
Report To:	Health & Social Care Committee and Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee	Date: 7 January 2010 12 January 2010
Report By:	Acting Director, Social Care Corporate Director, Environment and Community Protection	Report No: ECP/Plann/WR10/03
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Subject:	Equipment and Adaptations	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with detailed information on the current and future demand for Equipment and Adaptations in the private and public housing sectors to inform future investment requirements.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 At a national level work is being undertaken to develop guidance and good practice examples in the funding and delivery of equipment and adaptations. In recent years the number of hospital beds used to care for people in the longer term has reduced and an increasing number of people of all ages are being supported with packages of care in their own homes. The impact of this has been an increase in the demand for equipment and adaptations provided for the residents of Inverclyde.
- 2.2 Social Work Services provide and install adaptations to private sector housing costing less than £1,000 using local contractors. Social Work also provide equipment for household use, e.g. bathing and toilet equipment, hoists and transfer equipment, height adjustable beds and pressure mattresses.
- 2.3 Major adaptations of a permanent nature, such as ramps, wet floor areas and standard amenities are provided for elderly and/or disabled residents in Inverclyde and make an essential contribution to care in the community. The purpose of these 'stage 3' adaptations is to modify a disabling environment in order to restore or enable independent living, privacy, confidence and dignity for individuals and their families. The first step in accessing the service is via the Social Work based Occupational Therapist who will assess the individual's needs and priority. Following assessment of need a referral will be passed to Inverclyde Care & Repair if the client is a home owner or private rented sector tenant, or, if the client is the tenant of a Registered Social Landlord, the referral will be passed to the relevant Housing Association.
- 2.4 Installation of temporary adaptations are provided and serviced by Social Work Services to all housing sectors with the exception of Riverclyde Homes.
- 2.5 Landlords cannot unreasonably refuse permission for an adaptation for a disabled occupant who has applied for consent. This rule applies irrespective of tenure. For Housing Association tenants, this rule is set out under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and for private sector tenants is set out under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. The Disability Discrimination Acts of 1995 and 2005 also set out legislation which makes it illegal for a 'controller of let premises' to discriminate against a disabled person by unreasonably refusing permission for an aid which would enable a disabled person to use the property as entitled to.

2.6 The number of people being supported in their own homes increases year on year, with dependency levels increasing also. Equipment to provide safe and sustainable care including specialist beds, seating, toilet aids and hoists are an essential element of care packages and to assist informal carers especially at the point of hospital discharge. The requirement is increasing annually, but the increased costs have to be balanced against the cost of care home admissions, hospital admissions following a fall or informal carers being unable to continue their role.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Committee:

- a) note the historical demand for equipment and adaptations in Inverclyde; and
- b) note the rising demand for equipment and adaptations in Inverclyde.

Fraser K Williamson
Head of Planning and Housing

Barbara Billings
Head of Service (Community Care & Strategy)

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Occupational Therapy staff carry out assessment of needs looking at the functional abilities of the client and their housing situation. Recommendations can range from the addition of a handrail to installation of a wet floor area. The same process is used regardless of the ownership of the property.
- 4.2 Funding for equipment is provided through Social Work Services with a contribution from the NHS. Equipment is purchased, stored and delivered/collected from the Centre for Independent Living. Additional funding was made available through the Delayed Discharge budget and also as a local authority priority for 2008-9. This funding has not been identified for 2010 onwards.
- 4.3 Funding for Adaptations in private sector housing costing under £1,000 is funded by Social Work with a number of the items used being recycled as and when necessary through the joint equipment store based at the Centre For Independent Living.
- 4.4 Funding for stage 3 adaptations comes from 3 different sources and is dependant upon the tenure of the client.
- 4.5 Funding for adaptations in the private sector comes from the owners themselves, with financial assistance from Inverclyde Council provided in the form of a grant for a minimum of 80% of the cost of eligible works. The adaptation service is delivered by the Inverclyde Care & Repair Service who will work on behalf of the client to source competitive tenders from a range of contractors, engage architects and landlords as required, apply for the relevant permits and warrants and assist the applicant in applying for financial assistance from Inverclyde Council. During and after the works Care & Repair provide quality checks and submit applications for payment of the grant element of the works to Inverclyde Council on the client's behalf.
- 4.6 Funding for adaptations in the social renting sector comes wholly from the Housing Associations themselves, although it should be noted that the RSLs receive funding for adaptations from the Scottish Government following identification of need through the Affordable Housing Investment Plan (AHIP) and their anticipated level of expenditure is set out in the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 Equipment and Adaptations

As previously noted in para 4.2 funding for equipment and adaptations is provided by Social Work. In 2008/09 a sum of £370,771 was spent on provision of equipment, including £120,169 on the installation of adaptations under £1,000.

- 5.2 Referrals for adaptations are prioritised by Occupational Therapy staff and forwarded to either Care and Repair or to the relevant RSL for action. Currently all priority 1 adaptations are being progressed by the RSLs. The current referral rate for assessments for equipment and adaptations is approximately 280 per month, although not all of these will necessitate adaptations. Information about unmet need in priorities other than priority 1 is not held by the local authority. The RSLs have the ability to approach the Housing Investment Division to put forward a case for additional funding.
- 5.3 Referrals received at the Centre for Independent Living are prioritised and those in a Priority 1 category are seen within 2 days. The average waiting time is 4 weeks and some lower priority categories can wait up to 6 months. There are currently 637 referrals awaiting assessment.

5.4 Private Sector Stage 3 Adaptations

The annual budgets fully funded from Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG), for the provision of financial assistance to owners and private rented tenants requiring adaptations over the past 5 years, alongside the number of approvals at the halfway point of the year, the average grant % and average award level are noted in the table below

Year	PSHG Budget	Approvals at Qu2	Av. Grant %	Av. Grant £
2005/06	£380,000	86	88	2,953
2006/07	£430,000	96	92	3,422
2007/08	£450,000	112	90	3,200
2008/09	£650,000	118	90	3,699
2009/10	£855,000	183	92	4,098

In 2009/10 there has been a national increase in the number of referrals received for adaptations. Inverclyde has seen a 55% increase on the 2008/09 position and as such the adaptations budget was increased from £555,000 to £855,000 in October 2009, with £740,000 committed to date. This increased budget will allow us to provide financial assistance to the high priority adaptation requests likely to be received this year. The funding for these adaptations is taken from the PSHG which has been ring-fenced up until 31st March 2010. From 2010/11, PSHG will be part of the Council's allocation from the Scottish Government and the Council will have to decide how much of it is retained for 'private sector' housing purposes. A separate report on the overall budgets required to deliver the Council's Scheme Of Assistance has been prepared for consideration by the Corporate Management Team.

5.5 Social Renting Tenants

The Strategic Housing Team do not record any information on the referrals to RSLs or the levels of adaptation work carried out by the RSLs in response to referrals received. The Strategic Housing role, in terms of RSLs stage 3 adaptations, relates solely to the inclusion of financial information within the SHIP to ensure that the RSL requirements are accounted for in any bid for or allocation of funding. The undernoted table illustrates the budgets that each of the local RSLs have indicated for 2010/11 relative to current adaptation budgets for 2009/10.

RSL	2009/10 £	2010/11 £
Bield HA	No submission	No submission
Cloch HA	50,000	75,000
Key	7,500	7,500
Larkfield HA	31,200	30,000
Link Group	18,720	19,469
Oak Tree HA	100,000	100,000
Margaret Blackwood HA	28,000	28,000
River Clyde Homes	750,000	300,000
Trust HA	30,000	35,000
TOTAL	1,015,420	594,969

(source: Strategic Housing Investment Plans 2009 & 2010)

It is of note that River Clyde homes have made considerable reductions in their adaptation budget for 2010/11. Indications are that RCH are due to introduce a new policy for the delivery of adaptations for their tenants to in an attempt to ensure expenditure is within the budget allocation. To date no formal consultation process has been indicated to either the Strategic Housing Team or Social Work Services. Anecdotal evidence suggests that no consultation process has begun with tenants groups or local disability groups.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Strategic

The delivery of equipment and adaptations to vulnerable client groups both in partnership and directly from Inverclyde Council allows the Council to deliver the aims of several strategic aims and objectives as set out in the:

- Local Housing Strategy
- Joint Community Care Plan
- Community Plan
- Corporate Plan
- Delayed Discharge Commissioning plan
- HEAT targets
- SOA
- DED

6.2 Financial

The delivery of equipment and adaptations is wholly dependant upon appropriate levels of funding being made available from the Councils budgets as set out in the undernoted table.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this report £	Virement From	Other Comments
PSHG	Adaptations	2009/10	855,000	n/a	Full spend expected
Social Work	Equipment & Adaptations	2009/10 *2010/11	309,380 258,130	n/a	Full spend expected
NHS	Equipment	2009/10 2010/11	30,000 30,000	n/a	Annual revenue contribution from the NHS for specialist equipment

* Please note the decrease in the 2010/11 budget which relates to a reduction of £51,250 previously contributed from the delayed discharge allocation.

The allocation of RSL funding for the provision of equipment and adaptations for social renting tenants is set out in table 5.5 and requires no financial commitment from the Council.

6.3 Legal

There are no Legal implications arising from this report.

6.4 Personnel

There are no Personnel implications arising from this report.

6.5 Equalities

When delivering services to our customers, full cognisance is taken of equality and diversity processes and procedures.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the:

- Chief Financial Officer
- Head of Social Work

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 – Work To Meet The Needs of Disabled People, May 2009, ECP/Plann/WR/18.
- Private Sector Housing Grant: Adaptations, Revised Budget, October 2009, ECP/Plann/WR/09/032

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16th December 2009

SSC & HSC Cmtees 2010 Support For Owners (Jan 10)