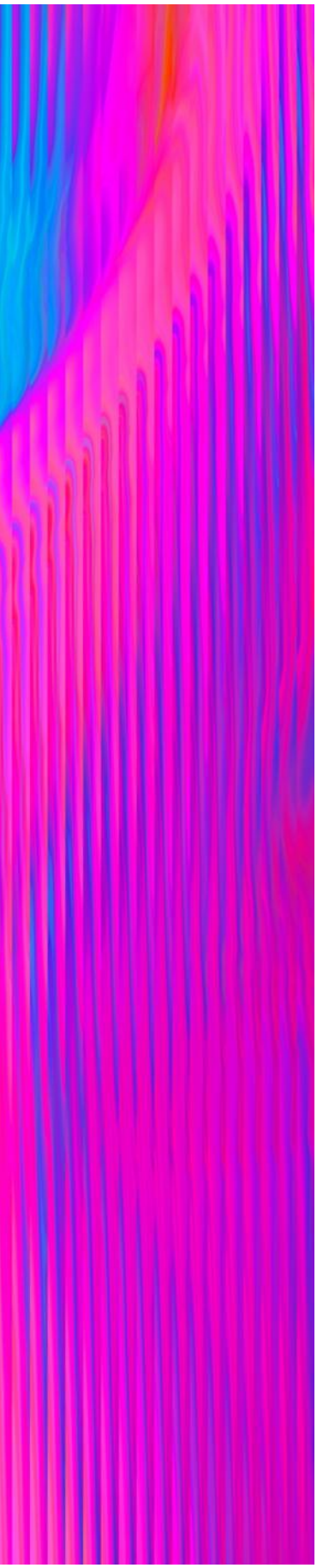
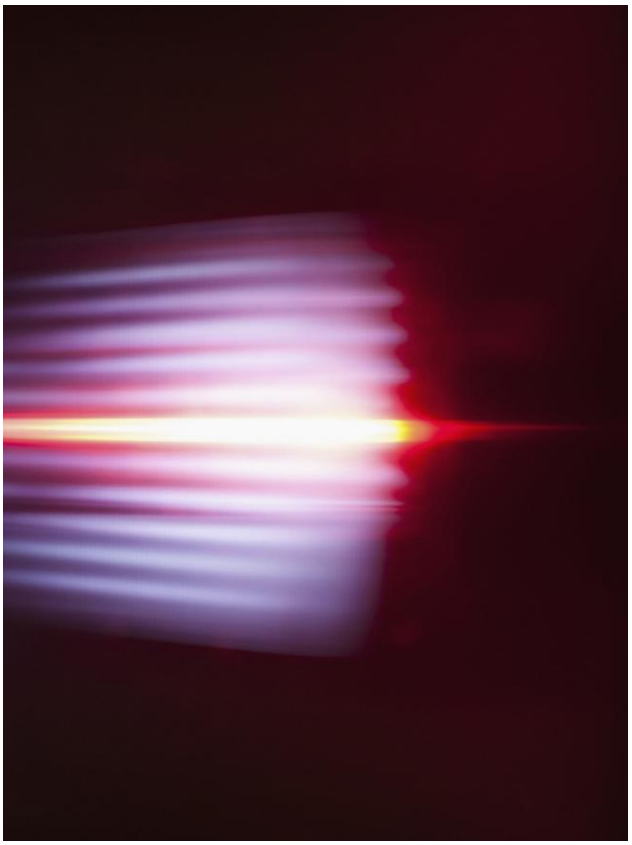


RENT AND BUDGET SETTING FOR APRIL 2027

Tenant Engagement Report

OCTOBER 2026



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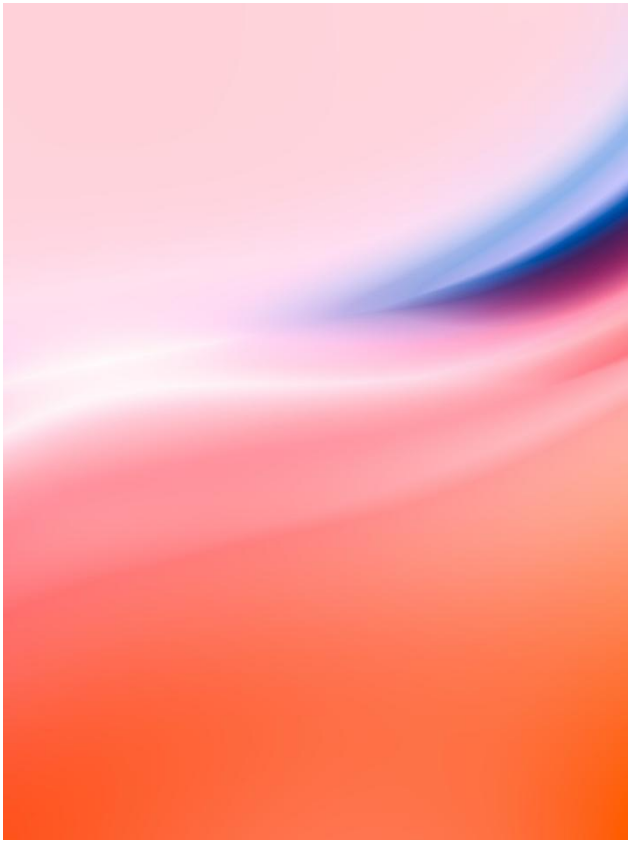


PREPARED BY

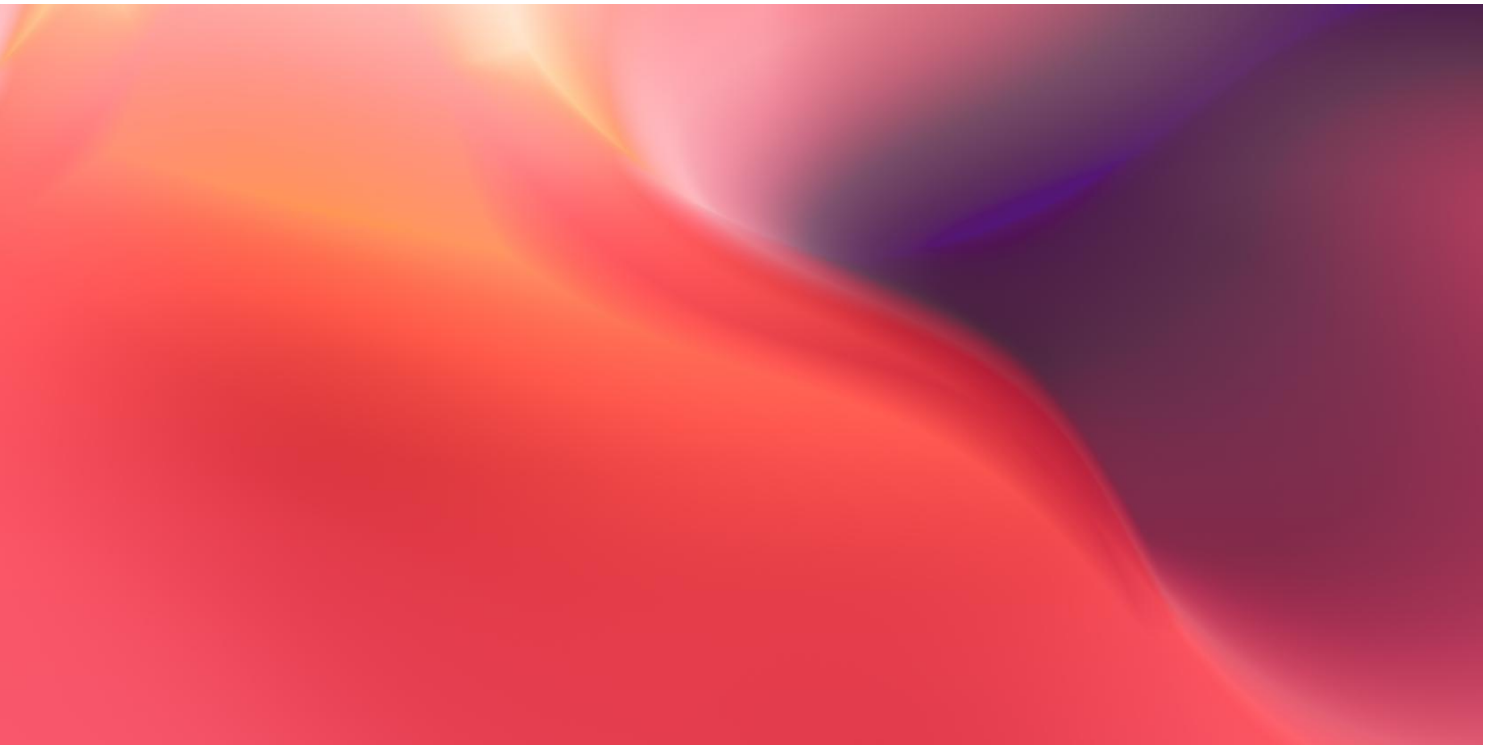
ZHAN MCINTYRE
POLICY AND CUSTOMER STANDARDS

WHY WE ARE ASKING TENANTS NOW

A home should provide security, support and independence and leave people able to live well. Decisions about rent and spending affect each of those things.

Before Bield develops it rent proposal for April 2027, we want to understand what tenants need us to protect, where they believe we should look for savings and what they want the Board to consider.

Asking these questions early gives tenants an opopportunity to influence the priorities behind the proposal. It also helps Bield explain the choices ahead in terms that matter to the people who will experience them.



WHAT WE HAVE HEARD

Six anonymous responses were received between 21 and 16 October 2026.

The strongest message is that affordability matters. Five respondents identified keeping rents as affordable as possible as their highest priority. At the same time, five favoured a reasonable balance between affordable rents, reliable services and investment in homes.

The responses suggest that these tenants want Bield to manage costs carefully while continuing to look after their homes. They also highlight the importance of explaining how charges are calculated and what tenants receive for the money they pay.

This is a small sample. It provides useful questions for budget discussions but does not establish the views of all tenants or support for a particular increase.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Area explored	What respondents told us
What matters most	Four prioritized affordable rents. One priortisied Bield's future ability to maintain homes and services
Balancing affordability and services	Four supported a reasonable balance. One prioritized keeping the increase down, accepting that some work might take longer or services might change
Where savings should begin	Two selected management and administration; one contractor and supplier value; one more efficient service delivery; and one needed more information
What should be protected	Three identified repairs, maintenance or upgrading existing homes. Two did not answer

WHAT SITS BEHIND THE ANSWERS

Affordability means having enough left to live on
For tenants, an increase is experienced through their household budget. One respondent told us:

> "Some tenants are finding it hard to pay rent"

Two respondents specifically asked Biedl to recognize the pressures facing tenants who do not receive Housing Benefit. Their comments described tight budgets and having little left after rent, council tax and utilities.

These comments bring the purpose of the consultation into focus. When considering the proposal, Bield needs to understand what the total payment means for people's ability to meet their other living costs.

The next stage should therefore show the impact clearly in pounds and pence, alongside the percentage increase.

Looking after homes remains a priority
The four respondents who identified something to protect all referred to existing homes: repairs and maintenance, maintaining buildings, and upgrading older properties to meet housing standards.
Five respondents also supported a balance between affordability, services and investment.

Taken together, these answers suggest that keeping homes in good condition matters alongside managing increases. The proposal should explain what work the budget would support and what the consequences would be if necessary, investment were delayed.
That gives tenants a clearer basis on which to consider the choices.

Tenants want to see costs managed carefully
Three respondents identified management and administration costs as the first area where Bield should look for savings. Others selected better value from contractors and suppliers, or more efficient service delivery. One respondent needed more information before answering.

These responses do not demonstrate that particular costs are excessive.

They do indicate where respondents want assurance that spending is being examined.

A clear explanation of the efficiencies considered, the savings achievable and their effect on the proposal would help tenants assess whether Bield is making good use of their money.

Understanding charges supports trust
One respondent questioned how increases across the different parts of their monthly payment affect the overall increase. They also suggested lower increases for older properties and higher increases for newer properties.

This is an individual view, but it raises a useful question: can tenants follow the explanation of what they pay and why?

The next consultation should make the separate charges and their combined effect easy to understand. The concern about property age should also be recorded and considered, with an explanation of how fairness is addressed in setting charges.

What this means for the emerging proposal
The early feedback suggests that the proposal should help tenants answer four practical questions:

Tenant question	What Bield should explain
Can I afford this?	The proposed payment and the increase in pounds including the effect on total housing costs.
Are you using my money well?	The savings and efficiencies considered and how th influenced the proposal.
Will my home be looked after?	The repairs, maintenance and investment the budge support.
Is the approach fair?	Why charges are changing, how they are calculated payments may differ between homes.

The preference for balance must not be interpreted as agreement to a specific increase. Tenants will need the figures and supporting information before they can give an informed view on the proposal.

How we should take this forward
The next stage should build on what tenants have told us and make their contribution visible.

It is recommended that Bield:

1. **Continue listening**, seeking broader participation and discussing the emerging themes with the Partnership Forum.

2. **Bring these priorities into budget discussions**, recording how affordability, value for money and maintaining homes have influenced the proposal.

3. **Make the financial impact clear**, showing current and proposed charges and the overall change to tenants' payments.

4. **Explain the choices**, including the investment supported, efficiencies considered and implications of alternative options.

5. **Provide accessible ways to respond**, through online and paper surveys and opportunities for discussion at developments.

6. **Report back**, explaining what tenants said, what changed as a result and the reasons for the final decision.

Conclusion
The early responses remind us why tenant involvement matters: decisions about Bield's budget become decisions about people's homes and household finances.

The feedback so far asks Bield to keep affordability central, look after existing homes and demonstrate that money is being used carefully.

Further engagement will help test these priorities more widely and inform consideration of the rent proposal for April 2027.