



Foundations

DFG Case Study #1

Cornwall Home Solutions

December 2015

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Document History

Revision History

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Signed approval forms are filed in the Management section of the project files.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
P Smith		Director	04/01/16	1.00



About Foundations

Foundations is the National Body for Home Improvement Agencies and Handyperson Services in England as appointed by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Foundations' remit is to:



Engage with providers and commissioners to monitor the sector and enhance the quality and reach of home improvement agency services



Arrange events and training



Develop tools and resources



News and publicity

For more information visit: www.foundations.org.uk

About Home Improvement Agencies

Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), sometimes known as Care & Repair or Staying Put schemes, help vulnerable people maintain independence in their own homes. Their services include:

- visiting clients at home or providing detailed telephone advice;
- setting out housing options to help clients decide what type of housing is best suited to their changing needs;
- checking entitlement to any financial help, including grants and charitable funding;
- project management, drawing up plans, getting estimates and liaising with others involved in any building work/adaptations needed, such as council grants officers and occupational therapists;
- provision of handyperson services, to carry out small jobs around the home, help with gardening, or coming home from hospital; and
- helping to make homes more energy-efficient.

A searchable directory of accredited HIAs and handyperson services is available at: www.findmyhia.org.uk



About Cornwall

Locality

Cornwall is the most south westerly tip of the United Kingdom, covering an area of 3,559 sq km. It is the second largest local authority area in the South West. Cornwall is characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern. Nine towns have a population of over 10,000 (five over 20,000) while a further seventeen small towns have around 5,000 residents. These sit among many other sizable villages and hamlets.

Cornwall is a unitary authority.

Population

Circa 532,000. Cornwall's population has been growing steadily since the 1960s; it has consistently grown quicker than the rest of the South West region, and is amongst the fastest growing areas in the UK. Changes in the population present major challenges, an increase in the proportion of older residents' impacts on health facilities and services, while deprivation remains a persistent concern in key areas.

Health & Disability

10% of the population in 2011 considered that their day to day activities were limited a lot by their health. Around 87,000 households in Cornwall, almost 2 in every five households, contain at least one person with a long term health problem or disability. There is predicted to be a 40% increase in the number of people aged 65 or more whose long term limiting illness will affect their day to day activities.



Good Practice

What it Illustrates

- Holistic approach to meeting customer needs
- 'One stop' provision,
- Silverlinks programme promoting early consideration of housing options & involvement of volunteers
- Promotion of independent living solutions to self-funders
- Completely integrated and co-located service with pooled budgets
- Effective joint working across housing, social care and health
- Promotion of independent living solutions
- User involvement
- Adoption of Bathroom Framework and Service level Agreement for stairlifts
- Influencing Planning Policy & development of accessible housing
- Partnership working with Registered Providers and development of process to manage transfers and ensure best use of adapted stock

How it Works

Cornwall Home Solutions is an in-house Home Improvement Agency (HIA) of Cornwall Council. The team was established in 2013 by integrating the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant team with the Therapy team and bringing in –house the three external HIAs and Handyman services that had operated within Cornwall. The HST has circa 66 staff based in three locality teams covering the whole of Cornwall. Due to the multi skilled teams CHS offers a range of housing solutions for older and disabled people.

CHS delivers a range of solutions to meet the housing needs of older and disabled clients. This includes the provision of:-

- Minor adaptations & equipment,
- Major adaptations,
- Handyman services,
- Access to finance such as grants & loans
- General information, advice and signposting to other Council services and partner agencies
- Energy efficiency advice
- Winter wellness campaigns
- Support to relocate including financial assistance
- Housing options advice to enable older people and people with disabilities to live better at home and plan for future needs.

Influence and Direction

As an in-house HIA, CHS is best placed to influence strategic decisions and corporate agendas relevant to the client group. To this end CHS has used its knowledge and influence to:

- Inform the Council's Allocations policy to ensure that best use is made of adapted and accessible housing
- Inform Planning documents to address the need for new homes to be built to lifetime homes standard and to increase the proportion of wheelchair accessible housing
- Work with colleagues in social care and health to improve integration of services

Innovation

CHS has a dedicated team of three Housing Solutions Officers (HSOs) and a Silverlinks Officer who deliver the following functions:-

- Free, independent, impartial information & advice on housing options
- Act as an advocate for disabled clients who live in unsuitable housing and need support to secure alternative accommodation.
- Support relocation as an alternative to adapting existing homes where this is appropriate and the person's choice.
- Advice and assistance for older and disabled people affected by the Welfare Reform legislation.

What They've Achieved

- Introduced a Bathroom Framework reducing the average cost significantly during the first 6 months from £4,582 to £3,636.
- Delivery times for bathroom adaptations have improved with the average time from OT recommendation to completion of work being cut in half from 180 days to 91 days.
- Prevented spend of £250K in DFG in the first two quarters of this year by relocating 21 families.
- Improved access to independent financial services by providing training sessions and workshops for staff re SOLLA.
- Accepted as a Silverlinks pilot
- Influenced Planning Policy and secured support for 25% of new housing across all tenures to be built as accessible homes and a proportion will be built as wheelchair accessible housing.
- Introduced a Service Level Agreement for provision of stairlifts and early feedback indicates reduction in time and savings in average cost.
- Worked in partnership with Health to develop a process to provide and fund wheelchair risers where it's more appropriate than adapting a kitchen.

Customer feedback

- 100% of customers were satisfied with the service and 100% rated the service as excellent or good. 90% agreed the adaptations improved the quality of their life, with 70% feeling more independent and better able to manage.
- 100% of customers receiving Handyperson services were satisfied with the service, 95% rating the service as excellent. 100% also scored the service as 10/10 and in one case 11/10!

Impact on health & wellbeing

75% noted that following the adaptation they are now at less risk of a fall or accident in the home, 30% agreed they are now less reliant on carers and/or social care, 38% agreed they were less likely to be admitted to hospital and 6.5% noted the adaptations helped with discharge from hospital.

What the manager says

“CHS is a good example of integrating housing support services with social care i.e. the bringing together of a number of previously fragmented services that served the same client group achieving a better experience for the customer, improved outcomes and reduced costs. The integration and co-location of teams has supported and facilitated joint ownership of issues and has delivered a better appreciation and understanding of the need to: inform and support clients to secure the solution of their choice, to manage the capital programme and increase income to ensure future sustainability of the service. Above all it demonstrates what committed and passionate officers can achieve despite difficult financial times within a context of continual change”.



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THE NATIONAL BODY FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY
AND HANDYPERSON SERVICES

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