Information Management Strategy

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Introduction

This Strategy sets out how Bield Housing & Care will aim to excel in information and knowledge management. Information is critical to every part of Bield and we understand the importance of focussing on managing our information effectively in order to improve our business intelligence, productivity, service delivery and customer service.

Information will be valued and identified as an asset and will be used to its fullest at all times by ensuring we understand the information the organisation holds and how it needs to be used to support the business.

These are challenging times for all organisations; customers have ever-increasing expectations in terms of quality of service, while resources are continually under pressure. Effective information management can help us move forward in this environment by achieving cost and efficiency savings, making best use of information assets and taking advantage of opportunities offered by new technologies.

The importance of managing our information must be understood by everyone in the organisation. Adequate training and support must be provided to develop the appropriate skills and competencies, and technical support must be provided for our electronic information resources. All this must be supported by a robust governance framework, ensuring responsibilities are clearly defined, and there is a clear decision-making process.

Scope

This strategy includes all Bield's information systems and assets. It will apply to all the information which Bield holds regardless of format. It applies to all Bield Employees, volunteers, casual workers, contractors, Board and Committee members.

It covers information accessed from within Bield premises and from any other location e.g. mobile working, home working or from partner organisations.

What is Information Management?

Information Management is an umbrella term that encompasses all the systems and processes within an organisation that support the creation and use of corporate information. Information Management supports the immediate and future regulatory, legal, risk, and operational requirements of Bield.

Information Management is much more than just the technology on which we store most of our information and compliance with information access rights such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 or Environmental Information Regulations (Scotland) 2004. When we think of Information Management, we need to think of people, processes and technology.

Information Management is about ensuring we have the ability to know what documents and records exist on a particular subject, where they are located, how we store them, who own them, what they can be used for, who should access them and when we should destroy them. It is about our overall control and utilisation of information resources.

Information management can be considered as defensive (i.e. value preserving) and offensive (i.e. value creating) as demonstrated below in Table 1. The value preserving concept is aimed at solving current problems within the organisation related to information management. The value creating concepts are more progressive in nature and help the information management strategy support the Business Strategy in working more effectively and developing new opportunities to be innovative.

Table 1: Motives for implementing an information management strategy (adapted from Hinssen, P., (2011))

Value Preserving	Value Creating
Compliance Ensuring that records are retained for certain periods to meet regulatory or legal requirements.	**Speed** Providing quick access and distribution of information throughout the organisation.
Control Ensuring that the quality of information maintained; the whole cycle of creation, approval, publication, archiving and destruction is closely monitored.	**Share** Eliminating silos in which information is locked; creating value by working together to create and share information.
Archiving Placing the emphasis on "losing nothing": all documents are stored ready for easy retrieval.	**Intelligence** Accumulated knowledge and co-creation are the key words.

Why we need Information Management

Bield's information comes in many different forms; minutes, statistics, policies, research, operational data and personal data. It is currently held in printed and electronic formats and at times duplicated in both formats. We use information in our daily activities as each department/ team works to achieve its own goals and deliver our Business Strategy.

To ensure we maximise the potential benefit from our information we need to manage it effectively, reuse it where we can, share it when appropriate and continuously protect it throughout its life cycle. In the past this has not always happened. Information has not always been recorded or protected appropriately resulting in information being misplaced, being shared with the wrong people, or getting lost through staff turnover. Poor records management also makes information time consuming to retrieve.

The Information Management Strategy aims to provide a framework around managing our information throughout its lifecycle and to create consistency across the organisation which has previously been missing. The Strategy will help to identify gaps in our information and improve how we handle information.

There are a number of benefits that effective information management can offer:

- Financial savings from reduced storage costs, both for paper and electronic
- Efficiency gains through improved working practices and reduction in time taken to locate required information
- Improved knowledge and control of information assets
- Knowledge to make the best use of information assets
- Reduced exposure to risk of prosecution from non-compliance with information legislation and the related reputational risk
- Reduce the risk of losing important information

These benefits are valuable in any organisation but perhaps particularly so to Bield as we look to achieve efficiencies and savings while at the same time improve service delivery and customer satisfaction.

What do we want to achieve?

The Information Maturity Model (see Table 2, overleaf) can be used to assess an organisation's approach to information. The model recognises four different maturity levels, from 'fail' (in which there is insufficient information to enable processes to run smoothly) to 'outsmart' (where information is used as a source of competitive advantage). Bield's approach to 'information management' and 'information value' can be benchmarked against a set of descriptions relating to each of the maturity levels.

In practice the maturity level varies across Bield; however, our approach occasionally conforms to the description of 'Fail' and often conforms to the description of 'Run'. Some of the most common failings in our approach to information management include:

- Entering data into administrative systems using workarounds with little consideration of the impact on data quality
- Failing to understand circumstances in which data is, or could be, re-used by others for a different purpose
- Inefficiently duplicating the processing or storage of information
- Restricting access to information that has a value to others
- Failing to develop and apply common standards and metadata that allow information to be retrieved and re-used efficiently

The Information Management Strategy aims to address these shortcomings and improve our maturity to the 'Achieve' level, allowing processes to be executed quickly and accurately, making optimum use of available information. Where possible we will aim to reach the Outsmart level.

Table 2: Enterprise Information Maturity Model (adapted from Septer, J. (2013))

Maturity Level	Information Management *satisfying the need for information on an ongoing basis*	Information Value *the added value of information for the organisation*
Outsmart	• Information is an asset and organisations are constantly looking for opportunities to do more with this asset. • New opportunities are used to better meet the information needs of tomorrow. • New opportunities are applied to retrieve more information from existing information sources.	• Data and content are used to improve customer service. • Workers know what customers want and what they find important. • Services and products are based on the available information adapted to customer needs to bind the customer more closely to the organisation.
Achieve	• Data quality is an important issue at this stage because it influences the effectiveness and efficiency of processes. • Information owners are appointed to oversee the improvement of quality.	• Data and content are used throughout the organisation and deal with uniformity and efficient processes. • Data and content are recorded only once. • There is no discussion about the meaning of information. • The metadata model is well known and accepted. • Information is shared so that benchmarking is possible between business units.
Run	• The organisation has mapped the information flows. • It has a view of duplicate processes (for example multiple captures of customer data) and how the information is used and shaped during the process.	• Information has been given a formal meaning within the organisation. • The reports are ambiguous. • The terms key performance indicator (KPI) makes its careful entrance.
Fail	• The organisation focuses only on daily business processes without seeing these processes in conjunction with the rest of the organisation. • There is no question of information management. • Everything is arranged in a decentralised way, and the necessary information to justify the works is managed manually.	• The organisation considers information as a burden and is busy with cramming the daily processes into existing systems without worrying about the consequences of workarounds.

Overall Strategic Aim

Accurate, up-to-date and reliable information is readily available when needed to deliver services and support decision-making. All employees understand the importance of good information management; which is demonstrated by using information correctly, pro-actively sharing information when appropriate, and protecting information from improper use. All customers have confidence in our ability to hold information with transparency and security.

Principles

Our information management principles will enable us to become increasingly aligned in the use and management of information across the organisation and establish a common set of principles and best practice. These principles will support the Business Strategy (see Table 3) by ensuring that Bield's information is managed consistently and effectively improving our working practices.

Information will be treated as a **valued** asset highlighting its importance in delivering our services to meet customer expectations.

Information will be **managed securely** throughout its life cycle, reducing the risk of losing or mishandling information that could affect our reputation or compliance with legislation.

We will only hold information that is relevant and **fit for purpose** allowing employees to be able to consistently access accurate and high quality information at the right time. This will help reduce silo working, lost time due to information having to be requested from individuals as opposed to being centrally available to the relevant people.

Personal data will be **accessible** to the data subject to ensure that we uphold their information access rights**.** Public information will be published to demonstrate transparency and integrity in how we operate as an organisation.

Using Bield information assets to nurture **innovation** and look for opportunities to improve and protect our services and ensure we deliver high quality, person centred services.

Table 3: The relationship between the Information Management Strategy principles and the objectives of the Bield Business Strategy 2018-23

Related Business Strategy strategic outcomes	
We will become more efficient	
• Recognise and work to improve the value of the data we hold, ensuring that information is shared appropriately within Bield to make processes more efficient and to enable staff to interact more effectively with customers	
Our information management principles	
Valued	Information is identified as an asset which is essential to the efficient and effective delivery of services. Where possible information will be re-used.
Managed & Secure	Information is stored, managed and protected in a manner that reflects its value throughout its lifecycle.
Fit for Purpose	Information must be accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete to ensure that it meets the purposes for which it is intended.
Accessible	Public information will be easily identified and readily available to promote transparency. Personal information will be effortlessly retrieved and provided in a timely manner when requested.
Innovative	Information will be used to enable and encourage the active pursuit of opportunities.

Valued:

Information is identified as an asset which is essential to the efficient and effective delivery of services

Information needs to be recognised and treated as an asset; this means viewing and managing information as a source of value to the organisation. Bield will use information to learn and adapt; changing the way it operates in order to provide more efficient services and create improved outcomes for customers. Identifying information and handling as an asset will allow us to understand the purposes for which information is collected, created and managed.

➢ Identifying Bield's Information Needs

Bield uses information for a wide range of purposes, from demonstrating compliance with legislation to making strategic decisions about the way services should be provided in future. Demand for information is constantly changing. Bield requires 'relevant, current, accurate, reliable, and integrated information to support (business) activities, whenever and where ever it is needed' (Lundqvist, M. (2007)).

In practice information demand is a combination of the motivational factors outlined in Table 1 and various contextual factors e.g. the frequency in which the information is required, the required style / format of the information and the role of the person or group receiving the information.

Information needs will be formally assessed via an information audit, which will be refreshed annually. The information audit will utilise existing sources of evidence, including Bield's retention schedules, departmental plans, risk registers and self-evaluation results. Existing evidence may also be supplemented by information gained from interviews or questionnaires sent to relevant stakeholders.

Conducting an information audit will help us to understand:

- Our information priorities and what we want to achieve,
- What do we want to do with any information gathered,
- What can we practically achieve,
- What risks we need to mitigate,
- What benefits can we achieve and
- What areas need the most urgent attention?

The information audit will also help to inform retention schedules by identifying vital records that need to be managed effectively.

The information audit is an example of a formal approach aimed at capturing information needs; however, the dynamic nature of information needs means that this type of formal approach cannot possibly be sufficient on its own. Feedback must be captured throughout the year and information provision should be refined continuously in response.

➢ Establishing Information as Assets

An Information Asset is a body of information, defined and managed as a single unit so it can be understood, shared, protected and used effectively. In order to establish information as an asset we will create an Information Asset Register that will:

- promote ownership and responsibility of information by identifying information asset owners,
- increase employee awareness of the information they create,
- help to maintain our knowledge of what information Bield holds, and
- align information assets with Bield's information needs

The goal will be for Bield to group individual pieces of information into manageable sections and identify and establish appropriate Information Asset Owners to ensure that employees understand their role in regard to information management and the value that it adds.

In order to apply these best-practices it is necessary that a suitable organisational culture be established, and that those processing information are professionally qualified and skilled to do so. This objective also includes the processes, roles, responsibilities, training, and organisational structure and culture needed to ensure the effective and efficient use of information in enabling an organisation to achieve its goals.

Managed & Secure:

Information is stored, managed and protected in a manner that reflects its value throughout its lifecycle

Consideration should be given to the lifecycle through which all information exists in Bield, from identifying a need for the information, to the creation, quality assurance, protection, sharing, archiving or destruction at the end of its business use. Information management best-practices need to be established and applied throughout the lifecycle to avoid exposure and loss, and to ensure continuity across technology upgrades. It is particularly important that personal and confidential information is easily identified and adequately protected.

➢ Embedding Good Information Management Practice

Information management is much more than just technology, it is about the business processes and practices that underpin the creation and use of information. It is also about the information itself, including the structure of information, metadata and content quality.

Good practice in information management is defined by the implementation of a range of policies, procedures and supporting guidance on how Bield will manage all its information throughout its lifecycle. These processes need to be embedded throughout the organisation to ensure information management is considered continuously in Bield's daily activities as well as being an important factor in any business change.

Information management processes will only be successful if they are actually used by staff; it is not sufficient to simply write policies and install information management systems. In practice, most information management processes need the active participation of staff throughout the organisation, e.g. staff must save all key files into the document/records management system.

➢ Improving Information Security and Integrity

With information being regarded as essential asset to Bield we are now increasingly reliant on ensuring the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our information. We need to implement effective information security and integrity throughout the organisation, embedding a planned approach to managing information risks and security. Maintaining an environment where sensitive information is only disclosed to authorised individuals (confidentiality), prevent unauthorised modification of data (integrity), and guarantee the information can be accessed by authorised individuals when requested (availability) is key to improving information security.

➢ Implementing Information Risk Awareness

Many things can put our information at risk including changes to our organisation or technology. If not managed, information risks could have a significant impact on our ability to carry out effective service delivery and comply with legislation. We need to implement an evaluation process to ensure that any risks to our information are identified and managed accordingly.

> ➢ Ensuring Legal and Regularity Compliance

Bield has a responsibility to protect the information it holds from loss, exploitation and unauthorised access or alteration. We are also required to comply with relevant legislation including:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations
- Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (Potentially in 2018)

All staff must be aware of how the relevant legislations affect the information that they use regularly and how to identify when individuals are exerting their rights under these legislations.

We need to ensure we can evidence compliance and continuously monitor compliance throughout the organisation.

Fit for Purpose:

Information must be accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete to ensure that it meets the purposes for which it is intended.

High quality data is important and required for a range of purposes. Bield uses data to inform decision making, improve service delivery, promote accountability, encourage innovation and demonstrate compliance with regulations. Reports should include data that is fit-for-purpose in terms of meeting the needs of the intended audience.

The Performance Data Quality Policy reflects the process described by the Audit Commission to ensure that data is fit-for-purpose (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Stages in producing and using information ('In the know', (2008) Audit Commission)
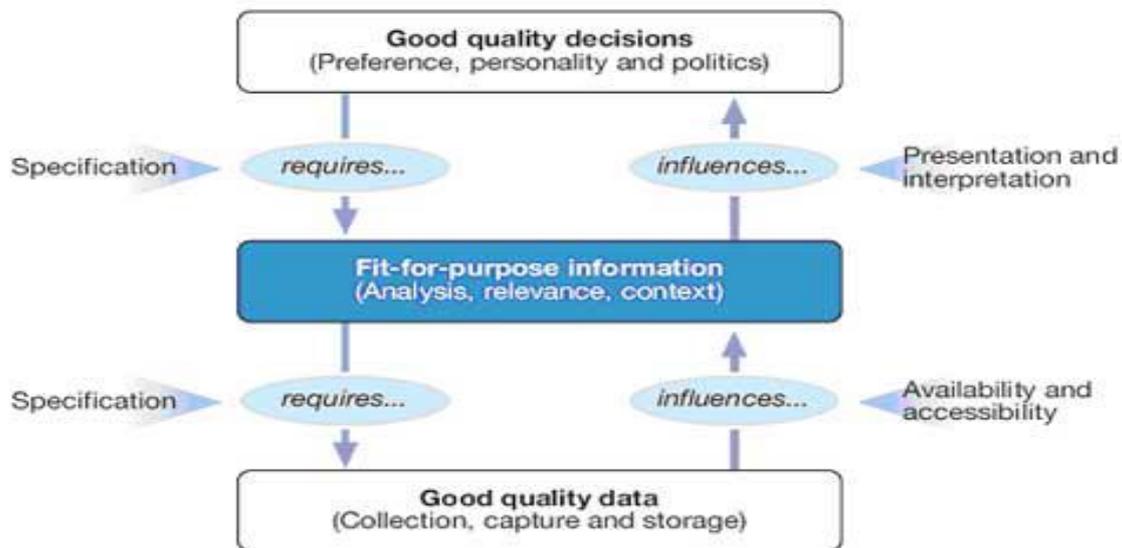

Figure 1 describes a process that begins with specifying the purpose, in terms of decision-making, for which the data is required. Subsequent choices about the way in which the data is collected and presented should then be designed to support this purpose. Figure 1 also shows how data quality and our ability to interpret the data influences decision-making. Good quality data needs to be available and accessible as specified or it will not be fit-for-purpose. Data that is fit-for-purpose then needs to be presented and interpreted effectively to help inform good quality decisions.

Fit-for-purpose information is not the same thing as perfect information. Compromises sometimes need to be made, for example to balance the frequency of reporting with the time and resources taken to produce the data.

Fit-for-purpose information must be accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete to ensure that it meets the purposes for which it is intended. For Bield, this means that its information can inform decision making processes at a Strategic, Departmental and Operational management levels.

a) Accurate - data should be sufficiently accurate for its intended purposes. Accuracy is most likely to be secured if data is captured as close to the point of activity as possible. Data should be captured once only, although it may have multiple uses. The importance of the uses for the data must be balanced with the costs and effort of collection. Where compromises have to be made on accuracy, the resulting limitations of the data should be clear.

c) Valid - data should be recorded in an agreed format and used in compliance with recognised Bield and national standards. Where proxy data is used to compensate for an absence of actual data, it must be considered how well this data is able to satisfy the intended purpose.

d) Reliable - data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes across the organisation.

e) Timely - data should be available within a reasonable time period, quickly and frequently enough to support information needs.

f) Relevant - data captured should be relevant to the purposes for which it is used. This entails periodic reviews of requirements to reflect changing needs.

g) Complete - all data should be captured, in accordance with the definitions, or based on the information needs of the organisation and data collection processes matched to these requirements.

Accessible:

Public information will be easily identified and readily available to promote transparency. Personal information will be effortlessly retrieved and provided in a timely manner when requested

Individuals have certain legal rights to access certain information held by Bield. Being able to deliver on these rights can become a resource burden if the information is not easily obtainable. Employees need to have a high level of awareness of our legal obligations and they also need to be equipped to access the relevant information in an efficient manner.

Some of the practices described in relation to the principles of 'Valued' and 'Managed & Secure' will help us to fulfil requests for information. Bield could champion transparency by implementing the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) model publication scheme. Publishing information publically will help us meet our legal obligations once the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act is extended to Housing Associations. Publishing information may also lead to fewer information requests, which can be time consuming to deal with.

Technological solutions will be pursued that help to provide customers with access to (and control over) their personal data. The introduction of the replacement housing management system provides an opportunity to introduce this type of functionality. Providing customers with direct access to their personal data should result in fewer information requests. Customers could also potentially amend their personal data directly, which could help to reduce errors and improve data quality.

Innovative:

Information will be used to enable and encourage the active pursuit of opportunities

Our Business Strategy recognises that:

'Customer intelligence needs to be developed further to help inform marketing. We hold useful information arising from customer feedback, customer participation and customer data, although more analysis and integration of the information is required to exploit its potential. Likewise, business intelligence could be developed further, which is particularly important given the pace of change over recent years. Our capacity to use this information to better anticipate and react to change needs to be developed.'

In order to address these shortcomings we must share information more effectively across the organisation. Information held by different teams, departments and offices is often not visible or available to people in other parts of the organisation. The result of this lack of data sharing includes duplication of effort to acquire information, lost potential opportunities to learn from other areas of the organisation and an inability to build knowledge by augmenting data with data from other sources.

The barriers to information sharing can be both cultural and legal. Traditionally Bield has worked in departmental silos and has not felt the need to share information or accept that information is a corporate resource. We aim to establish processes and procedures that will allow both the legal and legitimate appropriate sharing of information across an organisation, while introducing changes to collect information once and disseminating where appropriate.

In some circumstances the structure of the organisation will be revised to encourage and enable more effective use of information. Bield is developing a 'Hub', for example, which will bring together employees Involved in call handling, and more transactional processing across Bield activities, both customer-facing and back-office.

Knowledge is only valuable, however, if it is put to use to help achieve our strategic objectives and outcomes. Employees will need to be equipped with the tools to analyse data and they will also need an understanding of how information can be used to improve processes and services.

Equality and Diversity

Equality Impact Assessments should be carried out in the development of Bield's Information Management policies and procedures.

Monitoring and Reporting

Progress against the actions of the Strategy will be monitored and reported on a quarterly basis.

The annual information audit will include an evaluation of Bield's maturity against the information maturity model.

Review

The Information Management Strategy will be reviewed in line with any review of the Business Strategy.

References

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Action plan:

	Run	Achieve	Outsmart
Valued	**By 2019:** Conduct an information audit (following the establishment of new departments), identifying needs or gaps (including data sharing), mapping information flows and establishing risks Develop Information Asset Registers (to include retention schedules) Review EDRMS and internal communications tools in light of Office 365 deployment	**By 2019:** Establish information asset owners **By 2020:** Establish CX as a customer relationship management system, providing staff with access to the information they need to deal with customer needs at the first point of contact Review access to (and integration of) core systems and data to improve data sharing	**By 2020:** Profile and segment customer groups using data from CX, other Bield systems and (potentially) external sources Establish and approach to the analysis of transactions via the Hub (contact centre) to help develop customer service tailored to the needs of individual customers
Managed & Secure	**By 2019:** Promote the effective use of archiving and disposal procedures (and tools) Develop and apply an email retention and archiving policy Review the business transformation programme to identify changes to working practices that should be subject to a Data Protection Impact Assessment (e.g. use of home working for BR24 staff)		
Fit for Purpose	**By 2019:** Develop a training programme to support all aspects of the Strategy, ensuring that employees understand the value of information and good practice in information management **By 2020:** Develop a practical approach to the assessment of data quality that can be applied by employees to identify the root cause of data quality issues	**By 2019:** Adopt an agile approach to the development of Business Intelligence (BI) **By 2021:** Develop an approach to Master Data Management to help improve data quality **By 2022:** Consolidate documents from across the organisation within a single electronic document management system	
Accessible	**By 2019:** Implement the SFHA model publication scheme **By 2020:** Prepare for the introduction of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act	**By 2020:** Review and revise the corporate file plan, integrating it with the retention schedule / Information Asset Register	**By 2022:** Develop a customer portal to enable customers to access their personal data and engage with Bield online
Innovative	**By 2019:** Define Business Intelligence (BI) data governance arrangements	**By 2020:** Provide managers and key staff with access to self-service BI, dashboards and reports **By 2021:** Adopt the UK Housing Data Standard	**By 2022:** Enable data from all key corporate systems to be analysed via a single BI tool, providing a coherent overview of the customer (and our processes) Establish business analysis as a competency within Bield to ensure information is used to improve services and identify new opportunities