



Need to make a complaint?

This is your guide to our complaints procedure



Why complaints matter to us

If you've got a complaint, we want to hear it.

After all, at Bield we believe you should always expect first-class customer service. And if we make a mistake, we want to learn from it.

So if something goes wrong, or you're not happy with our services, please tell us.

This leaflet tells you how. It also tells you how we'll deal with your complaint, and what you can expect from us.

What do we mean by a complaint?

Very simply, a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction.

It could 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.

The kind of things you can complain about are:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- dissatisfaction with our policy
- treatment by a member of staff, or their attitude
- failure to follow proper procedure.

Of course, your complaint might involve more than one of our services – or it might be about someone who's working on our behalf.

What isn't a complaint?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service – so for example, if you're reporting a problem that needs to be repaired, or want initial action on antisocial behaviour
- requests for compensation
- our policies and procedures with a separate right of appeal. For example, if you aren't happy with the priority you have been given when applying for a house, you may have the right to appeal against the decision
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or tribunal
- an attempt to reopen a complaint that's previously concluded, or to have a complaint reconsidered if we've already given our final decision following a stage 2 investigation.

If you are still not satisfied you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for an independent review of the complaint.



Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us. That includes a representative of someone who's dissatisfied with our service.

If you don't want to complain yourself, you might find it useful to read the section headed '*Need help to make your complaint?*' on page 11.

Making it straightforward to complain

Q. How do I complain?

A. You can complain in person at any of our offices. Or if you prefer, you can do it by phone, in writing, email or by using our complaints form. Contact details can be found on the back page.

As you might imagine, it's easier for us to sort out complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of staff involved with the service you're complaining about. They'll try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When you complain, please tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter
- if you have made a complaint about this matter previously.

Q. How long do I have to make a complaint?

A. Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of:

- the event you want to complain about, or
- finding out you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that this should apply to you, please tell us why.

Q. What happens when I have complained?

A. Right at the start, we will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint.

There are two stages to our complaints procedure: stage 1 is **frontline resolution**, and stage 2 is **investigation**.

Q. How does stage 1 work?

A. At **stage 1** we try to deal with complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We'll give you our decision at stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why. If you are still dissatisfied, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage 2. You can either choose to do this immediately, or some time after you get our initial response. We can help you make this request.

Q. What happens at stage 2?

A. **Stage 2** is an investigation to deal with two types of situation: either a complaint that hasn't been resolved at stage 1, or one that's clearly complex and needs detailed investigation.

At this stage we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- discuss your complaint with you, to understand why you're still dissatisfied – and find out what outcome you're looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible, within 20 working days.

Of course, if our investigation needs to take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. If that's the case, we'll agree revised time limits with you – and keep you updated on progress.

What you can expect, and by when

Stage 1:

Frontline Resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can. If you aren't happy with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.

Stage 2:

Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We may also look at some complaints immediately at this stage if it is clear they are complex or need detailed investigation. We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days** unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

Once you've had our final decision on your complaint, if you're still not satisfied you can ask the SPSO to consider it. We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.

What if we can't sort out your complaint?

After our investigation is complete, if you are still not satisfied with our decision – or the way we dealt with your complaint – you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it. You'll find their address on the back of this booklet. The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (so **before** contacting the SPSO, please make sure it has)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- any matter that has been, or is being, considered in court.

Complaints about Owner Services

The SPSO does not normally look at complaints about our Owner Services.

The First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber) will try to resolve complaints and disputes between home owners and the service provider.

So if your complaint is about our Owner Services and you are still dissatisfied after our investigation stage, you will be able to go to the Housing and Property Chamber. You will find their address on the back of this booklet.



Care complaints

If your complaint relates to a care service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate. You can find out more about their complaints procedure, or make a complaint, by contacting the Care Inspectorate.

Find details on their website:

scswis.com

Or contact them by:

Telephone:
0345 600 9527

Fax:
01382 207 289

Email:
enquiries@careinspectorate.com

The Local Council

Where we provide services on behalf of Departments of the Local Council, such as social work or the Supporting People team, you can complain to them at any stage. The Bield development or project that provides the service can provide contact details for you.

Reporting a Significant Performance Failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about Significant Performance Failures.

This is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. It applies to a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a Landlord's tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this, you should report it to us first. If we then don't resolve it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

This **doesn't** cover a complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord. For this reason, Significant Performance Failures can't be dealt with through our complaints handling procedure.

Ask us for more information, or find out more on the SHR website:

scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

You can also phone them on
0141 271 3810.

Need help to make your complaint?

We completely understand that there may be situations where you're unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself.

That's why we're always happy to accept complaints from the representative of a person who is dissatisfied with our service. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate – but only **if you have given them your consent to complain for you.**

If you'd like to find out about advocates in your area you can contact:

- The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
- Your Local Citizens Advice Bureau
- The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

Contact details can be found on the back page.

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all members of the community. And in line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing please tell us.

We can also give you this leaflet in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille).

Call us and ask for the Business Support Team and we will be happy to help **0131 273 4000**.



How to contact us

Registered Office

Bield Housing & Care
79 Hopetoun Street
Edinburgh
EH7 4QF
Telephone: 0131 273 4000
Fax: 0131 557 6327
Email: info@bield.co.uk

Bield Housing & Care

7 Eagle Street
Glasgow
G4 9XA
Telephone: 0141 270 7200
Fax: 0141 331 2686

Bield Housing & Care

1 Bonneathill Gardens
1 Caldrum Terrace
Dundee
DD3 7HB
Telephone: 01382 228911
Fax: 01382 224088

Response 24

18 Castlebank Gardens
Munro Place
Anniesland
Glasgow
G13 2BG
Telephone: 0141 950 1025
Fax: 0141 959 0788

Useful contact information

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Telephone: 0131 260 5380
Fax: 0131 260 5381
Website: siaa.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland

Website: cas.org.uk
Or check your phone book
for your local bureau

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Visit:
SPSO
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS
Freephone: 0800 377 7330
Website: spsso.org.uk
Mobile site: m.spsso.org.uk

Postal address:

Freepost SPSO

Housing and Property Chamber First-tier Tribunal for Scotland

Glasgow Tribunals Centre
20 York Street
Glasgow
G2 8GT
Telephone: 0141 302 5900
Fax: 0141 302 5901
Website:
www.housingandpropertychamber.scot

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HE
Telephone: 0131 313 8777
Fax: 0131 313 8778
Service user and carer
freephone: 0800 389 6809
Email: enquiries@mwscot.org.uk

Care Inspectorate

Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY
Tel: 0345 600 9527
Email:
enquiries@careinspectorate.com