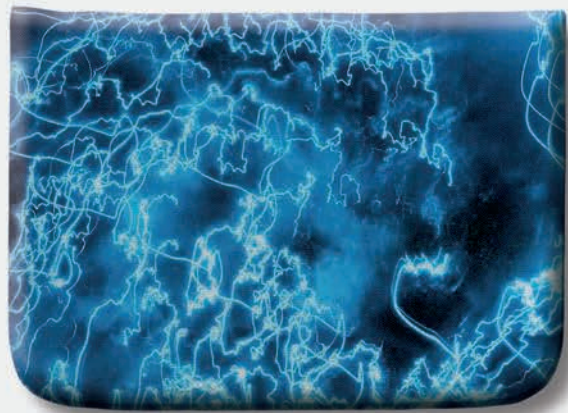




# Are we all set?

ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16



# Life's a journey...

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Old age isn't the same journey it once was. Getting your bus pass is still something of a milestone – but now it's more likely to be seen as the chance to get out and about, rather than a cue to take things easy.

Bield's journey may not have taken the route we expected when we started out 45 years ago. A lot has changed since 1971. There are more older people than ever before and their expectations and aspirations are changing all the time.

Their needs are changing too – the levels of care and support required are more complex; the properties that we build today are very different from those we built in 1971 and technology plays a greater role in the services we provide.

But one thing doesn't change – our commitment to Scotland's older people. The only change is how we fulfil that commitment and realise our goals.

No journey is without the occasional bump in the road and in the last 12 months we've faced some tough choices, but we've also experienced some great moments.

Explore them with us...



“ I don't plan to use the lift.  
I'm thinking ahead, one day  
I know I'll be glad it's there. ”



## Different routes, same destination

We're nothing without our customers; they live in our properties and use the services we provide across 23 Scottish local authorities.

As one of Scotland's biggest specialist providers of housing and care for older people, we manage over 5,500 properties, around 80% of which are rented, making tenants our largest single customer group. It adds up to a lot of people – with differing ideas, needs and expectations – that's why we aim to engage with them and discover what they think of us.

Our Partnership Forum lets us do just that. Now in its twelfth year, this formal tenant representative body goes from strength to strength, providing us with valuable feedback on everything from the layout of a report to rent review proposals. We value the input of our tenant members whose insight helps guide us in the right direction.

No one knows more about our properties than the people who live in them. That's why the Partnership Forum played a key role in helping develop the Bield Improvement Group – our tenant engagement and scrutiny process. It's the biggest step forward we've made in terms of tenant engagement this decade.

We took our time and consulted widely, internally and externally, before we set up the group. Getting this right matters to us, and the insights we've gathered mean that we're already headed in the right direction.

The Group will look at areas where they believe improvements could be made. For example, arrangements for ending a tenancy – is it fair, does it work for people, could it be better? The Group will be able to look in detail at a process and report their findings with any recommendations to the Performance and Audit Committee and Board.

Engaging with our customers isn't new. Last year we circulated more than 10,000 surveys to customers and other key stakeholders. Together with the feedback gathered through regular meetings with tenants, owners and other services users, their views enable us to enhance and improve services.

# Sometimes we all need a helping hand

Times are challenging for Care Services in Bield, and it's not been an easy year for us. There is increasing uncertainty around the delivery of care and support services across Scotland, and this will continue whilst the government makes some big decisions.

We've faced some major challenges and tough choices in the last year; we closed a valued day centre and respite service in West Lothian, and announced the closure of a small care home at Carntyne Gardens in Glasgow. There are several reasons behind these decisions, but financial viability and changes in local authority funding played a key part. It was a hard choice and whilst we know that in the long run it was the right decision, it doesn't make things easier for the people who used these services and the dedicated staff who provided them.

We continue to deliver care services to a large number of older people through Care Homes, Day Care, Home Care and Flexicare services. These services don't just benefit the people who use them; they make a world of difference to their carers, family and friends. We know how important these services are to people and we're committed to providing them to the highest standard we can.

This year we purchased Haugh Street in Edinburgh's Stockbridge. We managed the home for the owners, Elizabeth Finn Care for several years, so when they decided to sell, it made sense for us to buy it. The purchase means that we can continue to make this care home available to older people in the local community.

We're not afraid to try new ideas and for many years we've taken an innovative approach to delivering care services.

Our innovative ideas are inspired by our customers – that's why our care staff listen to them and talk to them about ways that we can help them maintain their independence. That's how Bield at Home came about. It's home care with a difference; a flexible service that reflects the needs of each individual. For some it's about walking the dog or help with the shopping, for others it's about company and a chat over coffee.

We never forget that everyone's journey is different, so whatever they need, that's what we'll aim to deliver.

// I feel lucky. The services provided mean a lot – breakfast, lunch, tea and supper, washing, ironing, songs, scrabble... //



// We knew we would downsize to a flat in the future, however we hadn't decided we wanted to move until we saw this development. //



## Different journeys, new routes

Different people's lives take them on different journeys; even those heading in the same direction may not take the same route. As a diverse organisation we offer a range of services to meet everyone's individual needs.

A growing group among our customers are owners for whom we provide factoring services – 15% of the properties we manage fall into this category. The number has grown recently and in the last 12 months two developments (one in Bridge of Earn, one in St Andrews) have transferred their factoring services to us. Thanks to the Property Factors Act 2011, more and more owners take an active interest in who provides their factoring services. They want quality and reliability, and as a registered charity that focuses on the needs of older people, we're a popular choice.

That's because we care about what matters to them. This year we circulated a survey to more than 850 owners seeking their views on the services we provide. Alongside the Owners Forum which provides a more formal platform for engaging with us, and the Annual General Meetings, owners know we will listen to them.

Taking on factoring services isn't our only link to St Andrews this year; we also completed the first phase of our new development, The Walled Gardens, in the town last autumn. Another shared ownership project – twenty new homes in Bearsden – won the Small Affordable Housing Development of the Year award in the 2015 Scottish Home Awards.

Building new affordable homes for Shared Ownership is just one of the ways we offer even more choice to Scotland's older people.

The Walled Gardens,  
St Andrews



# No hold-ups

When it comes to great service, our BR24 team are destined for success. They provide emergency response services to over 15,000 people across Scotland – no mean feat when you consider the range of services that they offer. The team are also keen problem solvers – always ready to find new solutions and make the most of the latest technology to give our customers peace of mind.

No sooner had they successfully implemented Sure Call – our automated daily call service based around mobile technology – than they were ready for the next challenge.

Another problem they helped solve was to do with fire alarm activations – although most are false alarms, each activation requires the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to attend.

It's unsettling and inconvenient for everyone involved, especially when it happens in the middle of the night. The BR24 team worked with their colleagues in the Property team and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to come up with a solution.

The installation of new fire alarm monitoring software means systems can be more effectively managed remotely. The BR24 team connect to fire alarm calls more quickly, and it enables them to spot faults and false alarms more easily.

The system provides detailed location information within each development, which is invaluable when making a 999 call. Another advantage of the new system is that it can silence smoke detectors once they've done their job; this helps reduce noise and confusion which in turn makes things less stressful for tenants. Although the system can silence an alarm once it's been logged and called in, should smoke be detected from another device in the property, that alarm will sound as normal, so safety is never compromised.

We're proud of our BR24 team and their passion for innovation and are delighted with the news they had successfully won back a tender bid to supply services to customers of Inverclyde Council.

// I was really pleased and very satisfied with their help when I needed them. //



// We cannot complain about anything. We were contacted immediately and received prompt maintenance. //



# Planning for the journey

Some people want to take the fastest possible route from A to B, while others prefer the scenic route. Everyone has different wants and needs, and what might be fine for some people may not be suitable for anyone else.

What's right for our current customers may not work for their children when they become older, so that's why we're constantly revising our plans. The once fashionable bedsits we built in the 1970s don't always meet the needs of modern customers, so we need to think about what we'll do with these properties and how best to invest in them.

Investment in our housing stock is always a priority – more than 20% of our turnover for the year was spent on maintaining and improving the quality of our housing. Eleven million pounds may seem like a lot of money, but there's a lot to do with it; almost 15,000 reactive repairs – an average of 3.5 repairs per property – were carried out last year alone. Add to this the cost of service and maintenance on common facilities

such as lifts and fire alarms coupled with refurbishments to communal areas and windows, and it's not hard to see where the money has gone. It's a big investment, but when 93% of tenants tell us that they're happy with the quality of their homes, we know it's worth every penny.

To help invest in improvements we need to make things as efficient as possible. One way to do this is by making use of multi-trade contracts. This type of contract not only helps us save money via economies of scale, but it also helps make things easier when repairs or faults need to be reported, since one call to one number takes care of everything.

By introducing targets we can respond to repairs faster and more effectively. The average response time for an emergency call is now just four hours, whilst routine repairs are usually dealt with in five days – not bad when you consider that we manage around 15,000 repairs a year.

# The ones who drive things forward

We're committed to helping the people who work with us achieve their potential, so we're delighted to have achieved Gold Investors in People status this year. We've been accredited Investors in People since 1997 and achieved Silver status in 2012, so it's great to have reached the next stage of the journey.

People are at the heart of everything we do – whether it's our customers or the dedicated staff and volunteers who help keep us moving forward. We've got a big team behind us (1,200 employees and 250 volunteers); together they help us achieve great things and enhance the lives of our customers.

Our 12 Board members are also volunteers who give their time, expertise and knowledge to help ensure that Bield is governed according to the organisation's rules and in compliance with statutory and regulatory obligations.

This year our Board spent a lot of time working on our new Business Strategy, which will see us through the next five years. They have also been meeting customers – an important part of their training, which gives them a real insight into what we do and the impact that their decisions will have.

Communication is key to the Board's success and every year we hold discussions with them to not only make sure that we're on the right road, but that we're also providing the support, training and advice they need to do their job.

Some of our Board members are involved in more ways than one; 'double volunteer' Ingrid Deuling not only serves on the Board, but also volunteers at one of our developments in Stirling, where she leads exercise classes for tenants.

This year we said farewell and thank you to Jim Jarvie, who stepped down after nine years on the Board. Sadly, we were advised that former Board member Alastair Mowat had died; Alastair was a spirited character with a unique energy who made a significant contribution to the Board and will be fondly remembered.





// I am 100% happy and very fortunate to have found the perfect place to spend my later years in. Thank you so much. //



## Lots of people want to get on board

It's always great when you don't just meet your fundraising target, but you beat it by miles. That's what happened to Kevin Rowe this year – his fundraising for Bield got a fantastic boost in the form of a £75,000 award from the Scottish Government's People and Communities Fund; it's the single biggest grant we've had in our 45-year history.

The funding has helped support nine different services, bringing benefits across Scotland. Mary's kitchen in Kirkintilloch, the evening care service at Thornhill Court in Falkirk, and a new sensory garden are just some of the projects supported by the funding.

Projects such as these mean a lot to our customers and we know they value them.

In a recent tenant survey 88% said that moving to Bield has improved their peace of mind. Feedback like this is great to hear and acts as a useful marketing tool for us. 99% of new tenants said that they would recommend their developments to others.

We can't just rely on happy customers to spread the word though, that's why we've been exploring new ways to market our housing and services. Social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube are not only cost effective, but they are more engaging and interactive than a traditional newspaper ad. Our first ever YouTube video has already clocked up 15,000 views – and people are still watching it.

Local media is also a great way to showcase what we do – and remind people that our customers are as active as ever. Thousands of people have seen the coverage – and video – of one of our service users enjoying a balloon ride; it really does go to show that the sky's the limit when our team are here to support you.

As well as working hard to promote Bield's work, we also work in partnership with Hanover (Scotland) and Trust Housing Associations to highlight the needs of Scotland's older people. Together we lobby parliament and attend events to ensure the growing number of older people can have choice about how they live their lives in the future.

## Gerry O'Sullivan

### Chair of Bield

After almost five years, it's hard to believe that 2015-16 was my last full year as Chair. It's only when I sit down and reflect on the past year that I realise how far we've come.

It's been a mixed year. There has been much to celebrate, but there have also been some tough decisions for me, my fellow Board members and the Senior Management Team.

Much of the year has been spent planning for the future. Looking ahead and finalising the Business Strategy that sets out plans for the next five years and which will see us through to our milestone 50th anniversary in 2021.

Our commitment to Scotland's older people is as strong now as it was in 1971. Our vision and mission remain relevant. However, the world we live in is constantly changing and evolving. We are not the same organisation we were all those years ago – and nor should we be.

We have grown, adapted, remodelled and introduced new services to meet changing customer demand and expectations.

Announcing the closure of the care home at Carntyne Gardens was a low point of the year. The fact that it was the right decision doesn't make it any easier.

Changes in funding from West Lothian Council resulted in other difficult decisions and the closure of a day care and respite service.



Alongside the difficult times there have been many positive events and achievements.

The Gold level award for our Investors in People accreditation, for example, reaffirms our commitment and investment in the people who deliver services to our customers.

Without our dedicated staff, and the large number of volunteers who work alongside them, we could not provide the first-class services that we do to Scotland's older people.

My journey as Bield's Chair will soon end, but I will remain on the Board, supporting my colleagues and the Senior Management team as they continue to drive Bield forward.

## Brian Logan

### Chief Executive

At Bield we have never been afraid to embrace change, and in our 45-year history there has been a great deal of change.

The housing we built in 1971 is significantly different to the housing we develop now. Some services, such as the Sure Call service delivered by BR24, would have been seen as the stuff of sci-fi just a decade ago. It just goes to show how fast technology advances – and how quickly we need to adapt.

We have achieved far more than we ever envisaged in 1971. Our turnover this year was in excess of £50m. Bield is a large organisation with many complex challenges.

Our commitment to our customers and the people who deliver the services is central to everything we do. But it isn't always easy – this year our journey took us along a road that could best be described as bumpy.

Changes to salaries, pensions and funding cuts mean balancing the books is a continual challenge. Making the decision to close services is exceptionally hard, even when we know it's the right thing in the long run.

We know that we will face even more financial challenges in the future, which is why this year we dedicated a lot of time and energy to developing our new Business Strategy.



This year there have been many difficult decisions, but they have been balanced by celebrations.

Winning the Small Affordable Housing Development of the Year 2015 at the Scottish Home Awards and achieving Gold status in Investors in People are both things that we're particularly proud of.

Reading our customers' stories in the national press and watching video footage of a centenarian having her dream of a balloon ride (a trip made possible by our Flexicare service) help remind us that we're still on track to deliver our vision and mission.

The road ahead will be difficult to navigate but with the drive and determination of our Board and staff team and with our new Business Strategy providing a clear roadmap, I know we can achieve further success and continue to improve the quality of life for Scotland's growing population of older people.

## Board of Management, Directors and Advisors

### Board of Management:

Gerry O'Sullivan, BA (Chair)

Bill Nicolson\* (Vice Chair)

David Scobie, FRICS  
(Vice Chair)

Hugh Carr, BA (Hons),  
ACA, CPFA

Ingirid Deuling, Dip COT,  
COTSS-Housing, HCPC  
(Retired), BEM

Lesley Holdsworth, PhD,  
MPhil, FCSP, SRP, DPT  
(Appointed 17 September 2015)

Jim Jarvie, BA, CA  
(Retired 17 September 2015)

Margery McBain, BSc,  
MBA, FCIPD

Jacqueline McCormick,  
MA (Hons), FCIH

Michael McFee, LLB, CA, ATII

Susan Napier, BSocSc, FRICS

Mohanjit Singh, BSc

William Smalley\*  
(Appointed 17 September 2015)

John Watson\*  
(Appointed 17 September 2015;  
Resigned 26 November 2015)

\*Tenant of Bield

### Company Secretary:

Scott M Smith, FCMA, CGMA

### Directors:

Chief Executive  
Brian J Logan, BCom (Hons),  
CPFA

Housing Services  
Amanda Miller, DipHS, FCIH  
(Resigned 31 July 2015)

Graeme Russell  
(Interim Director)  
(Appointed 1 August 2015;  
Resigned 30 June 2016)

Asset Management  
Stuart Dow, MCIQB

Care Services  
Charlie Dickson, RMN,  
CSWM, CHM

Finance & ICT Services  
Scott M Smith, FCMA, CGMA

Human Resources  
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### Bankers:

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EH2 2YB

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Scottish Charity SC006878

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