



Cambs Home Improvement Agency is a shared service of Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire

Annual Review

2017 – 2018

Introduction

by our Lead Councillors

2017 has seen a number of improvements to how the agency is run.

A new manager has introduced a stronger performance management culture, new contractors are being appointed, systems are being improved to maximise efficiency and customer/stakeholder engagement is being reviewed.

In January 2018, the government awarded us a further £250,000 for the Disabled Facilities Budget

(DFG) 2017/18 which enabled the agency to complete over £3 million worth of adaptations, the largest programme since the agency was created five years ago.

Cambs HIA continues to work closely with key partners including Health, Social Care and the Voluntary Sector.

Cambridgeshire County Council has introduced a new approach to meeting the longer term needs of older people by working in partnership with the Elderly

Accommodation Council (EAC).

A new scheme run by the County Council called HOOP (Housing Options for Older People) aims to help customers consider their longer term needs and support those who wish, to move to alternative housing.

The government is reviewing how DFG's operate nationally and we are continuing to work towards a new Adaptations & Repairs Policy for Cambridgeshire.



Cllr. Kevin Price
Cambridge City



Cllr. Lynda Harford
South Cambs



Cllr. Ryan Fuller
Huntingdonshire

Governance

In 2012, Cambs Home Improvement Agency was the first shared service in Cambridgeshire, combining South Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Cambridge City Councils.

Our Management Board:



**Helen Reed (Chair),
Housing Strategy
Manager, Cambridge
City Council**



**Stephen Hills,
Director of Housing,
South Cambridgeshire
District Council**



**Andy Moffat,
Head of Development,
Huntingdonshire
District Council**



**Diana MacKay,
Commissioner (Adults),
Cambridgeshire
County Council**



**Lynne O'Brien,
Commissioner (Adults),
Cambridgeshire
County Council**



**Julia Hovells,
Principal Accountant,
Cambridge City
Council.**

Welcome

Welcome to our Annual Review for Cambs Home Improvement Agency. This review provides an update on the work completed in the previous 12 months.

A Message from Our Manager:

This year, we have transformed our systems and improved efficiency. I was delighted to see that the average time to progress adaptations has reduced and I am confident this will continue. Our social media presence has increased and we are continuing to appoint new contractors and ensuring that they share our vision of providing quality adaptations.

We have tried out new ways of working – installing our first modular built bedroom and bathroom. We have created You Tube videos to explain the Disabled Facilities and Repairs Grant processes and have entered into a new partnership agreement to help speed up the grant process for some social housing tenants. I would like to thank both the Occupational Therapists and the district council Grants Officers for their support throughout the last 12m.

– Frances Swann



Cambs HIA Staff:



Our Business Support Team, Caseworkers and Surveyors

We would like to say a special thank you to our clients who were kind enough to contribute to this report.

About Us

The agency is now in its sixth year. Although our main focus is on grant funded adaptations and repairs, we can also work for clients on a private basis.

Our aim is to help clients to have various works carried out at their property, typically following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist, to enable them to live safely and independently.

Cambs HIA will provide information and advice and refer clients to other agencies where other needs have been identified - this might include referring on for help with welfare benefits, alarms, falls assessments and/or care and support packages.

Our clients include disabled children & adults, older people, those with long term or life limiting illnesses and people who are living in poor housing conditions. Customer satisfaction with the service is high with around 90% of clients reporting that their adaptations had improved their homes. We continue to look for ways that we can improve and welcome customer feedback.

“I am writing to express my profound gratitude for the job that has been done by the Contractor, organised by Cambs HIA at my home. Now I really enjoy living in my house. That would not be possible without the Home Repair Assistance Grant.”
Mr K



2017 – 2018: Highlights

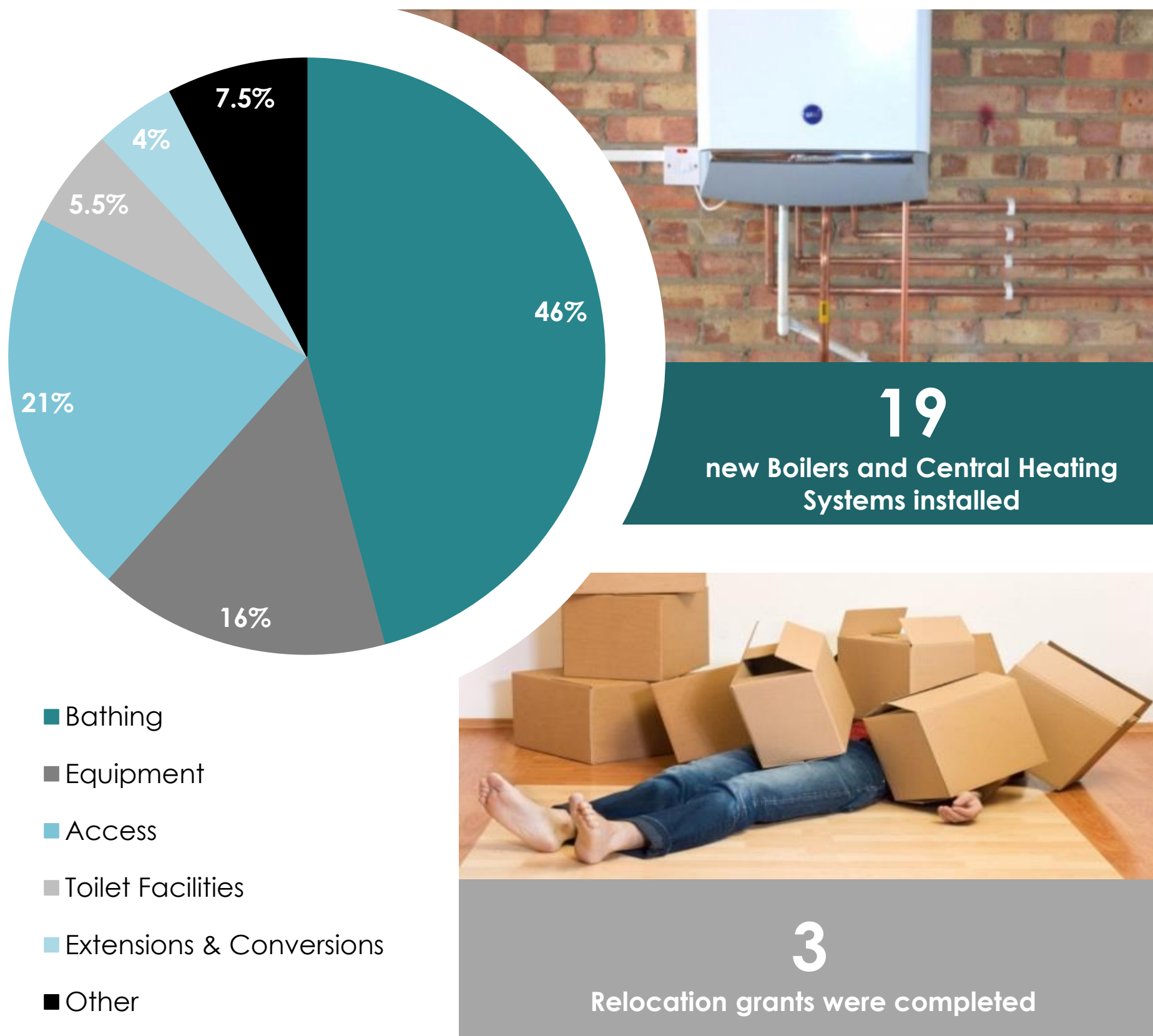
In 2017-2018 the number of completed Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) increased by 18%

Completed Works

In 2017/18 we helped **388** people with disabled adaptations.

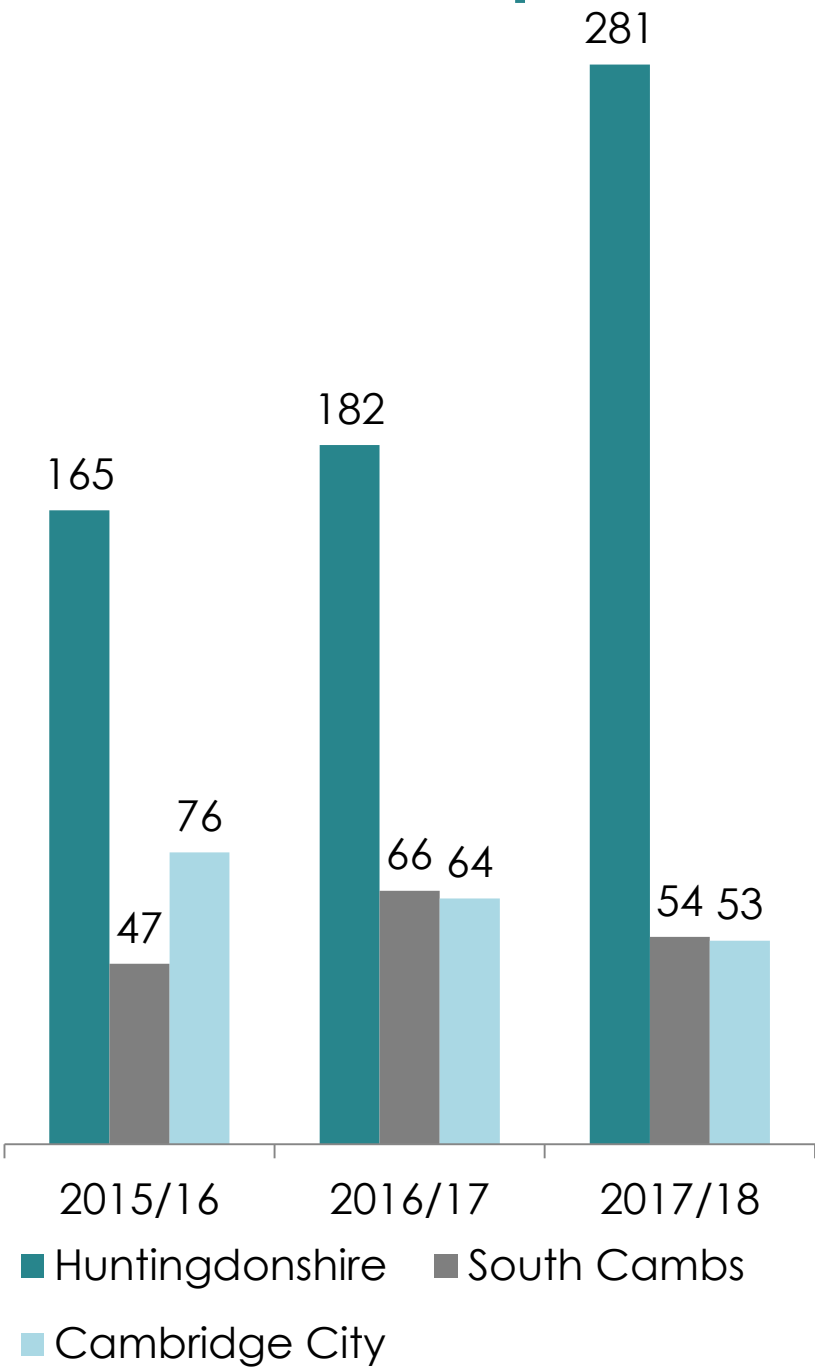
Cambs HIA also supports clients to identify ways of funding work which exceeds the £30,000 cap applied to DFG work. Last year Cambridge City spent £38,707 on top-up grants, over and above the £30,000 DFG.

Types of DFG completed

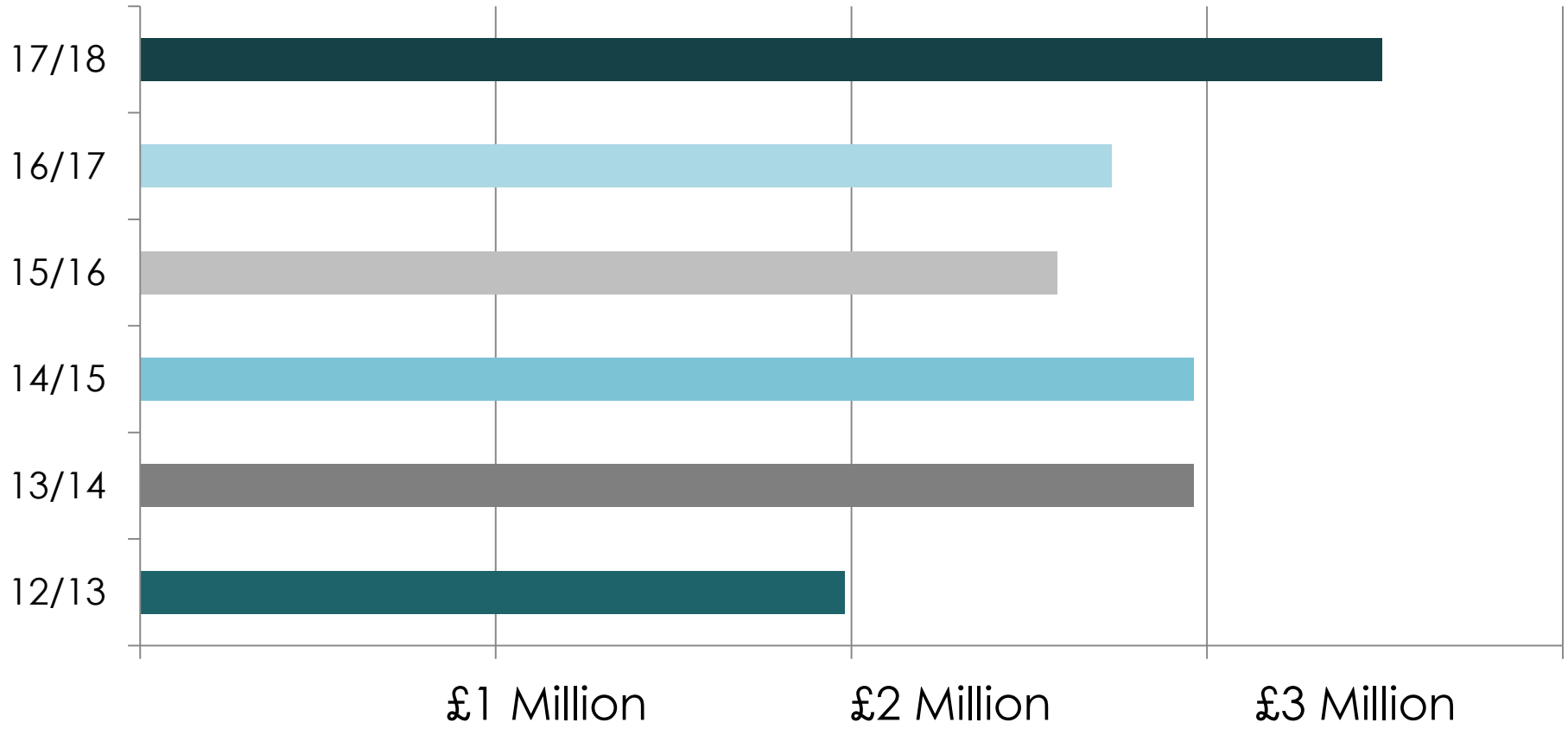




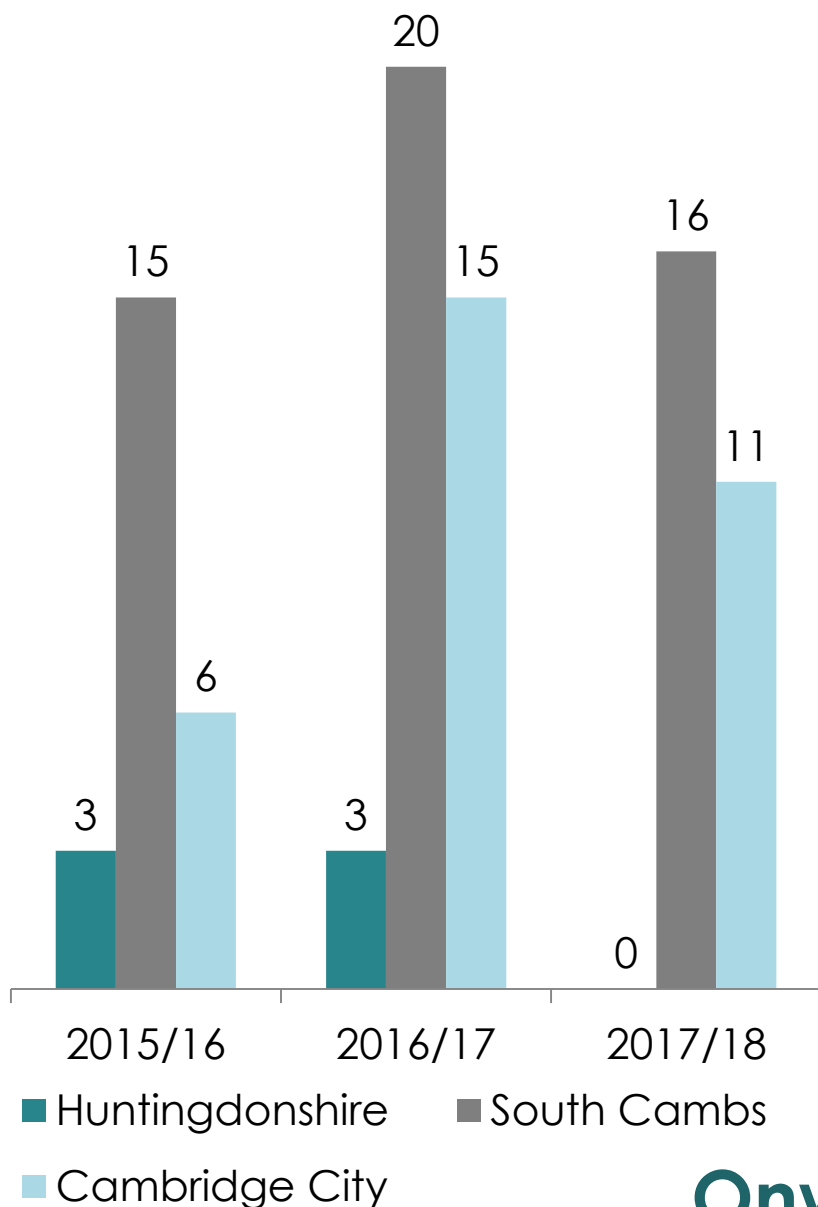
Disabled Facilities Grants Completed



DFG Spend



Repairs Grants Completed



Onward referrals

We made 115 onward referrals last year to help people:



Get housing advice



Claim benefits they are entitled to



Request fire safety checks



Improve their home security



Install a Community Alarm

Local Economic Contribution



£3,612,365

Spent on Disabled Adaptations & Repairs



The work we do helps people remain living safely and independently in their own homes avoiding admissions to hospital or residential care homes and reduces the amount of care they need

We use local contractors who employ local people.



222

Adaptations completed for clients living in Social Housing, costing £1.7m



19

new boilers and air source heat pumps installed



Cambs Home Improve... · 22/09/2017 ▾

Last year, #CambsHIA completed 37 #adaptations for #DisabledChildren living in our area. Today, we are supporting #JeansForJeans day.



We regularly post on Social media to promote the service, other services, and to raise awareness of disability awareness days

Customer Satisfaction

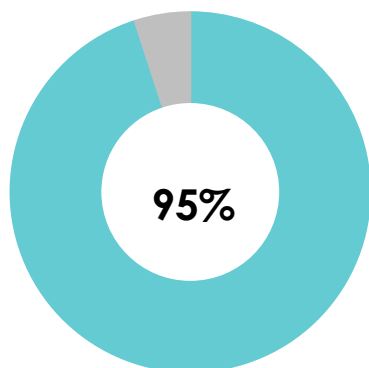
We monitor our performance carefully to ensure we are meeting the needs and expectations of our clients



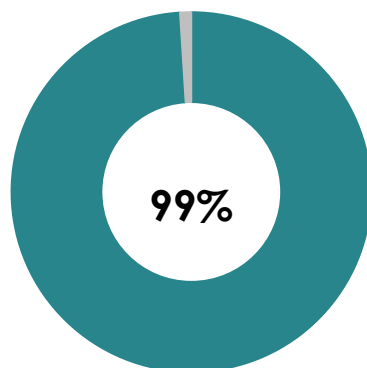
“We are very happy with our new shower room and would like to thank everyone involved!” - Mrs W

Satisfaction Stats

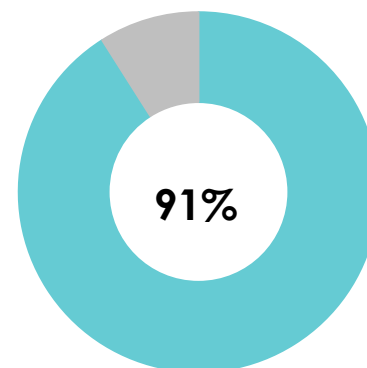
After each job is completed, each district is asked to rate the quality of work; our service and how well we have met their needs.



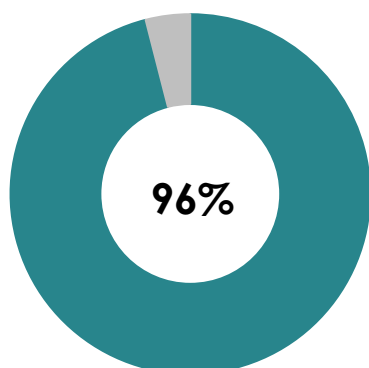
Rated the quality of work as good or excellent



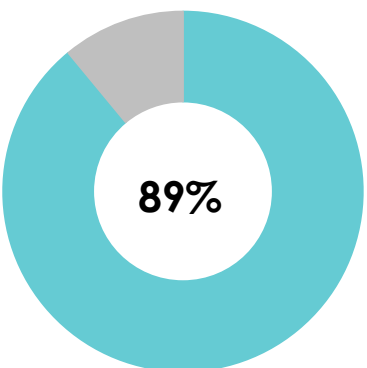
Said that work met expectations



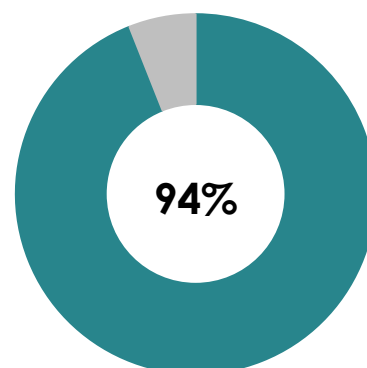
Felt that work represented value for money



Told us that work has helped their health/ wellbeing



Felt that work increased their independence



Were satisfied overall with our service

A First for the Agency

Late last year, after some time in the planning, a new modular level access shower extension was installed in a home in Huntingdonshire.

The unit, referred to by the team as a “pod” was constructed off site at a factory in Yorkshire and craned into place.

It was designed and specified by one of the Agency’s Surveyors in conjunction with the client’s OT as an alternative to a traditional brick built extension.

As with any innovative project, the job was not without it’s challenges along the way and in the end took longer than expected. However, the benefits of this type of design include cost and the ability to relocate the “pod” in the future if needed.

As the pod was constructed off site, it minimised disruption to the disabled householder with only minor works needed to link the extension to original part of the dwelling. Traditional extensions can take up to thirteen weeks

to build with contractors on site every day. This project required contractors to be on site for only six days.

The Surveyor and Caseworker overseeing the project reflect positively about what they learned from the experience and how they would be able to deliver a similar extension more quickly in the future.

Our thanks to the installers 3CS and the Luminus Group for their support throughout the project and especially to the client who remained patient and engaged throughout the process.



The POD Being Craned In



Inside the POD



The Finished POD

Statement of Financial Activities

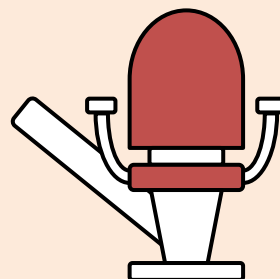
For 2017-2018, here are our statement of financial activities figures:

	31 March 2015	31 March 2016	31 March 2017	31 March 2018
Income				
HIA Fees	(231,885)	(260,472)	(274,162)	(434,953)
External Funding (Cambridgeshire County Council, etc.)	(233,932)	(233,932)	(233,932)	(159,188)
Other Income (including landlord & client contributions, & fees from private works)	(30,312)	(36,928)	(8,084)	(10,611)
Total Incoming Resources	(496,129)	(531,332)	(516,178)	(604,752)
Expenditure				
Cost of generating funds	477,976	533,504	540,467	427,413
Total Resources Expended	477,976	533,504	540,467	427,413
Net Incoming/outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses	(18,153)	2,172	24,289	(177,339)
Trading (Surplus) /Deficit b/f	(8,308)	(26,461)	(24,289)	0
Trading (Surplus) /Deficit c/f	(26,461)	(24,289)	0	(177,339)

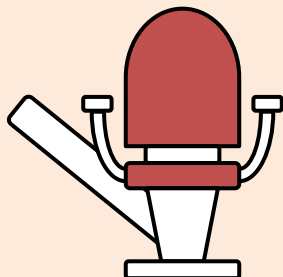
Last Year We...



...completed 388 Disabled Facilities Grants across the three districts totalling over £3,491,178



...improved efficiency by creating a new equipment contract framework



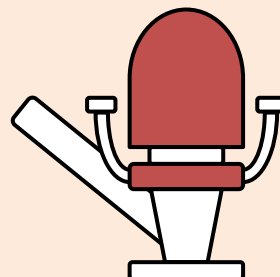
...worked in partnership with the Luminus Group to fast track landlord consents for some adaptations in their properties



...increased our social media presence by introducing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts to spread awareness of the agency.



...participated in a Business Process Review in which we spent time as a team streamlining our processes to provide a smoother more client focused service.



...met with staff from Discharge Planning, Age UK, Neighbourhood Cares Project, Housing Related Support and others. To promote access to our service.

Our Aims for 2018-2019

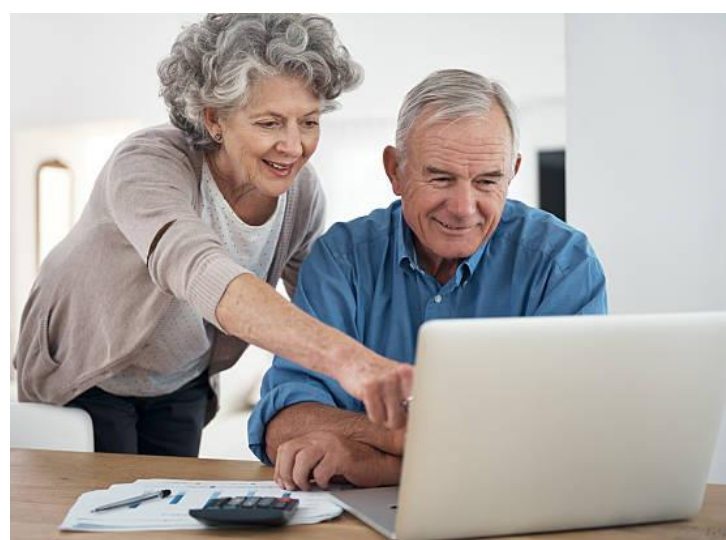
Improve Performance by:

- Creating new contractor frameworks
- Filling vacant posts
- Working with Housing Associations to speed up the landlord consent process
- Introduce a tighter performance management culture
- Working closely with Occupational Therapists to improve the customer's experience
- Developing a new Marketing Strategy



Improving customer service:

- Identifying how our customers would prefer to be contacted
- Updating our customers more on the progress of their case
- Enabling customers to "self-serve" on our website
- Promoting good news stories on our social media pages
- Using customer feedback to improve our work



Develop a Sustainable Funding Model by:

- Minimising operating costs
- Maintaining external funding arrangements
- Reviewing the fee charged by the agency
- Identifying opportunities for external funding
- Maximising demand



Promote Well Being by:

- Develop staff awareness of local health and well-being services
- Encourage people to think about their future housing needs
- Signposting and referring clients to specialist support agencies
- Looking at national best practice to further develop our services



Collaboration is Key

To enable us to deliver our service we work closely with:



Approved Contractors

who are trusted and experienced in this field to complete building works on the client's behalf. Our clients (or their representatives) are involved in selecting the contractors considered for their project.

Occupational Therapists

who assess people's need for adaptations and determine how those needs can be addressed within the relevant legislation.



Local Authority Grants Officers/Private Sector Housing Team

in each of the three districts to check and approve mandatory and discretionary grants for qualifying people.

Charitable Organisations

who help us by providing additional funding where the cost will be above the £30,000 grant limit. Usually needed for complex work including extensions and conversions.

Tell Us What You Think

Your Feedback

We welcome your comments about our Annual Review and how you think it could be improved.

We also welcome your views about the work of Cambs HIA, now and in the future.

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