



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

Annual Review

2018 – 2019

Introduction

by our Lead Councillors

Following last year's success, the Agency continues to develop the way adaptations are delivered for disabled people across Cambridgeshire.

A new County Wide Adaptations Policy has been produced which will help standardise our approach to adaptations across the different district council areas. It provides greater flexibility to enable the Disabled Facilities Grant fund to be used more flexibly and in

the spirit of the objectives of the Better Care Fund. Similarly to last year, the government awarded a further £362 000 for the Disabled Facilities Budget (DFG) in 2018/19 which resulted in the agency completing over £4m worth of adaptations and repairs to homes across the area.

Cambs HIA is working positively with colleagues in Health and Social Care to review the client's pathway from request to receipt of an adaptation.

This has resulted in some new changes being considered which include placing an Occupational Therapist in the agency to support the existing staff who will also be newly trained Trusted Assessors. In turn, this will also mean that the Agency is well placed to implement some of the recommendations of the national government review on Disabled Facilities Grants including greater integrated working.



Cllr. Richard Johnson
Cambridge City
Council



Cllr. Hazel Smith
South Cambridgeshire
District Council



Cllr. Ryan Fuller
Huntingdonshire
District Council

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**



**Julie Fletcher,
Head of Housing
Strategy, South Cambs
District Council**



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



**Lisa Sparks,
Commissioner (Adults),
Cambridgeshire
County Council**



**Frances Swann,
Manager,
Cambs Home
Improvement Agency**



**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:

Last year we introduced a number of changes to improve the efficiency of our service. I am really pleased that this has resulted in our minor works being completed 11 weeks faster and major works being 19 weeks faster.

Our partner councils have invested a further £689400 above that awarded by government for disabled facilities grants enabling more people to remain living safely on their own home.

We have worked closely with Social Care and our staff have started to train as Trusted Assessors to help reduce the time our clients wait for particular adaptations ie: level access showers and to help reduce demand on busy Occupational Therapists.

We have reviewed our health and safety procedures for working in our client's homes and introduced new processes. We have also procured 8 new contractors to deliver our bathrooms and kitchen adaptations – the new contract will also help to improve efficiency.

Our thanks as always to the Occupational Therapists and clients whom we work with throughout the year.

– 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

This year we received £2,900,000 from government to ensure disabled adults and children can remain living independently in their own homes. The agency completed £3,880,000 worth of adaptations in our client's homes.

Cambs HIA continues to provide information and advice and refer clients on to other services who can meet their broader health and well-being needs. We have also worked with the new Specialist Housing Advisors to identify people who could be offered advice and support to move to more suitable properties.

For every £ spent on adapting a home there is significant savings to the Health service in terms of avoided admissions and falls prevention.

Cambs HIA also delivered £65,500 of repairs for elderly or disabled householders – this includes replacing boilers, roof repairs and remedying problems with damp or improving energy efficiency.

“The bathroom is nearly complete now and I just wanted to say thank you for all of your help.

I would also like to say how respectful and professional the contractor has been. Each and every one of the team have been great.”

Mr O



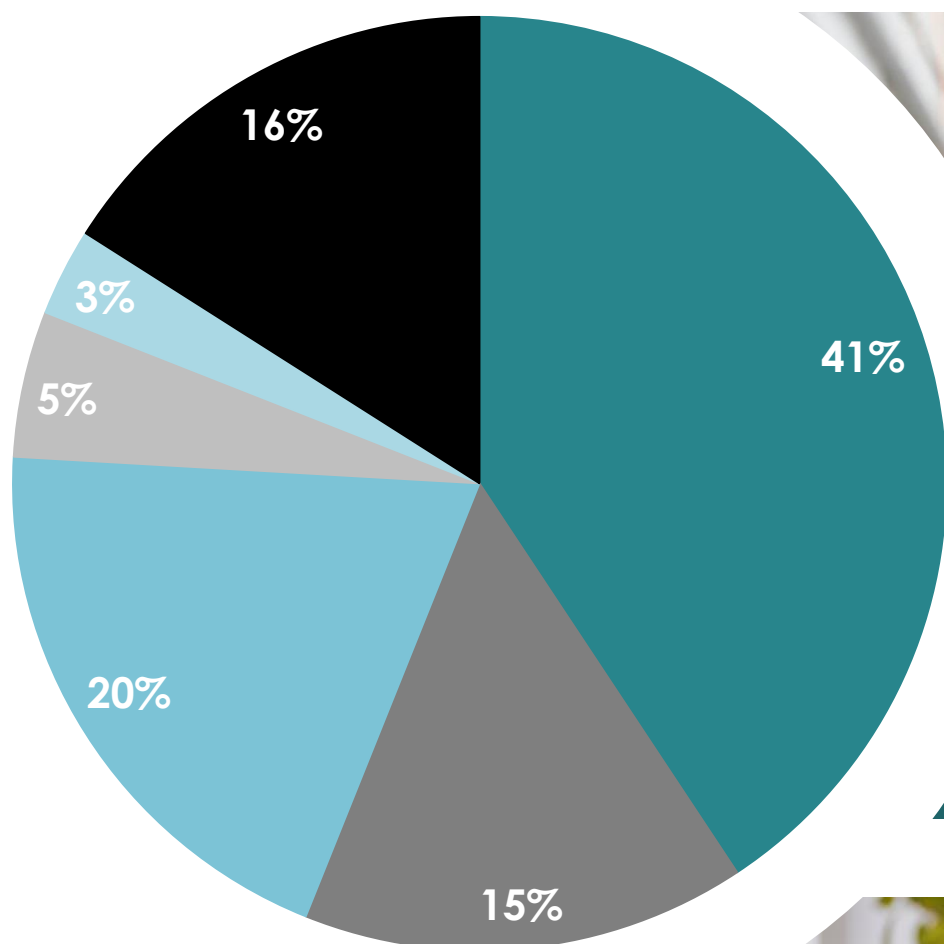
2018 – 2019: Highlights

Completed Works

In 2018/19 we helped **371** 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 £17,737 on top-up grants, over and above the cap – which is a 36% increase on the year before.

Types of DFG completed



- Bathing
- Equipment
- Access
- Toilet Facilities
- Extensions & Conversions
- Other



28

Repair grants completed across South Cambs & Cambridge City



53

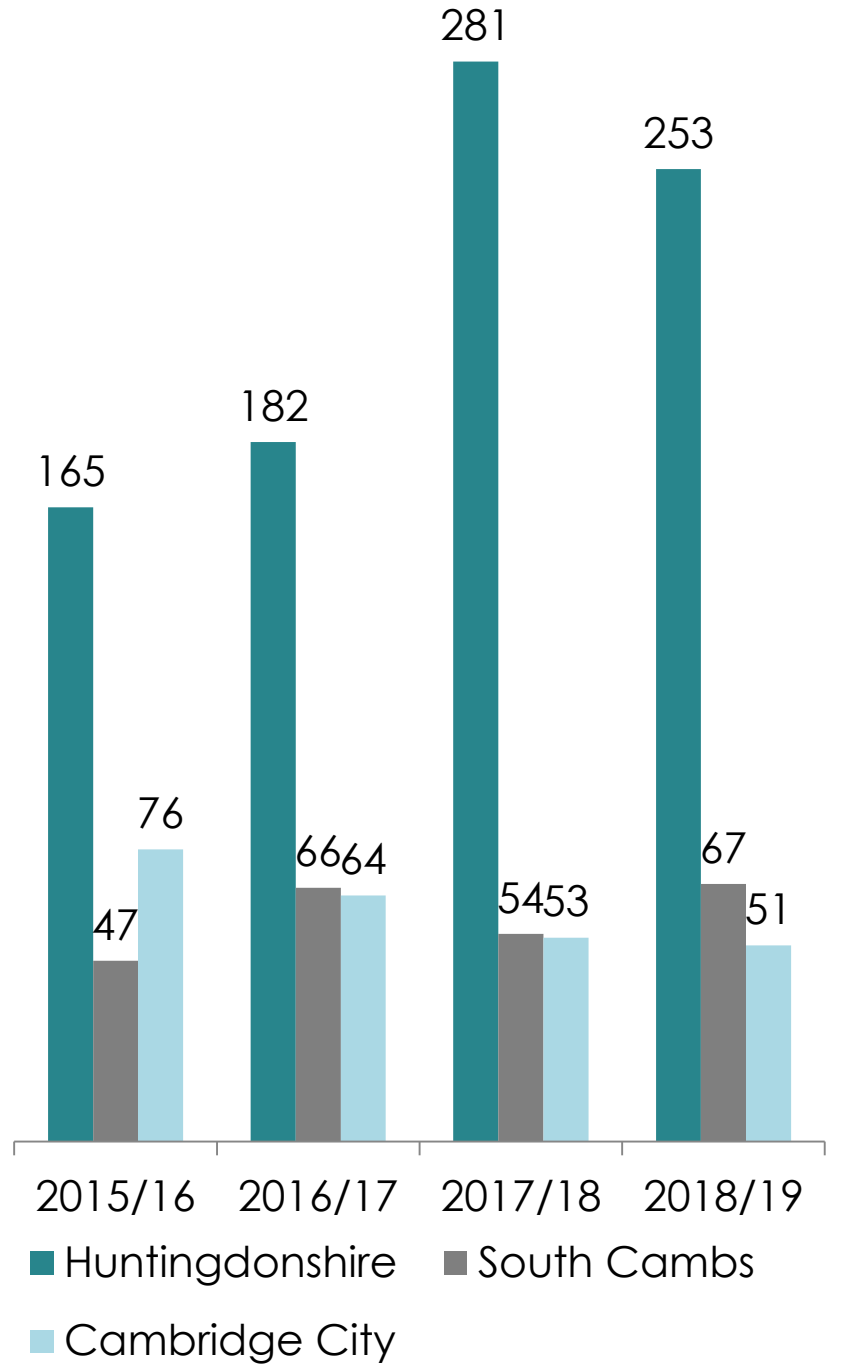
Grants provided for disabled children

358

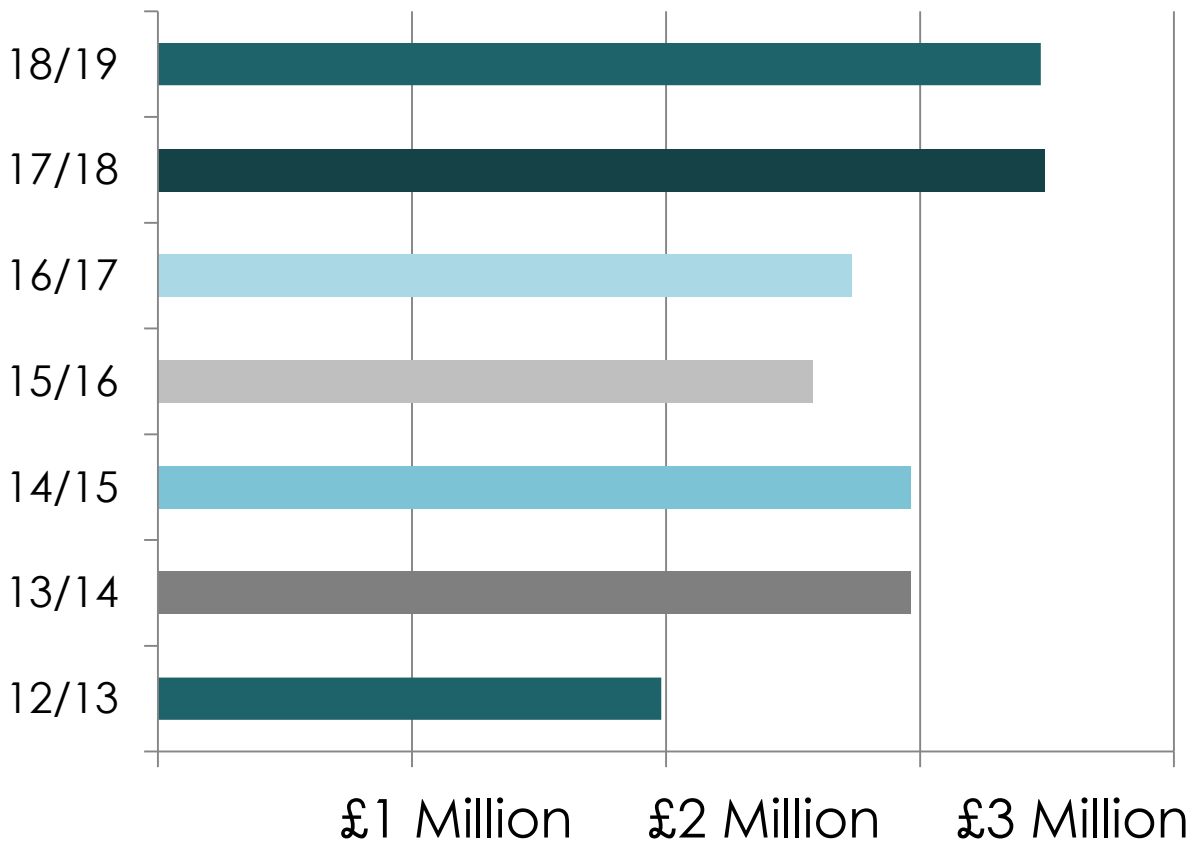
preliminary test of recourses completed to check client eligibility



Disabled Facilities Grants Completed



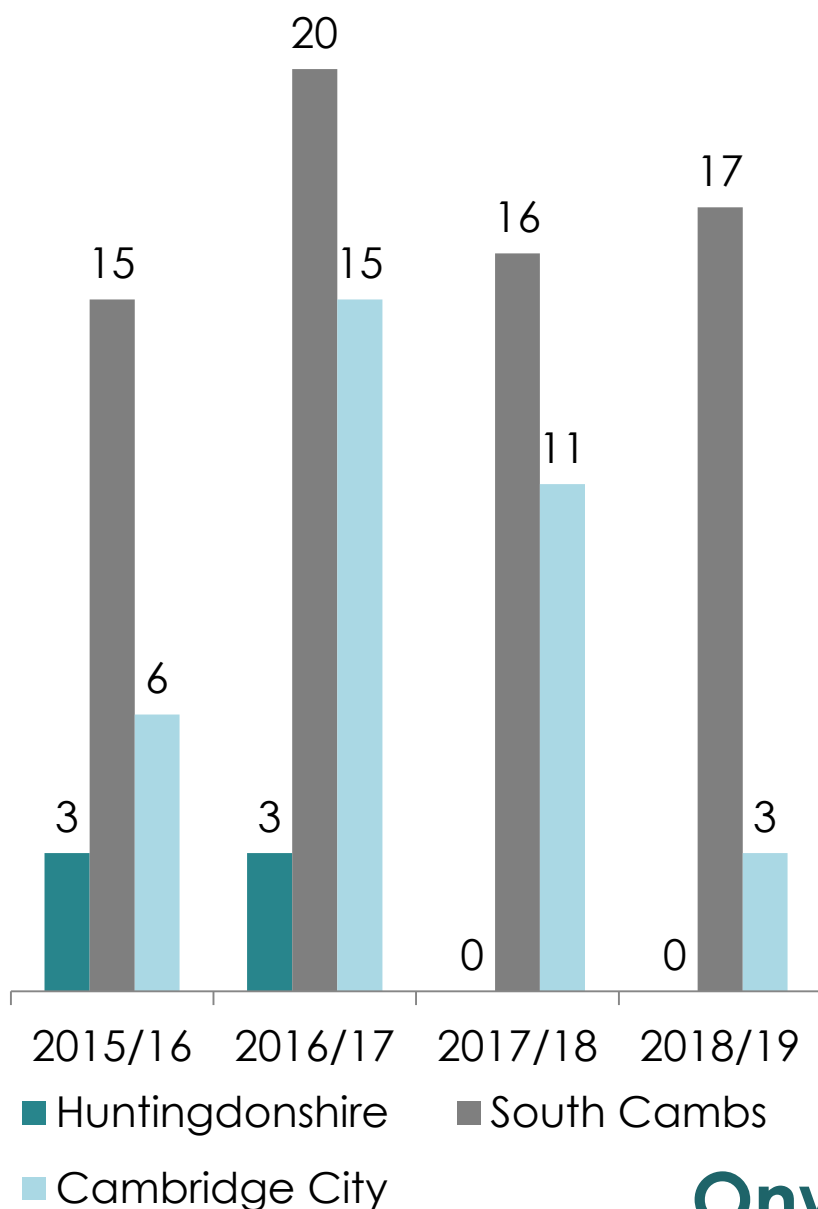
DFG Spend



“Anyone we’ve seen from start to finish has been very good, very friendly and very helpful. We are very happy with our Level Access Shower.”

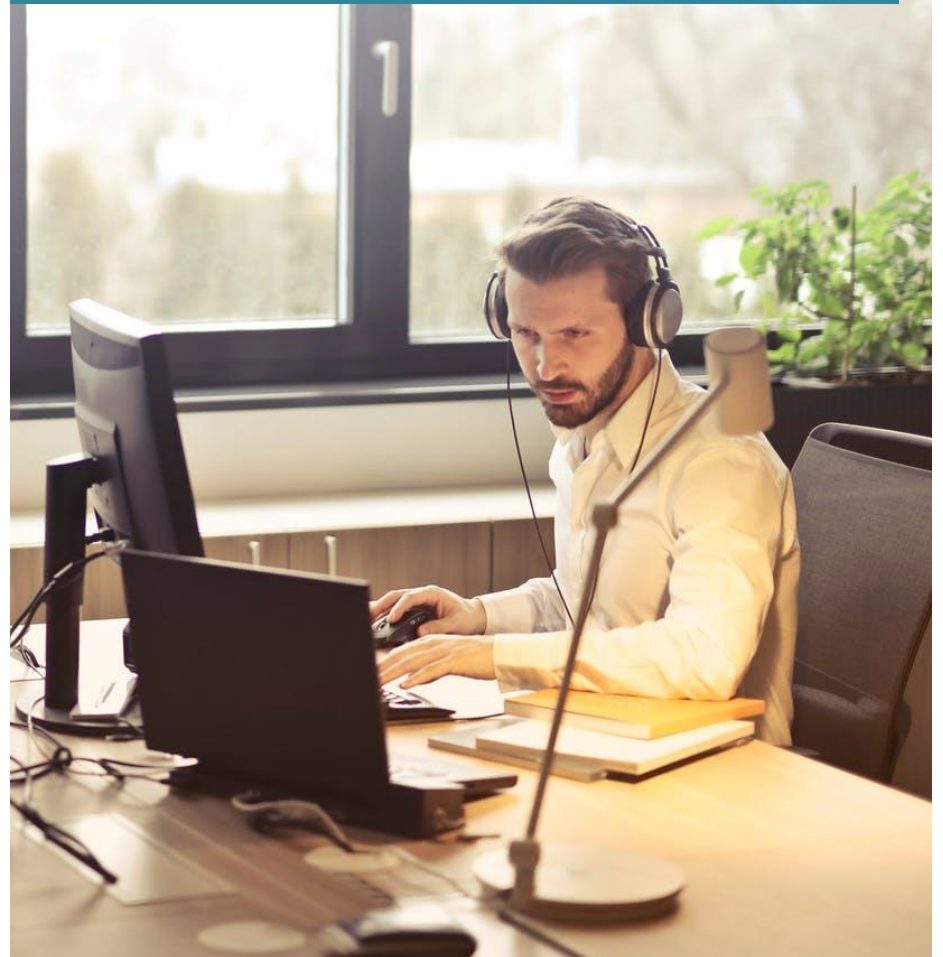
Mr & Mrs P

Repairs Grants Completed



9,000

phone calls were answered by the agency in 2018/19



Onward referrals

We made **111** 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



£3,594,602

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

172

People provided with ramped access allowing them access to the wider local community



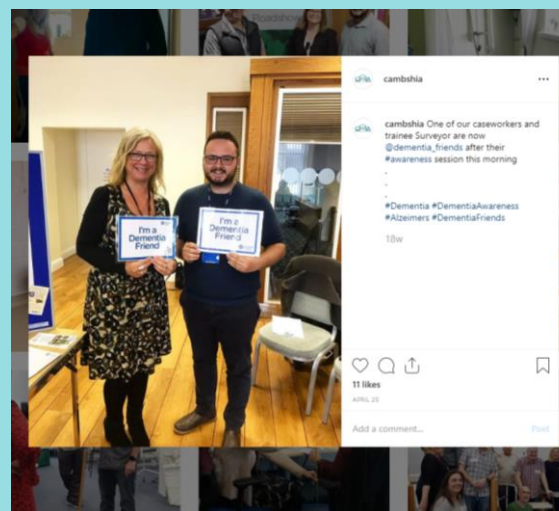
172

Adaptations completed for clients living in Social Housing, costing over £1.4m



9

Helped to tackle fuel poverty by installing new boilers and insulation



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

Trusted Assessor Training

Earlier this year Caseworkers and Surveyors from Cambs HIA attended Trusted Assessor Training (Level 3 & 4) in London.

The course enabled attendees from Cambs HIA, East Cambs and the County Council to learn the practical skills required to assess a person for minor aids and adaptations without the need for a full Occupational Therapy assessment. Throughout the course there were practical assessments, written tests and case study discussions.

The learning outcomes included:

- Assessing the individual, task, environment, other people/ factors
- Identify a need for equipment and be able confidently source the correct equipment.
- Understand environment factors that will impact on the ability in install adaptations using the Occupational Therapy model
- To be able to measure an individual for major adaptations
- To be able to understand ranges of products available within level access showers, ramps and stairlifts
- Recognise role of Trusted Assessors and understand when to refer clients back to OT service.

All Cambs HIA staff passed the course which means that they are now able to assess clients for simple adaptations, including ramps, grab rails, stair lifts and level access showers. Once an Occupational Therapist joins the team Cambs HIA staff will pilot a new assessment pathway for simple adaptations/equipment. This will take the pressure off the community OT's and help reduce the time the client has to wait.



Trialling New Materials

This year we trialled the use of waterproof wall panels, instead of conventional tiling, in a home in Huntingdonshire.

While inspecting this bathroom, the client asked our surveyor if it was possible to use panels rather than tiles after doing their own research into a similar product and asked if this was something we could provide.

After meeting a provider and discussing the details of using and fitting the panels, we decided to go ahead and trial the new product.

The panels come in a huge variety of colours and styles giving a modern and stylish effect while also having an easy to clean surface with no grout to harbour mould – at a price that is comparable with conventional tiling.

The bathroom was completed in a week.

“We’re literally over the moon! We cant commend them enough – we’re happy to show off our bathroom to anyone!” Mr & Mrs R



Putting up the panels



All finished!



Happy clients



Client Feedback:
“My raised toilet seat makes it easier to get up and the seat in the shower means I am able to wash without holding grab rails.”



Statement of Financial Activities

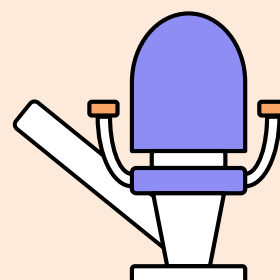
For 2017-2018, here are our statement of financial activities figures:

	31 March 2016	31 March 2017	31 March 2018	31 March 2019
Income				
HIA Fees	(260,472)	(274,162)	(434,953)	(438,622)
External Funding (Cambridgeshire County Council, etc.)	(233,932)	(233,932)	(159,188)	(127,490)
Other Income (including landlord & client contributions, & fees from private works)	(36,928)	(8,084)	(10,611)	(42,603)
Total Incoming Resources	(531,332)	(516,178)	(604,752)	(608,715)
Expenditure				
Cost of generating funds	533,504	540,467	427,413	506,700
Total Resources Expended	533,504	540,467	427,413	506,700
Net Incoming/outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses	2,172	24,289	(177,339)	(102,015)
Trading (Surplus) /Deficit b/f	(26,461)	(24,289)	0	(177,339)
Trading (Surplus) /Deficit c/f	(24,289)	0	(177,339)	(279,354)

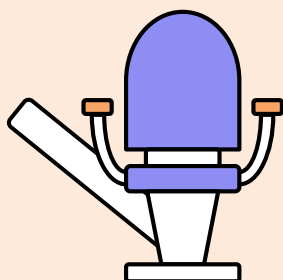
Last Year We...



...completed 371 Disabled Facilities Grants across the three districts totalling over £3,474,998



...tendered a new bathroom and kitchen framework to comply with procurement legislation



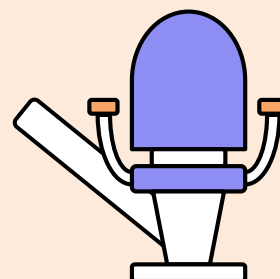
...created new leaflets for bathrooms and kitchens to allow our clients to get a better idea of the works we provide



...trials 3D design software to create realistic views of kitchens for our clients



...introduced new CDM procedures to ensure our contractors and clients are safe while works are onsite



...worked alongside the specialist fostering team to adapt a foster carers home

Our Aims for 2019-2020

Improve Performance by:

- Increasing the number of contractors available
- Developing and upskilling staff
- Working with Housing Associations to speed up the landlord consent process
- Trialling an OT in the agency to help speed up adaptations
- Developing a new Marketing Strategy



Improving Client Service:

- Procuring a new IT system that enables clients and OT's to receive updates on their work
- Promoting good news stories on our social media pages
- Using client feedback to agree new standards for our client service
- Providing more examples of the outcomes of means tests to help people to better understand eligibility



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:

- Using the new skills learned as Trusted Assessors
- Working with the County Council's Specialist Housing Advisors to encourage moving where practicable
- Looking at national best practice to further develop our services
- Working with Environmental Health to address hazards identified as part of Housing Health and Safety Assessments
- Targeting grants to help reduce fuel poverty



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.

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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