

Paw-some visits at Edinburgh housing development

An Edinburgh housing development has organised pet therapy sessions for elderly customers to help combat loneliness, following initial success throughout lockdown.

Cocker spaniel, Caly, has been visiting customers at [Bield's](#) Castlebrae Glebe in Craigmillar twice a week since September to provide much needed fun activities and cuddles.

Sharon Tomany, Development Manager at Castlebrae Glebe organised the sessions to encourage a positive mental health environment and help individuals tackle issues that come with isolation.

Sharon said: "The pet therapy sessions have been received extremely positive by customers and staff as there is nothing better than a cuddle from a fluffy animal, especially during a period of isolation where socialising and human interaction was limited.

"We made the decision to continue the sessions as customers have noticeably benefited and we've seen first-hand just how big an impact it has. I can tell when we have Caly in the building, our customers' faces light up.

"Some of our customers feel comfort with Caly as it brings back fond memories of when they had pets of their own.

“It fills me with happiness to see how much joy Caly has brought to Castlebrae Glebe, we look looking forward to her visits.”

Pet therapy can significantly reduce pain, anxiety, depression and fatigue in people with a range of health problems.

The 10-year-old spaniel has proved a major hit as customers get the chance to stroke and brush him for up to an hour.

John Smith, customer at Castlebrae Glebe, said: “We all love Caly and we wish she would come and visit us every day!

“She is a wonderful gentle happy dog and I am looking forward to spending more time with her in the garden”

Bield’s new strategy for property development provides housing solutions – with greater choice and flexibility – to address the needs of the current generation of older people and the next.

[Bield website](#)

