will be independently reviewed by the SPSO or another equivalent organisation should the Care and Repair service be an independently governed body

The following points should be considered by Care and Repair services in developing their complaints procedure –

- Frontline staff should be trained and empowered to deal with complaints and have the first point of contact with the complainant
- Clear guidance should be given to staff in respect to identifying what constitutes and what does not constitute a complaint
- Staff require to be clear on what category of complaint they can act upon
- High risk or high profile complaints must be managed by senior staff

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<sup>9</sup> Scottish Public Sector Ombudman 2010. *Consultation on a statement of complaints handling procedures and guidance on a model complaints handling procedure.*

- Staff involved in the original complaint must not be involved in the investigation
- A minimum acknowledgement timescale of 3 days and formal response timescale of 20 days must be achieved
- Senior staff must take ownership of the complaints handling process and be accountable for the decision that is reached
- Staff should be able to inform clients of the process associated with an independent review of the complaint

#### **4.9 Further resources**

Guidance on managing complaints can be obtained from the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman at the following link –

<http://www.spsso.org.uk/online-leaflets/leaflets-for-complaint-handlers>

## **Section 5**

### **Information and advice**

#### **5.1 The role of Care and Repair services in the provision of information and advice**

Care and Repair teams throughout Scotland provide a diverse and complex range of information and advice services. Information and advice provision has always been a core activity undertaken by Care and Repair staff alongside managing repairs, improvements and adaptations, small repairs, and handyperson services.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (Scheme of Assistance) Regulations 2008 [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/draft/sdsi\\_9780111000182\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/draft/sdsi_9780111000182_en_1) gave Local Authorities in Scotland new powers to help owners and private tenants through the provision of advice, information and practical help.

Care and Repair projects have a central role in assisting local authorities with their Scheme of Assistance functions by providing information, advice and practical support that contributes towards assisting disabled and older persons to continue to live independently in their own homes.

#### **5.2 General guidance in respect to information and advice services provided by Care and Repair teams**

Care and Repair staff are committed to providing effective and practical advice and information to clients. Depending upon the clients circumstances, the general guidance that follows may assist in determining the manner in which advice and information is given.

- Clients should be encouraged to express what their needs are within the context of available resources
- Clients require to be made aware of what choices they have in relation to the services available to them
- Should adaptations work be necessary, clients should be briefed on the work process and any disturbance or inconvenience that may cause
- The most accurate assessment of financial assistance and client contribution to the works cost should be given
- Clients should be involved at all stages of the process to ensure that significant decisions are made with the clients consent
- Clients should be updated on progress with the works at all stages and given copy correspondence where appropriate
- Clients should have staff contact details and be able to contact Care and Repair staff should they have any questions about the ongoing process of arranging and carrying out the works
- Care and Repair staff should be prepared to signpost a client onto another agency for further information and advice should that be necessary

### 5.3 Quality assurance frameworks for information and advice providers

Care and Repair staff are not bound by a requirement to follow any particular quality assurance framework in relation to the provision of information and advice. However, the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers are the most common set of standards adopted by advice providers in Scotland. The Standards allow organisations in the voluntary and public sectors to develop effective information and advice services.

The Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers constitute a quality assurance framework for agencies that are involved in housing advice, money and welfare benefits advice, and debt counselling. The Scottish National Standards can be found at the following link -

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/287236/0087629.pdf>

The Scottish National Standards incorporate performance indicators, competencies for advisors, and good practice guidance.

Advice and information given by Care and Repair staff is likely to include some or all of the following, which contribute towards ensuring clients can remain safe, secure and independent in their own homes and communities –

- Visiting clients at home and listening to the repair, improvement or adaptation issue they have
- Investigating and diagnosing the repair, improvement or adaptations issue, and where appropriate, establishing the technical nature of the problem
- Working jointly with Occupational Therapists in relation to assessment of the client's needs
- Advising clients and older and disabled persons in the community of projects and initiatives of relevance to them such as home safety, central heating and energy efficiency initiatives
- Informing and advising clients of the options open to them in respect to grant availability, loans, and other sources of funding
- Giving information on welfare benefits issues, and where appropriate, signposting clients to other agencies.
- Taking forward on behalf of clients, repair, improvement or adaptation projects from initial enquiry stage to completion of works
- Advising clients on the small repairs and handy person services offered by the Care and Repair service
- Assisting and empowering clients to remain independent through the provision of good quality information and advice
- Enabling the client to take informed action on their own behalf

## 5.4 The Scottish National Standards for information and advice providers

Competency standards in respect to the provision of housing information and advice were first produced in 1995 and have been periodically reissued to reflect legislative changes in the areas of housing, money, and welfare benefits advice. The current standards were published in 2009.

Advice services in Scotland are diverse, and the range of advice given by Care and Repair services reflects this diversity. Should Care and Repair teams choose to follow the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice, interpretation and implementation of the standards will depend upon the type of advice and information provided by the service.

Care and Repair teams can interpret the standards in accordance with the service provided, and this in turn is mirrored by the degree of flexibility within the Standards to allow for the different contextual situations in which advice and information are provided.

The Scottish Government's Information and Advice Support Unit (IASU) are able to provide support to organisations that are aiming to work to the national standards. Assistance on interpretation of the standards and training programmes focusing on specific areas of advice is available from IASU. Contact with IASU can be made on the following link -

[housing\\_support@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:housing_support@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

To become accredited in relation to the Scottish National Standards for information and advice providers, an organisation giving housing advice and information must be able to demonstrate that it meets the quality of service defined by the standards. Accreditation can be achieved after successful completion of an audit by an assessor appointed by the Scottish Government Information and Advice Standards Unit.

Care and Repair teams wishing to become accredited require to achieve the following standards –

- General management standards
- Standards for planning
- Standards of accessibility and customer care
- Standards for providing the service
- Standards around competence
- Resourcing standards

Further information on these standards and costs associated with accreditation can be obtained by going to the IASU link above.

## **5.5 Types of advice and information services provided by Care and Repair teams as defined in the Scottish National Standards for information and advice providers**

The Scottish National Standards for information and advice providers define three main types of advice and information provision. These are as follows:

- Type I – Active information, signposting and explanation
- Type II – Case work
- Type III - Advocacy, Representation and Mediation

Care and Repair services typically provide Type 1 or Type 1 and Type 2 advice services. Care and Repair Services that provide advice and information can choose to be included on the Scottish Government database of information and advice providers. This database details the contact details for

- The Care and Repair team
- The client group to whom advice is given
- The quality assurance model used by the team
- Whether the advice service is accredited.
- The type of housing advice/money and welfare benefits advice provision
- Housing advice/money and welfare benefits advice provided arranged by topic

For staff giving advice on matters relevant to Care and Repair services, housing specific adviser competence 2.15 refers directly to ‘Housing Repair Improvement and Adaptations’. Advisor competence in respect to Type I, Type II and Type III information provision requires evidence of knowledge and understanding in key areas associated with repairs, improvements and adaptations. The required evidence is set out in the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers document and can be accessed via the link given in section 5.3.

Agency competence is measured in the same way, with the Scottish National Standards setting out the evidence required to demonstrate that Care and Repair offices promote and provide information consistent with the type of advice service that is delivered. Further information in respect to this is also available in the link to the Scottish National Standards.

## **5.6 Other quality assurance frameworks**

There are a number of other quality assurance frameworks that Care and Repair service providers can consider should they wish to follow a quality framework or seek accreditation. Other frameworks include –

- Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO)  
PQASSO is a self assessment tool that focuses on 12 areas of quality assurance including planning and governance, learning and development, communications and promotion, and monitoring and evaluation. While not a quality standard that relates principally to the provision of information and advice, PQASSO offers a staged approach to implementing a quality standard and is a useful self assessment tool. A PQASSO training programme is presently being developed in Scotland. Further information can be accessed at the following link to Charity Evaluation Services who provide support and services to charities and community organisations across the UK. –

<http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=172>

- Investors in People (IIP) is a business improvement framework based on staff development. Assessment against the Investors in People Standard allows an organisation to measure its development and to focus on future improvements. IIP can provide assessment against their Customer Excellence Standard (an improvement tool which develops high levels of customer service standards) and the Public Service Improvement Framework (a streamlined approach to organisational development). Further information on the services provided by Investors in People Scotland and other resources offered by them can be found at the following link –

<http://www.iipscotland.co.uk/>

## 5.7 Best practice examples

### **Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair - Becoming a Pensions Service Alternative Office**

#### **Introduction**

Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair has developed close relationships with the Pensions Service at a local level. For a time, the Care and Repair service acted as a 'Pensions Service Alternative Office'. This meant that Care and Repair could hold application forms for Pensions Credit, and other benefits available to over 60s. Care and Repair would support clients to complete these, verify and accept forms, and forward forms to the Pensions Service.

#### **The issues**

In 2005, The Pensions Service was closing its local offices and setting up a central call centre for all enquiries. To make sure that people still received high quality support with their benefit applications, the Pensions Service introduced a network of 'Pensions Service Alternative Offices' across the country. These offices receive and verify social security applications made by older people. The aim is to provide a better customer service, with fewer delays and frustrations. And it helps to build and strengthen relationships between the Pensions Service and their partners in the public and voluntary sector.

Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair were very aware of the importance of increasing benefit uptake among older people. The National Audit Office (*Tackling Pensioner Poverty: Encouraging uptake of entitlements (2002) and Progress Report (2006)*), had undertaken research into benefit uptake among older people, and had launched a campaign to increase benefit uptake. Furthermore, increasing benefit uptake was particularly important to Care and Repair. In Dumfries and Galloway, older people in receipt of the guaranteed element of the Pensions Credit are 'passported' to 100 per cent grant funding for repairs, maintenance and improvements. Older people in receipt of Pensions Credit are also often prioritised in other initiatives – including the current Central Heating Scheme run by the Scottish Government. Care and Repair was also keen to work in partnership with The Pensions Service locally, to continue to build on already very good working relationships.

### **Establishing a Pensions Service Alternative Office**

Care and Repair worked with The Pensions Service to become a 'Pensions Service Alternative Office', which could hold, accept and verify applications for benefits for older people. This involved training for all staff from The Pensions Service and Dumfries Citizens Advice Bureau.

This arrangement worked well for a while. Care and Repair supported clients through the process of applying for the benefits they were entitled to. But as there was a national drive to increase Pension Credit uptake, it became more difficult to identify and support the few eligible but still not claiming the benefit. After the initial drive, cases became few and far between, meaning that staff found it difficult to keep up with any changes.

At the same time, the Care and Repair Officers' workload increased, and funding decreased, resulting in staffing pressures. Dumfries and Galloway Council also strengthened its Income Maximisation Team – a partnership between the Council and The Pensions Service. This meant that a team of Income Maximisation staff were available to support older people. As a result, Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair moved to simply checking whether older people were in receipt of all of the benefits they were entitled to, providing basic information, and referring clients to the Income Maximisation Team.

In August 2008, Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair ceased to be an 'Alternative Office'. It continues to work very closely with the Pensions Service, and refer clients to the Income Maximisation Team within the Council.

### **Challenges and achievements**

Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair believes that through the joint efforts of the Council, Pensions Service and Care and Repair, the vast majority of older people who are eligible for Pensions Credit have received advice and assistance. The challenge is that it is those who are most difficult to reach who are left, and it requires lots of time and effort to engage with this group. Training staff on benefit uptake has been an important achievement. But it has been difficult to retain staff skills when they are dealing with very few cases – particularly as Pension Credit uptake increases. The context changes very quickly and it can be hard to stay up to date.

### **Key successes**

A key success of the initiative has been to raise awareness of benefit uptake among Care and Repair officers. Care and Repair is able to provide a wider range of information and advice, and through income maximisation can support clients to achieve more in terms of home maintenance, improvement and adaptation.

### **Issues to be considered**

The experience of acting as a Pensions Service alternative office has led Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair to make the following conclusions -

- Don't assume anything – always ask clients about their situation and you may uncover income or benefit related issues that need dealt with.
- Invest in ongoing training and refresher courses for staff.
- If staff are not sure, it is good to be able to signpost to a dedicated service.
- Staff can find it difficult to provide information and advice in an area which rarely comes up – it is easier if staff are building experience on a day to day basis.

### **Future strategy**

The Pensions Service and Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair plan to continue to make sure that clients are aware of the range of services available to them. Dumfries and Galloway Care and Repair will continue to check that clients are in receipt of the benefits that they are entitled to, and refer to the Income Maximisation Team within the Council. The Pensions Service will also refer clients to Care and Repair.

## **Shetland: A One Stop Shop for Home Owners**

### **Introduction**

Shetland One Stop Shop provides advice and assistance with repairs, minor adaptations, and energy efficiency measures to homeowners. Handyperson services are available to owners on low incomes, and a minor adaptations service is available free of charge to owners of any age. Rather than establishing a Care and Repair service targeted at more vulnerable households, Shetland Islands Council entered into a partnership with Hjaltland Housing Association (who are the managing agent for the Care and Repair service) to establish a one stop shop that would provide a range of services for all home owners.

### **Establishing the service**

The One Stop Shop provides general advice on property maintenance to anyone who requires it, and home owners can receive a home visit from staff working in the One Stop Shop in order to assess the works that require to be undertaken

Shetland Care and Repair work in partnership with Shetland Islands Council to deliver energy efficiency initiatives to owners homes and this may include central heating installations, installation of low energy double glazing, and other insulation measures.

For owners wishing to proceed with major repairs, the service can prepare architectural drawings, obtain statutory consents, and procure and co-ordinate the works.

### **Successes and challenges**

The service has satisfied a need for owners to be supported with the repair and maintenance of their homes. Arguably, the best thing about the service is that it is accessible to any home owner.

The provision of a universal home advice service has led to owners carrying out investment to their property that would otherwise not have happened. The holistic nature of the service has addressed many of the barriers owners perceive to exist when organising building services.

### **Future strategy**

Shetland One Stop Shop is continuing to work in partnership with Shetland Islands Council, most particularly in regard to developing services in line with the Council's fuel poverty strategy.

## **5.8 Further resources for Care and Repair teams providing information and advice services**

There are other resources that Care and Repair teams can use to support the provision of information and advice services. Training, support, and information resources can be found at the following links –

- Advice UK is a support network for independent advice centres offering training and information resources. Support in respect to the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers is available from this organisation

<http://www.adviceuk.org.uk/local/scotland/Scottishstandards>

- Wiseradviser provides training and support to money advisers. Training is provided in relation to the three levels of advice and information provision set out in the Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers

<http://www.wiseradviser.org/index.php/scotland/>

- Citizens advice bureaux provide a wide range of advice and information services to people in need ensuring that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

<http://www.cas.org.uk>

- Money Advice Scotland is the national umbrella organisation in Scotland representing organisations that provide free, independent, and impartial money advice. It provides training and consultancy services to its members

<http://www.moneyadvicescotland.org.uk/>

## Section 6

### Best Practice in Adaptations and Occupational Therapy Services

#### 6.1 Care and Repair services and Occupational Therapy services working in partnership to provide adaptations

Occupational Therapy services in Scotland are provided by Local Authority Social Work and Housing Departments, the National Health Service, and other public and voluntary sector agencies. Some Care and Repair offices employ Occupational Therapists as part of their staff team or have access to a dedicated Occupational Therapist employed by the local authority or health board.

The British Association of Occupational Therapists and College of Occupational Therapists give the following definition of the work carried out by their members – ‘Occupational therapists and support workers help people engage as independently as possible in the activities (occupations) which enhance their health and wellbeing.’

[http://www.cot.co.uk/Homepage/About Occupational Therapy/](http://www.cot.co.uk/Homepage/About_Occupational_Therapy/)

The College of Occupational Therapists is the professional body that represents individuals working in the profession, with professional practice being regulated by the Health Professions Council. Occupational Therapists work with a diverse range of clients in respect to age and occupational problem arising out of physical or mental disability. In common with Care and Repair services, Occupational Therapy seeks to reduce the impact of an individual’s health problems by helping them to live an independent life.

Joint working between Occupational Therapy services and Care and Repair teams is important as adaptation grant applications cannot be processed without an Occupational Therapist’s recommendation. This section of the good practice guide describes the policy framework for Occupational Therapy services, reviews current good practice literature, and sets out best practice in respect to joint working between Occupational Therapy departments and Care and Repair teams.

#### 6.2 Occupational Therapy services within the context of national social work policy

The Scottish Executive’s document, *Changing Lives: Report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Social Work Review*, was published in 2006, and ‘set out a new direction for social work services in Scotland based on the strong core values of inclusiveness and meeting the whole needs of individuals and families’.<sup>10</sup> The review emphasised interagency working characterised by early intervention and prevention to deliver social work services and can be accessed on the following link –

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91931/0021949.pdf>

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<sup>10</sup> Scottish Government.2006. *Changing Lives: Report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Social Work Review*

The contribution made by Occupational Therapy professionals to this vision for social work services is set out in the College of Occupational Therapists report, 'Changing lives, changing practice – occupational therapy in social work, enabling independent living in Scotland'. In this report, key challenges such as securing greater value and recognition for the profession, developing staff skills towards collaborative partnership working, and diversifying roles towards engaging proactively in prevention activities are explored. The report is available at the following link –

<http://www.cot.co.uk/MainWebSite/Resources/Document/ChangeLivesChangePrac.pdf>

In common with Care and Repair services, Occupational Therapists promote independent living by putting the client at the centre of service provision and in turn make a significant contribution to the Scottish Government's health and wellbeing agenda. The projected increase in the number of older people in Scotland means that the promotion of collaborative working between Care and Repair officers and occupational therapists will allow both professions to continue to contribute towards reducing the overall cost of health and care services while at the same time maintaining client independence.

### **6.3 Scottish Government Guidance on the Provision of Equipment and Adaptations**

In 2009, the Scottish Government published Guidance on the Provision of Equipment and Adaptations which can be accessed at the link below-

[http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/publications/CC2009\\_05.pdf](http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/publications/CC2009_05.pdf) .

The purpose of this guidance is to allow health, social work, and housing professionals, together with others working in the area, to develop partnerships and to work consistently in respect to the provision of equipment and adaptations. The guidance calls for clients and their carers to be at the centre of provision, defines clients and their carers as partners in the assessment process (which in turn facilitates choice and control), aims to promote a consistent approach to adaptations provision, and encourages partnership working. Accompanying this guidance is the Scottish Government's Guide to Funding a Major Adaptation which details the most important sources of funding for carrying out major adaptations to clients' homes. This guidance is available at the following link –

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/924/0103476.pdf>

The Scottish Government has published two other guidance documents relevant to the provision of adaptations equipment. The Good Practice Guide for the Provision of Community Equipment Services focuses on the provision of community equipment and supports local organisations providing adaptations equipment by acting as a benchmarking checklist and service development tool. This guide is complemented by the publication of a Self Evaluation Toolkit which helps adaptations equipment providers develop positive approaches to performance and to learn from each other. These documents are available at the links below –

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/924/0089844.pdf>  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/EandA/SelfEvaluationTool>

#### **6.4 Requirements of the Housing (Scotland) 2006 Act**

The Housing (Scotland) 2006 Act was introduced to address private sector housing quality issues. The Act also recognises that a significant number of disabled people would be able to live more independently if their properties were adapted. The 2006 Act can be viewed at the following link –

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2006/asp\\_20060001\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2006/asp_20060001_en_1)

As mentioned in Section 2 of the good practice guide, Part 2 of the 2006 Act places a duty upon local authorities to prepare and make publicly available a ‘Scheme of Assistance’ for home owners and private tenants. While home owners have responsibility for maintaining their own properties, local authorities may be able to assist owners and tenants living in the private rented sector where such assistance is appropriate.

Statutory guidance for local authorities in respect to implementing a Scheme of Assistance emphasises a move from grant funding repair and improvement works towards the provision of advice, information and practical assistance. Volume 6 of the statutory guidance on implementing the Act – Work to Meet the Needs of Disabled People focuses on extending the opportunities for disabled persons to live independently through the provision of adaptations. The statutory guidance can be viewed at the following link –

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/265371/0079487.pdf>

Care and Repair services are well placed to assist local authorities deliver their Scheme of Assistance obligations both in terms of information and advice provision and project managing adaptations work.

Grant funding resources are now focused towards disability related works, with mandatory grants available to fund most adaptations to meet the needs of disabled persons. Grant funding covers a minimum of 80% of works costs to 100% funding dependent upon the client’s benefit entitlement. Local authorities can offer discretionary grant support as well as mandatory grants.

#### **6.5 Partnership working in the provision of adaptations**

Requests from clients in respect to adaptations are normally subject to a single shared community care assessment carried out by an Occupational Therapist. Eligibility criteria may vary across local authority areas.

Care and Repair officers are skilled in ensuring that adaptation work is completed without unnecessary delays as they are able to advise Occupational Therapists about the adaptation work in relation to technical aspects of the property. By assisting clients select reliable contractors and by project managing the work, Care

and Repair officers can support the client through the adaptation process while allowing occupational therapists to focus on the assessment of other individuals, allowing waiting times to be reduced.

Partnership working between Care and Repair teams and Occupational Therapists is critical to the successful delivery of Care and Repair services. Occupational Therapists and Care and Repair staff will be involved in joint assessment visits, joint site meetings, and post completion visits, and work together for the benefit of the client.

The respective roles of Care and Repair staff and Occupational Therapy staff require to be clearly defined, with those involved being committed to understanding and respecting the role of the respective partners. The Occupational Therapist is normally responsible for the initial assessment of the client's needs and provides advice and support during the period the assessment is ongoing. Care and Repair teams have a more detailed project management role from the end of the assessment period to the completion of the works.

Effective communication channels need to be in place to ensure that the adaptations process goes smoothly. A partnership working toolkit that may be of use to Care and Repair teams has been developed by the Improvement Service, an organisation providing support and advice to local authorities with the aim of improving their efficiency, quality, and accountability. The toolkit is available at the link below –

<http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/library/view-document/234-partnership-working-tools-review/?format=raw&tmpl=component>

The working relationship between Care and Repair services and Occupational Therapy departments can be characterised by a desire to achieve a common objective, that is, the best possible service to the client. Maintaining the achievement of this shared objective may require each partner to review their approach to the partnership from time to time. It is important however to be alert to the possibility that the experience of clients can become secondary to concerns about how the partnership is working.

Partnership working requires constant development. The partnership working toolkit produced by the Improvement Service provides a range of tools for developing partnership working including partner responsibilities, conflict resolution, and partnership review.

## **6.6 Time Targets and best practice checklist for the provision of adaptations**

Although Care and Repair services in Scotland are not subject to a regulatory requirement in respect to meeting target timescales for carrying out adaptations work, it is in the client's interest that such work is carried out as quickly as possible. The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have established guidance on time targets that may be useful to staff working for Care and Repair services in Scotland.

While the DCLG good practice guide on delivering adaptations to disabled people acknowledges that setting time targets is difficult, they have set indicative time targets expressed in working days according to whether the adaptations assessment is ranked high, medium, or low. Within the overall indicative time target there are specific time targets for particular tasks such as carrying out an assessment, tender return and time on site for example. The total of these specific time targets makes up the overall time target. The DCLG good practice guide can be accessed at the following link –

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/138595.pdf>

Care and Repair teams may wish to consider developing their own targets based on local circumstances or to benchmark adaptations timescale performance against other Care and Repair services.

### **6.7 Care and Repair services working directly with Occupational Therapy services**

As stated earlier in this section, some Care and Repair offices in Scotland directly employ Occupational Therapists or work closely with Occupational Therapists as a result of Care and Repair projects having responsibility for adaptations work in the local authority area in which they operate. The benefits of doing so include –

- A ‘one stop shop’ model can be established which allows ease of access to the adaptations process for clients
- Occupational Therapy processes can be simplified with a resultant reduction in waiting times
- Care and Repair services can project manage all aspects of the case – application for grant, adaptations design, tendering of works, contractor selection
- Minor adaptations can be dealt with through the small repairs service
- Occupational Therapists can focus on assessments and as a result reduce waiting times

### **6.8 Cost benefits of adaptations services being provided by Care and Repair services**

Research evidence in respect to a link between investment in adaptations and revenue budget savings of health and social work departments is beginning to emerge. To demonstrate such a link, evidence from different sources has to be gathered, and methodologies to support this research have to be developed. Care and Repair Scotland are currently commissioning consultants to consider the feasibility of assessing the extent to which Care and Repair services in Scotland contribute to such savings.

Recent research by Bristol University<sup>11</sup> has demonstrated the cost benefits of investment in adaptations and equipment in addition to the clear benefits to clients.

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<sup>11</sup> Office for Disability Issues/Bristol University, 2007. *Better outcomes, lower costs.*

The research report can be accessed below –

<http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk/docs/res/il/better-outcomes-report.pdf>

The provision of adaptations can save Local Authority Social Work Departments and the National Health Service significant sums of money in respect to cost savings on residential care and care at home, prevention of accidents in the home, and by preventing admissions to hospital. Not all adaptations will have a cost saving but if they are installed as an alternative to the aforementioned then savings may occur.

Overall, the provision of adaptations can prevent health problems from developing among the client groups served by Care and Repair teams, with a resultant saving to the NHS and respective local authority in respect to unnecessary health and care costs. This has a beneficial effect on the most effective use of public money.

Through delivering adaptations within efficient timescales, Care and Repair services contribute towards ensuring that Occupational Therapists assessments do not become out of date and no longer relevant to the client's needs. The effective delivery of adaptations by Care and Repair services ensures that there are benefits to both the client and the National Health Service, and best practice in this area should be promoted by Care and Repair organisations.

## **6.9 Best practice examples**

### **Borders Care and Repair - Best practice in adaptations**

#### **Background**

Borders Care and Repair was established in 2007 following a successful pilot scheme in the central borders area. Eildon Housing Association acts as the managing agent for the Care and Repair service in the Borders local authority area through a contract with Scottish Borders Council.

In common with other Care and Repair services in Scotland, the primary aim of Borders Care and Repair is to enable older and disabled people to remain in their own homes by providing help and advice on repairs, improvements and adaptations and to ensure that the work is carried out to a high standard.

The service has evolved to include a minor adaptations programme delivered to all tenures via the handyperson service, and major adaptations delivered to tenants of Registered Social Landlords and to owner occupiers who are eligible for grant funding or are self funded.

#### **Service provision**

The movement of minor adaptations provision from Scottish Borders Council Social Work Services to Borders Care and Repair has enabled Occupational Therapists employed by the Council to concentrate on assessment of need and on

rehabilitation, and to devolve management of major adaptations. It has also allowed Occupational Therapists employed by the NHS to access adaptations directly, thus reducing waiting times.

Borders Care and Repair employ an in house occupational therapist who can carry out a client/ environment analysis to assess the necessary improvements required to a client's home in order to help the client be more independent. When a Social Work Services or NHS Occupational Therapist forwards a request to Borders Care and Repair for a client to have a major adaptation installed, the Borders Care and Repair Occupational Therapist will carry out a visit to the client's home to establish the client's exact requirements. A Project Officer from Care and Repair will then plan and specify the works, request costings, and assist the client with a grant application should that be relevant. When the works have been instructed and have commenced, the Project Officer from Care and Repair will monitor progress and sign off the works when completed. Grant funding, if appropriate, will be drawn down at this stage.

The adaptations service provided by Borders Care and Repair aims to -

- Facilitate the installation of minor adaptations such as grab rails through the handyman service
- Reduce waiting lists and waiting times
- Facilitate a 'one stop shop' that is accessible to both Occupational Therapists and clients
- Design adaptations to the specific needs of each individual client and assist the client through the process
- Provide an advice/design service for self funded adaptations

Adaptations such as grab rails, bath and shower aids, level access showers, ramps, and stair lifts can all be fitted through the service.

### **Outcomes and benefits**

The Borders Care and Repair adaptations service achieves the following outcomes and benefits -

- The workload of Occupational Therapists from Scottish Borders Council Social Work Services is reduced and they are able to focus on assessment and rehabilitation work
- Occupational Therapy processes have been simplified and streamlined to create efficiencies
- The service operates as a 'one stop shop' which is easily accessed by Occupational Therapists and clients
- Project Officers are able to offer considerable technical experience
- The service is client centred and offers assistance with planning, tendering, grant applications, and on site management at a pace appropriate to the client's needs
- Adaptations are designed to meet the specific needs of clients
- An advice and design service is available for self funded adaptations
- Approved contractors are used to carry out the works
- Public funding savings are achieved in areas such as reduced architect fees

- An excellent joint working arrangement is in place with Scottish Borders Council grants department
- Time is saved for the Council's grants team as the collation of financial information from the client to calculate grant entitlement is carried out by Care and Repair staff

The adaptations service delivered by Borders Care and Repair offers considerable benefits to clients, most particularly in respect to removing the stress associated with dealing with contractors and applying for grant assistance.

Significant efficiencies have been achieved by allowing Scottish Borders Council Occupational Therapists to shift the emphasis of their work towards assessment and rehabilitation. Occupational Therapists working for the NHS in the Borders area can now refer directly to Borders Care and Repair, greatly decreasing waiting time for the clients concerned.

The adaptations work of Borders Care and Repair is consistent with and supports current government initiatives.

### **Future strategy**

Borders Care and Repair is presently developing its adaptations service to meet local and national needs. An example of this is the Borders Care and Repair service undertaking the delivery of adaptations for Registered Social Landlords operating in the Borders area.

## **Lochalsh and Skye Care and Repair - Establishing Equipment Stores**

### **Introduction**

Lochalsh and Skye handyperson service maintain two equipment stores for all equipment required by the Social Work department and the NHS. The Service is responsible for the cleaning, maintenance, storage and installation of the equipment. Involvement in this work has gradually led to the service extending its activity into other areas. In addition to this, the service undertakes minor repairs within the home for the older and the disabled free of charge.

### **Identifying and responding to the need for equipment stores**

Lochalsh and Skye handyperson service was established in 1998. Following a survey by the Community Care Forum, a need for a small repairs service was identified. Initially, funding was sourced by Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association from a variety of funders, mostly charitable. A few years later, staff became aware that equipment, supplied by Social Work and the NHS, were not always being reused when they were no longer required by a client. Informal discussion with an NHS staff member over the issue eventually led to Lochalsh and Skye Care and Repair being contracted by the NHS and Highland Council to provide a local service.

Initially the Care and Repair service was responsible for the establishment of two joint equipment stores for all equipment required by Social Work and the NHS. Their role was then expanded to include the delivery, maintenance, storage, cleaning and database management of items in the joint equipment stores. In addition, the service would complete many of the minor adaptations such as the installation of grab rails

and handrails. Funding is provided on a joint basis between Highland Council's private sector housing and social work budgets, and the NHS. Generally a social work occupational therapist undertakes an assessment of a client's needs. The handyman service then fits the equipment within prioritised timescales. It also collects equipment no longer required, disinfects and stores it until it is required for a new client.

During 2007/08 the two handymen employed by the service were trained as Occupational Therapy assistants. This has provided them with the skills to complete assessments and conduct equipment training. And they are often able to fit equipment without the need to make a further visit to a client, leading to substantial time savings in more remote areas, in particular for the Occupational Therapist. Their training also allows them to familiarise users and carers with any equipment fitted, and provide ongoing maintenance. As a result of achieving the qualification, social work has increased the level of grant funding to the service.

As its skill base and reputation has grown, the handyman service has extended the range of related services it provides to include -

- distributing and disinfecting equipment on behalf of the NHS, Social Work services and the Red Cross. This could involve providing wheelchairs required by visitors to the area for example
- undertaking joint assessments with social work staff of deaf people, and installing and maintaining equipment to support them in their homes
- holding a stock of Telecare equipment on behalf of Highland Council, and undertaking assessments, installing, maintaining and tracking the equipment via Care and Repair's database
- operating a 'virtual home' in a local hospital to train NHS, social work and voluntary sector staff in the opportunities that Telecare can deliver
- assessing the value and cost efficiency of Telehealth provision for the client group served by Care and Repair

In addition to the expansion of services to clients, the handyman service has adopted innovative approaches to supplementing its workforce. Having established a volunteer service, it encountered insurance difficulties and had to disband it. The Service then entered into a partnership with the Criminal Justice department and now provides placements for people serving Community Service Orders. This generally involves taking on one person at a time (who has been vetted as being suitable) to provide assistance in managing the stores. The service has a very good record of people completing their Orders and has received positive feedback from those participating.

### **Successes and challenges**

The development of Lochalsh and Skye handyman service has demonstrated how a local partnership can flourish as its value is recognised. With only two Occupational Therapists covering the whole of Skye, Lochalsh, and part of Wester Ross, the service now being delivered has had a significant impact in reducing delays and ensuring clients have appropriate equipment to support them remain in their own home. District Nurses can have equipment fitted within prioritised timescales and the service is actively supporting the NHS to reduce delayed hospital discharges.

The success of the service creates its own challenge in keeping up with demand. With only two handypersons covering the whole of Skye and Lochalsh, there are challenges associated with holiday and sickness cover. There is an informal arrangement with a local tradesman who can undertake suitable tasks on a chargeable basis. Skye and Lochalsh Care and repair would like to raise additional revenue funding to employ another handyperson.

Care and Repair is now providing a holistic service to clients reducing the number of agencies involved in supplying and fitting equipment to support them to remain in their home. Key to the success of the service has been the calibre of handyperson employed, providing a quality service and developing new partnering activities.

### **6.10 Further resources for Care and Repair teams working with Occupational Therapists**

The Scottish Government's website has a section which focuses on equipment and adaptations. Advice on adaptations, good practice guidance and best practice examples can be found at the following link –

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/EandA>

The British Association of Occupational Therapists and College of Occupational Therapists website offers a range of resources which may be helpful to Care and Repair officers. The library and publications section is particularly useful.

[http://www.cot.co.uk/Homepage/Library\\_and\\_Publications/](http://www.cot.co.uk/Homepage/Library_and_Publications/)

## Section 7

### European Union (EU) procurement rules

#### 7.1 The EU rules and Care and Repair services

Local authorities and any other agencies that have responsibility for procuring Care and Repair services may choose to tender these services from time to time with a view to achieving best value.

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 places an obligation on local authorities to achieve continuous improvement in the performance of their functions. They are obliged to demonstrate a balance between quality of service provision and the cost of services, to be accountable and transparent, and to make decisions that are in the best interests of stakeholders. While the Act does not place an obligation on local authorities to competitively tender Care and Repair services, they are subject to auditing pressures which demand the review of existing arrangements for delivery of services. The 2003 Act can be accessed at the following link –

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2003/asp\\_20030001\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2003/asp_20030001_en_1)

Another factor which may lead local authorities to tender Care and Repair services is the impact of the EU procurement rules.

This chapter of the good practice guide describes the general legal position in respect to procurement law. Please note that it does not consider every possible situation that arises. Should a procurement issue arise that could affect a Care and Repair service, contact should be made immediately with Care and Repair Scotland which can provide support and advice.

[enquiries@careandrepairsotland](mailto:enquiries@careandrepairsotland)

#### 7.2 Legislative background

In Scotland, procurement law as it relates to purchasing by public sector bodies is governed by the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. These regulations implement European Commission Directive 2004/18/EC into Scots law. This is the main European Union (EU) public contracts procurement directive and sets out the legal framework for ensuring fair and open competition in respect to public contracts. The regulations and directive can be accessed at the links below –

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2006/20060001.htm>

<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:134:0114:0240:EN:PDF>

Core European Community Treaty principles of equal treatment, non discrimination, transparency, and the free movement of goods and services; together with the detailed requirements of EU procurement directives, are in turn supplemented by the case law of the European Court of Justice and by case law from the domestic courts

of EU Member States (the courts of the countries comprising the UK are most relevant in respect to case law). Case law deals with a specific set of facts and circumstances, but is often helpful in explaining and setting out how the broad principles of EU law apply in a particular context or to clarify difficult or unclear points. As such, the legal framework for procurement is not static.

Public sector bodies such as local authorities have a legal obligation to tender the award of contracts for supplies, services and works that equal or exceed particular thresholds. These thresholds are reviewed every two years. Threshold values are discussed later in this chapter.

### **7.3 General principles of procurement law**

Most substantial public procurement activity in Scotland is subject to the above rules. The rules can be detailed and complex, but it sometimes helps to consider the key principles the rules aim to ensure are followed -

- Contract procedures must be transparent - tenderers need to be able to understand how the tendering process is going to operate and opportunities to tender require to be advertised
- Tendering criteria require to be publicised
- Tenderers require to be treated equally – all tenderers require to be allowed a fair chance to win the contract
- Tenderers cannot be discriminated against, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of nationality
- Procurement procedures should be proportionate – contract requirements should be set according to the needs of the purchaser

These principles are consistent with the EU Treaty requirements of equal treatment, non discrimination, transparency, and the free movement of goods and services.

The Scottish Government, all local authorities and a range of other public bodies are subject to the procurement rules. The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 apply when:–

- The organisation procuring the contract is defined in the Regulations as a contracting authority.
- The contract is for public works, services or supplies.
- The estimated value of the contract equals or exceeds the current financial threshold relevant to the contract.

When these criteria are met, the contracting authority is required to follow the Regulations. For works, supplies and certain services (Part A services – see 7.4 below) this means advertising the contract in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) and following one of the procedures permitted under the Regulations for the award of a contract. OJEU can be accessed at the link below –

<http://www.ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do>

## **7.4 Types of contracts covered by EU Procurement rules and how they may affect Care and Repair services**

Contracts for services, supplies and works are governed by EU Directive 2004/18/EC and in Scots Law by the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The applicable rules can vary according to contract type, with some service contracts (those considered to be less likely to be of interest to service providers in other Member States), subject to less detailed rules.

Where a tendering situation arises, Care and Repair projects in Scotland are likely to fall under the category of services rather than works (building or civil engineering contracts) or supplies (of products).

The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 divide services into Part A Services ('priority' services such as accounting, consultancy and computer services), and Part B services (services such as health and education)<sup>12</sup>. Many Care and Repair projects are likely to be appropriately characterised as involving all or predominantly Part B services. Such contracts are more likely to be of interest only to tenderers from the Member State where the contract is being offered.

The financial thresholds at and above which the Regulations apply are revised every 2 years. The current EU procurement threshold for service contracts awarded by local authorities is £156,442 net of VAT (a lower limit applies for central government bodies). Information on the threshold for supplies and works is available on the Scottish Government website -

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/116601/0092523.pdf>

To establish if thresholds are met and a contract falls within the Regulations, a contracting authority should consider the value of all contracts that have the same general characteristics, are for the same type of services, and could be supplied by the same organisation during one particular year, and aggregate the value of those contracts together.

The Regulations prohibit contracting authorities from artificially splitting contracts to bring them below the relevant threshold. In addition, contracting authorities cannot generally award contracts without a competitive tendering process taking place<sup>13</sup>, are prohibited from only inviting local tenderers to bid, cannot award contracts exclusively to local companies, and are prevented from insisting on disproportionate or irrelevant experience or capability.

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<sup>12</sup> The division of Part A and Part B services is set out at Schedule 3 to the Public Sector (Scotland) Regulations 2006. This division sets out service types and service codes that are categorised as either Part A or Part B. The codes correspond to a detailed EU list of different types of contract called the Common Procurement Vocabulary. Sometimes it is necessary to check this list to determine whether a particular type of service contract is Part A or Part B.

<sup>13</sup> There are a number of very narrowly construed exceptions set out in the Regulations e.g. extreme urgency where a natural disaster may mean there is no time to have a tender process

If the estimated contract value for a Part A services contract is above the threshold, the full requirements of the Regulations apply. For Part B service contracts above the threshold, a limited number of provisions in the Regulations apply, with no express requirement that these contracts are advertised in OJEU. However, case law has determined that there must be adequate publicity if a Part B service contract is potentially of interest to service providers in other Member States.

Such contracts will typically be advertised by contracting authorities on portal/websites such as Public Contracts Scotland provided by the Scottish Government –

<http://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/>

Contracts for Part B services may fall below threshold values and not be subject to the limited Regulations. In such circumstances if the contract is potentially of interest to service providers in other Member States, the general obligation still applies whereby authorities must procure contracts following the principles of equal treatment, non discrimination, transparency and proportionality. This implies that adequate advertising of the contract must take place to ensure fair competition.

## **7.5 Tendering procedures**

The procedure used to award a Part A services contract will be one of the following -

- Open procedure – any party can submit a tender in response to the OJEU notice
- Restricted procedure – any party can express an interest in tendering, but only those meeting the tendering authority's criteria will be invited to bid<sup>14</sup>
- Negotiated procedure – used in a limited number of situations and tightly controlled
- Competitive dialogue – for complex contracts including where dialogue with the marketplace can influence the service specification
- Framework agreements – which set out the terms and conditions of subsequent contracts between the contacting authority and the successful tenderer(s). The framework must be established by using the open, restricted, negotiated or competitive dialogue procedures, but once established, contracts can be awarded under the framework without following the detailed procedures.

Tender timetables vary depending on which tendering procedure is being used – the tender documents will invariably set out the key dates for the particular contract that may be of interest. Tendering procedures (other than the open procedure) comprise two main stages. First, the contracting authority sets out its requirements and invites expressions of interest. Expressing interest is the first stage. The contracting authority will then use publicised criteria to select or reject bidders and identify a smaller group who will be invited to submit full tenders, engage in a competitive dialogue or negotiate (depending on the process). This process of filtering

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<sup>14</sup> Authorities use a variety of criteria to filter down to a manageable group (typically 5-10) of tenderers who will be invited to submit full bids.

expressions of interest is based on financial standing (such as evidenced by the tenderers' annual accounts) and on an assessment of whether tenderers have the technical capability to carry out the contract. There are some mandatory grounds for exclusion (e.g. if a bidder has committed certain specified offences) and some discretionary grounds for exclusion (e.g. being bankrupt).

Contracts are assessed and awarded on the basis of either

- lowest price, or
- most economically advantageous tender

If contracts are awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender then this method requires the adoption of clear criteria to judge tenders and an indication of the relative weighting of each criterion. Most local authority contracts are awarded on this basis.

Following the award of a Part A services contract there is a mandatory standstill period of 10 days before the contract is concluded. At the start of this period all tenderers must be informed of the outcome of the tender process and unsuccessful bidders are now given specified debrief information in the standstill letter. Subsequently, contract award notices must be submitted to OJEU within 48 days of the award of contract.

Where the contract being awarded is a Part B services contract, there is not the same level of prescriptive detail regarding the procedure to be followed. However, considerations of good procurement practice and in attempting to ensure that the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination and transparency are observed, often lead public bodies to follow processes which are similar to those under the full Regulations. It is wrong to think that the fact a contract is for Part B services gives the contracting authority discretionary power as regards the tender process.

## **7.6 Complaints and challenges to the procurement process**

There are a number of options for tenderers who consider the procurement rules have been breached. Concerns can be raised with the contracting authority. It is also possible to contact the Scottish Procurement Directorate's Single Point of Enquiry albeit that route does not offer formal remedies. The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 allow tenderers to bring proceedings against contracting authorities in court should they consider that the Regulations have been breached. Tenderers can also complain to the European Commission if they are of the view that EU Procurement Directives have been infringed.

## **7.7 Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) implications if Care and Repair Services are tendered**

The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) provide protection to employees when their employment is transferred to a new employer. The TUPE regulations can be found at the following link –

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/20060246.htm>

A transfer of employment may take place if Care and Repair services are competitively tendered and a new organisation wins the contract. In such circumstances consultation will be initiated by either the employees' existing organisation or the new employer.

On transfer to a new employer, the employee's terms and conditions of employment are preserved. Staff will transfer to the new organisation on their current contracts. Prior to transfer, the old employer and new employer are required to provide information to staff affected by the transfer. This information includes the following –

- Date of transfer
- Reason for the transfer
- Details of possible redundancies
- Details of proposed changes to terms and conditions of employment

Meaningful consultation must take place with staff at all the key stages in the process of transferring to the new employer. Consultation will normally take place with employees via nominated employee representatives. Staff require to be aware that general information on their terms and conditions of employment (pay and conditions, pension arrangements etc) will be disclosed to the new employer together with more detailed employee information such as details of existing contracts and information on current disciplinary action and grievances will be disclosed to the new employer.

Following transfer, an employee's terms and conditions of employment can only be varied following full consultation by the new employer and only if there is a clear economic, technical, or organisational reason for doing so.

It is possible for an employee to object to the transfer. In such circumstances the transferring employer must request the reasons for the objection in writing from the employee and explain to the employee the consequences of objecting to the proposed transfer. If an employee exercises his or her right to object to the business transferring to a new employer, this is regarded as a resignation.

## **7.8 Further information and resources**

EU procurement law and procedures are complex and require specialist advice and guidance. Similarly, legal advice should be sought in respect to interpreting the TUPE Regulations.

Further information resources are listed below and can be obtained at the following links –

- Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) promotes better employment relations in organisations. Acas provides advice for both employers and employees on a variety of employment relations subjects including TUPE

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1655>

- The Scottish Government website offers resources in respect to EU Procurement

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement>

In particular, a useful document is Tendering for Public Contracts – A short guide for businesses. The Scottish Government, 2008

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/242629/0067473.pdf>

- The UK Government citizens website, Directgov, provides further information on employment issues, and guidance on TUPE can be found at the following link

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/BusinessTransfersandtakeovers/index.htm>

- A procurement toolkit can be accessed from the Foundations website (the Home Improvement Agency organisation in England)

[http://www-foundations-uk-com/http://www-foundations-uk-com/pictures/content154/procuring\\_home\\_improvement\\_agency\\_services.pdf](http://www-foundations-uk-com/http://www-foundations-uk-com/pictures/content154/procuring_home_improvement_agency_services.pdf)

## **Section 8**

### **Developing Care and Repair services**

#### **8.1 The impact of population ageing in Scotland**

Demographic changes in Scotland mean that there are many challenges facing Care and Repair services now and in the future. The number of households with a head of household aged over 65 is projected to increase significantly in the next 20 years, with the number of disabled persons within this population group also increasing. By 2016 the number of older people in Scotland requiring care will increase by 25% while by 2032 this will have risen by nearly 75%<sup>15</sup>. Over this period an increasing number of older people will require care and support, while the working population funding that care and support will be in decline.

Taking into consideration that the costs of providing care and support for people aged 65 or over will increase as a result of this demographic trend, Care and Repair services are in a unique position to contribute in a cost effective way towards ensuring older people remain in their own homes and do not require to be re-housed in sheltered accommodation or in a care setting. Care and Repair services are also in a key position to assist with meeting the increasing demand for adaptations both in respect to older disabled persons and disabled persons of any age. These activities are likely to make a substantial contribution to reducing the costs of providing care services in Scotland.

Care and Repair services are also at the forefront of providing advice, small repairs and handyperson services, and delivery of these services makes an essential contribution towards ensuring that the housing needs of older and disabled persons are met.

Given that people in Scotland are living longer, healthier lives, and that older persons will constitute an increasingly greater proportion of the population, there is a government expectation that service delivery to a larger population of older persons will be accompanied by increased quality and standards. Due to the skills of Care and Repair staff and their practical expertise, Care and Repair can contribute positively towards improving these delivery standards and to the provision of services to older persons generally.

#### **8.2 Diversifying the service**

In addition to the core services that they offer, many Care and Repair organisations have developed a range of other initiatives that meet the needs of the client groups they work with. To ensure that Care and Repair organisations maintain their place at the forefront of service provision to older and disabled people, it is important that Care and Repair services in Scotland explore options around diversification. Such diversification does not mean that core services need to be neglected and that

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<sup>15</sup> The Scottish Government. 2010. The Impact of Population Ageing on Housing in Scotland

service delivery will be diminished. Diversification of services can take place without the traditional role and ethos of Care and Repair being compromised.

If Care and Repair organisations can become involved in delivering a broader range of services, then rather than services being diluted, Care and Repair will remain at the frontline of service delivery to older and disabled clients over a diverse range of activities. The advantage of this approach is that clients in need are able to access a more diverse range of services than before, benefiting from services that further enhance their safety, wellbeing and independence. If the target client base is widened through pursuing other initiatives, then the income received through these activities can be reinvested into core activities improving the overall financial viability of the service.

### **8.3 Care and Repair services – the local context**

Services provided by Care and Repair teams vary across local authority areas. While the most common client group comprises older and disabled homeowners, in some areas services are offered to other vulnerable client groups such as women fleeing domestic violence or individuals with drug or alcohol dependencies. All Care and Repair offices provide a clear statement identifying the client groups supported by the service, reflecting the fact that Care and Repair services are principally directed towards assisting older and disabled persons repair and improve their homes, and that they work in partnership with other agencies to promote the independence of the client groups served.

Although Care and Repair services interpret client needs in accordance with local priorities, principal services provided by Care and Repair teams consistently include information and advice, major repairs and adaptations, small repair services, and handyperson services. In addition to these core services, local Care and Repair services are able to offer a range of other services that are in demand in the local community.

In some local authority areas there is an overlap of service provision, and Care and Repair services may wish to explore opportunities for joint working with other agencies in activities they are not presently involved. Service overlap typically occurs in areas such as advice provision and small repairs services. Opportunities exist for Care and Repair services to co-ordinate overlapping services on a local level and to adopt a role as the lead service provider.

Care and Repair is often the only service provider in a local authority area in respect to delivering services such as home safety initiatives, and the unique client centred approach to service provision delivered by Care and Repair teams can be used to provide other new services.

## **8.4 Other areas of Care and Repair service provision**

Traditionally, Care and Repair services such as assistance with repairs, adaptations and small repairs have been offered to older and disabled clients living mainly in the owner occupied sector. The development of Care and Repair services must consider opportunities that exist in respect to other clients and within other tenures beyond owner occupation such as the private rented sector, and where appropriate, the social rented sector. Opportunities to expand Care and Repair services should focus on establishing local need and local demand for the new service, with due regard being given to the funding context and funding opportunities that exist.

Advice and practical assistance in respect to fuel poverty and the provision of adaptations are possible examples of areas of expansion for Care and Repair services. At present there are a range of other services provided by Care and Repair teams that go beyond core services. These services include trades referral/trusted trader services, home from hospital services, affordable warmth projects, home safety and security initiatives, and garden maintenance, some of which will be further explored below.

## **8.5 The range of additional services provided by Care and Repair organisations**

In addition to core services, some of the other services and initiatives that Care and Repair organisations currently offer are described in this section. Care and Repair organisations that currently do not offer these services but are interested in doing so are encouraged to liaise with other Care and Repair offices to get an insight into how to set up and run such projects. Care and Repair Scotland can assist with this. It is also important for Care and Repair offices to be aware of the priorities set by their local authority and Community Planning Partnership.

Expanding from traditional core activities and accessing other opportunities can take Care and Repair into new areas that demand collaboration with partner agencies. Care and Repair offices should explore all options, both at a local and a national level, in which income opportunities exist and where expansion of activities can take place.

Service availability across Care and Repair offices in Scotland has some similarities and some differences. In respect to core services, all Care and Repair organisations provide information and advice. All but eight services are involved in major repairs, although changes to the grants system will mean that the emphasis is likely to pass to adaptations work which is currently offered by all except four services at present. This reflects the Scottish Government's objective of putting 'assistance with disability adaptations on a separate footing from assistance with the owner's responsibility for the condition of the property'<sup>16</sup>. The majority of Care and Repair services carry out small repairs work, with just over half offering a handyperson service.

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<sup>16</sup> The Scottish Government. 2010. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (Scheme of Assistance) Regulations 2008 Executive Note.

Scottish Government guidance encourages local authorities to consider making greater use of their local Care and Repair service in facilitating the provision of adaptations<sup>17</sup>. This reflects the shift from the previous repairs and improvements grants system set out under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 towards the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and most particularly the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (Scheme of Assistance) Regulations 2008. Care and Repair services may experience a shift from assisting owners with major repairs and improvements towards assisting them with adaptations. However, continued assistance with major repairs and improvements can take place if Care and Repair services explore the possibilities associated with helping clients access other sources of finance.

A range of other services are currently offered by Care and Repair organisations. These include the following -

- Affordable warmth projects
- Energy advice initiatives
- Garden Share Schemes
- General wellbeing checks
- Home from hospital services
- Home safety checks
- Home security audits
- Housing options advice
- In house architectural services
- Loft clearance services
- Occupational Therapy services
- Provision of adaptations equipment
- Technical advice to other organisations
- Telecare initiatives
- Trusted traders schemes
- Welfare benefit checks
- Referrals to other agencies

Further information on some of the above additional services is given below.

### **Trusted trader/trade referral schemes**

Trusted trader/trade referral schemes are operated by a number of Care and Repair offices and constitute a database of reputable traders used by the Care and Repair service who in turn are suggested to clients who wish to carry out work not covered by the service that Care and Repair provides.

### **Affordable Warmth Projects**

Affordable warmth projects assist clients with the installation of efficient and economical heating systems and with effective insulation measures. Clients receive

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<sup>17</sup> Implementing the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities: Volume 5 Scheme of Assistance, para 2.83-87, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/03/25153822/3>.

home visits to establish the energy rating of their home and to assess what works are required to bring their accommodation up to standard. Clients are assisted with applications for central heating installation work and for the installation of insulation.

Should grant assistance be unavailable to the client, other funding options are investigated in order to facilitate the required work.

### **Home safety/security initiatives**

A number of Care and Repair offices have become involved in home safety initiatives involving home safety checks and the provision of advice to clients on home security, fire safety, and other home safety matters. Some Care and Repair offices offer advice and assistance in regard to uninvited callers and provide advice and practical help to ensure that clients feel safer at home. These initiatives are often operated in partnership with the police and fire brigade.

South Lanarkshire Care and Repair have operated a 'Safe as Houses' initiative for over 10 years. The Safe as Houses service is free to clients in South Lanarkshire who are over 65 or anyone who has been a victim of domestic abuse, house breaking, or a bogus caller. The South Lanarkshire Care and Repair small repairs service fit free of charge items such as door locks, door viewers, door chains and personal safety alarms that are provided to clients by South Lanarkshire Council. The initiative is supported and promoted by Strathclyde Police.

### **Home from hospital services**

Care and Repair offices are involved in services that benefit clients who are currently in hospital awaiting discharge. The provision of a key safe will allow health professionals to access a client's home and provide support following the individual's discharge from hospital. Other services such as the installation of Telecare facilities and aids and adaptations such as grab rails provide further assistance to clients recently discharged from hospital.

### **In house occupational therapy services**

A number of Care and Repair services offer Occupational Therapy services on a 'one stop shop basis', often by directly employing an occupational therapist. This allows Care and Repair services to deliver the installation of adaptations in shorter timescales thereby contributing towards reducing waiting list times. Care and Repair offices are able to offer an adaptations service where all stages of the process can be carried out 'in house' – the assessment of a client's needs, assistance with applications for grant funding, coordinating the design and installation of the adaptation, and fitting additional minor adaptations and equipment through the handyperson service.

## **8.6 Care and Repair case studies**

This section describes some of the services Care and Repair offices deliver both in respect to core services and with regard to other initiatives. These examples

illustrate best practice in particular areas of activity and may be of interest to Care and Repair offices that wish to diversify the services they offer.

### **Small repairs and handyperson services**

Small repairs services address repair work that clients cannot carry out for themselves or cannot afford to instruct, and support clients that have had difficulty arranging a suitable contractor. Typically, work carried out by small repair teams includes fitting security measures, insulation measures, and minor door and window repairs. Handyperson services are focussed on carrying out simple repairs that do not require specialist knowledge but contribute towards the safety, security and wellbeing of the client. Such repairs would include draughtproofing measures, putting up shelves and changing lightbulbs. The following case studies illustrate the work of a small repairs officer –

- Social Services approached Care and Repair regarding a client with vascular dementia who was taking food from her freezer, was not thawing or cooking the food properly, and as a result was at serious risk of food poisoning. Social services requested that Care and Repair send a small repairs officer to fit freezer locks and this was carried out immediately with the effect that the client was no longer at risk .
- Care and Repair were contacted by Social Services concerning an elderly couple - a client who was in poor health and his wife who acted as his carer. When the client's wife became ill suddenly and was admitted to hospital, a small repairs officer attended straight away to fit a key safe. As a result the client was able to continue living at home rather than being temporarily admitted to a care home as carers were able to access the property to provide the client with support.

### **Adaptations**

Adaptations work is increasingly important within the context of the introduction by local authorities of Schemes of Assistance. Adaptations allow clients with mobility problems to remain in their own homes and in many cases can facilitate discharge from hospital that may have otherwise not been possible. A typical case study is as follows –

- A client who was in hospital after having had a stroke was referred to Care and Repair by a tradesman who had been asked by the client's husband to provide a quotation for a level access shower. Care and Repair assumed management of the case and began by contacting the hospital and community occupational therapist who provided a referral and supported an application for grant funding for a level access shower and external ramp. As the client was a wheelchair user and could not leave hospital until the work was completed, Care and Repair were able to ensure that the local authority consented to an early start to the work. The shower and ramp work was promptly completed, with grant approval confirmed within a few weeks given the priority of the case. The client was then discharged from hospital and continues to live at home supported by her husband and local authority

carers. Care and Repair staff were also able to assist the client with benefit claims which reflected her new entitlement following her stroke and co-ordinated an application for a central heating boiler upgrade through the Energy Assistance Package run by the Scottish Government.

## **Major repairs and improvements**

Historically, core funding of Care and Repair has focussed on providing assistance to clients with major repairs, maintenance, improvements, adaptations and with funding applications to facilitate such works. The move away from subsidy will lead to a significant drop in the level of grant awards in this area with a renewed focus on adaptations work and other priorities set out in the local authority's Scheme of Assistance. Nevertheless, this activity remains an important part of the Care and Repair service, most particularly in respect to the provision of advice. The following example illustrates how Care and Repair services have accessed other funding sources to carry out such improvements.

- An older Care and Repair client lives in a high crime area in a property where the windows were in a poor state of repair and could no longer be adequately secured. The cost of replacing the windows could not be met by local authority grant as such funding is no longer available in the local authority area that the client resides. The Care and Repair office secured funding from various trusts and charities and raised the required amount need to replace the windows. Following the replacement work, which was carried out by a reputable contractor, the Care and Repair small repairs service fitted window locks. The client now feels more secure and safe in her home.

## **Other services**

Care and Repair services offer a range of other services, often in response to local circumstances. Other initiatives include home safety measures, affordable warmth projects, energy advice initiatives, home from hospital services, trusted traders schemes, and welfare benefit checks. A case study example of the delivery of other services by Care and Repair is as follows –

- Home safety visits to clients are carried out by Care and Repair to reduce the risk of accidents at home including reducing the risk of falls. Clients are guided through a falls prevention checklist that highlights issues around the home that may present a risk if left unattended. Other home safety issues such as fire safety, electrical safety and home security are also explored. When the home visit has been completed, the client receives a report summarising the findings. If the client agrees, then areas of risk identified during the home safety visit can be addressed by the Care and Repair small repairs service or to other agencies such as the local authority community alarm service.

## **8.7 Future funding options**

Some Care and Repair services are presently involved in charging for services and take part in fundraising activities. While such funding routes can provide welcome

additional income and can be directed towards assisting those clients most in need, these sources of income will not replace the present need for revenue funding to be forthcoming from local authorities through private sector housing budgets.

Charging for services is an area that Care and Repair organisations have been active for some time. Most commonly, charging is associated with small repairs services, with the charging structure for small repairs varying in accordance with local circumstances.

When charging for services, Care and Repair offices must ensure that they do not exclude any sections of the community from the opportunity to benefit from service delivery. Although there may be a possibility that charging for services gives the impression that Care and Repair offices have moved away from providing a 'not for profit' public service, this can be countered by having a clear policy on charging.

When charging for small repairs work, tiered systems should be considered. As an example, one Care and Repair service operates the following charging system –

Level 1- Clients require to be on benefits such as pension credit, and small repairs are carried out on the basis that the client pays for the costs of materials but the labour is free.

Level 2- Care and Repair will organise contractors to carry out work for the client and the client pays the contractor directly.

Level 3 – Care and Repair advise the client of an approved contractor and the client organises and pays for the work

Fundraising is increasingly an activity that Care and Repair organisations are involved in. The income generated from such activities can be used to fund particular services and can be directed towards those most in need. Fundraising can take place through holding specific fundraising events or through encouraging members of the public or previous Care and Repair clients to make donations or to leave a legacy to Care and Repair in their will.

## **8.8 Partnership working and consultation with stakeholders**

The Scottish Government encourages partnership working and collaboration with other service providers to achieve service delivery in the areas described. Similarly, service users require to be consulted on changes to service delivery.

Partnership can involve collaboration with other service providers and joint working with other agencies. Care and Repair organisations and other partners are increasingly working together to explore service delivery options that can be shared. Examples of this would be Care and Repair working with the Fire Service or the Police to deliver fire safety and home security advice and practical assistance.

Engagement with stakeholders ensures that Care and Repair organizations are well prepared to respond to the service demands that clients require. Stakeholder

consultation can take place on a local basis or in a wider context and allows service delivery objectives to be aligned to community needs.

Further guidance on partnership working can be accessed via the link in section 6.5 to the Partnership Working Toolkit produced by the Improvement Service.

## **8.9 Best practice examples**

### **Aberdeen Care and Repair – Best practice in developing Care and Repair services**

#### **Introduction**

Aberdeen Care and Repair, which is managed by Castlehill Housing Association, works in partnership with Aberdeen City Council to assist owners and disabled persons with repairs, improvements, adaptations and heating issues. The activities undertaken by Aberdeen Care and Repair fall into the following categories –

- Information and advice
- Trusted traders scheme
- Grant aided disabled adaptations (a Technical Agent fee is charged)
- Affordable warmth services
- Small repairs service
- Non grant aided repairs, improvements and adaptations
- Income maximisation

In response to funding pressures, most particularly the withdrawal of Private Sector Housing Grant, Aberdeen Care and Repair have developed and diversified new and existing services and initiatives. While the charitable fund set up by Aberdeen Care and Repair offers assistance to clients who would suffer hardship unless financial help was given and who are at serious risk due to lack of repair to their properties, the effectiveness of charitable funding is diminished by the limited funding available and the time consuming nature of the process towards accessing the funds. Nevertheless, £74,716 of charitable funding was raised in 2009/10 which represents 9% of the funding sources accessed by Aberdeen Care and Repair.

#### **Partnership working**

Partnership working with Aberdeen City Council has proved to be the most effective way of diversifying the services provided by Aberdeen Care and Repair. Work outside of the service level agreement with the Council is undertaken by Care and Repair staff and full costs are charged back to the local authority. Some of the work carried out in partnership with Aberdeen City Council includes –

- Assisting home owners in pre 1919 mixed tenure tenements to address fuel poverty issues. Care and Repair have organised draught proofing work to entrance doors at a cost affordable to the owner. Draught proofing has also been carried out by Aberdeen Care and Repair at the homes of Aberdeen City Council tenants
- Working in partnership with the Community Alarm team within Aberdeen City Council Social Work department, key safes have been fitted by Aberdeen Care and Repair to the homes of clients who use the Council's Community Alarm Scheme.

- Loft clearance work is carried out by Aberdeen Care and Repair on behalf of owners in advance of loft insulation works. Aberdeen City Council then uplift any unwanted items
- To allow Aberdeen City Council's Home Energy Team access to owners lofts in order to carry out insulation works, Aberdeen Care and Repair organise tradespersons to cut loft hatches so the work can be carried out.

The main advantage of partnership working between Aberdeen Care and Repair and Aberdeen City Council is cost effectiveness, with joint working allowing the expansion of services into a greater number of geographical areas while ensuring consistency of service delivery.

Aberdeen Care and Repair has explored opportunities for widening the client base who benefit from the organisation's services and have reinvested any surpluses from such works into core activities. Examples of these opportunities are as follows –

### **Affordable warmth project**

The Aberdeen Care and Repair affordable warmth project assists homeowners who are vulnerable to fuel poverty. The project involves Care and Repair staff working with owners to identify measures that can improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Assistance is available with grant applications and applications for charitable assistance. Access to a loan fund for emergency energy efficiency measures is also administered by Aberdeen Care and Repair. Low fixed interest loans are available from the Affordable Warmth Loan fund to owners who are unable to secure finance from other sources. The capital for the loan fund originated from Aberdeen City Council although the fund is now self financing.

### **Homecheck service**

The homecheck service is available to individuals living in Aberdeen irrespective of age or housing tenure. Aberdeen City Council staff visit clients to carry out safety checks and make referrals to Care and Repair in regard to safety measures that require to be installed by Care and Repair's small repairs service. A separate service level agreement is in place for this area of work. Work carried out by Aberdeen Care and Repair includes installation of grab rails, safety gates, and safety catches. Further work has been carried out by Aberdeen Care and Repair to install additional security measures into clients homes. This work has been possible due to Care and Repair accessing charitable funding to cover the cost of purchasing the additional equipment and to meet the installation costs.

### **Trusted trader scheme**

Aberdeen Care and Repair have addressed the difficulties older owners face in respect to technical knowledge and accessing reliable tradespersons by developing a trusted trader scheme. This is a list of local reputable contractors used by Care and Repair and their clients. In order to be part of this scheme, contractors have to submit copies of their public liability insurance, accreditations, and details of their hourly rates. Customer satisfaction surveys are carried out to ensure that these contractors are providing a professional and reliable service. Local traders pay a small registration fee to the charitable group fund operated by Aberdeen Care and Repair. The charitable group fund provides 'hardship' grants to clients who are unable to meet the costs of repairs.

### **Future strategy**

Aberdeen Care and Repair are involved in a diverse range of services and initiatives that contribute towards the development of the organisation. Care and Repair provide assistance with minor aids and adaptations to tenants of Aberdeen Council, tenants of housing associations operating in the local area, and to owners, and have responded to grant funding from the local authority by generating higher levels of income year on year through the small repairs service. To achieve this however, the charging policy has had to be reviewed and the fixed charge for small repairs increased, although clients on benefits continue to pay the lowest rate.

Aberdeen Care and Repair are of the view that a service requires to be developed that promotes support and independent advice on property maintenance matters extending beyond the needs of older and disabled people. Aberdeen Care and Repair have demonstrated that they can deliver small repairs services that are marketable to a wider client group willing to pay for the service.

Aberdeen Care and Repair are presently exploring the options in respect to setting up a social enterprise, further extending their service.

### **Angus Care and Repair - service expansion**

Angus Care and Repair has expanded its services for older and disabled people through working closely with a wide range of other organisations across the local authority area. A key factor in this growth has been its ability to work closely with local partners such as Angus Council. Angus Care and Repair service has also been committed to measuring the impact and outcomes from its activities.

Angus Care and Repair is a relatively large Care and Repair organisation, and funding from Angus Council has enabled the service to develop a wide range of activities. As well as supporting older and disabled people with large scale repairs, maintenance and adaptations, and running a small repairs service, other activities include:

**Safe as Houses Service** - Angus Care and Repair works with Tayside Police, Angus Council, and Tayside Fire and Rescue to provide a safety and security service for older, disabled and vulnerable homeowners. A Community Liaison Officer undertakes a crime prevention survey following which recommendations are then passed to Care and Repair which delivers, fits and explains the new safety and security measures. Over the ten years since Safe as Houses began there has been a reduction in household crime in Angus.

**Doorstoppers Telecare** – Care and Repair supports this programme to prevent cold calling through installing a button connected to a Community Alarm Centre. Service users can push this if an unexpected caller is at the door. The Community Alarm Centre automatically alerts the police, and the button emits a message stating that the person has called unexpectedly, informing them that the police are on their way. When pressed, the button also records the conversation. The project has been

expanded to include new neighbourhood watch areas, sheltered housing, and victims of domestic abuse, and is now a standard part of the Community Alarm/Telecare equipment provided by Angus Care and Repair.

**Hospital Discharge Scheme** – Care and Repair works with the local authority Social Work department to operate a scheme which gives priority to those requiring adaptations or maintenance before being discharged from hospital. Care and Repair staff work jointly with occupational therapists and physiotherapists to assess the needs of the client. Care and Repair staff then prepare drawings and specifications in house which reduces the cost of the works to the benefit of both the client and the grant budget.

**Home Safety Service** – Angus Care and Repair runs a home safety service. Care and Repair carries out room to room checks and notes any repairs, adaptations or safety equipment required highlighting in particular any fire hazards. Care and Repair staff undertake small repairs, fit grab rails and issue dusk to dawn lights, non slip bath stickers and safety information. Clients needing other works are referred to other agencies, which are contacted if the client permits. Any properties with serious fire hazards are referred to Tayside Fire and Rescue.

**Home Safety and Security DVD** – This DVD informs clients about home safety and security issues and included clients, partners and Care and Repair staff in the cast. The DVD was distributed across Angus and to other local authorities.

**Minor Adaptations Service** – Older and disabled people needing adaptations to their home are normally assessed by an Occupational Therapist from the Social Work department, and referrals are then forwarded to Care and Repair for installation. Clients who only require grab rails can approach Care and Repair directly, without an assessment. The grab rails are provided to Care and Repair from Angus Council's Social Work department. This system is much simpler for clients and more cost and time efficient for Social Work. It also means that a dedicated officer can pick up and inform about other areas of work whilst fitting the grab rail. A satisfaction questionnaire left with the client allows feedback to be received on the quality of service delivered by Care and Repair and the Occupational Therapy section of the Social Work department.

**Child Safety** – Angus Care and Repair is working to expand the service to undertake home safety inspections as part of the foster care/adoption home assessment process.

### **Measuring outcomes**

Angus Care and Repair regularly undertakes surveys to measure the impact of its activities. For example, as part of Doorstoppers initiative and Home Safety Services, clients are issued with surveys designed to measure the impact of these services. A recent survey measuring client satisfaction with the doorstoppers service found that the service resulted in the following –

- 17% reduction in fear of crime
- 36% reduction in fear of opening their door
- 54% increase in feeling of support in own home

In respect to the home safety service provided by Angus Care and Repair, information has been gathered about the falls history of clients, with 44 per cent of 291 survey respondents having previously been involved in an accident at home. Care and Repair staff have followed this up with a further survey to establish whether safety measures provided through the home safety service have made a difference to client safety.

In addition to the outcomes for clients, anecdotal evidence suggests that work carried out by Angus Care and Repair saves the Social Work department time (installing grab rails for example), frees up NHS resources (by reducing bed blocking), reduces crime and house fires, and increases linkages between organisations at a local level. The evidence gathered by Angus Care and Repair on the number of falls clients have had in their homes has also been used to inform the planning processes of other organisations such as Angus Council.

Angus Care and Repair staff are extremely enthusiastic and motivated and have good contacts with other local partners. Good working relationships are important, and as Angus is a small local authority area Care and Repair staff have good contacts with very senior people within the Council, with Councillors represented on the Board.

As Angus Care and Repair has invested time in evaluating the outcomes of its activities, it can clearly demonstrate the benefits of its work. The organisation is standalone, meaning that it is very clear about its aims and ambitions, and is flexible in its response to the needs of its clients.

In common with other Care and Repair services, Angus Care and Repair faces challenges in respect to generating funding for its services. Some services such as the small repairs service was initially funded for one year, was then funded by the National Lottery for three years, and subsequently received mainstream funding from the Council. Continued funding was only possible through constant evaluation of impacts and client satisfaction. As wider government decisions strongly influence Care and Repair services, organisations such as Angus Care and Repair are always working in a changing context and must be flexible in respect to wider priorities.

Angus Council currently provides most of the funding for Angus Care and Repair. Other partners recognise the value of Care and Repair, but are not proactive in contributing towards funding the service.

Angus Care and Repair are able to offer a range of services that ensure that clients can almost always be given assistance. In most cases, Care and Repair can help clients to solve their problem whether through direct services or referral and signposting elsewhere. Care and Repair aims to be like a one stop shop for older and disabled people, and link very closely with the services that other organisations are providing.

## Section 9

### Social enterprise

#### 9.1 Introduction to social enterprise

Changes in funding arrangements have meant that some public sector and voluntary sector organisations have reviewed their objectives and given consideration to operating as businesses, most particularly by adopting a social enterprise model. Social enterprises commonly have a clearly defined social aim and achieve their social objectives by using business techniques.

Social enterprises are often defined by the following characteristics –

- They have social aims such as providing local services that benefit the community
- Profits or surpluses are reinvested to achieve the social objectives of the organisation.
- Governance of the social enterprise is characterised by the existence of a board of trustees or directors who oversee the organisation on behalf of stakeholders.

Charities and voluntary organisations may not consider themselves to be businesses in the commercial sense, but they are increasingly adopting business like practices in respect to management and governance. Becoming a social enterprise could allow Care and Repair services to have more control over their development and direction since they may be less dependent on grant funding in future if other sources of income arise as a result of adopting a more business orientated approach to their work. Social enterprise combined with an entrepreneurial approach can be an effective way of delivering public services to local communities.

Care and Repair services may wish to contact other organisations that have embraced the social enterprise model to learn how these organisations have delivered services through entrepreneurial methods in a way that enables them to meet their social aims. Care and Repair Scotland can assist with this. Communication with other social enterprises will help towards addressing any concerns about whether pursuing public sector contracts would compromise a Care and Repair organisation's overall social objectives. A useful resource is the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition which aims to raise the profile of social enterprise as a business model. The link to the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition website is as follows –

<http://www.scottishsocialenterprise.org.uk/about-us/>

## **9.2 The objectives of a social enterprise**

Social enterprises make a distinction between their social objectives and their business objectives. A Care and Repair service may have a social objective of assisting older and disabled homeowners with practical advice and assistance in respect to repairs, while the business objectives of a Care and Repair organisation may be to deliver a service that meets the needs of the client group, is sustainable, and maximises income by ensuring that the cost of providing services is met by grant funding, charging for services, fundraising activities, or a combination of these.

Care and Repair services may be concerned that focusing on business objectives might interfere with the organisation's fulfilment of its social objectives. However, the importance and interdependence of social and business objectives can be viewed in terms of successful business objective outcomes contributing towards the achievement of social objectives.

## **9.3 Developing a business approach to meeting social objectives – Care and Repair services becoming social enterprises**

The unique social objectives that Care and Repair services pursue – assisting older and disabled persons with repairs and adaptations that allow them to live independently in their own homes – arguably add value in respect to the delivery of public services. This added value can be realised by Care and Repair services tendering successfully for public sector contracts appropriate to their work. While most opportunities for Care and Repair services will arise in the public sector, a social enterprise approach is equally as applicable in the private sector, and tendering opportunities that arise should be sought there too.

Although the development of other services as described in section 8 of the good practice guide fit well into the social enterprise model (affordable warmth projects and home safety and security initiatives for example), Care and Repair services should first of all establish whether this model is appropriate to the needs of their organisation. There are strategic questions for Care and Repair Boards/Committees to consider if their organisation wishes to pursue business growth and development through a social enterprise model approach. Most significantly, a risk assessment should be carried to establish whether the Care and Repair service has the resources to bid for contracts and has adequate structures in place to deliver services if it was to be the successful tenderer.

## **9.4 Care and Repair services as social enterprises – issues for consideration**

If Care and Repair services are exploring the possibility of pursuing a social enterprise model, the following issues should be considered –

- Care and Repair services should review their business strategy and carry out market research in respect to demand for their services
- The implications of entering into public sector contracts should be carefully evaluated. If Care and Repair services do not have the capacity to meet the

demands of the service they have tendered for, then the reputation of the Care and Repair organisation may be damaged. Tendering for a smaller public sector contract may be a prudent starting point to ensure that the service does overstretch itself

- The viability of the Care and Repair organisation operating as a social enterprise in the medium to long term requires to be examined and risk assessed to ensure that running costs can be met from the organisation's income and that the Care and Repair service does not over commit itself with regard to resources. A cash flow plan should be used to model whether tendering for a particular contract is a viable option for the Care and Repair service, and consideration may need to be given to whether costs and overheads require to be spread over a number of contracts to ensure the overall financial health of the service
- Risks require to be balanced against the benefits of being successful in the tendering process. Managing a contract effectively and maintaining a good relationship with the client incurs costs. Similarly, significant expenditure may be incurred at the beginning of a contract when outlay costs require to be met. Conversely, there are costs associated with preparing an unsuccessful tender.
- While public sector contracts may present a good business opportunity for Care and Repair services if they chose to become social enterprises, a previous dependency upon grant funding may be substituted by an over reliance on public sector contracts. Success in tendering for a range of contract types which the Care and Repair service is confident of delivering, including those in the private sector, will allow Care and Repair services to diversify their business activities
- Staff training may be required to meet the demands of business development and to prepare for possible changes in the culture of the organisation
- Service performance should be measured and client feedback sought. This will put service delivery standards into perspective within the context of contract performance allowing the Care and Repair organisation to be confident about its relationship with its clients

As part of their business strategy review, Care and Repair services may wish to examine which areas of activity may be relevant to their aspirations to be social enterprises and to anticipate what public services they can deliver. These areas of activity will be considered in the Care and Repair organisation's business plan.

### **9.5 Social enterprises - business planning**

Section 3 of the good practice guide gave consideration to business planning. This part of the social enterprise section of the guide examines the way in which the business planning process is the means by which the Care and Repair service, as a social enterprise, sets out how it intends to attract income and how that income is going to be used to meet the social objectives of the organisation. Should the organisation's circumstances change then the business plan can be amended accordingly.

As described in section 3, business planning is a complex process involving committee/advisory board members, staff, clients and other stakeholders. Business

plans have a number of functions and are a useful planning tool in their own right, but most significantly they are an important means of securing funding from other agencies such as local authorities and health boards. A business plan should allow a Care and Repair service to look in an impartial way at what it can achieve, how it can be achieved, and within what timescales. By doing this any potential problems can be identified at an early stage, financial planning can be addressed, and the future development of the service can be set out.

Business planning for social enterprises can be challenging in the sense that the need to create a balance between business and social objectives may cause tensions in respect to organisational priorities and decision making. The strategic or social objectives of a Care and Repair service (meeting the needs of a particular group) will require to be balanced with its business objectives (attracting income which can be used to deliver the organisation's social objectives).

Social enterprises should consider producing business plans that ideally cover a 5 year period – 3 years of detailed planning and 2 years of more general business planning assumptions. A business plan is an organic document that will require updating and revision as the Care and Repair business develops and grows. It will give an objective account of the current situation facing the organisation, emphasising the organisation's strengths while acknowledging its weaknesses and planning for them accordingly.

Key issues and themes that should be included in a social enterprise's business plan include the following –

- A statement of what the main aims and objectives of the organisation are
- An indication of when key actions in respect to the aims and objectives of the organisation will be carried out
- What income and resources are needed to achieve organisational aims and objectives and where these resources will come from
- Evidence of risk analysis and a description of control measures associated with how the organisation intends to cover its costs and remain a viable business
- Cash flow analysis, the requirements of funders and lenders, and if appropriate, how loan repayment terms fit into the financial planning of the organisation
- Strategies for risk assessing and addressing situations that deviate from assumptions in the business plan

A Care and Repair service that intends to operate as a social enterprise may wish to structure their business plan as below –

- An executive summary setting out the overall objectives of the Care and Repair service, the services being offered to clients, and the resources required to deliver these services
- A detailed statement of the strategic objectives and activities of the Care and Repair service and how these key strategic and business arrangements will be achieved

- A clear description of the governance and management structures of the Care and Repair service
- A description of the markets that Care and Repair services intend to be part of, including 'niche' markets
- An indication of how Care and Repair services will be advertised and promoted
- An analysis of competitors in the market and how Care and Repair services will differentiate its service from other providers

A good business plan should have a strong executive summary at the beginning of the document which clearly states the key points of the plan. This summary can be written as the last part of the process of writing the business plan as it will reflect and give an overview of all the other sections. The executive summary is arguably the most important part of the business plan as it is likely to be the first part to be read by funders and other significant parties. As a result it should focus on the highlights of the plan rather than restating detail contained within the other sections.

Following on from the executive summary should be an effective description of what the Care and Repair service has as its vision including the services it proposes to offer to the 'market'. A description of the services on offer should be precise and highlight what differentiates service provision from other service providers, the benefits and attractions of the service to clients, and how the organisation intends to develop the service. For Care and Repair services this might mean stressing the unique nature of the home based service to the client (based on trust and with the client in control), the preference of clients to be visited in their own properties and to be supported with decision making in regard to key issues, and the opportunities for Care and Repair services to extend their work into new areas such as home from hospital initiatives or adaptations work.

Information in the business plan about existing and new services should demonstrate any market research that has been carried out by the organisation in relation to the target client base and the way in which other service providers provide a competing service. This will allow Care and Repair organisations to accurately plan services around the needs of their clients and to do so in a way that is effective and appealing to their client base. Promotion of the organisation's services is also an important part of the business plan and this may include reference to issues such as charging for services should this be decided upon by the committee/advisory board as a course of action.

External funders place importance on being satisfied that the governance and management structures of the organisation are effective. The skills of the management team and staff of the organisation require to be highlighted in the business plan together with the governance arrangements that are in place. This will ensure that potential funders are satisfied that the correct balance of skills and experience exist in the organisation, both in terms of staff team and the governing body.

Financial planning and financial forecasts are a critical part of the business planning process. Cash flow statements and profit and loss forecasts should be accompanied by detailed assumptions behind the organisation's financial projections. This will

ensure that funders can understand the rationale behind them. Financial forecasts should be accompanied by an analysis of the risks associated with the financial activities of the organisation, with contingencies having been prepared to deal with them should such risks present themselves.

Finally, to ensure that the business plan makes an impact on funders and other stakeholders, the following points should be taken into consideration –

- The business plan should be readable and not too long
- It should be carefully proofread and professionally presented
- The executive summary should be the first part of the plan
- The plan should make realistic assumptions about financial and strategic goals
- The business plan should be updated on a regular basis, at least annually

## **9.6 Social enterprises – procurement and tendering for public sector contracts**

In section 7 of the good practice guide, consideration was given to European Union (EU) procurement rules. This part of the social enterprise section of the guide describes some of the methods by which Care and Repair services can tender for public sector contracts and gives an insight into the way in which local authorities and other public bodies procure their services.

As described in the earlier section on EU procurement rules, it is a requirement that procurement procedures are open and transparent, with public sector organisations having an obligation to achieve value for money when purchasing goods or services. Care and Repair services are encouraged to familiarise themselves with local authority and public sector tendering processes should they wish to pursue public sector contracts.

Increasingly, public sector organisations are adding community benefit clauses into contracts that are being tendered. By considering ‘value for people’ together with ‘value for money’ local authorities can achieve added value through their tendering procedures. Indeed, The Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition sees Community Benefit clauses as key to embedding social enterprises in public service delivery<sup>18</sup>.

If a Care and Repair service is to be successful in the tendering process it requires to respond efficiently to the actions of the commissioning authority. Local authorities require to give due regard to EU procurement rules, best value, and to take community planning into account when tendering public services. To have a good chance of success in tendering for public sector contracts Care and Repair services should ensure the following –

- Key contacts should be established within the local authority department that is commissioning the service
- The local authority should be made aware that the Care and Repair service wishes to be considered as a potential tenderer

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<sup>18</sup> Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition website  
<http://www.scottishsocialenterprise.org.uk/campaigns/1>

- Information from the local authority on award criteria such as the split between quality and price should be established where possible
- Care and Repair organisations need to be prepared for an inspection of their service to ensure compliance with the public sector contract

As indicated in section 7, all local authorities and a range of other public bodies must follow procurement rules as set out in The Public Contract (Scotland) Regulations 2006 which implement European public contracts procurement directives into Scots law. Public sector contracts require to be advertised through the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) and in electronic format via Tenders Electronic Daily (TED). It is important that Care and Repair staff build up strong contacts with relevant local authority staff to ensure that the Care and Repair service is well known to the contracting authority and for the service to be well placed to learn of contract announcements.

Tendering opportunities may exist within local authority departments such as housing and social work, the National Health Service and community health partnerships, and a range of other public sector bodies. There may be opportunities for Care and Repair services to enter into long term contracts for public services or to emerge as a preferred partner delivering local services that meet local needs.

Procedures for tendering often start with a pre tender stage which requires the submission of documentation and information demonstrating that a Care and Repair service has the capability to deliver the service. Information requested might include the organisation's annual accounts and references from other organisations that receive services from Care and Repair. Issues of price and quality are also likely to arise as is a requirement to produce a method statement detailing how the Care and Repair organisation proposes to deliver the service. Submission of the Care and Repair organisation's business plan may also be required to demonstrate that the needs of the client group and the contracting authority's requirements are met.

Overall, the Scottish Government recognises that organisations like Care and Repair operating as social enterprises bring added value to the delivery of public services. The Scottish Government also strongly encourage local authorities to ensure that social enterprises are considered in the public sector procurement process. As such, there may be significant procurement opportunities for Care and Repair services in the public sector.

## **9.7 Best practice example**

### **Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair - Becoming a standalone organisation and setting up a social enterprise**

#### **Introduction**

Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair was set up in 1992, and became a standalone organisation in 2002. The organisation is has expanded since becoming independent, and in 2010 set up a social enterprise as a subsidiary of the main organisation called Care and Repair Extra.

## **The background to Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair**

Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair was originally set up as Dumbarton Care and Repair, with Dunbritton Housing Association acting as managing agent. The housing association and the Care and Repair service were established at around the same time, and the two developed together. During the first few years that the Care and Repair service was in operation it was advantageous for Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair to have a managing agent due to viability issues that existed as a result of funding arrangements at the time. However, by 2002 Care and Repair was ready to become a standalone organisation.

One of the main reasons why Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair chose to become a standalone organisation was that being part of a housing association placed restrictions on the funding that Care and Repair was able to attract. For example, Care and Repair had no accounts of its own to support funding applications. Similarly, some funding sources such as the lottery were not available to housing associations and as such Care and Repair had no access to such funds.

Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair were also of the view that a standalone model would offer the organisation more flexibility as they would only need to consider the needs of their clients and partners rather than the needs of the housing association. Decisions affecting the Care and Repair service often had to be approved by the housing association's Management Committee.

By 2002 Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair and Dunbritton Housing Association felt that the time was right to become independent of each other, and it was an arrangement that took place amicably.

Care and Repair worked through a process to become a standalone organisation including -

- discussions with Dunbritton Housing Association staff and committee
- gathering the views of funders
- reviewing potential structures – legal advisors assessed the options and suggested becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee
- drafting a Company Memorandum and Articles of Association
- appointing Board members
- registering as a company.

At this time Dumbarton Care and Repair was rebranded as Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair. The Board was set up with 12 places – two local authority representatives, three Dunbritton Housing Association representatives, representation from agencies working with older and disabled people, representation from Community Councils, and individual representation. Board members were originally identified through a public meeting. A Code of Conduct for Directors was then drawn up, and a process of training for staff and Board members began.

It has been relatively easy to retain active and motivated Board members. There is a core of 8 Directors, who have been committed to Care and Repair for a number of years. The Board members give lots of support and direction, and all have a keen interest in Care and Repair. This also ensures that Care and Repair has positive linkages with the local authority.

### **Successes and challenges**

The Manager of Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair strongly believes that the service would not be in its current strong position if it had not become standalone. The organisation now offers a much wider range of services that are funded from more varied sources. A number of additional services have been developed to complement Care and Repair's core services – for example expanding some services to operate across all housing tenures.

There were however, some challenges along the way. The main difficulty that was encountered was ensuring that staff and board members developed the confidence and ability to take responsibility for managing Care and Repair as an independent company. This required a different approach and new skills, particularly in respect to financial control. The period from when Care and Repair took the decision to become Standalone in 2001 to becoming independent in 2002 gave staff and board members some time to adjust and develop skills.

Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair had to negotiate with West Dunbartonshire Council to create funding arrangements which enabled the organisation to standalone. To overcome the historical problem of funding not come through on time, representatives from the Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair service met with the Council and negotiated an agreement that full funding would be provided on the 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

### **Developing a social enterprise company**

In 2006, Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair began investigating whether they could set up a 'social firm' as a subsidiary organisation. This would be an organisation which was not for profit, and would help vulnerable people into employment. To qualify as a social firm, at least half of the workforce would need to come from a vulnerable group – such as disabled people or people with addiction issues. The original aim was that this organisation would allow Care and Repair to extend its range of services and client group, and create local employment opportunities.

Unfortunately, since 2006 funding provided to Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair has remained static and as a result, the potential of generating additional income became more of a priority. Care and Repair began exploring whether a social enterprise would be a better model, allowing them to provide a small repairs service at a commercial rate, with funds reinvested into the Care and Repair service. In the longer term, the service would explore how best to create employment opportunities for more vulnerable people as part of this.

A feasibility study was completed in mid 2008 which concluded that it would be possible to set up a social enterprise as a subsidiary of Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair. This would be a property maintenance company which could carry out small repair type works on a charged basis for people who are not part of the traditional client group.

The service would be available to anyone who can pay a commercial rate although the service can be provided at a slight premium as the profits will be reinvested in Care and Repair activities for older and disabled people. The Care and Repair small repairs service will continue to operate, free of charge, for those over 60 and for disabled people.

It was recognised that there could also be potential for the new social enterprise company to undertake larger works which do not fit within the scope of the Care and Repair small repairs service. The advantage of setting up a social enterprise to undertake this work is that it facilitates easier accounting and ensures that there is a clearer distinction between services delivered through Care and Repair and wider service delivery.

However, as Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair is a charitable organisation, restrictions that could be placed on the chargeable activities it could undertake required to be overcome. This matter was subsequently addressed when the social enterprise subsidiary, Care and Repair Extra, was established.

Care and Repair Extra was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in May 2010. The subsidiary has a separate management board and the organisation is currently working towards implementing its business plan.

## **9.8 Further information and resources**

Guidance on preparing a business plan and business planning templates can be found at the following links –

[http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pub\\_business\\_plan\\_guide.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pub_business_plan_guide.pdf)

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/EB57BAAE-5761-43AB-9331-1593BB95E143/0/GBSBusinessPlanNotes2.pdf>

<http://www.blondon.com/SocialEnterprise/BusinessToolkit/BusinessPlanningTool.aspx>

A social enterprise toolkit can be accessed at the following link –

[http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/business/social\\_economy/se\\_toolkit.htm](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/business/social_economy/se_toolkit.htm)

A toolkit for social enterprises wishing to tender for public sector contracts can be downloaded from the following link –

<http://www.s-p-i-n.co.uk/assets/dtitoolkitforsocialenterprise.pdf>

Social Enterprise Scotland aims to promote the growth of social enterprises in Scotland through the provision of advice and support. Their website can be accessed through the following link –

<http://www.socialinvestmentscotland.com/page/mission-statement>

The Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition is the national collective voice for social enterprises in Scotland. It is a membership led organisation that exists to raise the profile of social enterprise as a business model. Their website can be found at the link below –

<http://www.scottishsocialenterprise.org.uk/>

## **Section 10**

### **Diversity and Equality**

#### **10.1 Introduction to diversity and equality issues**

The principles of diversity and equality, along with flexibility, choice, privacy and trust, reflect the ethos of Care and Repair services in Scotland. The purpose of this section is to describe the current legal context of equalities in Scotland and for it to act as a guide for Care and Repair services on matters associated with diversity and equality.

Diversity relates to the differences between people, with the management of diversity within Care and Repair organisations focusing on acknowledging and respecting such differences in the workplace and addressing diversity issues when delivering services to service users and interacting with other stakeholders.

Equality relates both to equality of treatment – treating everyone in the same way – and equality of outcome – acting in a way that impacts equally on different groups. Equality is the framework which enables individuals and groups to participate and contribute to communities and society in an inclusive and fair way within the context of equal opportunity and open access.

There are essentially seven elements or strands to equality and diversity – disability, gender, race, age, sexual orientation, transgender, and religion or belief. All these elements require to be addressed by Care and Repair services both in terms of complying with the law on equality and by taking a proactive and positive approach to equality and diversity to ensure community cohesion and good relations between groups of people and between individuals.

In Scotland, equal opportunities are defined in schedule 5 of the Scotland Act 1998<sup>19</sup>. Equal opportunities are interpreted in the Act as the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, racial grounds, on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions. The specific statutory obligations of Care and Repair services in regard to equality and diversity are detailed below.

#### **10.2 Legislative background to equality and diversity**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to simplify the law relating to equalities by combining a large range of legislation into one Act. The main major pieces of legislation that have merged are the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Equal Pay Act 1970.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/46/schedule/5>

This has allowed equality law to be modernised and for there to be one piece of legislation that simplifies the law on discrimination. As well as harmonising equality law, the Equality Act 2010 extends legal provisions in regard to diversity and equality, protecting individuals from unfair treatment and promoting a more equal society.

The Equality Act 2010 applies to nine protected characteristics, the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. These protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The impact of the Equality Act 2010 in respect to Care and Repair services can be characterised by the following key themes –

- A new equality duty is placed on public bodies in respect to the seven equalities strands
- Equality rights for older persons are strengthened
- Better protection for disabled persons is included in the legislation

Although they are not public bodies (local authorities have this status), Care and Repair services must ensure that their staff and management committees/advisory boards are aware of the new equalities legislation. Furthermore, service users and other stakeholders must be made aware of the organisation's commitment to equal opportunities.

The extension of provision in the Act in respect to positive action means that Care and Repair organisations must take positive measures to ensure that people from the seven equalities groups are represented more in relation to employment and have fair access to services. Care and Repair organisations must actively promote services to the main equalities groups and may wish to undertake impact assessments to establish the extent to which their equalities initiatives are effective.

From April 2011 all protected characteristics (with the exception of marriage and civil partnerships) will be subject to the public body equality duty which requires organisations not to discriminate, to promote equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations by tackling prejudice.

The government is still considering some provisions contained within the Act. The most significant of these for Care and Repair services is the provision for Scottish Ministers to pass regulations that provide that a disabled person is entitled to make relevant adjustments to common parts in relation to premises in Scotland.

The full provisions contained within the Act can be accessed at the following link –

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission has regulatory functions in respect to ensuring that organisations comply with the law as it relates to equalities. A useful video guide to the Equalities Act 2010 can be accessed on the Equalities and Human Rights Commission website as follows –

### 10.3 Equalities in practice

Beyond the statutory requirement that Care and Repair organisations have to comply with the law on equalities, it is important that best practice is followed. This part of the diversity and equalities section of the good practice guide explores why addressing diversity and equality issues is important for Care and Repair organisations, explores best practice in respect to equality and diversity, and gives general guidance in regard to the approach Care and Repair staff should take with this issue.

It is important for Care and Repair staff to embrace equality and diversity issues to ensure that the right services are delivered to meet the needs of clients from groups with protected characteristics. A positive approach to equality and diversity allows Care and Repair organisations to contribute towards enhancing the quality of life in communities by promoting understanding and tolerance. Embracing a proactive approach to equalities in regard to employment allows Care and Repair organisations to attract and employ the best possible staff members.

All Care and Repair organisations must promote equality and diversity across the seven elements or strands to equality and diversity – disability, gender, race, age, sexual orientation, transgender, and religion or belief. In order to do this, Care and Repair services should give consideration to carrying out the following actions –

- Ensure that the Care and Repair services' policies and procedures embrace statutory requirements associated with equality and diversity and best practice, particularly in relation employment and recruitment
- Develop links with partner agencies to support engagement with equalities matters e.g. participating in translation schemes
- Have effective monitoring systems in place to evaluate the organisation's performance in respect to equality and diversity issues
- Initiate a training programme for staff in respect to raising awareness on equality and diversity issues associated with disability, gender, race, age, sexual orientation, transgender, and religion or belief

When considering training aimed at raising staff awareness of equality and diversity issues, there may be some equality strands that require more attention than others. While it is a generalisation, Care and Repair staff may have experience of issues surrounding age discrimination and disability but possibly have less experience of the issues associated with transgender or religion or belief. A training needs assessment should be carried to establish what the training needs of the staff team are, and trainers should be selected that have specialist knowledge in particular areas of equality and diversity.

#### **10.4 Other resources**

Equality and diversity are at the heart of the basic principles of human rights. The European Convention's statement on Human Rights can be found at the following link -

[http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/ENG\\_CONV.pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/ENG_CONV.pdf)

The Chartered Institute of Housing have produced a briefing on equalities and diversity which has an informative glossary on equality terminology. Although focused on the housing sector, there are examples of innovative practice within the briefing. The briefing can be accessed at the following link -

<http://www.cih.org/practice/briefs/documents/EqualityDiversityPracticeBrief.pdf>

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission Scotland promotes equality and human rights, works to eliminate discrimination and to reduce inequalities, and protects human rights. Their website contains a range of resources and can be accessed at the following link -

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland/>

## **Section 11 The national standards for Care and Repair services**

The national Care and Repair standards and guidance were originally written by the Scottish Executive in 2004 following recommendations from the Housing Improvement Task Force, and were a statement of the standards to which Care and Repair organisations in Scotland should operate in relation to the delivery of core Care and Repair services. It was intended that the standards would ensure that clients accessing Care and Repair services would experience consistent quality of service delivery across Care and Repair offices and that there would be a uniformity of service standards across the country.

In this section, general standards for Care and Repair services are set out. The good practice guide sections that precede this section give guidance on how Care and Repair organisations can meet the national standards set out in the original guidance.

The first section of the 2004 edition of the national standards for Care and Repair services described the overall general standards applying to Care and Repair services in all areas of their work while the second section described the standards that relate to service provision within specific areas of Care and Repair service activity. The general standards included in this section of the good practice guide ensure that Care and Repair organisations are consistent in respect to delivering high quality services to their clients. The standards relating to service provision have been addressed within the various chapters of the good practice guide.

The general standards set out in this section remain essentially the same as the original standards and guidance issued in 2004 but with some updates to reflect changes and developments in policy and practice since that date. Although uniformity of service delivery will be influenced by local arrangements, all Care and Repair services strive to meet or exceed the level of service set out in this section of the good practice guide.

The national standards for Care and Repair services allow service users to know what standards of service delivery they should expect from Care and Repair offices across the country. Although the national standards describe the standards to which Care and Repair services should operate, they are not prescriptive in determining the way in which Care and Repair staff perform their duties. This allows Care and Repair services to adapt to local circumstances, develop their own approach, and provide assistance in the way which best meets the needs of their local communities.

Overall, the national standards for Care and Repair services are intended to ensure that the application of high standards of service delivery in respect to providing assistance with repairs, improvements or adaptations help older and disabled people remain living independently with their own home for as long as it is practical and safe to do so.

## National Standards for Care and Repair services

All Care and Repair services should clearly identify their target client group, what they can provide to these clients, and how clients can obtain access to these services.

All Care and Repair services should have in place a written statement which sets out the client group catered for, the services provided and criteria for accessing these services, and should ensure that potential clients are well informed of the availability of these services.

### Guidance

- A written statement should be available which sets out the above issues
- This statement can either be a standalone document or incorporated within the service business plan, annual report or publicity materials
- This statement should be available to clients, the public in general and key stakeholders
- A clear publicity strategy should be in place and all publicity should accurately reflect the services offered and state eligibility criteria

### Sources of Support

- Care and Repair Scotland can assist with the provision of standard publicity materials available for Care and Repair services  
<mailto:enquiries@careandrepairsotland.co.uk>

Any strategy for prioritising service delivery should be clearly set out and available to clients

It is important that service users understand that within the target group catered for, Care and Repair services may choose to prioritise either certain clients (e.g. those aged over 75), certain needs (e.g. repairs related to home safety or hospital discharge) or certain types of repair (e.g. urgent/ non-urgent). This is particularly important as in many areas demand outstrips supply and Care and Repair services may choose to target those most in need. In order that this happens in a transparent way, any prioritisation strategy should be written down and available to clients

### Guidance

- If prioritisation is occurring, the Care and Repair service should set out within a written strategy the way in which priority is decided
- Information on the way in which service delivery is prioritised should be available to clients and the public in general

All services should be committed to ensuring equality of access to the service to all those within the target client group

Those accessing Care and Repair services should be able to do so in the confidence that they will all receive the same high quality assistance. Services are still able to target particular client groups, for example by housing tenure or age, but should ensure that within the target group equality of access is provided. The service provided should be flexible to accommodate the needs of individual clients.

### **Guidance**

- Service delivery should comply with The Equality Act 2010
- An equal opportunities policy should be in place which covers service planning and provision
- Where services have a managing agent, it should be determined whether the equal opportunities policy of the managing agent is applicable or whether a separate policy should be developed
- Services should have a clear statement of target group and any prioritisation strategy
- Mechanisms for ensuring all client groups can receive equal access to services should be in place, for example text phone or email facilities for those with hearing difficulties, or access to interpretation services
- The value of current home based, individual approach to the delivery of Care and Repair services should be recognised as an effective way of ensuring access
- Services should seek to gather data on at least the following categories - age, ethnicity, disability and gender of service users
- Client satisfaction monitoring should analyse satisfaction by at least the following categories – age, ethnicity, disability and gender

### **Sources of Support**

- The Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>
- The Scottish Disability Forum <http://www.sdef.org.uk/>

Care and Repair services should offer a client centred, individual approach, with clients having choice over the services received and how they are delivered

The assistance provided by Care and Repair should aim to be flexible in meeting individual needs, and should provide a package of services which best suit the client. However, there should be procedures in place which ensure that both client and Care and Repair service understand the type of assistance which will be provided.

## Guidance

- Clients should be informed of the range of services which Care and Repair organisations could provide them with
- Clients should be able to choose the level of support they wish to receive from Care and Repair, provided they are eligible for the service
- Clients should be provided with adequate information and advice to enable them to make an informed decision
- Clients should demonstrate their acceptance of chosen services through receiving and signing a statement to this effect

## Sources of Support

- Assistance with standard letters is available from Care and Repair Scotland <mailto:enquiries@careandrepairsotland.co.uk>

A clear written procedure for the initial assessment of clients' needs for the Care and Repair service should be in place

Procedures for assessing the needs of clients with regard to Care and Repair services should be in place, and should be appropriate to the type and scale of assistance being provided. For example, for the provision of handyman services it may be possible to assess needs by telephone, while other services will require a more in depth analysis and home visit.

## Guidance

- Written procedures for assessing needs should be in place within the Care and Repair organisation
- All staff should be aware of the procedures for assessing needs and should follow these accordingly
- Clients should be informed of the outcome of these assessments
- Where possible, this assessment procedure should attempt to pick up where clients may be in need of alternative services, and clients referred accordingly

Outcomes of assessments should be clearly explained to clients, and where applicable, clients should be informed in writing of the services which Care and Repair can offer them

As the service available to clients varies on an individual basis, it is important that all clients understand the assistance which Care and Repair organisations are able to provide.

## Guidance

- All clients should receive a letter which informs them of the service which Care and Repair can offer them, and how to take this forward
- Where possible, clients who are not eligible should be informed, either verbally or in writing, of any alternative sources of assistance for which they may be eligible

## Sources of Support

- Assistance with standard letters is available from Care and Repair Scotland <mailto:enquiries@careandrepairsotland.co.uk>

Where clients within the target group are denied access to Care and Repair services, a written explanation should be provided

In a very small number of cases, Care and Repair services may have to decline individuals access to the service due to concerns over staff safety or security when dealing with this client. In these circumstances, clients should be informed of this decision in writing.

## Guidance

- A statement on when access to services can reasonably be refused should be in place
- Where access is refused, clients should be informed of this decision in writing, with an explanation of the reason for this decision
- All clients refused access should receive details of
  - how to appeal this decision
  - other options available to them which may help resolve their situation

A formal mechanism for appealing decisions regarding access to Care and Repair services should be in place, and clients should be informed of this

Where a decision has been taken to exclude a target group client from receipt of a Care and Repair service, this decision should be open to appeal by the client.

## Guidance

- Procedures for appealing decisions to deny access to the service should be in place, and should involve consideration of the case by someone other than the staff member directly involved in the case (e.g. the Care and Repair Manager /Advisory Group/ Management Board)
- Clients denied access should be informed of these procedures
- Clients should be kept up-to-date with the progress of their appeal

All Care and Repair services should have a policy in place for dealing with complaints and should ensure that clients are made aware of the complaints process

It is important that clients have a route through which they can register dissatisfaction with the Care and Repair service and, if appropriate, information on any action that can be taken to provide redress. As Care and Repair organisations are often co-ordinating the works rather than undertaking them themselves, it is important that the complaints policy explains the procedures for dealing with poor performance of contractors the client has a contractual relationship with. Although largely the responsibility of the local authority, a complaints process must be in place in regard to grant administration. A complaints procedure must also exist in regard to those working on behalf of the Care and Repair service itself (e.g. staff, trainees, volunteers, contracted services).

### **Guidance**

- A written complaints policy should be in place in all Care and Repair services which sets out the procedure for dealing with client complaints
- The complaints policy should be publicised to clients
- Complaints should be monitored and the outcomes used for future service planning

### **Sources of Support**

- The Scottish Public Sector ombudsman <http://www.spsso.org.uk/>