

REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 21 DECEMBER 2017

DRAFT HOUSING ADAPTATIONS - UPDATE ON TENURE NEUTRAL MAJOR ADAPTATIONS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Discuss the progress to date towards the development of a tenure-neutral major adaptations process.
- 1.2 Agree that further work to improve outcomes is reported to this committee and to the Integration Joint Board.

2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 As previously indicated in the report to the Social Work and Housing Committee, dated 25th February 2016, The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 established the legal framework for integrating health and social care in Scotland. The availability of appropriate good quality housing and housing services has been identified as making an important contribution to improving health and wellbeing outcomes, to reducing health inequalities and contributing to achieving the strategic priorities of The Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership. Outcome 2 of the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework acknowledges the important role which housing plays in people's lives:

"People, including those with disabilities, long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community."

- 2.2 The Scottish Government's Housing Strategy for Older People 'Age, Home and Community' 2012-2021 recognises the importance of making the best use of existing housing for older people. The strategy supported the recommendations of the National Working Group for Adaptations that the current systems for adaptations are unsustainable in light of our ageing population and the subsequent demand this places on reduced resources. Additionally, the National Working Group for Adaptations recommended efficient and streamlined processes to ensure equity of access and service provision across all housing tenures and with a person-centred approach.
- 2.3 This report ensures commitment to the Scottish Government's Guidance on Aids and Adaptations, May 2015, which recommends the development of a strategy for a 'tenure-neutral' approach providing clear outcomes and priorities for housing adaptations, and which complements and supports wider housing, health and social care strategies to be incorporated in to the Local Housing Strategy, the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Strategic Plan and the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Aberdeenshire 'Ageing Well in Aberdeenshire'.

- 2.4 As advised in the report, dated 25th February 2016, it was recommended that strategic leadership for housing adaptations should sit with the local housing authority, working in partnership with health and social care, to provide a clear local strategy going forward.
- 2.5 Although it was established that the current processes work reasonably well, the improved processes allows overall consideration of assessment/eligibility and priority providing standardised approaches and focusses on the identified need of the individual as opposed to the tenure of their home.
- 2.6 Much has been achieved as demonstrated in this report and we would look to continue to develop further ensuring alignment with the priorities of the Local Housing Strategy and the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership and the developing teams in localities.
- 2.7 With regard to the improvement project, the next steps are to agree on Key Performance Indicators. These will be aligned for both the Private Sector and Council Housing and may include data on “increased independence” and “average time taken to complete adaptations. We will also develop how this information is going to be collected and ensure that the reporting mechanism is consistent for both tenures. Work to improve data collection will continue to be a focus for the project.
- 2.8 There is increased demand on adaptations resulting in increased pressure on funding and early discussions with the Registered Social landlords (RSLs) have taken place and we are working with our partners to discuss how the issues can be taken forward. The situation will be monitored through the Particular Needs Strategic Outcome Group (PNSOG) and data/evidence gathered on projected need and demand for housing adaptations.
- 2.9 The remainder of this report gives evidence of the work undertaken by the Tenure Neutral Improvement Project and what it has achieved to date. The Tenure Neutral Improvement Project for Major Adaptations began in May 2016. The project has taken the Six Sigma approach to improvement, i.e., using tools comprising Quad of Aims, Process Mapping, etc. The Project Team placed an emphasis on the adaptations process from referral to specification stage and each element has been broken down for streamlining and efficiency whilst ensuring an overall person-centred approach for clients.
- 2.10 The first step for any customer is the application process. At the beginning of the project it was identified that the Private Sector and Social Housing had separate application processes. To ensure this was as streamlined as possible for all major adaptations applications customers, a tenure neutral application process and application form were developed (**see Appendix 2 and 3**). All letters and forms for each tenure have also been reviewed and updated. In order to monitor customer feedback on the **installation process** for adaptations we reviewed the current Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire for Disabled Adaptations Grants used by Care and Repair in the Private Sector (**Appendix 4**) to assess whether this could be made easier to understand and complete by users. The redesigned questionnaire is now in use within the Private Sector and can be extended across tenures as part of

developing the collection of data for performance and evaluation aspects to be reviewed within the next stage of the tenure neutral improvement exercise.

- 2.11 In order to monitor customer feedback on the **effectiveness and impact** of adaptations we reviewed the Outcomes Questionnaire already in use within the Private Sector (**Appendix 5**) through the Care and Repair Team with this being redesigned to be tenure neutral and easier to use. A trial was completed where the responsibility for delivering and discussing the Outcomes Questionnaire with users was passed to the Occupational Therapist Team with these staff being the most relevant to discuss the impact on users health and wellbeing. The redesigned questionnaire is now in use within the Private Sector and can be extended across other tenures through the Occupational Therapy Service as part of developing the performance and evaluation aspects to be reviewed within the next stage of the improvement exercise.

Both of these questionnaires are currently in use within the private sector through Care and Repair with results being reported to the Communities Committee on a bi-annual basis through the Care and Repair update reports. In summary the questionnaires and previous versions used by Care and Repair have consistently shown over the years that following the installation of adaptations customers strongly agree or agree that it is easier for them to use the adapted facilities in their home and that they feel safer when carrying out general day to day activities. The next stage of the Tenure Neutral Project will focus on performance and evaluation and the collection of data from all tenures to form comparable statistics with the updated questionnaires being invaluable to inform us on the effectiveness of adaptations as a whole.

- 2.14 The result of the six sigma project favoured a Dedicated Occupational Therapist with close working links to Care & Repair and concentrating solely on major adaptations. It was decided that it was best to pursue this through a pilot project initially as there was thought to be several issues to address including crucially Health and Social Care Integration and locality teams. A pilot project was therefore undertaken in the Kincardine and Mearns area to explore the potential benefits of this. An update of the evaluation is at **Appendix 6**.
- 2.14 Future work is intended to further develop the tenure-neutral approach as per Scottish Government guidelines. The 'Adapting for Change' evaluation of the Scottish Government 5 pilot schemes has now been completed (<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-adapting-change>) and an analysis in comparison to the work carried out in Aberdeenshire is at **Appendix 7**.
- 2.15 The tenure-neutral approach promotes equity of access and ease of access across all housing tenures and focusses on the need for an adaptation and not the tenure of a person's home. The approach ensures joint working and collaboration with health and social care teams in localities and will promote best use of staff time and resources ultimately for the Clients benefit. The preventative approach of adaptations is documented and the Scottish Borders have evidenced as far as is possible the savings to be made.

In Aberdeenshire we have been able to ensure adaptations are installed at an earlier stage and the holistic picture for clients is explored across partners.

- 2.16 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated in this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section D 7.1.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to improvements to matters within the committee's remit.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals set out above. It is included as **Appendix 1** and there is a positive impact as follows:-

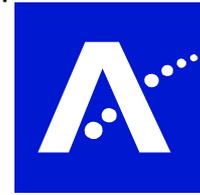
Older People and Disabled People - Ease of access to a holistic service with early information and support from the appropriate pathway including rehab and enablement, Housing Options advice, Adaptations and Discretionary Powers.

- 4.2 There are no staffing and financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level Budget pressures – The improvement and streamlining of the adaptations process and pursuit of a tenure-neutral approach is necessary to ensure best value and efficient use of resources.
- 4.4 A Town Centre Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not have a differential impact on town centres.

Stephen Archer, Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Jennifer Stewart, Particular Needs Officer, and Belinda May, Strategic Development Officer Service Improvement.
15th November 2017

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT Appendix 1



Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Infrastructure Services
Section	Housing Strategy
Title of the activity etc.	Tenure-neutral adaptations
Aims of the activity	<p>The development of a tenure-neutral process for housing adaptations which streamlines current systems and practices to ensure efficient use of resources;</p> <p>Person-centred approach, promoting Client choice;</p> <p>Promote and facilitate Independent Living;</p> <p>Supporting the strategic priorities of the Local Housing Strategy and the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership.</p>
Author(s) & Title(s)	<p>Jennifer Stewart, (Particular Needs Officer)</p> <p>Belinda May, Strategic Development Officer Service Development</p> <p>Billy Wishart, Senior Private Sector Housing Officer</p> <p>Shona Campbell, Team Manager for Occupational Therapy, Kincardine & Mearns, Marr and Garioch.</p>

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	<p>Scottish Government Final Report of the Adaptations Working Group Adaptations, Aids and Equipment, Scottish Government (April 2015)</p> <p>Care & Repair customer satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Local Authority customer satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Adaptations data for Local Authority and Care & Repair.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Local Housing Strategy (2012-17);</p> <p>Aberdeenshire health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) Strategic Plan.</p>
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	<p>Housing Service, including housing Strategy, Tenancy Services, Asset Management,</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) including Occupational Therapy and Care Management;</p> <p>Care & Repair service</p>
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	<p>Registered Social Landlords;</p> <p>Houseability</p>
External data (census, available statistics).	<p>The revised 2008 based population and household forecasts from the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2011 predict an increase in older people in Aberdeenshire in the 25 years to 2033 as follows:</p> <p>65-74 69.7% increase 75-84 113% increase 85+ 272.5%.</p> <p>The increase in the ageing population will in turn see the number of individuals with a learning disability and or physical disability also increase. Scottish Government policies of 'reshaping the balance of care' and 'Independent living' will place pressure on the demand for the necessary adaptations.</p> <p>The Scottish Government's Strategy and Action Plan for housing: 2011-2020: Homes fit for the 21st Century;</p>
Other (general information as appropriate).	<p>The project has followed Scottish Government recommendations and additionally the Scottish Government Adapting for Change Pilot sites. Aberdeenshire Council form part of the wider Adaptations Network from the Adapting for Change project.</p>

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	Improved data collection on adaptations and performance.

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:
	Development of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for adaptations	December 2018
	Improved data collection on adaptations.	December 2018

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger			X	
Age – Older	X			
Disability	X			
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)			X	
Religion or Belief			X	
Gender – male/female			X	
Pregnancy and maternity			X	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			X	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			X	

Marriage and Civil Partnership			X	
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Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.	Older People and Disabled People A focus on the changing and increasing demographics and on prevention and early intervention in service provision to enable independent living.	
	Older People and Disabled People Ease of access to a holistic service with early information and support from the appropriate pathway including rehab and enablement, Housing Options advice, Adaptations and Discretionary Powers.	
	Older/Disabled – promote self-care/self-management for older and disabled people.	
	Older/Disabled – Provides the opportunity for Council/Integrated services to be delivered earlier. (Early intervention.)	

Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?	
If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?	Customer Satisfaction surveys and questionnaires and Adaptation Outcome questionnaires.

Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.	Mitigating Steps	Timescale
	N/A	

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?	
These should be included in the action plan.	Ensure all communication for service users is clear, concise and easy to understand.

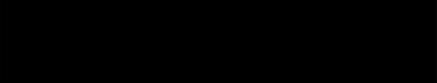
Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?	
The activity promotes equity of access to adaptations and equity of service across all housing tenures and focusses on the need for an adaptation and not the tenure of a persons' home.	

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?	
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Satisfaction surveys • Adaptation Outcome Questionnaire

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	N/A	
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.
	N/A	
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen
	N/A	

* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.
No negative impacts have been identified.

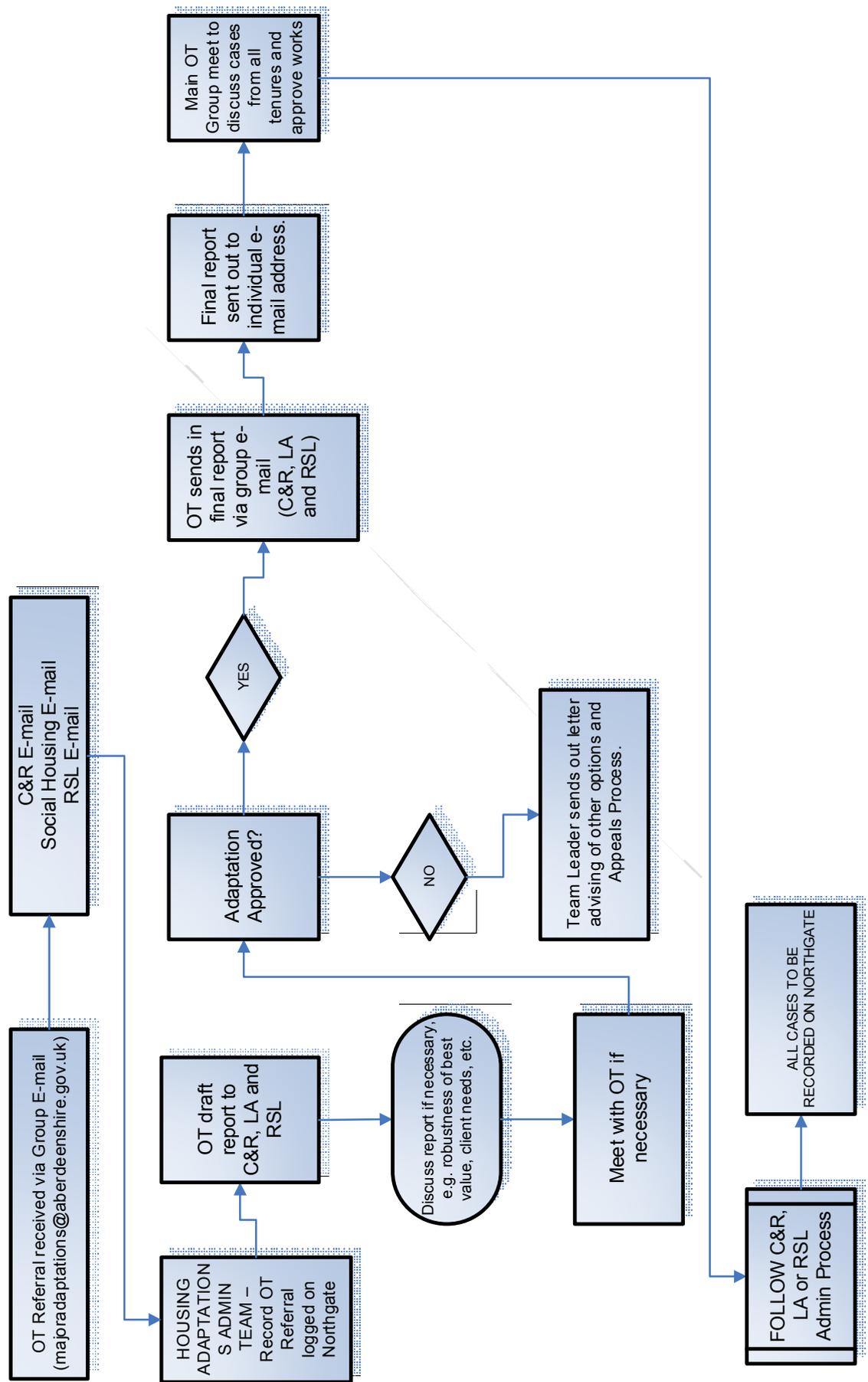
Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.		
Sign off and	1) Service and Team	Infrastructure Services - Housing Strategy
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	Tenure-Neutral adaptations

3) Authors: I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Jennifer Stewart Position: Particular Needs Officer Date: 15 th November 2017 Signature:	Name: Belinda May Position: Strategic Development Officer Date: 15 th November 2017 Signature:
	Name: Billy Wishart Position: Senior Private Sector Housing Officer Date: 15 th November 2017 Signature:	Name: Shona Campbell Position: O.T. Team Manager, Date: 15 th November 2017 Signature: 
4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Alexander Macleod Date: 23 th November 2017	
5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Rob Simpson Position: Head of Housing Date:	Name: Position: Date:
6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. E.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.		Date:
7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire		Date:
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO		Date:

Action Plan					
Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications
Development of Key Performance Indicators	December 2017	December 2018	Jennifer Stewart	Improved data for statistics on adaptations performance	N/A
Data collection (Improved system)	December 2017	December 2018	Jennifer Stewart	Improved systems	N/A

TENURE NEUTRAL APPLICATION PROCESS

Appendix 2





Aberdeenshire
Health & Social Care
Partnership

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Major Disabled Adaptation Assessment Form

Occupational Therapy Report

Name of Applicant:	
Date of Birth:	
Address of Applicant:	
Tenure	
Telephone No:	
Name of clients representative:	
Representatives telephone number or email address:	
Name of O.T:	
Care First Reference Number:	
Contact Details:	
Date Referred to OT:	Date Assessed by OT:
Date Adaptation Recommended by OT:	
Type of Adaptation/Improvement required:	
Reason for Adaptation/Improvement:	

Proposals Agreed Between OT & Applicant including sight of plans?		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Priority:	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Any Other Comments:			
	Draft Report/Referral <input type="checkbox"/>	Final Report <input type="checkbox"/>	
OT Signature and Date:			
OT Team Manager and Date:			
Email To: housingadaptation@aberdeenshire.gov.uk (Council Housing) or careandrepair@aberdeenshire.gov.uk (Private Housing)			



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Appendix 4

Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire – Disabled Adaptation Grants

File No: _____

Officer: _____

All the answers given in this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used by Aberdeenshire Council Care & Repair.

Q1. How satisfied were you with the work done through Aberdeenshire Council Care & Repair?

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied | |

Q2. How satisfied were you with the Aberdeenshire Council Care & Repair Officer?

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied | |

Q3. How satisfied were you with the Occupational Therapy service?

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied | |

Q4. How satisfied were you with the amount of time you waited to see the Occupational Therapy service?

- Very Satisfied Dissatisfied
 Satisfied Very Dissatisfied
 Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

Q5. How satisfied were you with the amount of time you waited to see Aberdeenshire Council Care & Repair?

- Very Satisfied Dissatisfied
 Satisfied Very Dissatisfied
 Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

Q6. How satisfied were you with the overall amount of time it took for your adaptation to be completed?

- Very Satisfied Dissatisfied
 Satisfied Very Dissatisfied
 Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

Q7. How satisfied were you with the standard of work of the tradesman?

- Very Satisfied Dissatisfied
 Satisfied Very Dissatisfied
 Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied

Q8. Would you have managed to carry out the work without the help of Aberdeenshire Council Care & Repair?

- Yes No Don't Know

Q9. Would you use the Aberdeenshire Council Care & Repair service again?

- Yes No Don't Know



Appendix 5

Adaptation Outcome Questionnaire

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following questions about the disabled adaptation that has been carried out.

Name: _____ Care First No: _____

Address: _____ Grant ref: _____

Council Housing:

Private Housing:

Q1. It is easier for me to use the adapted facility/facilities in my home.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q2. I now feel safer when carrying out my day to day activities.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q3. I feel I am less likely to have a fall at home because of the work that has been carried out.

- 1 - Strongly Agree

- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q4. I feel that I am more independent.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q5. I feel more confident that I can continue to live at home.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q6. I am more likely to get out and about, or receive visitors at home, as a result of the work that has been carried out.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q7. I feel that I was treated with dignity throughout the process.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree

- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q8. My house is warmer at the same or reduced cost to me.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Q9. I feel more confident about my safety and security in my house.

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 –Strongly Disagree
- 5 - Question does not apply

Thank you very much for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Please return in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Appendix 6

Aberdeenshire Occupational Therapy Service and Aberdeenshire Care & Repair

Major Adaptations Pilot

During 2016, a pilot project was undertaken in the Kincardine & Mearns area to explore the potential benefits of having a dedicated occupational therapist for the assessment and provision of major adaptations in line with recognised examples of good practice in other Local Authority Areas. The project was planned and overseen jointly by the Aberdeenshire Council Occupational Therapy and Private Sector Housing Teams.

The Kincardine & Mearns area was selected for the pilot project because of a proportionally higher level of occupational therapy staffing overall which included a half time (18 hour) peripatetic post. This peripatetic post was dedicated to the major adaptations role for the duration of the pilot, assuming responsibility for all housing tenures in line with the Scottish Government drive to provide tenure neutral housing adaptation services. There were no other staffing changes during the pilot and staffing levels were consistent in both years. The time taken to complete key stages in the adaptations process and the overall time from referral to completion of adaptation during 2016 was compared with the previous year.

In 2015, 30 people residing in the Kincardine & Mearns area were referred to Care & Repair for provision of a structural adaptation to their home through the Disabled Adaptations Grant scheme following occupational therapy assessment. In 2016, this number had increased to 50, demonstrating an increase of 40 %.

The average time taken to complete key stages of the process from referral to occupational therapy to completion of the adaptation is summarised in the table below:

Key stages	2015	2016
Referral to initial assessment	25	5
Decision to adapt to Care & Repair referral	40	42
Referral to Care & Repair to final grant report	109	53
Final grant report to completion of adaptation	117	100
Total time from referral to completion of adaptation	291	200

Table: Summary of time taken in calendar days to complete key stages of the adaptations process (Private Housing)

These results demonstrate that during the pilot project it was possible to deliver housing adaptation services in the Kincardine & Mearns area more efficiently by using our existing resources differently.

Qualitative data was provided by Occupational Therapy and Care & Repair team members. Their feedback demonstrated that the dedicated occupational therapy role was on the whole viewed positively by both teams. Key themes were:

- More streamlined process with clearer responsibilities

- More effective management of time and workload
- Reduced waiting times
- More effective use of staff knowledge and skills
- Reduced stress
- More considered and reflective approach to work resulting in improved quality
- Improved relationships between the Occupational Therapy and Care & Repair Service
- Easier to engage with and manage new developments for the occupational therapy service

However, the following risks were also noted by team members:

- Sustainability of improvements with current staffing levels
- De-skilling of other team members

Further work is now planned to identify the resources required to sustain the improvement demonstrated in the Kincardine & Mearns area, achieve similar improvements across Aberdeenshire and to mitigate the risks identified by the team.

Appendix 7

Adapting for Change Evaluation – Scottish Government Pilot project at 5 sites and comparison with the work of the Aberdeenshire project.

An independent evaluation of the Adapting for change pilot project was commissioned by Scottish Government and carried out by APS Group Scotland.

Overall recommendations from the original National Adaptations Working Group were:-

- **Strategic leadership with the local housing authority.** Housing adaptations is and should remain a partnership service. Strategic leadership should rest unambiguously with the local housing authority.
- **Centred around the individual.** This would ensure that the needs, circumstances and choices of the individual and their family and/or carer(s) are central to the way in which services and supports are designed, including a single point of access; assessments of people's circumstances and discussion of choices and preferences; and arrangements which enable the person to have control over the process.
- **A broader outcomes-focused service.** Services and support must become wider than simply providing grant funding or directly undertaking an adaptation. A successful outcome must be more clearly defined as helping someone to retain or recover their independence.
- **Partnership Governance.** Governance and management of housing adaptations should be undertaken as a partnership between commissioners, providers and those using the services.

The Scottish Government evaluation concluded that:-

For areas with difficulties in gaining 'buy-in' from partners such as O.T. services and Care & Repair progress has been either slow or at times blocked. **In Aberdeenshire** partners including Housing Strategy, Tenancy Services, Asset Management, Private Sector Housing (Care & Repair) and the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) have been fully committed to the process and this working partnership has been essential to look in detail at the current processes and to drive forward the work and implement and effect change.

Much of the work from the 5 sites had a focus on early intervention and encouraging people to consider options before serious problems arise. Early access to information and advice was seen as supporting the preventative approach. **In Aberdeenshire** a focus for the project has likewise been early intervention and the preventative agenda. A single point of access and developed pathways has been achieved which provides direct contact for Clients with a dedicated O.T. and this communication ensures the correct identification of the appropriate pathway for Clients.

The Group have worked together to map and re-design the pathways through the different processes and establish a tenure-neutral approach. The work still ongoing includes developing a holistic approach to meeting a person's assessed need, evaluating short/mid/long term outcomes and ensuring services such as Rehab and

Enablement, Adaptations, Housing Options and Discretionary Funding powers are used in a way that provides the most efficient use of public resources as a whole in meeting a person's long-term needs.

The adaptations improvement work has importantly ensured processes in place to link in with related work such as the following:-

- For Local Authority tenants communication and liaison exists for access to capital maintenance programmes instead of an adaptation.
- More involvement of Occupational therapy staff in identifying specific requirements for disabled Clients for new build properties.

For the 5 pilot sites developing the tenure-neutral approach with a single funding pot has proved difficult. Whilst sites were able to improve other aspects of the tenure-neutral approach as in Aberdeenshire the 'single-pot' funding system which would ensure consideration of need as opposed to tenure of house for Clients has been considered. However owing to existing funding arrangements this has not been possible other than for the Borders site which has wholesale stock transfer and therefore Housing Association or private sector housing stock only and subsequently has been able to establish a single pot approach.

Current funding arrangements for adaptations are as follows:-

- Housing Association funding is received from Scottish Government and difficulties can arise with the current system when funding is not sufficient for the whole year.
- Private Sector (Care & Repair) funding is received from the Council's Capital Plan through the Private Sector Housing Grant which is provided to Council Housing services as a means of funding activities to repair, improve and adapt private sector properties through Housing's 'Scheme of Assistance' policy. This is laid out in the Housing Scotland Act 2006.
- Local Authority properties funding for adaptations is from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and can only be used for Local Authority properties.

In Aberdeenshire as in the pilot test sites it has been difficult to effect change in this area and the Scottish Government have not from their evaluation recommended changing the current funding arrangements.

The tenure-neutral admin/application process does however in addition to ensuring the correct pathway for Clients provide a streamlined process for major adaptations which is tenure-neutral.

Improved data collection to ensure a good standard of analysis of adaptations has been a focus of the work in the 5 pilot sites and has proved challenging. **In Aberdeenshire** this has also been the case. The 'Uniform' system has now been introduced for Care & Repair and Local Authority adaptations are recorded on Northgate. Improving data collection for adaptations is a priority for the work going forward.

From the evaluation consideration has been given in some areas to discretionary powers and the Scheme of Assistance which potentially allows for 'top-up' contributions by the local authority. **In Aberdeenshire** an exercise exploring this area of work has already commenced. The project aims to further develop the Scheme of Assistance to include criteria that details how the Health and Social Care Partnership work with a Client to identify options to mitigate risk to a person's health, wellbeing and independence arising from their housing circumstances.

This will include having a seamless and systematic approach to minimising identified risk to a Client's health, wellbeing and independence. Some Clients will have needs that cannot be met through the provision of a mandatory grant but will have requirement for an adaptation. The process will require to be equitable, tenure neutral and be applied across Aberdeenshire.

Additionally the group intend further work on high cost and low cost minor adaptations intended to improve ways of working and allowing more to be done within current resourcing.

In conclusion the 5 pilot sites generally felt that although the work was resource intensive and challenging that the projects had been necessary and worthwhile and now provided a platform for going forward. **In Aberdeenshire** the project team are in agreement with this and the continuation of developing projects from the work now achieved from the tenure-neutral adaptations project recognises the increasing complexity of the reshaping of care agenda due to an ageing population. As more people are enabled to remain at home with more complex needs it is vital that the consideration of individual needs ensures access to the wider picture of health, social care and housing.