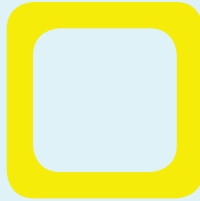


Annual Review
2013/14



Better Together



Cambs Home Improvement Agency works in Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire.

www.cambshia.org



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council



Message from Lead Councillors

Welcome to Cambs HIAs second Annual Review. This highlights our progress in helping older, vulnerable and disabled people to live in suitable housing and maintain their independence.

Cambs HIA is working closely with key partners (including health, social care and other district councils) to consider how to develop disabled adaptations and related services in the future. This includes progress on cost savings from procurement change.

We are committed to helping vulnerable people of all ages to live independently. While increasing life expectancy should be celebrated, our challenge is to provide cost effective solutions that make best use of limited statutory funding.

The key objectives in the next 12 months will be to deliver excellent customer service, demonstrate value for money and streamline what can seem to be a very complex and bureaucratic process.

We are proud of our shared service and the positive impact this has on improving people's quality of life.



Cllr. Kevin Price
Cambridge City



Cllr. Doug Dew
Huntingdonshire



Cllr. Mark Howell
South
Cambridgeshire

Introduction

We hope that this Review will increase awareness of what we do and help more people to find out how to maintain, improve or adapt their home or find out about other related services that can help them to live well and independently.

What we do

Working with owner-occupiers, private tenants and Housing Association owned properties; we help guide clients to access funding for disabled adaptations and essential repairs from their local Council. Although most of our time is spent on grant funded adaptations and repairs, we can also work with clients on a private basis.

Our client groups include disabled children & adults, older people,

those with long term or life limiting illnesses and people who are living in poor housing conditions. Many of our clients are in challenging and stressful circumstances that can make it difficult to carry out routine daily tasks and maintain an independent lifestyle. We endeavour to tailor our service to meet individual needs.



"A thank you from the bottom of my heart ... I have never disclosed the need for help before and it was a positive experience."

About the service we delivered 2013/14

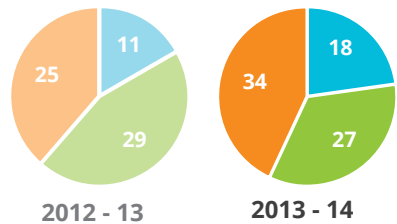
There was significant growth in enquiries and works delivered in our second year with enquiries up by 18%, completed Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) up by 42% and overall discretionary grants up by 22%.

We are pleased that productivity has increased in year two as Cambs HIA has become established.

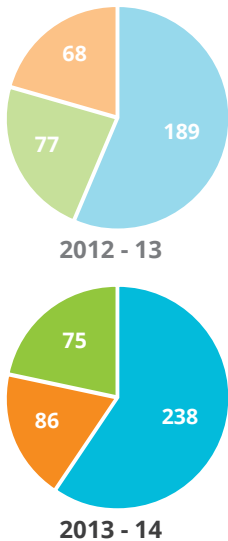
Enquiries and completed works

In 2013/14 we helped 219 older people, 104 disabled adults and 26 children with disabled adaptations. 55% of all adaptations are for help with bathing. Only 3% of works were major extensions or conversions but these are the highest cost works and may require multiple sources of funding.

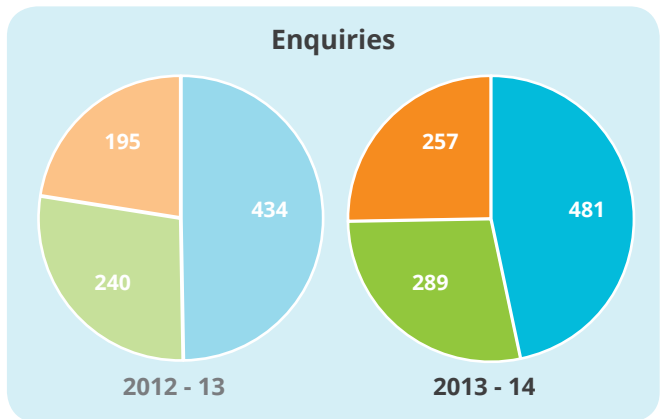
Completed Discretionary Grants



Completed DFGs



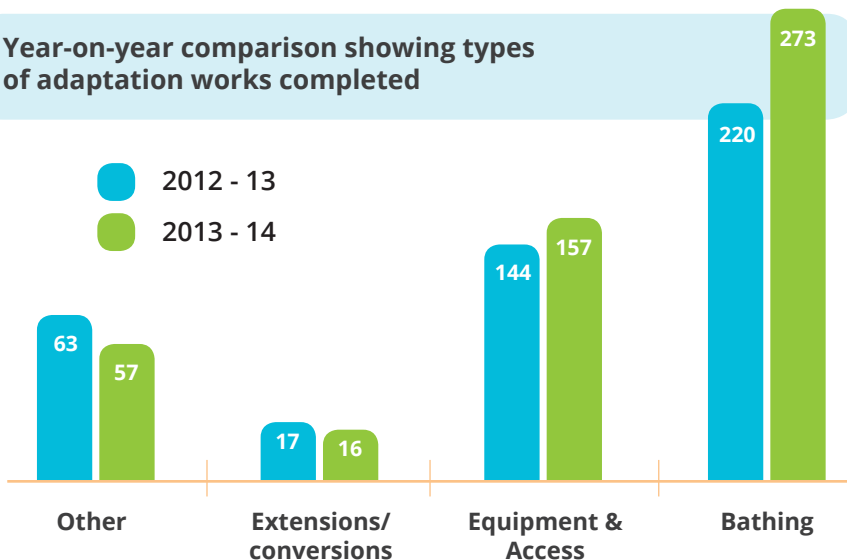
Enquiries



- Huntingdonshire
- South Cambridgeshire
- Cambridge City

Types of adaptations completed

Year-on-year comparison showing types of adaptation works completed



"My partner died suddenly. I had so many problems I was feeling desperate. I contacted CHIA and received so much help. I am forever grateful for the kindness and understanding. Without such practical help, I don't know how I would have managed"

Customer satisfaction

We strive to improve our service. To help us do this each local council sends a customer satisfaction survey to all clients when work is completed. A further survey is sent 6 months later. The results of these surveys are shared with Cambs HIA and reported to our Board and funders from health and social care.

The following key areas are measured:

- % clients satisfied with the service provided
- % clients who maintained their independence
- % clients who consider that the work prevented ill health

The results consistently show between 90 and 100% of clients are satisfied or very satisfied. When clients feedback queries, other requests or any issues this is followed up by Cambs HIA. Feedback is important to us and helps to alert us to possible issues, learn from things that go wrong and about how the service can be improved.

What happens when a property can't be adapted?

Alternative housing solutions are considered as a key part of the adaptations process. This is most likely to happen when a property cannot be effectively adapted or where the costs are too excessive. In these cases a relocation grant may be considered.

Before a relocation grant can be awarded, the Council will need to know that:

- The cost of moving and adapting the new property will be less than providing adaptations to the current home,
- A referral has been received from an Occupational Therapist outlining the client's clinical needs,
- A CHIA Surveyor has assessed the current property as "unadaptable or possible adaptations are not an effective solution to meet the clients clinical need."

A relocation grant could cover all reasonable costs of moving, which may include:

- Estate Agents fee, including the Energy Performance Certificate,
- Solicitors conveyance costs,
- Structural surveys and professional removals fees.

Case Study

Cambs HIA received an application for a relocation grant from a family living in a two bedroomed end of terrace house. The applicants' home was assessed as being unsuitable for the needs of their 2 year old disabled son. The child had severe clinical needs which meant he had to be monitored constantly day and night.

The child shared a bedroom with his older brother, which was assessed as inappropriate due to the night time disturbance to the sibling. The Occupational Therapist recommended a single storey extension to provide a bedroom large enough to house a specialised bed, oxygen tanks and to facilitate waking night care.

Due to the location of the existing property, a CHIA Surveyor determined that there was insufficient space to build an extension. With guidance from the Occupational Therapist and the CHIA Surveyor, the family found a new build property in the same local area which could be easily adapted to meet the child's needs.

A relocation grant was submitted to the council and the family's Caseworker liaised with all relevant parties to ensure the transfer of all the funds needed for the completion of the sale once contracts had been exchanged.

Through regular contact with the family, the Caseworker was able to support a successful move.



Relocation grant details

Removal Costs - £585

Conveyancing fees - £852

Mortgage valuation fees - £355

EPC & associated fees - £210

Estate Agent Fee - £3000

Helping clients who don't qualify for grant funding

For people who do not qualify for grant funding we can help carry out adaptations on a private basis, using the blueprint of the Occupational Therapist's recommendations.

The agency charges a fee for this service. Works may include:-

- carrying out a survey and producing drawings and a detailed schedule of works,
- dealing with the tendering process and any statutory requirements e.g. planning or building control,
- working closely with the clients' chosen contractor and project managing works on site,
- verifying invoices and making payments as necessary.

Case Study

A client, who did not qualify for grant funding, asked Cambs HIA to organise the installation of a level access shower on a private basis. Following the recommendations given by his OT, his existing bathroom (with a bath and a shower cubicle) was no longer suitable so a level access shower was deemed necessary and appropriate to meet his needs. An agreement was drawn up between CHIA and the client to outline the works.

A CHIA Surveyor prepared detailed drawings and a schedule and arranged quotations for this project. Prior to the commencement of the works, a pre-contract meeting with the

client and the

contractor was arranged to finalise any issues and determine client choices, e.g. tiles, flooring. Our Surveyor monitored the works to completion and arranged payment to the contractor following a final inspection of the works.



"I am able to shower without any help and feel safe"

Who we are

Cambs HIA is a small, friendly and experienced team, committed to providing an efficient and customer focussed service. Our team comprises of 3 Administrators, 6 Caseworkers, 4 qualified Surveyors and a Manager. Over half of our staff team work part-time.



The Cambs HIA Team with Council Grant Officers

- Our Administrators are likely to be the first voice you hear when contacting us. They provide valuable all round support to the agency,
- Our Caseworkers work with eligible clients throughout the grant process and ensure that all the necessary documentation is in place for a grant to be approved,
- Our Surveyors carry out technical design work and deal with regulatory requirements, including planning permission and building control,
- Our Manager oversees the work and plans of the Agency and reports to our Management Board.

Our Management Board

Meets quarterly and is responsible for overseeing and monitoring what we do. The Board members are:

Alan Carter (Chair),

Head of Strategic Housing Cambridge City Council.

Stephen Hills,

Director of Housing, South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Trish Reed,

Housing Strategy Manager, Huntingdonshire District Council.

Key Partners

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

- Our clients (or their representatives) taking account of each individuals circumstances and how much guidance and support they need with the process. Clients are also involved in selecting the contractors considered for their projects,
- Local Authority Grants Officers (and the Private Sector team in Huntingdonshire) who check and approve housing grants for qualifying people,
- Occupational Therapists who assess people's need for adaptations and determine what will address those needs within the conditions of relevant legislation,
- Approved contractors who are trusted and experienced to complete building works in this field.

Progress on our plans from last year

Aim	Done	Partly Done	Not Done	More Information
Increase service delivery	✓			See "About the service we delivered"
Increase staff capacity	✓			Temp increase to deliver works in Hunts
Launch website	✓			On 23 October 2013
Raise awareness about Cambs HIA		✓		Some progress on information and events
Prepare a draft Business Plan from Apr 14			✓	A proposal for the Better Care Fund in Cambridgeshire submitted Feb 2014 included options for the Plan.

Our key aims in 2014/15

Customer service

This includes:

1. maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction
2. developing records of follow-up on feedback
3. developing our performance monitoring measures and ways to reduce the length of time it takes projects to complete
4. greater involvement in informing our work and plans.



Funding

Capital funding for works and revenue funding towards the running of Cambs HIA is committed by our key partners until March 2015. Prospects for longer term funding need to be agreed. We also aim to increase our funding from other sources.

Working effectively with key partners on delivery of the service

We aim to improve the way we work with key partners. This includes:

1. assessing ways to streamline and join up the service between us, our council partners and the Occupational Therapy service
2. set standards for all our contractors, share good practice and learning
3. Progress work to change our approach to procurement including plans for a full review of our contractor arrangements.

Business planning

In June 2014, an external facilitator helped us to run an event involving key partners to develop joined up and forward thinking about our Business Plan. The report from this event will form the basis for our draft Business Plan. There will be wider consultation on the draft Plan during 2014.



Communications

We want to do more to increase awareness of Cambs HIA and what people can expect from our service.

This includes:

1. promoting and developing our website
2. producing more leaflets
3. informing colleagues and other agencies
4. going to local forums and events.

"I am now more independent in my kitchen and daily living"

Looking ahead

Major future changes are expected that will impact directly on our work. We are preparing for this and want to be seen as a key service contributing to improving people's ability to live independently at home in good housing conditions.

Ways we can do this include:

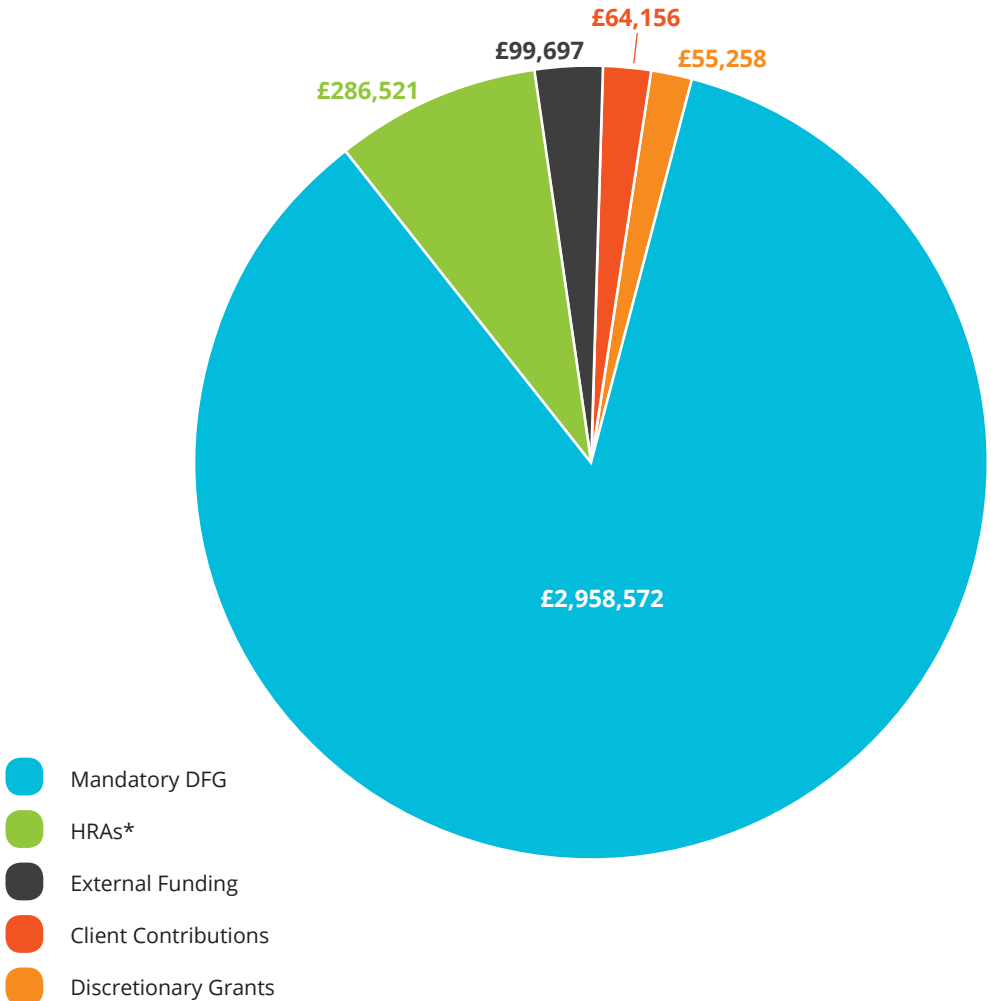
- Giving people easy access to a range of trusted information, advice and services that can help them deal with changing circumstances and prepare for their future housing needs
- Evidencing the value and effectiveness of our work
- Innovating and developing to respond more quickly and efficiently to the predicted significant growth in need
- Working with key partners to develop a more streamlined, consistent and cost effective service including expanding to other districts
- Preparing and responding to policy changes including:
 1. changes in the way social care and health services are delivered in Cambridgeshire
 2. national policy and government legislation including the new Care Act 2014

Funding works

Capital funding for works currently comes from 2 main sources (1) national government allocations for DFGs (2) local partner council's contribution towards DFGs and discretionary grants.

Funding for works also includes the fees charged by Cambs HIA for managing works.

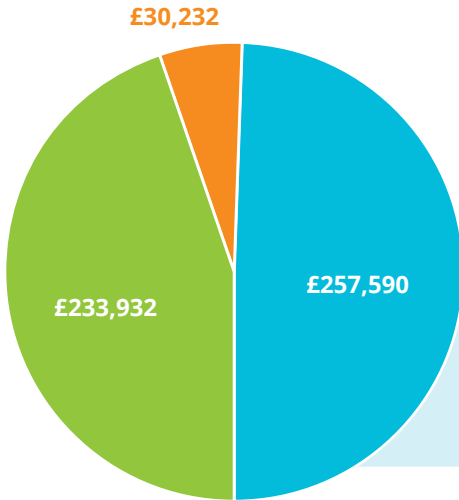
Capital funding 2013/14



* Home Repairs Assistance

Running Cambs HIA

Income 2013/14 - £521,754

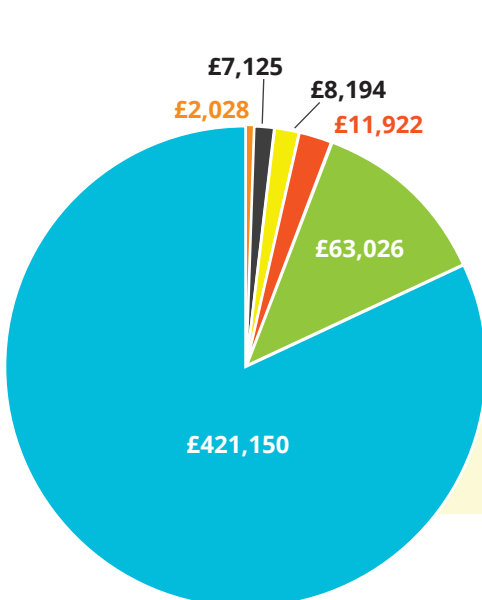


- HIA Fees
- External funding
- Other (including fees from private work, Landlord fees and client contributions)

Cambs HIA has been set up to be self-financing and we achieve this by charging fees based on a percentage of the costs of work we administer on behalf of our clients. Some landlords agree to contribute towards costs by paying the HIA fees.

Expenditure 2013/14 - £513,445

Staff costs make up 82% of our expenditure.



- Staff costs
- Office/Admin/Overheads
- Travel
- Consultants & Professional fees
- Rechargeable fee related costs
- Training/Conferences/Seminars

Our staff costs make up a large percentage of our overall expenditure. We have a highly dedicated team including a Manager, 6 Caseworkers, 4 Surveyors and 3 Admin staff.

Tell us what you think

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

We also welcome your views about our work - now and in the future.

If you are interested in taking part in developing our plans or influencing and supporting our work please let us know.

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