

Care & Repair (Wyre and Fylde) Annual Report 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Core Service

During the year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, Care & Repair (Wyre and Fylde) dealt with 2864 enquiries for advice and support.

The service met its target times for:

Average number of weeks between enquiry and first visit – 0.6 against a target of 3
 Average number of weeks between first visit and practical completion for jobs costing less than £1000 – 15 against a target of 20
 Average number of weeks between first visit and practical completion (jobs costing £1000 or more) – 19 against a target of 40

We have little control over timescales where there is a need to source charity funding, as finding this funding can be very time-consuming and is often delayed whilst waiting for trustees to meet to consider requests, make their decisions and authorise release of funding.

Charity funding has become increasingly scarce, with charities now restricting funding to absolute need and not fully funding works, but making a contribution towards the cost of essential works only.

The Handyperson service has also met the target time for carrying out works – average number of weeks between initial enquiry and completion being 0.7 against a target of 2. Where the target timescale was exceeded for a job, this was generally due to, or at the request of, the service user.

Private/Charity Funded Works

The Service has facilitated the following works for clients:

Cases completed	21
Cases in progress	19

In addition, during the year, at various stages during the process, 24 jobs did not progress for a number of reasons, including:

- Client not eligible for charity funding but not willing to pay for the work
- Client refused to disclose financial circumstances (for grant or charity funding application)
- No charity funding available to the client
- Client changed their mind about having the work done

Care & Repair supplied and fitted grab rails and banister rails for 99 clients, on request through the Handyperson service, for those people who did not wish to wait for an assessment by Social Services. This paid for service keeps waiting times down for Occupational Therapist assessment for those people who require only a grab rail or banister rail and ensures that people who do not want to wait for an assessment for a rail from Social Services, and are happy to pay, can have this equipment fitted safely and professionally.

From December 2018 to March 2019, the contract was extended to allow Care & Repair Trusted Assessors to identify clients who would benefit from minor aids and equipment and to supply and install certain items without assessment by a health or social care professional. This has resulted in provision of preventative measures more quickly for 8 clients who we identified were at risk.

Care & Repair has continued to deliver and install minor aids (grab rails, shower seats, newel rails, etc) for Millercare and HMI Healthcare pharmacy who are retail providers of minor aids under the Lancashire County Council retail prescription scheme. The arrangement has continued to be beneficial to all, especially the clients, who have their equipment delivered and fitted quickly and safely, as well as getting the opportunity to access other services provided by Care & Repair.

10 clients have been supported to access in excess of £17,800 charity and/or grant funding to carry out essential work to their property.

Caseworkers carried out 568 visits to people in their homes, undertaking an assessment of their needs and providing appropriate support, including referrals to other services and bespoke assistance with benefits claims for Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payments and Carer's Allowance.

Benefits Claims

During the year, Caseworkers have completed applications to support clients with claims for disability-related benefits, resulting in **353 successful claims**, providing additional Attendance Allowance income of **£1,184,229.80 per annum**, at least £3052.40 per person and, for some couples, as much as £9115.60.

Successful claims for other disability-related benefits have brought in additional annual income for clients of **£9,932.00**, giving an overall total of **£1,194,161.80 extra annual income** for older and disabled residents in Wyre and Fylde.

We rely on clients letting us know whether or not their claims have been successful, as there is no other way we can get this information. We are still following up the outcome of claims for 194 clients (which could amount to a further £592,165 or more). Claims for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) continue to be very slow in being assessed and we have received very little information from clients as to whether or not their claims have been successful, with many still not having received a decision some months after submitting their claim.

Marketing/Promotion

Throughout the year, Caseworkers and the Manager attended the following events/venues to promote the services provided by Care and Repair:

- Dementia Hub Fleetwood Fire Station
- Dementia Hub St Annes Fire Station
- Dementia Hub Wesham Fire Station
- Heat and Eat event Garstang
- Dementia Hub Fleetwood Fire Station
- Older People's Day event Fleetwood Fire Station
- Dementia and Dementia Research event Trinity Hospice
- Preparing for Winter event Wyre Council

- Self-Care Week event Lytham Primary Care Centre
- Stroke Education event St Annes Fire Station
- Memory Café Garstang
- Stroke Association talk Fleetwood Fire Station
- Dementia Hub Poulton Methodist Church
- Live, Laugh, Love group St Annes
- Just Good Friends group St Annes

Supplies of leaflets have been distributed across Wyre and Fylde, to a wide range of venues and organisations, including Lancashire Wellbeing Service, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Lytham Primary Care Centre, Age UK Lancashire, St Annes Fire Station, LCC Adult & Community Services offices, Bispham Rehabilitation, Regenda, as well as shops, churches, libraries, GP surgeries and businesses who are in contact with people who would be eligible for our service. Leaflets have also been delivered door to door across both Districts in areas which we know are populated predominantly by our target client group.

The Manager has played an active part in the following groups:

- Lancashire Agencies Forum
- DWP Lancashire Customer Representatives Group
- Fylde and Wyre Disability Partnership
- Garstang ICC / WREN ICT meetings
- Healthier Fleetwood Strategy Group
- Energy Officers Group
- Wyre and Fylde Community Network – Chair
- PPEI Group
- Dementia Action Alliance Steering Group
- Fylde Community Projects Funds Panel
- Energy Officers Group
- Older People's Day planning group

The Manager attended the following events during the year:

- DFG Workshops
- Dementia Hub
- Fylde 50+ Forum
- Citizens Advice Fylde Anniversary event
- Forget-Me-Not dementia café
- Dementia Friendly Communities Forum
- Disability Summit
- Fylde Coast Health event
- LCC Dementia Strategy Launch
- Active Ageing Alliance workshop
- Whyndyke housing workshop
- EDS Grading event
- Universal Credit presentation
- Dementia Hub – Lowther Pavilion
- Dementia Friends and Communities Conference
- Early Supported Discharge team meeting
- Intermediate Care team meeting
- Frailty project planning meeting
- HIA Consultation meetings
- Age Concern Dementia Conference

- International Women's Day Festival
- BCF Integration Workshop

Working with Partners

Funding has been in place for Sanctuary Scheme work to continue in both Fylde and Wyre, to support victims of domestic violence, anti-social behaviour and repeat burglary. During the year, Care & Repair dealt with 3 referrals to the Sanctuary Scheme in Fylde and 7 referrals in Wyre for the Sanctuary and Haven Schemes.

Care & Repair has continued to work in partnership with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, making referrals for smoke alarms and Home Fire safety checks for vulnerable clients.

There was no funding provided by Lancashire County Council for Affordable Warmth initiatives but previous under-spend continued to be used, with Care & Repair the lead Agency for this work in Wyre, acting as first point of contact and assessing referrals for eligibility and appropriate support. Care & Repair also drew in funds from charities and Government ECO funding towards the cost of heating repairs. Affordable warmth work will continue to be provided, whilst funding allows it, to support clients in Wyre who are eligible.

Fylde took responsibility for its own Affordable Warmth work and Care & Repair has referred Fylde residents to Fylde Council for that support.

Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Surveys were sent out to clients who had core service work completed during the year. Everyone who completed a survey rated the service as Excellent or Good.

Staff

The staff team has remained stable throughout the year although an additional handyperson has been recruited on a temporary contract until 31st March 2020.

Handyperson Service

During the year, the Handyperson Service carried out 1803 jobs.

A breakdown of work carried out is provided with this report (Appendix 1).

The small repairs handyperson service has continued to provide help for clients with works which would not be viable for a contractor but which clients are not able to carry out themselves. Charges for the Handyperson small repairs service and grab rails brought in £7,993 contribution towards running costs and 14 clients made voluntary donations, amounting to £231, an average donation of £16.50.

Care & Repair has continued to deliver and install grab rails and other minor adaptations equipment for Millercare and HMI Pharmacy, both of these being retailers operating the scheme for County. These arrangement work well for both parties and clients benefit from gaining direct access to Care & Repair services via

the Handyperson visit. Health and Social Care professionals and clients are able to send prescriptions direct to Care & Repair for items of equipment.

The Handyperson Service carried out valuable work on the Affordable Warmth project, delivering heaters and other measures and installing draught-proofing. The Handyperson Service is key in the effective delivery, by Care & Repair, of affordable warmth initiatives.

Minor Adaptations works

The collaboration agreement currently in place with Lancashire County Council requires Care & Repair to deliver the minor adaptations works.

Care & Repair delivered 760 minor adaptations in 2018-19, including external handrails, steps, banister rails and other bespoke minor adaptations. Care & Repair has worked closely with local health professionals, contractors and the Lancashire County Council Fylde and Wyre administration team to deliver this work.

The Agency also dealt with 641 enquiries during the year for reputable trades-people to carry out works which are not appropriate for the Handyperson Service for clients who are able to arrange works themselves, without support from the Care & Repair core service.

Finance and Funding

Care & Repair has operated within budget and retains a contingency fund of 3 months operating costs.

The additional funding provided by Wyre and Fylde Districts has enabled a broader client base to receive the service.

Unfortunately Lancashire County Council has taken the decision to cease funding all Home Improvement Agencies after 31st March 2020. Alternative options to secure funding to maintain this essential service across Fylde and Wyre are currently being explored.

Care & Repair continues to work as a key partner, delivering services which meet priorities and targets for Lancashire County Council Adult and Community Services and Public Health, Wyre and Fylde District Councils, Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board and the Clinical Commissioning Groups covering Wyre and Fylde. The service plays a key role in supporting residents to remain living independently in their homes for as long as they wish, preventing hospital admissions and reducing the need for social care interventions, with the service adapting to meet specific needs and priorities, as demonstrated through the Affordable Warmth partnership project.