

# Report

Report to:	<b>Social Work Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>19 August 2020</b>
Report by:	<b>Director, Health and Social Care</b>

Subject:	<b>South Lanarkshire Council Stairlift Provision</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ provide an update on the key factors impacting on high levels of Stairlift Provision within South Lanarkshire

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the HSCP develop a local Stairlift Provision Policy aligned with agreed South Lanarkshire Council Eligibility Criteria;
- (2) that the recommendations of the Adaptations without Delay report Royal College of Occupational Therapists 2019 be implemented;
- (3) that a tenure neutral major adaptations policy be developed;
- (4) that funding options for Stairlift Provision and maintenance be reviewed: and
- (5) that a future report is brought back to Social Work Committee following consultation and testing of policy.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) has historically provided stairlifts and through floor lifts to people with all levels of assessed risk and need, following a dedicated assessment by the SLC Occupational Therapy (OT) Services.
- 3.2. This has created a longstanding community expectation of provision and encouraged a culture of risk avoidance rather than risk enablement. This has resulted in higher levels of Stairlift Provision levels in comparison with many other local authorities in Scotland. Significant changes in discharge planning practices within NHS Services over recent years has resulted in a shorter length of hospital stay and reduced opportunities for in-patient rehabilitation. Patients are therefore being discharged with higher level needs, where their recovery or rehabilitation potential has not been realised.
- 3.3. SLC OT Services have operated historically with a service target of 28 days from referral to assessment completion date. This has been performance driven rather than person centred. The alternative aim is to achieve reablement and rehabilitation approaches to enhance service user outcomes.
- 3.4. The more detailed guidance on eligibility guidance around Stairlift Provision has emerged from complaints from the public, and enquiries from elected members.

#### **4. Rehousing Options for Service Options**

- 4.1. An important consideration for assessors is the future suitability of each service user's property in relation to their disability and the environmental layout of their home.
- 4.2. Re-housing is routinely discussed during assessments undertaken however this option is rarely pursued by service users and their families. This is particularly relevant to service users who own their own homes and who are less willing to consider selling their property to then purchase one that was more suitable and sustainable for them, in the longer term.
- 4.3. Appendix 1 demonstrates the breakdown of stairlift installation across the Council per tenure, for the last three financial years. It should be noted that 75% of all stairlift installations for the past three financial years has been within owner occupied homes.
- 4.4. The limited availability of suitable social housing as an alternative to Stairlift Provision remains a challenge across all localities due to the type of housing stock available.
- 4.5. The legislation (Housing (Scotland) Act 1978) provided tenants with the right to buy their home. This has produced a 61.6% reduction in the available SLC housing stock (Appendix 2). This significant reduction reduced the availability of properties that may have been suitable for disabled people.
- 4.6. The availability of suitable flatted properties for re-allocation to disabled people is limited due to current SLC housing stock. An analysis of this stock (from figures issued April 2019) demonstrates that there is a higher percentage of "houses" (in stock type) as opposed to suitable flatted properties that may be available for re-allocation to disabled people when void (Appendix 3).
- 4.7. Of note is that Appendix 3 illustrates figures for total housing stock, not available properties for re-allocation. Within SLC housing stock, only 49% of the Council-wide total of 13,426 flats (for example, 6584) would potentially be suited for reallocation to disabled people.
- 4.8. The Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) will raise awareness amongst staff of the national and local organisations that can support disabled people to consider their option in relation to securing accessible housing. These could be accessed as an alternative to referring for the provision of stairlifts and other adaptations.

#### **5. Policy and Procedures**

- 5.1. The creation of a stairlift policy would allow for any assessment decisions to be more equitable, fair and transparent. Learning will be taken from other council areas to support the development of local guidance and protocols for Stairlift Provision.
- 5.2. In SLC, all stairlifts, maintenance, repairs and replacements are procured via a partnership arrangement with other local authorities and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board (Equipu 2020). All funding is secured from the SLC Social Work budget regardless of tenure. There is potential to make further efficiencies by exploring alternative funding options for stairlifts. Some local authorities utilise grant funding for owner occupiers which often means the homeowner pays 20% of the

cost. In South Lanarkshire, around 75% of new stairlifts are provided to owner occupiers, so savings could be significant.

- 5.3. In the Adaptations without Delay report (RCOT 2019), a new framework for equipment provision was introduced involving universal, targeted and specialist solutions with a person-centred approach. It supports positive risk taking providing a clear and different way of working from the existing practice within South Lanarkshire. This framework has not been adopted within the South Lanarkshire area to date, yet it aligns well with the desired outcomes of the Joint Board Strategic Commissioning Plan (South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership 2019).
- 5.4. Presently, there is no SLC major adaptations policy for private homeowners in contrast to the position for SLC housing tenants. This position often leads to the provision of extensions, significant home remodelling, and major lifting products in private homes without formal consideration of alternative options.
- 5.5. Historically, a £60 annual charge for stairlift maintenance was approved as policy by the Social Work Resources Committee in 2011. This was never implemented but could be considered as a possible means of additional income generation.

## **6. Stock Evaluation and Pre-Planned Maintenance (PPM) Implications**

- 6.1. As at September 2019, there are 2799 lifts (all types) installed across SLC. This does not include lifts currently removed and sitting awaiting relocation. The breakdown of the different type of lifts currently in situ is shown in Appendix 4.
- 6.2. The average age of a lift within SLC is estimated by Equipu to be approximately five years old.
- 6.3. All servicing and PPM of all types of stairlifts is currently procured by SLC through Equipu on an all-inclusive basis regardless of tenure. This includes the mandatory, biannual checks completed in accordance with The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.
- 6.4. The all-inclusive servicing and maintenance arrangements were previously evaluated against individual servicing and maintenance of each lift. The all-inclusive option was determined to offer best value, providing a more responsive repairs service to the benefit of service users whilst reducing the administrative burden and costs to SLC.
- 6.5. Repairs and PPM are a significant expenditure each year. The total cost of repairs and PPM for SLC, over the last three full financial years, had been over £362,000 per annum on average (Appendix 5). There has been a reducing trend in the number of number of repairs and episodes of PPM undertaken each year. This correlates with the increased number of lifts that have been purchased by SLC, following the Equipu recommendation that the original lift be removed and replaced (Appendix 6).
- 6.6. The expected lifespan of a stairlift is approximately 10 years. The current stairlift provider to Equipu, Handicare, has advised that there is no legally mandated industry requirement to keep parts for lifts in manufacture once the model of lift itself is no longer being manufactured.

- 6.7. As each model of stairlift becomes obsolete and the availability of parts becomes limited, a threshold is reached whereby it is no longer viable to keep a lift in operation and it must be replaced.
- 6.8. In SLC an average of 17% of all installations in each financial year of the last three years are lifts requiring replacement. Replacements comprise 15% of the cost on average of all new installs at an average cost of £144k p.a. (Appendix 6). Replacements are clearly a significant year on year cost and will continue to be a pressure on the service even with the introduction of eligibility criteria.
- 6.9. It is anticipated that with eligibility criteria and the application of updated guidance for provision, that as the overall number of lifts held in stock diminishes, then the annual costs associated with servicing, PPM, and replacement will further reduce.

## **7. Employee Implications**

- 7.1. There will be a time and workload impact upon the existing SLC OT Team Leads to progress the recommendations within this report. This is likely to be a seconded full time OT for a period of a year. This will be met within existing resources.
- 7.2. There will be training implications for the wider NHSL and SLC OT workforce.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1. The prevailing approach is not financially sustainable. Implementation of the enclosed recommendations is suggested to achieve cash releasing efficiency savings which will support the IJB to deliver on its Strategic Commissioning Plan. Presently it is difficult to quantify due to the complexity and relationships with other SLC Resources, however it is projected that a 5% saving on total stairlift spend could be achieved by adopting the enclosed recommendations and proposed practice changes.

## **9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

- 9.1. There are no implications for climate change, sustainability or the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

## **10. Other Implications**

- 10.1. There are no risk implications associated with this report
- 10.2. There are no other issues associated with this report.

## **11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 11.1. There is no requirement to carry out an impact assessment in terms of the proposals contained within this report.
- 11.2. There is no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in this report.

**Val de Souza**  
**Director, Health and Social Care**

28 July 2020

**Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives**

- ◆ Improve health care and well being
- ◆ Deliver better health and social care outcomes for all

**Previous References**

- ◆ None

**List of Background Papers**

- ◆ Appendices

**Contact for Further Information**

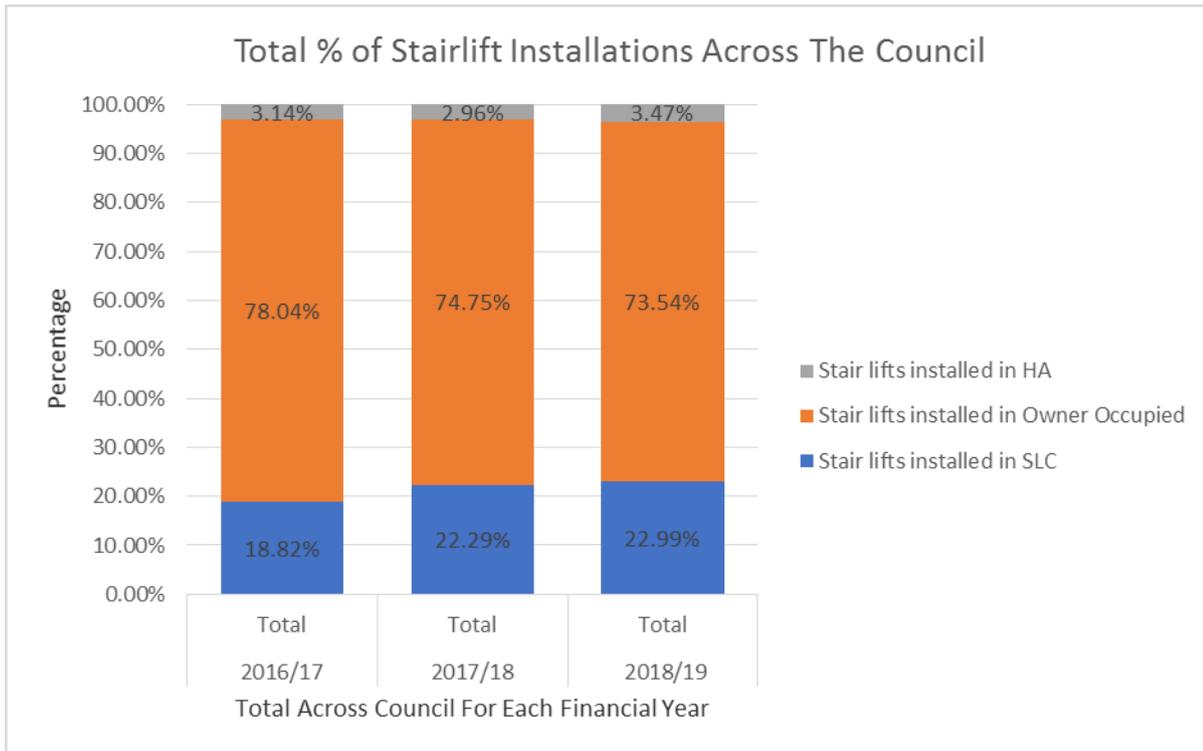
If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Marianne Hayward, Head of Health and Social Care

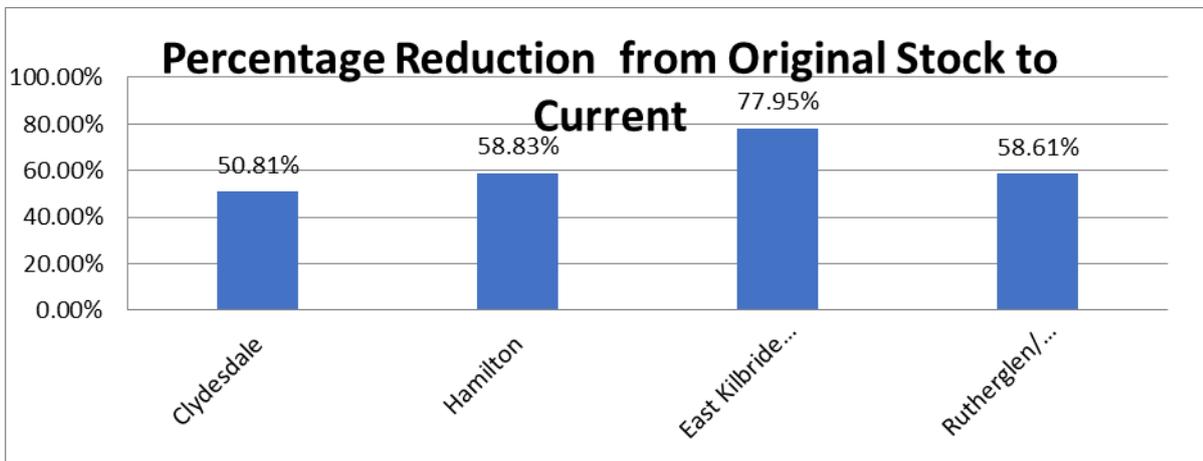
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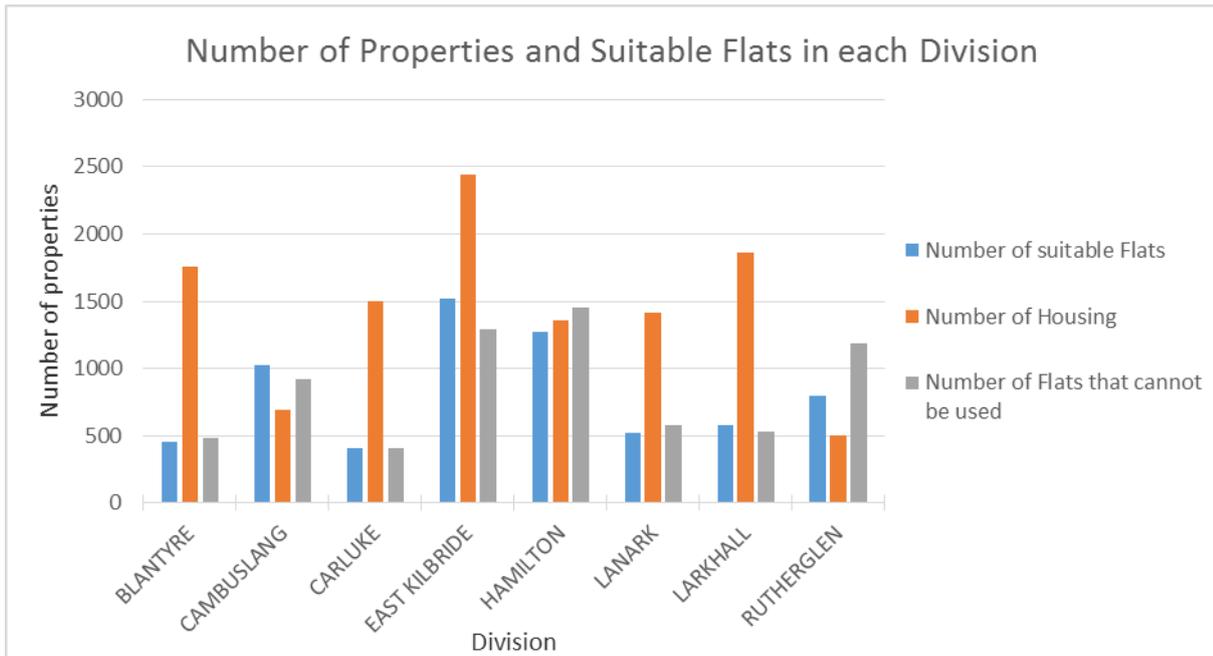
◆ **Appendix 1.**



◆ **Appendix 2.**



◆ Appendix 3.



◆ Appendix 4.

<b>Stairlift and Track Hoists in Situation within SLC (as at Sep 2019)</b>		
Type of lift	No. of units	Ave. age of asset
Curved	1128	5 years approx.
Straight	1593	
Through floor	41	
Other (Access / external)	37	
<b>Total Lifts</b>	<b>2799</b>	

◆ Appendix 5.

<b>Stairlift Repair and PPM Cost Analysis 2016-2019</b>				
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Average p.a.
Repair Costs	£181,037	£182,490	£174,925	£179,484
Repairs No of	3677	3345	2931	3318
PPM Costs	£155,211	£141,872	£137,578	£144,887
PPM No of	4409	4048	3981	4,146
Repair and PPM Costs	£336,248	£324,362	£312,503	£324,371
Equipu Service Charge (11.7%)	£39,341	£37,950	£36,563	£37,951
<b>Total costs p.a.</b>	<b>£375,589</b>	<b>£362,312</b>	<b>£349,066</b>	<b>£362,322</b>

◆ Appendix 6.

**Stairlift (& Other major lift) Analysis - Remove and Replace  
(Replacement Lifts)**

<b>2016-17</b>						
<b>Locality</b>	<b>No. of Rem/Rep</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Total No. of Installs</b>	<b>Total Cost Installs</b>	<b>Approx. % of installs</b>	<b>Approx. % cost of install</b>
Rutherglen	9	£12,200	67	£108,725	13%	11%
East Kilbride	20	£28,820	99	£244,294	20%	12%
Hamilton	27	£42,510	171	£335,945	16%	13%
Lanark	8	£8,855	65	£121,755	12%	7%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>£92,385</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>2017-18</b>						
<b>Locality</b>	<b>No. of Rem/Rep</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Total No. of Installs</b>	<b>Total Cost Installs</b>	<b>Approx. % of installs</b>	<b>Approx. % cost of install</b>
Rutherglen	18	£41,045	82	£165,017	22%	25%
East Kilbride	15	£25,030	157	£251,805	10%	10%
Hamilton	25	£38,090	174	£293,921	14%	13%
Lanark	15	£25,990	92	£178,645	16%	15%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>£130,155</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>2018-19</b>						
<b>Locality</b>	<b>No. of Rem/Rep</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Total No. of Installs</b>	<b>Total Cost Installs</b>	<b>Approx. % of installs</b>	<b>Approx. % cost of install</b>
Rutherglen	12	£29,330	73	£164,296	16%	18%
East Kilbride	35	£64,376	145	£288,861	24%	22%
Hamilton	43	£74,510	230	£503,922	19%	15%
Lanark	19	£41,365	86	£182,757	22%	23%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>£209,581</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>19%</b>

**Total number of lifts installed in SLC over the past 3 years**

Total number of lifts installed over the past 3 years	<b>1441</b>
Average number of lifts installed per year	<b>480</b>
Average cost of all installations per year	<b>£946,647</b>
Average cost per lift	<b>£1,883</b>