

Housing Management
Salisbury District Council, 26 Endless Street
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 1DR

direct line: 01722 434503
fax: 01722 434530
email: jhudson@salisbury.gov.uk
web: www.salisbury.gov.uk

Report

Subject : Funding of The Age Concern Handyperson Service

Report to : The Cabinet

Date : Wednesday 18 June 2008

Author : Private Sector Housing Policy Officer

Cabinet Member for Housing - Councillor Ian Tomes

1. **Report Summary:**

The purpose of the report is to seek member's approval for additional funding of £23,782 for continuing the Age Concern Handyperson Service until 31st March 2009.

2. **Background:**

The council entered into an agreement with Age Concern to fund the Handyperson service providing free help to vulnerable owners and private tenants for 2 years from September 2006 at a cost of £20,000 per year. This funding provided financial stability following the withdrawal of support from social services and ensured the continuance of the Handyperson paid for service for higher income elderly householders. The provision and funding of a Handyperson service was a key action in the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy 2006-2010.

3. **The Service:**

The aim of the Handyperson service is to provide someone to carry out small jobs of repair in the homes of older and disabled people on low incomes. Householder often find such small jobs too hard or too expensive to get someone to do.

The underlying principle is to help older and disabled people live independently within the community for as long as they wish by assisting with minor repairs which they cannot do themselves. However the scheme also contributes to reducing the risk of accidents and injuries at home, reducing the number of unplanned hospital admissions and promotes people's independence. The scheme has been a great success and has received very good feedback. The headline successes are from 1st September 2006 until 29th February 2008:

- 891 hours of work completed.
- 601 jobs completed.
- 154 grab rails fitted
- 49 mop rails (stair rails) fitted



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



- 28 surfaces levelled
- 66 tap washers changed
- 31 replacement taps
- 62 repairs to doors
- 25 small leaks
- 100% satisfaction with the way enquiries are dealt with and the attitude and appearance of the Handyperson
- 99% satisfaction with the work carried out and cleanliness.

A number of national reports have highlighted the importance of a Handyperson Service, the most recent of which, a government publication in March 2008 entitled *Lifetime Home, lifetime Neighbourhoods, A National Strategy in an Ageing Society* a which announced new national funding to be available from 2009/11 to grow and deliver handyperson services.

The types of work carried out by the service include:

- **Plumbing:** Tap washers, small leaks, de-scaling showers, replacement taps.
- **Carpentry:** Repairs to doorframes, hanging doors, easing doors, replacing doors and small scale fencing repairs.
- **Falls prevention work:** Works in connection with fall prevention, and in particular those which might be regarded as category 1 hazards under Housing Health and Safety Rating system. These works would include refitting loose or frayed carpets, fitting mop rails, fitting grab rails in bathroom, clearing lofts in preparation for loft insulation work, levelling flat surfaces such as paving slabs, providing extension lead where trailing leads are a problem, changing light bulbs etc.
- **General:** Putting up shelves, lowering shelves, fitting curtain rails, moving cupboards, minor tiling, plastering and making good, moving of heavy furniture, door bells etc
- **Minor security measures:** fixing smoke detectors, door chains.

Attached is Age Concern's 'Report on the Handyperson Service' from September 2006 until February 2008 which provides more details of the scheme and the work they have completed.

4. Funding:

The council has taken an innovative approach in funding the Handyperson scheme. Rather than give core revenue funding to the provider to undertake the service, which is usually the case with service provision of this kind, the council has used capital from the Regional Housing Capital grant received for Private Sector Renewal to purchase an agreed number of handyperson hours of work and materials.

The Report on the Handyperson Service identifies that the service has grown and expanded since it first started. The current contract comes to end on 31 August 2008 however, given the current demand projections, Age Concern are seeking to extend the contract until 31 March 2009. This is sensible as it will provide the opportunity for the new Unitary authority to review the provision. The cost to extending the contract is £23782. Resources are available from the Capital Private Sector Renewal budget and therefore no additional expenditure will be incurred by the council.

5. Recommendations:

It is recommended that members approve a payment of £23782-00 to Age Concern to provide a Handyperson Service until 31 March 2009

6. Implications:

- Financial** : The cost of the scheme can be financed through existing budgets
- Legal** : Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002
- Human Rights** : None
- Personnel** : None
- Community Safety** : Contribute to vulnerable households feeling safe in their homes
- Environmental** : None at this stage.
- ICT** : None
- Risk** : None
- Equality & Diversity:** The scheme provides support a group of vulnerable householders
- Council's Core Values:** It is likely that this proposal will meet a number of SDC core values. - Providing an excellent service and supporting the disadvantage people
- Wards Affected** : All wards



SALISBURY DISTRICT

REPORT ON THE
HANDYPERSON SERVICE

Funded by Salisbury District
Council

Sept 2006 - Feb 2008
18 months

Age Concern Salisbury District

Background

The handyperson service was in existence when Salisbury District Council offered to improve the service by providing Age Concern Salisbury District with a grant of £20,000 each year for 2 years to provide the following services:

- A free service to owner occupiers or private tenants over 60, in receipt of means tested or disability benefit including Attendance Allowance.
- A free service to owner occupiers or private tenants under 60's where all the members of the household (excluding children) are in receipt of Disability living Allowance
- Free labour , materials cost to clients, who are over 60 and either an owner occupier or private tenant where the work is connected to falls prevention

Benefits for Salisbury District Council

This service helps to meet a number of the Council's aims – Decent Homes Standard, Housing Strategy Statement and the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy.

Achievements (01.09.07 – 29.02.08).

A total of 545 hours of work were achieved during the first year, and 346 hours in the first six months of the second year. As detailed in the attached appendix 1.

A total of 376 clients were helped during the first year with a further 213 being helped in the first six months of the second year.

A wide range of tasks were undertaken which are detailed in the appendix 1. These range from changing light bulbs to relaying paths. Over 50 different types of tasks were completed.

Safety checks were undertaken both by the handyperson when visiting to carry out tasks and by our staff who visit older people in their own homes. Appendix 1

The cost of equipment was kept low at £3596 during the first year this was due to prudent purchasing procedures. Expenditure during the first six months of the second year has increased due to the increasing complexity of tasks.

Satisfaction surveys were completed by leaving a reply card with each client. The return was 28% which is very good for this type of service and we had a 100% satisfaction with the way in which we dealt with enquiries. 100% satisfaction with the attitude and appearance of the handyperson. 99% satisfaction with the work carried out and cleanliness. In addition many people went out of their way to compliment the staff.



Figure 1 Gate and path unusable



Gate repaired and path made safe



Figure 2 Old style taps



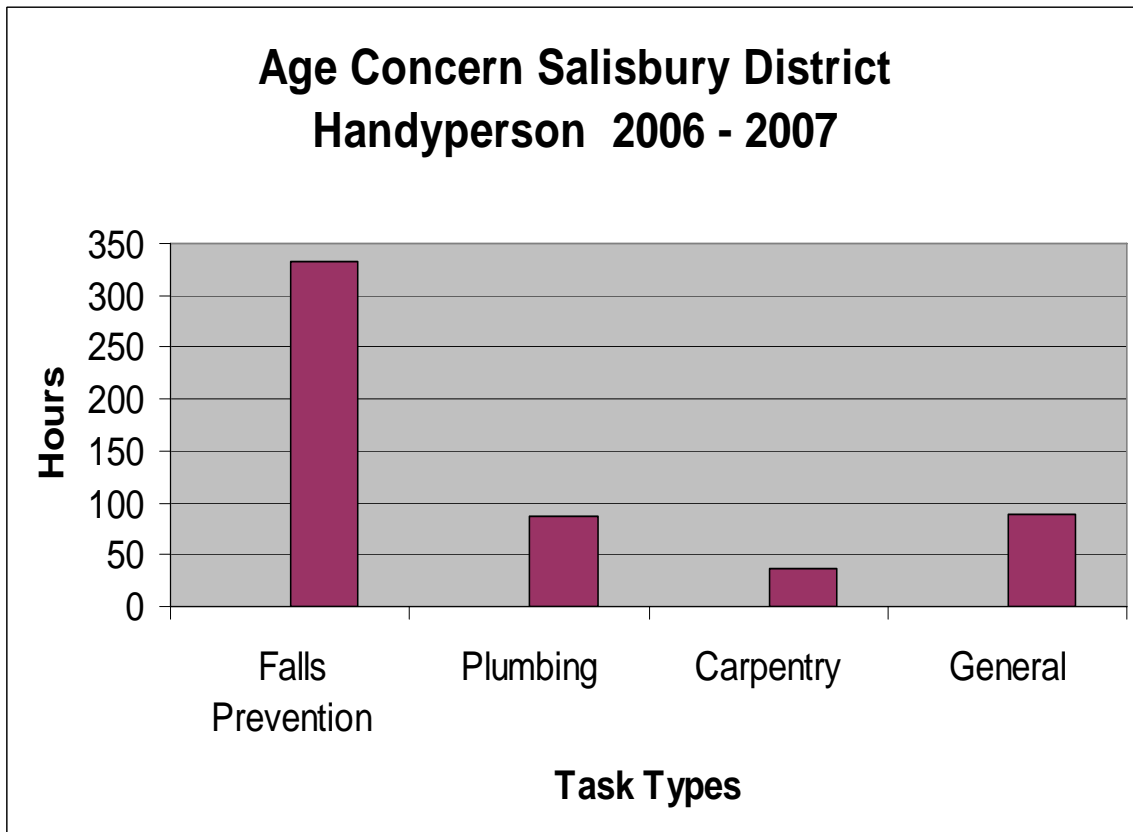
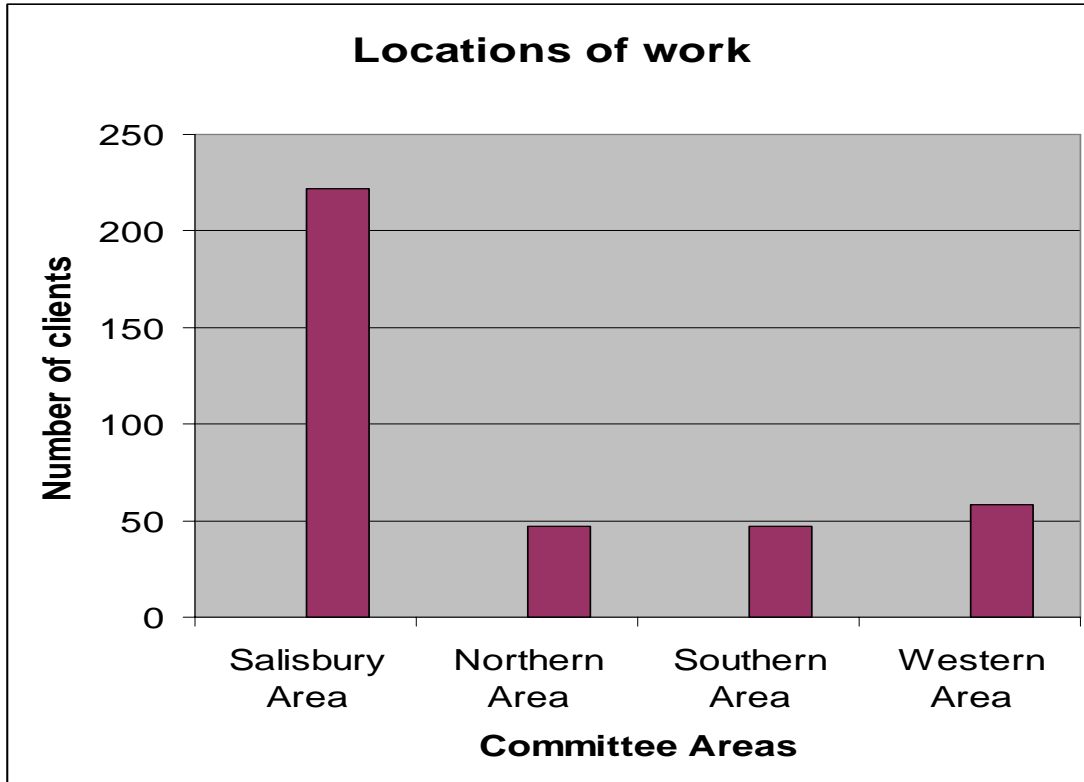
New lever taps



Figure 3 Steps before handyperson visit



With handrail installed



Comments received from Clients

- *Very helpful, even recommended where a specialist firm needed - to stop draughts around windows*
- *This was an EXCELLENT service. It is so embarrassing to have to get someone in to do small simple things as you get older, but this made it all so easy.*
- *Intelligent and helpful comments by the Handyman. Now I feel much safer.*
- *Why didn't I think about having this done months ago? The rails are a boon!*
- *Your handyperson was very much appreciated. He was cheery, very tidy and able. The item he fitted has made going up and down stairs safe and a lot easier.*
- *Work provided this year which made an enormous difference to my husband's safety and stability around the house.*

Issues

In May 2007 the handyperson who had been with us for several years retired and we appointed a replacement – this individual left by mutual agreement in September 07 and another handyman started who is very well qualified and experienced. Feedback on the latest staff member has been excellent.

Finance

As can be seen from the attached schedules there has been some underspend on the first year which we propose to take forward into the 2007-08 year.

Hours – Target 572 Achieved – 545 Balance Carried forward 27 hours

Materials Target £4,000 Spent – £3596 Balance Carried Forward £404

Indications are that the work had rapidly increased in the last few months of the year, with more complex outside work being referred. This is in part due to the Decent Homes Inspections being carried out by Salisbury District staff and in part due to 'word of mouth' as the quality of the work is discussed between older people.

September 2007- end February 08

Target hours 563 + 27 from 06-07 = 590 Sept-Feb completed hours 346

Materials £4236 + £404 from 06-07 = £4640 Sept-Feb material expenditure
£4414

Future Working

The service is an obvious success and based on the number of hours and materials expenditure already spent in the first six months of the second year additional financial help is required if this service is to keep going.

To complete the **existing** contract to end of August the following is required:

Additional materials expenditure based on 706 hours being completed	= £ 3974
Additional hours above contract : 116 hours @ £28.00 p.h.	= £ 3248
TOTAL	£ 7222

To **extend** this service until end March 2009 when the new unitary authority takes over the following is requested: (Sept 08 – March 09)

Materials for 7 months based on average expenditure during previous year	= £ 5024
Hours for 7 months based on average during previous year 412	
	@ £28.00 p.h. =£11536
TOTAL	=£16560

GRAND TOTAL REQUESTED:

To complete existing contract	£ 7222
Extend contract to Mar 09	£16560
	£23782

Age Concern Salisbury District
20.03.08