



Equality Impact Assessment Record Form 2012-16

Section 1 – Service Details and Summary of EIA Activity

Title of activity:	Strategic review of the commissioned provision for a Home Improvement Agency (HIA), currently delivered under a contractual agreement. Optional Contract Extension in place until March 2014.
Lead Officer responsible for this EIA:	Helen Watson Supporting People Contracts Officer (as a member of the strategic review project group)
Telephone:	01325 388278
Service Group:	People
Service or Team:	Supporting People – Development and Commissioning
Assistant Director accountable for this EIA	Pauline Mitchell
Who else will be involved in carrying out the EIA:	HIA Strategic Review Group Corporate Equality Group. Current Service Users.

What stage has the EIA reached?

This is important to note that this EIA reflects a position at the moment in time and will be subject to continual review at each stage of the re-commission/remodelling. The outlined mitigation Action Plan will also be subject to review, refresh, and refinement as any remodelling evolves. The monitoring of the mitigation Action plan will be responsive to any change, in addition standard Bi-weekly monitoring will be undertaken.

Stage	Date	Summary of position
Stage 1: Initial Officer Assessment. Whole Population likely to be affected identified	15.03.13	<i>Whole population, e.g. whole borough, a neighbourhood, a whole demographic group such as older people</i> The service is delivered across the Borough of Darlington; however, each of the service components have their own service eligibility criteria.
Stage 2: Further Assessment. Target Population likely to be affected identified		<i>Target population, e.g. rural communities, community centre users in neighbourhood, older users of particular services</i> Recipients of the service are vulnerable individuals (primarily Disabled People, (including children) and Older people. Please refer to page 7 onwards for a detailed breakdown) living in the Borough of Darlington (of any tenure) who require an intervention to maintain/sustain independent living. Each of the service components have

		their own specified eligibility criteria.
Stage 3: Further Assessment. Individuals likely to be affected identified		<p><i>Individuals, e.g. disabled users of a particular rural bus service, mother and toddler group within community centre, older people who will lose service</i></p> <p>Due to the fact that the commissioned service provision has a range of individual service components, as previously specified. The profile of individuals utilising each of the components does vary, broadly speaking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Advice and Information (Incl. Category 1 Safety Checks) is available cross Borough for enquiries from residents of Darlington. • Financial Assistance (Loans/Grants). Utilised by individuals on low incomes. However, this service component was fully integrated with North East Regional Loans Administrator; however, due to funding difficulties, it in reality has not been a service component which has been available for a significant period of time. • Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a means-tested grant that enables the home of disabled homeowners and private tenants to be adapted to meet their needs. DFG's are available also for disabled children. • Handyperson Service is available to owner occupiers and tenants who are 55 and over, disabled, at risk of falling or vulnerable in other ways. The aim of the service is to help people remain independent and keep them safe, secure and comfortable by undertaking small jobs in and around their homes. <p>It is important to note that this section of the impact assessment will be continuously reviewed throughout the strategic review. Due to the fact that depending on the scope of remodelling individual service components may be affected to a greater or lesser extent.</p>
Stage 4: Analysis of Findings		Please refer to page 16.
Stage 5: Sign-Off		
Stage 6: Reporting and Action Planning		Please refer to page 24.

Section 2 – The Activity and Supporting Information

Contextual Information:

The Darlington Home Improvement Agency is delivered via a commissioned arrangement. The Contractual Agreement commenced on the 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2013 (with option to extend for an additional year after the 31st March 2013)

The current contractual agreement for the provision of the Home Improvement Agency service covers the following core service components:

- General Advice and Information (Incl. Category 1 Safety Checks)
- Financial Assistance (Loans/Grants)
- Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)
- Handyperson Service

The core service provision contained within the contractual agreement is presently funded from a number of sources, comprising;

- DBC Services for Place- Housing Service
- DBC Services for People - Supporting People
- Public Health
- DBC Services for People Adult Social Care.

Darlington Borough Council has the following statutory duties/powers which the provision of DFG's facilitates the delivery of:

1. Adaptations - (Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 s.2 (1) (e))
2. DFG's (Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 Part 1)
3. Additional facilities designed to secure greater safety, comfort, or convenience (Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 s.2 (1) (e))
4. Minor adaptations (Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc) Act 2003 ss15 and 16)
5. Practical assistance within the home (Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 s.2 (1) (a))
6. Publish general information about help available to disabled people in the area by the LA (Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 s.1 (2) (a))
7. General powers to improve living conditions in its area. (The Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) 2002) Discretionary power
8. Make arrangements for promoting the welfare of old people (Health Services and Public Health Act 1968 s.45) Discretionary power.

Overview of Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants can be provided to enable a disabled person to live more independently in their home. A means test is applied to assess an individual's eligibility for grant assistance. The type of work that can be carried out includes installation of stairlifts, level access showers, and ramps. Specific EIA consultation was undertaken regarding a potential system of prioritisation for DFG's, as detailed from page 16.

The remaining elements of the current HIA Agreement, are discretionary:

- General Advice and Information. (Part of the core service delivery)
- Financial Assistance (Part of a wider regional arrangement, which has not been operational for a period of time)
- Handyperson Service. Specific EIA consultation was undertaken regarding the potential ceasing of the service, as detailed from page 16.

Overview of the Handyperson Service

The Handyperson service is available to owner occupiers and tenants who are 55 and over, disabled or at risk of falling. The aim of the service is to help people remain independent and keep them safe, secure and comfortable by undertaking small jobs in and around their homes. Examples of Handyperson jobs include:

- Replacing light bulbs, plugs and fuses
- Re fixing loose carpets
- Fitting door and window locks, door chains and viewers
- Replacing tap washers and bath sealant
- Fitting grab rails and additional stair rails

The service provides an integrated housing support service, through the provision of a single point of contact and seamless co-ordination of services. It enables those in need of support to maintain their independence, health and well-being in their chosen home for as long as possible. This includes older people, people on low incomes, disabled children, young people and adults and other groups determined by local circumstances.

Details of the activity (including the main purpose and aims)
<p>To review the currently externally commissioned Care & Repair Service, the contract commenced on 1st April 2010 and is due to expire on 30th September 2013. A strategic review is required to ascertain the most appropriate service delivery element effective from the 1st October 2013. A Strategic Review is required as part of the natural commissioning cycle and will be undertaken taking into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How service remodelling can be undertaken to ensure that future and changing service demands can be met through improved service targeting to meets the greatest needs.• The current financial position of the Council and pressures on available future funding.• The position of the contributing partner agencies.• Value for Money.• Service Outcomes.• Service reconfiguration opportunities.• Potential service duplication.• Future commissioning priorities.• Potential for service remodelling.
Who will be affected by the activity?
Whole population

Between the 4th April 2011 and the 1st April 2012 there were 1994 enquiries made to the Care and Repair Service in Darlington. (Based on PI data)

Target population

Between 4th April 2011 and the 1st April 2012: 1235 users who remained, living independently in their own home following a DFG or Handyperson Intervention.

(*It is important to note that this figure will reflect the number of visits, and therefore will need to be viewed with a certain degree of caution as there may be individuals who received more than one Handyperson visit in the quarter).

Individuals

37%	Older people
8%	Older people with mental health problems
35%	Frail elderly
20%	Physical or sensory disability

Between 4th April 2011 and the 1st April 2012 the percentage client profile for the HIA has been detailed above. It is important to note that some Children will also be incorporated into the 20% of people with a physical and/or sensory disability.

There were 1052 uses of the Handyperson provided between the period 4th April 2011 and the 1st April 2012

183 individuals received an adaptation through a DFG between the period 4th April 2011 and the 1st April 2012

What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to the EIA?

Completed - 19.03.12 update 1, 20.04.13 update 2 10.06.13

Statistical information provided by the current contractor relating to key lines of enquiry as part of the Strategic Review.

Quarterly contractor PI's which detail: service availability, service utilisation, new client profiles including key characteristics and presenting needs and outcomes following service intervention.

Occupational Therapy assessment information.

Contractor Client Satisfaction information.

For DFG's 5 detailed qualitative cases detailing customer experience and outcome achieved following service intervention.

It is important to note, that Officer Assessment Screens were undertaken for each of the potential proposals. However, for the purpose of clarity, only the Officer Assessment relating to the service proposals identified features within in the main body of this Equality Impact Assessment. The Equality Impact Assessment has continued to evolve and will continue to evolve throughout the service review and remodelling process.

Section 3: Officer Assessment – re-commission statutory elements of the service provision only (Consequence – Decommission of the Handyperson Service)







Due to the varied service components covered within the contractual agreement and the potential changing scope of the strategic review, this Equality Impact Assessment will be subject to continuous review.

Protected Characteristics	Potential Impact Positive/Negative/ Not Applicable			Potential level of impact				Summary of Impact
Age	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	<p>Of the 986 individuals (who provided their age) and utilised the Handyperson Service between 04 April 2011 – 01 April 2012.</p> <p>94% of individuals utilising the service were over 50. 23% of who were over the age of 85.</p> <p>The Officer assessment has been undertaken on the basis that the Handyperson provision as a discretionary function ceases in the re-commission. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson arrangements which are likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done, resulting in potential requirements for further care and support.</p>
Race	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	<p>Ongoing monitoring will be required regarding any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered, as this would have a potential negative impact, as the service may become inaccessible for previous service users, which would include individuals from culturally diverse community groups. The Officer Assessment has not revealed any specific impact; however, this will be reviewed and Officers are conscious of possible impact resulting from communication difficulties when sourcing alternative provision.</p>
Sex	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	<p>74% of users of the Handyperson Service between the 4th April 2011 -1st April 2012 were Female/ 26% were male.</p> <p>The withdrawal of the Handyperson would not have an impact on individuals as they have this</p>

								particular characteristic; however, due to the usage profiles of the Handyperson service provision the impact would be disproportionately felt by females.
Gender Reassignment	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	No potential impact from the strategic review or service re-commissioning has been identified in relation to this particular characteristic.
Disability (summary of detail on next page)	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	<p>20% of service users were identified as disabled people. A further 35% of individuals identified themselves as Frail elderly a number of these individuals are also likely to have a Physical and or Sensory Impairment.</p> <p>23% of the service users of the Handyperson service were aged over 85.</p> <p>To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done resulting in resulting in potential requirements for further care and support .</p>
Religion or belief	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative as the service may become inaccessible for previous service users, which would include individuals from culturally diverse community groups.
Sexual Orientation	P	N	N/a	H	M	L	nil	No potential impact from the strategic review or service re-commissioning has been identified in relation to this particular characteristic.
Pregnancy or maternity	P	N	N/a	H	M	L	nil	No potential impact from the strategic review or service re-commissioning has been identified in relation to this particular characteristic.

Marriage/ Civil Partnership	P	N	N/a	H	M	L	nil	No potential impact from the strategic review or service re-commissioning has been identified in relation to this particular characteristic.

Section 3: Officer Assessment - continued

Mobility Impairment	P		NA	H		L	nil	<p>To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own Handyperson arrangement which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done.</p>
Visual impairment	P		NA	H		L	nil	<p>To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done. The impact assessment specifically identified the fitting of light bulbs as a potential negative impact.</p>
Hearing impairment	P		NA	H		L	nil	<p>To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals</p>

								are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done.
Learning Disability	P	(N)	NA	H	(M)	L	nil	To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done. Resulting in potential requirements for further care and support.
Mental Health	P	(N)	NA	H	(M)	L	nil	To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done. Resulting in potential requirements for further care and support.
Long Term Limiting Illness	P	(N)	NA	H	(M)	L	nil	To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for

								previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done. Resulting in potential requirements for further care and support.
Multiple Impairments	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	To monitor: Any changes to service eligibility criteria or scope of support offered would have a potential negative impact as the previous Handyperson service will become inaccessible for previous/potential service users, some of whom will be disabled people. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done.
Other – Carers/ those with caring responsibility.	P	N	NA	H	M	L	nil	Due to the nature of the support provisions available interventions also have dual outcome often with a positive impact for carers and those with a caring responsibility. Removal of the Handyperson provision would generate a negative impact. There are no equivalent services available within the Borough of Darlington. Individuals are likely to have to source their own Handyperson which is likely to be at greater cost. It may deter individuals from having small preventative jobs done, putting greater pressures on carers.

Cumulative Impacts	
Change activities	Potential cumulative impacts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-procurement of housing related support and domiciliary care. • Procurement & Re-Commissioning of Advocacy Services • Tender for Carers Support Services for Young Carers. Parent Carers and Adults caring for Adults • Review of Vane House • Carers Emergency Support Service • Strategic Review of Extra Care • Welfare Reforms • Changes to Fair Access to Care • Financial Contributions Changes • Severe Disability Premium Disregard • Localised Social Fund • Provision of Wheelie Bins • Localised Council Tax support (requiring contributions from all individuals of working age)

Section 4: Engagement Decision

Is engagement with affected people with Protected Characteristics required, now or during the further development of the activity?	Yes
If YES, proceed to the next section.	

Engagement Methodology:

The engagement methodology builds on previously obtained client consultation information. To support the understanding and purpose of the impact assessment work, the consultation information included an example of an impact. The opportunity to receive the impact assessment information in an alternative format/s was highlighted; one request for large print was received during the consultation.

A number of avenues were explored to ascertain the most effective impact engagement route. However, given the fact that unlike other commissioned service provisions there was no single key locality where service users would convene, consultation with representative service user groups would not have provided an accurate portrayal of impacts for potential current service users.

From the quantitative information analysed in preparation for the impact assessment, it was apparent that for a number of individuals the provisions through this contract were their main or only forms of support. Individuals utilising the service were individuals with significant mobility difficulties, a number of whom are very elderly. Individuals using the service in the main were unlikely to be known to each other; therefore, it was felt that convening a focus group would not be the most effective method for engagement.

This impact assessment was also somewhat unique in the sense that the details of the users of the service in the main are unknown to the Council and therefore any

communications regarding the impact assessment had to be facilitated via the existing contractor.

In order to ensure a representative sample 43% of all the users of the handy person service in the 12 months prior to the impact assessment commencing were contacted. (The sample ensured a representative sample of usage profile and accommodation type and tenure).

Handyperson Service

Due to the large volume of individuals utilising the Handyperson service, for the purpose of the EIA, an equivalent number to the number of individuals utilising service in a quarter (400 individuals) were contacted via letter to ascertain what the impact upon them would be if:

- The Handyperson service was no longer available.
- If there was no longer an Office based for the HIA.

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

As there were comparatively lower numbers of recipients of DFG's and given the fact the primary impact communication route was via postal survey. To ensure a reasonable number of responses were received all individuals previously receiving a DFG were contacted over the last 12 months.

The engagement methodology was supplemented by, written requests to the local voluntary organisations representing the key potentially impacted protected characteristics groups of Older and Disabled People to invite a response on behalf of their members.

An online impact assessment questionnaire was available for completion via the current consultation section on the DBC website.

Occupational Therapists distributed copies of impact assessment forms with accompanying pre-paid envelopes to individuals that they visited during the consultation period.

Section 5 – Involvement and Engagement Planning

Has the assessment shown that the activity will treat any groups of people with Protected Characteristics differently from other people? Yes
<p>If yes, please state which groups and how</p> <p>As the service provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Facility Grants • Handyperson Provisions <p>Are primarily targeted at individuals with physical and sensory impairments any measures to remodel provisions directly impact individuals who are Older People or Disabled People.</p>
Will the differential treatment advance equality for people with Protected Characteristics? Yes/No
<p>If yes, please state which groups and how</p> <p>For eligible individuals for DFG a system of prioritisation may be used to ensure those individuals with the greatest needs receive a response service. (Delivery would need to be in line with the mitigation plan detailed on page 25)</p> <p>There would be no advancement of opportunity for users of the Handyperson Service.</p>

Will the differential treatment cause or increase disadvantage for people with Protected Characteristics? Yes/No

If yes, please state which groups and how

There will be no differential treatment for individuals as a result of a protected Characteristic/s.

In order to reduce any potential disadvantage a number of mitigation actions have been identified, the proposed mitigation actions will look to reduce the likelihood of any disadvantage for affected individuals.

Involvement and Engagement Plan

Which organisations, groups and individuals do you need to involve or engage and how?

Date of plan entry	Organisation, Group or Individuals	Date of event or activity	Type of activity – venue, channels, method and staffing
13.05.13	Impact Assessment Questionnaires sent to recipients of a Disabled Facilities Grant within the last 12 months.	Live Consultation 20.05.13 – 14.06.13	Impact Assessment Questionnaires with example impact information dispatched with prepaid envelopes. 153 Individuals
13.05.13	Impact Assessment Questionnaires sent to a large percentage sample of current users of a Handyperson service 43% (400 individuals)	Live Consultation 20.05.13 – 14.06.13	Impact Assessment Questionnaires with example impact information dispatched with prepaid envelopes.
13.05.13	Online consultation available via Survey Monkey on DBC Website.	Live Consultation 20.05.13 – 14.06.13	N/A
13.05.13	Occupational Therapist Team	Live Consultation 20.05.13 – 14.06.13	Occupational Therapists handed out copies of impact assessment questionnaires to individuals being visited during the consultation period.
13.05.13	Contact made with key representative organisations for affected protected characteristic groups.	Live Consultation 20.05.13 – 14.06.13	Written communication supplemented by telephone contact.

Section 6: Engagement Findings

Responses to the EIA were invited from both Age UK and DAD, as key representative organisations for Older People and Disabled People. Detailed below is a summary of the key impact areas raised.

Impact Area Consulted: What would the impact be for you (affect on you/consequence) if the Handyperson Service was no longer available?

Negative Impacts Identified

- Clients may not be able to afford to pay for repairs from local tradesmen.
- Clients have used this service and recognise it as a trusted service.
- Significant signposting is undertaken to the service.
- Many individuals have no family living by to provide this support.
- Small jobs would be left neglected, increasing the risk of falls, injury and reliance on Social Care, Commissioned Service and NHS. (Increased referrals to Adult Social Care)
- Older/Disabled people living alone are more likely to be targeted by doorstep sellers/bogus trades people whose work is not fit for purpose.
- Impact on other lower level advice and information services, with increased enquires about aids and adaptation and options for care and repair in around the home (this would be compounded by potentially very limited signposting options)

Impact Area Consulted: Town Centre Office Base.

What would the potential impact be for you (affect on you/consequence) if there was not a Town Centre Office for the Home Improvement Agency? Contact would be by other means, for example, home visits (where appropriate) telephone, fax or email.

- Potentially negligible.
- Older Clients may have difficulty hearing and understanding over the phone, many do not have internet access.

Impact Area Consulted:: Disabled Facilities Grant

What would the potential impact (positive or negative) be if there was a waiting list system, with priority given to urgent cases (e.g. to support a hospital discharge) for Disabled Facility Grant? (This may mean that some people experience a delay.)

Clarification points highlighted.

- *The legal time frame for the Council to provide a decision from the date of application, with payment of the grant no later than 12 months from the date of application. Any system of prioritisation would adhere to the time scales as detailed within **Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.***
- More detail of the criteria for prioritisation needed.

Negative Impacts Identified

- A delay could put clients at higher risk of falls and neglect.
- Delay might lead to increased admissions to hospital and additional pressure on Social Care and Housing for individuals in need of urgent alternations. The impacts from any closure of the Handyperson service could exacerbate this negative impact.

General Feedback

A number of current service users felt that the Handyperson service had not been advertised well enough. A number of the individuals who received a DFG were unaware of the Handyperson Service.

Handyperson

As part of the EIA it was felt important to ascertain the scope of the use of the Handyperson service. Individuals were asked for an overview as to the frequency and purpose for their use of the Handyperson Service.

This varied quite significantly, encompassing; individuals who had used the Handyperson only once. This primarily was due to the fact that they had received a carbon monoxide detector as a one off (this was in addition to the provisions of the Handyperson Contract Agreement).

From the 112 responses received primarily though postal consultation; however, an additional 12 telephone discussions were also held with service recipients (equating to an overall sample response rate of 28%) the following activities were identified.

Area of support received.	
Supply and fit hand banister rails	Putting tap washers on.
Supply and fit grab rails	Fixing fence.
Supply and fit grab rails in Bathroom	Fitting a letter box
Supply and fit stair rails.	Tidying electric wires
Key Safe	Replacing light bulbs
Repairs to Garden Gates.	Fitting a security light
Clean Patio	Fitting a draught excluder
Hanging – pictures mirrors	Smoke Alarm battery replacement
Replacing light bulbs.	Setting up washing line.
Maintaining guttering – cleaning guttering, replacing guttering clips and white fascia.	Replacing bathroom seal
Putting up Curtain rail	Toilet rail repaired
Boxing in pipes.	Window frames sealed.
Fixing gas monitor.	Tiling in the bathroom and at the front door.
Putting filler into windows	Replacing Radiator screw.
Putting in a outside tap	Swivel taps fitted.
Mending interior and exterior door handles.	Telephone cable tidying.
Fixing garden gates.	

It is important to note, that a number of respondents stated in the positive impact column, what they valued about the service not the positive impact if the service ceased. For the purpose of clarity, and to accurately convey the emphasis which the respondent was making, these impacts have been transferred into the negative impact column.

Appendix 1 Details all of the impact responses received and should be considered alongside the themed information below.

Due to the number of negative impacts received (for the purpose of clarity) these have been themed below, it is important to note that the majority of respondents were very elderly or disabled people. Only 3 individuals out of the 112 respondents for handyperson service felt that there would be no impact arising for them specifically arising from the ceasing of the

Handyperson service, this was; however, quantified in one instance as at this moment in time.

Impact Area Consulted: What would the impact be for you (affect on you/consequence) if the Handyperson Service was no longer available?

Overwhelmingly, the negative impacts identified pertained to two key areas detailed as follows:

- The fact that the current service provision is delivered by CRB (DBS) checked individuals, provides individuals with a sense of confidence and reassurance. Backed by the fact there are Quality Assurance measures in place through the checks by the Local Authority.
“My mother is registered disabled and could not change electric bulbs or anything else that needed. Standing on ladders. The Handyperson is someone you can trust, especially being elderly and not a cowboy that one hears about”.
- The costing structures of the current service provision means that individuals on certain benefits pay for the material costs only, individuals not in receipt of a qualifying benefit pay a flat rate labour charge of £10. Consequently, there is no equivalent alternative provision.

Summary of impacts

- Poor previous experience in obtaining tradespeople for small jobs.
- No equivalent service with the same costing structures.
- Anxiety regarding the sourcing of reputable and reliable tradespeople.
- No potential for alternative high cost care/support arrangements required.
- Difficulty sourcing alternative arrangements.
- Only support service utilised.
- Scope of service provided- not provided anywhere else.
- Potential waiting time for alternative arrangements
- Potential risk that jobs would go undone, resulting in hazards in the home.
- Negative impact on Quality of Life.
- Frequency of use, part of a persons routine (always use it for annual jobs).

Poor previous experience in obtaining tradespeople for small jobs.

- No one likes small jobs, tradespeople have been approached before and were not interested.
- Previously low level maintenance has had to go undone as no one wanted it as they considered it to be unprofitable.
- Small jobs are overpriced.
- There were a number of people who have used the Handyperson service to fit lightbulbs, the individuals have stated that they would have no one else who could do this for them.
- We would have to employ a company. No one wants small jobs like we get done and they take advantage (i.e. charge the earth)
- I have found it very difficult finding a reliable tradesperson to do these types of jobs. They either don't turn up, or charge ridiculous prices. I trust the Handyperson Service implicitly, and they always do a good job. My jobs would go undone, causing me stress and possible further problems, and deterioration of my surroundings / living conditions
- No person to change light bulbs - little jobs I can't manage
- Being very elderly my wife and myself would not find it easy to get someone reliable to carry out small jobs such as the one that was done

- Ease of contact through Three Rivers, peace of mind knowing employees are registered CRB are Health and Safety trained, small jobs undertaken when profit making companies would not consider, reliable service for elderly and disabled.
- The Handyperson Service is very good because it is either free or low cost for jobs we still cannot manage to do ourselves. Also, the workmen are what they say they are, and can be trusted in our home.
- The Handyman Service is a very positive service for older people who are not as dexterous with their hands, as in former years. This service is very good for those small jobs, which do not warrant calling in a professional firm.

No equivalent service with the same costing structures.

- Don't have to fully fund the repair, pay part cost only (this is for materials for individuals in receipt of certain benefits).
- I would not be able to afford anyone else.
- Would be detrimental to my health given my multiple disabilities. I may not be able to afford any further repairs to my accommodation
- My Mother would feel at a loss as to who she could trust to provide a good service. Also, she would have to fund the repair fully, instead of parts only cost.
- I would not be able to pay a tradesman's charges. The handyperson who have called on me have been kind and polite, advantage for me the service is free
- I would be absolutely gutted, it would be massive for me. I couldn't afford to for a professional, it may seem like a little service, but it is massive to me and people who are vulnerable and on benefits.

Anxiety regarding the sourcing of reputable and reliable tradespeople (potential risk that jobs would go undone)

- Would have to source own people, don't know where to start and would be concerned that non vetted individuals were entering the property. Linked to this was a number of people stating that their jobs would go undone as they would be too frightened to source their own tradespeople.
- My property would deteriorate without repairs.
- Previous experience of rouge traders (reference being to unreliable poor quality, and high cost work)
- If you do not know someone you are always worried whether they are qualified.
- If they say they are coming on a certain time or date then that is when they arrive, if they are stuck at a job or in traffic they ring to let you know.
- This would cause stress for vulnerable people but medically and financially.
- Would no longer have peace of mind knowing there is someone to call on for small household jobs/repairs at an affordable price.

Potential for alternative high cost care/support arrangements required.

- I don't think I would be able to continue living at home.
- My patio doesn't get pressure washed and I fall, this would cost services more.
- There will be long term cost implications, if people are injured they will need more costly interventions as a result of a comparatively little service ending.
- After 6 days in a nursing home, after arrangements and work completed. I was home. Without a stair rail installed quickly my stay would have been much longer

Difficulty sourcing alternative arrangements

- For someone with any disability it is a challenge to get things done in the house. If the Handyperson service not available, then it would mean the excellent service,

support, would be missed. Wouldn't know how to arrange a tradesperson if I needed it.

- A dramatic loss of practical help would be a huge negative issue, we older folk need skilled people and agencies we can trust.

Only form of support service.

- This is the only service I use.
- I have no one else who could provide this support.
- Would need to find alternative help as housebound, and too old to climb ladders etc..
- Would no longer be able to maintain home, so house would be devalued.
- I would be unable to do the jobs the Handyman has done. Due to my husbands disability we would have been unable to do these jobs ourselves. All jobs were of great help given my husbands chance to go upstairs with help, also to sleep in a bed
- As I am living on my own am 86 years old, and have no family so depend on Care and Repair.

Scope of service provided

- The staff spend time explaining things to you
- Staff have picked up other hazards within the home other than the job you called them out for.

Potential waiting time for alternative arrangements

- I got in touch with Social Care and was told I would have a while to wait, they told me to ring the Handyman, and got prompt attention.
- Not only would it have been beyond my physical or financial means to otherwise have had the jobs done, the expediency and friendly manner in which my requests were treated was exemplary. I simply would have had to live without the comforts and benefits of the work being done.

Jobs would remain undone.

- Jobs that needed doing for my safety and to make my home nice for myself which is very important to me, just would not get done.
- Find it very difficult to organise and have problems fixed, e.g. need good lighting as have very poor eye sight. Things would remain broken
- Two man jobs may not be delivered.

Negative impact on Quality of Life.

- I was not getting sleep because I had no curtains up, by getting my curtains up (via the Handyperson service) it improved my life, I can sleep well.
- My depression, I suffer from, would be worse if work needed to make a house a home were not managed by this wonderful agency.
- This service is outstanding and also very useful to a large section of the population, it is safe to recommend it to very vulnerable older and also infirm, it would be a tremendous loss to the town. So many times it has been a stress saver to me.
- They've been very helpful and much appreciated. If its no longer available then it would be devastating

Frequency of use (always use it for annual jobs)

- I am 82 live alone, have medical disabilities. I live in a bungalow. I have my jobs done on an annual basis and have had this arrangement in place for a number of years. When the handyman has come he has identified a number of other items in the property which needed doing for my safety. If he hadn't come I wouldn't have known.

Having the handy person is my independence without it I would have to rely on my family. My family are happy with me using the Handy person as they are CRB checked. The work of the Handy person helps me to feel safe and secure in my home. I appreciate it and value it very much. I am happy with it.

Both users of the Handy person Service and Recipients of a DFG were requested to identify any impacts pertaining to:

Potential Impact Area Raised: Town Centre Office Base.

What would the potential impact be for you (affect on you/consequence) if there was not a Town Centre Office for the Home Improvement Agency? Contact would be by other means, for example, home visits (where appropriate) telephone, fax or email.

It is important to note that the majority of respondents have not utilised the office base in person. Where a number of impacts were identified these related to individual being unable to use the phone, no access to electronic forms of communication or unable to visit the office due to disability or illness. Respondents in the main felt that as long as there was provision for home visits that would mitigate the arising impacts. A number of respondents had overlooked that the fact that the opportunity for home visits would still remain.

A respondent identified the positive impact that not having a town centre office would have on overhead reduction.

There was a concern that if the office was elsewhere that people it may lose its local focus.

However, it is felt that this could be mitigated further through discussion with key representative organisations with town centre office bases, to explore the opportunity for individuals presenting to have onward referrals made.

Potential Impact Area Raised: Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

What would the potential impact (positive or negative) be if there was a waiting list system, with priority given to urgent cases (e.g. to support a hospital discharge) for Disabled Facility Grant? (This may mean that some people experience a delay.)

There was a 27% response rate to the DFG impact consultation.

The majority of individuals felt that giving priority for urgent cases was fair. However, there were a number of concerns raised as follows, which if not managed could become negative impacts:

- If you weren't urgent when would you become a priority?
- There will always be hospital discharges.
- People may have been struggling at home for long time before making contact with the service. People may be in pain and discomfort whilst they wait.
- Everyone could be urgent, it is only urgent for the person.
- You may have a progressive illness and have to wait a long time, how would people know how you were?
- May have to cope longer with insufficient equipment.
- There was particular concern from individuals whose adaptations related to access to toilet and washing facilities. (Relating to maintaining dignity).

In response to this any system of prioritisation would occur following a full Occupational Therapy assessment which would take account of presenting needs and risks.

Consideration will be given to any interim measures which could be implemented while an individual was on the waiting list.

Individuals would be advised to keep in touch and advise if their circumstances change, in addition to this a review of the waiting list will be introduced by Occupational Therapists.

Section 6: Engagement Findings – Continued

a) How will the proposal help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?
<p>The Proposal for the Handyperson Service related to potential service withdrawal; therefore, this specific proposal will not eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.</p> <p>The prioritisation system for the DFG would (subject to the implementation of the mitigation actions) to provide timely intervention to individuals with the greatest need to assist disabled individuals to live as independently as possible.</p>
b) How will the proposal help to advance equality of opportunity?
<p>The Proposal for the Handyperson Service related to potential service withdrawal</p> <p>The prioritisation system for the DFG would (subject to the implementation of the mitigation actions) provide a timely intervention to individuals with the greatest need to assist disabled individuals to live as independently as possible.</p>
c) How will the proposal help to foster good relations?
<p>The fostering of good relations was not within the scope of this impact assessment.</p>

During the engagement process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.
<p>This question was asked of all individuals engaged with as part of the impact assessment work</p> <p>For the Handyperson Service, the overriding response was not to cease the service.</p> <p>Outside of not ceasing the provision, the following opportunities for mitigating the negative impacts were identified by current service users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An approved contractor list held by the Council.• Increased Charging structures to sustain the service.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My friends and I would rather Pay more for this trusted service than loose it• Perhaps just a small charge for jobs might outweigh some of the costs• If ever I had to pay it wouldn't be a problem because they are worth it to me. <p>In addition, Officers felt there would be an opportunity to explore highlighting the service demands and opportunities for the service to be delivered as part of a self sustaining model.</p> <p>No mitigation options were identified by DFG individuals; however, the project group felt that a system of review of the waiting list would need to be in place by the OT to ensure that they were aware of any change in circumstances for individuals on the list.</p> <p>Through the impact assessment process mitigation option review meetings were held with representatives of the project group.</p>

Section 7 - Sign-off when assessment is completed

Officer Completing the Form:		
Signed	Name:	
	Date:	
	Job Title:	
Assistant Director:		
Signed	Name:	
	Date:	
	Service:	

Section 8 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

What does the review of the information show?	
a)	No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics - continue with the activity and monitor progress on implementation
b)	Negative impact identified – recommend continuing with the activity; clearly specify the people affected and the impacts, and providing reasons and supporting evidence for the decision to continue
c)	Negative impact identified - adjust the activity in light of the identified impact to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact
d)	Negative impact identified - stop activity and provide an explanation why

Section 9 – Action Plan and Performance Management

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
<p>The current service provision is delivered by CRB (DBS) checked individuals which provides individuals with a sense of confidence and reassurance. Backed by the fact there are Quality Assurance measures in place through the checks by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Need know that you can trust the workers and that they can book jobs in. Need a maintenance service that is run by the council which can check that trades people are good workers and reliable.</p> <p>There is no equivalent alternative provision.</p> <p>Only form of support service.</p> <p>Scope of service provided- not covered anywhere else.</p> <p>Potential waiting time for alternative arrangements.</p> <p>Jobs would remain undone.</p> <p>Impact on Quality of Life.</p> <p>Frequency of use (always use it for annual jobs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the opportunity for a self sustaining service model (although it must be acknowledged that costing structures are unlikely to remain the same and it would not be a direct service commission from the Council) • DBC to explore the potential for the development of an approved contractor list- acting as an introductory service only. • Raise with the market the somewhat untapped opportunities for larger local Handyperson Service provision. This was apparent from the number of calls from potentially eligible individuals who were not aware of the service and the number of individuals who stated that they have only used it recently as prior to this they were unaware of it. • Signposting to national schemes such as check a trade.com 	<p>Officers Assigned from project lead.</p>	<p>TBC in line with remodelling timescales.</p>

Poor previous experience in obtaining tradespeople for small jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise with representative organisations and the good neighbour strategic group surrounding the emerging needs, impacts and potential gap in provision. 	Officers Assigned from project lead.	TBC in line with remodelling timescales.
Concern if there was no a local office regarding opportunities for face to face contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would still be local offices held by the representative organisations for the main protected characteristics groups and DBC Adult Social Care who could make onward referrals. (However, this would place a further pressure on existing information and advice services) • The provision for home visits would remain. 		
For DFG- Individuals may not become priority or have to wait.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The list would be reviewed at regular intervals by Occupational Therapists and delivered in line with specified timeframe frames. 		

Performance Management	
Date of the next review of the EIA	The EIA is embedded within the project group meetings and will be reviewed, reflected upon and refined as the service remodelling develops.
How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?	The EIA Action Plan will be reviewed at 4 weekly intervals to check progress.
Who will carry out this review?	Carried out by the EIA Project Group.

