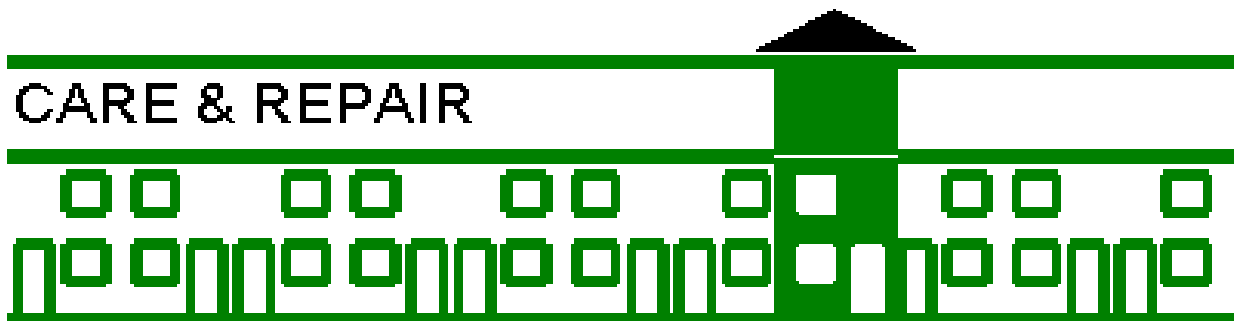


# BUSINESS PLAN

2005 - 2008



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To other HIAs etc.

A lot of hard work has gone into this document. If you use anything from it please acknowledge this in your document. Thank you. Mo Murray.

Director. 10<sup>TH</sup> August 2005

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## Executive Summary

West Leicestershire Care and Repair - the Home Improvement Agency for North West Leicestershire and Hinckley and Bosworth - helps older and other vulnerable people to live in safe, warm, secure, well maintained and adapted homes.

This 'Plan' develops a strategy for 2005-2008. It has been devised and written with the involvement of the staff, committee and clients of Care and Repair. The first of the two parts is the main strategy document and the second is an annual document detailing specific targets, funding and staffing.

Care and Repair was established as an independent Home Improvement Agency (HIA) in Coalville in 1985. It is an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status.

The core HIA activities are:

- Advice and advocacy with Housing Advisers assisting people to identify the problems and issues with their homes, then looking at appropriate ways of resolving these
- Providing financial information and support to enable people to achieve their required outcome
- Technical advice, guidance and assurance is provided by Technical Advisers, to ensure that the work undertaken is of a satisfactory standard and meets the needs and desires of the client

Ancillary services have grown to meet clients' needs and achieve the mission where opportunities have arisen. These include the small repairs (Handyperson) Service and the Leicestershire Safe at Home Partnership service, which provides advice and home security equipment to make older peoples' homes more safe and secure.

Revenue funding is provided by North West Leicestershire District Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Leicestershire Social Services and Leicestershire Supporting People for core HIA services. Maintaining adequate funding for core services is a major concern of Care and Repair as funding has not kept pace with inflation or the increasing demands made of the Agency by funders and users.

The anticipated revenue streams for core services in the next three years will not adequately fund the basic core services. The Government recognises the effective role that HIAs can play in delivering both national and local housing, health and community care policies in a situation of rapid growth in the numbers of older people but funding, both national and local, is limited.

Care and Repair intends to meet the needs of its present and future clients by grasping opportunities to build on its track record and reputation for reliable, high quality services, and so maintain funding for the core services and develop additional income generating services.

**The aims of Care and Repair over the next 3 years are:**

1. To maintain the long term viability of Care and Repair
2. To provide wide ranging advice and practical assistance for those older people choosing to remain independent in their own homes
3. To provide advice, support and practical assistance to disabled people, of any age, accessing the grants system.
4. To continuously improve our performance and services to achieve excellent standards
5. To explore and develop appropriate services for the existing client groups, or other disadvantaged groups, which generate income for Care and Repair
6. To explore and develop in partnership with Leicestershire Supporting People and other agencies the provision of HIA services within every District in Leicestershire.

## 1. Introduction

Care and Repair (West Leicestershire) Ltd, hereafter referred to as Care and Repair, has been the designated Home Improvement Agency (HIA) for North West Leicestershire District Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

The purpose of "The Plan" is to develop a strategy for the next three years, 2005 to 2008. The current plan (2003/6) no longer reflects our current position, as there have been so many changes and developments.

This Business Plan and its accompanying Annual Plan are for all our stakeholders whether they be funders, both current and prospective, external stakeholders, management committee, staff and clients.

The Plan is in two sections, the first is the main strategy document and provides a clear statement of our proposed plans and objectives. The second document is an annual plan and will provide a more focused document for the staff and management committee, detailing specific targets, as well as funding and staffing details.

It has been devised and written with the involvement of the staff, committee and clients of Care and Repair. Funding was secured through hact's Supporting People "make it happen fund" enabling the securing of the services of a management consultant, Sarah Hargreaves, to work with the Director. They planned and facilitated an "Away day" for stakeholders, management committee and staff. A second meeting was held with management committee and staff and they prepared the documents here today. Further information was gathered through focus groups, facilitated by Janice Fox.

## 2. Mission statement

West Leicestershire Care and Repair - the Home Improvement Agency for North West Leicestershire and Hinckley and Bosworth - helps older and other vulnerable people to live in safe, warm, secure, well maintained and adapted homes.

### 3. Core HIA Activity

#### **ADVICE AND ADVOCACY:**

Housing Advisers assist people to identify what the real problems may be with their home and how these issues may be addressed. This includes a review of all housing options open to the client including advice on welfare benefits, financial matters and legal entitlements and other support services which the client may need to enable them to remain in their home.

#### **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

Housing Advisers offer a broad overview to clients of the financial implications of pursuing their chosen option. Whilst for some people, the cost of any repairs or improvements will be covered by a grant from the local housing authority, Advisers will also offer support to clients to access alternative sources of income, including charitable funds and using their own savings. Initial information on raising loans against the equity of their property will be offered, however this will usually only be to advise clients to ensure they get appropriate independent financial advice.

#### **TECHNICAL ISSUES:**

Many clients of a HIA are apprehensive about housing repairs carried out to their own home. The Technical Advisers provide a crucial role in offering both guidance to clients on the required work and assurance that any repairs undertaken will be completed satisfactorily, to budget and on time. Jobs undertaken can range from the very small (such as minor plumbing repairs) to major renovations or the construction of adaptations or extensions for a disabled person. The building work is specified, competitive estimates are sought from good quality vetted contractors and the whole work is overseen by the agency's technical staff in order to ensure that the finished result meets the needs and desires of the client.

#### 4. Ancillary Services Small Repairs (Handyperson) Service:

This vital service provides local contractors who carry out small repairs to the homes of older people to enable them to maintain their properties and live in greater comfort and security. Charitable funds have been raised to subsidise the labour costs - clients paying half the cost of labour and all the material costs.

#### Leicestershire Safe at Home/Help the Aged Handyvan scheme.

This is a partnership with Age Concern Hinckley and Burbage, Age Concern Leicestershire and Rutland, three Crime and Disorder Partnerships and Help the Aged. This is managed by Care and Repair. The project worker carries out a home security check to the homes of vulnerable people. He then installs necessary measures such as door and window locks, door chains, viewers and smoke alarms. The project covers all tenures in Charnwood, Hinckley and Bosworth and North West Leicestershire.

#### Energy Efficiency Project:

Care and Repair is the loan manager for two schemes providing interest free loans for energy efficiency measures. These schemes are targetted at people who are not eligible for a government or local authority grant.

#### 5. Aims over the next 3 years

1. To maintain the long term viability of Care and Repair
2. To provide wide ranging advice and practical assistance for those older people choosing to remain independent in their own homes
3. To provide advice, support and practical assistance to disabled people, of any age, accessing the grants system.
4. To continuously improve our performance and services to achieve excellent standards
5. Explore and develop appropriate services for the existing client groups, or other disadvantaged groups, which generate income for Care and Repair
6. To explore and develop in partnership with Leicestershire Supporting People and other agencies the provision of HIA services within every District in Leicestershire.

## 6. Need and statistics /Local Context

North West Leicestershire has a population of some 85,503 (2001 census) with 17,976 (21%) being aged over 60. 76% of the population are owner occupiers, slightly lower than the rest of Leicestershire, but higher than the East Midlands average. Some 15,255 (or 17.84%) have a "limiting long term illness" which is the highest percentage in Leicestershire but slightly lower than the East Midlands average. The major towns are Coalville, Ashby de la Zouch and Castle Donington in the north. There is a very small ethnic minority population of 1.22%.

In North West Leicestershire housing conditions in the private sector are not a general problem but a private house conditions survey in 2003 found that over two thirds (68%) of properties occupied households over 60 years old needed immediate housing repairs and that one in five (20.7%) of homes in the private rented sector were unfit, twice the national average.

Hinckley and Bosworth has a population of some 100,141 (2001 census) with 21,188 (21%) being aged over 60. 82.58% of the population are owner occupiers. This is one of the highest levels of owner occupation in the country, ranking it 16<sup>th</sup> in England and Wales. Some 16,349 (or 16.33%) have a "limiting long term illness" which does not differ much from the regional or national position.

The major centres of population are Hinckley, Earl Shilton, Barwell, Market Bosworth and Markfield. There is a very small ethnic minority population of 2.08%.

The last private sector housing conditions survey (1998) showed around 3% of the private stock failed to meet the legal criteria for being fit to live in, compared to an estimate of 6% in England. A further 0.8% of the stock was found to be in substantial disrepair, though not unfit. Unfitness was found to be disproportionately in the private rented sector - only 8% of the private stock was thought to be privately rented at the time of the survey but of these 27% were unfit.

Both Districts have small areas defined as areas of multiple deprivation, however they are concentrated within areas of public sector housing. North West Leicestershire is ranked 200 (out of 354) and Hinckley and Bosworth 267 in the national multiple deprivation table (2004).

Both Districts have large rural areas which suffer from poor transport links.

## 7. History

Care and Repair was established in Coalville in 1985 by members of the local community, in response to both local and national research confirming that older people were living in the worst accommodation. Moreover, older homeowners were likely to have the fewest resources for repair and maintenance, but were the least likely to benefit from the renovation grant system, and other sources of help.

Initially funded by North West Leicestershire District Council and the Housing Association Charitable Trust (hact), it was one of the earliest schemes to be established in England. In 1987, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council invited Care and Repair into its area, providing part funding. Funding was also provided by the Leicestershire County Council's Urban Policy Unit, later transferred to Social Services.

Care and Repair has continued to maintain the same principles, client groups and community base. However opportunities to develop and enhance the service have been sought and taken, many in response to the external environment.

## 8. Geographical areas

The Agency works across the geographical areas served by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough and North West Leicestershire District Council. The Primary Care Trusts serving these districts are the Hinckley and Bosworth PCT and the Charnwood and North West Leicestershire PCT whose boundaries are based on the location of GP surgeries and are not therefore co terminus with the Districts. Social Services have, on the whole, adopted the PCT boundaries.

## 9. Legal status and Governance

The Association is an independent not-for-profit organisation and is registered as an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status. There are some 20 independent HIAs in England run by their own Management Committees. Such Independent HIAs are generally more forward thinking and dynamic and able to respond to local

need. The majority of HIAs are part of other organisations such as Housing Associations, Local Authorities or Charities.

The Management Committee of Care and Repair includes both members and officers of the District Councils, individual members who have a particular interest and knowledge of our work, a representative of the local Housing Association and a number of potential service users. (see annual plan). It meets quarterly and a Personnel Subcommittee is convened as necessary. The Director, the senior paid officer, is the Company Secretary. There is a staff team of nine, of which three are part time. (see annual plan)

## 10. Funding

North West Leicestershire District Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Leicestershire Social Services and Leicestershire Supporting People provide revenue funding for core HIA services. Maintaining adequate funding for core services is a major concern of the Association as funding has not kept pace with inflation or the increasing demands made of the Agency by funders and users.

Fees are an essential part of funding, although their monetary value has reduced over recent years. From 1990 to 1998 it was a condition of Central Government funding that 5% of the cost of all work carried out was earned as fee income.

Prior to 2003 funding was received direct from Central Government (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). This funding was then transferred to Supporting People teams across the country. This money was initially ring fenced, but it is now part of general funds to provide housing support to vulnerable people.

In the past the local HIA has had to raise 50% of its funding from local sources, in particular the Housing Authorities, but this is now an expectation rather than a rule. Care and Repair have one year service level agreements with both District Councils and Leicestershire Social Services and an interim contract with Leicestershire Supporting People, which is about to become a one year steady state contract.

The anticipated revenue streams for core services in the next three years will not adequately fund the basic core services. Care and Repair is therefore looking to develop additional income generating services.

## 11. The national picture

HIAs, known locally as 'Care & Repair' agencies or 'Staying Put' schemes currently operate in 325 local authority areas, meaning that 90% of the country can now access HIA services. This provision has increased over recent years as the Government recognises their importance. Britain has an ageing population. The proportion of the population over the age of 50 has doubled this century and this trend is set to continue with over 40% of the population likely to be over 50 by 2021. It is estimated that by 2021 there will be over 12 million pensioners, nearly 20% of the population in the UK, over 2 million more than present levels. This brings many challenges to the way housing, health and social care are delivered.

Older people are the main users of health and social care services, and statistics suggest that in 2003/4, hospitals, community health and personal social services accounted for some £20b of expenditure on older people but even this provision has struggled to address needs. It is in this context that housing has a central role to play in enabling older people to remain in the home of their choice with the provision of appropriate and timely care, support and other services that enhance ones quality of life.

Numerous government reports papers and guidelines have highlighted the effective role that HIAs can play in delivering both national and local housing, health and community care policies. The further potential contribution that HIAs can offer in this present situation is also now being encouraged.

It is within this context that this business plan has been developed.

The Government has appointed Foundations, until 2007, as the National Co-ordinating Body for Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) whose remit includes providing advice and support to HIAs, and monitoring performance.

## 12. Leicestershire HIAs

Government believes that HIAs need to be larger restructured organisations with more and better strategic management. They believe these will be more robust and offer a more consistent range and quality of services. In Leicestershire the current situation is that there are two other HIAs, and between them they cover five of the seven districts Leicestershire supporting people are committed to exploring the benefits of restructuring.

However the three Leicestershire HIAs believe that there is room for three providers as long as they work together, which they are beginning to do effectively. The vision is to provide comprehensive HIA services available to all those eligible across Leicestershire. These services are to be of a high quality, well resourced, accessible and sensitive to local needs.

## 13. Quality assurance and external monitoring

Care and Repair has achieved the CLS (Community Legal Service) Quality Mark for generalist advice provision. This is subject to an annual review. In addition the Foundations HIA Quality Mark accreditation has been achieved, with 12 "A" grades out of a maximum of 15.

## 14. Local strategies and partnerships

Care and Repair recognises that its success in delivering appropriate services depends on good working relationships with other organisations concerned with the well being of our client groups and their housing conditions. The organisation believes firmly in the effective development of partnership working and this is demonstrated on a daily basis.

Care and Repair contributes to national and local policy development by commenting on central and local government strategies e.g. the Regulatory Reform Order.

Care and Repair works in partnerships with its four core funders to assist them in delivering their strategies:

- North West Leicestershire DC
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
- Leicestershire Social Services
- Leicestershire Supporting People

Care and Repair also works in partnership with many voluntary and statutory organisations, many of them are listed below:

Age Concern Hinckley and Burbage  
Age Concern Leicestershire and Rutland  
Age Concern North West Leicestershire  
Charnwood and North West Leicestershire PCT  
Citizens Advice Bureaux  
CVS Community Partnerships  
Help the Aged  
Hinckley and Bosworth PCT  
Leicester Energy Advice Centre  
Leicestershire Constabulary  
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service  
Leicestershire Rural Community Council  
Leicestershire Trading Standards  
Neighbourhood Watch  
North West Leicestershire Council for Voluntary Service  
Victim Support including PRIDE  
Voluntary Action Hinckley and Bosworth

	<b>Aims for the three years</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Targets to March 2006</b>
1	To maintain the long term viability of Care and Repair	<p>1.1 To ensure that our core services remain cost effective and relevant to current funders and partners</p> <p>1.2 That all our services are relevant to the needs of current and future clients</p> <p>1.3 To generate adequate funding</p> <p>1.4 To maintain and develop the capacity of the Management Committee to provide appropriate strategic leadership for the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work out a “full cost” analysis of the separate services as part of the procurement strategy (1.1, 1.3)</li> <li>• To explain, promote and publicise our services to funders, partners and service users alike (1.2,1.3)</li> <li>• To update the membership training programme (1.4)</li> </ul>
2	To provide wide ranging advice and practical assistance for those older people choosing to remain independent in their own homes	<p>2.1 To maintain and develop core and ancillary services appropriate to client needs</p> <p>2.2 To nurture current partnerships and, where appropriate, develop/join further partnerships with both the statutory and voluntary sectors</p> <p>2.3 Ensure more potential clients are aware of our services by promoting and publicising them</p> <p>2.4 To work with others to achieve loan products acceptable to our clients</p> <p>2.5 To facilitate and support the safe and timely discharge from hospital of older people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To further develop the diversity and inclusion policy and then implement practical ways to ensure fair access to minority and “hard to reach” groups (2.1, 2.2)</li> <li>• To consult with clients through focus groups and other means to ensure our services reflect their needs (2.1)</li> <li>• To continually monitor and improve our contractors list (2.1)</li> <li>• To work with Leicestershire Safe at Home to secure the long term future of the Handyvan project (2.2)</li> <li>• To promote the WarmFront grants scheme in conjunction with EAGA and the District Councils (2.1, 2.3)</li> <li>• To further investigate appropriate loan products (2.4)</li> <li>• To explore, with Social Services and the PCTs, ways to develop this service (2.5)</li> </ul>

3	To provide advice, support and practical assistance to disabled people, of any age, who are accessing the grants system.	<p>3.1 To successfully deliver the Hinckley and Bosworth DFG grant programme, as the Council's appointed agent</p> <p>3.2 To expand the adaptation service to other tenures and/or Districts in Leicestershire, using the good practice developed in Hinckley and Bosworth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To spend Hinckley and Bosworth's allocated funds (3.1)</li> <li>• To further explore providing an adaptation service to the private sector in North West Leicestershire (3.2)</li> </ul>
4	To continuously improve our performance and services to achieve excellent standards	<p>4.1 To continue to effectively monitor service delivery and development in accordance with agreed commissioning arrangements and accreditation processes</p> <p>4.2 To ensure the staff are up to date, trained and equipped to deliver excellent services</p> <p>4.3 To maintain both Foundations and the CLS quality marks</p> <p>4.4 To continue to be known as a good service provider, employer and partner of choice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve performance indicators agreed with funders – see separate tables (4.1)</li> <li>• Find additional funding to update and improve ICT including software for Supporting People reporting (4.1)</li> <li>• To develop a meaningful programme of internal audit (4.1, 4.3)</li> <li>• To ensure staff are fully trained in the protection of vulnerable adults (4.2)</li> <li>• To budget for and deliver supervision, support, training and team development (4.2, 4.4)</li> </ul>

5	<p>Explore and develop appropriate services for the existing client groups, or other disadvantaged groups, which generate income for Care and Repair</p>	<p>5.1 To take every opportunity to develop appropriate new services                      5.2 To increase fee based services to older people not eligible for a grant to support them in their independence                      5.3 To investigate funding to offer younger disabled people the same services we offer older people                      5.4 To develop our profile to funders to work in other tenures and client groups</p> <p>5.5 To assist in reducing fuel poverty in line with Government objectives. This will be done by developing affordable warmth initiatives with partners, especially the District Councils                      5.6 To develop innovative projects to prevent older people having falls/accidents in their homes and so avoid the need for hospital and other high intensive care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Trading Standards and others on combating rogue contractors by promoting our services (5.2)</li> <li>• To consider the introduction of a “housing options/move on” advice service (initially targeted at those people living in properties that are not adaptable) (5.1,5.2, 5.3, 5.4)</li> <li>• To generate an additional income of £17k (our budgeted deficit) from new services (5.2)</li> <li>• To develop new affordable warmth projects and in particular a project to supply and fit radiator panels (5.5)</li> <li>• To work with Social Services and the PCTs to develop an appropriate falls/accident prevention project (5.6)</li> </ul>
6	<p>To explore and develop in partnership with Leicestershire Supporting People and other agencies the provision of HIA services within every District in Leicestershire.</p>	<p>6.1 To contribute to the strategic thinking and planning of key partners in relation to developing HIAs across Leicestershire                      6.2 For Care and Repair to continue its representations on key local partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote our HIA for Charnwood (6.1)</li> <li>• To produce joint promotional leaflets and publicity with other Leicestershire HIAs (6.1)</li> <li>• To maintain the current level of representation on partnerships and other bodies (6.2)</li> </ul>

**Care & Repair (West Leicestershire) Ltd**

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