

New procedure for complaints handling at care firm

❑ Care Provider Launches New Complaints Procedure

Scotland's leading provider of housing, care and community services for older people has introduced a new complaints procedure. Designed to be more easily understandable and more accessible to the public, Bield reformed its complaints procedure as it strives to continue improving customer satisfaction.

Reflecting the model Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman the procedure also gives the option for customers to make a complaint to other bodies such as the Care Inspectorate.

Under the changes the complaints handling procedure has been reduced to two stages instead of the previous three, but will continue to follow specific time-scales for responding to complaints.

Bield currently has 16 housing developments in Edinburgh including sheltered housing, very sheltered housing, amenity housing, private retirement whilst day care services are also provided.

Brian Logan, Chief Executive at Bield, said: "While we have introduced a new procedure, our commitment to providing a first class service still remains firmly in place.

"The procedure reflects our commitment to valuing complaints. We know that on occasion we get things wrong and when this happens we want to put it right. We want to learn from our mistakes so we can do things better.

“Issues that arise can be about something we’ve done, or not done, or it could be about the standard of service provided by us, or on our behalf.

“Complaints give us valuable information that we can use to improve customer satisfaction. They provide a first-hand account of our customer’s views and experience, and can highlight problems we may otherwise miss. The new procedure will help us do our job better, improve relationships with our customers. It will help us keep the customer at the heart of the process, while enabling us to better understand how to improve our services by learning from complaints.”

As well as the new procedures, Bield has introduced a new recording system for staff which promotes a more efficient method of monitoring complaints and will provide better reports that will help identify the cause of any raised incidents.

Brian added: “For staff, complaints provide a first-hand account of our customer’s views and experience, and can highlight problems we may otherwise miss. All of these changes have been designed solely with our customers in mind and implemented to improve the services they receive. We are continuously evolving and exploring ways we can meet and go beyond their expectations.

“We hope that this procedure will enable us to address a customer’s dissatisfaction and try ‘get it right first time’ and even help to prevent the same problems that led to the complaint from happening again.”

All Registered Social Landlords will use the same procedure making it clearer and easier for everyone to understand. With more than 40 years experience, Bield, a registered charity, offers quality housing and services for older people. From humble beginnings in Bo’ness it now provides a wide range of housing and services for around 15,000 people across 22 local

authority area.