



Foundations

DFG Case Study #5

White Rose HIA

Scarborough and Ryedale

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About Foundations

Foundations is the National Body for Home Improvement Agencies and Handyperson Services in England as appointed by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Foundations' remit is to:



Engage with providers and commissioners to monitor the sector and enhance the quality and reach of home improvement agency services



Arrange events and training



Develop tools and resources



News and publicity

For more information visit: www.foundations.org.uk

About Home Improvement Agencies

Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), sometimes known as Care & Repair or Staying Put schemes, help vulnerable people maintain independence in their own homes. Their services include:

- visiting clients at home or providing detailed telephone advice;
- setting out housing options to help clients decide what type of housing is best suited to their changing needs;
- checking entitlement to any financial help, including grants and charitable funding;
- project management, drawing up plans, getting estimates and liaising with others involved in any building work/adaptations needed, such as council grants officers and occupational therapists;
- provision of handyperson services, to carry out small jobs around the home, help with gardening, or coming home from hospital; and
- helping to make homes more energy-efficient.

A searchable directory of accredited HIAs and handyperson services is available at: www.findmyhia.org.uk



About Scarborough Borough and Ryedale District

The Borough of Scarborough is situated in North Yorkshire. In addition to the town of Scarborough, it covers a large stretch of the coast of Yorkshire, including Whitby and Filey. The population of the Borough circa 108,006 and the area covered is 340/sq mi.

Ryedale, is the neighboring authority, settlements include Helmsley, Kirkbymoorside, Malton, Norton-on-Derwent, and Pickering. The Council covers an area of 582/sq mi, yet its population circa 52,655

Areas of both Councils lie within the North York Moors National Park. The upper tier authority is North Yorkshire County Council.

Health & Disability

Both areas have higher than average levels of households in fuel poverty. There is a growing older demographic, with particular issues in rural areas with older housing stock which are less energy efficient.

The population estimates continue to show an ageing population in North Yorkshire and both Councils areas are popular retirement areas. In 2011, the population aged 60+ accounted for 28% of the population in North Yorkshire compared to 22.5% in England.

Over half of the population in Scarborough (52.6%) are aged over 45 compared to 41.7% in England. These figures raises further concerns about the outward migration of young people from the Borough, and how best to meet specialist needs in terms of suitable care, health and nursing facilities, as well as housing which is capable of being adapted to suit changing life circumstances.



How it works

The White Rose Home Improvement Agency is a partnership between Scarborough Borough and Ryedale district Councils. Previously, both Councils operated smaller individual in-house agencies, but in 2012 it was felt that a better and more sustainable service could be achieved if a partnership was formed. The WRHIA now has 14 staff based at the Town Hall in Scarborough, and offers a wider range of services. Its priority groups are older and disabled people.

The main services include:

- Major adaptations
- Minor adaptations
- Handypersons services
- Well being service, providing general housing information and advice and signposting to other key services
- Choices4Energy Services, an energy efficiency advice service
- Winter Health Campaigns

Influence and direction with the Council areas

As an in-house Agency, the WRHIA is perfectly placed to help shape the key decisions and policies in relation to their client group. The Agency has been able to:

- Develop the Councils' Adaptations policy
- Work with colleagues in social care and health to integrate services, particularly in terms of web based referrals
- Develop the Councils' services in relation to energy efficiency
- Worked with the County Council to help shape their Winter Health Strategy



Efficient ways of working

The Agency has been at the forefront of introducing efficient ways of working with internal and external partners and has been the flagship for showing what can be done within the Council and to other local authorities.

In such a rural area it is key to make the most of officer visiting time. All visiting staff utilise mobile devices, enabling them to access Case Manager whilst working remotely. The devices also support them with the creation of schedules of work. All DFG applications and supporting evidence are now completed on the visiting officer's Ipad, reducing the need for unnecessary paperwork and providing a more secure way of working. The removal of the traditional paper file means that multiple officers can, where necessary, work on the same case at the same time and access all the information regardless of their location.

The Well Being Officers utilise their Ipads to complete their 'Well Being assessments' and the system is able to automatically generate support plans and letters for the clients to reference.

In addition to using Case Manager, the Agency also utilises the Councils' online secure referral system, which allows referrals to be made from a wide range of professionals. The referrals can be tailored to the person inputting the details and other organisations can be added to the process. For example, this is used where OT Managers need to authorise the recommendations and housing associations need to agree to the works and provide landlords certificates.

Specific information can be requested on the referral system, relating to the type of referral being made with the general system opened up to the public. The Occupational Therapists are given access codes so that their referrals for major and minor adaptations can be locked down in contrast to general enquiries for the Handyperson service.

For example, requests for minor adaptations come straight from the Health Service and appear in a Dashboard for the Handyperson to complete. Jobs are then picked up on their Ipads whilst out and about and completed, reducing the need to return to the office for job sheets and negating the need to employ a specific handyperson administrator. In such a geographically dispersed area this has resulted in excellent levels of service to the client, with some adaptations being completed within 2 hours of them being received from the Health Service, due to the Handyperson being in the area and able to pick up the jobs as they came in.

In addition to these ways of working, the Agency undertook a procurement exercise in 2012 and established a framework of contractors. The framework centred on wet floor showers and ramps as these were the bulk of adaptations installed by the Agency. At this stage the main reason behind the framework was to remove the need to tender every individual shower installation. The removal of the tender process produced time savings of at least 4 weeks on each job and in addition provided savings circa £1000 per adaptation.



Best practice in short

Intelligent use of technology. The agency covers a rural area and has brought in mobile technology allowing Handypersons to receive referrals on their iPhone and they can then carry out the work without further ado. DFG applications are all done electronically along with the supporting evidence saving time and resource.

Procurement- Most showers and ramps are now procured on a Framework agreement saving time on tendering and reducing the cost per unit.

In the last year, 96% of all customers rated the service as good or excellent.

The Agency continues to look for efficient ways to deliver its services to its clients.



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THE NATIONAL BODY FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY
AND HANDYPERSON SERVICES

The Old Co-op Building,
11 Railway Street,
Glossop,
Derbyshire, SK13 7AG

www.foundations.uk.com