

Annual Report

Aberdeen Care and Repair

01/04/2009 to 31/03/2010

Introduction

Aberdeen Care and Repair works with Aberdeen City Council, through local housing strategy to assist owner- occupiers with repairs, improvements, adaptations and heating issues. The client group are older people, people with a disability or long-term health problems within the private sector and/or experiencing fuel poverty.

The service comprises of the 6 elements identified below along with the number of new referrals received during the reporting period:

Service	No of Referrals
Advice	93
Trusted Traders	559
Grant Aided (Disabled Adaptations)	51
Affordable Warmth	191
Non- grant aided (Repair/improvements/adaptations)	221
Small Repair Service	2393

The service assists client's carry out repair's, improvements and adaptations allowing them to remain independent, safe and secure within their own homes. Since July 2008 an in-house small repairs service has been in operation, employing 4 tradesmen direct to assist older and disabled people within the city of Aberdeen carry out small repairs or small tasks within their home at a fixed charge. We also provide through a service level agreement a joiner for the Homecheck scheme to install safety measures in client's homes for the prevention of trips and falls. Examples of these are grab rails for the elderly and stair gates for young families.

Each year the numbers of requests and referrals increase and the need for the type of assistance care and repair provides becomes more demanding. The project over the years has adapted and changed to meet the demands of both funders and service users. The removal of private sector housing grants for repair and improvements in 2008 resulted in an increased need for Officers to identify alternative funding routes, one of which is accessing charitable funding for low - income households. Charitable funding, although effective is very time consuming, which may result in work being delayed and condition of property worsening.

This year we have worked with Aberdeen City Council on a few projects within the city:

- Victorian Tenement Project – targeting householders living in mixed tenure blocks of pre 1919 tenements where fuel poverty is known to be prevalent. Our joiners carry out draught-proofing work to front and rear entrance doors at competitive rates.
 - 130 tenements had draught-proofing work carried out
- Tenant Draught-proofing – Our joiners have been carrying out draught-proofing work on behalf of ACC for their tenants.
 - 78 tenants have had draught-proofing work carried out
- Clients using the Community Alarm Scheme require keys safes fitted to their homes. This year our joiners have been supplying and fitting key safes to these properties on behalf of the community alarm team.
 - 34 Key safes have been installed.
- Loft clearances – for homeowners who are physically unable to clear their lofts to allow for energy efficiency measures to be carried out. Our tradesmen empty the loft and we arrange for ACC to collect the unwanted items.

- 13 lofts were cleared
- Crossgates – These properties had no access to the loft area. In partnership with ACC’s Home Energy Team an offer was sent to owners and tenants to cut loft hatches to the upper and lower floors of the property in order that insulation could be carried out. Our tradesmen carried out this work.

By organisations joining together to deliver projects throughout the city the outcomes can be improved in many ways, namely

- Cost effectiveness
- Greater coverage
- Controlled delivery

Referrals to the service increase yearly due to the ageing population within the city. Many of these clients live in designated regeneration areas within the city. During the last financial year 29% of our clients lived in regeneration areas.

**This figure does not include identified ‘at risk’ areas within the city*

We actively participate on many networks and committees to ensure that the voice of our client group is heard and continually lobby both local and national bodies for changes in service provision as well as identifying unmet needs within the city of Aberdeen. Care and Repair Staff attend/support local community groups to provide talks and information on the service and work closely with other local organisations in the city, in particular through the Cash in your pocket partnership where a bespoke referral system to other organisations is in place.

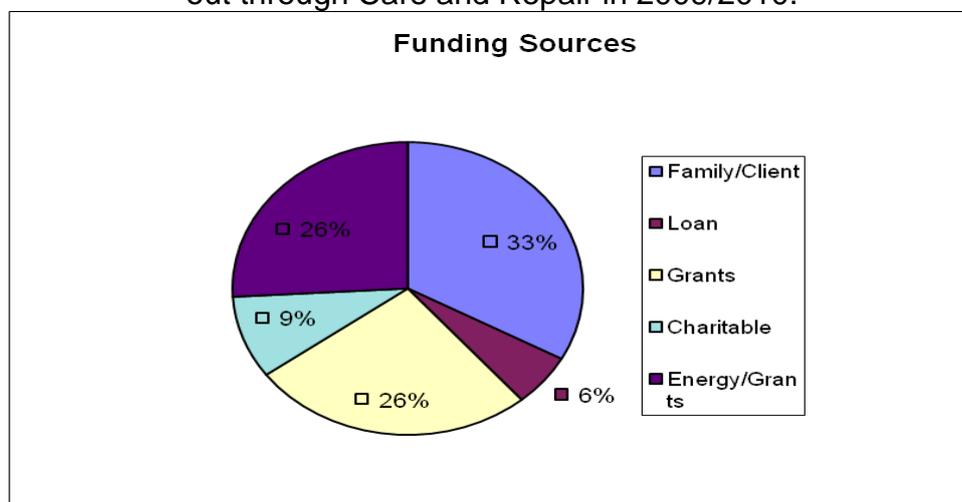
Project Statistics

Aberdeen Care and Repair received a total number of 3438 referrals over the year.

Total cost of work completed was as follows:

Small Repairs/Handyman	£ 68,030.67
Affordable Warmth	£ 204,262.26
Repair/Improvement/Pilot Project Grants	£ 111,901.70
Disabled Grants	£ 64,475.50
Non-grant eligible works	<u>£ 218,447.35</u>
Total Costs of Works Carried out	£ 667,117.48

The graph below illustrates the sources of funding which covered the works carried out through Care and Repair in 2009/2010.



£74,716.00 of charitable funding was raised for individuals in 2009/2010

The Service

Free advice/Trusted Trader Scheme

One of the barriers for owner-occupiers carrying out work within the home is the lack of technical knowledge and the ability to find trusted tradesmen. The advice service has always been seen as an important part of the service, but over the last 12 months the number of advice cases has increased with vulnerable clients requiring immediate advice. As a result the project have arranged for an officer to be on duty between 9am and 4.30pm in order that any calls for advice can be dealt with immediately and clients can get the information they require thus reducing their concerns. The service is registered as an advice service with Homepoint and all administration staff and officers have completed gained level 1 accreditation for housing advice. Due to recent funding cuts we will not be in a position to have an officer available every day 2010/11.

A formalised 'trusted trader scheme' has been in operation for the last 18 months. 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. Contractors are removed from the lists if they do not meet care and repair standards of service. 46 contractors registered in 2008/09.

Our web site provides information on our service provision as well as details of our Trusted Trader Scheme. www.aberdeencareandrepair.co.uk.

During 2009/2010, 652 clients received immediate advice or information on our Trusted Traders to enable them to carry out the work.

Repairs and Improvements

The Care and Repair service assist homeowners and private rented sector tenants carry out improvements, repairs and adaptations in their own homes. Clients are visited in their own homes and given advice on the options available to bring the property up to standard. This includes drawing up specifications, obtaining quotes from selected contractors and helping organise the financing of the works required. There are no statutory grants available for repairs and improvements which can result in many clients being unable to afford the cost of the work. In these cases charitable organisations have to be approached for financial assistance. This has an impact on the length of time taken per case, as well as a reduction in the level of repairs carried out by householders, many of whom choose to carry out the minimal repair required and in some cases none at all.

Types of work undertaken: roofs/gutters/downpipes/ rewiring/window & door replacement/shower installation etc.

During 2009/2010 – 221 new cases were assisted through Care and Repair for this type of work. Total cost of work carried out being £218,447.35

Affordable Warmth Project:

The Aberdeen Affordable Warmth Scheme was established in October 1999. It is targeted at householders in Aberdeen who are owner-occupiers, are on low fixed-incomes and have little or no capital assets except the house they live in. Since the project has developed and the recent rises in energy bills the target group has widened and now includes anyone suffering from fuel poverty.

The main barrier, which prevents people from this group carrying out energy efficiency measures, is their lack of capital, ability to borrow money or repay a loan on a low fixed income. . The scheme works with individual householders to identify the energy efficiency measures required, access any grants available both locally and nationally and if necessary approaches charitable organisations on their behalf. The service administers a loan fund to provide loans for energy efficiency measures. This fund offers low fixed interest loans to clients where no alternative source of funding is available. The service arranges to have the work carried out by reputable contractors and ensures that work has been carried out to client's satisfaction.

Two Care and Repair Officers are fully qualified NHER Assessors and 3 have qualifications in energy advice.

Fuel poverty is on the increase with the local house condition survey identifying that currently 16.7% of households in Aberdeen are in fuel poverty. When the most recent fuel prices are included it is estimated that this figure has risen to 21% resulting in more people falling into the client group who will have need of this service.

During 2009/2010, 191 households were assisted through Care and Repair for this type of work. Total cost of work carried out being £204,262.26

Disabled Adaptations

Over the last financial year 51 of our cases have required assistance with disabled adaptations that are grant eligible and supported by the OT's. Care and Repair have been working closely with the Occupational Therapists, contractors and clients to ensure work is carried out with the minimum distress to the disabled person. This can sometimes involve arranging temporary accommodation for the occupants whilst work is carried out.

During 2009/2010 43 households were assisted through Care and Repair for disabled adaptation work. Total cost of work carried out being £64,475.50.

The service has not received funding to continue this area of work in 2010/11 although the managing agent Castlehill Housing Association has decided to continue to offer a service on a full cost recovery basis.

Small Repairs Service/Handyperson Service

An increased demand for the small repairs and handyperson service over the past few years resulting in the project carrying out at review of service provision, which included a customer survey to obtain our service users views .The out come of the review was additional Tradesmen were employed to deliver the service in-house and the project had to generate enough income through its charging policy to meet shortfalls in statutory funding. At the same time a fixed charged of £13.00 per hour including travel was introduced.

The number of referrals to this service constantly increases and this service has proved to be beneficial to our clients for the following reasons:

1. Project can cover joinery, plumbing and electrical work
2. Safety/Security – all Care and Repair Staff have full disclosure Scotland
3. Continuity – Same person turning up to do the work
4. Cost effectiveness – Clients are advised of charges before work carried out.
5. Appointments are arranged to suit clients whilst they are on the telephone
6. Staff can be flexible, i.e. meet social workers/carers at appointed times

7. Staff have knowledge of other assistance that may be available through Care and Repair and other agencies
8. Small jobs are often more complex or involve more than one type of tradesman,
9. Customer satisfactions surveys are carried out to ensure quality service is delivered.
10. The charitable group fund purchases security equipment which the tradesmen can fit free of charge whilst in vulnerable clients homes.

We are pleased to be able to continue and offer this service in 2010/11, but due to a reduction in funding the charges have been reviewed. A means test has been introduced and two subsidised rates £15.00 per hour for those on qualifying benefits and £25.00 per hour for all other service users.

“Handyperson service helps and encourages independence for vulnerable people to remain in their own homes promoting home safety and security thus reducing the risk of accidents and addressing security matters”

During 2009/2010, 2393 households were assisted by Care and Repair through our Handyperson Service.

Type of work carried out

Electrical	378	Plumbing	505
Joiner	842	Gardening	63
Security Measures	85	Small Tasks	107
Safety Measures	450	Other	25

Homecheck Service

This service is available to all residents within the city of Aberdeen irrespective of age or tenure. Officers from the Homecheck service visit residents in their own homes to carry out a safety check and provide advice to clients on preventative measures that can be taken. If there is a need for safety equipment to be installed a referral is made to our service to carry out the installation of the equipment safely.

A service level in agreement is held with Aberdeen City council to provide the tradesman to carry out the installation of safety equipment in client’s properties within the city of Aberdeen.

Total number of referrals to service	405
Total number of completions during reporting period	400

Items Fitted	No	Type of work	No
Grab Rails	48	Safety Catches	34 packs
Safety Gates	510	Threshold/Mat wells	7
Metal Rails	3	Additional security measures	25

On average work is completed within 20 working days, but if Homecheck staff identify priority cases an early visit is arranged.

Security Project

During 2009/10 we secured funding from the Lintel Trust to cover the cost of our Tradesmen time whilst installing additional security measures in client’s homes. Aberdeen Care and Repair Group Fund purchase the equipment and our Tradesmen can now fit these items at no cost to the client

. During 2009/10 85 households received assistance through this project.

Additional Assistance – Referrals to other agencies

As part of the holistic approach taken by Care and Repair staff during this financial year, 1243 referrals were made to other agencies/organisations on behalf of care and repair clients for assistance. The table below identified the main organisations referrals were made to:

Aberdeen City Council – Various Departments	45
Trusted Traders	979
Re-housing (Various)	6
Income Maximisation (other agencies)	31
Charities	22
Scottish Executive CHP Scheme/Insulation Measures/Energy Advice	84
Occupational Therapists	48
Other	28

Customer Satisfaction: (Work Cases only)

The following response was received from clients who had work carried out in their home.

1. How did you find out about Care and Repair?

Local Authority Dept	14%	Social Work/OT	5%
Health/GP	3%	Neighbour	10%
Publicity	12%	Voluntary Sector	5%
Home Care	3%	Other	14%
Friend/Relation/Self	34%		

2. How did you contact Aberdeen Care & Repair?

Telephone	70%	Referred by other agency	21%
In person/letter	7%	Can't Remember	1%

3. How long did you have to wait from first contact to first visit?

1 Week	29%	1 to 2 Weeks	38%
1 month	14%	Can't Remember	18%

4. How satisfied were you with work done through Care & Repair?

Very satisfied	73%	Satisfied	22%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	2%		

5. How would you describe the assistance of the Care & Repair officer?

Very satisfied	85%	Satisfied	14%
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6. Describe the standard of work of the tradesmen with regard to:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Unanswered
Quality	66%	26%	1%	7%
Reliability	62%	19%	3%	6%
Customer Care	55%	23%	1%	21%

7. Would you have managed to carry out the work without Care & Repair?

No	75%	Yes 12%	Don't Know	12%
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8. Has the work carried out made a difference to your enjoyment of your house?

Significant Difference	79%	Minor Difference 5%	No Difference	4%
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9. Would you be able to continue living at home if the work had not been carried out?

No	18%	Yes 79%	Don't Know	3%
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10. Would you use the Care & Repair service again?

No	1%	Yes 97%	Don't Know	2%
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11. Would you recommend Care & Repair to others?

No	1%	Yes 97%	Don't Know	2%
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12. In overall terms how satisfied were you with the assistance given by the agency?

Very Satisfied	84%	Satisfied	15%
No Answer	1%		

The following tables show the profile of customers, their properties and the type of work carried out during 2009/2010 in percentages.

Customer Profile (All):

Age	Under 60	60-70	70-80	Over 80
%	22%	15%	33%	30%

Household	Female Single	Male Single	Couple	Single & Family	Couple & Family	Siblings
%	47%	8%	24%	7%	14%	7%

Disability	Physical	Mental	Learning	Chronic Illness	Mobility	Dementia	General Poor Health
%	32%	8%	1%	18%	25%	5%	11%

Property Profile:

Property Age	Pre 1919	1919 to 1944	1945 to 1964	1965 to 1982	Post 1982
%	20%	18%	30%	20%	12%

Tenure Type	Paying Mortgage	Own Outright	Social Housing	Private Rented
%	9%	73%	14%	4%

Property Type	Detached	Semi	Terraced	Tenement Flat	Other Flat	Multi Storey
%	7%	33%	19%	17%	19%	4%

Length of Residence	Less than 5 yrs	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	20 to 30 years	30 years or more
%	11%	8%	18%	22%	41%

Number of Cases & Type of Work (Completed)
(Does not include small repairs)

Window/Door	Roof/Walls/Rot Works	Bathroom	Electrical	Heating	Other Works
11%	17%	17%	4%	35%	14%