

Bulletin



Digital hub in Linlithgow welcomes tenants for first look

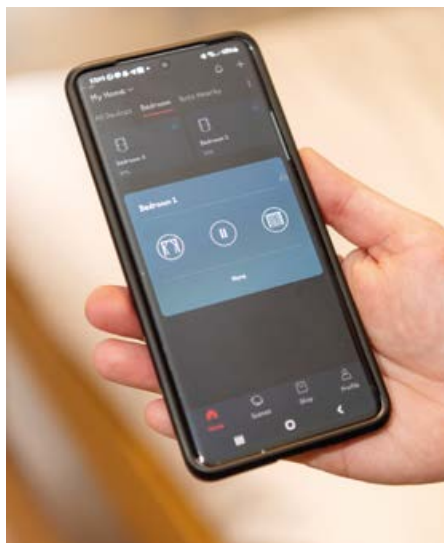
We were delighted to open our new digital hub, showcasing housing technology of the future, to our staff and tenants in March.

Last year, we secured £75k worth of funding from the TAPPI project as the only Scottish demonstration site. We have used some of this money to open the digital hub at our West Port development in Linlithgow, allowing tenants, staff and other stakeholders to trial and give feedback on technology that supports individuals to live independently, in their own homes, for longer.

The Technology for our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (TAPPI) project aims to improve the way technology is used in housing and care for older people. Led by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN), the TEC Services Association (TSA) and funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust, TAPPI seeks to address the opportunity that technology has to enhance the lives of our ageing population and the barriers that prevent its adoption.

Digital hub in Linlithgow welcomes tenants for first look

The West Port hub consists of four demonstration rooms: two bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, one kitchen and one living room. There is also a consultation room and a dining space. Each room has been fitted out with different technologies for people to test.



Tenants were welcomed to the space by Dr Lynne Douglas, CEO of Bield, on Friday 31st March ahead of a formal launch later in May. She said: *"Setting up the digital hub will bring life-changing technology to West Lothian and it's fantastic to have this space to enable people to get first-hand experience."*

"It's very important that Bield tenants and customers get the chance to familiarise themselves with this incredible tech which is available to them through the TAPPI project. After all, the technology is designed and installed in order for them to reap the benefits."

The funding will give Bield the unique opportunity to work with Linlithgow-based tenants to test a range of devices, apps and systems across a variety of housing settings. With co-production at its heart, staff

and tenants will have shared responsibility to produce digital services to support independent living.

We are constantly seeking new ways to integrate technology into our services to suit individual requirements. Giving people access to this hub, and knowledge of the technology available to support them, should help tenants and customers to live independently for longer, which is at the heart of Bield's new strategy and ethos. The innovative hub will not only be

open to tenants and their families, but also to local Health & Social Care organisations, partners and volunteer groups so we can spread the knowledge of these innovative technologies further than Bield.

Bield's use of innovative technology has already received major recognition – it's 'Inspire Phase 2' project which utilised proactive telecare was the winner of the Transformation Award at the 2023 ITEC Awards in Birmingham (see page 20 for more on this).

All our tenants and their families are welcome, and encouraged, to visit the digital hub and see the different technologies we are demonstrating. Visits are by appointment only so please contact your Local or Area Manager if you would like to come along. We understand that because we have sites and tenants spread all across Scotland travel might be a barrier to some. If this is the case, please get in touch as we are working on options for this and would love to know that you are interested.

Independent Age Grants Fund

Good news!

We're delighted to share the news that our application for a grant from Independent Age to help older people with the cost of living was successful!

We are one of 50 organisations that have received £40,000 from Independent Age, from the £2 million fund they set up to give to charities that work directly with older people to help those struggling with the cost of living.

This funding will help us extend our support to our tenants by establishing an Energy Advocacy service. A dedicated Energy Advisor will be on hand to support tenants with any energy-related issues such as understanding fuel bills, comparing

energy tariffs and helping to switch suppliers and handling energy complaints. Look out for more information on this service in the coming months on our website and in the next edition of this bulletin.

We would like to thank Independent Age and the Pension Insurance Corporation for their funding, which will help us support more older people in our communities.

To find out more on Independent Age, visit independentage.org or follow them @IndependentAge on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.



MPLC licensing

We have encountered some challenges from tenants at multiple developments regarding the requirement to pay for an MPLC (Motion Picture Licensing Company Ltd) license to play films on televisions in the communal lounges.

MPLC licences are a legal requirement. Bield are not responsible for paying for MPLC licenses (or for communal TV licenses), as the televisions are used by tenants within the communal areas which are deemed to be outside of their private homes (i.e. their own flats).

The MPLC license website provides the following advice:


- Whenever audio-visual content, whether films or TV shows on DVD/Blu-ray, downloads, streaming, broadcast television, pay TV and video on demand are being viewed outside the private home it is considered a 'public performance' where legal authorisation is needed to avoid copyright infringement.

- To avoid the hassle and expense that can come from breaking UK copyright law, you simply need to get MPLC's **Umbrella Licence** at <https://www.themplc.co.uk/page/mplc-umbrella-licence%25C2%25AE>
- This licence enables you to legally show TV series and films in public from more than 1,000 rights holders assuming no admission fee is charged and any promotion falls within MPLC's guidelines.

For more details

 www.themplc.co.uk

 01323 649 647

 MPLC House, 22-24 Gildredge Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 4SA

Acclaimed chef serves up award-winning recipes to Bield's Whitehill Lodge tenants



The founder and chef of one of Scotland's most popular Chinese restaurants is now cooking up a storm for elderly tenants.

Jian Wang, who previously owned the successful Chop Chop restaurants and was praised by TV chef Gordon Ramsay for making the best dumplings he had ever tasted, has taken up the role of Casual Cook at our Whitehill Lodge development in Dalkeith.

Jian, who was a finalist on Gordon Ramsey's TV show the F Word, was forced to close her three branches in Edinburgh and Glasgow in 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19.

After moving to Scotland from North East China in 1997, Jian vowed to incorporate the region's impressive food into all of her ventures – including their world-famous dumplings. Tenants at Whitehill Lodge have been quick to praise the various delicacies on offer since Jian's arrival.

She said: *"Taking up the role as a Casual Cook last November was a really easy decision for me as I love working with older people and helping to put a smile on their faces with nutritious food."*

"As we age things can quickly change, but one thing that doesn't is our ability to taste. This gives me the drive to put my all into every dish and ensure all of the meals I provide have been tailored to the tenants' preferences."

"For example, I wanted to incorporate the much-loved dumplings from Chop Chop into the menu at Bield. Instead of making these fried, I made them boiled so it is softer and easier for tenants to enjoy."





Yvonne & Jian



Some of the tenants' favourite dishes include sweet ribs, dumplings and chicken curry – with Jian encouraging feedback after every sitting.

Before joining the development, Jian had never cooked anything other than Chinese food. Luckily the development's Manager, Yvonne Boyle, has been on hand to share advice and recipes with Jian. Jian's son has also translated recipes such as mince pies, shepherd's pie and pork chops into Mandarin to allow her to follow them easily.

Jian has also been hosting taster sessions to ensure a variety of Scottish, European and Chinese dishes are available for tenants.

She added: *"It has been great to learn these new recipes and I have fallen in love with the different cuisines – I've even started making them at home and inserting my own twist with different spices. My family keep asking me to make the dishes again and again."*

Whitehill Lodge is one of Bield's Retirement Housing with Meals developments which provides two home-cooked meals per day.

Yvonne Boyle, Development Manager at Bield said: *"Jian is a breath of fresh air to have in the development and her talent is remarkable."*

"Tenants love her food and the feedback is always brilliant. Jian puts her heart into everything she does and has spent time getting to know each tenant to understand what they like and dislike."

"We are so lucky to have Jian with us at Whitehill Lodge and look forward to every meal she makes."

In addition to Jian's cooking talents, she is also a keen violinist. She graduated from a popular music academy in North East China in 1984 with a degree in Music and has played in several orchestras over the years.

Before Chop Chop closed its doors after 15 years, during which time it was the favourite venue of a number of celebrity chefs, it received accolades including being a finalist in the Scottish Restaurant Awards. It was also one of the few Chinese restaurants in the UK to hold an AA Rosette.

Jian continues to run a successful food business - Chop Chop Frozen - which has been operating for over 24 years and employs 50 staff. The business supplies dumplings and other Chinese-style delicacies to 50 Chinese supermarkets across the country as well as other restaurants and large supermarkets including Lidl and Aldi.

War hero tenant receives Ambassador for Peace award

A Glasgow veteran and Bield tenant who fought in the Korean War has received an Ambassador for Peace medal following his service there in 1953.

92-year-old Andrew Glassford was overwhelmed when his son and grandchildren surprised him with the award for his time with the Black Watch regiment in Korea where he fought in the famous Battle of the Hook.

Now a tenant at our Loch Laidon Court development in Glasgow, Andrew travelled for seven weeks by ship to Korea after he had carried out his national service training at Fort George in the Highlands.

Andrew was heavily involved in the battle and was struck by bomb shrapnel which damaged a large part of his shoulder. He was quickly airlifted to Japan for treatment before returning to Korea to fight.

He said: *"To be part of the Black Watch regiment and play a role in the Korean War is something that still makes me very proud so, when I found out I was honoured with the Ambassador for Peace award, it was a very special moment."*

"Over my two years in the national service across Korea and Kenya, there were highs and lows but I wouldn't change any of it, it was a meaningful experience and one I will always be incredibly proud of."

"To now have a medal to remind me of my time there and to thank me for my service to South Korea is of course a huge honour."

A skilled tradesman, Andrew undertook an apprenticeship in building before his time in the war. On his return, the industry had slumped, leading to Andrew qualifying in

a second trade - carpet weaving. He subsequently returned to the building trade and became a joiner in the early 70s.

Since his retirement, Andrew enjoys spending time with his son Paul, daughter-in-law Helen and grandsons David and Matthew, with whom he reflects on memories of his life and his late wife Margaret – who he was married to for 60 years.

The recent award makes it Andrew's fourth war medal, adding to his African Campaign Medal, Korean Campaign Medal and United Nations Medal. Andrew's grandson Matthew read the citation from the Korean Embassy when presenting the award.

Andrew added: *"It was a very special occasion to be surprised with the award by my close family and a brilliant start to 2023."*

The Korean War was fought between North Korea and South Korea from 1950 to 1953. North Korea was supported by China and the Soviet Union whereas South Korea was supported by the United States and other allies including Great Britain.

Ambassador for Peace is a title presented by the Universal Peace Federation to individuals in recognition of their peace-making merits.

Andrew now spends his days relaxing, cooking, spending time with friends and family and watching his favourite old cowboy movies in his flat at Bield's Loch Laidon Court in the east of Glasgow.

Bridget Heenan, Retirement plus Manager at Loch Laidon Court, said: *"Andrew is a true inspiration to staff and tenants at the development. We are all extremely proud of his achievements and over the moon to see him receive this deserved award."*



Andrew is pictured with his award and also during his national service.



The **BIELD** Partnership Forum

What is the Bield Partnership Forum?

The Bield Partnership Forum is an independent group run by tenants and supported by Bield staff. They meet quarterly to discuss key issues facing Bield.

The Partnership Forum is made up of 16 tenants and we currently have five vacancies.

What happens at the meetings?

The Bield Partnership Forum meet quarterly in person - usually at a location in Stirling. The last meeting took place in February 2023 and the main topic that was discussed was the annual rent increase. The Partnership Forum members got the chance to talk through the implications of the increase and changes to the energy charge with Bield's Interim Director of Finance.

The Partnership Forum members also identified issues that they would like to explore in more detail and expressed an interest in working with other tenant groups and officers to make real changes for tenants.

Can I suggest topics for discussion?

Absolutely! If you would like to suggest a topic for the Partnership Forum to discuss at a future meeting, please get in touch! Send your suggestions to us:

✉ feedback@bield.co.uk

✍ **FREEPOST RLXG – LIKH – AABE –
Bield Housing & Care, Craighall Business
Park, 7 Eagle Street, Glasgow, G4 9XA**
(no stamp is required provided you include the
freepost details above)

Car parking



At the Partnership Forum in February, the issue of car parking was brought up by tenants.

We all know there are limited spaces within our development car parks and priority should be given to resident-owned vehicles.

We respectfully ask that vehicles belonging to family and friends are parked out with the car park unless it is for the purpose of picking up or dropping off a resident. Thank you.

Your guide to damp and mould

We recently published a guide to damp and mould which is available on our website (www.bield.co.uk/leaflets), from your Local/Area Manager or by contacting any of our offices.

Damp commonly occurs in bathrooms, on exterior-facing walls and around window and door frames. Keep an eye on these problem areas and clean any moisture/dampness regularly to minimise your chances of developing black mould or mildew.

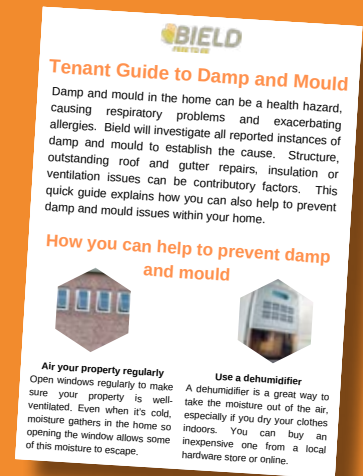
If you see mould or mildew forming, use gloves and a face mask before cleaning. When working with cleaning products, always follow the manufacturers' instructions. Ventilate the room well and dispose of any cloths that you have used to clean mould afterwards.

If you are concerned that there may be problems with damp or mould in your

property, please report this to us immediately and it will be investigated by one of our Property Management Officers.

There are also a few key actions that you can take to prevent damp and mould. These include:

- Airing your property regularly
- Drying clothes in a ventilated room
- Keeping bathroom/kitchen doors closed when showering/cooking
- Using extractor fans where these are fitted
- Wiping away condensation



Fire Safety



In accordance with the guidance recently issued by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, we have completed Fire Risk Assessments in all of our developments.

There were some general recommendations made in the assessments which our teams are working on and which we thought would be useful to share:

Emergency escape corridors and stairwells

Only a limited amount of suitable furnishings and accessories, owned by Bield, will normally be authorised for location and display in the fire escape

circulation routes. It is acceptable to have a small personalised display of **non-combustible** items next to your door where an inglenook is provided, however these should not obstruct the escape route. We are arranging for signage to be displayed in each stairwell but no items can be stored in these areas.

If your development has any book club tables or other social or seasonal displays, these must be located in the communal lounge.

External storage of household items for uplift

If you have arranged items for uplift these must:

- Be located in a safe location at least 5 metres from the building.
- Be placed outside as close to the uplift date as possible.
- Not be placed outside without arrangements for an uplift in place.

Maximising your income



The cost of living crisis is impacting everybody and household income is not stretching as far as it once was. From energy bills to food costs, petrol and everyday expenses, the amount we are paying for things has increased significantly in a short period of time with income not mirroring outgoings.

In order to better support our tenants, Bield have appointed two dedicated Income Advice Officers, Rebecca and Scott, both of whom have a wealth of knowledge and experience in relation to the welfare state system. They are highly motivated to assist Bield tenants with maximising their incomes and relieving the burden of the cost of living crisis.

In the short time they have been in post, Rebecca and Scott have assisted 132 tenants and successfully managed to increase tenants' income by £40,000 - with this figure expected to rise significantly throughout the year ahead.

Whilst securing financial gains for tenants is very important, Rebecca and Scott's roles encompass much more than this. Helping tenants check that they are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to, information sharing with colleagues and providing information on grants and funds out with the welfare state system all enhance the standard of living for our tenants.

 Scottish Housing Regulator
National Panel of Tenants and Service Users

Share your views...

Want to help improve social landlord services in Scotland? The latest National Panel survey is now available!

What's involved?

The Panel is one of the ways that the Scottish Housing Regulator hears from tenants and people who use council or housing association services. Feedback helps the Regulator focus on the important things.

We have more than 400 people already having their say. Members receive occasional surveys and take part in other feedback exercises. Participation is always optional.

Who can join?

The Panel is open to anyone who uses Council or housing association services. Members include social tenants, people who have been homeless, homeowners who receive factoring or common repairs from a social landlord, and people on social rented Gypsy/Traveller sites.

Take the survey and join...

By phone
0800 433 7212

Online
bit.ly/shr-panel

On your smartphone:



Take part for
a chance to win £50!



If you would like to be referred to Rebecca or Scott for advice and support, please get in touch by emailing:

incomeadvice@bield.co.uk



OUR REPAIR LINE NUMBER HAS CHANGED

Our Repair line telephone number has changed. Please contact us on the number below to report a repair.

0141 370 2040

Calls will be responded to Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm. Alternatively, you can report routine repairs to us online or via email. Routine repairs will be processed during normal working hours.

 www.bield.co.uk/report-a-repair/
 Property-1@bield.co.uk

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

You can report emergency repairs by calling:

- **0141 370 2040** (Monday-Friday, 9-5)
- **0141 950 1025** (Out of hours - BR24)

Your repair will be reported to our contractors straight away.

For Retirement Housing services, the Local Manager can provide assistance when on duty. If you have an alarm service, you can also use your pull cord to contact BR24 in an emergency.

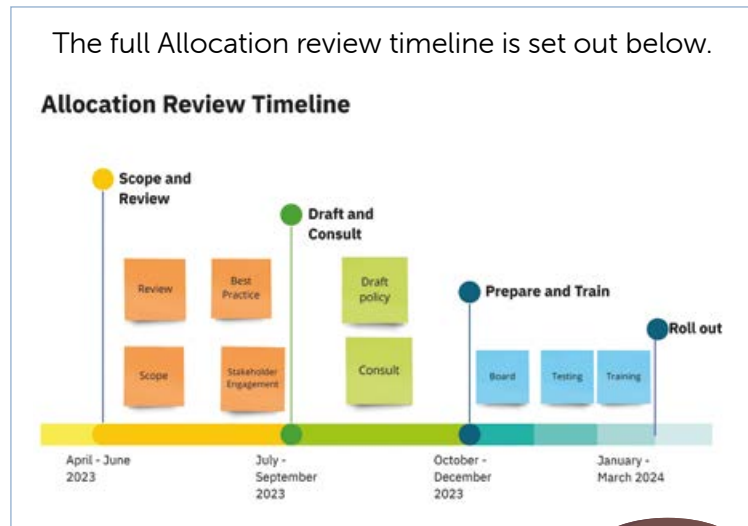
Allocation Policy review

We are starting a review of Bield's Allocation Policy. The Allocation Policy is the framework we use to let homes to those in need. Much of this framework is set out for us in law, but there are various approaches and some flexibility that we can use to help ensure we are delivering our objectives as a landlord.

Work has started on a review of guidance and best practice, and we will be bringing the topic to our various tenant groups over the next few weeks to gather initial views. Over the summer, we will redraft the Policy and aim to begin consulting on this in Autumn 2023.

All going well, we hope to adopt the new Policy from April 2024.

The full Allocation review timeline is set out below.



If you would like to learn more or get involved, please contact Zhan McIntyre, Head of Policy & Customer Standards by emailing: z.mcintyre@bield.co.uk



Working efficiently to support our tenants

Now that our systems are online, a lot of Bield staff can work anywhere.

We are encouraging our staff to work locally where they can. This is good for the environment and helps staff to get a better understanding of our front-line services.

We wanted to let you know that this means you may, on occasion, see Bield employees at your development who are not normally based there. Bield employees are asked to wear identification at all times so that you can have confidence they are meant to be there.



Please feel free to say hello if you see anyone with a Bield ID badge on!



Rent increase

2023/24

Thank you to everyone who took part in our recent rent consultation. Your comments and views were shared with the Bield Board who make the decision on rent levels each year.

The Board considered all of the customer feedback received in detail and decided that a 7% "below inflation" rent increase was the right balance between keeping our rents affordable and having enough money to manage and maintain homes.

The rent you pay contributes to:-



A repair service that offers:

- emergency repairs within 6 hours
- urgent repairs within 3 working days
- routine repairs within 20 working days



Planned and cyclical maintenance of the different parts of your home (inside and out), such as roofs, windows, kitchens and bathrooms



The chance to invest in communities through new housing provision and upkeep of existing buildings

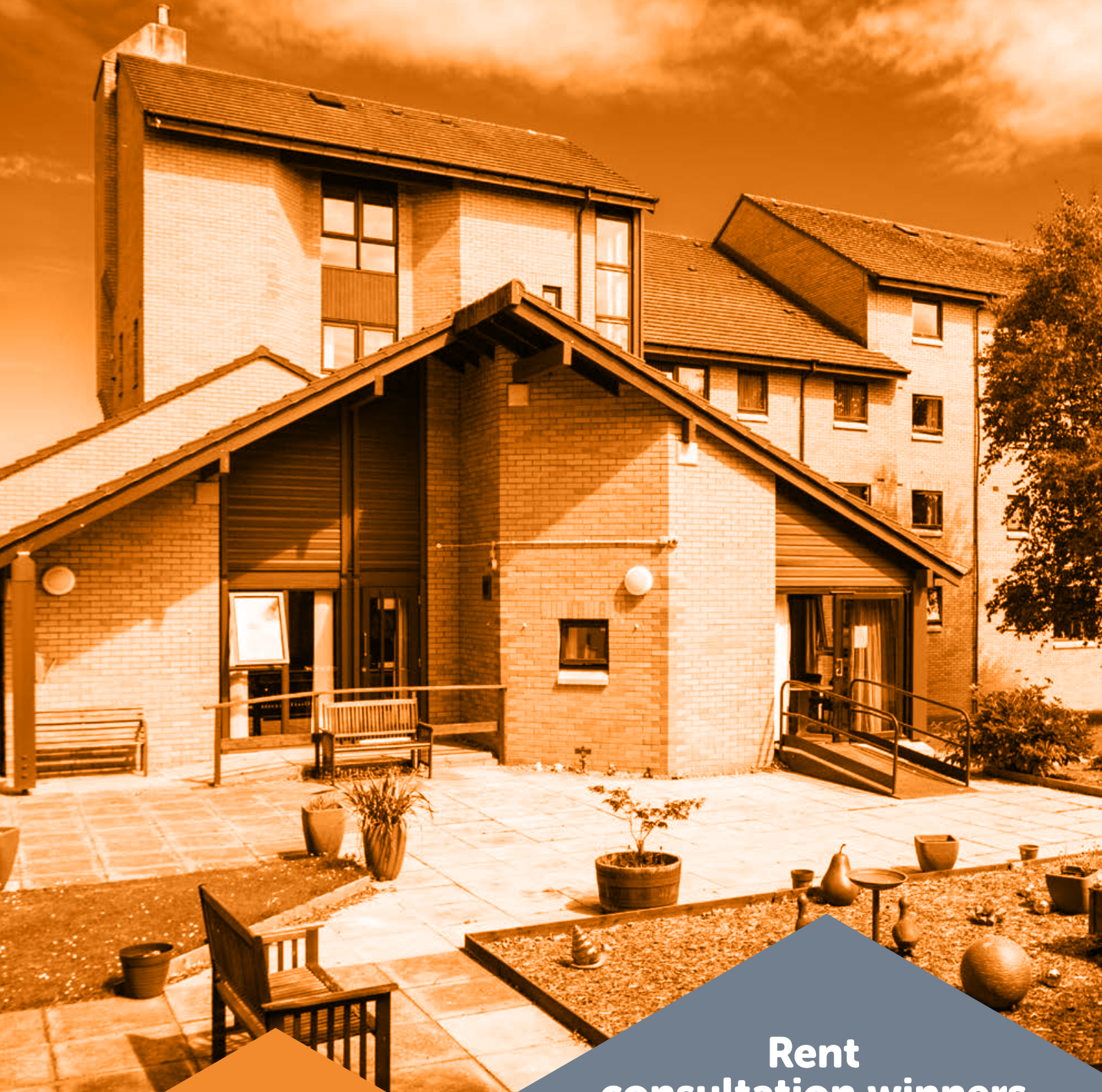


The maintenance of the common parts of your building, making sure it is safe to use

You will have seen a different charge on your rent letter this year relating to a communal energy charge. Almost every development in Bield has 'communal areas'. These include lounges and laundries, as well as corridors. Until now, the cost to heat and light these areas was included in your rent. These costs, just like domestic energy costs, have increased significantly over the last few years and we continue to experience uncertainty around this. As part of our rent consultation, we proposed to separate this from the main rent to make it more visible. We appreciate this may have caused some concern to tenants as it looked like a 'new' charge, and many people were worried it would not be eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. We would like to assure those tenants who claim benefits that this is still eligible, it is now just detailed separately.

We know that this is a challenging time for everyone in terms of the cost of living crisis. We are looking at ways to reduce our costs where we can and keep costs under review. If you're struggling with the new charges and need some help to understand what you may be entitled to, then please contact us. If you feel that you may fall behind with your rent payments, the best thing you can do is tell us straight away. If you speak to us, we will help to identify any additional support you are entitled to and work out a payment plan that you can afford.

Please ask to speak to a member of our Customer Services Team for confidential advice and support. They can also signpost you to appropriate debt advice agencies and arrange for you to meet with one of our new Income Advice Officers who can provide additional assistance regarding benefits and grants (see page 9).



How we can help you

- Agree repayment terms to help you get back on track.
- Direct you to appropriate independent advice and support services such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Money Advice Service and Shelter's housing advice centres.
- Our dedicated Income Advice Officers can help ensure you are receiving all the benefits and support that you should be.

Rent consultation winners

Everyone who returned a completed rent consultation survey was given the opportunity to be entered into a free prize draw to win one of six £50 Aldi vouchers. The Partnership Forum selected the winners at random when they met at the beginning of February. Congratulations to our winners who came from each of the following developments:

Carlow Court, Gladstone Court, Glenview Court, Houston Court, Robertson Court and Stewart Court.

A big thank you to every single tenant who took the time to participate in the consultation!



Join SHARE

- The Scottish Health Research Register & Biobank

If we are going to discover and develop new treatments and cures for disease, we need to support health research. Help save lives and join SHARE, The Scottish Health Research Register & Biobank today.

SHARE is a database of volunteers (11+ yrs) who are interested in research for improving healthcare. Many also provide consent for any leftover blood following routine clinical tests to be used for anonymised genetic research.

We have most recently assisted projects investigating arthritis, asthma, Covid-19, epilepsy, cancer, dementia, heart failure, stroke and mental health issues. We currently have over 297,000 volunteers but to support projects appropriately, we need to have a wholly inclusive register of volunteers which mirrors the diversity of Scotland's population.

Sometimes, people who want to take part in medical research don't know how to get involved; **here's how anyone who signs up to SHARE can help in 2 ways:**

1. You can agree to be contacted for research projects which you may be suitable for. These studies can take different forms e.g. completing surveys, helping to write guidelines or testing new medical devices or medicines.
2. You can agree for any leftover blood from routine clinical tests to be stored and used in genetic research studies.



Please sign up to SHARE today! Help us achieve our aim to reach 1,000,000 volunteers in Scotland.

For more information or to register, please scan the QR code or search **www.registerforshare.org**

Visit our YouTube channel (https://youtu.be/CNzgbUj_7T0) to find out how you can help.



SHARE is an NHS Research Scotland initiative, supported by the Universities in Scotland and the Chief Scientist at the Scottish Government.

Special celebrations!



Massive congratulations to Mr and Mrs Roy from our Brae Court development in Linlithgow who recently celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary! They were thrilled to receive a card from King Charles and his Queen Consort. Mr and Mrs Roy spent the day celebrating with family.

Mr and Mrs Tough from our Strathmartine Court development in Dundee also celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary recently – congratulations to them both! They shared a couple of images from a family photo album with us including one of them together back in 1961!



Big congratulations are also in order for Mr and Mrs Girdwood who attend the Tuesday Club at our Stewart Court development in West Calder every week. They celebrated their Platinum wedding anniversary and Mr Girdwood's 92nd birthday in March.



Joyce, the Cook from our Castlebrae Glebe development, retired in April after an impressive 25 years of service! Joyce is pictured with some of her leaving gifts from her colleagues, tenants and friends.



In March, Margaret from our Loch Laidon Court development in Glasgow celebrated her 95th birthday. She is pictured with our Retirement Plus Manager, Bridget, and a fabulous cake provided by her family.



Customer satisfaction

Every three years, social housing providers across Scotland are required to ask their tenants to complete a customer satisfaction survey. This is part of the Annual Return on the Charter, which is one of the main ways the Scottish Housing Regulator reviews how each provider is performing.

We wrote to all tenants about this back in December 2022 and enclosed a copy of our survey which had been influenced by our very own Bield Improvement Group.

Despite the busy Christmas period and a number of mail strikes, over 1,000 tenants returned their survey - a response rate of around 24%.

A summary of the results is below. Thank you to every single tenant who took the time to respond and provide feedback.

What we're doing well



Communication and Participation

Overall Satisfaction

Around
8 out of 10 tenants (80%)
said they were very or fairly satisfied with the overall service Bield provides.



Nearly
8 out of 10 tenants (78%)
believed Bield was very or fairly good at keeping tenants informed about their services.

In relation to the most recent contact with our offices, around
8 out of 10 tenants (80%)
found staff helpful and able to resolve their queries.

Around
9 out of 10 tenants
strongly agreed or agreed that Bield staff are friendly (91%) and helpful (87%).



ion survey results

Repairs and Housing Quality



Just over
8 out of 10 tenants (82%)
were very or fairly satisfied with our repairs service.

Over
8 out of 10 tenants (84%)
were very or fairly satisfied with their home.

Where we can do better

Nearly
6 out of 10 tenants (57%)
were very or fairly satisfied with opportunities given to them to participate in Bield's decision making processes. We are working with our tenant groups to offer new, easy and convenient ways for more of you to participate and be involved in our decision making processes.

When asked to think about different elements of the repair process:

- **90%** were very or fairly satisfied with the ease of reporting a repair.
- **92%** were very or fairly satisfied with the helpfulness of Bield staff.
- **81%** were very or fairly satisfied with the system for arranging repairs to be carried out.
- **77%** were very or fairly satisfied that contractors showed ID on arrival.
- **85%** were very or fairly satisfied with the approach of the tradesperson.
- **76%** were very or fairly satisfied with the length of time to carry out repairs.
- **81%** were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of repair undertaken.
- **81%** were very or fairly satisfied with the level of disturbance they faced.
- **73%** were very or fairly satisfied that the repair was done right first time.

Nearly
8 out of 10 tenants (76.3%)
thought that the rent and service charge for their property represented very good or fairly good value for money.

What we will do with this information

We will use all of the information from the survey in two main ways. Firstly, this will be the data we submit to the Scottish Housing Regulator as part of our Annual Return on the Charter later this year. Secondly, the survey information and feedback will help us develop and prioritise our action plans to help us improve our services where we need to do better.

For more information on the different ways you can get involved and influence Bield's decision making processes, see pages 22-23.

Setting the Pace...

Our People, Our Homes, Our Communities

We recently delivered our new transformational Corporate Strategy which sets out Bield's ambitions, intentions and priorities for the next five years.

We are thankful to all of the people from across Bield and beyond (including staff, tenants and other external stakeholders) who helped to contribute to this.

The strategy strengthens our commitment to tenants, customers and staff, pledges to grow Bield over the next five years and establishes how we will build the services and communities older people in Scotland want to live in.

Bield's long-term vision is to lead, set and deliver the global standard for ageing at home. Over the next five years, we will work together with our tenants and customers to co-produce exactly what you want to see and how you want to live in order to achieve this.



Aids and Adaptations

As you get older, your medical and mobility needs may change.

Everyday tasks such as moving around your home, going up and down stairs or getting in and out of the bath can be made easier with special equipment or adaptations to your home; helping you to maintain or increase your independence.

You can apply to have an adaptation fitted in your home at no extra cost to you.

Every year, Local Authorities allocate funding to us to fit adaptations. Minor adaptations such as fitting grab rails, lever taps or a deaf aid alarm can usually be carried out right away.



Major adaptations such as fitting an automatic door opener or installing a wet floor shower are carried out in priority order as funds become available. Each applicant will be given a priority rating based on need as assessed by an Occupational Therapist or GP (not by Bield). Where there are identical assessments and priority ratings, the earliest application on the waiting list will be carried out first.

Please ask your Local Manager or Area Manager for further information about special equipment or adaptations which can be made to your home to help make daily activities more manageable. They will be able to provide contact information for you to request an Occupational Therapist assessment.

For more information about adaptations or to make a request, please contact us by calling **0141 270 7262** or emailing: **star@bield.co.uk**

Making it easier to manage your tenancy online – introducing My Bield

Many of us use online accounts to help manage our day-to-day living, such as online banking, online shopping and even booking hair appointments or holidays. We are excited to let you know that we are working on a new way for tenants and other Bield customers to manage their accounts online – via the My Bield portal.

Early feedback on My Bield has been sought from our tenant Communication Champions as well as our Interested Parties list. We are working on making sure tenants will be able to look at their accounts, report repairs online and request call-backs from a member of Bield staff.

We know it will not be for every tenant, but for some it should offer a convenient and fast way to get the information you need about your tenancy or to get in touch fast.

If you would like to know more about My Bield, become a Communications Champion or join our Interested Parties list, get in touch by emailing: feedback@bield.co.uk or write to us for free at FREEPOST RLXG – LIKH – AABE, Craighall Business Park, 7 Eagle Street, Glasgow, G4 9XA.

We will be writing to every tenant over the next few months with all the details you will need to register for My Bield, so look out for your letter coming in the post!

Bield's Got Talent!

Every Monday, the tenants at our Dean Court development in Bo'ness enjoy a craft and games afternoon in the communal lounge, with activities such as knitting, sewing, crocheting, jigsaws and dominoes.

One of our newer tenants recently mentioned that she does loom knitting, which caught the interest of both tenants and staff. Last month, the tenant kindly brought her loom to the lounge and gave a demonstration on how to make a baby blanket.



Inspired by her work, the tenants attending the craft afternoon are now busy making their own items and are hoping to hold a sale later in the year to raise tenant funds.

Crossword Solution:

Across: 9 Precipice, 10 Lama, 11 Smith, 12 Rootstock, 13 Telegrams, 14 Tsar, 18 Witness, 20 Riotous, 21 Rile, 22 Sunstroke, 26 Semibreve, 28 Cheap, 29 Alpha, 30 Intercept.
Down: 1 Spasm, 2 Regimental, 3 Tightened, 4 Mirror, 5 Reformer, 6 Bliss, 7 N A T O, 8 Jack Frost, 15 Shopkeeper, 16 Swordsman, 17 Fourscore, 19 Souvenir, 23 Sweaty, 24 U-boat, 25 Spite, 27 Maps.

Bield win at the ITEC Awards!



Bield's 'Inspire Phase 2' project was the winner of the Transformation Award at the 2023 ITEC Awards in Birmingham in March.

The ITEC Awards celebrate innovation within the sector and the positive impact Technology Enabled Care has on the lives of millions of people in the UK. The Transformation Award honours services that have planned and implemented major transformation with a proactive and preventative approach.

Our winning 'Inspire Phase 2' project involved an intensive proactive telecare trial by our digital alarm monitoring team, Bield Response 24 (BR24), which revealed astonishing results about the impact of proactive intervention for older adults.

By utilising proactive telecare, the team were able to maintain or improve the health and wellbeing of 45 participants and anticipated and prevented crises from occurring. The project revealed a 75% decrease in ambulance calls and a 68% reduction in A&E visits as a direct result of early intervention and preventative support methods. Proactive telecare played a vital role in empowering the participants, ensuring they had the correct support in place to live the life they wanted, without constraints or a heavy dependence on social work or public services. You can read more about the project on our website: www.bield.co.uk/future-services



Congratulations to everyone involved on this amazing achievement!

Generous barber gifts free festive haircuts to Inverclyde tenants

Grateful tenants at our Crosshill Gardens development in Port Glasgow benefited from free haircuts just before Christmas.

Mounzer Darsani, a Syrian barber, said it was a way of giving back to the community that welcomed him when he first came to Scotland in 2016.

It was the second time Mounzer offered up his services to tenants at the development, having visited previously to keep locks trimmed during the pandemic.

Thomas Patton, a tenant at Crosshill Gardens, said: "To have a fresh haircut was excellent and myself and all of the other tenants who received a haircut were extremely grateful for Mounzer's help.

"Whenever someone volunteers their time and skills for us, we're always very thankful. It was great to be looking and feeling my best heading into the festive season."

Since his move to Inverclyde, Mounzer has successfully launched his Orient Salon barber shops, with one in Greenock and one on the Isle of Bute.

When Mounzer and his family first arrived in Inverclyde, he was welcomed with open arms by the local community, so much so that he has turned to offering his services in a charitable way.

Mounzer said: "It's always a pleasure to offer up my services to the lovely people at Crosshill Gardens.

"People in Scotland have always been so welcoming since I first arrived and it is a mission of mine to continue contributing to the community by giving back as much as I can.

"Although Christmas is a very happy time for most, it can be a lonely time for some people too so it's important to me to try to spread as much kindness as I can. I hope the tenants at Crosshill Gardens felt their best heading into the festive season!"



You can influence Bield's decision making

As a housing association, Bield have a number of ways for you to get involved in decision making and influence the services we provide, in a way that suits you!

How much time do you have?



A **small** time commitment



A **medium** time commitment



A **large** time commitment



A **small** time commitment

One-to-one consultation

You can meet staff members such as your Local Manager, Area Manager or Property Management Officer to discuss a particular issue.

Let's Meet

Let's Meet sessions are held regularly at developments by the Area Manager and/or the Property Management Officer. This is a chance for tenants to get together and talk about important issues at their development.

Focus Groups

From time to time a focus group session will be held at a development where you can liaise with staff on potential major works/changes at your development.



A **medium** time commitment

Interested Parties List

The Interested Parties List is a way for tenants to express their thoughts and opinions on a range of key issues. Surveys are issued periodically by mail to the tenants who have signed up to receive them.

Surveys

A variety of different surveys are regularly sent out to tenants. These include surveys for repair works and the annual rent and service charge survey.

Bield Membership

You can choose to become a member of Bield at any time for a nominal fee of £1. Being a member gives you the opportunity to attend and vote at our Annual General Meetings and put yourself forward for a place on the Board.

Registered Tenant Organisations

You could form a Registered Tenant Organisation at your development. This is a more formal group which we consult with on wider issues within Bield.

Rainbow Network

Especially for our LGBT+ tenants and people wanting to support them, the Rainbow Network meet monthly on Zoom for a catch up and chat.



A **large** time commitment

Bield Partnership Forum

Why not put yourself forward for a place on our national Partnership Forum? This is a group of tenants who meet at least quarterly to discuss a wide range of key strategic matters. They feed back to the people in their area and oversee the work of the other tenant engagement groups.

Bield Improvement Group

This group reviews and scrutinises areas of Bield's performance such as rents or repairs. Reporting to the Partnership Forum, this group makes recommendations on how services can be improved for customers.

Bield Communication Champions

This group reviews and influences how Bield communicates with tenants, ranging from influencing standard letters to more substantial communications such as policy and strategy documents.

Bield Equality Network

This group provides a specific forum for tenants interested in equality, diversity and inclusion.

Bield Compliment and Complaint Collective

This group meets quarterly to review complaints performance and make recommendations to improve Bield's services.

Board and Committees

If there is a vacancy, you could stand for election to the Board and be involved in the highest level of decision making within Bield.

If you're interested or would like to find out more, please email: feedback@bield.co.uk or write to us (no need for a stamp!) at FREEPOST RLXG – LIKH – AABE, Craighall Business Park, 7 Eagle Street, Glasgow, G4 9XA.

Landlord's permission and compensation for improvements

Tenants require written permission from Bield Property Services before carrying out any physical alterations (other than decoration works and laying carpets) to homes or garden areas.



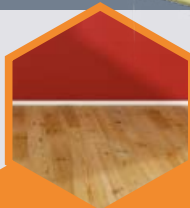
For example you will need advance permission to:



Alter any heating, plumbing or electrical systems



Install new kitchens and shower rooms



Install laminate flooring



Install plumbed-in appliances



Change ceiling light fittings



Put up a shed



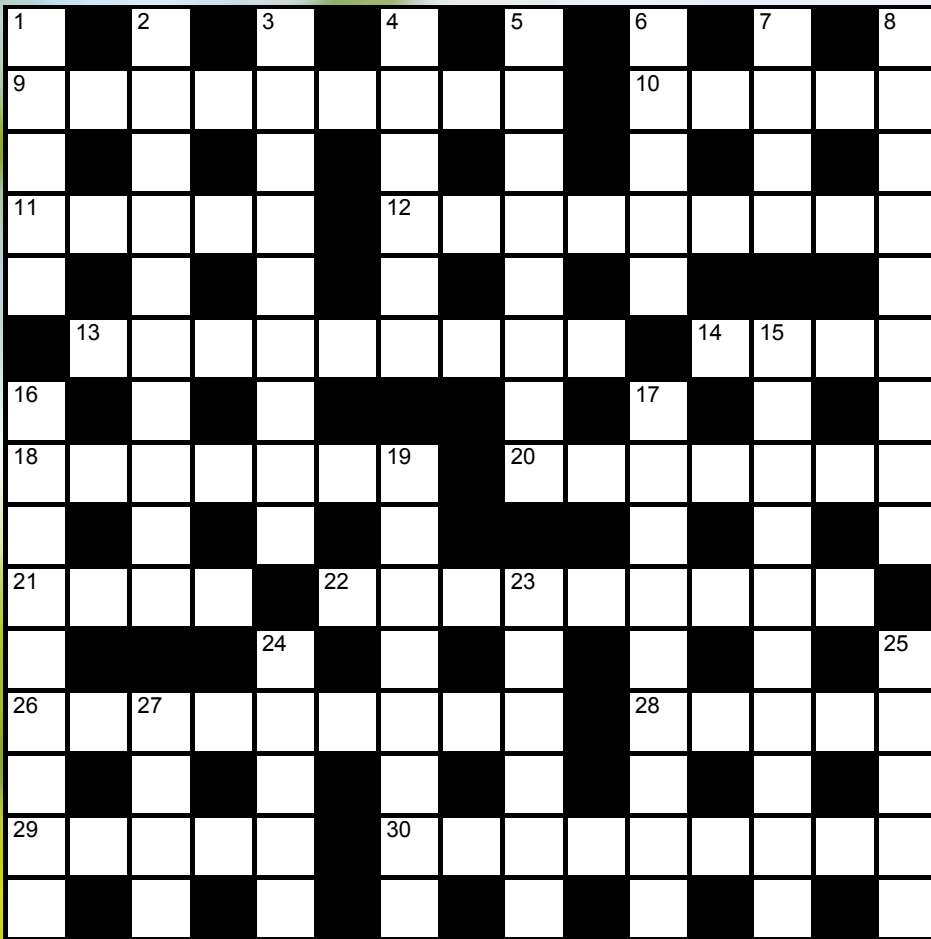
Remove or replace doors and partitions

This is particularly important if you wish to claim compensation once your tenancy ends for qualifying improvement works, such as kitchen or bathroom replacements, under The Scottish Secure Tenants (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 2002. Copies of receipts and invoices for the works are also required to claim compensation so make sure you hold on to these. Your Local Manager, Area Manager or Property Management Officer can advise you on this.

Written permission is also required before you can use or store a motorised scooter in your development. You must obtain this authorisation prior to purchasing a scooter as there may not be a safe place available for storage.

If you're ever unsure of who is at your door, don't open it! All of Bield's contractors carry identification – always ask to see this. If you are in any doubt at all, please contact your Local Manager or BR24 for advice.

Puzzle Page



Across

- 9 Cliff face (9)
- 10 South American ruminant (5)
- 11 One who shapes metal (5)
- 12 Rhizome (9)
- 13 Telegraph messages (9)
- 14 Government supremo in a specified policy area (4)
- 18 See (7)
- 20 Uproarious (7)
- 21 Vex (4)
- 22 Caused by overexposure on a hot day (9)
- 26 Musical note (9)
- 28 Inexpensive (5)
- 29 Type of male (5)
- 30 Cut off (9)

Down

- 1 Sudden convulsion (5)
- 2 Type of military flag (10)
- 3 Made more restrictive (9)
- 4 Reflecting surface (6)
- 5 Progressive (8)
- 6 Utter joy (5)
- 7 Western pact (1,1,1,1)
- 8 Cold weather personified (4,5)
- 15 Retailer (10)
- 16 Fencer (9)
- 17 Eighty (9)
- 19 Memento (8)
- 23 Perspiring (6)
- 24 German submarine (1-4)
- 25 Malice (5)
- 27 Charts (4)

Crossword answers on page 19

Sudoku

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

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

Fun and festivities!

Check out the photos of different celebrations from across our developments in recent months.

Christmas



The celebrations didn't stop for tenants at our Balgowan Court development in Dundee. They hosted a Boxing Day lunch with lots of mince and tatties!



Volunteers Danielle and Vicky treated some of the female tenants at our Campsie Gardens development in Cumbernauld to a pamper afternoon ahead of their Christmas party.

Santa found the time to visit our Oakburn Park Day Care centre in Milngavie on Christmas Eve! Everyone had a great time watching him meet with the families of service users and staff.



Tenants at our Crosshill Gardens development in Port Glasgow celebrated with a lovely two-course meal at the Upper Port Glasgow Social Club – brownie points for everyone who wore their Christmas jumper!

Father Christmas didn't miss our Strathmartine Court development in Dundee – he brought lots of gifts and joy to our tenants, their families and staff.



Warrick & Glebe



Foley Court



Coxton Gardens

Valentine's Day

Love was certainly in the air at our Coxton Gardens development in Glasgow while the ladies at our Crosshill Gardens development in Port Glasgow celebrated Galentine's Day with fun games and a delicious afternoon tea.



Easter



Tenants at our Campsie Gardens development in Cumbernauld showed off their crafting skills by taking part in an Easter bonnet competition. Which one is your favourite?!

Mother's Day

Some of the lovely ladies at our Coxton Gardens development in Glasgow enjoyed a special pamper session on Mother's Day.



Meet our newest residents!



Introducing the newest residents at our Castlebrae Glebe development – Gizmo and Snowy! Owning pets has been scientifically proven to have a positive impact on the health of older adults and they are already proving to be a real hit with the tenants!



Emergency contact details

You can report an emergency at any time, day or night, by contacting BR24. Call **0141 950 1025** or use your pull cord if you have one.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this copy of our tenant bulletin. If there's something you'd like us to include in the 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, please email **communications@bield.co.uk**



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