



Northampton's Home Improvement Agency

Annual Report 2009 / 2010

Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd

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Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd
Introduction to Annual Report 2009/10

In writing an introduction to this Annual Report I am struck by the number and extent of the changes that have taken place since last year – and I am not thinking about the change in government and their obvious and very evident consequences for public and other services across the country which no doubt we will return to in future reports!

The changes I wish to highlight relate to Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd:

- To the premises we now occupy
- To the way things are now managed stored, delivered and used
- To the Team of highly committed, professional and very caring people who work for or volunteer their services to assist us achieve our aims

The move to our new premises took place almost exactly one year ago and it has given us the opportunity to transform the way we work. I am certain that the decision of the Management Committee to move was correct and has achieved at least as much as we had hoped – to the credit of all involved. The staff have all embraced the move and have worked extremely hard to establish new systems and ways of working that really benefit our clients as well as the commissioning bodies and our partners across the county.

Elsewhere in the Report, details are given of some of the service developments that took place during the year – and more are planned as we plan for the future. The user statistics again show a dramatic increase in the use of our services – which is very heartening to those involved in either commissioning or service delivery and show a real need for us to continue. And remember, Annual Reports only ever show a snapshot of what has happened during the year they relate to and they tend to gloss over many external activities that involve our Senior Team but really matter to our success and sustainability. I encourage you to speak to any of our Trustees or Managers to learn more about what we do and how we contribute to the strategic priorities of the many public bodies we work with – it really is fascinating to gain a better understanding of how we fit into local service provision for so many public and related bodies.

As ever, it has been a very busy year and I would like to publically acknowledge and thank:

- Our team of staff and volunteers – without whom nothing would be achieved
- All of our funders (whether by grants or commissioning/partnership working)
- Our Members – who volunteer their time and expertise to manage the organisation
- The many other individuals and groups, charitable and otherwise, who have sponsored or helped us, in cash or kind, during the year

Without all of your help, we couldn't do what we have achieved and couldn't plan for the future.

Oswald A. Dodds, MBE
Chairman, Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd
01.10.2010

The Management Committee of Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd present their annual report and audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 and confirm that they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993, as amended by the Charities Act 2006, and the Charities SORP 2005.

Our Constitution

Care & Repair is a limited company; it was established in 1987 under the Industrial & Provident Society Acts 1965 & 1975 and has charitable status.

Objects of the Association (taken from Governing Document/Rules)

The objects of the Association shall be to carry out for the benefit of the community the business of

(a) Setting up and managing a service to provide advice and assistance to vulnerable homeowners or tenants who are older, disabled or on low income to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their homes;

(b) Where local need arises, to carry out works in response to initiatives which enable residents to maintain their independence in their chosen home (regardless of tenure) for the foreseeable future.

Our Aims (the benefit of our services)

We aim, through our Home Improvement Agency (HIA) services, to assist people to remain living at home (in warmth, safety and security) for as long as it is their wish to do so. We do this by acting as client's agent: in the project-management of home improvement works - building improvements carried out by listed external contractors; and the provision of casework support, which includes making relevant funding applications to pay for the work. Agency support is provided in the Borough of Northampton (with neighbouring HIAs providing agency services in their local authority areas)

We also operate a range of Handy-Schemes' services for vulnerable* people, where our Technicians undertake works in response to preventative initiatives (eg prevention of: avoidable accidents; fire; crime). Handy-schemes services are not tenure-specific, but based on client need. With the exception of Daventry and Northampton, HIAs in Northamptonshire do not operate Handyperson services. Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd provide Handy-Schemes' services wherever there is no local access for vulnerable people; we are the preferred provider for target hardening works.

*Definition of vulnerability: those in need by reason of victimisation, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage (depending on scope of service provision)

Fees are charged for some services, but are not restricted to client's ability to pay.

The Agency operates a Hardship fund/policy (eligibility criteria apply).

Services Offered

Advice, information and practical assistance in accessing grants, private finance and charitable funding to help keep homes Warm, Safe and Secure

Assessments and remedial works (eg prevention of falls)

Minor Adaptations

Major adaptations (privately-funded)

Home Security / Crime Prevention / Target Hardening

(-reducing crime and the fear of crime experienced by vulnerable people)

Sanctuary Services

(- helping victims of domestic violence and 'hate crime' to 'stay put' in their chosen home)

Minor Repairs and Home Maintenance

Access to other agencies

Services Developed During 2009/10

Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA): Safe at Home

A new partnership during 2009/10, working with Northamptonshire County Council's Children & Young People's Service and Sure Start Centres (- Specific works that aim to reduce the number of young children presented as emergency hospital admissions due to avoidable home accidents)

Home Office-funded Project: Adapt & Secure

During 2009/10, Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd was awarded funding from the Home Office, to assist the reduction of domestic burglaries in Northampton. We visited and provided home security advice & 'Good Doorstep Behaviour' to 548 homes and carried out target hardening works to 356. During March, these directly related to reports produced by ComPaSS for Community Safety Partnerships regarding the most high-risk of crime properties/residents in Northampton.

Local research has identified that education regarding (eg) *Good Doorstep Behaviour* and discipline regarding (eg) windows being left open is a successful method of reducing crime against vulnerable groups. Training and promotional activity included the production of a Home Security DVD meaning that the home security improvement message and community training is sustained, regardless of funding availability. This will also be available on our website (launched during the project), to enable people to access our Home Security/Target Hardening Service.

Partnerships have continued to develop, and special projects resulted in our shared efforts to reduce 'hot spots' and target harden properties at their most vulnerable point (method of entry).

Evidence of Need:
Time to Adapt (Care and Repair England)

- ❖ By 2025 almost 1.5 million people aged 75 or over will be unable to manage at least one mobility/daily living activity on their own
- ❖ There are now as many low income home owners as low income tenants and the majority of the need for home adaptations is in the private sector
- ❖ In 2006-7, 1.4 million individuals reported having a medical condition or disability that resulted in them requiring specially adapted accommodation, of whom 22 per cent considered their current home unsuitable
- ❖ By 2036 there will be 17 million people aged 65 or more. On current trends 33% (5.6 million) of people over 65 and 50 per cent (4.5 million) of people over 75 will experience a limiting long term illness.

Based on current population projections, this would mean in 2036, around 810,000 people aged 75 or more would be living in properties that they considered unsuitable for their needs. The vast majority (around 70 per cent) 567,000 would be living in owner-occupied properties.

Home Adaptations for Disabled People: *Equality and Excellence in Future Provision*
Addressing the Nine Key Comprehensive Spending Review Questions posed by HM Treasury
(-A submission by the Home Adaptations Consortium)

Is help with home adaptation essential to meeting government priorities?

- *The Coalition: our programme for government* states: “We will help elderly people live at home for longer through solutions such as **home adaptations** and community support programmes”
- Home adaptations are relevant to *all* policies relating to: independence for disabled people of any age; carers; enabling disabled people and carers to work; end of life care at home
- Home adaptations can enable disabled people and carers to remain active citizens, thereby contributing to the Big Society agenda
- Home adaptations provide direct economic benefits to the state through reducing calls on the health service (eg. falls, hip fractures, delayed discharge), reducing social care expenditure and enabling independent living for longer

Falls by older people in the UK cost over £1 billion annually; one hip fracture costs £30,000. Home Adaptations reduce the risk of falls and fractures thereby reducing this expenditure.

Do home adaptations provide substantial economic value?

- Home adaptations enable more disabled people and carers to remain economically active
- There is substantial economic value to Treasury linked to demands on the NHS and social services

With the current demographic changes in society, any policy with the power to reduce the costs of health and social care for older and disabled people must be of interest to government

Can home adaptations help be targeted at those most in need?

- Funding is already highly targeted through disability criteria and means testing

Heywood, F and Turner (2007) *Better Outcomes, Lower Costs: implications for health and social care budgets of investment in housing adaptations, improvements and equipment: A review of the evidence* Office for Disability Issues

Technical Support and the Agency Support Process

Many of our clients are apprehensive about housing repairs carried out to their own home. It is, therefore, a critical role of ours to offer both guidance on the required work and assurance that any repairs or adaptations undertaken will be completed satisfactorily, to budget and on time. Jobs undertaken can range from the very small, such as minor plumbing repair, to project management of major adaptations to the home of a disabled person.

The building work is specified, competitive tenders are sought from vetted contractors and the work is overseen by the agency in order to ensure that the finished result meets the needs and wishes of the client.

Review of Activities & Achievements

Service Users and Fees

The number of requests for assisted support from clients and their representatives continues to increase, with 6460 new referrals received by the agency during the year. The level of support is dependent on client need at the time, ranging from *advice only* through to full agency support of home improvements. With the exception of 'advice only' (listed contractor details), the majority of home improvement works carried out during the year were subject to a grant from project partnerships.

The main sources of referral during the year were: Occupational Therapists & Social Care professionals (3331); direct request from client (690); Police (2357). 5692 cases were supported during the year; fees and charges for the works carried out being in the region of £574,000 (funded by local authority grant and trust funds). A breakdown of the type of support given/works undertaken is given below:

(NB: some referrals were received in the previous financial year)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Totals
Minor Adaptations	650	706	712	730	2798
Casework	3	6	12	12	33
Small Job	75	84	53	60	272
Home Security	192	247	298	229	996
Handyperson	35	45	58	56	194
Emergency Contractor	9	11	15	25	60
General Advice	40	44	36	45	165
Home Security (other)	17	112	538	523	1190
Stair lift			5	12	17
Safe at Home (RoSPA)			10	10	10
TOTALS:	1021	1255	1727	1702	<u>5705</u>
Value of work:	£109,688	£140,333	£154,413	£168,647	£573,082

An example of Service Developments – RoSPA’s Safe at Home

Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd is committed to continual development of its services, to support vulnerable groups. During the year, we were involved in two ‘Safe at Home’ services (as mentioned under ‘Services Offered’). One funded by the Home Office, following our successful **Adapt & Secure** application; in its invitation to apply the Home Office encouraged partnership working between agencies, education and awareness-raising about crime prevention; and, target hardening installations.

During 2009, we also commenced partnership working with Children & Young People’s Services (of Northamptonshire County Council). The Safe at Home service initiated by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), aims to reduce the number of children who are presented to Hospital Accident and Emergency Departments, following an (avoidable) accident at home.

This project has steadily developed, and utilising our Technicians’ assessment and installation skills, advice and equipment are provided to families referred to the service by Sure Start Centres.

Governance and internal control

Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd has developed and agreed a series of policies and practices to protect its assets, staff and volunteers when dealing with any aspect of its finances. It is ultimately the responsibility of the Management Committee to oversee its financial and other activities. The Committee has delegated aspects of these tasks to the Care & Repair Hon. Treasurer, to its Business Sub Group and to the Management Team (Service Director, Operations Manager & Customer Support Manager). Financial Procedures and Controls provide details of relevant Roles & Responsibilities. Copies of Policies and Procedures are available from Care & Repair, on request.

With support from Sunley Business Centre (Northampton College), and assistance from our Auditors, Management Committed adopted a Risk Management Process to support the internal controls that were already in place. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed by meetings of Management Committee and Business Group; standard agenda items for meetings include Register of Business Risk/Assessment (with regular updates from Chairman and Service Director) and Financial Reports from the Treasurer (comparing income and expenditure to budgets).

Quality Control / National Coordinating Body

Foundations is commissioned by Communities and Local Government (central Government department) to undertake the role of National Coordinating body for Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) across England and assist national development and expansion of HIA services. Foundations also provides advice, training and support to HIA staff, it represents the sector in discussions with Government and other stakeholders and administers the Quality Mark Scheme. We work closely with Foundations and *Care & Repair England* (national charity), who have provided valuable advice and support to staff and the Management Committee. The provision of quality training; plus, facilitating meetings, providing information and newsletters has all contributed to the stability and development of the Agency. For more information see wwwFOUNDATIONS.UK.COM and WWW.CAREANDREPAIR-ENGLAND.ORG.UK

Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd: Providing high quality services National Quality Mark Accreditation

The HIA **Quality Mark Scheme** was developed by *Foundations* and approved by Government for the Supporting People (SP) Monitoring and Review process. It provides a rigorous and detailed mechanism for measuring the quality of our services. Care & Repair (Northampton) Ltd is accredited with the Quality Mark, having achieved 9xA's and 5xB's in the required competencies.



Client Feedback

Of course, national quality accreditation is meaningless, if our clients aren't happy with our services.

Feedback from clients revealed that:

91% of people would recommend our Home Security Service to others;

91% were happy with the support their received from Care & Repair (through minor adaptations)

98% were very satisfied with our Handyperson's attitude towards them;

96% were very satisfied with the quality of service provided

93% were very satisfied that the information and advice provided to them was clear, accessible and relevant

82% of minor adaptations' clients (referred by Occupational Therapists) said that they would use our Handyperson service for any private work that they might require

91% of service users said that they felt safer in their home, after using our Home Security Service

Feedback from our Clients and their Carers

- “Pleased with the service provided by all at Care & Repair”

About our Technicians (Minor Adaptations, Home Security, Handyperson)

- The OT team only came to my property yesterday to discuss our needs and the work was carried out the following day. The speed with which the work was carried out was very impressive.
- Very high quality work by a pleasant workman
- I have always found you good and have recommended you to several of my friends
- ***** was a very clean worker, very polite and did a good job

About our listed contractors

- Very pleased with ***’s work , he is very hard working and trustworthy and will definitely recommend him
- ***** extremely helpful and very professional in his work carried out to a high standard. He left his contact details in case the stair rail needs adjustment

We acknowledge that things do not always go to plan, we occasional receive comments that require further investigation and resolution. Compliments, comments, complaints are regularly monitored by Managers and Trustees, in order to identify (and meet) organisational development and training needs and to highlight potential improvements in partnership work, responding to (for example):

- “Telephone/customer manner needs more training”
- “Re OT’s: though the work was carried out quickly it has taken an inordinately long time to start to put the care package in place
- Only disappointed with metal hand rail will have to coat it with metallic paint.

CARE & REPAIR (NORTHAMPTON) LTD

Support in Kind 2009/10 - An acknowledgement

We would not be able to afford the services that we provide, without Support in Kind from a number of local organisations. In September 2009, we moved into our new accommodation (9 Cirrus Park). However, prior to that we did not have sufficient space to store tools and equipment or van parking

- Churches for Van parking space. Value of support during 2009/10: £500 (approx)
- N.B.C - Westbridge Depot: Van parking space. Value of support 2008/09: £500 (approx)
- Police Head Quarters – Van Parking Space. Value of support 2008/09: £500 (approx)
- Northamptonshire Fire Service for Storage space for adaptations' equipment. Value of support 2008/09: £750 (approx)

Once again, Pro-help (Business in the Community) assisted us. This time in our acquiring a new address (combined premises: offices, workshop & store with van parking). For their in-kind help and support, we were extremely grateful to the following:

- Pro-Help (Business in the Community), particular thanks to Anne
- Tollers LLP, in particular to Duncan Bisatt and Claire Nobes
- James Aldridge, Kelly Beckwith and Alex Tilley from Lambert Smith Hampton

On behalf of Care & Repair and our vulnerable clients:

MANY THANKS TO THE ABOVE FOR THEIR SUPPORT DURING 2009/10

Thank you, also, to our volunteers:
Beula (Customer Support) and our Management Committee

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On behalf of everyone involved with Care & Repair, its clients and team members, thank you to the contractors on our list who helped us to help vulnerable people during 2009/10.