

BIELD FREE TO BE Bulletin

WINTER 2022

Also inside:
**BIELD
TENANTS
RAISE A LATTE
MONEY FOR
CHARITY!**

Page 6

COST OF LIVING CRISIS AND HOW WE CAN HELP

The wellbeing of our tenants is always our top priority and we share your concerns around the rising cost of energy, food and fuel.

Over the last six months, the UK and Scottish Governments have issued a number of support packages to help people with the cost of living crisis. The Scottish Government have also set up a dedicated cost of living website at: <https://costofliving.campaign.gov.scot>

Amongst other things, this website can help you to:-

- Check which benefits, grants and free services are available to increase your income
- Check what support you could get with debt and money advice
- Check what support is available for older and disabled people (as well as those who care for them)
- Check what support you could get with energy, rent or mortgage and other bills.

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Energy price increases

We are in the middle of a global energy crisis and energy bills are increasing at an unprecedented rate.

As an organisation, we are committed to doing everything we can to reduce energy costs and help ensure your bills remain as affordable as possible.

We are continuing to monitor energy consumption levels throughout all of our developments and have started to introduce energy saving measures to reduce energy usage and expenditure. These include reducing the temperature (and therefore reducing the cost) at all of our developments which are heated via a communal boiler by 15%. We began to introduce this measure in September 2022. We also recently sent an energy advice and support leaflet to all tenants which included information about the financial support available to households to assist with energy costs.



We need your help!

We would love to get your thoughts on what else we can do to save energy and prevent bills from becoming unaffordable.

Use the link below to submit your ideas on how we can best reduce energy consumption/costs into our online suggestion box:

<https://forms.office.com/r/BBwe8Qn7ZM>

Everyone who submits a suggestion which is then adopted will receive a £20 Amazon gift voucher. The person whose idea results in the greatest reduction in energy spend will receive a further £100 gift voucher.

Send us your suggestions today!

Energy Priority Services Register

Energy suppliers know that some people need a little extra help, which is why they offer priority support to those who need it. The Priority Services Register (PSR) is suitable for elderly, very ill or disabled people or those who rely on power for medical equipment. Eligibility criteria applies.

By registering for the PSR, you'll get extra support during a power cut or emergency if you need it. It is completely free to join, you simply need to contact

your energy supplier.

More information on eligibility and how to register can be found on the Ofgem website:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register>



Pre-payment meters

The UK Treasury is providing financial support for individual households which have an individual electricity meter and pay an energy supplier directly. A £400 energy grant to reduce bills will be paid to the accounts associated with these electricity meters.

For customers who have a traditional pre-payment meter which requires topping up via a key or card in a local newsagent or Post Office, the help with energy bills comes in the form of a voucher. Discounts will be received automatically as either:

- redeemable vouchers, sent by SMS text, email or post

- an automatic credit when you top up at your usual top up point

Your electricity supplier should advise how you will get your discount but, if you're not sure or if you don't receive any information from them, you should contact them directly to check that they have your latest telephone number and/or email.



Tenant action on sustainability

We know that rising energy prices are putting an added strain on household budgets. Becoming more sustainable is important not only in order to reduce costs, but also to tackle inefficiency and energy waste and combat climate change.

As a social housing provider, we are being asked to reach ever-higher energy efficiency standards as well as work towards net zero carbon operating in the next few decades.

We want to plan changes with tenants and are looking to establish a new tenant group – Tenant Action on Sustainability. We are looking for people with an interest in system change and energy efficiency to join our group, as we explore what sustainability means together, and help us to make the right decisions.

We plan to meet quarterly online, starting on Wednesday 14th December 2022. If you are interested in finding out more or coming along, please email: feedback@bield.co.uk

We understand that this is a difficult time for all of our tenants. If you have any concerns in relation to paying your energy bills, please speak with your energy supplier in the first instance. Alternatively, you can contact the following organisations for additional advice and support:

Advice Direct Scotland

Call **0808 196 8660** or visit their website (you can also email them via the website): www.energyadvice.scot

Age Scotland

Call **0800 124 4222** or visit their website: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/information-advice/energy/>

Citizens Advice Scotland

Call **0800 028 1456**, visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau or visit their website: www.cas.org.uk

Energy Action Scotland

Visit their website: <https://www.eas.org.uk/for-households>

Ofgem

Visit their website: www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers

You can also email Bield at: energyadvice@bield.co.uk



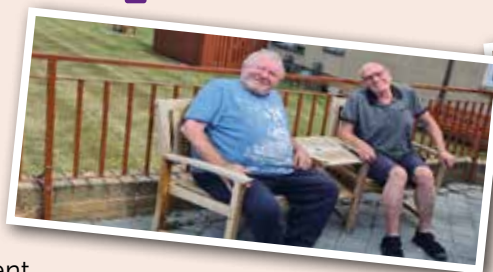
Garden transformation ex-seeds expectations!

Back in 2019, Bield staff successfully applied to the Co-op Local Community Fund to help improve the garden area at Emily Court in Gorebridge. Although the bid was successful, little did we know at the time the project would be delayed by more than two years due to a pandemic!

In recent months, Elizabeth Calder (Retirement Housing Manager at Emily Court) has driven this project forward, organizing for the purchase of various items including benches, companion seating sets and planters for every block. Elizabeth negotiated so well with a local firm that they supplied and planted additional flowers for the development free of charge!

All the tenants and regular visitors of Emily Court give thanks to:

- Co-op Local Community Fund
- Klondyke Garden Centre
- Ballantynes Nursery



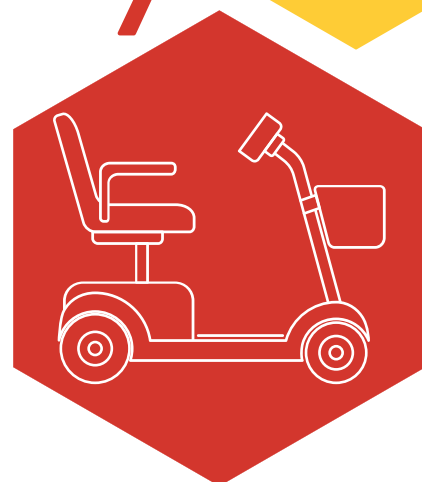
Powered Wheelchair & Mobility Scooter Policy

We recognise the positive benefits that a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair may have for tenants with a mobility impairment. However, if used or stored incorrectly, mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs can cause serious injury, damage or fire.

To help us keep everyone safe, tenants are required to apply for and receive permission to keep and use a mobility scooter at a Bield property.

Tenants who use powered wheelchairs must ensure that these are used and stored safely.

You can access a full copy of our Powered Wheelchair & Mobility Scooter Policy on our website: www.bield.co.uk/powerd-wheelchair-and-mobility-scooter-policy-december-2021



Special birthday wishes!

100th Birthdays

On 30th May, Helen Fiddes from Kirkton Court celebrated her 100th birthday with a party full of family and friends!



On 9th October, Peggy Calderwood from our Highcrofts Dalmellington development also celebrated her 100th birthday! Peggy enjoyed a week of celebrations with her family as well as an afternoon tea which was organised for her by the other residents. Peggy is pictured with her personalised birthday cake which was presented to her by Area Manager, Alison Allan.



West Port resident, Peter Common, celebrated his 100th birthday on 7th October.

A party was organised by Peter's granddaughter, great granddaughter and the Westport Residents Group Committee. Along with Peter's many relatives, friends and neighbours in the development, the Mayor and the Lord Lieutenant of West Lothian were also in attendance.

A great afternoon was had by all including the main man himself!



90th Birthdays

Two of the residents from our Oakbank development also celebrated their 90th birthdays this year! Annie Goldie (right) turned 90 on 22nd May while Rose Beattie (left) reached the same milestone on 16th October.



Bield tenants raise a latte money for charity!

Tenants at Ochilview Court in Armadale and Springfield Gardens in Uddingston recently held coffee mornings for MacMillan Cancer Support. Both events were a huge success and raised an incredible £225.00 and £900.50 respectively.

Some of the Ochilview Court tenants are pictured enjoying their tasty treats while the Springfield Gardens tenants are pictured with their very large cheque!



Our Marshall Court development in Dunoon also hosted a coffee morning recently. As well as getting to enjoy a fabulous selection of cakes and biscuits, the tenants were treated to entertainment from pupils at nearby Dunoon Grammar School. The school was recently crowned the winner of the World's Best School Prize for Community Collaboration and we can see why!



Our 2022 AGM

We returned to an in-person Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September following a two-year hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The AGM took place on 22nd September at Edinburgh's Apex Grassmarket Hotel, with a mixture of staff, members and Board members in attendance to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the industry, including sustainability and the cost of living crisis.

The election of members to the Board saw the re-election of Robert Fernie and Isabel McGarvie. David Fisher was formally elected as a new member whilst Ingrid Deuling retired from the Board.

Long-service awards were also presented to celebrate loyal staff

and recognise their outstanding contributions (see below).

In addition to the AGM, we held a Staff Conference on the same day to bring together staff who will be overseeing and implementing changes to policy and practice over the coming years.

Our Chief Executive, Dr. Lynne Douglas, said: "This year we have been working on setting the direction for the next five years, listening to people's views and pulling them all together into a coherent plan that we are excited to launch in 2023.

"The industry has weathered tough storms over the past few years and we were delighted to look forward and celebrate and acknowledge the hard work of our staff in



person. Both our tenants and staff continually drive us forward to achieve the best we can, and that is what helps us through periods of uncertainty. We were delighted to be back hosting our AGM in person and enjoyed catching up with members to hear about their experiences over the last year.

"The Staff Conference also helped to play a vital role in contributing to our next strategy and shaping the Bield of the future, while providing an opportunity for staff to network and create connections".

Long service awards:

Linda Anderson
Angela Bruce
Lisa Coe
Angela Fitzpatrick
Angela Gray
Julie Henvey
Carole Irvine
Rena Kirkton-Vaughan
Anne Leslie
Yvonne Macaulay

Pamela MacMaster
Lynn McCusker
Ruth McFadden
Moirra McGoff
Julie Newman
Marie Paterson
Veronica Pirrie
Maria Smith
Lorraine Urie
Sandra Wilkie

15 YEARS

Yvonne Boyle
Jennifer Hosea
Janice Lawson

25 YEARS



Crossword Answers
Across: 9 Obese, 10 Amazement, 11 Retic, 12 Intrinsic, 13 Own, 14 Nahum, 15 Glassware, 16 Shrub, 18 Eagle, 22 Avalanche, 25 Forgo, 27 Net, 28 Employees, 29 Wrong, 30 Undermine, 31 Aisle.
Down: 1 Soprano, 2 Wealth, 3 Newcomer, 4 Saying, 5 Last page, 6 Gift wrap, 7 Persuade, 8 Sticker, 16 Stampede, 17 Bacteria, 19 Gift wrap, 20 Gaseous, 21 Roughen, 23 Aboard, 24 Ensued, 26 Rhooose.

Bield welcomes new Board member

We are pleased to welcome our newest Board member, Derek Breingan, to Bield. Derek was co-opted onto the Board in October, with a view to being formally elected as a Board member at our 2023 AGM.

Derek has many years of UK multi-banking experience and a personal passion for social care which has allowed him to become a specialist lender and advisor to the sector. His customers include aged care, specialist care and looked-after children providers. Derek joined the-then Clydesdale Bank in 2010 to create a dedicated sector division and grow the bank's appetite to support health and social care across the UK. It is currently the second largest sector which the business bank, now known as Virgin Money, lends to.

With his wide knowledge of social care, real estate and property, Derek has been involved in financing the development of over 85 care homes and 3 retirement housing schemes in the last 7 years.

As an Ambassador for Championing Social Care, a supporter of the Care Workers Charity and a regular speaker at public events, Derek actively promotes better outcomes for social care for the benefit of residents, staff and families.

He is married to Tracy and lives in South Ayrshire with their dog Coco.



Join our Board!



We're always on the look-out for new members to join our Board.

If you share our vision of a Scotland where people of all ages are respected, can make their own choices and are able to lead independent and fulfilling lives, we'd love to hear from you.

We are particularly interested to hear from individuals with skills or experience in relation to law, accountancy, commerce, customer service and Health & Safety.

For more information, please contact Clare Beesley, Governance Manager, at: c.beesley@bield.co.uk



Bield receive funding boost to improve lives of tenants

We were delighted to have been awarded funding earlier in the year to get older tenants involved in shaping new digital services, enabling them to live as independently as possible.

We successfully secured £75,000 from the pioneering TAPPI (Technology for our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation) project which aims to improve the way technology is used across the housing and care sector.

The funding will enable us to work with tenants to test different

devices, apps and systems across a variety of housing settings. Tenants will be given shared responsibility, alongside staff, to co-produce digital services to support their independent living.

The TAPPI project is being led by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN), the TEC Services Association (TSA) and funded by the Dunhill Medical Trust over a 12–15-month period.

Our Chief Executive, Dr Lynne Douglas, said: "We are very excited to be the Scottish testbed for TAPPI. This has huge potential to shift thinking on how housing can be integral to new models of delivery in the integration agenda."

Most importantly, it will be delivered together with older people to improve the outcomes that matter to them."

Bield is one of just six providers across the UK, and the only one in Scotland, to be awarded this funding. The other providers are Haringey Council, Platform Housing Group, Pobl Group, Southend Care and Wiltshire Council. Each will receive between £65,000 - £75,000 from the total award sum of £440,000.

All of the providers will work with researchers from The Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (CCHPR) – part of the University of Cambridge - to quantify benefits from their work and share what they have learnt with the wider housing and care sector.

Tracey Howatt, our Director of Customer Experience, said: "This important funding will improve the lives of our tenants and enable us to integrate technology throughout our services."

"This will ensure that our tenants can live as independently as possible, in homes that have been designed to suit their care and support requirements."

For more information about the TAPPI project, please visit: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/TAPPI2>



HOW WE'RE PERFORMING



The Scottish Housing Regulator has now published performance information about us and all other Registered Social Landlords in Scotland. They do this every year so that tenants can see how well their landlord is doing and how they compare to others.

You can access Bield's performance information for 2021/22 at: <https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/landlords/bield-housing-care>

Our performance has improved in a number of areas since last year including the amount of rental income collected, the number of days taken to re-let empty properties and the number of properties meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing (ESSH).

However, we have also encountered some challenges, most notably regarding repairs. Coronavirus restrictions, supply chain issues and a shortage of labour and raw materials had an impact on our repairs service this year. Nevertheless, we completed a total of 15,090 day-to-day repairs in 2021/22 (in addition to the usual cyclical, service and major repairs programmes) and over 85% of all repairs were completed "Right First Time". Despite all of the ongoing challenges, we continued to get



things done and kept both our tenants and staff safe.

Our latest Annual Review (available in both text and video format) and our Tenant Performance Report contain more information on what we'll be doing to improve our performance throughout the next year. You can find these on our website at: <https://www.bield.co.uk/resources/annual-performance-reports>

You Said, We Did

You Said, We Did is about sharing what we have done, based on what you have told us, and the difference it makes.

You Said:

Customers waiting on adaptations to their homes were unsure who to contact for an update.

We Did:

We updated our website to provide more information about the adaptation process and average timescales. We also added a direct message service and email address so that tenants know who to contact. You can call **0141 270 7262** and leave a voicemail requesting a call back or email: star@bield.co.uk



Developing systems for the future

There have been some significant changes to the way we work and communicate across the organisation and this will continue over the coming months.

It all began with the introduction of our new housing management system, Cx, in October. Cx has transformed the way we work by integrating our repairs and housing functions and streamlining processes for our staff – helping us to provide a better service to our tenants and owners.

The introduction of Cx required significant input from our specialist project team. They worked hard over the last 12 months to review our

processes and ensure that they were as efficient as possible.

But the work doesn't stop there! We have also started working on an innovative online customer portal which will allow tenants and owners to access a variety of Bield services (including making payments, submitting requests and reporting repairs) 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

We aim to develop and launch the portal over the next 12 months and will work closely with tenants and owners to ensure it is tailored for all.

RENT FREEZE: WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

This is the time of year when housing associations start thinking about their budgets for the next financial year (from April 2023). A key part of that is our consultation with tenants on what level of rent is set from April. The law requires us to do this every year.

You've probably heard that, between now and the end of March 2023, all rents (for social housing tenants and for private tenants) have been frozen by the Scottish Government. This hasn't affected your rent yet, as housing associations only set rents once a year, every March/April.

The Scottish Government will decide in January whether housing associations will be allowed to raise rents in 2023/24. However, both the Scottish Government and Scottish Housing Regulator have said that housing associations should still carry out normal consultations with tenants on rents for next year. We will contact you again once we know what the Scottish Government has decided.

How will we set your rent for next year?

As you know, housing associations are charities which exist to provide good quality homes at affordable rents. We will always do our best to keep your rents as low as possible.

The cost of living crisis affecting our tenants, combined with the many inflationary pressures which Bield has been facing, make it especially important that our consultation with you finds the right balance between rent affordability and the need to maintain our services and continue investing in our homes. This includes things like replacing kitchens and bathrooms and further improving the energy efficiency of our homes to help limit your energy costs.

What should you do next?

We will shortly be sending all tenants information about the options we are considering for next year together with a short survey. We would be grateful if you would look out for this in the mail and, once completed, please send your surveys back to us so that you can influence the decision of the Board.

Customer Satisfaction Survey - let us know your views!

Every three years, all social housing providers in Scotland are required to ask their tenants to take part in a Customer Satisfaction Survey.

All Bield tenants will soon receive a survey through the post – please look out for this. The survey will ask you a variety of questions including how satisfied you are with your home, our repairs service and with the opportunities to engage with and influence us.

Our scrutiny group, the Bield Improvement Group (BIG), helped us to review the look and format of this year's survey. We are grateful to the members of the BIG who took the time to assist us with this.

All completed surveys are sent to an independent and impartial third party company who collate the results and share them with us. We then report the results to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). The SHR uses this information to compare how all housing providers in Scotland are doing and to focus on those who need extra scrutiny.

Please take the time to complete your survey – this is your chance to give us your views on the services we provide and how these could be improved.

Last time around, only 28% of tenants completed and returned their surveys! We want to hear from as many people as possible this year and we hope you can help!

- Do you run a social club at your development? Please mention the survey and encourage your members to complete it.
- Do you meet with other tenants in your lounge regularly? Why not agree a day and time to complete your surveys together?

- Do you know someone who can't get to the postbox? You could offer to post the completed survey for someone who can't get out and about.
- Not everyone may realise what the survey is and why it is important. Please mention it to your neighbours when you receive yours.
- Your views help us to get things right – please complete the survey and send it back. You can complete it anonymously if you wish, or if you want us to follow up on anything, include your name and contact details.

Look out for your survey coming soon!



Are you a Communication Champion?

Do you get frustrated by poor communication? Do you enjoy making a difference to help others? You could be the champion we are looking for!

The Bield Communication Champions were established because we recognised that, as an organisation, we could be doing much better in how we communicate with you, our tenants.

So far, the Bield Communication Champions have developed a 'tenant

checked' mark that will help you to identify documents that have been influenced by tenants. They have already reviewed several letters and leaflets and are working on an update for the tenant handbook.

The Bield Communication Champions currently meet online every quarter to identify pieces of work, review and sense-check documents that we hope to share with tenants.

If you are interested in learning more or in joining the Bield Communication Champions, please get in touch by emailing: feedback@bield.co.uk

Bield host awards ceremony to celebrate employees going the extra mile



Back in September, we hosted our first ever Staff Awards Ceremony to recognise and reward the employees who went above and beyond their normal duties and kept morale high despite the ongoing challenges of the last few years.

The ceremony took place at the Grassmarket Community Project in Edinburgh with over 60 employees across all areas of the organisation in attendance.

Eight awards were presented on the night with the winners of seven of these chosen by a judging panel. The judging panel comprised of six members of staff from across the organisation and one Board member.

The People's Choice Award was determined by Bield employees and the general public with over 200 votes cast in an online poll. The winner of this award was announced at the ceremony via a pre-recorded video message from well-known Scottish actress and comedian Elaine C Smith.

Our Chief Executive, Dr Lynne Douglas, said: "All of our teams have worked tirelessly over the past two years, overcoming exceptional challenges. Hosting our first ever Staff Awards Ceremony gave us a chance to bring together our employees from all across Scotland and recognise and celebrate their incredible efforts and achievements."

The winners were:

The Collaborator Award: **Gary Baillie (Bield Response 24)**

The Customer Hero Award: **Sharon Tomany (Castlebrae Glebe)**

The Employee Achievement Award: **Marie Paterson (Glenview Court)**

The Making a Difference Award: **Ann Finlayson (Waverley Court - volunteer)**

The People's Choice Award: **Sarah Dickson (Camperdown Court)**

The Problem Solver Award: **Sarah Lewis (Earnbank)**

The Supporting Others to be Themselves Award: **William Hume (Bield Response 24)**

The Team of the Year: **The Cx Project Team**



Campylobacter awareness

Always follow the **4Cs** when cooking chicken to stay safe.



Chilling



Cleaning



Avoid
Cross-contamination



Cooking

Campylobacter can cause serious illness for over 65s.

Bield have partnered with Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to help increase awareness of the bacteria campylobacter and the danger it poses to those aged over 65. Campylobacter is the most common bacterial cause of food poisoning in Scotland and is commonly spread by improper handling, preparation and cooking of raw chicken.

Anyone can contract campylobacter but the over 65s have a higher rate and are at greater risk of suffering from more serious side effects than younger people. This is due to the body's immune system weakening as people age, which increases the risk of getting food poisoning and can result in a serious illness requiring hospitalisation or even causing death.

The highest hospitalisation rates occur in those aged 70 and over, with around 1 in 4 who are in the 75–79-year-old age group ending up in hospital after contracting campylobacter.

To reduce the risk of contracting campylobacter, FSS want to encourage everyone to follow the 4Cs when cooking meals, especially chicken.

These 4Cs include:

Chilling

Defrost chicken in the fridge in a covered container on the bottom shelf away from cooked foods. Always check chicken is fully defrosted before cooking.

Cleaning

Always wash hands in warm, soapy water after handling raw chicken. Effective cleaning removes bacteria on hands, equipment and surfaces, helping to stop campylobacter from spreading onto food.

Avoid Cross-contamination

Never wash raw chicken! This can splash harmful bacteria around the kitchen sink and surfaces. Use different chopping boards and utensils for raw chicken and ready-to-eat food. If you can't use different chopping boards and utensils, thoroughly wash them in hot, soapy water between use.

Cooking

Check the chicken is cooked to 75°C in the thickest part using a meat thermometer. Ensure there's no pink meat, the juices run clear and that it's steaming hot in the middle. This is the only way to ensure that harmful bacteria are killed.

For more information, please visit: [foodstandards.gov.scot/campylobacter](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/campylobacter)



The Bield Improvement Group (BIG) are a group of tenants who make up Bield's scrutiny group.

What is scrutiny?

In the context of social housing, scrutiny is a systematic way for tenants to take a closer look at the work being done by their landlord with a view to making recommendations that will make things better for all tenants.

What has BIG done so far?

The BIG was formed in 2016 and has been working hard since then on various issues including:

- **Complaints** – following a recommendation from the BIG, tenants now receive a unique complaint reference number every time they make a complaint.
- **Ending a tenancy** – the BIG influenced our procedure in relation to this.
- **Reviewing the customer satisfaction survey** – the BIG helped us to come up with the questions which will be included in our 2022 survey. (See page 12 for more information on this).

Influencing the decisions Bield make

Scrutiny is a great way to influence the decisions we make and can help make things better for all Bield tenants. The BIG meet six to ten times per year, depending on what work they are carrying out, and it is a great way to get involved with us.

Would you like to join?

We are looking for new members and would love to hear from you. If you would like to find out more, please visit our website: www.bield.co.uk/tenant-engagement-and-participation or email: feedback@bield.co.uk

Bield Equality Network

The Bield Equality Network is a group for tenants who are interested in discussing and influencing what Bield does for tenants with protected characteristics.

What have they done so far?

The Bield Equality Network is still relatively new, but has already achieved a lot including:

- Setting up the Older People Rainbow Network (see page 18)
- Publishing guidance on LGBT+ terms

- Making a proposal to the Partnership Forum to consider working towards the Rainbow Mark
- Working with Happy to Translate to research how applicants and tenants with little or no English contact us by telephone

We would be delighted to welcome new members – any person who would be interested in working with Bield to make things better for minority groups can join. If you are interested in joining, please email: feedback@bield.co.uk

If you've got it,

Residents and staff across our developments had a great time celebrating Halloween.



HAUNT IT!

MOORFOOT COURT SPOOKTACULAR

by Shirley Queen, Retirement Housing Manager

*It's that time of year again, the autumn leaves are falling,
October 31st is when ghosts and ghouls come a-calling,
The lounge is decorated with spiders and bats,
The witch is in the corner with her scary black cat,
Beneath her is the cauldron full of frog's tails and beasts,
She's looking for body parts to add to her feast!*

*We're all dressed up for the Halloween party night,
Last year's costume is feeling a little tight,
As usual a prize for the best worst dressed,
Some of them came wearing their Sunday best,
Mags came as Medusa with snakes in her hair,
Nettie came with a mask on and gave us quite a scare!*

*We had some food and drinks and got a little boozy,
Then we settled down to watch a scary movie,
The lounge was in darkness as the film began,
I'm sure I felt something touch me on the hand,
The suspense was thrilling, you could feel it in the air,
Oh no - now there's something touching my hair!*

*A decoration fell and hit me on the head,
I let out a scream that could have woke the dead,
Everyone jumped we all got such a fright,
My hair and my face turned a funny shade of white,
This Halloween party really was a scream,
So, to everyone out there, Happy Halloween!*



Join the Older People Rainbow Network

Do you belong to the LGBT+ community or are you an ally of LGBT+ rights? Would you like to connect with other like-minded people and chat about your experiences living in retirement housing? Then the Older People Rainbow Network is for you!

An online meeting for LGBT+ tenants and staff, as well as those who want to support LGBT+ people,

we meet on the last Tuesday of every month on Zoom for around one hour.

Don't worry if you have never used Zoom before, we can help you get online - all you need is a smartphone or tablet with an internet connection.

To sign up visit: older-people-rainbow-network.mailchimpsites.com or email Zhan McIntyre at: z.mcintyre@bield.co.uk

Fire safety at Christmas

Here are some top tips to keep you and your home safe over the festive season:

- Check your Christmas tree lights carry the British Safety Standard design. 
- Never place candles near your Christmas tree or materials that can catch light easily.
- Most fires start in the kitchen. Avoid leaving your cooker unattended. Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol.
- Make sure your family and visitors know how to escape in an emergency.
- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly. NEVER smoke in bed.
- Decorations can burn easily – don't attach them to lights or heaters.
- Keep candles, lighters and matches out of the reach of children.
- Never leave burning candles unattended.
- Don't overload electrical sockets. Always switch your Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.
- Take time to check on older neighbours/relatives as they are at greater risk from fire.



Learning from our mistakes

When we get something wrong, we want the opportunity to put things right through our complaint process.

As a learning organisation, we also want to make sure we use each complaint as an opportunity to learn so we can make our services better for everyone.

When the Bield Improvement Group (BIG) looked at how we handled complaints, a number of recommendations were made to help us to improve. One of the key recommendations was to set up a group that would review complaints so that we can make sure we learn from these.

From this recommendation, the Bield Compliment and Complaint Collective was born!

Meeting quarterly online, this group reviews a sample of complaints from the previous quarter. Once all identifying information has been removed, such as the name of the person who made the complaint, the group reviews this and how it was handled before making any improvement recommendations.

Reflecting on the value of the group, Zhan McIntyre, Bield's Head of Policy and Customer Standards, said: "By taking the time to go over complaints, both why they happened and how they were handled, this group is helping us to make things better at a systems level. It has been great helping to set up the group and I look forward to working with them closely in the future".

This is another way that tenants can be involved in influencing Bield as their landlord, and make a real difference to Bield tenants across Scotland.

If you would be interested in finding out more or joining the group, please email:

feedback@bield.co.uk



Bield Partnership Forum – new members needed

Established in 2003, the Partnership Forum is the voice of tenants across Bield. With 16 places, members of the Partnership Forum meet quarterly to represent tenants' views and discuss issues that are important to tenants.

At recent meetings, the Partnership Forum have discussed energy efficiency and they have also been a key partner in our rent-setting process.

The Partnership Forum currently has five vacancies. Would you like to help influence decision-making by Bield? If you would be interested in joining, please email: **feedback@bield.co.uk**

Do you have an issue you want to raise to the Partnership Forum? Please email: **feedback@bield.co.uk**

We currently have Partnership Forum members in these areas:

East

- Inchkeith Court
- Strathmartine Court
- Milton Court
- Ashgrove Court
- Gordon Court
- Craigengar Park

West

- Lynn Court
- Bridge Court
- Dean Court
- Jamaica Court

Eat Well, Spend Less



Did you know that Bield operates 30 meals services? If you live at a Retirement with Meals development, you might not appreciate what great value and service we offer.

Unlike many housing providers, our meals are freshly prepared and cooked on-site by our own staff team, are nutritionally balanced and very tasty!

We always try to reflect the local preferences in what menu and foods we offer. For example, did you know that, in some parts, people prefer their mince and tatties with Worcester sauce? If you live in a local community where this is your preference, then we will add the Worcester!

What is probably more interesting right now, as we face some tough times with the cost-of-living crisis, is just how cost effective our meals service can be. For tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit or partial Housing Benefit (and possibly other benefits), the cost of receiving two meals per day is just **£2.86** (or £20.05 per week)!!!

Imagine someone offered to do your shopping, prepare, cook and serve two nutritious and tasty meals

for you every day then do the dishes and tidy everything away for just £2.86 per day! Would you want to opt in?!

This service is available to tenants living at Retirement with Meals services now. If you live at a Retirement service which is within walking distance of a Retirement with Meals service and want to opt in then you can; simply speak to the Local Manager and they can help you to join.

When you visit a restaurant, the menu is always available but it's the pictures and the presentation of other people's food that makes you decide what to have! We hope the images below from our recent taster sessions might make you consider joining the meals service.



If you're undecided about whether the meals service would be suitable for you, simply ask your Local Manager for a 'free week trial' and check it out!



Congratulations!






Christine!



Massive congratulations to Christine Mackinnon from our Asset Team who successfully completed her first ever London Marathon on Sunday 2nd October. Christine ran in aid of Mencap, a UK charity for people with a learning disability, and raised an incredible £2,060. Well done Christine from all your friends and colleagues at Bield!



Be prepared this winter



It's essential to prepare your home and reduce any chance of damage to your property when the winter weather strikes.

Frozen Pipes

Extreme winter weather can leave homes exposed to the risk of burst pipes. Water inside pipes can expand when frozen, leading to a build-up of pressure on the metalwork which leads to pipes rupturing. One of the main culprits for burst pipes is not heating your home properly. A solution is to keep your heating on low, which ensures that your pipes stay at a constant temperature and they don't get cold enough to freeze. If you will be away from home over the festive period, leave your heating on at 13 degrees C to ensure the pipes don't freeze.



Condensation

Condensation can be problematic and have health effects. It is caused by excessive moisture and differing temperatures between the outside and the inside of the home. During winter, as our weather is typically cold and wet, the humidity levels in homes increases. This can lead to a greater chance of condensation. The solution to this is to open windows and allow fresh air to flow through your property at least once a day. Keeping your heating on during winter also helps to combat fluctuating temperatures which can cause condensation.

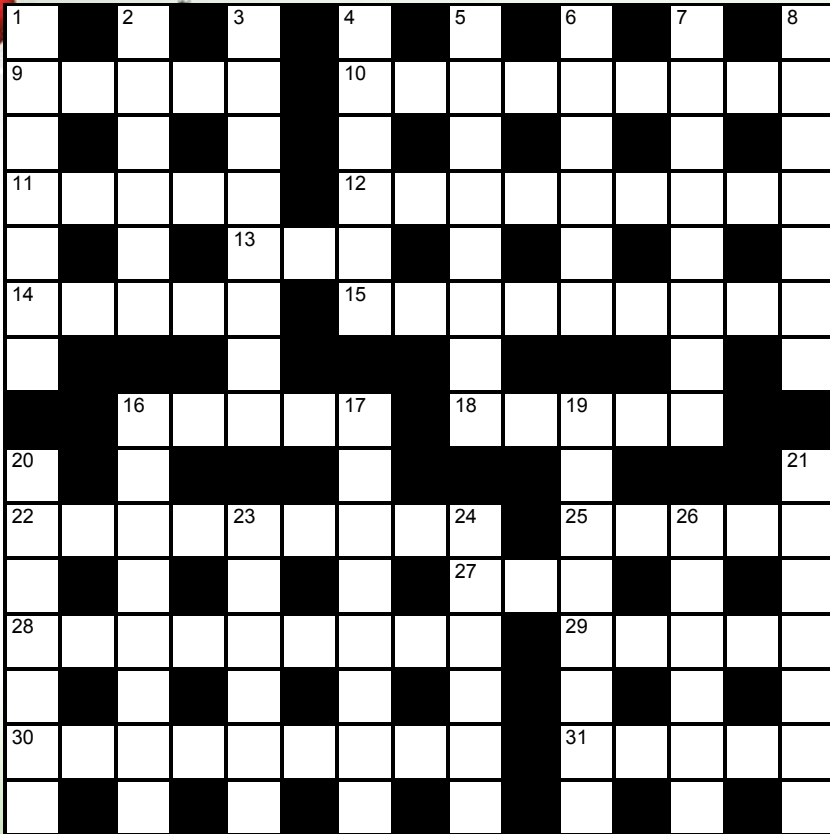


Puzzle Page

Sudoku

9		3				6	1	
2		1	6			5		3
							9	
		4			5	9		1
		6	4		7	8		
8		5	3			4		
	5							
4		9			1	7		2
	1	7				3		9

Crossword



Across

- 9 Corpulent (5)
- 10 Extreme surprise (9)
- 11 Souvenir (5)
- 12 Inherent (9)
- 13 Possess (3)
- 14 Hebrew minor prophet (5)
- 15 E.g. wine goblets (9)
- 16 Bush (5)
- 18 Double birdie (5)
- 22 Large mass of sliding snow (9)
- 25 Renounce (5)
- 27 Open mesh fabric (3)
- 28 Staff (9)
- 29 Mistaken (5)
- 30 Weaken insidiously (9)
- 31 Passageway (5)

Down

- 1 Highest singing voice in women (7)
- 2 Affluence (6)
- 3 Recent arrival (8)
- 4 Saw (6)
- 5 Book end, perhaps (4,4)
- 6 Exceptional intellect (6)
- 7 Convince (8)
- 8 Adhesive label (7)
- 16 Frenzied rush (8)
- 17 Single-celled organisms (8)
- 19 Conceal with decorative paper (4,4)
- 20 Neither solid nor liquid (7)
- 21 Abrade (7)
- 23 Part of a group (6)
- 24 Followed (6)
- 26 Cardiff International Airport (6)

Answers on page 7

RECIPE CARD:

Clementine posset

These simple desserts only take 15 minutes to make but look really impressive!

Ingredients

- 1 lemon (zested and juiced)
- 4 clementines (zested and juiced – plus extra zest to serve)
- 600ml double cream
- 200g golden caster sugar
- shortbread, to serve (optional)

Method

1. Pour the cream into a pan with the sugar and heat until the sugar fully dissolves. Add the clementine and lemon zests and juices, and whisk together. Divide between six glasses and chill for at least 2 hours.
2. To serve, grate extra clementine zest over the top of each posset and serve with a piece of shortbread.



Prep: 5 mins / **Cook:** 10 mins / **Serves:** 6 / 645 kcal per serving / Vegetarian and gluten free

Festive season

opening/closing times

Our offices will be closed on **Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th December 2022 and Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd January 2023**. Our staff and Local Development Managers (Retirement Housing only developments) will not be working on these dates. BR24, our care services and our meals services will remain operational.



Emergency contact details

Although our offices will be closed on the above dates, you will still be able to report an emergency at any time by contacting BR24. Use your pull cord or call **0141 950 1025**.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this copy of our new-look bulletin. If there's something you'd like us to include in our next edition, please get in touch – we'd love to hear from you. Email your suggestions to **communications@bield.co.uk**

If you require this bulletin in a different format or language, please email **communications@bield.co.uk**



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