

## Home Safeguard Review

### Marketing Plan & SWOT analysis

- 1.1 Until recently the Home Safeguard service has remained relatively unchanged for many years, providing a reliable and popular community alarm service and 'out of hours' response for the Council. Recently we have undertaken a SWOT analysis which considers the strengths and weaknesses of the service together with an assessment of the opportunities and threats facing the service. There is also some useful background information on the Home Safeguard service contained in the Marketing Plan (which is available separately).
- 1.2 We have included the SWOT analysis in the refreshed Marketing Plan. The original Marketing Plan was produced in 2004 and considered the main opportunities to market and grow the service at the time. For the first time Home Safeguard was considered to be a business, not one aiming to make a profit, but to break even whilst ensuring that the vulnerable client group could access the service at no or a modest cost.
- 1.3 The Home Safeguard brochures have been updated and an information pack created to provide more comprehensive information about the service available, and to present a more professional image. We have also included a Customer Charter for service users and reviewed the Lease Agreement to make it more user friendly for our customers.
- 1.4 We have modernised the branding with a bespoke logo and used positive images of older persons, disabled people and business options for our lone working monitoring for on our marketing material.
- 1.5 Home Safeguard staff have been provided with branded uniforms and specific equipment installation technique training, again to present an efficient, professional image.

### Opportunities and threats

- 2.1 The main opportunities identified for Home Safeguard are briefly summarised in this paper together with the main issues likely to influence the success of the service.
- 2.2 Attracting **new business** still has to continue to be a major activity for Home Safeguard. Our staff are attracting new business opportunities on an ever increasing scale by offering a range of products, including new customers from small organisations asking for group alarm connections which have produced additional income. The Marketing Plan is geared towards attracting new customers and our proposed revised charging policy needs to ensure that new customers are largely paying customers (we can consider offering flexibility with their payment plans to encourage more paying customers to take up the service).

## Telecare

- 3.1 **Telecare** is the provision of continuous, automatic and remote monitoring of real time emergencies and lifestyle changes over time in order to manage the risks associated with independent living. Telecare is sometimes referred to as assistive technology. Telecare devices include movement sensors, bed exit monitors, fire/smoke alarms, window/door sensors, gas shut off devices, temperature range sensors, medication reminders etc.
- 3.2 These devices connected to the Home Safeguard system can alert Operators to problems the client is facing concerned with their memory loss or potential emerging health threats. There is the potential to move into this area by offering this type of equipment choices, although there will be implications for the system capability, staff training and the ability to be competitive in an increasingly cost conscious business environment and economy.
- 3.3 During September 2008 in response to customer requests we fitted the first Telecare sensors at Kempston House. This consisted of two epilepsy alarms and a falls sensor. We also needed to install a new software card in the Control Centre to enable us to receive and respond to calls activated by the sensors through our system; therefore we now have Telecare capability. We have continued to pilot further installations, and this has proven to be a success.
- 3.4 Our intention in the longer term is to respond to further requests for Telecare equipment installations, and to actively market the service over a period of time now we have tried and tested the equipment linked to our system and trained the staff in how to respond. We have acquired a demonstration pack from Tunstall our equipment supplier who have also trained the installation staff in its use and demonstration. This allows our staff to show customers and professionals working in the community how the various Telecare devices work.
- 3.5 In early 2009 a Home Safeguard customer Newsletter was published and distributed to all existing customers. Included in this Newsletter was an article promoting future availability of additional Telecare sensors. As a result, Home Safeguard has received 13 new enquiries for more information for the Telecare sensors. Furthermore, Home Safeguard received many enquiries from professionals such as an Occupational Therapist in Ottery St Mary, Social Services in Exmouth, and the Practice Manager in Exmouth Health Centre all looking to explore having Telecare equipment for their clients. Therefore a clear direction on a charging structure to develop and inform these customers is now required.
- 3.6 An option would be to consider charging the new customers the full cost of purchase of the sensor, the customer would then own the equipment outright. There could be an installation charge for fitting the equipment by our trained staff, and thereafter an additional charge for monitoring of each sensor installed.
- 3.7 Another option would be to Lease the Telecare equipment to the customer at a higher charge per week to recover the cost of the initial outlay by Home Safeguard purchasing the equipment which could be done over a period of 2 years. Thereafter, the monitoring charge and the Lease charge would continue and the equipment always remain in ownership of

Home Safeguard and could be recovered and issued to another customer once re-conditioned and tested for use if the customer no longer required its use.

- 3.8 The cost of set up for this proposed service development option would be approx £2000-2500. The equipment we could offer to customers on this hire agreement approach would be as indicated in the list below. On top of each sensor hire charge there would be a 50p per week monitoring charge customers would need to pay.

<b>TELECARE SENSORS</b>	<b>PURCHASE COST</b>	<b>MONTHLY HIRE CHARGE</b>	<b>WEEKLY HIRE CHARGE</b>
Additional Amie/Gem triggers	£37.47	£1.56	39p
Bed Occupancy Sensor	£127	£5.29	£1.32
Bogus caller/Panic button	£39.77	£1.66	42p
Chair Occupancy sensor	£170	£7.08	£1.77
Carbon Monoxide detector (wireless)	£80.75	£3.36	84p
DDA Flashing Beacon	£76.00	£3.17	79p
Enuresis sensor	£131.00	£5.46	£1.37
Epilepsy sensor	£280.00	£11.67	£2.92
Fall detector	£75.00	£3.13	78p
Flood detector	£68.00	£2.83	71p
Gas shut off valves 1" Gas Pipe	£440.00	£18.33	£4.58
Gas shut off valves ¾" Gas Pipe	£405.00	£16.88	£4.22
Gas shut off valves ½" Gas Pipe	£400.00	£16.67	£4.17
Heat detector	£55.25	£2.30	58p
Medication Dispenser – Povo Tell	£150.00	£6.25	£1.56
Medication Dispenser – Addoz	£126.00	£5.25	£1.31
Minuet watch	£65.00	£2.71	68p
Natural Gas detector	£108.00	£4.50	£1.13
Pillow Alert solution	£351.42	£14.64	£3.66

Fast PIR	£49.00	£2.04	51p
Passive Infra Red detector	£36.00	£1.50	38p
Pressure Mat	£3.57	One off payment	
Property Exit sensor	£220.00	£9.17	£2.29
Smoke detector (wireless)	£40.80	£1.70	43p
Power supply unit for Sounder Beacon/Visual Beacon	£40.00	£1.67	42p
Sounder Beacon (Blue/Red)	£70.00	£2.92	73p
Temperature Extremes sensors (2-35c) (2-42c)	£55.25	£2.30	58p
Visual Call Beacon	£28.00	£1.17	29p
<b>shaded items would need to be held in stock</b>	<b>£2090.28 initial set up costs</b>	<b>+\$2.17 per month monitoring charge for all the above</b>	<b>+ 50p per week monitoring charge for all the above</b>

- 3.9 A clear direction is now required for Home Safeguard in this emerging Telecare service which can be provided not only to our existing customers in sheltered housing and in the private sector, but to any new potential customers as a opportunity to remain independent in their own homes with these new innovative equipment options. So a competitive charging system needs to be agreed and marketed to customers. This will guarantee its success with a good take up of additional equipment and sensors from new and existing service users over a period of 2-5 years. The income generated within that time will recover the set up costs. All recovered equipment can be re-cycled and re-used for further customers requesting any particular type of sensor. We can re-use or order new if not available to re-cycle.
- 3.10 All new Home Safeguard customers having the basic alarm installed in their home will have the opportunity at the same time of having additional Telecare equipment installed if they require it at the beginning of their Lease Agreement. This could reflect favourably for them in the total cost of their choices for additional sensors to be installed from the very outset, which can be captured all in the one off payment we currently charge for installation and set up costs without the need for a return visit to install additional sensors. If a charging structure can be agreed, we would develop this into a package option approach for all customers who can choose from the outset the package option they would like. This then could be marketed favourably against some of our competitors.
- 3.11 Option 1 we offer Alarm, installation cost, and 1 sensor including the monitoring fee for a set cost. Or Option 2 could be an Alarm, installation cost and 2 sensors at a reduced monitoring fee, and so on.

- 3.12 In order to progress the marketing and provision of this equipment to our customers and tenants there would need to be additional funding available through the Home Safeguard budget to allow for the initial purchase of a stock of the additional sensors. If however this cannot be provided the option to only provide the service for those who are prepared to buy outright the full cost of the sensor then pay a quarterly monitoring fee for each sensor may potentially leave many customers deciding not to take up this service and possibly either go without, or go elsewhere to another Telecare service provider who does lease the sensors.
- 3.13 There are many providers now developing packages which include several sensors which customers can choose from whereby they pay a set fee and not a separate monitoring fee for each additional sensor.
- 3.14 A survey identifying other Telecare provider's current 2009 charging structures has been carried out to look at what our local and national competitors do in certain situations regarding alarm costs, installations and Telecare.
- 3.15 Many of the providers contacted for our survey have been providing Telecare equipment to their customers for several years, and they are all indicating that their enquiries for this service is increasing due to the cascading of the benefits of having such equipment available to people who wish to remain living in their own homes for as long as possible. All the benefits of having such equipment is being 'sold' to community based organisations and professionals which has resulted in many enquiries being generated through these channels.
- 3.16 The East Devon district has a high proportion of retired and older frail vulnerable people who often live in isolated areas and who would benefit from having a locally accessed service which can provide them with the Telecare equipment. Additional sensors like the intruder alarm and bogus caller alarm would help reduce the fear of crime and improve their safety and security in their own homes.
- 3.17 Our current fully trained staff carrying out the equipment installations will call on potential customers by appointment to suit the customer, including Saturday mornings once an enquiry or referral is made, and will give a free demonstration of any of the equipment we can offer. These staff are all familiar with the local areas within East Devon as all were previously Scheme based Wardens with the Council, therefore are familiar with the challenges older and vulnerable people encounter whilst living in small communities. We know that customers often experience little or no support or family they can call upon and would benefit from such equipment in their home to make them feel safe and secure.
- 3.18 There are huge opportunities in this area of work and we are informing the Supporting People Team, Primary Care Trust, Adult Social Services, Age Concern, the Home Improvement Agency Devon Care and Repair, etc. of our potential service development capability.

- 3.19 **Telehealth** is another recent development where monitoring devices exchange physiological data between home and medical staff to assist in diagnosis and monitoring. Devices include blood pressure monitors, cardiac monitoring, blood glucose level monitors etc. This may especially be of interest to G.P's, Community Mental Health Teams and Learning Disability Teams for patients who are discharged from hospital to their home who require early return home monitoring, or on-going health monitoring and welfare calls to identify their patients coping abilities whilst living independently in the community.

#### **TSA accreditation**

- 4.1 The **Telecare Services Association** offers an accreditation, inspection and award scheme which many new customers may find attractive. The Association produce a code of practice and service standards for accredited organisations. We have joined the Association and are undertaking an audit against the criteria with a view of developing an action plan and timetable for compliance and ultimately accreditation. We are taking advice from TSA and liaising with community alarm centres that have achieved accreditation to identify their good practice models to implement into Home Safeguard policies and procedures.
- 4.2 Achieving this standard is key to our ability to bid for future contracts and developing the business as it represents an industry standard that many now insist upon when commissioning alarm services. The service will need to source expert advice on achieving the accreditation if it is to be a success. After carrying out some research with several other Community Alarm services, engaging with expert outside Consultancy services has been their approach in achieving the accreditation.
- 4.3 The Business Unit Manager has therefore sourced and approved a credible Consultant to help us with this preparation process. The Consultant has worked with several other large and medium sized Community Alarm services and all have achieved 100% success after his support with preparing and guiding them through the TSA accreditation process. This is a specialised sector and therefore there are few Consultants available in the South West who specialise in this area of housing service provision. We feel that Consultancy support and involvement with the Home Safeguard's approach to and applying to be accredited by the TSA is essential. The anticipated work forecast and brief was given to the Consultant and a realistic timetable has been set for Home Safeguard to achieve this goal.
- 4.4 We anticipate that a period of 33 days of the Consultants time will be required. This will involve 2 days per month working on site with the staff and by distant electronic contact. Finally, an Action Plan for a period of 4-5 months will be implemented for work and procedures to be put into place based on the recommendation of the Consultant. Then the consultant carries out a 'mock inspection' and a report back on the findings, with a forecast of anticipated success of the TSA accreditation for Senior Managers.
- 4.5 Once accreditation is achieved the Home Safeguard service will receive a recognised certificate of accreditation at level 1 & 2 demonstrating call monitoring and installation services are up to the national standards, also a TSA accreditation approved logo to use on all of our literature to promote this achievement.

- 4.6 The total cost including all anticipated costs for travel of the Consultant etc for the Consultancy involvement in achieving the TSA accreditation status would be approximately **£15,000**.

### **Customer Service Centre**

- 5.1 Linking the Home Safeguard service with the EDDC **Customer Service Centre** presents some opportunities which we are exploring. There is some logic in considering amalgamating Home Safeguard with the Customer Service Centre in that both services are concerned with call handling and issue resolution. However, at this stage we have not considered this a feasible option due to the specialist nature of the Home Safeguard service, and major differences in call handling software currently in use, also the different service operating hours for both services.
- 5.2 We recognise that there is a clear difference in call answering and handling regarding landlord and general council services in comparison to the often lengthy calls received from our Home Safeguard customers when customers are in need for help, who on occasions need to be held on a call for what can often amount to long periods of time for re-assurance whilst the emergency services are called. This would if conducted from one central service potentially 'back up' calls into a call centre.
- 5.3 However, there are benefits from the service having similar performance monitoring objectives and management procedures regarding call handling and monitoring, and this can be explored to ensure the services look to learn from each other and share good practice. Also the training and sharing of experienced staff good practice will improve communication between the Teams as currently the Home Safeguard service takes all East Devon District Councils 'out of hours' calls, therefore it is important that both services work closely together to provide continued excellent customer service during and out of office hours.

### **Digital compliance**

- 6.1 A further threat regarding ensuring future service continuity is the need to ensure that all customers' telephone equipment is **21CN digitally compliant**.
- 6.2 During 2008/09 British Telecom is starting a process referred to as 21CN and it has been quite problematic to locate robust information on the process of migration to digital capability. We do know that between 2008 and 2012 British Telecom will be managing an upgrade of its network to the next generation telephone network. This will give a more reliable system with improved performance, be easier to maintain, cheaper, and give more features. However, we have established that the majority of telephone equipment manufactured in the last ten years will comply after the switchover is completed in the East Devon area.
- 6.3 In the worst case scenario, some of our older alarm units still in circulation will not work when 21CN switch over occurs. We are therefore working with our alarm equipment suppliers to ensure we acquire an adequate stock of up to 50 new units to replace those we have still yet to be identified which will need replacing with our current customers. We have

also replaced in readiness for migration to digital switchover six software cards in our control centre.

- 6.4 It is therefore recommended that the cost of a further 50 Tunstall 400 alarm units are held in stock to ensure that all of our existing customers equipment is replaced with the 21CN compliant equipment by April 2010. The 50 units will be required which will cost **£5000**. If after the identification of all our customers units reveal that 50 units will not be required then these spare units will be put back into our normal stock and used to install into paying customers homes.
- 6.5 Another potential threat is that there are a number of **competitors** who run community alarm or enquiry centres. These include Exeter City Council; Care Direct (Devon County Council) Torbay and Age Concern. We have made recent links with Care Direct who are now promoting Home Safeguard to their callers, where appropriate.
- 6.6 It is a reality that community alarm services are a rapidly developing area of business which will require some investment if we are to expand the services we offer. We are also mindful that any results from the Local Government Review could impact on how we develop the Home Safeguard service over the next few years; therefore we need to factor this into our plans and thinking.

#### **Lone working alerting system**

- 7.1 We operate a basic level of '**Lone worker' monitoring service** for our own staff and Teignbridge District Council. We encourage staff who work out of the office on site or visiting customers of the Council in their homes to report into our Control Centre when they are on-site to give details of their location, mobile telephone number, and estimated finish time. If the Officer does not report back when expected our Operators are alerted and will telephone the number given. If no response is received Operators advise a Manager and/or the Police.
- 7.2 Expanding this part of the monitoring service within Home Safeguard has real potential to generate further income by expanding the Lone Worker service into the community. Health & Safety regulations are an area for increasing the business due to requirements by health professionals, and businesses to protect lone workers who are visiting in the community. The Home Safeguard emergency call system can be easily set up to monitor any lone workers anywhere in East Devon. Beyond this is a service which our competitors are offering on a GPS system which can be installed to pinpoint a person's location if there were any problems and some examples of costs and terms to the service user are shown below.
- 7.3 The untapped market for lone worker monitoring opportunities in East Devon includes those who work in or manage the services of:
- petrol stations
  - off- licences
  - security guards
  - health professionals

- 7.4 The intention is to develop this part of the Home Safeguard Service in 2010/11 with a robust marketing approach and if the new software system is installed this will then put us in a prime position to target local businesses, health professionals and other public bodies to operate a lone worker monitoring service for the community. The income generated from this could be in the 1<sup>st</sup> year a further £7,500 per annum if we attract 250 new customers. Then approx a year on £1500 per year if every year we increase the amount of lone worker monitoring by an additional 50 people, at an annual charge of £30.00.

	<b>Number of Lone Workers</b>	<b>Yearly monitoring fee per person</b>	<b>Income generated</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>£30.00</b>	<b>£7500.00</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>£30.00</b>	<b>£1500.00</b>
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>£30.00</b>	<b>£1500.00</b>
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>£30.00</b>	<b>£1500.00</b>

- 7.5 We are contracted at Home Safeguard to offer an ‘**Out of Hour’s**’ services for East Devon and Teignbridge Council. This is an emergency service where callers contact Home Safeguard outside normal office hours. The Operators assess the nature of the call and forward the call to listed duty officers, if appropriate. Some of the calls relate to housing such as urgent housing repairs, homelessness, but many are concerned with environmental health, refuse and recycling etc.

### **Software**

- 8.1 We have recently explored alternatives to our current software system with Chubb Saturn, which is now very dated and limits our ability to link with other organisations for partnership working in control centres due to the system age and the progression of new technology since its installation in 2000. We have found **Tunstall PNC system** to be the market leaders.
- 8.2 We have received a demonstration of their Tunstall PNC5 software system and have a quote for changing over to this alarm centre operating system. The cost is not significantly higher than our current maintenance agreement with Chubb. The Tunstall quote gives an option for an outright purchase or a five year leasing option which although more expensive is an option we may wish to consider. The comparative costs are shown below. Annual maintenance costs also have to be factored in after year one.

#### **Chubb annual Contract Costs and on-going Saturn system maintenance charges**

**(Incl. Disaster Recovery system charges)**

**£64,123.00.**

**Jontek Answer Link 3G system (incl. Disaster Recovery system charges)**

**£57,800.00**

**Tunstall PNC5 system (incl. Disaster Recovery system charges)**

**£54,755.00**

- 8.3 There is also a separate requirement to replace and upgrade the current voice recording system which is in need of updating and the UPS system we have installed in the Home Safeguard Control Centre. Only Tunstall have provided us with quotes for this replacement work which would be a cost in addition to the above.

**Tunstall UPS Dialog Dual**

**£8,152.00**

**16 channel Weston Digital voice recorder**

**£10,439.00**

- 8.4 Tunstall PNC5 is considered the market leader in terms of community alarm software, and the latest version of this successful Tunstall product. It has an enhanced range of features available to both monitor users activities linked to sensors and alarms, with client data presented in a more user friendly format, performance monitoring reports are easier to generate etc.
- 8.5 Transfer of our data to this system will need to be managed carefully and Tunstall have assured us due to their vast previous experience of carrying out this type of move from one system to another is possible within a 10 week period with all Operators being trained and all information and data being transferred. During this time it is reassuring that no break in service would be experienced by the customers and staff would be able to operate both systems in the migration process to allow consistent contact with all customers during this time of transfer from one system to another.
- 8.6 The Tunstall PNC5 system is the preferred option for the service as we are already a major Tunstall customer with all our alarms purchased from Tunstall at this current time.

**Staffing structure**

- 9.1 We rely heavily on the commitment and professionalism of our Home Safeguard staff. Several years ago we changed to a 'waking night' shift because the new business attracted meant that Operators were increasingly busy at night. We intend to review the rota to see if there is a way of making better use of our staff resources.
- 9.2 We have also reviewed the level of staffing needed to maintain the rota as we have found that we are currently using agency and casual staff on a regular basis to cover sickness and holidays. We are looking at working with the Customer Service Centre on their approach to work surges to ensure we share knowledge on staffing to match call activities.

- 9.3 We undertook a Stress Audit in July 2008 and uncovered concerns about communication, consultation, change, relationships, and poor recognition. These are being addressed through more frequent team and individual meetings (one to ones), a quarterly staff newsletter, a commitment to better listening to staff views, recognition of the need to consult and cascade information more effectively etc. All of these issues have been captured in an action plan.
- 9.4 Between May 2008 and May 2009 the Home Safeguard service received an average of 203.78 calls a day on the Chubb Saturn system in any 24 hour cycle. However, this does not include the volume of incoming and outgoing calls on the landline telephone during the day from customers not linked to the Saturn alarm system, or capture any calls relating to the “out of hours” and Lone working service for East Devon District Council or Teignbridge District Council. It is therefore essential we have sufficient well trained and committed staff to respond to callers within prescribed timescales. We also need to use the reporting facility currently installed on the system to produce timely and useful management information to enable the service to be managed to meet the expectations of customers.