

Review of the Governance and Activities of Care & Repair

This is an independent report by CRG Research Limited commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government Housing Directorate. All views expressed are those of the Researchers.

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1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1 A range of studies (e.g. Mackintosh and Leather, 1992) have pointed to the preferences older people usually express for remaining in their own homes rather than staying in hospital or entering residential care – and the benefits which can ensue in health, economic and quality of life terms when they do. The Care and Repair movement was set up to support older and vulnerable people who wish to continue living independently in this way.
- 1.2 Care and Repair in Wales consists of Care and Repair Cymru (C&RC) and twenty-two local Agencies working towards a mission “*to ensure that all older and disabled people have access to housing services that enable them to live in housing that meets their individual needs.*” (Concordat, 2003).¹ There is a strong emphasis on owner-occupation: “*Care and Repair Agencies work to help older and disabled owner-occupiers to remain in their own homes, in their own communities, living as independently as possible...*” (C&RC, 2009).
- 1.3 The first Welsh Agencies were established in 1987 as a result of what was then the Welsh Office’s ‘Assisted Agency’ Initiative (Concordat, 2003). Further Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) funding¹ built upon this initial experience leading to an Agency becoming established in each Welsh Unitary Authority area.
- 1.4 In 1991, the Welsh Office established C&RC to develop the work of the Care and Repair movement in Wales. C&RC is now the national co-ordinating body supporting and advising local Agencies, as well as monitoring and evaluating them on behalf of WAG.
- 1.5 In June 2007, CRG Research Ltd, in association with Fortune Business Development, were commissioned by WAG to carry out a review with overall aims:
 - *“to determine whether the governance arrangements of the individual Care and Repair Agencies in Wales and of C&RC are*

¹ Especially the ‘Enhanced Funding’ arrangements introduced with effect from April 2003,

- *appropriate; and*
- *to evaluate the quality, value-for-money, effectiveness and impact of the services and activities of the individual Agencies and C&RC;*
- *in respect of governance, services and activities, to identify any scope for improvement and make recommendations." (Research Specification).*

1.6 The main elements of the review process took place between July 2007 and the winter of 2008 and included:

- A workshop for WAG, C&RC and Agency Managers in July 2007;
- A desk review of relevant policies, strategies, and research evidence for Wales and other parts of the UK;
- Eight case studies of local Agencies and an interview-based survey of the remaining thirteen Agencies²;
- Analysis of Agency planning, performance and management information;
- Semi-structured interviews with 16 C&RC personnel; eight C&RC Board Members; four WAG personnel; and nine national stakeholders;
- Reviewing C&RC planning, monitoring and performance documentation;
- Analysis and reporting: draft reports were submitted to WAG and the steering and reference groups established for the project.

1.7 This report begins with a brief overview of the context for Care and Repair operations, and then addresses Agency Services and Performance, Agency Funding and Governance, C&RC Services and Performance, and C&RC Funding and Governance in Chapters 2-5 respectively. Chapter 6 looks at Value-for-Money specifically and Chapter 7 provides Conclusions and Recommendations. The report is underpinned by extensive analyses of data from the desk research, interview and case study exercises, the subject of fuller reports to the steering and reference groups.

² During the review it was agreed not to include the Care and Repair Agency in Conwy, which was subject to direct management by C&RC at that time.

Care and Repair Structures

1.8 Figure 1 summarises key links between WAG, C&RC and the Agencies^{3,4} at the time of the review. Arrangements were complicated somewhat by four different Agency models (we return to these models and other formal arrangements in Chapter 3) but key points to note include:

- C&RC acting as the focal point for gathering and reviewing monitoring information and claims data from Agencies, and submitting it to WAG;
- WAG distributing funds to Agencies on the recommendation of C&RC, based on this data;
- The formal independence of the Agencies⁵, each with its own Board, financial responsibilities, links to other local organisations, etc;
- Local-level arrangements (normally through Strategic Business Planning Committees (SBPCs)) for coordination and joint planning with local authorities and other organisations;
- Significant management roles for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in managed and subsidiary Agencies – but not in others.

1.9 Relationships between C&RC and both WAG and individual Agencies were summarised in two Concordats “*intended to be binding in honour only*” (Concordat, 2003 for WAG; Concordat, 2007 for Agencies). The Concordats gave general principles and expectations, from which more detailed annual business plans and other material were developed.

1.10 Desk research and key informant interviews for the review confirmed that Care and Repair aligned well with important WAG policies and reports, including ‘*Better Homes for People in Wales*’ (WAG, 2001a) and ‘*Housing for Older People*’ (WAG, 2003). ‘*Living Longer Living Better*’ (WAG, 2007c) reaffirms the important role of housing for healthy ageing, also noted in the ‘*Strategy for Older People in Wales*’ (WAG, 2007a).

³ Figure 1 inevitably simplifies relationships, particularly Board-level representation from local organisations, informal contacts between individuals with functions at both local and all-Wales levels.

⁴ Details of C&RC and Agency structure and links to other bodies are given in Chapters 2-5.

⁵ The single directly managed Agency was a temporary exception.

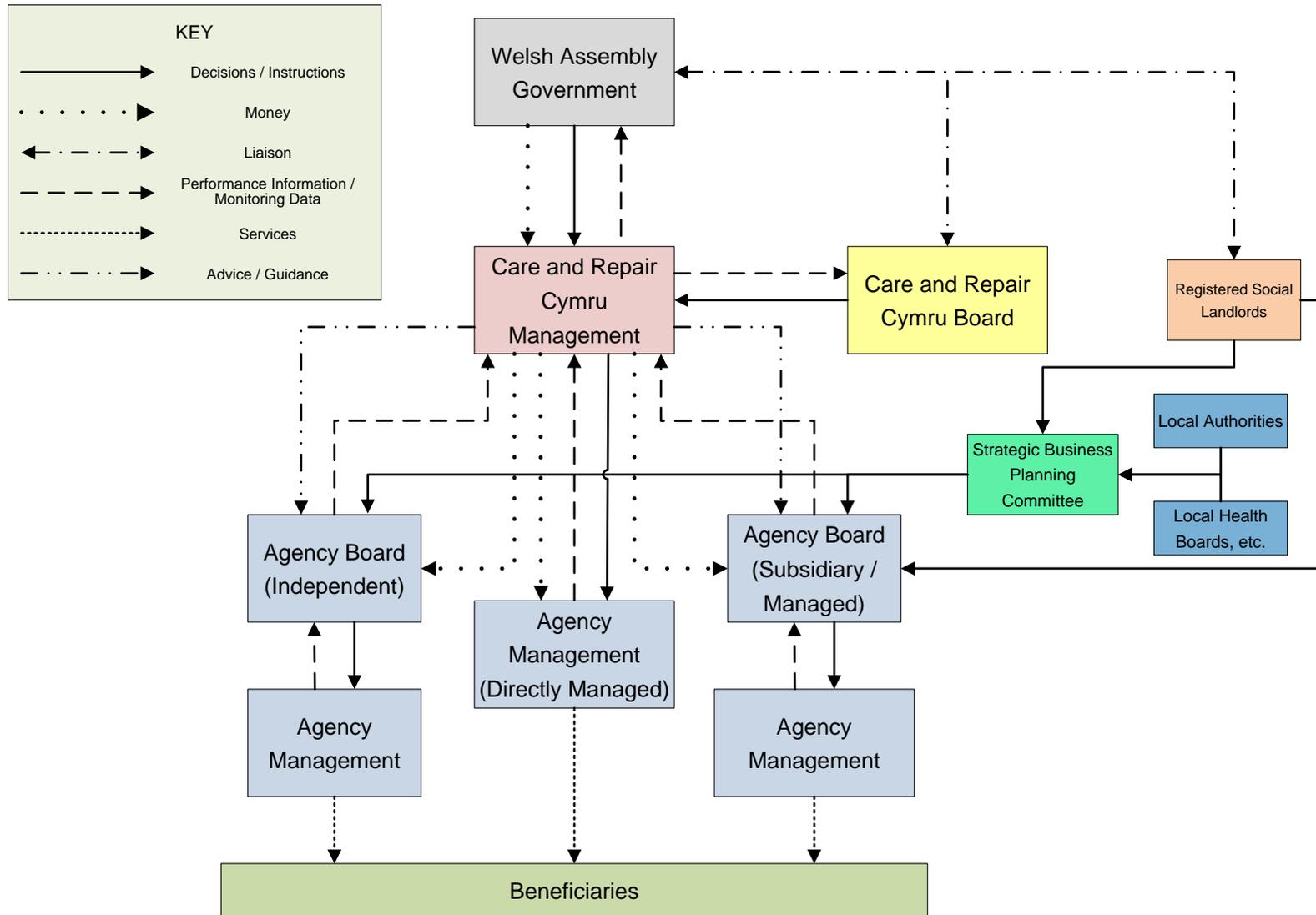
1.11 At local level, further measures supported independent living, including Health and Social Care and Well-Being Strategies; Social Care Plans; and Older People Commissioning Plans. Local Authorities had appointed Strategy Co-ordinators and Older People's Champions to drive forward these strategies. The remit for Agencies' SBPCs included aligning local Agency Business Plans with these plans and strategies.

Care and Repair Services

1.12 At the time of the review, Care and Repair services in Wales were available to those living in private sector housing only – primarily owner-occupiers. The 'core' service was funded by WAG and centred on a caseworker's 'holistic' assessment of the needs of a client wishing to stay in their own home, then advice and a 'brokerage' service to find ways of meeting these needs – sometimes through the Agency's own services, sometimes through other services.

1.13 Various 'additional' services (such as handypersons carrying out minor repairs, or gardening) **could** be delivered by Agencies, funded from other sources to provide varied 'local service solutions'. We consider the range of services which clients might be able to access in more detail in Chapter 2.

Figure 1: Relationships Between Welsh Assembly Government, Care and Repair Cymru and Care and Repair Agencies



Context

- 1.14 Demand for Care and Repair services is predicted to rise: the 2007 figure of 20.7%⁶ of the Welsh population above the pension age⁷ is expected to grow to 24.3% by 2031 (ONS, 2008).
- 1.15 Since the Care and Repair movement started in Wales there have been major changes to the housing stock. The physical condition of much Welsh private housing remained a matter for concern in the early 1990s, but this was barely so at the time of the review.
- 1.16 Further, almost all homeowners had seen major increases in the capital value of their property. Welsh house prices rose on average by 191% in the decade to the end of 2007 (Nationwide, 2008). These capital values had implications for Care and Repair through some older people transferring ownership of their properties to relatives for tax planning or to avoid care charges (Age Concern, 2008) – technically becoming tenants rather than owner-occupiers.
- 1.17 The private rented sector provided much less accommodation for older people than owner-occupation, but as Table 1 shows, in 2007 around 40,000 households living in private rented sector homes were headed by someone over 50. The 2004 Living in Wales survey showed that private sector rented homes were nearly three times as likely to be categorised as ‘unfit’ as owner-occupied property (12.2% compared to 4.3%).

Table 1: Age of Head of Household in Owner-Occupied and Private Rented Sector Housing in Wales: 2007

Age of Household Head	Owner Occupied (O/O)	Private Rented Sector (PRS)
50-64	282,924	22,055
65-79	211,370	11,294
Over 80	74,431	5,975
Total	568,725 (61.3% of all O/O)	39,324 (29.1% of all PRS)

[Source: Living in Wales Survey: 2007]

⁶ 2007 mid-year estimate

- 1.18 *'The Provision in Wales of Housing-Related Goods, Services and Advice to Older People in their Homes'* (WAG, 2007) found significant diversity throughout Wales in service provision, availability, and charges to users. As well as Care and Repair Agencies, services came from the commercial sector, statutory organisations (Local Authorities, Health Service, etc.), and the voluntary sector (Age Concern, Red Cross, etc.), but varied appreciably in different locations. These patterns were confirmed in case studies and interviews for this review.
- 1.19 Desk research indicated that Welsh Care and Repair service arrangements had largely been 'Made in Wales' in a partnership between WAG, C&RC and the Agencies. In other parts of the UK similar policies had been developed which recognised the needs of vulnerable people and encouraged strong links between housing and health, increased joined-up thinking across public services, and delivery through effective partnerships between statutory and voluntary Agencies⁸.
- 1.20 Yet differences in Care and Repair arrangements had become apparent through Agencies in England and Scotland not always being tied to local authority boundaries, and a competitive bidding process leading to the appointment of Foundations as the National Co-ordinating Body for Care and Repair in England.

⁷ As at 2007.

⁸ Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) in England; Care and Repair Projects in Scotland.

2. Care and Repair Agencies: Services and Performance

2.1 In this Chapter we examine the two principal groups of Care and Repair services: 'core' services (sometimes referred to as 'formal' services) and 'additional' services. The main sources of data were interviews with Agency staff and other local stakeholders, and inspecting information held by the Agencies themselves – with data from C&RC, key informants and other sources being used to complement and 'triangulate' data from Agencies alone.

Core Service

2.2 The Concordat between C&RC and WAG gave a broad framework for the WAG-funded 'core' service: "*Essentially, this will include the appropriate level of casework and technical resources to secure a customer focused, problem-led service within each county in Wales*" (Concordat, 2007). Accordingly, an older person receiving the 'core' service could expect:

- Referral from a number of sources (social services, self-referral, hospital discharge, Occupational Therapists, etc.);
- Contact with a caseworker;
- Advice where appropriate (e.g. on benefits);
- Minor works where appropriate (e.g. handrails);
- Additional Agency services where appropriate (e.g. help with small works through handypersons services);
- Access to other relevant services (e.g. home energy services, the 'bobby van' scheme⁹, WAG-funded Rapid Response Adaptations Programme (RRAP), Age Concern volunteers).

Additional Services

2.3 The term 'additional services' is really shorthand for services funded through various 'non-core' routes including local authorities, BIG Lottery and charitable sources. Locally negotiated through the opportunism and hard work of Agency Managers, Board Members and staff, Agencies' additional services might deliver:

- A handyperson service for very small jobs such as changing a light bulb - sometimes at a charge¹⁰, sometimes free to the user;
- A comprehensive Home Maintenance Pack¹¹;
- Recommended lists of local builders or tradespersons;
- A gardening service;
- A painting and decorating service;
- Access to a stair lift or shower grant;
- Help to access charitable funding for home improvements;
- Assistance to complete welfare benefit forms and submit them, especially for Attendance Allowance or Pension Credit;
- Advice and installation of Telecare systems;
- A service funded by Social Services to fit small adaptations, for example grab rails or ramps.

2.4 Figure 2 summarises overall service delivery patterns. Points to note include:

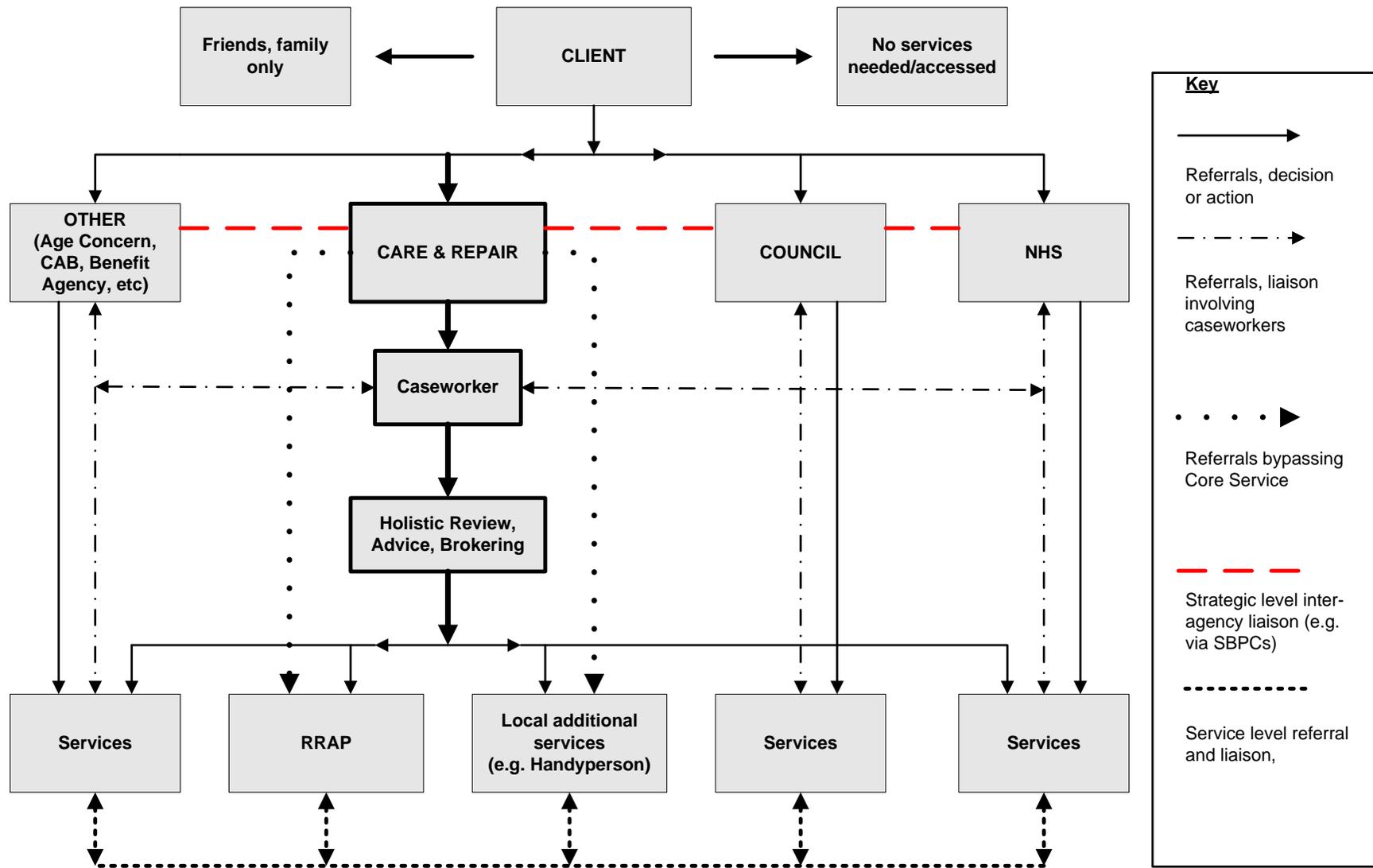
- For potential Care and Repair clients, options for accessing support from other organisations, or friends and relatives; the review also indicated significant potential 'latent demand,' considered below;
- A relatively complex picture of service provision, involving Care and Repair, local authorities, Health Service, voluntary groups, etc.;
- The importance of the 'core service' route for accessing services (emboldened in Fig. 2) through the 'holistic' assessment, but many ways of by-passing the assessment, either through a direct client approach to service deliverers or referral from other bodies;
- Options for varied local support because of different 'additional' services; the varying local presence of different organisations; varied eligibility criteria, etc.

⁹ A scheme offering enhanced physical protection for the home.

¹⁰ Charges are often made for materials only.

¹¹ Care and Repair England and C&RC first produced a Home Maintenance Pack in the early 1990s. C&RC was able to provide every Agency in Wales with a model document to modify for their county/area funded by public money. In Wales many Agencies derived from one produced in 2005 by Care and Repair RCT.

Figure 2: Care & Repair in Wales: Service Provision Patterns



Agency Performance

- 2.5 The review considered data from a number of sources about Agency performance. Some concerns arose about inconsistent definitions (e.g. of 'repeat clients') and what seemed to be arithmetical and transcription errors in some internal datasets, perhaps due to inadequate training or validation at Agency and C&RC levels.
- 2.6 Replacing the Client Management System¹² (CMS) database was being considered at the time of the review and it is important not to overstate the review team's concerns about overall accuracy levels, but there is some need for caution about the in-house data and the significance of patterns these figures indicate. Nevertheless analysis of this data and discussions with Agencies and C&RC which it prompted pointed to:
- Wide variations in, for example, times to first visit and average days to case completion. Some variation was linked to different service patterns or definitions, some was harder to explain;
 - Major variations in Agencies' financial ratios: the average cost to WAG per client ranged from £59-£318 for all clients; £83-£527 for new clients only – again often linked to different service patterns, but sometimes less easy to explain;
 - Many interviewees were cautious about Agency client satisfaction data¹³ but at face value results were impressive. For 2006/07, with a response rate of 56%,¹⁴ 91% recorded 'high' satisfaction.
 - A relatively high proportion of 'repeat clients' (41% in 2005/06; 44% in 2006/07). For C&RC a 'holistic' assessment should usually lead to appropriate actions and the case closed (C&RC, 2007c). Most Agency Managers interviewed saw high levels of repeat clients showing they "*continued to help people live independently*".

Prioritisation and Targeting

- 2.7 Given limited resources, and the attractiveness of the Care and Repair 'offer', it seemed from the case studies that demand could be

¹² Sometimes referred to as Contact Management System

¹³ Primarily due to variations in the way client satisfaction forms are administered e.g. some are case worker administered questionnaires completed with the client on a face-to-face basis, some are postal surveys either of a stratified or purposeful sample of clients. One of the questions concerns whether a person has been enabled to remain in their own home because of the service they have received. Interviewees informed us that many of their clients would be unwilling to consider leaving their own homes under any circumstances.

in danger of far outstripping supply. Agencies took most of their referrals from Social Services or word-of-mouth contacts, with levels of advertising typically being modest, but this could mean that people with high levels of need remained unaware of the service.

- 2.8 When workloads were high, Agencies focused their services on the most needy by varying their eligibility criteria for different levels of service. More than half of the Agencies had increased the minimum age to tackle excess demand, often by utilising a points system (as in Neath Port Talbot and Powys) with age as one of several variables.
- 2.9 The minimum client age was often quoted as 60, with the exception of some younger disabled clients. On average across Wales, statistics collated by C&RC indicated that 8% of Agency clients were younger than 60 years old. This rose to 13% in Powys and 15% in Denbighshire.
- 2.10 By combining C&RC and Office for National Statistics (ONS) data, it was possible to estimate the proportion of the Welsh population using their local Agency services during 2006/07 as 4.6% for those aged 60 and over; for those aged 75 and over, 8%. At a local level, these figures varied from 1.4% to 8.7% for those aged 60 and over; and 2.1% to 17.8% for those aged 75 and over. With these relatively low levels of 'market penetration' and little local awareness-raising about the availability of services, the interview programmes suggested the likelihood of considerable 'latent demand' for Care and Repair services, although there was little direct evidence of its scale.

Patterns of Provision

- 2.11 Confirming the patterns identified in *'The Provision in Wales of Housing-Related Goods, Services and Advice to Older People in their Homes'* (WAG, 2007), individuals with similar needs in different areas might experience different responses from local Agencies and other organisations. Access to the 'core' service could vary in terms of eligibility and local priorities. 'Additional' services ('solutions') varied widely, depending on what funding Agencies had attracted, and services provided by other organisations. In twelve Agencies, the 'core' service represented less than 50% of cases dealt with in 2006/07; in

¹⁴ 7,253 completed returns

eight it was below 30% (C&RC, 2007a). In the other cases, specific services (e.g. handyperson, RRAP) were accessed direct, without a 'holistic' prior assessment.

- 2.12 For a minority of interviewees, this variation was not a matter of concern, merely a reflection of the need to develop appropriate local responses to needs in a local context. Yet around half of all interviewees, from across the movement, suggested that Agencies should achieve more consistency. Concerns included the view that the 'core' service should be seen to be identical across Wales. There were also concerns about how the movement may be perceived by other bodies and the public if varied local solutions blurred the understanding of what Care and Repair 'is all about'.
- 2.13 Interviews pointed to different opinions about local service provision leading to some tension between C&RC and individual Agencies. Greater consistency might imply more central control and direction from C&RC, but Agencies are independent entities, able to contract to deliver services with a variety of funders, and argued that detailed local arrangements were matters for them.
- 2.14 C&RC staff stressed the importance of focusing on holistic casework assessments, defined by the needs of the client, with Agencies offering an impartial, brokering role, not a 'solution-led' service with clients tending to be directed to what the Agency happened to offer locally.
- 2.15 However, Agencies and local partners indicated that a holistic case work assessment to all clients could not be guaranteed, that Agencies' 'additional services' provided valuable benefits to clients, and the potential dangers of 'solution-led' responses in practice rarely arose.
- 2.16 CRC's Board of Management (C&RC, 2007) noted the prospect of some *"very challenging discussions at Board and SBPC level"* with *"on-going pressure from local stakeholders who see Care and Repair's value as being that of handyperson services... the traditional assessment role of Care and Repair's 'core' service is potentially being overshadowed by the range of local off-the-shelf solutions."*

3. Care and Repair Agencies: Funding and Governance

- 3.1 This Chapter reviews key aspects of Agency funding and governance, including arrangements for strategic planning and review, the accountability and effectiveness of Agencies, the suitability of the governance models currently in operation, and the processes for bidding and accounting for funds.
- 3.2 It draws particularly on the case study and survey data collected from individual Agencies, key informant interviews (particularly with C&RC staff and Board members), and reviewing papers including the Concordat agreed between each Agency and C&RC, terms and conditions for payment of grants, annual plans, reports and reviews.

Governance Models

- 3.3 At the time of the review there were four groups of governance models for Agencies in Wales, namely:
- Seven 'independent' Agencies which were independent entities, registered as Industrial & Provident Societies with Charitable Purposes;
 - Five 'subsidiary' Agencies which were registered as Industrial & Provident Societies with Charitable Purposes but which were wholly owned subsidiaries of Housing Associations (often termed Registered Social Landlords (RSLs));
 - Nine 'managed' Agencies which were departments of the RSLs which owned them;
 - One Agency 'directly managed' by C&RC, for a temporary period.¹⁵

¹⁵ This Agency (Conwy) was agreed to be outside the scope of this evaluation

- 3.4 Governance is often seen as being specific to particular sectors (Nolan, 1996), so the position of Agencies in the ‘third sector’ needs to be borne in mind, with their “*main focus ... to deliver social benefit in a variety of forms, rather than to generate profit...*” (WCVA, 2008). In the third sector, “*trustees take ultimate responsibility for the governance of their organisations,*” within “*the principles ... defined by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Nolan, 1996): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.*” (ACEVO, 2005, p.4).
- 3.5 Governance models might change over time: three independent Agencies – Bridgend County Care and Repair, Flintshire Care and Repair and Merthyr Care and Repair - had been managed by Wales and West Housing Association until April 2006. Powys and Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Agencies were formed in April 2003 by merging earlier Agencies, with both new organisations being formed as subsidiaries of Housing Associations.
- 3.6 In terms of governance, the key difference identified by the review was between independent Agencies and the rest. In the past several managed and subsidiary Agencies had encountered difficulties. In principle, however managed and subsidiary agencies had access to resources and expertise from their ‘parent’ RSL in ways not available to independent agencies. Independent Agencies had to develop their own capabilities or make direct arrangements for outside support they needed. The single Agency directly managed by C&RC was treated as a special case outside the scope of this review.
- 3.7 It was difficult to point to any correlations between ownership/governance models, client numbers, staff numbers, costs or local demographics (particularly proportions of older people). The most important influence on key variables seemed to be, simply, different service delivery characteristics – high numbers of clients per member of staff at Wrexham and the Vale, for example, appeared to be associated with a high level of small works.

Governance Model Characteristics

- 3.9 The case study, survey and interview data was used by the review team to generate the SWOT analysis given in Table 2. This pointed to both positive and negative aspects in each of the governance models. To some extent an area of strength (the perceived greater objectivity and focus on the client group in independent Agencies for example) might lead directly to a potential weakness (independent Agencies' fewer managerial 'checks and balances', for example).
- 3.10 This meant that almost any version of the four governance models could work well for particular organisations, given effective arrangements in key areas including managerial skills, SBPC membership and links with Local Authorities. But equally, each of the models had potential limitations unless Agencies were well managed at a local level.
- 3.11 All interviewees stressed the need to minimise the risks of Agencies 'failing' or running into difficulties and therefore needing outside interventions which would reflect badly on the movement as a whole. It seemed that no model could entirely guarantee this (with the possible exception of direct management).

Table 2: SWOT Analysis of the different Agency ownership and governance models

	Independent	Subsidiary	Managed	Direct Management by C&RC
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager and Board able to develop and implement policy locally • Transparent processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from parent: HR/IT/ Finance • Management support, mentoring for Agency Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from parent: HR/IT/ Finance • Support, mentoring for Agency manager • Less vulnerability • Local partners feel security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for greater consistency • Simpler monitoring and reporting to WAG
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less access to mentoring and support • Need capable and committed Board members • Less clarity between roles of Board and SBPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible differences in ethos: Care and Repair and RSL • Possible reluctance to adopt all-Wales Care and Repair systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less transparency, e.g. allocating surpluses, reserves • Danger of clashes, possible differences in ethos: Care and Repair and RSL • In some cases Agency has no Board or advisory committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in local partner commitment • Less responsive to local needs/ circumstances • Less scope for innovation • External funders may be less supportive of pan-Wales approaches
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency may pay less for its management support services so cost savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for sharing resources and financial savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for sharing resources and financial savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of scale: procurement, training, etc. • Greater opportunities for staff progression
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct management costs could be higher • Vulnerable: Agency succeeds or fails by Managers' and Directors' skills and abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency may use group services even if unsuitable/ uncompetitive • Manager's loyalty could be divided in case of policy disagreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management recharges may be high • Agency may not be visible within RSL structure • Manager's loyalty could be divided • RSL prioritises fee-generation rather than Care and Repair goals • Parent may be remote geographically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be higher overhead costs • Major restructuring changes inevitable • Loss of goodwill amongst local Managers and Boards

4. Care and Repair Cymru: Services and Performance

- 4.1 This Chapter considers C&RC's roles and performance including "*the value added to the work of Agencies by C&RC (e.g. through raising their profile, national representation, providing training, direct support and advice, monitoring performance)*"; "*the value brought to the Assembly Government and to national partnerships by C&RC*"; and "*the contribution made by Care and Repair to the Assembly Government's older people's policies*" (Research Specification).
- 4.2 Data for this Chapter comes principally from interviews, records and datasets from C&RC itself, but also takes into account the views of Agencies and other stakeholders.
- 4.3 At the time of the review, C&RC performed functions which could be categorised as:
- Assisting Agencies to deliver high quality services to meet the housing needs of older and disabled people in their communities;
 - Bringing the housing needs of older and disabled people to the attention of policy makers, practitioners and the public;
 - Monitoring the effective use of public funds on behalf of WAG;
 - Administering the RRAP on behalf of WAG.
- 4.4 At the time of the review, C&RC had 17 staff, headed by the Chief Executive, with five Agency Business Managers (ABMs) and a range of specialist, administrative and support colleagues (detailed structures and responsibilities changed during the course of the review). WAG provided most of C&RC's funding: £576,000 for 2006/07 rising to £650,000 for 2007/08.

C&RC and the Agencies

- 4.5 The interviews carried out for the review indicated that relationships between C&RC and Agencies were complex – often harmonious and effective, sometimes less so.
- 4.6 All C&RC staff were clear that their role was to **advise** Agencies, with no formal powers of control or regulation. In practice the position seemed to be more complex than this, with important distinctions between the ‘core’ service and other services. The formal position over finance for the core service was that *"The Assembly makes direct quarterly payments to each individual Agency on the recommendation of C&RC"* (Concordat, 2003) – so C&RC had major responsibilities for scrutiny, checking claims and allied tasks.
- 4.7 For ‘additional’ services, C&RC could certainly advise but it did not have the same responsibilities nor opportunities to influence, because no WAG funding was involved. Agencies needed to make appropriate arrangements for meeting the requirements set by BIG Lottery, private trusts, Local Authorities or other funders. Yet at least 75% of Agency Managers and local partners/stakeholders referred to *"requirements"* from C&RC about financial scrutiny of non-core services. For most of these individuals, C&RC’s roles for ‘additional services/ local solutions’ would benefit from clarification.
- 4.8 There was no doubt for the review team that support to Agencies from C&RC over many years had been substantial and valuable. For many Agencies, however, the position had changed and they now sought less guidance from C&RC. Several interviewees indicated that close links to C&RC could lead to avoidance of appropriate responsibility by Agency managers. One interviewee summarised these concerns as: *"if there is always C&RC to pass the issue onto ... there’s an easy way out for Boards and managers who should be doing their jobs"*.
- 4.9 On a day-to-day basis, C&RC’s contacts with Agencies were channelled through Agency Business Managers (ABMs). C&RC’s annual Agency satisfaction survey for 2007 suggested that many Agencies did not find this support particularly useful. For this review, more than half of the Agency managers interviewed questioned the value of ABM support. Even where support was highly valued, the

frequency of visits and contacts was questioned by over half of these interviewees, although they were often sympathetic to competing demands on ABMs' time.

- 4.10 A complicating factor in Agencies' links to C&RC seemed to have been high staff turnover at C&RC, and ensuing 'corporate amnesia' (see C&RC, 2007a). In the two years after October 2005, nine people left C&RC, eight having more than one year's service. More than half of Agency managers interviewed referred to high C&RC staff turnover; a number of Agencies also have new staff teams. These changes seemed to have constrained shared understanding and joint working.

C&RC Roles

- 4.11 Over three quarters of Agency staff and managers interviewed acknowledged that the training and development provided by C&RC had improved in recent years, responding effectively to requests for more tightly structured events, greater use of external experts, and coverage of specific issues (most commonly, technical information).
- 4.12 Agency Managers and Board Members valued the presence of C&RC at national events and in the media. Many believed this had enhanced the movement's profile nationally and locally with clients and partners.
- 4.13 C&RC provided Agency Managers, staff and local partners with information about the national policy environment in Wales and more widely through a number of channels including:
- National conferences and events;
 - Training courses and programmes;
 - Networking events and forums;
 - An e-mail newsletter and regular mail-outs (at least monthly);
 - ABMs providing a link between C&RC and the Agencies.
- 4.14 Yet many Agencies described themselves as "*under-informed*" in several areas. C&RC's website (www.careandrepair.org.uk) was redesigned during the summer of 2008 giving, in principle, a cost-effective way to disseminate policy and guidance to Agencies. The review took place before this upgrade: at that time, a majority of

Agency-based interviewees who expressed a view either did not use the website at all or considered its information limited or out-of-date.¹⁶

- 4.15 The review gathered many views about C&RC roles *individually* – many being very positive. Different issues arose when looking at these roles *taken together*. Just under half of the Agency managers and about a third of the Chairs of Boards or Parent RSLs interviewed had concerns about whether C&RC can support and nurture Agencies on the one hand, *and* take responsibility for the effective use of public funds and what they saw as ‘regulating’¹⁷ the movement on the other.
- 4.16 Most Agency Managers, Chairs and Chief Executives of parent RSLs saw C&RC’s very close links with WAG representing at least a degree of power over their Agency’s whole financial position, and hence viability. A minority of Agency managers reported feeling uncomfortable when asking C&RC for support or highlighting problems - although they often noted that ABMs and others had been helpful to them in the past.
- 4.17 Different Care and Repair roles have been allocated to different organisations in England, but this was not suggested by our interviewees as appropriate for Wales, which is, of course, very much smaller. Other organisations in Wales¹⁸ have reacted by separating roles internally, sometimes with ‘Chinese walls’ to distinguish between ‘nurturing’ and ‘scrutinising’ activities. In one case¹⁹ a member of staff outside any service function reports directly to the Chief Executive for monitoring performance and auditing service delivery.

¹⁶ Policy Update information at 3.03.08 was clearly written in, and referring to information and events in 2006, although press releases were up to date.

¹⁷ It must be stressed that neither Care & Repair Cymru nor the Housing Directorate of WAG use this term, and both argue that it is not a regulatory role in the statutory sense.

¹⁸ e.g. WCVA

¹⁹ WCVA

5. Care and Repair Cymru: Funding and Governance

- 5.1 In this Chapter we address the governance, funding and overall structure of C&RC, as well as governance in a number of other organisations.
- 5.2 Findings are based on interviews with C&RC personnel and members of the Board; attendance at Board Meetings; and a review of documentation relating to C&RC's internal management systems and processes, and relationships between WAG and C&RC.
- 5.3 Overall governance findings were mapped against the Third Sector Code of Governance (ACEVO, 2005), developed for the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations to give a comprehensive approach to third sector governance issues.

Formal Arrangements

- 5.4 The review confirmed that the statutory basis for funding C&RC is clear: *“WAG contributes to the ‘core’ funding of C&RC and individual Care and Repair Agencies under Section 169 (6) (7) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989”* (Concordat, 2007) giving WAG powers to provide financial assistance for the maintenance, repair or improvement of dwellings.
- 5.5 C&RC acted as WAG’s agent, monitoring and evaluating the work of the 22 Agencies, and receiving and reviewing applications for funding, under the terms of the Concordat and various plans and funding agreements. However, little in the Concordat gave precise responsibilities for the two organisations.
- 5.6 C&RC had 12 Board Members (the maximum permitted under Model Rules)²⁰ and five co-opted Board Members; seven other individuals could attend meetings as observers. An Executive Board consisted of the Chair, two Vice Chairs, Treasurer and two others. Board Members had been recruited from Care & Repair Agencies, RSLs, organisations

²⁰ source: C&RC

supporting older persons, and clients. Co-optees came from partner organisations including Shelter and Help the Aged.

- 5.7 Observing the Board in action, and interviewing its Members, C&RC staff and others pointed to considerable strengths in the way the Board was operating, including reviewing finances, policies, staff turnover and absence, and the Welsh Language Scheme. Discussions were thoughtful and indicated knowledge of relevant topics and preparation.
- 5.8 Several Board Members had around ten years Board experience; C&RC personnel reported there were no formal procedures for recruiting Board Members or reviewing Board membership, nor performance appraisal for Board Members.
- 5.9 Agency chairs and managers inferred good performance from the C&RC Board. As one put it: *“Everything seems to work smoothly – from the outside”*. Comments did, however, reveal some concerns that the Board should have more Agency representation, but at the same time was too large. A third of Agency managers and chairs felt that there was no formal conduit for Agencies to submit their views to the C&RC Board, although C&RC argued that Agencies were consulted extensively through network meetings, ABM visits and so on.
- 5.10 Key points identified from mapping C&RC governance arrangements against the ACEVO framework included:
- The Board had a good range of skills, experience and knowledge;
 - The Board of Management operated at a strategic level, not becoming involved in day-to-day managerial issues routinely;
 - The Board gave structured attention to the budget and the business plan. Staff provided management accounts on a quarterly basis and reported on variances;
 - Board meetings were chaired effectively. Full use was made of sub-committees and the Executive Board;
 - There seemed to be scope for defining the duties and responsibilities of Board Members more clearly;
 - C&RC had, in the main, effective procedures for reporting to the Board and reviewing organisational performance;

- There seemed to be scope for improving Board members' induction, although effective training was available subsequently;
- In the past, potential conflicts of interest had arisen through Board members promoting sectional interests rather than C&RC;
- Processes for reviewing Board membership and recruitment were not being applied consistently;
- The Board was giving attention to supervising and supporting the Chief Executive; there were good working relationships between the Board, Chair and Chief Executive.

Policies and Procedures

5.11 The review addressed a wide range of detailed policies and procedures. Data collected pointed to effective procurement policy and practice, contract management systems, internal control and audit, HR systems and the use of IT. Some concerns at the start of the review (e.g. Welsh Language procedures) seemed to have been addressed by the time it was completed; upgrades were being undertaken or considered in several areas (e.g. HR policies and the CMS database).

Funding

5.12 In 2007/08, the WAG budget for Care and Repair included £650,000 for C&RC, and further WAG funds supported C&RC's costs for administering the Rapid Response Adaptations programme (RRAP). The figure for 2007/08 included "*exceptions to include 21st anniversary year marketing costs, and increases in rent, rates and energy costs*"²¹ and represented an increase of 13% over the 2006/07 figure of £576,000, itself a 40% increase on the 2003/04 figure of £411,000.

5.13 The questions "*what does WAG want and get for its money?*" cover a number of issues. Specific tasks like administering RRAP and Agency monitoring were, in effect, delegated functions which might, in other circumstances, have been carried out by civil servants. Other advisory, training or information-transfer functions were more loosely defined, capable of being treated in various ways, including charging for services actually delivered.

²¹ The 2008/09 forecast figure of £666,378 (2.5% increase) assumes, however, that the "exceptions" have become included into the base figure

- 5.14 There was also, in effect, a ‘back-up’ function: as a last resort, Agencies facing problems could be managed directly by C&RC. Doing this meant that C&RC had to divert staff from other duties, but interviews with WAG staff and individuals from the wider Care and Repair movement accepted the periodic need for this form of intervention in the past. There was much less agreement on whether ‘last resort support’ should be available in future (particularly if Agencies had problems with ‘additional’ services) and if so, how C&RC might plan to respond, and what resources could be drawn on.
- 5.15 Interviews with WAG officials indicated that WAG did not seek to fund a set proportion of C&RC’s budget, but they expected other funds would be attracted, continuing established patterns. The 2006/07 C&RC Annual Report noted financial support from WAG and Age Alliance Wales. In 2005/06 funds came from the Francis Crabtree Charitable Trust, Age Alliance Wales, the Linbury Trust and WAG. Other income came from sponsorship, conferences and training fees.
- 5.16 WAG funding for C&RC was based upon an annual business plan approved by the Board and then by WAG. Progress reports were discussed with the WAG Housing Directorate at regular intervals; reports were detailed and identified areas of poor performance and reasons for this, although a minority of interviewees thought reports could be improved, with clearer performance and outcome targets.

Governance Issues in Other Organisations

- 5.17 Chief Executives (or their equivalents) from six third sector organisations active in Welsh housing and social care fields were interviewed. These discussions included matters of governance, and compared their organisations with C&RC and the Care and Repair movement as a whole.
- 5.18 A desk review of governance arrangements in bodies providing support for older people outside Wales proved less relevant for this part of the review, essentially because of different contexts: for example, the relationship between Care & Repair England and Foundations is quite unlike that between C&RC and WAG; Scottish local government roles and structures differ markedly from the position in Wales.

- 5.19 Staff from other organisations in Wales agreed that obtaining the appropriate level of skills, knowledge and commitment on third sector Boards was challenging. For C&RC, this was seen as less of an issue given the strength of the national 'Care and Repair brand', although most acknowledged recruitment challenges at a local level.
- 5.20 This group of interviewees all viewed Board Members' understanding of their legal obligations as extremely important and most referred potential or newly appointed Board Members to training or information sources explaining this in detail. WCVA has a dedicated website for governing body members across the third sector with legal information, guidance, advice and notifications of relevant training and events.²²
- 5.21 Most interviewees stressed the importance of obtaining the 'right' mix of skills, knowledge and attributes, with each willing volunteer or applicant judged not only on their personal ability and experience but on their potential contribution to the Board as a whole. A strong applicant might be turned away should a current member of the group possess similar skills and knowledge.
- 5.22 Most interviewees who expressed a view encouraged stakeholders to put forward names for Board membership but for a minority of interviewees, as one put it, this *“doesn't work: you rarely get people who are prepared to focus on us and forget about the organisation who nominated them.”*
- 5.23 One Director described how the third sector had changed: *“Although third sector organisations should look to work with their partners they should also be mindful that they are competing for the same money pots and should think of themselves as a business”*.
- 5.24 Interviewees all knew of Care and Repair, albeit to differing degrees, and a recurring theme was the generally strong reputation of C&RC and the view amongst those who felt able to comment that governance arrangements were generally fit for purpose.

²² See www.trusteewales.org.uk

6. Value-for-Money

- 6.1 This chapter considers value-for-money issues for Care and Repair, encompassing inputs, outputs and outcomes. There are many challenges at a conceptual level – well recognised in the literature - and this review also had to contend with variable quality in some of the datasets held by C&RC and the Agencies.
- 6.2 Because most Agencies are in contact with less than 10% of older people in their areas in any one year, it is easy to postulate that there could be a great deal of latent demand. Value-for-money is considered here in relation to services as delivered to current clients, not in relation to meeting presumed community need.
- 6.3 Data for the chapter comes mainly from the desk research. The final part of the chapter suggests a new methodology through which Care and Repair might address value-for-money in future.

Value-for-Money Principles

- 6.4 Financial savings from keeping people out of hospital or care have attracted significant attention (see e.g. Heywood and Turner, 2007), although precise figures remain a matter for debate. The Audit Commission (Audit Commission, 2005) and others have asserted that increased investment in housing adaptations and equipment bring significant savings to National Health Service and Social Services budgets, but funding and organisational structures, compounded by the lack of clear evidence, have created barriers to these kinds of investment.
- 6.5 Examples of costs which may be saved quoted in *'The Costs and Benefits of Independent Living'* (ODI, 2007) include:
- Hospital bed - £220 per person per day
 - A & E attendance - £117 per visit
 - Nursing home/ residential care - £16,700 per person per year
 - Average cost to the State of a fractured hip - £28,665
 - An hour's home care per day - £5,000 per year

- 6.6 Yet the same report, having reviewed around 300 studies, points out particular problems when measuring these costs and benefits in detail, including limited evidence of opportunity costs; costs individuals incur living independently; disaggregation by impairment or age groups; and macro-level benefits to the Exchequer and society.
- 6.7 Even if costs, benefits and value-for-money could be established for particular individuals, at an aggregate level there are further challenges, including:
- Attribution: if lower rates of hospital admissions can be identified, what proportion is due to Care and Repair? What is due to extraneous factors (like the weather) or support from other organisations (such as Age Concern) or friends and family?
 - Deadweight: how much of any change would have happened anyway, perhaps due to improving general health?
 - If savings in, say, health sector spending on in-patient services due to Care and Repair can be inferred, is it realistic to expect surpluses to be made available, or simply absorbed internally?

Inputs, Outputs and Outcomes

- 6.8 The 2007/08 total budget for Agencies (taken from business plans and grant applications) was £7,523,000. Adding an additional £650,000 from WAG for C&RC gave £8,173,000 for the movement as a whole - just under £300 per client on average. At least £7,900,000 of this came from public sector grants, fees or payments for specific projects.
- 6.9 Outputs came as advice, support and, in some cases, direct works allowed older people to stay safe, warm and secure in their own homes. Reported customer satisfaction was over 90% from those receiving Care and Repair services in 2006/07²³ but this gives a partial indication at best of outputs, outcomes and value-for-money.

²³ Over 27,000 individuals, 65% over 75 years of age

Alternatives and the Counterfactual

- 6.10 Assessing the value-for-money achieved from resources allocated to Care and Repair requires comparisons to be made with results which might be attainable through other means.
- 6.11 There are clearly alternatives to Care and Repair for *some* support services. Relatives, friends, churches and neighbours can play a crucial part in helping older people stay independent – but many lack these kinds of support networks. Other organisations, for example Age Concern and Local Authorities, may provide some services, and presumably could do more given greater funding.
- 6.12 Equity release and loan schemes might allow some support to be procured from the private sector. Currently most Care and Repair services are not available commercially, but in the case of handyperson services in particular, this may be changing.
- 6.13 There is no reason to envisage lower unit costs from any of these options²⁴, however, and the ‘brokerage’ role of Care and Repair in facilitating support from several sources might well be impaired, along with opportunities for WAG to work through a single point for coordination and monitoring (C&RC) for Wales as a whole.

Indications of Value-for-Money

- 6.14 Various reports suggest that the case for positive returns to investment in Care and Repair is strong. This was backed up in the case of Care and Repair in Wales by the financial contributions made by three²⁵ Local Health Boards (LHBs). This support acknowledged that Care and Repair services saved money by reducing the incidence of broken hips and other injuries, and recognised that older people’s independence usually deteriorates as a direct result of a stay in hospital. In other areas, it seemed that the ‘organisational structures, compounded by the lack of clear evidence’ noted above precluded this kind of support.

²⁴ Apart from the support which may be available from friends, family, faith groups, volunteers, etc.

²⁵ Neath Port Talbot, Torfaen and Newport

- 6.15 Despite this, costs associated with a broken hip, say, are so large that the proportion of clients achieving 'positive outcomes' need not be particularly high to cover Care and Repair's costs – even after allowing for the availability of other support.
- 6.16 Taking the cost of Care and Repair in 2006/07 as £8,173,000, these costs would be recovered if, say, around 490 people avoided a year in nursing home care, or 285 hip fractures were avoided. With 27,759 clients across Wales in 2006/07, these numbers required to 'break even' represent fairly low proportions of older people assisted (1.75% for the avoidance of nursing care, 1.02% for hip fractures avoided).

Assessing Value-for-Money in the Future

- 6.17 Points made above show that there are certainly technical and conceptual challenges to assessing the value-for-money delivered by Care and Repair. Practice in this area continues to evolve through, in particular, the National Audit Office (NAO, 2007).
- 6.18 If better value-for-money assessments are to be achieved in future, this review pointed to the need for clarity in establishing why monitoring information is collected – ideally it should support effective monitoring/scrutiny and meet Agency requirements for comparative data. A reduction in transcription and arithmetical errors is also essential.
- 6.19 The interview and desk research programmes for the review suggested that, as well as basic monitoring information (age of client, support provided, property details etc.), information will be needed about:
- I. Expectations for the outcome for the client without Care and Repair interventions;
 - II. Expectations for the outcome for the client following Care and Repair interventions;
 - III. Actual client outcomes;
 - IV. Costs per client;
 - V. Financial contributions from client (where relevant);
 - VI. Costs of undesired outcomes (hospitalisation, etc.);
 - VII. The involvement of other support services (including friends, relatives);

- VIII. The likelihood of particular outcomes arising without the Care and Repair intervention;
- IX. Previous support provided;
- X. Subsequent support provided;
- XI. Client views about the service provided.

- 6.20 This calls for a variety of techniques, following points made in the 'Green Book' (HM Treasury (2008)) which suggests, "*When faced with a mix of both monetary values and quantified data (and probably some unquantified considerations as well), weighting and scoring can be used...*"²⁶ to complement 'hard' financial or output figures.
- 6.21 Data for III, IV, IV, VIII, X would come from an updated CMS database (or a more rigorous version of the current one).
- 6.22 The costs of 'undesired outcomes' and, by extension, the benefits when they are avoided, might take the form of a table of costs of a day in hospital, a broken hip etc. like those quoted above from the ODI (ODI 2007) report. There are attractions in recognising local variation, but the extra work involved might well be difficult to justify. Periodic updates would, however, be required.
- 6.23 Gathering data for II, VII, VIII meets requirements for addressing attribution, deadweight and, potentially, distribution effects. It does seem that the only realistic source of this information is the informed judgement of caseworkers. We readily accept that these are busy people, but their judgements could provide appropriate information in these crucial areas via a tool to gather responses to a series of statements, along the lines of Figure 3, at the time of initial assessments for the 'holistic' service. This would ideally be followed up (probably on a sample basis) around 6 months afterwards to check on *actual* changes over that period and compare them with initial estimates, so promoting effective continuous improvement.
- 6.24 None of this represents an assessment of clients' circumstances against which caseworkers would have to account for their judgements. The data might provide a useful summary of an individual case, but its main value would come when looking at trends and overall patterns for

²⁶ Annexe 2: this quote refers to project appraisal, not value-for-money assessment.

‘added value’. Refining judgements over time would be important, using data about actual outcomes to compare with initial estimates.

6.25 Value-for-money calculations would start with a review of overall patterns of support provided by an Agency, scaled up from samples or incomplete records if necessary. Caseworker data would rescale this data to give information about the estimated total numbers of specific outcomes being achieved, and further rescaling should be applied to take account of the involvement of other sources of support. Drawing on the tables of financial values for particular outcomes would give an indication of the value of the principal benefits being achieved.

6.26 Clearly this has to be seen as an outline specification for a new approach, not a full solution, but had information along these lines been available for this review, drawing sound conclusions about value-for-money would have been greatly facilitated.

Figure 3: Capturing Value-for-Money Data for Care and Repair Agencies

Caseworkers should indicate the extent to which they agree with the following statements:

(1= Strongly disagree; 5= Strongly agree.)

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Comments
Without support from Care & Repair, the client would need a stay in hospital during the next 3 months							
Without support from Care & Repair, the client could not continue to live independently							
Without support from Care & Repair, the client would enter residential care within the next 3 months							
The client has good support from friends, neighbours, relatives							
Other Agencies are working with the client							
Care and Repair's role is the most important one amongst the Agencies working with this client							
The client could make a significant financial contribution to support costs							
Care and Repair is essential for finding an appropriate solution for this client							

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

- 7.1 The findings in Chapters 2-5 gave strong evidence of much good practice in the Care and Repair services delivered in Wales – albeit with a number of opportunities for further development. Assessing value-for-money is a particular challenge, and better ways of doing this in future were the subject of Chapter 6.
- 7.2 Needs for the kind of service Care and Repair provides in Wales are forecast to rise steadily as numbers of older people grow, and they seek to stay in their own homes for as long as possible.
- 7.3 Developments since the introduction of Care and Repair in Wales include the substantial reduction in poor quality private housing; and major increases in the capital value of most owner-occupied residential property. Older people living in private rented accommodation may face poorer living standards and have not benefited from owner occupiers' capital gains – yet rarely receive the services of Care and Repair.
- 7.4 Care and Repair had also changed. At the time of the review, most Agencies had increased their staffing, budgets and the service 'offer' appreciably. The WAG-funded 'core' service was delivered with some flexibility (e.g. over eligibility), but Agencies' abilities to attract funding for 'additional' services had led to wide variation in 'local solutions'. Changed expectations for Agencies' relationships with C&RC were apparent in interviews with Agency staff and Board members. Most thought they could do more for themselves – they had developed greater experience and expertise, and achieved greater confidence as a result.

Conclusions: C&RC Governance and Operations

- 7.5 C&RC's governance arrangements scored satisfactorily or better on most counts considered by this review. Issues like Board size and Board Member replacement justified further consideration, but need to be seen essentially as details.

- 7.6 Links between WAG and C&RC were close, summarised in the relevant Concordat, although its wording was not precise enough to determine 'what WAG expects to get for its money.' This was addressed to some extent in the annual business plan and support plan – although many performance measures were qualitative and difficult to assess objectively.
- 7.7 Processes for managing C&RC's roles and activities seemed generally fit for purpose, with good record keeping and reporting arrangements; policies and procedures (e.g. in HR) were being revised and upgraded systematically. The review pointed out some operational issues to cloud this picture somewhat.
- 7.8 First, the CMS database had examples of data using different definitions (e.g. of clients and repeat clients); there were also inconsistencies in some records and totals, and incomplete entries for reasons which were not entirely clear, but limited staff training and transposition errors could have been important factors.
- 7.9 Secondly, C&RC was fulfilling different roles, including advising or supporting Agencies; monitoring and scrutinising Agencies on behalf of WAG; and in extreme circumstances, managing Agencies directly. Agencies sometimes misperceived the basis upon which they were dealing with C&RC and might be cautious about seeking advice which could imply weaknesses.
- 7.10 Thirdly, the review identified a lack of clarity amongst some Agencies and partners about C&RC's role for 'additional' services (i.e. those not receiving WAG 'core' funding). C&RC provided advice when Agencies sought it, but there could be tensions between C&RC views that they retained some responsibilities for the movement as a whole, and the growing reality that Agencies were free to make agreements with other funders – responsible for solving problems if they arose.

Conclusions: Agency Governance and Services

- 7.11 At the time of the review, Agencies fell into one of four groups:
- Seven Independent Agencies with their own Boards, management arrangements, etc.;
 - Nine Managed Agencies with their own Boards, but operational management provided by a 'parent' RSL;
 - Five Subsidiary Agencies: wholly owned subsidiaries of RSLs, managed as part of the 'parent';
 - One Agency directly managed by C&RC.
- 7.12 There were no obvious correlations between Agency governance models and performance, size, location or other variables, and no evidence for one 'right' or 'preferred' management model for Agencies.
- 7.13 The proportion of the Welsh population aged over 60 using Care and Repair services during 2006/07 was 4.6% and for over 75 year olds, 8%, but there was considerable local variation around these figures. Given more active promotion of Care and Repair services, demand might have risen rapidly, in a way available resources could not have matched.
- 7.14 Patterns of service delivery at local level varied for a number of reasons: SBPCs and other arrangements were available to ensure that local needs, funding options for 'additional services', and services provided by other organisations were all duly noted in plans for Care and Repair services. Interview data indicated that, in practice, these flexible local arrangements typically achieved effective on-the-ground coordination.

Conclusions: Funding, Costs and Value-for-Money

- 7.15 The basis for grant allocations to Agencies was the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) for older persons services when 'enhanced' funding arrangements were agreed in 2004.
- 7.16 WAG funds for the 'core' service (£3,570,000 in 2007/08) represented 48% of the total budgets of the 21 Agencies. The proportion funded by

WAG had been declining, but still represented just over 70% of the budget for some Agencies (though less than 30% for others).

- 7.17 In total, Agencies had £2,736,000 in reserves at the end of 2006/07. Some Agencies' reserves exceeded their annual turnover. These high levels of reserves (in some cases in fixed assets as well as cash) seemed hard to justify.
- 7.18 Many outcomes from Care and Repair interventions came from improving the quality of life, comfort and well-being of clients. As for financial measures of value-for-money, a range of other studies have shown how difficult it is to prove **definite** links between spending on measures like Care and Repair and savings in acute or residential care. Further, organisational structures can make it difficult to pass funds from, say, Health Service budgets to Local Authorities or Care and Repair, even if savings could be established.
- 7.19 This review did identify a somewhat more positive picture. Problems with some data quality made calculations about costs and benefits difficult, but there did seem to be indicative evidence that resources allocated to Care and Repair represented good value-for-money through savings to health and social care budgets. It was notable that a small group of LHBs did make financial contributions to their local Care and Repair Agency on this expectation. The review also noted that, because of the high costs associated with residential care and hospitalisation, Care and Repair's costs are covered if only a very small proportion of clients achieve 'positive outcomes'.
- 7.20 There are important opportunities to develop new data collection and analysis models, and a revised methodology for assessing value-for-money was outlined in Chapter 6.

Recommendations

- 7.21 Recommendations are predicated on a view that the case for providing services of the kind delivered via Care and Repair remains strong - aligned as these services are with a wide range of Welsh policy agendas. They also assume that Care and Repair services will continue to be delivered through local Agencies, with co-ordination, support and a number of other functions being handled centrally.

Recommendation 1: Care and Repair Core Service. WAG, with C&RC, should establish a measurable specification of a standard core service to be made available across Wales. This would require considering:

- Whether Agencies can realistically deliver a ‘holistic’ service “*to ensure that **all older and disabled** people have access to housing services...*” (Care and Repair vision, emphasis added) or whether targeting is appropriate (and if so, on which groups);
- The appropriateness of providing the ‘core’ service outside the owner occupied housing sector. Technically, this is already the position when support is provided to older people who have transferred ownership of their homes to someone else;
- The basis for distributing grant between Agencies, to ensure that it remains equitable and promotes cost-effective service delivery. There have been continuing organisational and policy developments since the current arrangements were set up in 2004 – and demographic and health changes too.

Recommendation 2: Relationships between WAG and Care and Repair Cymru. The Concordat, Annual Business Plans and associated processes have served the movement well, but the review pointed to a need for more precision in setting out ‘what WAG expects in return for its money.’ WAG with C&RC should set out a clear statement of:

- How C&RC will monitor and manage the delivery of the core service and the spending of associated WAG funds;
- Other functions WAG wishes C&RC to perform and will fund – and how they will be managed and monitored;
- Criteria and guidelines for the rare occasions when direct Agency management might be called for.

Recommendation 3: Additional Services. Most Agencies now provide a range of additional services, not funded by WAG²⁷, which may cover handypersons, gardening, decorating, and delivering other programmes for a fee. These are essentially matters to be decided at a

²⁷ Except where, like RRAP, they are provided through a separate delivery contract with WAG, not through the ‘core’ funds.

local level with appropriate funders but it will be helpful to Agencies and their clients if WAG and C&RC issue guidance to cover:

- Avoiding services which might reasonably be provided by the private sector;
- Minimising duplication with other local services;
- Prioritising particular groups of clients;
- Charging for work done;
- Circumstances in which financial contributions from homeowners might be sought;
- The need for Agencies to identify and manage financial and operational risks appropriately: confirming that additional services will not normally be scrutinised, nor supported if problems arise.

Recommendation 4: Relationships between Care and Repair Cymru and Agencies. C&RC has played a vital, much appreciated role in helping Agencies reach current levels of success. Many Agencies are now much stronger and better resourced than they were and this has implications for their needs and expectations for C&RC inputs. C&RC should consider:

- Separating internal responsibilities for support and scrutiny, to avoid current misperceptions;
- Developing the website as a more effective resource for Agencies;
- Agreeing with each Agency a clear statement of services which C&RC will provide to Agencies; for some Agencies this would mean less C&RC contact in areas where they have developed their own expertise;
- Enhancing or replacing the CMS database. Error levels were not satisfactory; there are important requirements for consistency and accuracy in Management Information; better benchmarking; and robust performance and comparative data for individual Agencies.

Recommendation 5: Agencies. There are opportunities for individual Agencies to develop their internal arrangements and performance by:

- Keeping governance and management arrangements under review. There is no recommended governance model, but larger Agencies might consider the merits of the independent Agency model;

- Keeping financial and operational risks under review, noting that 'additional' services will not normally be scrutinised centrally, nor supported if problems arise;
- Considering local opportunities for sharing key functions (e.g. HR, Accountancy) - cooperating to make savings wherever possible;
- Reducing reserves to sensible minimum levels as a matter of urgency;
- Considering options for brokering solutions with local builders or tradespersons rather than direct provision – to avoid any suggestion of 'crowding out' the private sector.

Recommendation 6: Value-for-Money. WAG should fund a pilot programme to define, collect and process the additional data required for an effective assessment of value-for-money. This should take place at three varied Agencies and be appropriately evaluated before wider roll-out.

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Terms and Abbreviations

ABM	Agency Business Manager
C&RC	Care and Repair Cymru
CMS	Client Management System
EAC	Elderly Accommodation Council
HIA	Housing Improvement Agency
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
LHB	Local Health Board
NHS	National Health Service
ODI	Office for Disability Issues
RCT	Rhondda Cynon Tâf
RRAP	Rapid Response and Adaptations Programme
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SBPC	Strategic Business Planning Committee
SRA	Social Research Association
SSA	Standard Spending Assessment
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association
WCVA	Wales Council for Voluntary Action

Glossary

Care and Repair 'core' Service	<i>"Essentially, this will include the appropriate level of casework and technical resources to secure a customer focused, problem-led service within each county in Wales"</i> (Concordat, 2007)
Enhanced Funding (Care and Repair)	Enhanced Funding arrangements between the Care and Repair movement and the Welsh Assembly Government were introduced with effect from April 2003. Enhanced funding was introduced to provide funding for the 'core service' (see above) including staffing and running costs.
Equity Release	There are a number of financial products or 'plans' which help home owners to turn some of the value of their homes into cash - a lump sum, regular extra income, or sometimes both. There are different names for this type of scheme, including Equity Release Plan, Capital Release Plan and Home Income Plan.
Formal Care and Repair Service	The 'core service' (see above) is sometimes referred to as the 'formal service'.
Housing Associations	Housing Associations are independent not-for-profit organisations that provide affordable homes for people in need. They are now the UK's major providers of new homes for rent. Over recent years a number of Local Authorities have transferred all or part of their housing stock, including their sheltered housing, to Housing Associations.
Foundations	The national co-ordinating body for Care & Repair services in England is Foundations (see Home Improvement Agencies below).
Home Improvement Agencies (England only)	Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) are locally based, not-for-profit organisations. They help older, disabled and vulnerable homeowners or private tenants to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their homes. Some also provide services to council and housing association tenants. Their prime purpose is to help people continue to live in their own homes in comfort, safety, security and independence. There are approximately 250 Home Improvement Agencies located across England, operating in 317 Local Authority areas. 90% of residents in England have access to a Home Improvement Agency.
Nursing Home	A home registered for nursing will provide personal care (help with washing, dressing and giving medication), and will also have a qualified nurse on duty twenty-four hours a day to carry out nursing tasks. They are for people who are physically or mentally frail or need regular attention from a nurse. Some homes can be registered for a specific care need, for example dementia or terminal illness.
Personal Care	Personal Care includes: assistance with dressing, feeding, washing and toileting, as well as advice, encouragement and emotional and psychological support. The Department of Work and Pensions defines this as attention required in connection with bodily functions. Bodily functions can include dressing, washing, bathing or shaving, toileting, getting in or out of bed, eating, drinking, taking medication, communicating. Seeing and hearing are also considered to be bodily functions.

Rapid Response Adaptations Programme	The Rapid Response Adaptations Programme (RRAP) is a rapid-response service aimed primarily at addressing minor repairs and adaptations (hand and grab rails, ramps, door entry systems etc) in the homes of older and disabled homeowners or private sector tenants. In particular, it enables safe discharge from hospital or residential care. The programme was launched in July 2002 and is administered for the Welsh Assembly Government by Care and Repair Cymru. Day-to-day operations are led by the 22 Care and Repair Agencies across Wales acting with Local Authorities, GPs and other health sector organisations.
Registered Social Landlord	The new general name for not-for-profit housing providers. The vast majority of Registered Social Landlords are also known as Housing associations. In Wales, the regulation and funding of housing associations is carried out by the Welsh Assembly. Housing associations are independent, not-for-profit organisations that provide homes for people in housing need. Legally housing associations are often Industrial and Provident societies, and may or may not be registered charities.
Strategic Business Planning Committee	As a requirement of receiving WAG funding Agencies have a Strategic Business Planning Committee (SBPC) made up of key strategic partners. SBPCs are seen by WAG as the main driver for Agencies' strategic development, performance review, business planning and drawing up WAG funding applications.
Supporting People (England)	Supporting People (in England) is a Government run programme, funding services to help older people and others to live independently at home. Local Councils have responsibility for identifying local needs, for funding the services to meet those needs, and making sure that services are effective and of good quality, contracting with the organisations providing the services and specifying the type of service to be provided.
Supporting People (Wales)	Supporting People (in Wales) is the Welsh Assembly Government's policy and funding framework for delivering housing related support to vulnerable people.
Tele-care	Telecare is a form of assistive technology with electronic sensors linked to an alarm system to help carers manage risk and help vulnerable people stay independent at home longer.

ISBN: 978 0 7504 5168 0