

Report Title	Proposal for a Handyperson Service in Pendle
Meeting	Executive
Meeting Date	27 th August 2026
Report Author	Sarah Whitwell, Head of Housing & Environmental Health
Directorate	Place
Lead Executive Member(s)	Cllr Ammer
Wards Affected	All wards
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	Public
Appendices (if any)	Appendix 1 - List of works to be included within the scheme

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Pendle has not had a Handyperson Service since 2010/11. The previous service was funded by Lancashire County Council and delivered by St Vincent's. Reintroducing a service provides an opportunity to address minor housing disrepair and safety issues before they escalate into health, wellbeing or independence concerns.
- 1.2 A budget of £40,000 has been approved from the Crisis and Resilience Fund to establish a Handyperson Service in Pendle for 2026/27, with the potential for a further £80,000 over 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to future funding confirmation. The proposed service would provide low-cost practical help to support independent living, prevent accidents, facilitate hospital discharge, reduce demand on health and social care services, and help vulnerable residents remain safely in their own homes.
- 1.3 This report presents delivery, eligibility and charging options and recommends that Pendle commissions a provider to deliver a Handyperson Service using a hybrid charging model, subject to procurement and agreement of an appropriate service level agreement or commissioning arrangement.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, Executive is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the development of a Handyperson Service in Pendle, funded from the approved CRF budget allocation of £40,000 for 2026/27, with the potential for a further £80,000 for 2027/28 and 2028/29, subject to future funding confirmation.

2.2 Approve external commissioning as the preferred delivery model and delegate authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Leader, to commission this work under a service level agreement.

2.3 Approve a charging model under which eligible vulnerable residents make a customer contribution of £10 per hour towards labour costs, with materials charged at cost, to extend delivery capacity.

2.4 Delegate authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Leader, to review and adjust the hourly customer contribution where necessary in response to service demand, delivery costs, or available funding.

2.5 Agree that the service specification should include minor practical repairs, falls prevention work, home safety and security improvements, healthy home assessments and referrals into wider housing, health and wellbeing support.

3. Information: Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

3.1 Pendle has significant levels of deprivation and health inequalities, a large number of older properties, increasing demand for adaptations and preventative interventions through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and wider Housing & Environmental Health service, and existing partnerships with health, housing and voluntary sector organisations.

3.2 Residents can experience difficulty undertaking basic repairs or safety improvements that fall below the threshold for formal adaptations, but which can prevent accidents, improve wellbeing and help delay or avoid residential care. Reintroducing a Handyperson Service would provide a practical, low-cost preventative intervention within the wider housing support offer.

3.3 There is currently no local data available for Pendle to gauge likely demand for a handyperson service. The recommended approach therefore balances prevention and affordability with the need to test demand and build an evidence base during the initial funded period.

3.4 Delivery Options Considered

Option	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 1: External commissioning	Commission a specialist provider for the full-service delivery.	Existing expertise; established procedures; ability to mobilise quickly; proven reporting arrangements. A specialist provider would be trusted assessor trained and DBS certified.	Less direct control

		Immediate access to trained staff, existing operational systems and service resilience, enabling delivery to commence more quickly without adding permanent staffing liabilities. No single point of failure	
Option 2: Council in-house delivery	Employ a Handyperson operative within Housing & Environmental Health.	Direct control and management of the scheme, with strong links to other Council services. No additional procurement or contract management requirements. The employee could support other areas of the service, subject to workload and service demand.	There is currently insufficient capacity within the existing team to deliver the service. Additional funding would be required to cover recruitment, supervision, a vehicle and equipment. The Council would also assume the associated operational and demand-management risks. Relying on one employee to deliver the service could create a single point of failure during periods of absence or vacancy.
Option 3: Hybrid partnership	Joint delivery. Commission core delivery through a specialist provider while maintaining referrals and oversight through the Council.	Operational efficiency; strategic control; strong partnership approach.	Additional workload: contract management requirements and additional funding required.
Option 4: Do not progress the scheme	Do not develop a Handyperson Service in Pendle.	No additional delivery, procurement or contract management requirements; budget could be retained or redirected to other priorities.	Missed opportunity to provide preventative support; vulnerable residents may continue to experience minor disrepair and safety

			issues; potential increased demand on DFG, housing, health and social care services.
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3.5 It is recommended that Option 1, external commissioning, is progressed as the most proportionate, deliverable and financially sustainable model within the time-limited CRF allocation. Commissioning an established specialist provider would secure immediate access to trained and appropriately vetted staff, existing operational systems and service resilience, enabling delivery to commence more quickly without adding permanent staffing liabilities. A robust service level agreement would retain Council oversight through clear eligibility requirements, output and outcome targets, safeguarding and quality standards, transparent cost controls, performance reporting and remedies for underperformance. External commissioning therefore offers better value, greater flexibility and lower implementation and operational risk than direct employment, while allowing the Council to review demand and outcomes before deciding whether any longer-term arrangement is justified.

Local providers

3.6 Across Lancashire, organisations are already established to deliver handyperson services. These organisations are already on-site delivering work such as affordable warmth grants or minor works grants, with staff trained as Trusted Assessors. This means they can assess a person's needs for daily living equipment and minor home adaptations and make referrals into wider housing, health and wellbeing support.

Eligibility and charging

3.7 Given the annual budget of £40,000 and estimated delivery costs of approximately £45 to £72 per hour, comprising staffing, travel, equipment, administration and service management, the number of households that can be assisted will be limited. Consideration must therefore be given to requiring service users to contribute towards the cost, enabling the available funding to support more residents.

3.8 Assuming a delivery cost of £45 per hour, a £40,000 budget would provide approximately 889 hours of support. Introducing a customer contribution of £10 per hour would increase capacity to approximately 1,143 hours, while a customer contribution of £15 per hour would provide approximately 1,333 hours of handyperson support, equivalent to around 667 two-hour visits, excluding materials and VAT.

3.9 It is recommended that eligible residents are charged £10 per hour plus the cost of materials and that visits are capped at two hours to help balance potential service demand with delivery capacity. Based on a service delivery cost of £45 per hour, a £40,000 budget combined with a £10 per hour contribution would increase service delivery by approximately 29% compared with a fully subsidised model. Actual service capacity will depend on the procured rate.

The approach to eligibility and charging in neighbouring authorities is set out below:

	How the scheme is delivered	Eligibility	Charges
Blackburn:	Delivered by Care Network	People with a disability People with learning difficulties Those with mental health needs Anyone aged 50+ Carers	Free of charge for qualifying residents (over 65, living with long-term health conditions, or have a child under 5). For non-qualifying residents, there is a low, pre-agreed fixed price per task.
Burnley	Delivered in-house	Aged 60 or over or classed as disabled or vulnerable.	£10 per hour
Hyndburn	Delivered by Homewise	Aged 65 or over, OR A disabled person of any age	£15 per hour £30 per hour for non-qualifying residents
Rossendale	Delivered by Homewise	Aged 65 or over, OR A disabled person of any age	£15 per hour £30 per hour for non-qualifying residents

3.10 It is recommended that eligible clients are:

- residents aged 65 or over; or
- people who are disabled, of any age; or
- people on a low income, defined as having a household income of less than £36,000 per year or receiving a means-tested benefit.

3.11 These groups are more likely to experience difficulties carrying out minor repairs and improvements themselves and may be at greater risk of falls, accidents, deteriorating housing conditions and loss of independence. Targeting the service in this way will ensure that the limited funding is directed towards residents most likely to benefit from preventative support and is consistent with the eligibility criteria used by comparable schemes in neighbouring authorities.

Proposed Service Specification

3.12 It is recommended that Pendle's service focuses on practical minor repairs that support the health, safety and wellbeing of residents in the community. The service should include:

- Fitting grab rails, handrails and other falls prevention measures.
- Small joinery works, door and window repairs and minor home safety improvements.
- Security measures such as door chains, bolts, window locks, spy holes and key safes.

- Trip and fall hazard reduction, including securing loose carpets and trailing wires.
- Healthy home assessments to identify housing hazards, fuel poverty issues, falls risks and wider support needs.
- Referrals into minor works adaptations, DFGs and wider housing, health and wellbeing support.

3.13 The service should not include gas works, major electrical works, central heating repairs, structural building works, major plumbing or works exceeding two hours. A full list of proposed works is set out at Appendix 1.

3.14 Subject to approval of this report, it is proposed that the procurement process will commence in September, with a contractor appointed in October and the service operational by December 2026.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities

Council Plan Priority	How the proposal contributes
Providing High Quality Services and Facilities	Creates a practical, preventative housing support service with clear performance measures and customer satisfaction monitoring.
Proud and Connected Communities and Places	Supports vulnerable residents to remain safely and independently in their own homes and connects them to wider local support.
Good Growth and Housing	Helps address minor disrepair and safety issues within Pendle's older housing stock before they escalate.
Healthy Communities	Reduces falls risks, supports hospital discharge, improves home safety and helps reduce pressure on health and social care services.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

The proposal would be funded from the approved CRF budget allocation of £40,000 per year for 2026/27, with the potential for a further two years. The budget would fund the commissioned delivery of handyperson support. Materials would be charged to residents at cost. The final financial model and any VAT implications should be confirmed through procurement and finance advice before the SLA or commissioning arrangement is finalised.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

The recommended approach requires an appropriate commissioning arrangement delivered under an SLA, subject to procurement advice. The agreement should include eligibility, charging, excluded works, safeguarding expectations, data sharing, insurance, health and safety requirements, complaints handling and performance reporting.

5.3 Performance Measures

The SLA should satisfy CRF reporting requirements and include, as a minimum, monitoring of:

- Number of referrals received.
- Number of enquiries received.
- Number of jobs completed.
- Number of healthy home assessments completed.
- Customer satisfaction.
- Number of hospital discharge referrals assisted.

5.4 Climate and Biodiversity Implications

The proposal is likely to have limited direct climate and biodiversity implications. There may be indirect positive impacts where healthy home assessments identify fuel poverty or affordable warmth issues and residents are referred into relevant support.

5.5 Human Resources Implications

External commissioning avoids the need to recruit and directly manage an in-house operative. There will be officer time required to set up the commissioning arrangement and monitor performance and report against the SLA requirements.

5.6 Equality and Diversity Implications

The recommended service is targeted at disabled residents, older people, hospital discharge cases, residents at risk of falls or loss of independence and low-income households. This should have a positive equality impact by supporting residents who may face barriers to maintaining a safe home environment. An Equalities Screening Assessment has been completed.

6. Consultation

This report has considered delivery models used elsewhere in Lancashire. Further consultation be undertaken with procurement, finance, legal/governance, relevant service leads and potential referral partners before the service is launched.

7. Alternative Options Considered

Alternative options were considered as set out in section 3.4.

8. Statutory Officer Sign Off

Section 151 Officer	x
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Monitoring Officer	x
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9. Background Documents

Information on comparable handyperson schemes operating in Blackburn, Burnley, Hyndburn and Rossendale.

10. Contact Officers

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Appendix 1 – Works to be included in the scheme

1. Replace light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
2. Trimming and fixing loose carpet to make safe
3. Cleaning and clearing slippery paths.
4. Shower: fix/replace broken/old shower heads, leaking shower, fit shower rails, lower shower heads, fit or reposition grab rails
5. Walls: fix screws in walls, fix battens on walls, drill holes in walls as required; replace skirting boards
6. Windows: fix/renew windowsills, fix door handles, fit/replace windowpanes, reglaze/replace glass panels, fit window restrictors, plane and adjust windows, and remedy water ingress in window frames (all ground floor only)
7. Doors and gates: fix/renew door handles, fix/reset runners for sliding doors, fix loose bolts, fit/repair letter boxes, hang/rehang doors and replace door panels
8. Putting up curtain rails, curtains and blinds
9. Fit, fix and replace air vents
10. Cleaning extractor fans
11. Fitting draught excluders
12. Fitting telephone extension leads
13. Fit, fix and replace towel rails
14. Unblocking sinks and remedy problems with WC flush mechanisms
15. Replacing toilet seats
16. Renew bath/sink sealant
17. Securing trailing or loose wires
18. Small areas of wall tiling and regrouting of tiles
19. Fitting key-safe boxes
20. Fitting battery-powered Ring doorbells

Excluded works:

- Gas works.

- Major electrical works.
- Central heating repairs.
- Structural building works.
- Major plumbing.
- Works exceeding two hours.