



Celebrates 10 years

2001 - 2011

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HANDYPERSON
SUPPORT FOR CHOICE





This year (2011) we celebrated our 10th birthday.

In 2001 Trafford Council invited Manchester Care & Repair to provide a Home Improvement Agency for the Borough. Since then we have gone on increasing our range of services and meeting the needs of more and more people across the borough, and in every ward.

A major benefit of having a Home Improvement Agency is that vulnerable people can find a range of specialist housing support services under one roof. The criteria for using our services differ between each service but generally speaking we offer advice, support and practical help to older and vulnerable people living in Trafford. Some services are only for owner-occupiers and private tenants but others are for cross-tenure tenants too. If we are unable to offer help ourselves we can usually refer on to someone who can.

Staff turnover has been minimal so regular customers are familiar with our team. The team is hard working and customer-friendly and they will always try to go the extra mile.

We have had 10 very successful years helping older Trafford residents maintain their independence. We are well-established in the Borough and have become increasingly recognised for our high standard of workmanship and our willingness to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies.

Some key achievements in the last few years:

- Project managing £40,000 of building work for one client (our largest job).
- Being the first HIA to undertake the new Foundations Quality Mark and passing with flying colours
- Accredited with Trust Mark status for handyperson services
- Piloted the use of volunteer admin and handypersons
- Consolidating our position providing support with Disabled Facilities Grants
- Undertaking all Trafford Council's minor adaptations from April 2011.

In common with similar organisations, our immediate challenge is coping with the impact of Local Authority funding cuts. It is to be hoped that, despite budgetary pressures, the Council will recognise the real contribution we make to the health and wellbeing of thousands of older and vulnerable people and continue to support our work.

Herbie Yon
Service Director

Your thoughtfulness means more than words could ever say. Once again to the rescue! With all our thanks

I always find the help provided by Care & Repair very satisfactory And I greatly appreciate all the work which has been carried out.

Your young man was so different to a lot of other helpers – well-mannered and efficient.

The service I received was excellent and my caseworker was excellent in her manner and professionalism – she is a credit to your team

A Message from our Chief Executive



Manchester Care & Repair Ltd is a local charity that delivers services known as “Home improvement agency” or “HIA” services. Most services are supported by local councils, and we have historically worked to meet the objectives of greater health and independence for older people, reducing fear of crime and the impact of bogus callers and rogue traders, maintaining the private sector housing stock, increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty, and supporting older and disabled people to access benefits and services and make their voice heard.

We have worked in Manchester for 20 years and in Trafford for 10 years. We started to manage the Generation Project in 2002. In October 2011, we have been selected to start delivering Care & Repair in Wigan Borough.

As an employer of local people we are pleased to hold the accreditation “Investor in People” (IIP) and for each service to hold the Foundations Quality Mark for HIAs with all awards at the of higher levels A & B (C is pass).

Manchester Care & Repair Ltd. (MC&R) is run by a Board of local people. In our aim to continue to meet older and disabled people’s needs at a time of local government cutbacks, we are in a process of change. We will deliver some charged-for services, will make use of volunteers and we will fund-raise from other organisations and individuals. We will involve our service users in promoting services and take their views into account.

The following report gives a flavour of our work in Trafford over the last 10 years, and the energy and commitment of our staff in meeting older and disabled people’s needs. You can find out more information on all our services by visiting our web site at www.careandrepair-manchester.org.uk or by contacting us using the details on the front page. If you have any comments, do contact me.

Maggie Walker
Chief Executive

Small Works - Handyman Team



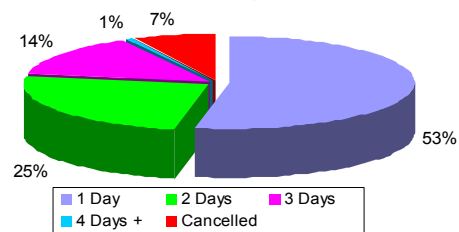
We operate a range of handyman services some of which started in response to urgent appeals from the Council for help in delivering minor adaptations. Other services such as HandyHelp were initially supported with charitable funding to help us meet the needs of older people who just wanted 'a little bit of help' stopping small disrepair becoming a major problem. On the other hand our Safe as Houses project funded by central government, to make people's homes more secure, was only funded for a few months.

Minor Adaptations

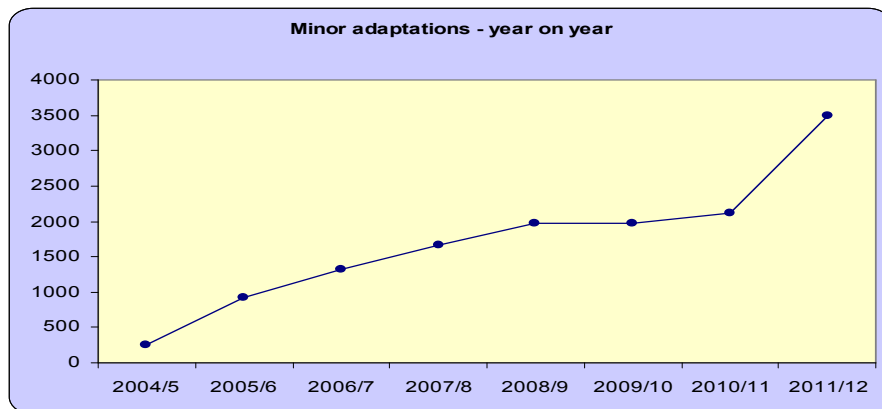
Our work with minor adaptations has increased year on year. In 2004 Trafford Council asked Care & Repair to fit smaller items such as grab rails, extra stair rails and key safes then, during the following year we increased our portfolio by adding an additional project fitting furniture raisers. These services make a real difference in the lives of Trafford residents: for some people it means being able to get out of hospital as soon as they are ready, whilst for others the timely provision of minor adaptations makes it possible for them to remain safely at home rather than go into care.

Up until March this year Care & Repair were mainly sent urgent minor adaptations so consequently we were working to very tight timeframes. We are extremely proud of our record for delivering well within the stipulated timeframes, an achievement which made a significant contribution to Trafford Council's quality targets.

Time taken to fit minor adaptations 2009/11



Our ability to get things done, speedily and with no loss of quality, has not gone unnoticed by our customers, occupational therapists and Trafford Council alike. With just 2 weeks notice Trafford Council asked Care & Repair to undertake the processing, and the delivery, of all Trafford Council's minor adaptations from April 2011. This represents a significant increase on what we had previously delivered. We use external contractors to carry out some of the extra work such as temporary wooden ramps.



Trusted Assessor

Our handypersons have been trained as trusted assessors. If Trafford Council wanted to outsource low level assessments in order to free up occupational therapists to deal with people with higher level needs, then we are already prepared to take on that role. Whilst that hasn't happened yet, and there is no indication that it will, some occupational therapists have recognised our expertise in this field and have requested joint assessment visits where they have been unsure what practical solutions to order.



Having trusted assessors on our team means that customers who want to pay for minor adaptations themselves rather than wait for an occupational therapist assessment, can have confidence in our staff's ability to take full account of their needs. Some clients may want to have more adaptations than the council will provide which we can supply and fit. Similarly our team can supply and fit equipment for people who are given personalised budgets – i.e. they have received funding from Social Services for purchasing their own minor adaptations.

HandyHelp

Our HandyHelp service is a subsidised handyperson service carrying out minor repairs around the house. This service was initially funded by a succession of charitable trusts but for a number of years it has been partially funded by Supporting People supplemented with special funding from CLG (Department of Communities and Local Government).

HandyHelp has been available to all Trafford residents aged 60 and over but as a result of deep funding cuts we might be forced to re-examine what we can now offer. If the criteria needs to change we will make every effort to ensure that the less well off are least affected. Over the years the range of jobs carried out under HandyHelp has grown but now serious consideration must be given to restricting the types of work that can be available at the subsidised rate.

We are committed to meeting the needs of older, disabled and vulnerable people in Trafford and will be introducing other pricing structures that will deliver the same high standard of customer care and workmanship but at a more sustainable price.

Suddenly the problem which we found so worrying and impossible to deal with was fixed and your handyman was on his way leaving us happy.

I am sorry I didn't hear about you sooner. It's so nice to have someone do a job for me and not 'rip me off'. I will certainly use you again.

Trustmark

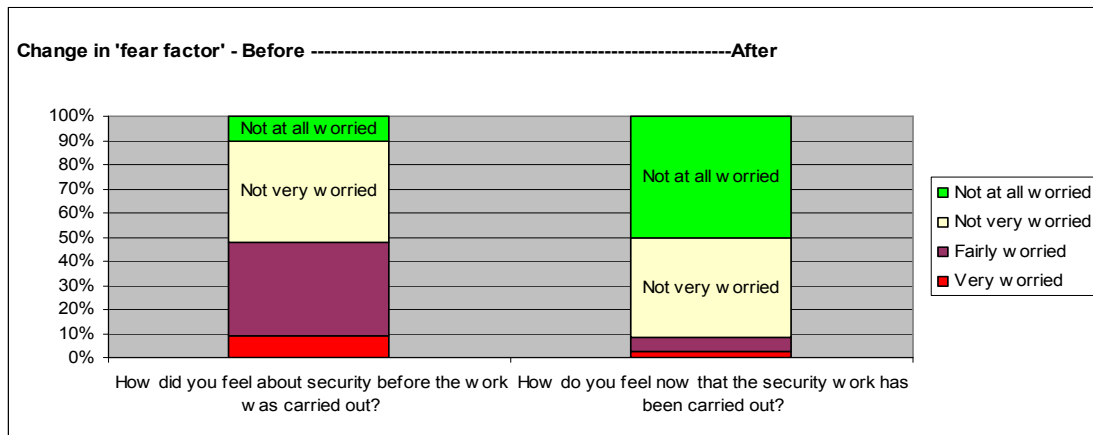


Our handyperson service has been externally validated and accredited with Trustmark status. We believe this will provide additional assurance to new customers who may be looking for a reputable handyperson service.

Providing high quality services is very important to us and we have lots of feedback from customers who are thoroughly satisfied with our services and 99% say they would use our services again. They also say that they would recommend us to others.

Example of one-off handyperson projects

Trafford Care & Repair successfully applied for central government funds to carry out free security audits and to fit free locks, bolts, chains, spy holes and security lights. We did this over a 6-month period. On the question of outcomes, we decided to measure change in the 'fear factor'. Many older people have a fear of being burgled and stay at home rather than go out. We compared how they were feeling before we carried out the work and after the work was done.



Advocacy and Support with Larger Repairs

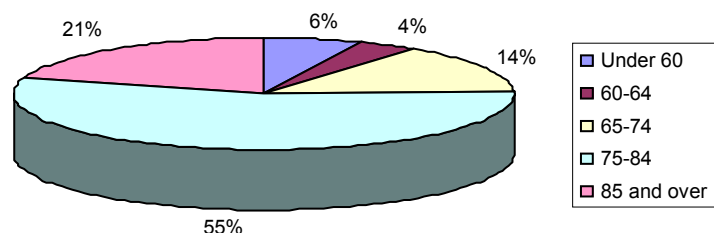


This Service is for owner-occupiers and private tenants. Many people find it difficult to organise their own repairs and this is even more stressful for people who are very elderly or otherwise vulnerable. Our caseworkers and technical officers visit people at home to discuss their needs and available options. (In 2010/11 our two caseworkers were managing 271 case files between them)

Studies have shown that disrepair can have a negative effect on people's health and wellbeing. The more obvious health connections are electrical and gas safety but defective or inefficient heating, draughty windows and doors, leaking roofs and damp also have an impact on people particularly if they are frail or already suffering with bronchial and respiratory conditions.

We offer advice and support for all types of property repairs and improvements. Advice is free but we can offer technical support at a modest price. Customers decide what level of support is required – this could include work schedules and drawings, sourcing quotations, liaising with contractors, and project-management.

As the pie chart demonstrates our client group (taken across all our services) are mostly elderly and generally in need of maximum support.



Funding home repairs

Since we started 10 years ago we have worked in partnership with Trafford Council supporting owner-occupiers to access Council repair grants. We have provided assistance completing the application forms, writing schedules, sourcing quotations and supervising the project to ensure that the work is completed to the customer's satisfaction. We offer support



and advice with all types of disrepair including, kitchens, roofing, doors and windows, heating, damp and drainage.

The majority of work supervised by Care & Repair has been grant-aided but Trafford's Home Owner Grants have now all but disappeared, a casualty of the recent and current financial crisis. Unless they can raise the finances themselves, many older and vulnerable owner-occupiers will not be able to repair their homes.



Our caseworkers continue to make every effort to raise funds from charitable sources for individual clients whose circumstances meet the specific criteria attached to each Trust. This is time-consuming: grants tend to be small and more often than not a piece of work is funded by several different sources.



I now have a new roof. I cannot emphasise enough how relieved I feel because for the past couple of years this has been a constant worry to me particularly during stormy weather when I would sometimes lie awake at night half expecting the roof and the bay window to collapse ... the speed and efficiency with which everything was sorted out for me has been truly amazing.

Electrical Safety Council

Trafford Care & Repair successfully applied for a small grant to assist qualifying clients upgrade unsafe electrical systems.

Case Study

We asked an electrician to carry out a safety check for Mr & Mrs B. He found that when the gas meter had been fitted the earth bonding lead was left unconnected and coiled behind the meter. Mr B said he thought the water supply came through the cellar, which the electrician eventually found by moving the furniture. In stepping into the cellar he found a foot of water.

Case Study

Mrs M is suffering from cancer. She used a builder to raise and renew her garage roof but he did not inform her about the legal requirements. Planning Department got to know and sent her a letter causing her much distress. Mrs M turned to us for assistance and our technical team prepared retrospective applications.

Major Adaptations for people with disabilities

The types of adaptations which we have undertaken include stairlifts, wet rooms, level access showers, installing downstairs toileting facilities, widening doors, ramps and building extensions.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

A Disabled Facilities grant is a local council grant which provides help towards the cost of adapting the homes of disabled people, to enable them to continue living there. A grant is paid when the council considers that the changes are necessary for the disabled person's needs and that the work is reasonable and practical.

Usually an occupational therapist will have assessed the client's needs and started the referral process by recommending the type of adaptation(s) needed. Some of these referrals are sent to Care & Repair by Adaptations department at the Town Hall.



Our role varies according to the type of adaptation but could include

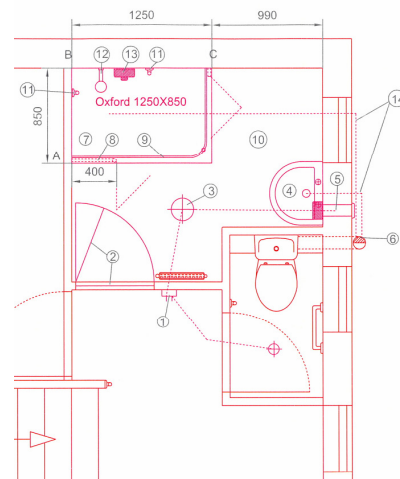
- helping clients complete the application forms
- checking property entitlement / or landlord's permission
- checking supporting financial documents for means testing
- assessing viability of proposed adaptation
- producing detailed specifications and drawings
- dealing with building control issues
- inviting contractors to tender for the work
- submitting all relevant documentation to Town Hall for grant approval
- ensuring that the adaptation work has been carried out to a high standard

Private funded work

We can offer support and technical help to people wishing to fund the work themselves. Disabled Facilities Grants are means tested (with the exception of families of disabled children under 19) so some people will not qualify for a grant or find that they would be required to make a high contribution towards the cost of the adaptation. Others would rather pay for the work themselves than wait a long time for an assessment by an occupational therapist.

Case Study

Mrs C's family wanted to give her something special for her 80th birthday. They asked our technical team to design and project-manage a bedroom extension with shower room. Mrs C is delighted - this will enable her to stay comfortably in her own home without having to struggle upstairs



Benefit Entitlement checks

We currently offer free benefit entitlement checks. We find that some people who might otherwise be very reluctant to claim benefits will do so in the context of seeking funding for their home repairs or when we are completing their Disabled Facilities Grant application. This is all done in the privacy of their own home. Our customers are not obliged to tell us whether their benefits application has been successful or the amount they have been awarded. But we know that in 2010/11 we successfully helped older Trafford residents to legitimately claim at least £132,295 in Welfare Benefits – the likelihood is that these deserving people would have ‘fallen through the net’.

Contractor List

As the customer’s agent, we arrange quotations and, if the work goes ahead we will liaise with contractors. Whilst customers may use any contractor of their choice, we have a list of ‘approved’ contractors whose quality we have assessed and whose insurances and trade credentials are up-to-date.

We receive around 700 enquiries per year from customers who want to organise their own repair work but who are afraid of falling victim to unscrupulous traders. We provide details of contractors from our list but customers make their own arrangements.

From a customer to one of our contractors

In this world full of cowboys, you are our saints. Thank you for all you have done for my mother and help with our house. Your hard work and compassion was very touching. Thank you again.

Bogus Callers

Over the years Trading Standards have asked us to inspect the work of ‘cowboy’ traders, with results which range from reassurance that the work is satisfactory to contractors being successfully prosecuted.

Trading Standards: I would really like to thank your technical officer for coming out on the roofing job in Hale this week –he was absolutely brilliant and put the couple’s mind at ease.

Trafford Care & Repair Staff

Audrey Foley	Admin Officer, Handyperson Services
Yvonne Lengden	Admin Officer, Advocacy and Support
Bud Marsden	Admin Assistant
Sonia Parr	Admin Assistant
Caroline Brown	Caseworker
Sophia Mohammed	Caseworker
Ray Flynn	Technical Officer
Fred Kelly	Technical Officer
Ian Angus	Senior Handyperson
Vinny Fahey	Handyperson
Aaron Turner	Handyperson
David Adams	Handyperson
Herbie Yon	Service Director

Manchester Care & Repair Ltd.

Company Financial and Performance Information:

MC&R Ltd's turnover has been of the order of £2m for each of the last 3 years, and each year more people have been reached by our services. We have had 50-55 full-time equivalent staff each year. There is a list of all staff on our website, and you can contact us if you would like to view our accounts. The company was able to make a small contribution to reserves each year to maintain a target level of reserves.

	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11
Clients	13,000	14,500	15,450
Change previous year	+20%	+12%	+7%
Staff – avg. fte	52	55	54
Turnover	£1,948,341	£2,182,385	£2,126,364
Incr/Decr previous year	+12.2%	+12%	-3%

Board members

There are currently 10 Board members, all individual volunteers with relevant experience. Board members length of service ranges from 14 years to 8 months.

Funder Acknowledgements

The main funders of the services have been:

- Manchester City Council – Private Sector Housing and Adults Directorate
- Trafford Council – Housing and Social Services
- BIG Lottery Fund (Generation Project)
- Home Office
- GM Fire and Rescue Service

We thank them and the many others who have supported services or individual clients.

Manchester Care & Repair Ltd's plan for the next 3 years is based on the following Mission, Aims and Values:

Mission:

To be a leader in delivering and developing repair, support and advocacy services to help older, disabled and vulnerable people to continue living independently in their own home.

Values:

- listen and give respect
- support client choice
- be fair and open
- be professional
- be responsive and innovative and
- adopt a partnership approach

Medium-term Strategic Objectives

- A. To provide caring, quality and accessible services that have evidence of value and cost-effectiveness in improving the quality of life of our clients
- B. To use a range of resources and partnerships to support service delivery including drawing on our own reserves
- C. To extend our services to more areas in the North-West of England

If you would like any further information about our organisation or the services it provides, please visit the web-site www.careandrepair-manchester.org.uk or contact us at:

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