

Annual Report
Aberdeen Care and Repair
(Managed by Castlehill Housing Association)
01/04/2010 to 31/03/2011

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. Some of the services are available to social housing tenants, in particular the small repairs service.

The service comprises of the 5 elements identified below along with the number of new referrals received during the reporting period:

Service	No of Referrals
Advice	248
Trusted Traders	358
Affordable Warmth	242
Non- grant aided (Repair/improvements/adaptations)	252
Small Repair Service	2387
Total	3487

The service assists clients carry out repairs, 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 clients' 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.

Over the last 18 months the service had identified gaps in service provision, in particular the recent changes in the Occupational Therapists' assessment process, the increased need for charitable funding to be raised for individuals and particular problems in assisting clients who lived in regeneration areas irrespective of tenure.

As a result an application for Fairer Scotland Funding was made to provide revenue funding for a Funding Assistant's post within the service to support officers, and clients by raising charitable funding for work required in their property. We were successful in securing funding for this post during 2010/11 and have recently received confirmation of continued funding for 2011/12. Detailed information on the outcomes for the charitable funding is contained in this report.

The changes in the OT criteria in September, 2010 have impacted heavily on the service, with an increased number of clients contacting the service for advice and

assistance with minor aids and adaptations. Although the service can assist with this type of work, we are having problems with capacity issues. The numbers requesting assistance are being monitored closely and these issues have been raised with Social Work, and Private Sector Housing.

This year we have worked with Aberdeen City Council and other housing providers 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.
 - 45 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.
 - 149 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.
 - 10 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.
- UHIS – Aberdeen City Council were running an insulation project in Torry, Cove and Altens. Many owners/tenants were unable to clear their loft to allow for insulation or the existing loft hatch was not large enough for the work to be carried out. The Care and Repair service were contracted to assist with the enabling measures which were fully funded by a grant from Scottish Government. In order to deliver on this contract the service worked with Aberdeen Foyer Works, a social firm which supports young people into employment. As a result of this work our service is currently supporting two work placements.
- Minor Aids Adaptations – Due to the high level of demand for minor aids and adaptations over the last few months of the year the service are closely monitoring these requests and raising the issue with the appropriate departments.
- Small Repairs Service – As part of the development of our small repairs service we are now offering some services to local Housing providers. Our tradesmen carry out non-responsive maintenance work for some providers, charging full recovery costs, which are reinvested in the service, reducing dependency on public funding in future years.

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
- Increased safety for service users

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 21% 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

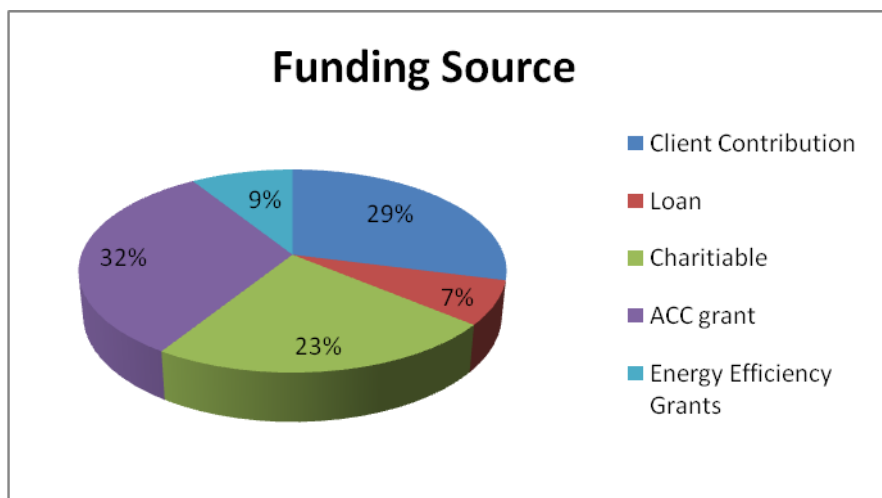
Aberdeen Care and Repair received a total number of 3487 referrals over the year.

Total cost of work completed was as follows:

Small Repairs/Handyman	£ 114,222.27
Affordable Warmth	£ 184,722.61
Disabled Grants	£ 87,185.55
All other non-grant eligible works	£ 415,600.13
Total Costs of Works Carried out	£ 801,730.56

*Figures adjusted for year end

The graph below illustrates the sources of funding which covered the works carried out through Care and Repair in 2010/2011.



£136,518.38 of charitable funding was raised for individuals in 2010/2011

The Service

Free advice/Trusted Trader Scheme

One of the barriers for older and disabled people, 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. The project has 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 and gained level 1 accreditation for housing advice. During 2010/11 staff also undertook level 2 Adult Protection Training.

A formalised 'trusted trader scheme' has been in operation for the last 2 years. 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. 29 contractors were registered in 2010/11.

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

During 2010/2011, 606 clients received immediate advice or information on our Trusted Traders to enable them to carry out the work.

Repairs and Improvements or adaptations to the home

The Care and Repair service assists 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 2010/2011 – 252 new cases were assisted through Care and Repair for this type of work. Total cost of work carried out being £415,600.13

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, the Scottish Fuel Poverty Index (2008) identifies 26.5% of households in Scotland are in fuel poverty. In Aberdeen City this figure is estimated at 21%.

During 2010/2011, 242 households were assisted through Care and Repair for this type of work. Total cost of work carried out being £184,722.61

Disabled Adaptations

Aberdeen City Council stopped funding a post to support disabled adaptations for 2010/11. As a result our Managing Agent, Castlehill Housing Association decided to retain this service and Castlehill Adaptation Service was introduced on 1st April 2011. This service is a Technical Support service working closely with the Occupational Therapists, contractors, private sector housing department 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. The service is self financing and shares an office with Care and Repair staff.

Small Repairs Service/Handyperson Service

An increased demand for the small repairs and handyperson service over the past few years resulted in the project carrying out a review of service provision, which included a customer survey to obtain our service users views. The outcome of the review resulted in additional Tradesmen being 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.

During 2010/11 our charging policy was reviewed in order to ensure that those householders who are in most need accessed the service at the reduced rate. Charges were set at £15.00 per hr inclusive of vat for those in receipt of benefits and £25.00 per hr inclusive of vat for all other service users.

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 as well as small tasks both indoor and outdoor, including safety and security measures.
2. Safety/Security – all Care and Repair Staff have full disclosure Scotland.
3. Continuity – same person/service turning up to do the work.
4. Cost effectiveness – clients are advised of charges before work carried out and assistance can be provided by other parts of the service if financing the work is an issue.
5. Appointments are arranged to suit clients whilst they are on the telephone, and backed up by an appointment letter where necessary.
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/services, where clients can be referred on to for assistance.
8. Small jobs are often more complex or involve more than one type of tradesman.

9. Tradesmen can provide advice on minor aids and adaptations and fit items where necessary.
10. Customer satisfactions surveys are carried out to ensure quality service is delivered.
11. The charitable group fund purchases of security/safety equipment which the tradesmen can fit free of charge whilst in vulnerable clients homes.

Although this service is partially funded by Aberdeen City Council, the service has to generate £60K of income to cover its costs, which the charges provide. Our tradesmen also carry out work for ACC and other housing providers, charge full recovery costs, which are reinvested in the project, thus allowing us to provide more hours of assistance to our client group.

We are pleased to be able to continue and offer this service in 2011/12, but due to a reduction in funding as well as increases in vat etc the new rates for 11/12 will be £15.00 per hr plus vat, and £25.00 per hr plus vat.

“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 20010/11, 2387 households were assisted by Care and Repair through our Handyperson Service.

Type of work carried out

Electrical	18%	Plumbing	13%
Joiner	21%	Gardening	5%
Security Measures	6%	Small Tasks	5%
Safety Measures	18%	Other	3%
Draught Proofing	8%		

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 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	415
Total number of completions during reporting period	347

Items Fitted	No	Type of work	No
Grab Rails/Metal Rails	62	Safety Catches	67 packs
Safety Gates	655	Threshold/Mat wells	12

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

Security Initiative

During 2010/11 we secured a grant from the Lintel Trust and Aberdeen Safer Community 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 fitted these items at no cost to the client.

During 2010/11 – 114 households received assistance through this project.

Gardening Initiative

During Spring Summer 2010, we offered a grass cutting service to older and disabled households irrespective of tenure. The George Crombie Trust provided a grant of £2500 in order that we could provide a subsidised service. 210 gardening jobs were carried out.

Electrical Safety Initiative

At the end of 2010 we applied for a grant from the Electrical Safety Council which was available to assist clients with electrical safety issues. Grant conditions laid down by ESC were for clients on low incomes. This grant of £2500 was very useful and 7 householders accessed this grant to help with electrical repairs.

Results of Customer Satisfaction Survey for Small Repairs/ Handyperson Service

After initial contact did you think you had a long time to wait?

No 83% Yes 17%

Were you satisfied with the work carried out?

Yes 99% No 1%

Were you satisfied with the manner of the Tradesman?

Yes 99% No 1%

Were your needs met by the SRS service?

Yes 99% No 1%

(Percentages based on an 87% return rate)

The feedback from customers using these services is a positive one. Although a large number of requests are made for the service to cover other needs, which the service can undertake but not at the subsidised rate.

Comments from Clients: -

"I found the service you provided when I have asked for help is first class, thank you very much, the tradesman was courteous, very efficient and took pride in his work, and I would recommend service to anyone"

"One of the best tradesmen we've had in the house."

"Great service, no problems, very pleasant tradesman, overall I would give 10 out of 10 for service and tradesmen work, much appreciated"

Qualitative Assessment:

Income maximisation:

As part of our holistic approach a benefit check is carried out to all clients who receive a home visit from one of the Project Officers or Funding Assistant. If benefits

are required clients are assisted with completing applications for the benefits highlighted below, but referrals are also made on to other organisations if it is a more complex cases. Another avenue for increasing household incomes, particularly with the elderly or disabled is to apply for Annuities from national/local or work related charitable organisations/trusts. This is seen by staff as another way to help those who may sit just above minimum income levels and find it difficult to deal with the unexpected expenses of housing repairs or unexpected increase in daily living costs. Over the last 12 months:

82 Clients have received assistance in applying for additional benefits.
 £1,794.21 a week of additional income has been secured.
 £93,298.92 per annum of additional income secured for our client group.

Benefits Secured 10/11

Attendance Allowance	29	Pension Credit/Incapacity	3
Disability Living Allowance	11	Council Tax Benefit	3
Annuities	33	other	3

*NB a large proportion of this work is carried out by our Funding Assistant Post which is funded by Fairer Scotland Funding

Charitable Fundraising

During 2010/11 the project secured funding from Fairer Scotland to support a part time post working on income maximisation and charitable funding. This has enabled a member of staff to concentrate on income maximisation and applying for charitable funding for individuals within Aberdeen city for various repairs/improvements/adaptations as well as basic furniture irrespective of tenure. This area of work is labour intensive and time consuming and allows existing project staff to concentrate on their specialised area of work, whilst the Funding Officer deals with the financial side in most cases.

Cases Completed – where charitable funding was secured

Number of Households	% living in regeneration areas	% living in social housing	Total Number of charities approached	Charitable Funding Secured	Cost of Work enabled as a result of charitable funding
142	36%	41%	364	£136,518.38	£388,072.18

Cases in Progress – where charitable funding is required

Number of Households	% living in regeneration areas	% living in social housing	Total Number of charities approached to date	Charitable Funding Secured to date	Expected cost of Work enabled as a result of charitable funding
59	36%	41%	141	£32,183.99	£87,921.48

We have received confirmation from Fairer Scotland Board that this post will continue to be funded in 2011/12.

Additional Assistance – Referrals to other agencies

As part of the holistic approach taken by Care and Repair staff during this financial year, 899 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	37
Trusted Traders	610
SRS service	30
Income Maximisation (other agencies)	37
Charities	33

Scottish Executive CHP Scheme/Insulation Measures/Energy Advice	28
Occupational Therapists	71
CIYPP	16
Other	37

Charitable Group Fund

The service has a registered charitable group fund (SCO 15306) whose principal activities and objectives are the promotion of the welfare of the elderly/and or disabled in respect of housing and other relative matters. Traditionally funds raised by the charitable group are used to provide 'hardship grants' to individuals to assist them carry out repairs, improvements, adaptations, including on some occasions assisting with the cost of basic furnishings such as beds, cookers and carpets.

Over the last few years the charitable fund has actively promoted and supported relevant services, in particular our gardening service and safety and security projects. The gardening service was introduced as a result of changes in local authority assistance for older and disabled people and in 2009/10, and 2010/11 we offered a gardening service to our client group. This service was subsidised with funding we secured from charities/trusts.

The safety and security project has also operated for the last two years. The group fund purchases of minor safety and security equipment which is fitted free of charge whilst tradesmen are at the property, or a security visit can be arranged to identify the minor equipment needed to increase the security and safety of the home. This service was provided free of charge as a result of support from local charities/trusts and companies.

Without the support of these organisations we would be unable to deliver this type of service which was identified as gaps in service provision from our client group. The following organisations/trusts/charities supported the group fund in 2010/11 to deliver these projects:

- Aberdeen Asset Management
- Aberdeen Safer Community Trust
- Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre
- Conoco Phillips
- Denburn Probes Club & Queens Cross Club
- Electrical Safety Council
- Elizabeth Wilson Trust
- John Gordon Charitable Trust
- Marathon Oil
- Nationwide Foundation
- Thomas Primrose Trust
- George Crombie Trust

Further details on our group fund can be found on our web site www.aberdeencareandrepair.co.uk .

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	9%	Social Work/OT	10%
Health/GP	8%	Neighbour	7%
Publicity	6%	Voluntary Sector	6%
Home Care	6%	Other	6%
Friend/Relation/Self	42%		

2. How did you contact Aberdeen Care & Repair?

Telephone	82%	Referred by other agency	11%
In person/letter	5%	Can't Remember	2%

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

1 Week	47%	1 to2 Weeks	33%
1 month	6%	Can't Remember	15%

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

Very satisfied	79%	Satisfied	19%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	2%		

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

Very satisfied	91%	Satisfied	19%
----------------	-----	-----------	-----

6. Describe the standard of work of the tradesmen with regard to:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Unanswered
Quality	76%	22%	2%	0%
Reliability	77%	21%	2%	0%
Customer Care	76%	21%	1%	2%

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

No	79%	Yes 11%	Don't Know	10%
----	-----	---------	------------	-----

8. Has the work carried out made a difference to your enjoyment of your house?

Significant Difference	95%	Minor Difference	3%	No Difference	2%
------------------------	-----	------------------	----	---------------	----

9. Would you be able to continue living at home if the work had not been carried out?

No	15%	Yes 70%	Don't Know	15%
----	-----	---------	------------	-----

10. Would you use the Care & Repair service again?

No	0%	Yes 100%	Don't Know	0%
----	----	----------	------------	----

11. Would you recommend Care & Repair to others?

No	0%	Yes 98%	Don't Know	2%
----	----	---------	------------	----

12. In overall terms how satisfied were you with the assistance given by the agency?

Very Satisfied	92%	Satisfied	8%
No Answer	0%		

The following tables show the profile of customers, their properties and the type of work carried out during 2010/2011 in percentages.

Customer Profile (All):

Age	Under 60	60-70	70-80	Over 80
%	22%	15%	32%	31%

Household	Female Single	Male Single	Couple	Single & Family	Couple & Family	Siblings	
%	50%	8%	22%	6%	13%	1%	
Disability	Physical	Mental	Learning	Chronic Illness	Mobility	Dementia	General Poor Health
%	33%	9%	1%	16%	24%	7%	11%

Property Profile:

Property Age	Pre 1919	1919 to 1944	1945 to 1964	1965 to 1982	Post 1982
%	19%	21%	33%	18%	9%

Tenure Type	Paying Mortgage	Own Outright	Shared Owner	Social Housing	Private Rented
%	7%	74%	1%	14%	4%

Property Type	Detached	Semi	Terraced	Tenement Flat	Other Flat	Four in a block	Multi Storey
%	7%	31%	18%	19%	14%	8%	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%	6%	17%	26%	40%

Number of Cases & Type of Work (Completed):

(Does not include small repairs)

Window/Door	Roof/Walls/Rot Works	Bathroom	Electrical	Minor Aids/Fencing & Kerb Turning	Other	Heating
10%	24%	11%	2%	9%	17%	27%