

Policies & Procedures

Policy No.117

Policy for Change and Continual Improvement

**Produced February 2007, reviewed June 2008, November 2008, April 2009) Update: September 2009
April 2010 April 2011**

Policies & Procedures are to be read and signed in the Central Policy File every six months

Sheltered Housing Services recognises that in a regulated service change is not only inevitable but also necessary in order to maintain high standards of service and comply with Government and Council regulations and criteria. Being able to identify strengths and weaknesses, evolve and develop is vital for a progressive service dedicated to continually improving standards of customer service.

Reasons for Change

Change is the natural process of evolution within a progressive service. Lessons are learnt from operational circumstances and policies and procedures are reviewed in order for the service to run more efficiently and effectively.

Pressure from outside the service can influence change such as new Government legislation, Council directives and also funding issues and the service must be able to respond to these influences and continue to operate at high levels of customer service.

The service also has to be aware of legislation relating to the well being of employees and adapt in order to provide fair work life balances. Employment regulation has a large impact on any service and is a major influence for change.

How is Change Implemented?

It is vital and necessary for managers to be aware of changes to regulations and legislation and examine the consequences relating to their specific service area. Managers have in place feedback and monitoring tools (from customers, staff, agencies and departments who access and support the service) to enable them to test the effectiveness of the service.

For high level issues, such as Government and Council directives, managers are to follow guidelines and criteria dictated by the senior body and implement changes of this nature by strong communication through appointed and appropriate channels, logging all actions and recording minutes of all meetings.

This process will also require the presenting of reports to committees and forums, informing by letter and/or newsletter and verbal reinforcement at meetings and on request.

Local changes will also need to progress through appropriate channels; forums, meetings, written communication and verbal explanation.

Employee issues are to be addressed at staff meetings and one to one meetings, recorded in the minutes and the information made available to all concerned including the opportunity for personal and private discussion.

Service Review – Managers Responsibility

Managers are required to regularly review the effectiveness and efficiency of the service by attending scheme meetings, tenant forums, staff meetings, reading relevant minutes, conducting one to one Meetings with staff and ongoing service and staff monitoring. Findings are to be collated into reports for the Head of Housing Management and Business Improvement Manager to evolve Policies, Procedures and service direction with regards to these issues.

The Head of Housing Management is responsible for the reviewing of Policies and Procedures. The Business Improvement Manager, in conjunction with the Senior Housing Support Officers and feedback from Housing Support Officers, tenants (scheme meetings/Sheltered Housing Forum/individual contact) and associated departments/agencies, will lead this process.

The reviewing of Policies and Procedures is to be carried out at a minimum period of 12 months or when service issues demand.

The Head of Housing Management or his appointed deputy is to sign and date all Policies and Procedures and Reviews.

Staff are to be updated and informed at Staff Meetings/Training Days, Team Meetings and One to One Meetings. The information and feedback process is to be minuted, logged and recorded on the appropriate forms.

Tenants are to be informed at scheme meetings, with the minutes documented and distributed to all scheme tenants, by newsletters and through the Sheltered Housing Forum.

Managers are to ensure that all staff are aware and adhere current Policies and Procedures, service guidelines, corporate and Governmental direction and are to be regularly monitored to ascertain consistent service delivery.

Managers will be responsible for inducting new staff and ensuring there are familiar with current criteria and requirements of both the Centre for Housing Support (CHS) Code of Practice and Supporting People.

Managers are responsible for keeping the Policy & Procedure Folders updated and signed.

Continual Improvement

Sheltered Housing Services is committed to continual improvement in line with Supporting People criteria, Wiltshire Council and Government legislation and initiatives and service requirements.

The Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) is used as the guide for improvement from the Grade C gained at SP Review July 2005 with the aim of achieving Grade B for the review in December 2008. A provisional grading of level C has been given from the December 2008 inspection.

An outline forward plan will to be reviewed yearly to prepare and focus on the requirements of Supporting People and Code of Practice in line with further government legislation, local government directives and service direction.

The outline plan for Year One (*see Appendix 1*) will focus and direct the service towards attaining at least level B Supporting People, continual adherence to Code of Practice criteria and overall service improvement and prepare the way for progress throughout Years Two and Three.

_____ Business Improvement Manager

Dated April 2011
Review *April 2012*

Programme for Continuous Improvement**Purpose:**

This document sets out key areas of improvement for the service. It is a 'living' document and will be monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis.

No	Task	Purpose	By when	Who	Progress
1	Develop training programme based on staff appraisals	Track, monitor and report on training and development	September 2011	JP/SHSO	Training plan spreadsheet now available for all Housing Management. Need updated version just for sheltered housing staff.
2	Publish promotional leaflet explaining sheltered housing services	Promote service and to tackle difficult to let issue at some schemes	On-going	JP	Existing documents reviewed and updated
3.	Produce a Welcome to Sheltered Housing Booklet	Completed, given to every new tenant	Annually	JP	Work completed
4.	Produce a Sheltered Housing Newsletter	Communication just for sheltered tenants	Quarterly	JP/SHSO	Included in Housing Matters/ tenant minutes
5.	Publish regular sheltered housing section in "Housing Matters"	Improve communications	Quarterly	JP/TPO	Now a regular feature of Housing Matters
6.	Implement standard agenda for tenants meetings	Improve feedback and consistency	On-going	JP	Schemes are dealt with on an individual basis
7.	Health and Safety	To write up all reports on the H& S inspections that have been done at all schemes and plan necessary actions. To confirm evacuation alternative locations for major incidents. To involve residents with future inspections.	On-going	MH/JP	Completed
8.	Disabled access	Ensure all schemes comply with DDA requirements	On-going	MH/JP	Programme of work underway.

Programme for Continuous Improvement (cont)

9.	Support Plan review	Ensure that the support plans now in use is in accordance with Supporting People and tenant feedback	On-going	JP	Support Plan form has been updated to remove intrusive questions users objected to.
10.	Publicising Diversity and Equality policy	Ensure that policy for new Wiltshire Council is published and in the Welcome Pack and scheme notice- boards	On-going	SHSOs	Completed
11.	To review staffing levels, teams, and geographical areas	Awaiting details of future plans of service delivery	On-going	HMs	Review delayed by outcome of service provider`
12.	To work with Sheltered Housing Working Group	To improve service	Ongoing	HMs/JP	
13.	To review viability of all schemes	To ensure service meets modern standards and levels of demand	On-going	HMs/JP	Awaiting new service provider
14.	Publicising complaints procedure	To ensure customers aware	On-going	JP/SHSO	Details of procedure have been circulated. Leaflet being designed, are on all scheme noticeboards.
15.	Promotion of Telecare	To make best use of new technology to serve tenants	On-going	HMs/SHSOs/CC	Review of progress underway
16.	Expansion of notice board capacity and standardising displays	To ensure there is space for all essential documents	Completed	SHSOs	Standard list for noticeboards contents produced
17.	Reprint receipt book requested by Sheltered Forum	To comply with request from Sheltered Housing Forum	Completed	JP	
18.	Update Strategy for Sheltered Housing	Ensure service is available for the future	On-going	JP	
19.	Complete application for Centre for Housing Support Code of Practice	To promote best practice and high quality service	Cancelled		Cancelled
20.	Policies to be taken to Sheltered Housing Forum	To review the content and effectiveness of the policies	Annually	JP	

21.	Need programme of annual scheme reviews	Need to ensure all schemes are legally compliant and meet needs of residents	On-going	JP/HMs	
22.	To develop written protocols with other agencies regarding joint working	To formalise existing arrangements	On-going	JP/HMs	
23.	Update staff induction checklist	Need to ensure new staff properly inducted	Annually	JP/SHSO	
24.	Equal opportunities	To provide training for staff and residents. To provide literature in other formats and languages.	Continual	JP	Language Line information circulated to staff
25.	To assess training needs of residents and start programme	To assist participation	On-going	JP	
26.	To update Abuse policy to include reference to MARACs	To ensure policy is up to date with changes in legislation and practice	Completed	JP	
27.	To develop process for central monitoring residents' outcomes	To improve performance monitoring	As needed	JP/SHSO	When tenants have complete Support Plans
28.	Update complaints and compliments log	To ensure that all appropriate complaints and compliments are being copied to the central file	On-going	JP/SHSO	
29.	To ensure all signs, posters and literature and all schemes complies with Wiltshire Council corporate branding.	To comply with corporate policy	Completed	JP/SHSO	
30.					

Key:

SHO – Senior Housing Support Officer

HM –Housing Manager

MH – Maureen Hebburn

HM – Housing Manager

CC- CareConnect

JP – John Pearce