



Suffolk Coastal's *Helping Hand for home owners*

**An independent service to
assist with all house repairs
and adaptations**



Suffolk Coastal - *where quality of life counts*

The responsibilities of home ownership can be daunting at the best of times but when faced with repairs or adaptations many people do not know where to start!

Suffolk Coastal's Helping Hand is a home improvement agency that can guide vulnerable home owners through the whole process. It is an independent service that you can trust, which aims to answer questions such as:

- What works really need doing?
- Can I get help towards the cost?
- How do I find a builder?
- Do I need planning permission?
- How do I know if the price is fair?
- Is the work up to "standard"?
- How do I get the builder back to finish the job?

How we can help you

If your house needs repair or insulation work or you need to undertake disabled adaptations we can help.

Grants

In the first instance we will be able to advise you over the telephone if the works are likely to qualify for grant aid. If so we can help you make your application. There are various grants available including:

- Renovation Grants - these are means tested and are available for major renovation schemes subject to certain other criteria.
- Minor Works Grants - these are for energy efficiency improvements to the least energy efficient homes. Applicants must be either over 65 years of age or in receipt of Council Tax Benefit.

- Disabled Facilities Grants - these are also means tested and are subject to referrals from the Occupational Therapy team at Suffolk County Council
- Warm Front - Government grants are available for insulation, draft proofing and heating improvements. You could qualify if you are a household with children in receipt of a means tested benefit, you receive a disability benefit or are over 60 and in receipt of an income related benefit. Telephone 0800 316 2814 for more information.

(Further information on each of these grants can be found in separate leaflets. Please ask for the appropriate one.)

Repairs and adaptations

Whether or not you qualify for a grant we can help you by organising the works.

The Helping Hand team will:

1. Identify the works that need to be carried out and also those that you may wish to have done at the same time.
2. Draw up a detailed specification, and if necessary draw up plans, so builders can price the work.
3. Obtain Planning Consents and Building Regulation Approval if needed.
4. Help you to apply for any benefits or alternative funding to which you may be entitled.
5. Obtain tendered estimates from reliable contractors to ensure a fair price for the work.
6. Arrange a start date to suit you and supervise the works as they progress.
7. Resolve any problems, finalise the paperwork and organise payments.
8. Help you in any other way we can.

Fees

The agency fee is calculated as 12% of the total cost of works (before VAT). If you have a grant approved these fees will attract grant aid and it is unlikely that you will have to pay anything extra to receive this service. Ask one of the team for further details.

Small Repairs

The agency also runs a small repair service for the elderly or people with disabilities. If you have difficulty in doing those small jobs around the house give Helping Hand a ring and ask for more details. Keep the number handy as you never know when you may need help.



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For more information about our services contact:

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