



Tenant Handbook

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Section

1

Welcome to Bield



Our tenants have helped us to design and develop this handbook. We hope you find it a great source of useful information.

A very warm welcome to your new Bield home.

Since 1971, we have been providing quality housing and services for older people in Scotland. You've now joined 15,000 others across 23 Local Authority areas that trust and rely on Bield.

Bield have local and office based staff teams who are supported by a number of invaluable volunteers who support and encourage social activities within many of our developments.

What this handbook is for

Our tenants have helped us to design and develop this handbook. We hope you find it a great source of useful information. Amongst other things, it explains your rights and responsibilities as a tenant and contains summaries of our main policies and procedures.

Please keep it in a safe place so that it will always be handy should you need to look something up.

Bield Housing Options

We offer a wide range of different types of housing and services – a summary of each is provided below.

Retirement Housing

Within all of our Retirement Housing Service options, the local staff team provide an enhanced tenancy management and property maintenance service to allow our tenants to live safely and securely within their homes and to maintain their independence with help available from the local staff teams.

Retirement Housing with Meals

Within our Retirement Housing with Meals Service, tenants also have access to Bield's meals service which offers high quality freshly prepared meals twice daily at lunch time and in the early evening. Meals are prepared daily by our on-site cooks who prepare menus in consultation with tenants receiving the meals service. We aim to provide flexible meals service delivery options e.g. home delivery and/or escorting assistance if required to the dining room in accordance with individual tenant needs.

Retirement Housing Plus

Some of our Retirement Housing with Meals services also provides additional services to individual tenants who have been assessed by the local authority as having personal care and support needs. This service is called Retirement Housing Plus. For tenants who have not been assessed by the local authority, we can also offer domestic support services (housework, shopping, laundry etc.) and personal care services (personal hygiene, medication management, support with mobility etc.) to them if they wish to opt in at an additional cost.

The majority of our Retirement developments have shared facilities such as a communal lounge where activities take place, a laundry facility for tenants use and often a guest room for visitors. All of these developments are linked via alarm units within tenant's homes and communal areas throughout the building to Bield Response 24 (BR24), our call receiving service.

For tenants living in our developments where there are local staff, this would be your first point of contact.

Amenity: At our Amenity developments tenants can live in a safe, secure home whilst still feeling completely independent. The majority of our Amenity developments don't have any local staff or communal facilities. Tenants have an emergency alarm unit in their home where they can contact Bield Response 24 (more commonly known as BR24), our call receiving service, which operates 24 hours every day of the year. Depending on building design there may also be main entrance secure door entry systems.

General Needs: Some General Needs properties are purpose built but most of our General Needs housing was previously occupied by residential staff and are therefore adjacent to or part of a retirement housing development. Our General needs homes do not have emergency alarm units linked to Bield Response 24 and there is no local staff team service. For general needs tenants their main point of contact will be their Housing Officer and the majority will not have access to common areas or facilities. At the start your tenancy, we will let you know what this means for you where you live.

Some of the information in this handbook won't be relevant to your type of housing, but we've tried to make it as clear as possible where information only applies to specific homes. If anything is not clear, please ask us.

Typical Services Provided	General Needs	Amenity	Retirement	Retirement with Meals	Retirement Plus
Local Staff Team support on site			✓	✓	✓
24/7 support from Bield Response 24 (BR24)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Well managed, maintained, clean and secure communal areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High quality property maintenance and repair services to our communal areas and tenant's homes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information, advice and assistance to tenants on paying their rent and how to access welfare benefits	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information, advice and support (where required) to tenants on dealing with neighbour disputes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Encouraging tenants to participate in social activities within our communal lounges and in the local community			✓	✓	✓
Responding to emergencies and offering reassurance			✓	✓	✓
Providing information and advice if a tenant's care and support needs are changing as well as support from our Tenancy Sustainment Officers who can offer specialist advice and support to explore additional tenancy services options	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information, advice and assistance to tenants on how to access home adaptations and maintain independence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
An automated daily contact re-assurance service (Sure Call) provided by BR24			✓	✓	✓
Access to additional forms of Telecare equipment e.g. pendants to help increase security and independence		✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to our meals service				✓	✓
Access to Bield's Personal Care and Support Service, if you have an assessed support need identified by the local authority					✓
Access to Bield's Personal Care and Support Service, for domestic support (housework, shopping, laundry etc.) and personal care if you elect to opt-in at an additional cost					✓

Other Housing Options

Other housing services provided by Bield include:

- Owner Services:** We provide a comprehensive management service for residents who fully own their home or who own a share of their home. This includes providing a written statement of services, financial management and maintenance to the common areas. Many will have a Local Manager and communal facilities, such as lounges and guest rooms. All of the properties Bield manage are linked to Bield Response 24.

- **Shared Ownership:** We have a small number of shared ownership homes, which offer the opportunity to purchase a share in return for a reduced rent. You will still be able to benefit from all the services available at your development.

Any questions?

If you have any queries that are not answered in this book, please contact us – we are here to help.

We wish you many happy years in your new home.

Section 2

Equality and Diversity



Our vision is a Scotland where people of all ages are respected, can make their own choices, and are able to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life of older people by offering a diverse range of housing and other support services.

Equality and 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 (protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation).

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.

Our Value:

- Caring – a passion for supporting each other.
- Equality and Diversity – we advance equality and celebrate diversity.
- Honesty – we are open, fair, just and act with integrity.
- Dignity – we treat all people with respect.
- Inclusion – we involve our people in what they do because their opinions matter.
- Ambition – we want to be the best at what we do and we want people to realise their potential.

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.

Section 3

Your Tenancy



This section answers some of the questions you may have about your tenancy with us.

Getting started

Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement

When you start your tenancy with Bield we will ask you to sign a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement. It's an important legal document which details your rights and responsibilities as a tenant in accordance with current legislation. If you are a joint tenant with another person you both have equal rights and responsibilities. We will give you a copy of this agreement as well as a summary document before your tenancy starts.

A Scottish Secure Tenancy offers increased security for your tenancy and can only be ended in one of the following ways:

- If you give four weeks written notice.
- If you die and there is no one to succeed the tenancy.
- If there is a written agreement between you and Bield to end the tenancy.
- If we get a court action to evict you.
- If you abandon the property.
- If your tenancy is converted to a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy.

 You can find further details about ending a tenancy in **Section 14** of this handbook.

Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement

In a very small number of cases a new tenant will be offered a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST). When this happens, we will explain to you why you are being offered this type of tenancy and when it will be reviewed. The terms of a short SST are different so some of the information in this Handbook will not apply to you. A summary of the agreement will be provided to you at the start of your tenancy. A Short SST can be ended in one of the following ways:

- If you give four weeks written notice.
- If you die and there is no surviving joint tenant.
- If there is a written agreement between you and Bield to end the tenancy.
- If we get a court order to evict you.
- If you abandon the property.
- If your short SST is converted to a Scottish Secure Tenancy.

Absences from home

Your Bield tenancy will continue during absences from home due to a holiday or illness provided you continue paying your rent and meet the other tenancy conditions. If you live in a development that has staff, you should let them know if you plan to be away from home, even if it's just for one night, so we know that you are safe and everyone can be accounted for in the event of an emergency.

For all other tenants it is a good idea to let us know if you plan to be away from home for longer than two weeks.

Changes to your household

It is important if there is a change in your household that you let us know immediately. This includes telling us about anyone who has moved into or out of your home in the future at the time they do so. Please contact us to let us know and to seek our advice. This is very important if, at a later date, you wish to become joint tenants with someone living with you or you wish to assign your tenancy to them or if a member of your household wishes to take over the tenancy if you die.

If you are on housing benefit or universal credit you should also notify the local authority and/or Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) of any changes to your household.

The right to have a joint tenancy, take in lodgers, sub-let or transfer your rights

We will be happy to advise you if you wish to have a joint tenancy with another person, take in a lodger, sub-let your home or transfer your rights to another person. Depending on the type of request, certain conditions will need to be met e.g. such as the length of time you have had your tenancy, the length of time the other person has lived with you **and** when you notified us about the change to your household. This is very important. If someone moves into your home and you do not notify us at that time, then this could prevent them taking over your tenancy if you die. You will require written permission first before your tenancy can change. Further details on changing your tenancy can be found in your Tenancy Agreement or by contacting us.

The right to buy

As Bield is a registered charity you do not have the right to buy.

The right to enjoy your home

At Bield we aim to ensure that you can enjoy your home and live safely in an environment free from discrimination.

To ensure that everyone can enjoy living at Bield we expect all tenants to appreciate and respect the different needs of others. However, we know that for many of our tenants living in close proximity and sharing facilities such as a laundry and communal lounge is a new experience, and our experience tells us sometimes this isn't easy.

If difficulties do arise with your neighbours or their visitors, we will do our best to help resolve these with you. Usually an informal solution can be achieved through an amicable discussion between the persons concerned.

If you feel the issues cannot be dealt with in this way, you should speak to your Local Manager or a relevant staff member as soon as possible. They will investigate your concerns and agree the next steps with you.

It is important to us that all tenants are able to enjoy their home and live in a safe, peaceful environment.

Anti-social behaviour and harassment of any kind against staff and/or tenants is not acceptable.

Where appropriate, and with the consent of the tenant, Bield will seek the advice and support of other agencies, including the police, to resolve a neighbourhood dispute, harassment or anti-social behaviour incident.

If Bield is unable to resolve the issue we may approach mediation services or consider internal housing transfers or external mutual exchanges.

Where the matter is serious and/or persistent and no solution is found Bield may, as a last resort, pursue court action.

The right to alter or improve your home

You are welcome to carry out any decoration within your home. However, for physical alterations you will need to get permission from Bield. This permission will normally be granted, provided that proposed works lead to an improvement in your home and are carried out by a competent tradesperson. You are responsible for obtaining any statutory consent that you require and this needs to be submitted to us prior to starting work.

Some examples of physical alterations include:

- Shower and sanitary ware installation.
- Replacement lighting.
- Relocation of radiators.
- Replacement doors.
- Additional power sockets.
- Satellite systems.

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 you may be able to apply for financial compensation from us for improvements that you have made to your home on or after 30th September 2002. For you to qualify for this compensation:

- ✓ We must have given you permission to carry out the improvement beforehand.
- ✓ Your tenancy must have ended.

If you wish to apply for permission to carry out alterations within your home you should contact us, setting out the works you propose to do.

 **Section 7** of this Handbook provides further information on repairs and maintenance within your home and development.

The right to be consulted

Our Tenant Engagement Strategy sets out a commitment from us to create opportunities for tenants as individuals or in groups to become involved in how Bield operates.

 You can find out much more on Tenant Engagement in **Section 11** of this Handbook.

The right to keep pets and assistance dogs

We realise your pet is important to you and we welcome them too.

In some cases your pet is more than a companion, and all recognised assistance dogs that help people with hearing or visual difficulties, epilepsy, diabetes, physical mobility problems and more, are permitted.

In all cases it is useful to know about your pet and we ask that you contact us prior to moving in so that any additional support can be agreed. Please note that only one pet is permitted at any one time and there are conditions to keeping one, such as ensuring that it is kept under control and it is not an annoyance or nuisance to your neighbours. Please also take reasonable care to ensure your pet does not foul or cause damage to your home or within the development itself. Pets should be exercised out-with your development.

 Further details on pet ownership can be found in your **Tenancy Agreement**.

The right to complain

We aim to provide a high standard of service at all times. However, we know there may be occasions when you might not be happy with some aspects of this. As a result, Bield has a clear, thorough process for handling complaints.

 Information on our complaints procedure can be found in **Section 12** of this Handbook.

The right to a Power of Attorney/Guardians

You, of course, have the option to appoint someone such as a Power of Attorney or Guardian to help with your affairs, a family member or friend to assist with your finances or perhaps an independent representative to speak on your behalf. Please let us know if this is the case and we will give you further advice about copies of documents we need to see and where they should be sent to.

The right to access information

We can provide you with a wide selection of information free of charge. This includes:

- The Terms of your Tenancy.
- Tenant Engagement Strategy.
- Rent and Service Charge Setting Policy.
- Joint Allocation Policy.
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

We are able to provide this information in an accessible format such as Braille, large print, language translations, email or audio formats as preferred.

Bield adheres to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (which replaced the Data Protection Act 1998) in terms of the personal information it holds on you. At the start of your tenancy we will give you a Fair Processing Notice that will make you aware of what information we collect, when we collect it and how we will use it as well as who we share it with and how we dispose of it.

In summary the information we collect will be:

- relevant, factual and up to date.
- used only in relation to your tenancy with us and any related support service you may receive.
- treated as confidential and only shared with relevant parties, for example those involved in your support provision.
- kept in a secure location and only held for as long as necessary.
- You have the right to request to see the information we hold on you and correct any inaccuracies. If you write to us to ask for this information we will send it to you within 30 days of receiving your request.
- Requests for personal information will normally be free of charge; however, a fee of £10 can be charged in circumstances where the request is excessive or where multiple requests for information have been made by the same person.

Gifts

Employees can only accept gifts or hospitality subject to clear procedures and they must record any gifts that are accepted. Gifts with a value over £15, or gifts of cash or vouchers for any amount, cannot be accepted under any circumstances and must be politely declined.

Wills

We ask that you do not make any Bield staff beneficiaries of your will. We have found this can cause distress to families and compromise our staff who are advised not to accept cash under any circumstances.

Legacy

Although we ask that Bield staff are not made beneficiaries of your will, you do have the option of leaving a legacy for the organisation. For many people this is a way of being remembered, a way of passing something on, or a way of supporting a cause that was close to their heart throughout their life. You may be happy to let Bield use your gift wherever we see the greatest need, but if there is a particular development or service that you would like to help you can specify this in your will.

Further information on this can be obtained on request.

Section

4

Moving In



This section gives information on things you need to do or know about when moving into your new home.

Getting Settled In

Keys

On your tenancy start date you will be given three sets of keys. You can request additional keys though you may be asked to meet the cost for these.

Heating

Where there is gas central heating in your home, bills will normally be part of your overall monthly charge. In this case you do not need to contact the gas supplier to transfer the supply into your name.

Where your home has an independent supply we will advise you about this in relation to your heating and hot water when you sign your Tenancy Agreement. Where this is the case you will need to contact the gas supplier and notify them of a change of occupant and provide a meter reading.

Electricity

At a number of our developments electricity is included in the monthly charge. Where this is the case normally an energy charge is applied. Where no charges apply you are responsible for any electricity you use and you will need to contact the electricity supplier and notify them of a change of occupant and provide a meter reading.

Council Tax

You are responsible for Council Tax payments and should contact your local Council office to advise them of your start tenancy date. We will be happy to help you with this.

Television Licence

Tenants who live in Retirement Housing, Retirement Housing with Meals or Retirement Housing Plus developments may be entitled to a Concessionary TV Licence if they are retired and aged 60 years or over, or are disabled. The development you live in also has to meet certain criteria.

Bield apply for the Concessionary TV Licence on an annual basis.

In developments where the age entry has been reduced to under 60, and in developments where staff hours have been altered, the development may no longer be eligible for the Concessionary TV Licence. In such developments, tenants who were living at the development prior to the changes may still have a preserved right to a Concessionary TV Licence, whilst new tenants under the age of 75 will need to purchase their own licence.

People over 75 are entitled to a free TV Licence regardless of the type of housing they live in.

Amenity or General Needs tenants under the age of 75 will have to purchase their own licence.

Am I eligible for a Concessionary TV Licence?

When you sign your tenancy agreement you will be advised whether:

- A Concessionary TV Licence covers you.
- You are eligible for a free TV Licence as you are 75 years of age or over and whether you will need to apply for this yourself.
- You need to purchase you own TV Licence.

If you have any queries regarding your TV Licence just let us know.

If you wish to receive satellite television you will need to ask for permission for a dish to be installed. Many of our developments have a communal dish and the necessary infrastructure to allow connections to the satellite service. Bield have the responsibility to supply this up to, and including, the distribution box situated in one area within the development. If you wish to receive satellite television, then it is your responsibility to contact the service provider and arrange a connection to the distribution box at your own expense. Bield has responsibility for the upkeep of the equipment from the dish to the distribution box only. Please contact us if you would like further advice or information.

Telephone

In most developments there is one telephone socket in each home. Please contact your provider for help with transferring your number to your new home.

Insurance

Bield has building insurance however this does not cover your personal belongings. We strongly advise all tenants to take out a contents insurance policy to cover these things. If you don't take out contents insurance, and something does happen, then you risk losing all of your belongings, and it may be costly to replace or repair them.

Altering and improving your home

During the time of your tenancy you may decide to carry out minor changes to your home. This could range from mounting your television on your wall to replacing the kitchen. It is important to ask for permission before any works begin. If permission has not been requested this may result in recharges to yourself for repairs and may compromise your rights to compensation for improvements at the end of your tenancy.

Once you have been given permission, any works carried out within your property must be carried out by a competent and qualified tradesperson or contractor for you, and your neighbours', safety.

Electrical Works

For your own safety, and to prevent damage to property, all electrical works, including the installation of an electric cooker, must be carried out by a contractor who is either a registered member of the NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installations Contracting) or SELECT (Scotland's trade association for the electrical industry). The electrical safety of an appliance can only be guaranteed if it is correctly and efficiently earthed in compliance with regulations on electrical safety.

The Local Authority in your area may have a "Trusted Trader" list should you require assistance in choosing an appropriate and trustworthy tradesman.

Where applicable, please ensure that all contractors employed by you, to carry out works in your home, consult the Asbestos Register displayed on the noticeboard in advance of any works proceeding.

Bield do not grant permission for the installation of gas supplies and/or gas cookers into tenant's homes.

Scooters and Motorised Mobility Chairs

Bield are happy to support the use of electric wheelchairs and scooters in and around your development. For the safety of all, this must be done in a controlled manner. Permission to bring one with you to your development must be sought in advance of your tenancy commencing. Bield will carry out a risk assessment to determine whether permission can be granted and, if so, to decide on any conditions about its use, storage and charging to prevent putting you, or any other tenant, at risk.

New Tenant Survey

As a new tenant we are interested in your experience of the service we provide when allocating your home and starting your tenancy. We will send you a survey about 2 months after you move in. The outcome of this survey helps us to monitor the service we provide. We would appreciate you completing this survey and returning it to us when issued.

Section 5 Staff



This section gives you some more details on the staff that help to deliver a service to our tenants.

Service with a smile

Our wide range of experienced staff are all here to make sure your time as a Bield tenant is a happy one.

All Bield employees follow Bield's Code of Conduct, which is designed to protect the rights of tenants and staff.

In addition procedures and guidelines are in place and staff receive regular training regarding their responsibilities under the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. This legislation states that Bield has a responsibility to report cases where they have concerns about any tenant who may be at risk of harm. This includes reporting any suspected, alleged or identified abuse to the relevant Local Authority for further investigation.

More information on what constitutes abuse and how you can report this can be found on your development notice board or from your Local Manager.

Your Local Manager and Development Staff

For tenants in Retirement Housing, Retirement Housing with Meals and Retirement Housing Plus developments our Local Manager and staff team will provide a range of enhanced tenancy management and property maintenance services for you. They may also offer other services dependent on the type of service provided at your development.

 The information in **Section 1** gives more details regarding the types of services we have within our developments.

Local staff are responsible for maintaining the safety and security of your building and will carry out regular health and safety checks of the communal areas. As part of their responsibility for the overall management of the building, they will monitor and test equipment such as pull cords and fire alarms, on a regular basis.

It is also the responsibility of staff to ensure that communal areas in the development are cleaned and maintained to a high standard.

Additionally staff can signpost you to other local services which you may benefit from e.g. statutory and voluntary health and social care services.

Staff are on duty at fixed hours and tenants will be made aware of the hours of service within the development they live in. You can contact staff during these times by calling in at the development office, or in an emergency by pulling any emergency alarm cord in the development. Bield Response 24 will respond to tenants pulling the emergency alarm cord when staff are not on duty.

Local Managers are also responsible for managing the local staff team and will ensure services are delivered in accordance with Bield policies and procedures.

Deputy Managers are employed in our Retirement Housing with Meals and Retirement Housing Plus developments. Their role is to support the Local Manager to deliver the service and provide support to the staff team.

General Assistants are employed in our Retirement Housing, Retirement Housing with Meals and Retirement Housing Plus developments. Their role is to maintain a high standard of cleanliness in the building and support the Local Manager to provide landlord services.

General Assistants within services where meals are provided will also help support the cook with the delivery of the meals service and escorting tenants (where required) to and from the dining room.

Cooks are employed in developments which provide a meals service and they are responsible for planning menus with tenants, purchasing food, undertaking food safety checks and cooking the lunch time and early evening meals.

Care Assistants within our Retirement Housing Plus developments provide a personal care and support service (which may also include domestic and shopping tasks) to those tenants assessed by the Local Authority for this part of the service. They will also provide support to other tenants who have chosen to take up this part of the service privately with Bield.

Peripatetic and Casual Staff help provide staff cover at our developments during sick leave and other absences. These staff are fully trained and adhere to the same working practices as other Bield staff.

Bield Volunteers receive training and help provide support to tenants to engage in a wide variety of social activities. Bield also has a befriending service whereby a carefully selected person can visit you regularly on a one to one basis at times agreed between you. If you are interested in having a befriender, please contact your Local Manager for further details.

All developments have the support of a Housing Officer and Property Officer who work closely together to ensure a high standard of service at your development.

In developments where there are no local staff teams you can contact your Housing Officer for tenancy advice or your Property Officer if you have a query related to property repairs and maintenance. They will then arrange to visit you if necessary.

Staffing

We have three area offices in Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh where our operational teams and support services are based. Operational teams will assist you with queries that you may have about your rent account, support you with any tenancy issues and provide advice with regards to property matters.

We will tell you at the start of your tenancy who your key contact persons are and their contact details.

Health, Care and Support Agencies

The Local Manager can offer advice and information on who you can contact regarding your health, care and support needs. For example, statutory agencies such as the local Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) team for the area (e.g. social work services and health care services). These agencies have staff who can arrange to visit and assess you to agree your personal care and support needs, and arrange for a home care service to be provided for you via home helps or home carers.

Section

6

Rent, Charges and Money Matters



This section gives you a breakdown on what is covered in your monthly charge(s) and the different ways to pay.

Adding it all up

In order to provide you with the highest possible quality of service we have to ensure that rent and other charges cover the cost of providing the service. However, we are conscious that our charges have to be affordable and your monthly charges are set with this in mind. They also take into account the size and location of your home and the development you live in.

If you signed your tenancy with Bield before 1989, you have the right to have your basic rent registered by the Rent Officer. This will continue while you remain in your current home. You also have the right to choose not to have your rent registered.

What you pay

Landlord Charges

Your monthly landlord charge is made up of some or all of the following:

- **Basic Rent:** This is the charge for occupying your home. This money goes towards the management and maintenance of your home and any long-term improvement or replacement programmes. It also covers any loan charges taken out by Bield to build or buy properties.
- **Service Charge:** This landlord charge relates to additional services and costs where you live. The type of services you receive and cost of these may vary between developments. You will be given information about any charges at the start of your tenancy.
- **Heating Charge:** This covers the cost of heating and hot water in your home. In some developments tenants are billed directly by the gas or electricity company for these costs. Not all developments have a heating charge.

- **Energy Charge:** This covers the cost of all of the energy to tenants' homes and includes all electricity as well as heating and hot water. Only a few developments have this service provided by Bield.
- **Meals Charge:** This covers the costs of the meals service where these are provided to tenants within Retirement Housing with Meals and Retirement Housing Plus developments. The costs include: staff costs, food and equipment costs.

When you pay

Your landlord charges are collected monthly in advance with payment due on the 1st of each month. The period covered by the charges is a calendar month (1st – 31st of Month).

How you pay your landlord charges

We offer a number of different ways to pay your monthly charges and you can choose the one that is best for you.

- **Direct Debit:** This method is available if you have a bank account which can support Direct Debit payments. Please contact your Local Manager or office if you require a Direct Debit instruction form. Direct debit payments can be collected on either the 1st or 15th of the month.
- **Standing Order:** This method is available if you have a bank account. It is an instruction issued by you to your bank to make monthly payments to Bield. You are required to advise your bank of any variation in your charges. Please contact your local Manager or office for a Standing Order form.
- **Rent Payment Card:** This method is available to all tenants and allows you to make payments at any Post Office, Paypoint or Payzone outlet. Please contact your Local Manager or office if you would like a rent payment card.
- **Telephone Payments:** Rent payments using a debit or credit card can be made over the telephone by calling 0131 273 4080. This line is staffed during office hours but payments can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via our automated payment line which is available outwith office hours.
- **Online Payments:** Rent payments using a debit or credit card can be made online at www.bield.co.uk. You will need your 6 digit tenant reference number which will be on your rent payment card, a recent letter or rent statement, or you can contact your local office and staff will provide you with this information

Rent Account

All rent payments you make to Bield are entered on our computerised rent system. You can contact us at any time to ask for details of your account or rent statement.

Rent and Charges Review

Your monthly charges will normally be reviewed and amended once per year and implemented from 1st April. We look at the money spent over the past year and calculate how much we will need to run the services for the coming year. We will also write to you and ask for your views on our proposed charges before confirming what they will be.

We will give you a minimum of four weeks' notice if we intend to change your monthly rent and other charges.

The only other time we are likely to review your charges is when we propose to amend the services at your development. In such cases we would hold tenant meetings to discuss this with you.

Other Charges (Personal Care and Support)

Where Bield provides a personal care and support service to you on behalf of the local council (where the council have assessed you as requiring this service), Bield will charge you for the part of this service that is not deemed to be personal care.

If you choose to have Bield provide a personal care and/or support service to you privately (where the council has not asked us to provide this for you, but you wish to have a service), Bield will charge you for this.

Your care and support charges are collected monthly.

We offer a number of different ways to pay your monthly charge and you can choose the one that is best for you.

- **Standing Order:** This method is available if you have a bank account. It is an instruction issued by you to your bank to make monthly payments to Bield. You are required to advise your bank of any variation in your charges. Please contact your local Manager or office for a Standing Order form.
- **Direct Debit:** This method is available if you have a bank account which can support Direct Debit payments. Please contact your Local Manager or office if you require a Direct Debit instruction form.

 More information on personal care and support services can be found in **Section 10** of this handbook.

Help with your rent and other charges and Housing Benefit

Many tenants are eligible for Housing Benefit in relation to their landlord charges e.g. rent, service charges and meal charges. Care and support charges are **not** eligible for Housing Benefit. This is a Government scheme that could help with payment towards your monthly charges. If you are in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee you qualify for full Housing Benefit. This will cover the cost of your basic rent, your landlord service charge and if you get a meals service, some of your meals charge. It will not cover your heating, energy or the remaining part of your meals charge. If you are not in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee, you may still qualify for full or partial Housing Benefit depending on your income and savings.

Your Local Manager can provide advice and assistance to you to complete a claim form for Housing Benefit.

Housing Benefit and short absences from home

When you are away from home you are still liable to pay your full monthly charges. For absences other than going into hospital, such as holidays, you will normally continue to receive Housing Benefit for at least 13 weeks, provided that it is your intention to return home no later than the 13 week period.

You can usually only get housing benefit for up to four weeks if you go abroad. In a few situations you can get housing benefit for longer this. If you go outside of England, Scotland or Wales it counts as going abroad. **Please note:** Travel to Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man all count as going abroad. If you are planning a holiday it is important that you get advice about your housing benefit before you go.

Going into hospital?

If you receive Housing Benefit and you go into hospital for more than 28 days (if you receive Attendance Allowance) or 52 weeks (in all other cases) your Housing Benefit may be reduced or stop. This might affect your ability to pay your monthly charges. It is important that you or the person managing your affairs seeks advice if you find yourself in these circumstances.

Bield can provide assistance with your Housing Benefit queries if required and we can provide you with information which explains what happens in different situations. We can also give you letters to fill in and send to your local council to ask for your Housing Benefit to continue.

If you receive a Meals Service and are going to be away from home, deductions may be made to your Meals Charge. Further information on the meals service, as well as conditions for deductions that can be made to the Meals Charge, can be obtained from your Local Manager or from your local area office.

We can also provide general information about the availability of other benefits for older people and help you complete claim forms.

Working age tenants

Working age tenants will usually require to claim assistance with their housing costs through Universal Credit which is being implemented in phases. We will give you advice at the start of your tenancy taking into account your own circumstances. If you are a tenant, and your circumstances change, we can also provide you with advice at that time to ensure that you claim the benefit that you are entitled to.

Happy to help you get the right benefits

Many benefits are not claimed. It is therefore worth checking to see if you are entitled to help. Bield staff such as your Local Manager can provide you with advice on this and assistance can also be sought through the Pensions Service, Citizens Advice Scotland, Age Scotland or a local housing advice centre.

 Contact information for all these can be found in **Section 15** of the handbook.

Problems paying your rent

If you have problems making your monthly rental charges, it is important that you contact us without delay. It is always easier to manage problems at an early stage and anything you discuss will be kept strictly confidential.

Should you fall behind with your monthly rental payments and fail to make contact with us, action will be taken to recover your arrears. The first stage of the process will involve a visit from an appropriate staff member where advice and assistance will be provided and a payment arrangement agreed.

Where a tenant persistently fails to keep to their payment plan, Bield may consider taking legal action.

If you require support to manage your financial affairs you may wish to appoint a Power of Attorney or Guardian to oversee your financial matters.

 Further information on this can be found in **Section 3** of this Handbook.

Section 7

Repairs and Maintenance



This section tells you how we keep your home and development well maintained and what your responsibilities are.

Keeping things shipshape

The responsibility for looking after your home is shared between you and Bield. As your landlord we are legally required to carry out certain repairs and to maintain your home to a safe standard. We are responsible for maintaining different parts of your home both inside and out. Before a tenancy begins, we inspect the house and carry out work to ensure that the property is safe and secure, wind and watertight and ready to live in. After you move in, we will carry out work to keep the property in reasonable repair. We will also inspect your house from time to time as required. We provide an easy way for you to report a repair and we encourage you to give us your views so we can keep improving the service we provide.

This section tells you how we keep your home and development well maintained and what your responsibilities are. It also explains

- how to report a repair
- our different types of planned maintenance

Tenants Responsibilities

You are responsible for

- Anything that belongs to you
- Internal decoration within your home
- Replacing plugs/chains on sanitary ware
- Light bulbs, including fluorescent lighting
- Making good any damage caused by your appliances, e.g. if your washing machine floods
- Television equipment owned or rented by you including digital receivers
- Shower curtains

Our responsibilities

- **External fabric**
We will repair and maintain the common areas of your building. This includes the roof, external walls, gutters, down pipes, the main entrance doors and the garden areas.
- **Internal common areas**
We will maintain the common entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, passageways and other communal areas to make sure they are in good condition. This includes walls, ceilings, stairs, paintwork.
- **Internal fittings**
We will repair the fittings/installations we have provided. This includes kitchen and bathroom fittings, water and gas pipes, heating systems, electrical wiring (including hard wired smoke alarms), windows and doors.
- **Environmental repairs**
We will repair and maintain areas around the property and related communal areas including paths, boundary walls and fences, drains, bin stores, drying areas, parking areas and hard and soft landscaping.
- **Planned Cyclical**

We also carry out planned cyclical maintenance works, for example:

- Gas servicing
- Lift maintenance
- Specialist intruder, fire and warden call alarm testing

How to report repairs

Depending on the type of repair needed there are two ways you can report a problem:

- **Emergency/Urgent:** During office hours at your development you should report any repairs to your Local Manager who will then contact Property Services. If your development office is not open you should pull the cord on the speech unit and tell BR24 what the problem is. They will assess the situation and arrange for suitable help.
- **Routine repairs:** All routine repairs should be reported to your Local Manager who will contact Property Services. Your Local Manager will keep a record of your repair request in the development office.

For tenants living in non-staffed developments, all housing repairs can be reported directly to the office and we have supplied you with a fridge magnet with the telephone number you need to report a repair. When outside of office hours, either use the pull cord, if you have one, or phone BR24 on 0141 950 1025.

Different types of repairs

There are four areas in which we classify repairs although there may be times when works do not fall clearly into one of these categories. In these cases an inspection will take place prior to any works order being processed. The four repair areas are:

1. Emergency repairs

These are when you are put in danger by the fault or there could be serious damage to property, such as:

- your front door is not secure
- you have a burst water or heating pipe that cannot be reasonably contained or is flooding and causing excessive damage
- you have no heating throughout the whole house and you do not have access to temporary heating
- there is severe water penetration
- you have no cold water supply

We aim to respond to all emergency repairs within six hours of them being reported this could mean we make them safe and return to complete the repair within 24 hours.

2. Urgent repairs

These are repairs that if left unattended could cause danger to you or damage to the property. Examples of these include :

- over-flowing pipes
- leaking taps
- broken lighting.

We aim to complete all urgent repairs within three working days of them being reported.

3. Routine repairs

These are minor repairs and adjustments that do not pose a danger to you or damage to the property. Some examples of these are minor external or plasterwork repairs, or adjustments to doors or windows.

We aim to complete all routine repairs within 20 working days of them being reported.

4. Tenant's Right to Repair

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gives you, as the tenant, the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by your landlord within a given timescale. The Right to Repair Scheme covers certain repairs up to the value of £350. If we do not carry out the repair within the time limit set, you may be entitled to compensation. Timescales for a qualifying repair are 1, 3 and 7 working days and these repair times depend on the type of repair you require.

Some examples of repairs covered under the scheme include:

Repair	Timescale
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilets where there is no other toilet in the house	1 working day
Blocked sink, bath or drain	1 working day
Loss of electric power	1 working day
Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house	1 working day
Loss or partial loss of heating where no alternative heating is available	1 working day
Partial loss of electric supply	3 working days
Partial loss of water supply	3 working days
Mechanical exterior fan in kitchen or bathroom not working	7 working days

If you report a repair that falls within the categories detailed in the 'Tenant's Right to Repair' legislation, you have the legal right to have the repair carried out within a defined timescales. For example, if the repair was reported today, and it was a one day Right to Repair, the appointment would be booked for tomorrow.

 Your **Tenancy Agreement** provides you with more information on your, and Bield's, legal rights and responsibilities with regard to repairs and maintenance.

Helpful Tips

If you smell gas:

- turn gas off at the meter
- make sure all gas appliances and the burners on your stove are turned completely off
- put out any cigarettes
- open all doors and windows
- do not use matches or naked flames
- do not operate any electrical switches or appliances including door entry systems

Call National Gas Emergency Helpline free on 0800 111 999

Remember by law you must allow us access to your home so we can carry out our annual gas safety check. The check protects you, your family and your neighbours.

Access to carry out the repair

When you report a repair it's important you let us know when the contractor can visit. The more flexible you can be with access times, the greater chance your repair can be done more quickly.

Tenant Satisfaction

A random sample of tenants will receive a questionnaire after a repair is completed in their home. This tells us if you are satisfied with the works and with the contractors who completed it. If you are seriously dissatisfied with any repair, please contact us and we will be happy to visit you to resolve the matter. There is also a section at the bottom of your copy works order where you can register your level of satisfaction and return it to us.

Planned Maintenance

These are works that we schedule in advance so we can tell you when these will take place. We will always take into account safety, convenience and cost. The scheduled works will vary depending on the type of development but, in general, we have four types of planned maintenance, these are:

- **Service Contracts:** Our developments are fitted with a wide variety of emergency and safety systems such as fire alarms and speech units. All of these require service contracts to make sure that they are tested appropriately. The maintenance of gardens and window cleaning also fall under this category.
- **Cyclical Maintenance:** In order to maintain our high standards of appearance, your external and internal communal areas are redecorated at regular intervals. Replacing carpets in communal areas and inspecting electrical wiring also falls within this heading.
- **Plant and Equipment Replacement:** It is important that mechanical and electrical systems within your development operate efficiently and reliably. We have a programme in place to replace boilers, refurbish lifts and replace heating systems.
- **Major repairs:** We replace or repair the major components of your home, such as windows, kitchens and bathrooms. If planned major works are proposed for your development we will advise you of the proposals and how they will affect you. If the work is in your home we will, where possible, give you a choice of colours and finishes.

Equipment and Adaptations

Equipment is generally moveable items, e.g. bath seats and raised toilet seats and are normally supplied by Social Work or Health Services.

Adaptations are more permanent, e.g. installation of grab rails or level access showers. Our contractors generally carry out these works which are funded by local authorities.

If you require special equipment or adaptations in your home, please let us know. Every year local authorities allocate funds to each of their local areas. When funds are available we will carry out adaptations in priority order. Each applicant will be given a priority rating based on need as assessed by the Council's Occupational Therapy Department. Where there are identical assessments the earliest application will be done first. In exceptional circumstances we may also be able to fund some adaptations.

Telecare and Telehealth

Telecare and Telehealth facilities include things such as door exit monitors, heat sensors, GPS monitors and epilepsy monitors. If you are assessed as needing one of these, this is usually arranged through your Social Work or Occupational Therapists. Let us know if you would like further information on this.  See **Section 8** for more information.

Noticeboards

The noticeboard at your development contains a locked section, which displays statutory information such as gas certificates, and asbestos registers.

Please contact us for further information on any issues relating to repairs, maintenance or adaptations.

Section

8

Emergencies and Your Safety



This section provides more information on what you can do to stay safe in your home.

Across our developments we have a wide number of features such as emergency (master) keys, door entry systems, intercom and alarm services, as well as fire and smoke alarms, all of which, help to provide a safer environment for tenants, staff and visitors. This section provides more information on these different services and what you can do to stay safe in your home.

Our General Needs properties are a little different. They do not have the same features as our other developments such as the alarm service connected to BR24 but do have hardwired smoke alarms which are maintained by Bield.

Bield Response 24 (BR24)

With the exception of our General Needs properties all Bield homes are linked to Bield Response 24, our Alarm Receiving Centre. We also provide this service to other housing organisations, local authorities as well as many other older, and vulnerable, people throughout Scotland.

Bield Response 24 has a fully trained team of Emergency Call Advisors who provide a 24 hour monitoring service, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Every minute of every day. We give peace of mind and reassurance that help is available at all times. We have the facility of a Language Line Service to communicate with you in your preferred language.

As part of our monitoring process we maintain the security of your development by monitoring doors, lifts as well as intruder, smoke and fire alarms and will call contractors for emergency repairs when staff are not at the development.

Named Contacts and Key-Holders

If you move into a Bield home that is linked to BR24, we will ask you to provide details of anyone who has a key to your home that can attend should an emergency situation arise. We will also ask you about anyone else, that may not have a key, but whom you would like contacted. We will require their contact details such as telephone numbers. It is important to let us know if your contacts/keyholders change their telephone numbers or address to keep our records up to date.

Sure Call Reassurance Service

This service is available within our developments where there is a local staff service. You can receive an automated call on your home phone number, mobile or via a text message on specific days you have requested.

When you receive your call you just need to press number 1 on your phone if everything is OK and 2 if you need help. If you press 2 an alert is then sent to Bield Response 24 and staff at your development (when on duty), or a contact/key-holder will be asked to check on you to make sure you are ok.

This is a service you can choose to have and has the flexibility to call on days that suit as well as being able to be used on a temporary basis. You just need to let Bield Response 24 know of any time you will be away from home so that we do not make calls to you for the period of time that you are away and to reduce false calls.

This service may not be suitable for every tenant, but staff will chat with you to consider if it would meet your needs. This service is not available to general needs tenants.

How do I contact Bield Response 24?

In Bield properties linked to BR24, there is normally at least one speech unit/pull cord in your home. You may also have a pendant that you can use. If you require help, simply pull the alarm cord or press your pendant. The call handling system at Bield Response 24 allows our Emergency Call Advisors instant access to your details and they will know immediately who you are, where you are calling from and will have a note of your contacts/key-holders and any medical or specific requirements. This information will only ever be provided to the emergency services in the event of an emergency.

We appreciate some people may find it hard to communicate with us through the call handling system and so the option to use a Text Message Service is available. This can be used for alerting us if you require assistance. Let us know if you are interested in signing up to this service.

What if I have difficulty in getting to the pull cord?

A pendant can help you call for assistance if you have difficulty reaching for pull cords. Pendants are generally worn around the neck or on your wrist. If you feel a pendant would help you, please ask for further information on how to get one.

What if I cannot speak or they cannot hear me?

If you are unable to talk via the speech unit, our Emergency Call Advisors will try to contact you by telephone/mobile. If you cannot answer your phone we will treat your call as an emergency and will immediately organise for an appropriate assistance to make sure you are ok.

Who will come to help me?

Our Emergency Call Advisor will evaluate your situation and arrange for help. This will be discussed with you and we will call the appropriate services or contacts/keyholders. Your Local Manager or another Bield staff member may be called. Our Emergency Call Advisor may contact your doctor, NHS24, or a family member/friend if you have asked for this to be done.

What if I pull the cord by mistake?

Don't worry, if you press your pendant/cord by mistake. We get as many as 10% of calls to Bield Response 24 that are false calls. If it is in your home or a communal area, all you need to do is confirm with our Emergency Call Advisor that you are safe and well and that the call was made in error. They will then cancel the alarm call.

What do I do if there is a fault with the alarm equipment?

You can call Bield Response 24 on their office number 24/7 – 0141 950 1025 if you notice a fault with any of the alarm equipment in your home or at the development. If you are reporting a fault with your own personal alarm unit you will need to advise Bield Response 24 who your telephone supplier is, in case there is an issue with the telephone rather than the equipment.

How you can help Bield Response 24

- In emergency situations we often call on your contacts to provide assistance so it is important you tell us who else holds a key to your home and would be able to help.
- It is essential that all of your details such as doctor, contact numbers, key-holders and medical conditions are up to date so make sure you tell your Local Manager if any of your details change. You can also pass this directly to Bield Response 24. All of this information is used when we are responding to an emergency call for a wide range of situations.
- Encourage visitors to press the door entry call button directly to your home to allow you to give them quick, direct access (where this facility is available) or you can arrange to get an additional key for regular family visitors or carers. Let any of your regular visitors or carers know that Bield Response 24 will only give access during times when the main door is locked and when they have checked with you first. This is a safety precaution but does mean your visitors may experience a delay in getting access.
- If you are in any way unhappy with how Bield Response 24 has handled your call, please let us know as soon as possible. Like the emergency services, all calls to Bield Response 24 are recorded and monitored so that we can assess your call. Each call is retained for a year.
- We welcome all comments on how calls have been handled as they help us to improve the service we provide. We also carry out regular satisfaction surveys with our tenants. The Bield Annual Report and our performance targets are available for everyone to view on our website.

Securing Your Home

You can help with the safety and security of your home and the development in general.

1. Access

In most of our Retirement Housing, Retirement with Meals and Retirement Housing Plus developments there is a main door to the building which is on a time switch and locks automatically. Access to the development after the main door is locked is with your own key. Visitors can press the door entry call button directly to your home to allow you to give them quick, direct access (where this facility is available) or you can arrange to get an additional key for regular family visitors or carers.

For everyone's safety please do not let any strangers in through the main door. If you have any doubts you can pull the cord on your alarm unit or press your pendant for assistance.

2. Emergency Key

Tenants are entitled to privacy and security and we want to ensure that tenants have peace of mind that no-one will enter their home without their consent except in an emergency. Staff, therefore have clear procedures to follow to ensure that the Emergency Key, held in the secure key cabinet at the majority of our developments and which can be used to open the front door of your home, is used appropriately and is kept safe.

This key will only be used in an emergency such as flooding or sudden illness or accident. If a potential emergency arises e.g. if a neighbour raises concerns that you may be ill or need assistance, your Local Manager, will try and contact you using the warden call system, by telephoning you or by contacting your family first depending on the circumstances. If after following these steps there is still a concern then they may use the key to come into your home to check that all is well.

Before entering your home, the Local Manager will knock the door and will call out to you.

If the key is used and you are not at home, a form will be left in your house to let you know that the key was used to enter your home and the reason why.

The key cannot be used to let contractors into your home for routine maintenance or repairs if you are not at home. If family or home carers need to access your home and you have difficulty opening the door, you can, with our permission, install an individual key safe. In some cases the local authority might provide this for you. The code for accessing your key safe can be provided by you to your family and carers to allow them access. We will not hold the code for the key safe at BR24 ensuring that you have control over who has access to your key.

General Needs: for general needs tenants that are in a property that is adjacent to, or forms part of, a staff development, the Emergency Key can not be used to access your tenancy.

Fire Safety

We want you and your neighbours to be safe from fire in your home. There are a number of precautions that you can take to make your home and development safer from fire:

- Never leave your cooker unattended.
- Take special care when cooking, especially with chip pans, grills and toasters.
- Put out cigarettes properly and never smoke in bed.
- Douse your ashtray with water before emptying into the bin.
- Don't use refillable lighters – use disposable ones instead.
- Do not overload electrical sockets.
- Switch off non-essential electrical appliances.
- Never burn candles – in an emergency use a torch instead.
- Don't use aerosol sprays near smoke detectors.
- Never use or store paraffin.
- Never use the lift during a fire evacuation.
- Keep hallways and corridors clear and free from obstructions.
- Never wedge open doors in corridors or entrance doors in flats or communal facilities such as lounges, laundry rooms, hobby rooms etc.
- In the event of a fire, close doors behind you as this can help to slow down the spread of flames.

Please speak to your Local Manager if you would like to use candles as part of a religious practice.

Entrance doors to your home and doors to communal areas have an important role to play in preventing the spread of smoke and fire and keeping you safe. Keeping doors closed between communal areas such as lounges and corridors can prevent smoke and fire spreading and provide additional time for those trapped to be rescued.

Entrance doors to laundry rooms have an essential role to play too, due to the electrical nature of the laundry equipment and the increased risk that this poses. Please always keep these doors closed.

Please let your Local Manager know if you have mobility problems and have difficulties using the entrance door to your home. We are happy to provide advice and assistance to help you to overcome such difficulties.

Never prop or wedge fire doors open. This can be the difference between life and death.

Oxygen

When a tenant uses oxygen cylinders in their home, oxygen warning signs will be placed on the tenant's front door. This ensures that Fire and Rescue Services are aware should they be attending an emergency at the development.

What to do in the event of a fire

If you live in Retirement Housing, Retirement Housing with Meals or Retirement Housing Plus development and the fire alarm sounds:

- **If the fire is in your home** you should get out as quickly and safely as possible, ensuring the door is closed behind you.
 - **If you are in a communal area** such as the lounge, guest room or laundry when the fire alarm sounds you should leave the building by the nearest exit, closing doors behind you.
 - **If you are in your own flat**, but the fire is **not** in your flat, it is safer to stay put and await instructions from the emergency services. In general, Bield houses are built to keep heat and smoke out for a maximum of one hour.
- ✓ The Fire and Rescue Service are routinely called whenever the fire alarm goes off.
 - ✓ You must not return to your home or use the passenger lift until the all clear has been given.
 - ✓ If an evacuation is required this will be carried out by the emergency services.
 - ✓ We will advise you of the specific fire safety procedures for your development.

If you live in an Amenity or General Needs development, Fire Scotland advise:

“Get Out, Stay Out and dial 999”

For more information on fire safety advice you can visit Fire Scotland's website: www.firescotland.gov.uk

Personal Safety

Your safety is important to us. There are a number of general precautions that everybody can take to make their home and development safer:

- Never let anyone into your home unless you know them, especially if they do not have an appointment.
- If you have repairs scheduled you will be advised when the work is planned to take place. If repairs are scheduled in communal areas, your Local Manager will let you know in advance when the contractors are going to be on site. Don't let contractors into your home unless you are expecting them or if Bield Response 24 have organised the visit in response to an emergency situation.
- Always ask for identification from visitors – if you have any doubts let us know. You can do this by contacting Bield Response 24 by pulling an alarm cord, pressing your pendant or calling them.
- Do not tie up any alarm cords you have in your home. This may prevent you making a vital call for help. Bield Response 24 does not mind the cords being pulled accidentally; just tell them it's a false call and that you are OK.
- Never leave your house unlocked or leave the keys in the door.

To reduce the risk of falling:

- Do not over-furnish your home or leave clutter on the floor.
- Make sure electrical wires are not trailing.
- Look out for worn floor coverings or loose rugs that may cause you to trip.
- Make sure you have adequate lighting in your home particularly if you have to get up during the night.
- Make sure your bed or chair is not too low as these can make getting up a struggle.
- Let us know if specialist equipment is required such as handrails or bath chairs.

 **Section 7** also contains further information on this.

Section 9

Shared Facilities



The information in this section explains how you can use the facilities available within your development.

At many of our developments we have a communal lounge which we encourage you to use to meet up with friends, relatives and neighbours.

These lounges usually have a small kitchen with facilities to make hot and cold drinks and can be used for organised activities.

We also support wider community engagement within each development and local groups can use the lounge for meetings or events. Tenants are, of course, welcome to join in with many of these and any such events would only take place after prior consultation with the tenants in that development. Sometimes Bield will charge for the use of the facilities and any fee is used to offset service charges at the development.

If you want to use the lounge for a social event you can speak to your Local Manager who can advise you on the availability. After using any communal facility please ensure it is left clean and tidy and that all doors and windows are securely shut.

Amenity tenants do not have the same facilities available at their development however they may be able to attend activities taking place elsewhere within Bield. Speak to us if you would like to find out more about this.

In most cases **general needs tenants** who have a tenancy adjacent to, or part of a, staffed development have limited, or no, access to the development and communal areas and this is reflected in how rent and service charges are structured. These will be explained at the start of the tenancy.

Dining room/Meals service

Tenants in Retirement Housing with Meals and Retirement Housing Plus developments will have the opportunity of taking up a meals service which offers meals twice daily at lunch time and early evening. You will be asked to sign an agreement should you wish to take on this service. In this agreement you will find information on what meals are provided, the cost of the meals and how you can leave the service.

The Cook will speak to you to find out your likes and dislikes and a menu with choices will be planned around you and other tenants' tastes. The Cook will also incorporate good nutrition with cultural and religious considerations into the service.

The size of the dining room may restrict how many tenants can have their meal there, however we also offer the opportunity for tenants to have their meals within their home where this can be managed effectively within the local service provided.

We may also be able to offer occasional (ad-hoc) meals to tenants even if you are not contracted to receive the meals service.

The meals service is regulated by strict health and safety guidance overseen by the local Council's Environmental Health Service. Therefore only fully trained staff work in the kitchens.

If you require any further information on the meals service you can refer to your Tenancy Agreement or speak to your Local Manager. A leaflet explaining, in detail, the meals service is also available on request.

 There is more information on the meals charges in **Section 6** of this handbook.

Laundry

There is a laundry at many of our developments which is for tenants use only. In most cases the laundry can be used at any time, unless the noise causes disruption to others.

At some developments, opening times may be restricted and a rota co-ordinated by your Local Manager may be in place. Home Helps and Carers are generally given priority to use the laundry in the morning, as this is when they are usually employed.

Guest room

A guest room is available at most of our developments and can be used by relatives and friends when visiting you. Tenants can also holiday at a guest room at another development, letting you have a break at an affordable price in a similar environment to your own home.

Priority is given to relatives of tenants who are ill and require the guest room to visit or support a tenant. On some occasions, therefore, holiday bookings may have to change to accommodate these priorities.

If you wish to book a guest room we can provide information on where these are located and the process for booking. We also have a reciprocal arrangement with Trust and Hanover (Scotland) housing associations which allows Bield tenants to holiday at their guest rooms and vice versa.

There is a nightly charge for tenants using guest room facilities. You should also let Bield Response 24 know if you are staying in a guest room in case they need to contact you.

Guest rooms are currently not available for General Needs tenants.

Smoking in Bield properties

To comply with legislation and to maintain everyone's safety, smoking and e-smoking is prohibited in all communal areas, including the lounge and guest rooms. Tenants and their visitors are asked to refrain from smoking in the presence of any Bield staff or contractors when they are visiting you in your home.

Window cleaning

For the majority of tenants, Bield arranges for the outside of your windows to be cleaned, along with all windows in the communal areas. You are responsible for arranging for the inside of your windows to be cleaned. Some tenants in our Amenity or General needs housing may not receive a window cleaning service – we will advise on this before you move in.

Parking

Most of our developments have a limited number of parking spaces which can be used by tenants and visitors. There are not enough parking spaces available to provide you with a dedicated space and therefore parking spaces are filled on a first come, first served basis. Tenants and visitors are encouraged to show consideration to those tenants with mobility problems. If you are a registered disabled driver you can speak to us and we will try our best to ensure your needs are met. Due to space restrictions, it may only be possible to mark out one or two disabled bays, even where there are more qualifying tenants who own a car. Again use of these spaces would be on a first come, first served basis.

Scooters

Many tenants find using a mobility scooter benefits their everyday life. It is important for the safety of other tenants that scooters are used and stored properly. You must ask for permission before you purchase a scooter, so that appropriate storage and charging arrangements can be taken into account when considering your request. Due to space restrictions, in some developments, it is not always possible to provide an appropriate safe storage area.

To ensure the safety of other tenants, we do not permit the use of large DVLA registered, class three scooters inside our developments. They can however be parked externally, in the car park area, if there is space for scooter storage.

Gardens

Most of our developments have grounds and/or a garden area which we oversee the maintenance of. It may be possible for tenants to participate by planting and maintaining raised beds, pots and planters. If you are interested, please let us know.

Refuse disposal

There are usually external bin stores or a communal bin room at each development for domestic refuse.

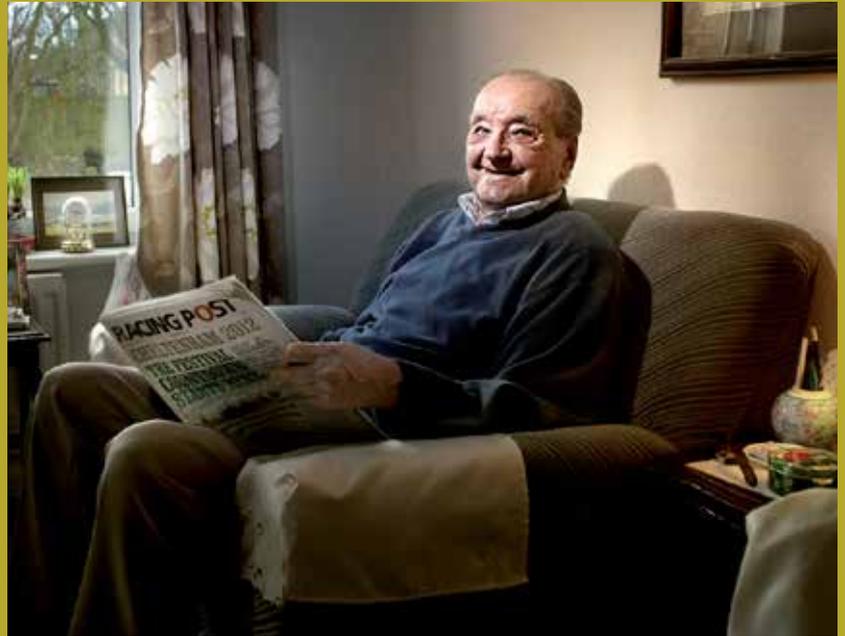
No other items should be stored in these areas. The council will normally arrange a special uplift if you need larger items removed (a charge may be applied). You can get further information on removal days and uplifts from your Local Manager or council.

Some General Needs tenants may be responsible for their own garden and taking out bins in accordance with council guidelines.

The council should be contacted if assistance is need for these tasks.

Section 10

Personal Care and Support - Retirement Housing Plus Developments



The term 'Personal Care and Support' covers a wide range of services available at our Retirement Housing Plus developments.

The term 'Personal Care and Support' covers a wide range of services available at our **Retirement Housing Plus** developments. This section gives you more information on what these are; the staff that provide them and how we ensure the services are always delivered to the highest possible standard.

Personal Care and Support Services

Personal Care and Support services are designed to help you maintain your independence, stay in your home longer and continue your life in the local community. The type of services provided varies to suit your needs and we will discuss this with you when you take up this service.

Staff will arrange to complete a Support Plan with you when you take up the service. They will discuss what support is available and help to design a plan that meets and fits with your lifestyle.

Personal Care and Support services are provided by your Local manager, Deputy and Care Assistants. Bield Response 24 is in place to deal with any emergency situations when staff are not on duty.

A range of carefully recruited and selected staff deliver our services. We undertake criminal record checks where appropriate and ensure staff are fully trained before they undertake their role.

Appropriate policies and management systems are in place to support staff and help ensure they provide quality services. Staff are kept up to date about changes in legislation and other matters that may affect their working practices, including how to manage risk and accident recording and reporting.

Annual appraisals and regular formal staff supervision help us to identify any training or support issues. You can be confident staff have the knowledge and skills to carry out their role.

Policies and procedures have been established for recording information and this is done in strict confidence, ensuring we comply with data protection legislation.

All financial transactions undertaken by Bield staff are carefully recorded for the protection of all parties concerned. All our records are available for inspection by regulatory bodies.

If there are any unavoidable changes to providing the service as in your Support Plan, e.g. staff illness, another member of staff will let you know as soon as possible. They will either, visit you at home, use the emergency call system or telephone you.

If you are expecting a service and the member of staff does not arrive and no-one has contacted you beforehand, you should let us know immediately by either using the emergency call system or phoning the development staff. We will then find out why and let you know as soon as possible.

Your care and support rights

The services we provide comply with the National Care Standards. We provide them in a way that ensures we maintain your dignity, privacy, choice and safety, respect who you are and encourage you to realise your potential. In doing so we will advance equality, eliminate discrimination and celebrate diversity.

Staff will help you to make choices about the services provided and make sure they meet your individual needs.

We will ensure that your right to privacy is maintained and all personal information will be kept secure. We will only ask you for information that is essential for us to carry out personal care and support services and will explain why we need the information and what we will do with it. Any information we have about you will be available on request.

Regulation and Monitoring

Bield's personal care and support services are registered with the Care Inspectorate. They undertake independent inspections at least once a year to ensure the National Care Standards are met.

Tenants can be involved in the inspection of services. Please speak with your Local Manager for more information on how to do this.

A copy of the Care Inspectorate's most recent inspection report on the service is displayed on your development noticeboard or can be obtained from your Local Manager as well as through any Bield office, our website or via the Care Inspectorate.

We monitor the quality of our services through regular discussion with tenants and staff. Our staff meet regularly to discuss service delivery standards and quality.

If you have a concern about the quality of the service you receive, please tell us. We can only improve or put things right if we know you are unhappy.

 Contact details for the Care Inspectorate can be found in **Section 15** of this handbook.

Charges for Personal Care and Support Services

Your local Council may charge for the support services we provide to you. We will give you details of the relevant Council officers so that you can discuss this with them. We will also give you details of the charges which the Council may expect you to pay.

This charge is reviewed annually and you will be notified of any changes to the charges made.

You have the right to have funding for your personal care and support services by the Council paid direct to you. This will allow you to source your own personal care and support services.

Please contact your Local Manager for more information about these direct payments.

 More information about personal care and support charges can be found in **Section 6** of this handbook

Ending the Personal Care and Support Service

You can end the personal care and support service with us at any time during your tenancy with us. Please contact your Local Manager if you wish to do this. The service will automatically stop when your tenancy terminates.

We may end your personal care and support service if we feel we are unable to continue to meet your needs. We will discuss this with you as part of your Support Plan review.

If we cannot meet your needs we will discuss other options with you before making any decisions. If we are unable to meet your needs we can help you if you decide to use a different service provider. As Council's pay a contribution direct to Bield for providing this service we will not end your service without first discussing it with them.

When your personal care and support service ends, your records will be sent to our area offices. Here they will be actioned in accordance with our data protection policy. You can obtain more information on this by contacting any of our offices. If required we can pass your up to date records on to your new support service provider.

Section 11 Getting Involved



This section gives you more information on how your voice can be heard in Bield.

At Bield we believe our tenants are at the heart of our organisation. Your feedback and input is vital to how we deliver our services, as well as helping us to develop and shape our future.

We appreciate some tenants are able to get more involved than others but every contribution, no matter the size, is welcome. This section gives you more information on how your voice can be heard in Bield.

Getting involved – what’s in it for me?

- **Making a difference:** knowing that your views are valued and you actually have a strong influence over the services you receive from Bield.
- **Learning new skills:** to help you in your tenant representative role.
- **Having fun:** although you are doing an important job it’s not all serious!
- **Meeting other people:** learning from other people’s experiences and making new friends.

There are many ways you can participate within Bield, ranging from an informal approach like talking to your Local Manager, right through to having a role on our Board of Management. We will do everything we can to help you get involved.

These participation options are continually developing and below are just some of the ways you can join in.

Low level participation

- **Liaising with staff at your development:** your Local Manager is your first point of contact for advice and information. They will listen to your thoughts and ideas and pass these on to the relevant staff where appropriate. Staff also visit your development on a regular basis and will be pleased to chat to you about issues or suggestions you have.

- **Membership of Bield:** You can, at any time, decide to become a member for a nominal fee of £1. Being a member gives you the opportunity to attend and vote at our Annual General Meetings and to stand for election to the Board.

Medium level participation

- **“Let’s Meet”:** we will meet with all tenants at your development at least once a year. This is an opportunity for you to discuss any issues relating to your development. Additional meetings may be held to consult on any planned improvements to your home or the development in general. You and your neighbours can request a meeting with a member of staff if you have issues that you would like to discuss too.
- **Interested Parties List (IPL):** This is an opportunity for tenants to become more involved without feeling obligated to come to meetings. If you sign up to being an IPL member Bield will contact you from time to time via post, phone, email or in person to get your opinion on important issues affecting the organisation.
- **Surveys:** Bield carry out tenant satisfaction surveys at new build properties or where major work has taken place either in your home or in the development itself. We also arrange to have a national Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out at least every three years. This survey gathers tenant opinion on the accommodation and services Bield provides.
- **Registered Tenant Organisations:** Tenants have the opportunity to form a Registered Tenant Organisation at their development. This is a more formal group which can be consulted on wider issues within Bield.

High level participation

- **Partnership Forum:** Bield has a national Partnership Forum, which is made up of tenants, staff and Board members. The Partnership Forum meets four times a year to discuss a wide range of issues including standards of service and the budget for the year ahead. Partnership Forum members also have the opportunity to attend ad-hoc focus group meetings as well as external tenant conferences. Tenants are elected onto the Forum by other tenants and serve a minimum five year term.
- **Bield Improvement Group (BIG):** BIG was formed in 2016 and comprises of a group of around 12 tenants, set up to conduct detailed scrutiny and reviews of Bield’s landlord services and to make recommendations as to how services to our customers can be improved. This is an independent group who determine which service area to review and what methods to use such as job shadowing, research, tenant and staff surveys and mystery shopping. Each area of review can last several months with the group meeting every four weeks or so. They are fully supported by Bield.
- **Role on Board of Management:** There are two places on the Board for tenants on the Partnership Forum. This allows tenants the chance to contribute to every level of the decision making process within Bield.

Literature

- **Tenant Engagement Leaflet:** Provides more information about ways to get involved and who to contact if you are interested.

- **Noticeboards:** Most staffed developments have a noticeboard near the entrance that provides tenants with information on forthcoming events and activities, as well as ways to get involved.
- **Newsletter:** The Bield Bulletin is produced three times a year and it provides news and information on what is happening throughout the organisation. Tenants can contribute to this through articles or photographs. A copy of each edition is sent out to every tenant.
- **Other information:** From time to time we will also send you other information such as our Annual Performance Report.

To ensure anyone can be involved we will:

- Provide information in your preferred format such as large print or Braille.
- Ensure buildings and meeting rooms are accessible, including an induction loop.
- Provide interpretation and translation on request, including British Sign Language.
- Cover reasonable expenses, including transport to and from meetings and associated events.
- Consider religious holidays and practices when organising meetings and events.

If you would like to get involved or have an idea for how we can develop in the future please let us know. If you are interested in joining the Partnership Forum or BIG we will be happy to provide you with further information. Details of vacancies on either group are advertised in the Bield Bulletin.

Section

12

Compliments, Comments or Complaints



We always welcome compliments, suggestions and comments on how we can improve our services.

Compliments and comments

We always welcome compliments, suggestions and comments on how we can improve our services. We would like to hear from you if you are happy with the service you have received so that we can share this with others.

If you've got a complaint we want to hear it as it lets us know how we are performing and what we can do better. We understand that you may not wish to make a formal complaint and we are happy for you to contact us informally to hear your views.

Complaints

At Bield we believe you should always expect first-class customer services. And if we make a mistake, we want to learn from it.

So if something goes wrong, or if you're not happy with our services, please tell us.

The kinds of things you can complain about are delays in responding to an enquiry, dissatisfaction with a policy or treatment by a member of staff. There are some things we wouldn't deal with through our complaints procedure, such as a routine first time request for service or compensation.

Anyone can make a complaint and it can be done either in person, by phone, in writing, email or via our complaints form. Normally a complaint should be made within six months of the event taking place although in exceptional circumstances, we may be able to consider a complaint after this time limit.

What to expect when you make a complaint

There are two stages to our complaints procedure: stage 1 is **frontline resolution** and stage 2 is **investigation**.

Stage 1: Frontline Resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within five working days if we can. If you aren't happy with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at stage 2.

Stage 2: Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at stage 1. We may also look at some complaints immediately at this stage if it is clear they are complex or need detailed investigation. We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days** and we will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **twenty working days** unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time. Where this is the case we will discuss this with you.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

Once you've had our final decision on your complaint, if you're still not satisfied you can ask the SPSO to consider it. We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision. This is a free, impartial service although the Ombudsman usually only investigates after you've followed our complaints procedure first. A complaint must normally be submitted to the Ombudsman within twelve months of the grounds for complaint arising.

 Contact details for the Ombudsman can be found in **Section 15**.

Care Inspectorate

If your complaint relates to a care and support service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to the Care Inspectorate or us.

Find out more about their complaints procedure via their website at: www.careinspectorate.com

The Local Council

Where we provide care and support services on behalf of the local Council, such as Social Work, you can complain to them at any stage. The Local Manager at the development or the Manager of the project delivering the service can provide contact details for you.

Reporting a Significant Performance Failure to the Scottish Housing Regulator

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about Significant Performance Failures.

This is defined by the SHR as something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved. It applies to a systematic problem that does, or could, affect all of a landlord's tenants. If you are affected by a problem like this, you should report it to us first. If we then don't resolve it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

This doesn't cover a complaint between an individual tenant and a landlord. For this reason, Significant Performance Failures can't be dealt with through our complaints handling procedure.

Ask us for more information, or find out more on the SHR website:
www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk. You can also phone them on 0141 271 3810

Need help making a complaint?

There is a whole range of independent advice available to you before you decide whether to complain with us formally. The independent sources you can contact include a:

- Law Centre
- Solicitor
- Housing Advice Centre
- Citizens Advice Scotland
- Equality and Advisory Support Service

 Please refer to **Section 15** for further details on these. Our “**Making a complaint**” leaflet is also available on request – you can pick up one either at your development or from one of our offices. You can also find details on our website.

Section 13 Moving Home



This section gives you more information about the options that are available to you and how to apply.

Thinking of Moving?

If you are thinking of moving to another home within your development, to another Bield development or elsewhere, we will do everything we can to help you with this process.

This section gives you more information about the options that are available to you and how to apply.

Transferring to another Bield development or to Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association or Trust Housing Association

You can apply at any time for a transfer to another Bield house in your own development or elsewhere, or to another property owned by Hanover (Scotland) or Trust Housing Associations.

Our application process is used by all new tenants as well as current tenants who wish to transfer to another property. We use a common housing register known as Home For You which allows you to apply for any housing managed by Bield, Trust or Hanover (Scotland) Housing Associations.

We can help you complete a Home For You form and give you further advice. All transfers are made in accordance with our Joint Allocation Policy with Trust and Hanover. A copy of this is available on request.

Moving to a different landlord

If you are interested in moving to a different landlord such as a local authority or community-based housing association, you will need to contact them to find out about their application process. They will also be able to advise you about your housing options and the prospects of being rehoused by them. Most landlords will also offer assistance to complete an application form and may visit you in your own home.

Exchanging homes with another tenant

If you are interested in mutually exchanging your home with another tenant, we can give you advice and assistance with this process. Bield tenants can apply to swap houses with another Bield tenant or with a tenant of another landlord. Both parties will need to have lived at their current address for at least 12 months prior to applying and will need to complete a Home for You application form. If the other party is not a Bield tenant, forms will also need to be completed for the other landlord.

There are some rules around exchanges that affect who you can swap with. If you live in a specially designed or adapted accommodation, only someone who meets the criteria for this type of housing can swap with you.

Please ask us if you are thinking of swapping homes – we can provide you with advice and assistance on how to do this and the steps you will need to take. Please remember that you must not exchange houses until you have received written permission from Bield. If you are transferring or exchanging your home, Bield will help you agree a date to exchange. You will still need to complete a termination notice for your current tenancy before you leave and follow our procedures that relate to ending a tenancy.

 Please see **Section 14** for more information about terminating your tenancy.

Section 14

Ending your Tenancy



This section provides you with information about ending your tenancy with Bield.

If you wish to end your tenancy you will need to give us 28 days' notice. This can be done by writing or emailing us, or by completing a Tenancy Termination Notice – copies are available from your Local Manager or any Bield office.

If you have a joint tenancy, it is essential that both parties sign. Your tenancy will expire at the end of your notice period or on the day that the keys are handed in if this is after the end of the notice period.

Rent and Service charges will continue to apply until the tenancy is ended. In some cases Housing Benefit may not cover the notice period. Once the house is cleared and the keys returned to us, we will write to you or the person managing your affairs, to let you know the balance on your rent account and to arrange any credit that may be due.

If you receive Housing Benefit paid directly to Bield on your behalf, we will write to them first to find out if they have paid the correct amount before we can let you know the situation with your rent. It can take several months for them to provide us with this information; however we will write to you as soon as we get a response.

If a tenant dies

We understand that ending a tenancy after a bereavement is a difficult time for families and friends and our staff will provide advice and assistance as sensitively as possible. There is some practical information that we provided in our **Ending a Tenancy** leaflet that we hope will guide families and friends through the process.

When a tenant dies and there is no-one who qualifies to succeed to the tenancy (see Succession later in this section), the tenancy is terminated on the date of death. The person managing the tenant's affairs should contact the Local Manager or Bield office to let them know they will be the contact person and a termination notice should be completed.

In terms of Housing Benefit, this will stop immediately. Bield continues to make a charge until the keys are returned. This is because the property cannot be let to anyone else during this time. It also means that we can be flexible when we agree a period of time for the house to be cleared which is very important to many families.

Any charges will be deducted from any credit on the tenant's rent account or will be recovered from the tenant's estate if there is one. If there are no funds in the tenant's estate, we will write off any outstanding balance.

Clearing the property and returning the keys

Before returning the keys, arrangements should be made to carry out the following:

- Remove all carpets and furniture.
- Clean the house.
- Contact the gas and electricity suppliers if the tenant was responsible for paying the supplier and provide meter readings.
- Contact the telephone company.
- Collect and return all keys from key-holders.
- Contact the Social Work Department to collect any specialist equipment.

A full list of the required tasks can be found in the Ending a Tenancy leaflet. Your Local Manager will be able to give you the Council's number to arrange for the uplift of furniture and refrigerators and will let you know where these can be stored pending an uplift.

When you tell us that the tenancy is ending we will discuss and agree with you the most convenient way to return the keys to us.

Alterations

Where permission to alter your property has been granted during your tenancy, the letter outlining the permission and detailing any conditions attached will explain if there are any actions that are required when you terminate your tenancy. Should you require a copy, please let us know.

Right to Compensation for Improvements

Permitted work carried out by you in your property e.g. a new kitchen, may fall under the "Right to Compensation for Improvements" provided for in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and you may be eligible for a payment from Bield as a result. Please contact us if you think you may be eligible. Further information can also be found on the Scottish Government's website at www.gov.scot/Publications/2002/09/15486/11219

Succession to tenancy

When a tenant dies there may be somebody eligible to succeed to the tenancy. Most often this is a husband, wife, co-habitee, joint tenant, family member or live-in carer. These people are grouped into three levels of priority. If more than one person could qualify to take over the tenancy, we use the levels of priority to help us decide who should take it over.

If a property has been designed or adapted for someone with special needs, this may have a bearing on who can succeed to the tenancy. There is a minimum qualifying period for the person who wishes to succeed to the tenancy when they will have had to have been resident at the

tenancy as their main home. You must have told us that the person moved in with you at the time they did so.

If you would like more information or advice about succession to tenancy and how this may affect you, please contact us.

Section

15

Useful Contacts

Scottish Housing Regulator

Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 OHF
0141 242 5642
www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

The Scottish Housing Regulator is the independent regulator of Registered Social Landlords and local authority housing services in Scotland.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS
0800 377 7330
www.spsso.org.uk

The SPSO handle complaints about public services in Scotland.

The Care Inspectorate

11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY
0345 600 9527
www.scswis.com

The Care Inspectorate is an independent scrutiny body for Care and Support Services.

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HE
0131 313 8777
www.mwcscot.org.uk

The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland has been set up to provide support and help for those with mental illness, learning disabilities and related conditions.

NHS24

111 (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
 0800 22 44 88 (for general information about
 pharmacies, doctors etc.)
 0141 337 4501 (for comments or complaints re:
 NHS24)
www.nhs24.scot

NHS24 is a national service offering health
 advice and assistance.

Age Scotland

Causewayside House
 160 Causewayside
 Edinburgh
 EH9 1PR
 0333 32 32 400 (General Enquiries)
 0800 12 44 222 (Helpline)
www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland

Age Scotland is a charity that challenges age
 and discrimination for older people in Scotland.

Equality Advisory Support Service

FREEPOST
 EASS Helpline
 FPN6521
 0808 800 0082
www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

The Equality Advisory Support Service
 provides information, advice and support on
 discrimination and human rights issues to
 individuals.

Citizens Advice Scotland

0808 800 9060
www.cas.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland is a national body
 set up to provide confidential advice and
 information whoever you are and whatever the
 problem.

Royal National Institute of Blind People

0303 123 9999
www.rnib.org.uk

The Royal National Institute of Blind people
 is a charity which offers help and support for
 blind and partially sighted people.

Action on Hearing Loss Scotland

0141 341 5330
 Textphone 0141 341 5350
www.actionhearingloss.org.uk

A charity which offers information, support and
 advice to people with hearing loss.

Stonewall Scotland

Mansfield Traquair Centre
 15 Mansfield Place
 Edinburgh
 EH3 6BB
 0131 473 8019
www.stonewallscotland.org.uk

Stonewall Scotland provides information on
 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality.

Shelter Scotland

0808 800 4444 – free helpline
www.scotland.shelter.org.uk/

Shelter provide emergency and urgent housing
 advice.

Office Contact Information

Registered Office
79 Hopetoun Street
Edinburgh
EH7 4QF

Craighall Business Park
7 Eagle Street
Glasgow
G4 9XA

Tel: 0131 273 4000
Fax: 0131 557 6327

Tel: 0141 270 7200
Fax: 0141 331 2686

1 Bonnethill Gardens
1 Caldrum Terrace
Dundee
DD3 7HB

Bield Response 24
18 Castlebank Gardens
Glasgow
G13 2BG

Tel: 01382 228 911
Fax: 01382 224 088

Tel: 0141 950 1025
Fax: 0141 959 0788

www.bield.co.uk

info@bield.co.uk

Bield Housing & Care · Scottish Charity SC006878