
REPORT TO:	COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	23 AUGUST 2001	CATEGORY: DELEGATED/ RECOMMENDED OPEN
REPORT FROM:	SANDRA WHILES	PARAGRAPH NO: N/A
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	MARK ALFLAT EXTENSION 5706	DOC: s:\cent_serv\committee reports\community services\23 aug 2001\changes to home repair assistance grants.doc
SUBJECT:	CHANGES TO HOME REPAIR ASSISTANCE GRANTS	REF: MEA/LJW
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: CS7

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Committee restricts Home Repair Assistance Grants to £2,000 per application except in exceptional circumstances. Grants above £2,000 per application to be approved by the Divisional Environmental Health Manager.
- 1.2 That HRA grants be restricted to persons over 60 years of age in receipt of income related benefit and disabled persons in receipt of an income related benefit.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To obtain Members' approval to restrict the amounts of grant per application for Home Repair Assistance to £2,000 per application.
- 2.2 To restrict HRA grants to those over 60 and in receipt of an income related benefit and disabled persons in receipt of an income related benefit.
- 2.3 To advise Members of the changes to the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Part 1, with regards to HRA's.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Under amendments made by the Government to Home Repair Assistance Grants, an authority may give up to £5,000 per HRA application, a change from the current £2,000 limit.
- 3.2 Demand for HRA grants exceeds supply within South Derbyshire District Council and limiting the amount of grant per application will ensure that help is given to more residents to enable them to 'stay put' in their own homes.
- 3.3 In addition restricting grants to those most in need of financial assistance is the fairest way of restricting limited funds.

- 3.4 Our partners in delivery of these grants are Walbrook Care and Repair Agency and they have requested the changes to limit funds and the criteria of availability.
- 3.5 Exceptional circumstances will always arise and it is therefore proposed that the Environmental Health Manager has discretion to approve grants to the statutory limit should these arise.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Money for grants is provided by Central Government from the authority's capital allocation.
- 4.2 For the year 2001/02 the allocation for HRAs is £129,000. There is currently just £20,000 left to allocate for the rest of the financial year.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 None.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 The proposed policy will enable more residents to be aided than would otherwise be the case and restrict grants to those most in need.

7.0 Background Papers

- 7.1 DETR Circular 05/2001 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Part 1.