

Mendip Care & Repair

Press Release

Contact: Sharon Leaver 01749341827

Sharon@mendipcareandrepair.co.uk



4th February 2008

Local organisation win national award for helping vulnerable people

Mendip Care & Repair, a local organisation that helps elderly and disabled people to make repairs and adaptations to their homes, has won a national award for the quality of its service. Mendip took “Best Social Enterprise” Award at the Annual Home Improvement Agency Awards, held in Westminster.

Government minister Baroness Andrews of Southover presided over the awards ceremony, which also saw local MP, David Heathcote-Amory, present the award to agency manager, Kevin Lake.

David Heathcote-Amory MP said: “I am delighted that Mendip have won this award. They won for the Best Approach to Social Enterprise Award for their stair lift recycling scheme. Under the recycling scheme clients donate the lifts back to the agency when they are no longer required. The lifts are then refurbished and stored at the agency for resale to the general public and local authority.”

Baroness Andrews said: “What’s often behind the best of these schemes is a simple idea, a lot of personal enthusiasm and hard work, and perseverance. And it’s this, as much as the innovation itself, that we are celebrating today. The forthcoming housing strategy for an ageing society will have plenty to say about home improvement agencies and the important role for the sector of making our vision of lifetime homes a reality.

“Home Improvement Agencies make a real difference to the quality of life of elderly and disabled people, providing repairs and adaptations which help them to live more comfortably and safely in their homes. The Foundations awards reward innovation and good practice and I am very pleased to see how high the standards are this year.”

Tony Molloy, Director of Foundations, the National Coordinating Body for Home

Improvement Agencies said: “We had a record number of entrants to this year’s awards, which really shows the quality of the service Mendip have developed to include advice on

repairs and adaptations, help accessing grants and other benefits to fund this work, and technical support in making sure that work is done the best standards using reputable traders."

Patrick Stannah, of Stannah Stairlifts, said: "We're delighted to be supporting the Home Improvement Agency Awards and hope that this will be a long standing relationship between two parties that strive to improve people's living conditions and enhance their quality of life within the home."

Kevin Lake Director of Mendip Care and Repair said "It is great that the Agency has won this award and recognises the hard work of all staff in making it a success"

Ends

Editor's Notes:

For further information or comment

Contact:

The Home Improvement Agency Awards were held on 28th January 2008, at Portcullis House, Westminster.

A photograph from the award ceremony is attached, featuring (l-r): Baroness Andrews, Kevin Lake, David Heathcote-Amory

What are Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs)?

Home Improvement Agencies are not for profit, locally based organisations that assist vulnerable homeowners or private sector tenants who are older, disabled or on low income to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their home. By improving people's living conditions, HIAs enhance their quality of life and enable them to remain in their home in greater comfort and security. They also offer a wide range of services, providing advice to clients and have become involved with many local authority schemes. For example:

- Advice and Advocacy - Helping clients identify and address problems with their home
- Financial Issues: Ensuring clients receive appropriate independent financial advice, and offering practical help, such as filling out forms, or checking that they are receiving all the benefits to which they are entitled
- Technical Support - Providing assurance that repairs will be undertaken satisfactorily, to budget and on time
- Making Links - HIAs make links and build partnerships in order to provide an effective service to their clients - working with, for example, local authority housing and grant officers, occupational therapists, health workers, social services and local voluntary services

There are currently 271 HIAs in England, covering 317 local authority areas. This means there is 90% coverage.

How do I find my nearest HIA?

Visit www-foundations-uk-com and use the online searchable directory, or telephone Foundations on 01457 891909.

The Home Improvement Agency Awards are sponsored by Stannah Stairlifts. Stannah Stairlifts is a British, family run business that has been making stairlifts since 1975. Today it is the world's leading stairlift manufacturer. All Stannah Stairlifts are independently tested and approved to the full BS5776 (1996) accreditation, the British Standard to which all reputable stairlift manufacturers must comply. In addition, Stannah Stairlifts all come with a comprehensive 12-month parts and labour guarantee, as well as one complimentary service visit. As part of Stannah's thorough after sales service, their customer service staff are on hand 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, all working from the nationwide network of service branches that make Stannah a truly national business with the local touch.

For more information please visit www.stannahstairlifts.co.uk

What is Foundations?

Foundations is the National Coordinating Body for Home Improvement Agencies in England. Foundations are appointed by the Department for Communities and Local Government to:

- Develop and expand HIA services
- Provide advice, training and support to HIA staff, managing organisations and sponsoring authorities
- Represent the HIA sector in discussion with government and other stakeholders

All media enquiries to:

James Blanchard, Media Executive, Foundations, Bleaklow House, Howard Town Mill, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 8HT