

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: DEVELOPMENT OF A HANDYPERSON SERVICE IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE
From:		
Date: 30 OCTOBER 2003	Ref: DM/MMcE	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to develop the provision of practical assistance for older people.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Sutherland Report on long term care for older people (2000) recommended that each area should have a strategy to address lower priority services such as small repairs.
- 2.2. Local authorities were awarded additional funding over the last three years to provide a range of improved and new services for older people, the use of which has been reported to Committee at various times, most recently in August 2003. The report of the Scottish Executive Joint Future Unit (2001) made clear that they expected some of these monies to be used for this purpose.

3. CURRENT PROVISION

- 3.1. At present, in North Lanarkshire, there are two organisations with a specific but quite different focus in providing practical assistance for older people. They are Age Concern Scotland's Handyman Service and the Care & Repair Small Repairs Service managed by Clyde Valley Housing Association.
- 3.2. The Small Repairs Service provided by Care & Repair comprises a qualified joiner with transport and tools who undertakes various small repairs for frail or disabled owner occupiers or private tenants. This is jointly funded on a partnership basis by North Lanarkshire Council, Communities Scotland and NHS Lanarkshire. Progress is reported regularly to Committee.
- 3.3. Age Concern Scotland operate a Handyman Service in certain localities in Motherwell, Bellshill and Wishaw, funded through Social Inclusion Partnership and Community Fund monies. It is run by a Project Co-ordinator, who recruits, trains and supports volunteers to complete household tasks outwith the range of work ordinarily undertaken by home care staff, (wiring plugs, changing lightbulbs, moving furniture before new floor coverings are laid etc). The remit of the volunteers also incorporates a befriending element should this be required.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Initial plans to integrate the two services have not been taken forward because Care and Repair is not a universal service across all types of tenure. Expansion of the existing Small Repairs scheme will therefore be considered in that context at a later date. This report proposes that Age Concern Scotland's Handyperson Service is expanded to cover the whole of North Lanarkshire.
- 4.2 The Handyperson Service in North Lanarkshire is one of four operated by Age Concern in Scotland which aim to help older people maintain a better quality of life in their own homes. The service is valued by both service users and the volunteers who provide the service, as it meets the users needs and gives the volunteers satisfaction from serving community. Over 500 older people were given assistance in the last year.
- 4.3 Close links have been developed with a wide range of agencies, notably North Lanarkshire Council; Strathclyde Police; Strathclyde Fire Service; Safer Homes Project; Care & Repair; and Maintenance and Property Care, all of which regularly refer older people to the service. The Handyperson Service has the ability and potential to contribute significantly to achieving key objectives of a wide range of agencies including the Council, Housing Associations, Health, Police and Fire Services.

5. FINANCIAL/OTHER COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is estimated that the cost of expanding the scheme to cover the whole of North Lanarkshire is £67,657 (full year effect). Social Work contribution to funding is contained within allocations for community care in 2003/04.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Committee is requested to:

- (i) approve the proposal to extend the Age Concern Scotland Handyperson Service; and.
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.



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Director of Social Work
30 September 2003

For further information on this report please contact Marie McEwan, Senior Development Officer, Social Work Department TEL: (01698 332657)