



Foundations

DFG Case Study #7

HEART Warwickshire

December 2016

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About Foundations

Our Mission

To share the magic about what makes good home improvement and adaptation services

Our Vision

A thriving range of home improvement agencies – supporting people to live safe, independent and happy lives in the home of their choice

Our Objectives



Identify and meet the training needs of the sector



Engage with stakeholders, providers and commissioners and facilitate networking opportunities



Represent and promote the sector



Develop tools and resources for providers and commissioners



Monitor activity, quality and performance and find out what good looks like



Develop and promote quality assurance systems



Provide an information management and workflow system

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

Our Values

Our shared values guide our actions and describe how we behave:

Leadership:	The courage to shape a better future
Collaboration:	Leverage collective genius
Integrity:	Be real
Accountability:	If it is to be, it's up to me
Passion:	Committed in heart and mind
Scalable:	National solutions for a local scale
Quality:	What we do, we do well

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 handyman 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 handyman services is available at:

www.findmyhia.org.uk

About FILT

Foundations Independent Living Trust (FILT) is the charitable arm of Foundations.

FILT helps older and vulnerable people live with dignity in their own homes this by operating funds which enable local HIAs to provide a range of support including repairs and improvements to people's homes.

FILT distributes Corporate Social Responsibility and charity funds through the network of HIAs. These then deliver a fast and effective service by assessing the customers' needs and carrying out the necessary work quickly and cost-effectively.

Foundations manages the delivery of these programmes, reporting to an independent board of trustees.





About Warwickshire Council

Warwickshire is a medium size county consisting of six districts, with the main centres of population in the north and central areas and a largely rural widely dispersed population in the south. Currently four districts are part of the HEART group, with Warwick Council already agreed to join and Stratford imminently going to committee to make a decision.



The vision

To create a service focussed around the home environment that will encompass all areas supporting people's independence in their own home. This includes equipment, major and minor adaptations, repairs and improvements, home safety, and falls prevention plus financial issues relating to these issues.

The service aims to be the go-to place for all people's housing issues, reducing the multiple handoffs created by many different agencies being involved.

To provide customers with the advice and information to help them make the right choice, and provide practical help to deliver the right housing solution when they want it.



How it works

Having realised that the disparate delivery of the many agencies involved in people's homes caused delay and confusion, the partnership has brought together all the statutory agencies under a single management. So that officers from housing, social care and public health are all now part of the HEART team, providing a single service on behalf of the public sector delivered to people across the county. Underlying this new commitment are the duties under the Care Act to provide housing information and support and the new duty to cooperate amongst public services to achieve a common objective.

Legislative framework

The authorities have used the Local Government Act 1972 Section 101 agreement to delegate the following powers.

- Power to carry out assessments under the Care Act
- Power to respond to DFG consultations
- Power to prescribe equipment and direct payments
- Power to approve grants on behalf of Housing Authorities
- Power to assess housing conditions under Housing Act
- Power to serve hazard awareness notices.

Staff are put "at the disposal" of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) under a section 113 agreement.

NBBC can then delegate these powers to all staff members.

Governance

The project board consists of:

- Head or Director of Housing from each authority – five in total.
- Head of Adult Social Care
- Public Health Representative
- Strategic Commissioning Representative – also manage Better Care Fund processes
- Head of Home Environment Services
- Service Manager for Integrated Care (WCC)

Each will have one vote and will decide on strategic issues with operational matter decided within the new team structure.



Innovation

The partnership has created a new dynamic role fusing together the skills of Caseworkers, Occupational Therapy Assistants and Grant Officers, forming a Housing Assessment Officer who, once having passed a competency test, will be able to carry out complex casework and deal with non-complex housing issues. Working in the same way as a Trusted Assessor the new Housing Assessment Officers will be trained to know the limits of their competence passing on the more complex assessments to trained Occupational Therapist.

The new service will be offered across the county, running a duty desk able to deliver to all parts of the service.

It will speed up delivery, reducing OT waiting lists, and ensuring that all customers get a timely and competent service.



Good practice in short

- Holistic approach to supporting all customers' needs
- One-stop principle in meeting needs and aspirations
- Legislative framework in place to delegate powers
- 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

Performance

At the heart of this process is the intention to improve the quality and timeliness of the service delivery. Previously average end-to-end times used to take on average 395 days including 125 as part of the OT process and the remainder with the HIA/Housing Authorities.

Early results have been positive with the average now down to 150 days and 50% completed in less than 100 days. The new process allows each stage of the process to be monitored so that any bottlenecks can be identified and rectified. Previously each service recorded its own processing times, fragmenting the whole process, but now the service takes responsibility for the entire customer journey from initial referral to completion of the job.



Foundations

THE NATIONAL BODY FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY
AND HANDYPERSON SERVICES

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