

DEVELOPING HANDYPERSON SERVICES



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ROCHDALE HIA

- Established in April 2001
- In house agency – independent Advisory Board
- Town Centre Base
- 30+ Staff
- Mixed funding
- Holistic services
- Partnership working – Age Concern, Victim Support, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

Range of services delivered by HIA

- Adaptations
- Home Repairs Assistance Grants
- Handyperson Services
- Equity Loans
- Overcrowding/Under-occupation Scheme
- Enhanced HP scheme – minor electrical and gas safety
- Warm Front top-up grants
- Advice and support

Handyperson delivered services

- Minor disrepair works
- Energy efficiency works
- Security works
- Accident prevention
- Hospital discharge scheme
- Crime reduction scheme
- Home Fire risk assessments
- Child Safety scheme
- Safer Homes Scheme

Skills mix

- Technical Manager
- Technical Officers
- Handypersons
- Handyman Assistants
- Customer Support Manager
- Customer Support Officers
- Scheme co-ordinators
- Back office support staff

Triage system/holistic service

- All new enquiries to one central co-ordinator
- Initial assessment made based on age, tenure, referral type, previous service history etc
- Passed through most appropriate channel e.g. may start with DH survey, could go straight to customer support, or Technical Officer, or Handyperson depending on need or what customer qualifies for
- When allocated, each member of staff is clear what services potentially need to be considered, based on the initial triage assessment and background checks

New ways of working

- Technical Officers 50/50
- Customer support officers
- Handyperson Assistants
- Scheme co-ordinators – office based
- Flexible skills mix – ability to switch workstreams/interchangeability
- Innovative ways of recruiting/testing people
- Partnership working/secondments

Recognising skills

- No one size fits all
- Need a mix of staff with a range of skills
- Must be flexible, committed, customer focussed
- Structure allowing for progression e.g. Handyman Assistant can train to become Handyman etc
- Staff with various strengths to complement each other
- Recognition that some staff only want to focus on one area and playing to their strengths if they have the right overall approach (customer focus, hardworking etc)

Quality assurance

- Customer Support Manager to respond to any major problems or complaints
- Detailed satisfaction survey sent to every customer at the end of the process/job – overall satisfaction levels between 95 – 98%
- Random sample checks of works undertaken
- Continuous review of services
- Rotation of staff where appropriate
- Enhancing of “softer skills” through child protection training, vulnerable adults training, domestic abuse awareness and Victim Support intensive course

CUSTOMER FOCUS

- All customers referred to the HIA have a triage assessment prior to allocation to a staff member
- All customers notified within 7 days of what to expect from us
- Holistic view of customer needs – HFRA, Security Audit, Handyperson Scheme, Equity Release, Home Repairs Assistance, referral to other services e.g. Age Concern friendly visitor scheme etc
- Customer support officer/scheme co-ordinator review progress every 4 weeks and contacts customer for an update where appropriate
- Customer Charter
- Customer contract for larger works (grants/loans etc)
- Partnership working for seamless service delivery
- Charter Mark award
- Quality Mark
- Customer feedback used to develop services e.g. minor gas/electrical scheme

Developing new services

- CLG money to set up enhanced Handy person scheme to provide help with minor gas/electrical works
- From April 2010 the HIA will be managing the Careline and Support at Home Service, using Handy persons to fit the units and key safes
- A Handy person and assistant who have demonstrated an aptitude and enthusiasm for this work are being trained to take the lead on developing this service and making better use of a wide range of assistive technology devices such as flood detectors, bed sensors etc