

National Policy Statement

A vision for Care and Repair
services in Scotland



Minister's Foreword

I am pleased to welcome the publication of Care and Repair Scotland's National Policy Statement, which provides a clear statement of the vision for Care and Repair services in Scotland.

Care and Repair services offer vital support to older and disabled people, helping them to remain in their own homes where disrepair or adaptation needs might otherwise mean a move into care homes or hospitals. With an ageing population in Scotland there will be pressure on limited public resources and health services to deal with increasing care needs. By supporting people through the process of getting adaptations to their homes, Care and Repair services enable older people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Many older people would prefer to stay in their own homes and this helps to support them to live independently. It also helps health and social services to meet the huge challenges of supporting our ageing population within limited resources.

Care and Repair services can also help older and disabled people to keep their homes in good condition. The personal service and support provided by Care and Repair services is, I am sure, highly valued by their clients. And, as local services, Care and Repair can be in an ideal place to deliver local authorities' Scheme of Assistance duties, providing assistance tailored to the needs of the individual.

This National Policy Statement reflects the aspirations of local Care and Repair services to continue to deliver these services, and to contribute to health and housing outcomes. It provides the foundation for Care and Repair services to go forward and demonstrate how they can support local authorities and health boards as they face the challenges ahead.

Alex Neil MSP
Minister for Housing and Communities
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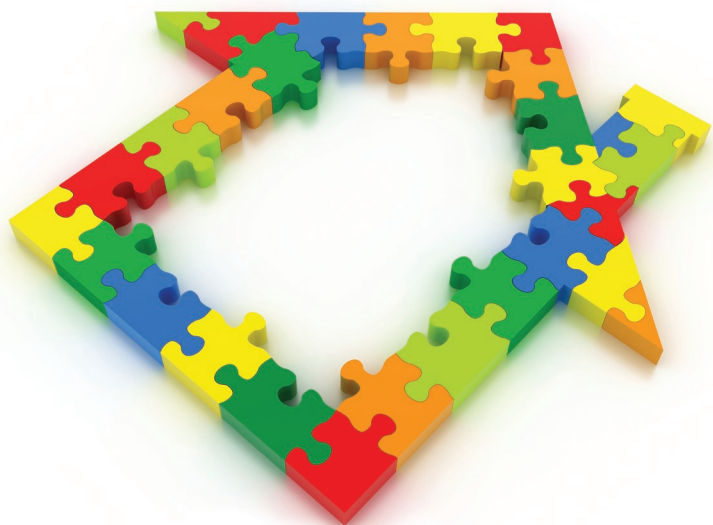




Care and Repair in Scotland

The next decade

Care and Repair Scotland is the national co-ordinating body for Care and Repair services in Scotland. In this policy statement, which follows extensive consultation, we set out our approach to the future development of Care and Repair. During the next decade the Care and Repair movement will face great challenges arising, on the one hand, from cutbacks in public expenditure and, on the other, from an increase in the number of people requiring our services. But the Care and Repair movement in Scotland has demonstrated over many years its ability to change and innovate and we are confident that it will continue to prove itself capable of delivering for older and disabled people as it has done for the last 20 years.



Building on sound foundations

The core aims of Care and Repair are to enable older and disabled people to remain in their own homes for as long as it is practical and safe to do so, rather than going into care homes or hospital, and to enjoy the benefits of good quality housing in the community. Thirty seven Care and Repair teams across Scotland seek to achieve this by providing advice and assistance with building works in the home - ranging from simple maintenance tasks to complex repairs, improvements and adaptations. Over the next decade these will remain the core aims of Care and Repair.

The “Reshaping Care for Older People” programme being developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA focuses on the challenges presented by the projected growth in the number of older people, draws attention to the public expenditure implications in terms of hospital and care home admissions if current policies are maintained, and argues that, both for expenditure and quality of life reasons, action needs to be taken to ensure that older people can stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Ensuring good quality housing is central to the programme, and Care and Repair Scotland enthusiastically welcomes this strategic recognition of the importance of the work which Care and Repair local teams have been undertaking for the last 20 years. It also believes that, given the necessary support by the Scottish Government, local authorities and the NHS, local Care and Repair teams are capable of making a major contribution to the delivery of the Reshaping Care objectives.

Care and Repair Scotland strongly endorses the view of the Scottish Government that adequate resources should be directed to safeguarding the condition of existing housing since, in any year, new building represents only a very small proportion of the total stock. Following the changes introduced through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 each local authority is required to produce a Scheme of Assistance to provide advice and, in some cases, direct assistance to owners to keep their homes in good condition. Local Care and Repair teams are working closely with local authorities to help implement their Schemes of Assistance in relation to older and disabled households and Care and Repair Scotland is confident that, providing the necessary resources are made available, they will also continue to make an important contribution in this area.





Ethos and values

Care and Repair services are provided to older and disabled people on a “not for profit” basis. Objective, professional advice is provided, uninfluenced by any commercial considerations. Care and Repair is a home-based and personalised service which seeks to empower customers to take informed decisions. The key guiding principles of Care and Repair are:

Flexibility and choice

tailoring the services to meet the specific needs of each customer

Privacy and trust

building trust by respecting the privacy of customers and ensuring that personal information is treated in confidence and by treating customers with respect
Equality and diversity – seeking to ensure that information on the services available to older and disabled persons and access to them is available regardless of gender, ethnicity or degree of disability

Care and Repair teams have sought to put these principles into practice and feedback from customers suggests that the services they provide and the way in which they are provided are widely appreciated. Care and Repair Scotland believes that the ethos and principles of Care and Repair remain valid and must be maintained.

Customers

Care and Repair services are directed to older owner occupiers and crofters, aged 60 and over. However in some areas services are provided to owners of any age with disabilities, and private rented sector tenants who are older or disabled.

Care and Repair Scotland will work to encourage the provision of Care and Repair services throughout Scotland to owners of any age with registered physical or mental disabilities.

So far as older people are concerned, and subject to the continued availability of resources, Care and Repair Scotland believes that it remains appropriate to focus on older owner occupiers, crofters and tenants (where they are responsible for the work in question) aged 60 and over. However, in the event that resources are reduced, local teams may need to consider whether to reduce any services they provide to those who are not owner occupiers or crofters, and whether to raise the qualifying age to 65, or even 70.

In situations where demand exceeds resources, and waiting lists build up, customers will need to be prioritised. Decisions in these cases should be based on an assessment of the extent to which there is a threat to independent living.

Services

For the most part, Care and Repair services provided locally can be categorised as follows:-

- Advice and information
- Help with major repairs, improvements and the installation of aids and adaptations for persons with disabilities
- Small repair services
- Handyperson services i.e. relatively straightforward maintenance tasks.

Care and Repair Scotland will encourage local teams to provide the full range of these services and to promote them widely in their areas. Innovation has been an important strength of the Care and Repair approach. Care and Repair Scotland will encourage local teams to consider with relevant funding bodies, such as health boards and local authorities, the scope for developing new services such as hospital discharge services, home security services, gardening services and “stay put” schemes with periodic maintenance checks.

Equality of access

Care and Repair Scotland will work to ensure that Care and Repair services are available throughout Scotland and to all social groups. It will provide advice and support to local teams as necessary to help achieve this. In particular it will encourage local teams to promote their services to ethnic minorities through proactive engagement with black and minority ethnic (BME) services locally.

Governance

The governance arrangements of local Care and Repair teams in Scotland vary greatly. 22 are managed by housing associations, 4 are managed by other organisations, 3 are part of the local authority, 1 is a subsidiary company of a housing association and 7 are independent charitable companies. Care and Repair Scotland will encourage local teams to review their governance arrangements in consultation with their local authorities. Care and Repair Scotland will advise, support and assist local teams who conclude that they should move to self-governing status.





Finance and Fundraising

Care and Repair local teams are almost entirely dependent on funding from local authorities. Reductions in local authority spending over the forthcoming decade will call current funding levels into question, but reductions are likely to lead to longer term costs in terms of hospital and care home admissions. Care and Repair Scotland will work to establish and demonstrate the benefits both to the individual and to the public purse which flow from the delivery of Care and Repair services.

However, recognising the pressures on council budgets, Care and Repair local teams should consider the scope for developing other sources of income. Care and Repair Scotland will work to support local Care and Repair agencies in the development of income generation strategies.

Role of Care and Repair Scotland

Care and Repair Scotland is an independent charitable company funded by grant from the Scottish Government. Our Board includes representatives of COSLA, the NHS, voluntary sector bodies and Care and Repair local agencies. Our role is to provide leadership at national level and to support local authorities and Care and Repair local teams in the delivery of operationally effective and cost effective Care and Repair services which enable older and disabled people to remain in their own homes.

Our priorities in carrying out that role include:-

- The development of good practice guidance
- The introduction of a performance monitoring system and an accreditation system
- Action to raise the profile of Care and Repair with older and disabled people.

Conclusion

We believe that Care and Repair local teams have achieved much in the last 20 years. But much remains to be done both to ensure that all those in need at present are able to benefit and to take account of the projected rise in the number of older people. The ethos and values of Care and Repair remain valid, but they need to be applied in a new era of pressures on public expenditure. The challenge for Care and Repair in Scotland is to rise to these new challenges, demonstrating the value, both to the individual and to public bodies, of the services it provides, showing its continued ability to change and innovate and continuing to deliver efficient and effective services which meet customers' needs.



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