



Estate Management Policy

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Board of Management

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1. Introduction

Bield operates across Scotland, providing a range of rented accommodation as well as a number of shared ownership properties. The majority of the stock is housing for older people with on-site staff providing varying levels of housing support and enhanced housing management services.

Estate Management is the management of the houses, communal areas and the environment around the developments for which Bield has a responsibility, however we recognise that estate management is not solely about looking after buildings and the physical environment. It is also about providing or arranging necessary advice and support to tenants and residents and it involves working with other agencies on services which enhance the local community.

This Policy is supported by detailed procedures and range of related policies which govern tenancy and property management.

2. Legal and regulatory Framework

2.1 In formulating and developing this Policy, we will ensure we comply with our statutory obligations detailed within the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2014

2.2 The rights and responsibilities of both the tenant and the landlord with regard to the upkeep of the property and surrounding areas are detailed in the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement entered into by agreement by both parties at the start of each tenancy.

2.3 As part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes, Landlords are expected to:

“Work in partnership with other agencies to help ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe”

2.4 Bield will also have regard to any relevant Health and Safety legislation as well as the Data Protection Act 1998 and Bield’s related procedures.

3. Policy Aim

Bield aims to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained developments and areas where they feel safe.

4. Objectives

- To ensure that stock, communal areas and surrounding environments are managed to a high standard

- To ensure that tenancy conditions are adhered to and that tenants are provided with support and assistance to sustain their tenancies
- To build effective relationships with external agencies to achieve partnership working when addressing local issues
- To ensure all staff are fully trained to deliver services to a high standard and in accordance with relevant legislation
- To engage with tenants and other customers to seek their feedback and ensure continuous improvement

5. Delivering an Estate Management Service

A range of tenancy management and property procedures, as well as operational practices, are in place to ensure that terms of tenancies are adhered to and properties are well maintained.

To deliver an effective estate management service, external and internal communal facilities are managed by a range of methods to ensure consistency in approach and delivery of the service and to ensure that the communal areas are presented to a high standard.

5.1 Internal Communal areas and facilities

- The majority of our developments have communal areas and facilities which may include a communal lounge, dining room, guest room, laundry room and hairdressing room.
- Bield will appoint staff or a cleaning company to clean the communal areas. The standard of cleaning will be monitored by the Local Manager and any issues addressed. In some developments, communal areas will be leased to external organisations to deliver a service.
- The Communal Facilities Usage and Charging Procedure outlines the steps to be followed in the event of a request being received and how the use should be monitored to ensure that the conditions of use are being met.
- A furniture and minor equipment replacement programme is in place as well as a decoration programme to ensure that the communal facilities are well maintained and provide an attractive environment.

5.2 External Communal Areas

- In developments where there are communal gardens and landscaped areas, Bield will appoint appropriate contractors to maintain these areas and will monitor the standard of service regularly.
- Essential footpaths will be cleared of snow and ice in accordance with our guidance on snow clearing.

5.3 Car Parking

- The majority of developments will have car parking areas within the curtilage of the development.
- Bield will only permit the parking of vehicles, caravans or trailers belonging to tenants, or their visitors, on Bield land in accordance with the terms within the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.
- Allocated parking spaces are only provided to tenants where the parking space is within a driveway or other area allocated as part of the tenancy
- Where appropriate, Bield will liaise with the local authority to ensure that areas where parking is not permitted are clearly signed.
- Where cars or vehicles are parked without authorisation or are abandoned on Bield land, we will liaise with the police or local authority to address this.
- Where car parking issues arise, the Local Manager or Housing Officer will work with tenants, Property Services and where appropriate, external agencies to develop a local solution

5.4 Refuse disposal, recycling and bulk uplifts

- Bield will provide bins for refuse disposal and recycling and will make arrangements with the local authority to have these are uplifted.
- Bield will ensure that the bin areas are clean and well maintained
- Where refuse is uplifted from the street, tenants will be expected to comply with local arrangements
- Tenants wishing to dispose of large household items including electrical goods, fridge, freezers, beds etc will be expected to comply with local arrangements. Local staff will offer information and advice with regards to this.

- Appropriate advice and guidance will be sought for the disposal of substances which are considered hazardous.

5.5 Vermin

Where Bield are responsible for problems with vermin or pests, the council or specialist contractor will be contacted to resolve the problem.

5.6 Vandalism and graffiti

Bield will endeavour to take preventative measures to deal with vandalism and graffiti and will work closely with other agencies such as the police and local authority to reduce the incidence and agree deterrents.

5.7 Security

- Safety and Security are important to our tenants. Advice and assistance will be offered to our tenants from local staff and additional advice may also be sought from the police and other agencies.
- Bield will ensure that security features are considered as a part of any new build developments and in any door and window replacement programmes.
- Security lighting, door entry systems and CCTV systems may be installed in consultation with tenants where there is an identified need
- Where CCTV is installed it will be done so in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and CCTV procedures.

5.8 Satellite Dishes

Permission is required to install a satellite dish, however many of our developments have a communal dish and the necessary infrastructure to allow connections to a satellite service.

5.9 Development Visits

For Retirement and Very Sheltered Developments, on site staff will provide a local service, identifying estate management issues as they arise and dealing with them promptly. In addition programmed visits to, and meetings at, developments by the Housing Officer and Property Officers will be used to identify any Estate Management issues that require resolution.

5.10 General Needs developments

Bield has a small number of general needs properties, some of which are part of a Retirement or Very Sheltered development whilst others are part of a small general needs development.

For those tenants that are part of a mixed development (retirement or very sheltered) the provisions of the Estate Management Policy will apply equally to those tenants.

For those in general needs developments, as with amenity tenants, they will not have the services of local on-site staff to oversee the communal areas on a daily basis or offer advice at local level, however they will have the contact details for relevant housing and property services staff who will be able to offer advice and assistance as appropriate.

The layout of each general needs development will differ in terms of communal garden and landscaping areas, car parking areas and communal corridors. Services will be agreed in advance of the properties becoming available for let and prospective tenants advised on the services that accompany the tenancy.

6. Tenant Engagement

Bield is committed to engaging with its tenants on a wide range of issues that affect them. The Tenant Engagement Strategy outlines the key areas of tenant involvement and the range of opportunities for tenants to share their views of the estate management service they receive from surveys and questionnaires to local meetings to membership of the Partnership Forum and Bield Improvement Group (B.I.G.).

7. Partnership Working

Bield staff will work in partnership with their colleagues to ensure that an effective estate management service is provided. We will also work in partnership with external agencies such as the local authority, police and other landlords to address jointly matters which we share responsibility or areas of operation.

8. Equality & Diversity

Bield is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Our goal is to ensure that these commitments, reinforced by our values are embedded in our day to day working practices with all our customers, colleagues and partners. Acting on these principles we aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination and one that values diversity. At the heart of our policy we seek to treat people fairly, with dignity and respect, and to uphold human rights for all. Bield considers any form of unlawful discrimination to be unacceptable in terms of good practice, social justice and legal duty.

9. Performance Monitoring and Reporting

We operate within a performance monitoring framework. Bield's Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are presented to the Performance & Audit Committee quarterly and monitor issues relevant to Estate Management and which are reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator on an annual basis as part of our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC):

- The number and percentage of serious and very serious antisocial behaviour cases
- % of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided
- % of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood in which they live

We seek tenant feedback through regular surveys and other methods. We analyse the information gathered from these as well as from complaints received to see if there any other ways of improving our service delivery. We will also consider for implementation, recommendations made by internal auditors or inspectors.

10. Review

The Estate Management Policy will be reviewed on a five yearly basis, in consultation with our Tenants.

Appendix A

A range of tenancy and property management procedures and operational practices are in place to address tenancy and property specific matters. See below:

Tenancy Management

A range of tenancy management procedures are in place to ensure effective tenancy management. These include:

- New tenant sign up
- Succession to tenancy; Assignment, subletting and lodgers
- Mutual Exchanges & Joint Tenancy applications
- Antisocial behaviour
- Abandonments
- Pets

Information is provided at the start of each tenancy about the above to outline key rights and responsibilities and to build up a positive relationship with incoming tenants.

Property Management

Property Management procedures are in place to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of our properties and communal areas. These include:

- Scooter Policy
- Property Services Policy

Communal area management

In addition we have procedures and arrangements in place for the following:

- Leasing of communal areas (Lounges and hairdressing rooms)
- Guest Room procedures and laundry usage
- Cleaning of common areas
- Furniture replacement programme
- Grounds maintenance, including Snow clearing and gritting
- CCTV
- Service and inspection contracts for the maintenance and servicing of equipment