

## Lancaster Home Improvement Agency Summer 2011 Update

Lancaster City Council's Home Improvement Agency aims to provide a high quality Care and Repair service, offering vulnerable residents independent advice and assistance to find solutions to their housing-related needs.

Our service is **free** to all residents over the age of 60 or disabled. Clients can be referred to us at [hiaenquiries@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:hiaenquiries@lancaster.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can contact us on 01524 582620 or complete the online referral form at [www.lancaster.gov.uk/homeimprovement](http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/homeimprovement)

### Meet the Team

Home Improvement Agency Manager	John Helme
Caseworker	Sylvia McAllister
Caseworker	we are currently recruiting
Technical Officer	Christopher Park
Technical Officer	Michael Henson
Handyperson Technician	Ron Courbet
Handyperson Technician	Stephen Jackson
Admin Officer	Claire Chaisty

**The Home Improvement Agency aims to help people remain independent and safe in their own homes through:**

**Assisting residents with repairs and dealing with contractors**

Our staff are happy to visit residents in their home and give them free impartial advice on any repairs or maintenance required to their property. Our qualified Technical Officers can also assist in obtaining estimates from Safe Trader approved contractors and help supervise any works being undertaken. We can also advise clients on works required to make homes more energy efficient, safe and secure.



**Caseworker Assistance**

Our Caseworker can assist clients in exploring ways to raise finance to complete works required to their property. We can offer advice and assistance in obtaining finance from a variety of sources including charities, increased benefits, equity release and other low cost loans. We can also advise on ways to reduce energy costs, help find the most suitable fuel tariffs and help residents to consider moving to alternative forms of accommodation if appropriate.

**Handyperson Service**



The Handyperson Technician can carry out a wide range of minor jobs around the home which residents find difficult to find a contractor to undertake.

The service is well established and Safe Trader approved.

**Disabled Adaptations**

The agency can assist both homeowners and private tenants to complete disabled adaptations. In many cases we are able to provide grant assistance towards the cost of providing necessary adaptations such as level-access showers, ramps, stair-lifts and ground floor toilet facilities.

Since April 2011 the Home Improvement Agency has:

- Received 57 new enquiries
- Received 42 referrals for disabled adaptations grants
- Assisted 276 clients through the Handyman service
- Completed 570 individual jobs through the Handyman service

## Customer Satisfaction

All clients are sent a satisfaction questionnaire on completion of our service.

The results below are from April 2011.

**98%** were satisfied with the service provided by Agency.

**98%** were very satisfied with the quality of the work carried out.

**83%** agreed that using the service has increased their independence.

**88%** agreed that service had improved their quality of life, health and confidence.

**97%** satisfied with the time keeping during the works.

**81%** agreed that the service helped them remain in their own

**99%** would use the service again.

**95%** would recommend our service to others.



## Additional comments made by our customers since April 2011

- *I had excellent service from everyone and the workmen were first class. We have nothing but praise for all the workmen involved, they were all polite, considerate and efficient.*
- *This service is a real help. It relieves one of the anxiety about many of the odd things that need attention but which you cannot cope with yourself.*
- *The men who came to do the job were efficient, courteous and friendly, I really appreciated what they did. Very pleasant workman. Very pleased with the service.*
- *The gentleman who came to put up handrails has helped a great deal and they will be very useful in winter. He was polite and a good worker and made no mess. A very useful service for minor jobs.*
- *Very satisfied with the time taken, advice and efficiency of the workman involved.*
- *Your brochure was given to me by the district nurse who came to dress my bandage. I have used this service before and have also told friends. I am very grateful to the service.*
- *I enjoy peace of mind using your agency, knowing there is someone there who can help me if I encounter any problems. Thank you.*
- *I found the workman very pleasant, well-mannered and a good workman. I was very satisfied with the work and would recommend your agency to other people.*

We thank you for your continued support for the Home Improvement Agency and we hope we can continue to provide a valuable service to enable residents to remain independent and safe in their own homes. Please feel free to contact us to discuss any of the services we offer. If you would like further copies of our leaflets for your clients, or posters for display purposes please let us know.

**John Helme**

Lancaster Home Improvement Agency Manager