



National Policy Statement

A **vision** for **Care and Repair**
services in **Scotland**



Ministerial Foreword

Care and Repair services offer vital support to older and disabled people, helping them to remain in their own homes where disrepair or adaptation needs might otherwise mean a move to a care home or an emergency hospital admission. By supporting people through the process of adapting their homes, Care and Repair services enable older and disabled people to live independently and safely in their own homes for as long as possible.

Early in my term of office I was pleased to announce the introduction of the Home Energy Efficiency Programmes Scotland equity loans pilot scheme which provides loans for homeowners for energy efficiency improvements and essential repairs.

Working in partnership with Energy Savings Trust Scotland, Care and Repair services provide local support for older and disabled applicants to the scheme who wish to stay in their home but do not have access to capital funding and who may need help in finding contractors and managing works.

The level of support offered by Care and Repair services is, I am sure, highly valued by their clients. I like that Care and Repair has a ‘can do’ approach that offers advice and assistance to older and disabled people and delivers high quality repairs and adaptations.

This National Policy Statement reflects the aspirations of Care and Repair to continue to deliver these services, and to strengthen their contribution to successful health and housing outcomes for older and disabled people.

I am delighted to welcome the publication of Care and Repair Scotland’s National Policy Statement, which provides a clear statement of the vision for Care and Repair services in Scotland.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Stewart'.

Kevin Stewart MSP
Minister for Local Government
and Housing





Care and Repair in Scotland

Care and Repair Scotland is the national coordinating body for Care and Repair services in Scotland. In this policy statement, which follows extensive consultation, we set out our approach to the continued development of Care and Repair. Our vision is of a Scotland where all older and disabled people can access Care and Repair services to enable them to continue living in their own home for as long as it is safe and practical for them to do so.

More than 90% of our customers report each year that they were satisfied with the service we provided. Given that many people find organising building works to be stressful and problematic this is a remarkable achievement. Our support has made a big impact on the quality of life of many older and disabled people in Scotland and has also helped to bring peace of mind to carers and families.

Care and Repair is a cost-effective solution. We know that our services are highly valued but we also know that there are many more people who could be helped. The population is growing older, with more people requiring adaptations to their homes to help them retain their independence. There is also an indication that levels of disrepair can increase as people's income reduces in later years. In short, we believe that more people need the help of Care and Repair than ever before.



Foundations for health and wellbeing

The core aims of Care and Repair are to enable older and disabled people to remain in their own homes for as long as it is practical and safe to do so, rather than going into care homes or hospital, and to enjoy the benefits of good quality housing in the community. Thirty five Care and Repair teams across Scotland seek to achieve this by providing advice and assistance with building works in the home - ranging from simple maintenance tasks to complex repairs, improvements and adaptations.

Care and Repair continues to work within the broad policy framework established in the Scottish Government's strategy for housing older people: Age, Home and Community. This strategy supports the longstanding policy of shifting the balance of care by supporting people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. The policy document clearly indicates that it supports the work of Care and Repair as a partner in moving the balance of care from acute services to prevention: from dealing with crises, to preventing them from happening. Decisions about funding Care and Repair are now taken by local councils and while most are supportive, we need a greater level of understanding and support to protect services and allow them to develop.

Health and social care integration provides Care and Repair with many exciting opportunities for joint working. We strongly endorse the overarching intention of Scottish Government that:

“Health and social care services should focus on the needs of the individual to promote their health and wellbeing, and in particular, to enable people to live healthier lives in their community”.

There are significant opportunities for Care and Repair teams to demonstrate how they can take pressure off other services by facilitating, for example, hospital discharge, maintaining technology and enabled care equipment, managing equipment stores and delivering dementia friendly solutions in the home.

We are absolutely clear that every local Care and Repair team in Scotland is in an ideal position to deliver on the first four National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and particularly on Outcome 2:

“People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions or who are frail are able to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community”.

We believe that Care and Repair is equal to the task of delivering high quality, jointly commissioned services, that place the customer first and continue our long standing and successful ethos of home based and personalised solutions.





Ethos and values

Care and Repair is a home-based and personalised service which assists customers to take informed decisions. The key guiding principles of Care and Repair are:

Customer empowerment

All decisions will be taken by the customer, including the choice of contractors and the final specification of works

Flexibility and choice

tailoring the services to meet the specific needs of each customer while providing an impartial and independent overview of the casework

Advocacy

acting for the best interests of the customer when liaising with individuals and organisations that can assist in moving the casework forward.

Not for profit

objective, professional advice is provided, uninfluenced by any commercial considerations

Privacy and trust

building trust by respecting the privacy of customers and ensuring that personal information is treated in confidence and by treating customers with respect

Equality and diversity

seeking to ensure that information on the services available to older and disabled persons and access to them is available regardless of gender, ethnicity or degree of disability, sexuality or age.

Care and Repair teams have sought to put these principles into practice and feedback from customers suggests that the services they provide and the way in which they are provided are widely appreciated.

Customers

Care and Repair services are directed to older owner occupiers and crofters, aged 60 and over. However, in some areas services are provided to owners of any age with disabilities, and private rented sector tenants who are older or disabled.

Care and Repair Scotland will work to encourage the provision of Care and Repair services throughout Scotland to owners of any age with registered physical or mental disabilities.

So far as older people are concerned, and subject to the continued availability of resources, Care and Repair Scotland believes that it remains appropriate to focus on older owner occupiers, crofters and tenants (where they are responsible for the work in question) aged 60 and over. However, in the event that resources are reduced, local teams may need to consider whether to reduce any services they provide to those who are not owner occupiers or crofters, and whether to raise the qualifying age to 65, or even 70.

In situations where demand exceeds resources, and waiting lists build up, customers will need to be prioritised. Decisions in these cases should be based on an assessment of the extent to which there is a threat to independent living.

Services

For the most part, local Care and Repair services should aim to provide: -

- Advice and information on housing repair and adaptation, including advice on accessing funding to pay for necessary works
- Help with major repairs, improvements and the installation of aids and adaptations for persons with disabilities
- Small repair services, especially to promote safety and security
- Handyperson services i.e. relatively straightforward maintenance tasks
- Signposting to other services available locally that could assist with wider social, health, financial or care needs.

Care and Repair Scotland will encourage local teams to provide the full range of these services and to promote them widely in their areas. Innovation has been an important strength of the Care and Repair approach. Care and Repair Scotland recognises that a number of local teams have developed, with relevant funding bodies, new services to provide independent living, hospital discharge, dementia support, technology and enabled care and digital inclusion. We will encourage and assist teams in other areas to develop similar services.

Equality of access

Care and Repair Scotland will work to ensure that Care and Repair services are available throughout Scotland and to all social groups. It will provide advice and support to local teams as necessary to help achieve this. In particular, it will encourage local teams to promote their services to ethnic minorities through proactive engagement with black and minority ethnic (BME) services locally.

Governance

The governance arrangements of local Care and Repair teams in Scotland vary greatly. 19 are managed by housing associations, 3 are managed by other organisations, 7 are part of the local authority, 1 is a subsidiary company of a housing association and 5 are independent not-for-profit companies. Care and Repair Scotland will encourage managing organisations and funders to objectively review constitutional models and governance arrangements, and assess their relevance to the current environment. We are also committed to assisting local teams to move to a more self-governing status as we believe that this provides the best opportunity for growth and innovation.





Finance and Fundraising

Care and Repair local teams are almost entirely dependent on funding from local authorities. We need more commitment by Government at all levels to the delivery of the preventative agenda that will enable people to live healthier lives in their own community. Teams need longer term funding arrangements to allow them to extend the scope of their work and develop new services in line with the health and wellbeing agenda. Care and Repair Scotland will work to establish and demonstrate the benefits both to the individual and to the public purse which flow from the delivery of Care and Repair services.

However, recognising the pressures on council budgets, Care and Repair local teams should consider the scope for developing other sources of income. Care and Repair Scotland will work to support local Care and Repair agencies in the development of income generation strategies.

Role of Care and Repair Scotland

Care and Repair Scotland is an independent charitable company funded by grant from the Scottish Government. Our Board includes representatives of SFHA, ALACHO, the NHS, voluntary sector bodies and Care and Repair local agencies. Our role is to provide a national platform to lead, promote and support local Care and Repair teams to work collaboratively in order to achieve strategic outcomes by helping older and disabled persons to live independently in their own homes.

Our priorities in carrying out that role include: -

- Strengthening the understanding of the key benefits of Care and Repair at national and local level
- Providing an accreditation and a performance framework to demonstrate value and efficiency to commissioners
- Supporting local teams to engage effectively with health and social care agencies and other stakeholders in the co-production of service frameworks

Conclusion

We believe that Care and Repair local teams provide high quality, good value services that are appreciated by our customers. The move towards health and social care integration only helps to strengthen the case for our services that put the person at the centre of the decision-making process. The desire of most older and disabled people to retain independence and have care delivered in a homely setting is one that we have supported since 1988 when we began in Scotland. The challenge for Care and Repair in Scotland is to demonstrate the value of the services it provides, showing its continued ability to change and innovate and continuing to deliver efficient and effective services which meet customers' needs.



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