

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HOUSING COMMITTEE – 12 SEPTEMBER 2001**

**PILOT CARE AND REPAIR PROJECT**

**Report by the Director of Homes and Technical Services**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authority to establish a Steering Group and to introduce a pilot Care and Repair project in East Ayrshire, to assist in funding works to enable elderly people and disabled people in the private sector to remain in their own homes.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Scottish Executive published new guidance on Care and Repair schemes in Scotland in June 2001, with the aim of setting out the strategic context for Care and Repair, and to help explain to Local Authorities how to engage with strategic planning partners in setting up a Care and Repair scheme.
- 2.2 The guidance makes it clear that Ministers attach the highest priority to the scheme and want to see it expanded to all parts of Scotland, as they recognise there are benefits for all strategic agencies in making use of the Care and Repair scheme through joint working. Scottish Homes' Care & Repair in Scotland, National Performance Indicators 1999-2000 reports that the service is provided by a total of 33 projects operating in 24 of 32 Local Authority areas.

**3.0 PRINCIPLES OF CARE AND REPAIR**

- 3.1 Care and Repair helps meet a wide range of national and local policy objectives. It:
- Provides practical help with repairs, improvements and household maintenance for older people and disabled people living in the private sector,
  - Helps people to live independently in the community by offering home-based solutions, thereby complementing the aims of Care in the Community,
  - Facilitates hospital discharge and helps prevent inappropriate admission to care settings,
  - Addresses condition issues within private sector properties,
  - Provides cost effective solutions,
  - Contributes to Social Inclusion.

**4.0 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

- 4.1 There are two sources of finance required to fund Care and Repair projects. Revenue funding is required for the operation of a Care & Repair project, and in the past this has been provided in the main jointly by Scottish Homes and the Local Authority. Scottish Homes as National Co-ordinator for Care and Repair will provide

up to 50% of the total revenue costs of a project with the local authority being expected to meet the balance. The local Health Board will however be approached to provide funding in recognition of the role that Care and Repair has in addressing the health needs of clients thus reducing the burden on the local authority.

4.2 Capital funding is also required to finance the cost of repair and improvement works. The source of capital funding required will depend on the nature of the work to be undertaken. This is provided through a variety of means as follows:

- Local Authority Repair and Improvement Grants.
- The client's own resources, e.g. for the material costs of a small repair. The labour costs are not charged to the client.
- Social Work Aids and Adaptation grants and equipment.
- Resource transfer monies associated with long stay hospital discharge programmes.
- Benefits Agency grants or loans.
- Insurance claims and charitable contributions.

## **5.0 DEVELOPING A NEW PROJECT**

5.1 The East Ayrshire Housing Needs Analysis carried out by the Housing Department in 1998 through a sample survey of 4000 households, identified a total of 9113 elderly (60+) owner occupiers throughout East Ayrshire. A total of 1232 elderly owner-occupied households (13.5%) contain members who have a long term illness or disability. This compares to an average of 8.07% amongst the owner-occupied sector. Of these households, 23.58% require an adaptation to help them cope more easily. This compares to an average of 22.7%.

5.2 East Ayrshire's Local Housing Systems Analysis, Assisting People With Particular Housing Needs, dated April 2001, predicts that between 1996 and 2013, the percentage of people over retirement age is due to rise from 16% to 20% of the total population. As such, there will be a substantial and increasing demand for housing which is suited to the needs of people with a range of physical disabilities, the majority of whom are over 65 years of age. As people are living longer and are remaining in their own homes, there will be a greater demand for adaptations to mainstream housing. This has the advantage of allowing people to remain in their own home, where preferred. Based on Office for National Statistics prevalence rates, it is estimated that over 13000 people in East Ayrshire have a disability. Further, there are large shortfalls reported in all areas of both wheelchair accessible housing and housing for the ambulant disabled.

5.3 There is a shifting pattern of tenure within East Ayrshire from rented to owner occupation. This trend mirrors the changes prevalent throughout Scotland. At present, the Council's stock now only represents 35% of the total stock within East Ayrshire. A significant proportion of the owner occupied stock is now ex-Council housing which has not been subject to the same modernisation and improvement programmes as the remaining stock.

5.4 Currently, the Council expends approximately £3.3 million per annum on major repairs and improvements to its stock and at the same time, spends £1 million on aids and adaptations, again within its own stock. The current comparable figure for major repairs and improvements in the private sector is approximately £394000 per annum. This balance of expenditure is out of alignment with known need.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

6.1 With a focus on a co-ordinated approach to meeting community needs, Care and Repair projects can assist in achieving Community Care, Health and Housing policy objectives, as reported in the Scottish Executive document 'Working Together on Care and Repair A Strategic View', dated 2001, and as detailed in Scottish Homes' Good Practice guidance, dated February 2001. Care and Repair projects provide cost-effective services which help sustain those people at greatest risk of social exclusion to live independently in better housing within the community, thereby avoiding the need for more institutional forms of care.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The identification of liabilities, annual revenue costs and the capital allocation required to pilot a Care and Repair project in East Ayrshire will be undertaken as part of the work of the Steering Group, in accordance with the Scottish Executive and Scottish Homes' guidance, and will be reported to Committee.

7.2 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Any future implications arising from the operation of a Care and Repair project in East Ayrshire will be reported to Committee.

7.3 As indicated in section 3.1 of this report the introduction of a Care and Repair project in East Ayrshire will meet a wide range of national and local policy objectives.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) approve setting up a Steering Group to include representation from partner organisations to develop worked up proposals for the implementation of a Care and Repair project in East Ayrshire; and
- (ii) note that further reports on progress will be brought to future Committee meetings.

James Lavery  
Director of Homes and Technical Services  
10<sup>th</sup> August 2001

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Scottish Homes' Care and Repair Good Practice Guide, 1995.
2. Improving People's Lives by Improving Their Homes, Care & Repair Forum Scotland.
3. East Ayrshire Housing Needs Analysis, Market Research Scotland, 1998.
4. East Ayrshire Local Housing Systems Analysis, April 2001.
5. Scottish Homes' Care & Repair in Scotland, National Performance Indicators 1999 – 2000.
6. East Ayrshire Council and Scottish Homes' Strategic Agreement and Joint Implementation Plan, 1998 – 2001.
7. Scottish Executive returns April 2000 – March 2001, forms IMP1A and IMP5.
8. Scottish Executive Working Together on Care and Repair A Strategic View, 2001.
9. Scottish Homes' Care and Repair - A Good Practice Guide, February 2001.

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**AGENDA**