

# BIELD HOUSING & CARE

ANNUAL REVIEW  
2022/23



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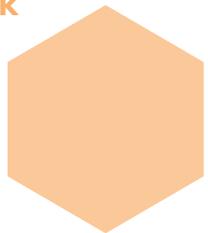
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# Introduction

**Welcome to Bield Housing & Care's 2022/23 Annual Review. This tells you all about our performance over the last year and how our services are enabling our customers to live their best lives, at home, surrounded by supportive communities, as well as some of our plans for the future.**

**We would love to hear your feedback on our 2022/23 Annual Review. Please get in touch by emailing [communications@bield.co.uk](mailto:communications@bield.co.uk) to let us know your thoughts!**



# A message from the Chair

## **I am very pleased to introduce Bield's Annual Review for 2022/23.**

The past year has brought both significant challenges and opportunities. We know that rising prices and increasing fuel costs have had a big impact on everyone (and continue to do so) and Bield have had to step up to meet these challenges at considerable pace and scale. Our teams are working hard to help our tenants and customers every single day, making a difference despite the often difficult circumstances.

This year we introduced Bield's new Corporate Strategy and Business Plan for the next five years. It is deliberately ambitious and signals the beginning of a period of significant change for the organisation. We have also agreed our Strategic Asset Management Plan which clearly signals the growth mindset the organisation has. Guided at all times by our values, and building on our existing skills and experience, the strategy will enable us to play a leading role in meeting the housing needs of current and future generations.

I wish to commend the Executive Management Team (EMT) for their hard work and leadership during a fruitful year which has included the delivery of the new Corporate Strategy as well as a new Strategic Asset Management Strategy. We have been extremely fortunate to strengthen the EMT this year with the appointment of Debbie Collins, Bield's first ever Chief Operating Officer, and their extensive combined experience will undoubtedly help us to achieve our new 10 year vision of leading, setting and delivering the global standard for ageing at home.

The Board were also delighted to welcome four new members earlier this year; Angus MacRae, Brian McLaren, Dougie Peters and Cath Strachan. Thanks to their variety of skills and expertise, they have contributed constructively and positively to the work of the Board from the outset.

I will be stepping down as Chair of Bield at the end of September 2023 having come to the end of my tenure but will continue to support the organisation in all that it does. I

would personally like to pay tribute to all of the staff and volunteers, as well as my colleagues on the Board, who I have had the pleasure of working with over the years.

We have faced many challenges in recent times, yet Bield is now stronger and working hard to meet the needs and expectations of tenants and customers by providing high quality, highly responsive and personalised services. There is no more important task and I wish you all the very best for the future; it's an exciting time for Bield.

**Professor Lesley Holdsworth OBE**



# Chief Executive's overview

There is much to admire in Bield's response to the last 12 months. The aftermath of the pandemic, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the ongoing cost of living crisis have all been challenging for our teams, with the impact felt across the entire organisation. I believe that our biggest success is not what has been done, but rather how it has been done – through collaboration, dedication and resilience.

We understand that rising costs are a source of worry for many. We have responded to this as best we can, taking on new functions and responsibilities, and we will continue to do everything possible to support and reassure our tenants. Since the beginning of the year, our Income Advice Officers have helped to secure over £90,000 in lump sums for our tenants whilst a further 514 tenants have been supported by our new Energy Advocacy service.

No one knows what the future will bring and, whilst we must be realistic about the risks we face and the challenges we are up against, we are excited about the work we have planned.

We are currently in a period of significant transformation with

the introduction of our new five year strategy 'Setting the Pace: Our People, Our Homes, Our Communities'. This will act as our blueprint for how we will continue to improve customer experience and satisfaction, invest more in existing homes as well as new builds and explore how evolving technology can support us.

Our 'Inspire – Phase 2' project highlighted the positive impact that technology enabled care can have on peoples' lives and was the winner of the Transformation category at the 2023 ITEC Awards. By utilising proactive telecare, the project led to a 75% decrease in ambulance calls and a 68% reduction in A&E visits from our customers as a direct result of early intervention and preventative support methods.

In the year ahead, we will continue to expand our digital offer with the introduction of a new customer portal, My Bield, which will give tenants improved access to our services online. They will be able to use the portal at a time that suits them for a variety of purposes including making rent payments and accessing repair information.

We will also continue our work on the TAPPI project by improving digital skills and using technology to enhance personalisation and independence for those using our services. Co-production will be a key feature and we will work closely with our tenants and other customers to improve the outcomes that matter most to them; empowering them to ensure they have the correct support in place to live the lives they want.



I wish to thank all of our Board members for their help and support this year and, in particular, Professor Lesley Holdsworth, whose ideas, energy and enthusiasm have been an asset to the Board. Thank you for your service.

Finally, I want to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their part in the past year's successes, none of which would be possible without their hard work, collaboration and dedication. To rise to meet so many new challenges at a time of significant organisational change is a credit to their professionalism and commitment to putting the needs of our tenants and customers first.

**Dr Lynne Douglas**

# Governance

We were delighted to welcome four new Board members in 2022/23, all of whom will be formally elected at our 2023 AGM.



## Angus MacRae

Angus has 37 years' experience in commercial property law and 23 years' experience running an owner-managed business (both through periods of exceptional growth and recession) which has given him a balanced view of business life.



## Brian McLaren

Brian has worked in a variety of roles in the banking sector, most recently as a Director of Group Change at SSE. Brian brings HR and transformation experience from his career and feels now is the right time to give back.



## Dougie Peters

Dougie has over thirty years of financial and property market experience and is now looking to take his first step as a non-executive director. Dougie has been a Managing Director and Finance Director so has strategic, leadership and mentoring experience in addition to his financial skills.



## Cath Strachan

Cath works with a variety of clients as a Business Growth Coach, focusing on improving their mindset, leadership skills and marketing plans. Cath also works with staff leadership teams on their personal development and runs her own Business Academies. Cath is passionate about inclusion and diversity.

# Tenant Engagement

Tenant engagement and participation have remained essential aspects within Bield, despite resource constraints during the past financial year. Nevertheless, significant progress has been made in achieving the objectives outlined in our Customer Engagement Strategy ('Engage'), and we are pleased to have maintained a dedicated group of actively-engaged tenants.

This year we:

**Appointed a new Tenant Engagement and Participation Lead**

**Implemented a powerful new CRM system**

**Welcomed a new Customer Standards Administrator whose valuable expertise strengthens our team**

**Said goodbye to a colleague after 16 years of dedicated service**

**Published information about activities and tenant engagement on our website**

**Incorporated a range of graphic assets for multiple publications and platforms which contribute to the visual recognition and branding of our tenant groups**

**Continued to place tenant views at the forefront of our decision-making processes to ensure their perspectives shape our organisation**

Going forward, collaboration between our Head of Policy and Customer Standards, our Tenant Engagement and Participation Lead and our actively-engaged tenants will be instrumental in reviewing and updating our 'Engage' strategy. The revision will align the strategy with the updated objectives outlined in Bield's new Corporate Strategy, with a strong emphasis on co-production and digital inclusion. By working together, we aim to ensure that 'Engage' reflects our commitment to meaningful tenant engagement and participation and incorporates innovative approaches and digital platforms to enhance the involvement of our tenants in shaping our services and decision-making processes.



# Customer Satisfaction Survey Results: Annual Report Highlights

As part of our commitment to ensuring the highest standards of service, and to comply with the Scottish Housing Regulator requirements, Bield conducts a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey every three years. The invaluable feedback received from our tenants enables us to assess our performance and make improvements to better serve our communities. In the most recent survey, we received an encouraging response rate of 24%, with 1,015 tenants sharing their thoughts and experiences.



## SERVICE SATISFACTION

**80% were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of service they receive.**

A significant majority of our tenants expressed satisfaction with the overall service provided by Bield. This outcome reinforces our commitment to delivering exceptional services and reflects the dedication of our team to meet the diverse needs of our residents.

**78% acknowledged that we are very or fairly good at keeping them informed about our services.**

Communication is crucial to fostering a strong relationship with our tenants. This result motivates us to continue our efforts in providing transparent and timely information to our residents, ensuring they are always aware of the latest updates and offerings.

## TENANT PARTICIPATION

**57% were satisfied with opportunities for participation.**

We value the input and engagement of our tenants in decision-making processes. While we are pleased with the positive response, we recognise the potential for further improvement. Moving forward, we will re-double our efforts to enhance tenant engagement and encourage active involvement in shaping our communities, through the work of our new Tenant Engagement and Participation Lead, Alan Morris.

## VALUE FOR MONEY

Financial wellbeing is of utmost importance to our tenants. This positive feedback validates our commitment to providing affordable and high-quality housing options, ensuring that our residents receive the best possible return on their investment.

**76% believe that the rent and service charge for their property represented very good or fairly good value for money.**

## REPAIR SERVICES

**82% of tenants who had repairs in the previous 12 months were very or fairly satisfied with the repair service provided.**

Maintenance and repairs are essential aspects of our service. Our dedicated team works tirelessly to ensure prompt and effective resolution of issues, and this feedback inspires us to continue delivering excellence in this area.



The results of our customer satisfaction survey affirm our commitment to excellence and the positive impact of our efforts on the lives of our tenants. We are grateful for the valuable feedback received, which enables us to continually improve our services and enhance the overall living experience for our communities. As we move forward, we pledge to use this valuable input to shape our services, ensuring Bield remains a trusted and preferred housing provider for years to come.

# Customer Experience

## HOUSING

During the year, our Housing Teams focused on two key areas:

### ALLOCATIONS

A lot of effort was made to test new ideas on how to allocate properties which had been empty for a long period of time. This included working with external companies to market these and developing new relationships with Local Authorities and other agencies. There has been a positive outcome at a number of developments where we not only allocated long-term empty properties but generated a waiting list for future vacancies. We will always have a higher turnover rate than most other social housing providers so it's vitally important that we keep the periods when properties are empty as short as possible. In 2022/23 we:



**Relet over 560 properties**

**Sustained over 80% of tenancies that started the previous year**



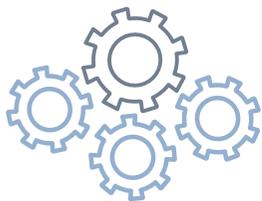
We also decided to change the way allocations are managed and a dedicated Allocations and Voids Manager was appointed at the end of the year. Sharon Hossack (formerly a Bield Housing Team Leader) will provide a clearer focus on this important area as we also look forward to the introduction of our new Allocations Policy and system which will be in place by April 2024.

### RE-ENGAGEMENT WITH TENANTS

Now that all of the coronavirus restrictions on meetings have been removed, we have started to re-engage with our tenants face-to-face. This includes annual meetings at developments as well as drop-in surgeries with Area Managers, Property Management Officers and our Income Advice Officers. Further engagement opportunities will be carried out in 23/24 to ensure that we continue to listen to feedback from tenants on the key issues that concern them.



**Changes to the operational arrangements within our Housing Team took place. We now have a single Head of Service supported by three Managers covering East, West and Allocations & Voids.**



**Our new housing management system went live in November 2022 following significant testing and changes of processes developed.**



**Area Managers have undertaken training on legal aspects of their roles including dealing with anti-social behaviour and tenancy law.**



## OWNER SERVICES

The Board made the difficult decision to withdraw from providing factoring services at developments which were wholly-owned. Owners were advised of this in November and we offered assistance in finding new factors. By March 2023, a number of developments had already transferred to their new factor with others completed by the end of June 2023. Our approach was to create a dedicated contact for owners and the new factors which worked very well and enabled as smooth a transition as possible. We aim to continue to provide management services for developments where we retain an interest in properties.

## NEW OFFICERS SCORE BIG WIN FOR TENANTS

Bield tenants are now seeing major improvements in their financial stability, thanks to the diligent efforts of our newest team members, Rebecca Summers and Scott Alexander.

Scott and Rebecca joined the Bield family at the end of 2022. Since their arrival, they have devoted their time and skills to ensure our tenants are fully aware of their entitlements and can successfully apply for various benefits, grants and, if necessary, foodbank access. The benefits, ranging from £5 to a remarkable £182 per week, serve to empower our tenants, with the financial boost addressing their individual needs and significantly enhancing their quality of life. Since they began talking to tenants in January, Scott and Rebecca have helped to secure over **£90,000** in lump sums. That's not all - they've also facilitated ongoing

annual payments amounting to roughly **£350,000**.

These pivotal roles were introduced by Bield last year as we recognised the impending cost of living crisis and the mounting inflationary pressure on our tenants. Since then, Scott and Rebecca have worked relentlessly to provide much-needed assistance to our tenants. Their dedication and hard work highlights Bield's commitment to continually improve and provide the best possible living conditions for our tenants. We look forward to sharing more successes like these in the future. Tenants requiring advice or support can contact Scott and Rebecca by emailing: [incomeadvice@bield.co.uk](mailto:incomeadvice@bield.co.uk)



## SUPPORTED LIVING

It's been a busy year for Bield's supported living services, as we continue to provide our customers with the care and support they need to live independently. We know that everyone is unique and we provide personalised support to ensure that preferences are met in a flexible way that puts the individual at the centre of their care. Our staff are skilled, compassionate, respectful and deliver the best possible care to those they provide a service to.

### RETIREMENT PLUS

In 2022/23 we:  
**Supported 199 tenants**  
**Delivered 144,950 hours of support**

### DAY CARE SERVICE

In 2022/23 we:  
**Supported 91 customers**

### BIELD AT HOME

In 2022/23 we:  
**Supported 41 customers**  
**Delivered 10,104 hours of care**

In the last year, three of our five registered services had their routine inspections by The Care Inspectorate. These went very well with all services receiving a grading of "very good" in relation to how we support wellbeing. This means we demonstrate major strengths in terms of supporting positive outcomes for the people we serve.

Feedback from The Care Inspectorate included:

- **Staff interacted warmly and respectfully**
- **Staff followed infection, protection and control guidance well**
- **Staff were well trained and supported**
- **Personal plans were thorough and up-to-date**
- **People's choices, decisions and independence were well-supported and encouraged**
- **Staff were enthusiastic and motivated to provide high standards of support**

## MEALS SERVICE

Our meals service has continued to develop over the last year.

Approx. **500 people** per week receive the meals service

We produce around **1000 meals per day**

This year we have really focused on consistency and quality across our meals service. The aim was to ensure all our meals are nutritionally-balanced and we can identify allergens effectively. The meals service works with individuals to ensure that the meals meet their dietary requirements. Our staff also liaise with individual tenants' health care professionals to ensure all medical needs are taken into consideration when developing

a menu plan for them.

This service is continually developing and we welcome input from those using the service. We aim to have a service that meets tenant needs whilst offering balanced nutritional meals that support them to stay as independent as possible for as long as possible.



# Bield Response 24 (BR24)

BR24, Bield's accredited and fully digital alarm receiving centre, has had a remarkably positive year. Despite the challenges encountered in the housing, health and social care sectors, including the aftermath of the global coronavirus pandemic, BR24 demonstrated resilience and excelled in fulfilling its mission to deliver top-tier emergency alarm response services. These services play a crucial role in supporting individuals to maintain their independence and continue living in their own homes for as long as possible.



It is no small feat to manage such a high volume of calls, and it is a testament to the dedication and expertise of our team that we were able to address these critical situations effectively and efficiently whilst providing reassurance and support to those in need during their most vulnerable moments.

This year BR24:

- » Responded to **97.9% of alarm calls within 60 seconds** (exceeding our TSA regulatory standards target)
- » Answered **14,610 fire alarm calls**
- » Responded to **99.1% of fire alarm calls within 30 seconds**
- » Made **3,378 ambulance callouts**
- » Made **1,776 fire and rescue response requests**
- » Made **9,856 calls to NHS24 for additional support**

These numbers emphasise the vital role BR24 plays in supporting the overall emergency response ecosystem and the valuable assistance we provide to our communities.

The unwavering dedication, perseverance and professionalism of the BR24 team has made a significant difference in the lives of our tenants and customers throughout 2022/23. Despite facing tremendous call volumes and the pressures inherent in our sector, BR24 has risen to the occasion time and time again, providing unwavering support when it matters most.

## PROACTIVE TELECARE: INSPIRE – PHASE 2

This year, our innovative 'Inspire – Phase 2' project revealed astonishing results about the impact of proactive intervention for older adults and was the winner of the Transformation Award at the industry-leading ITEC (International Technology Enabled Care) Conference.

The purpose of the project was to enhance our customers' ability to live

independently at home and reduce the reliance on additional social care services.

The project involved an intensive proactive telecare trial by our digital alarm monitoring team, BR24. By utilising proactive telecare, the team were able to maintain or improve the health and wellbeing of 45 participants and anticipated and prevented crises from occurring.

Regular outgoing calls were carried out by a small, highly trained proactive team who focused on good conversations and listening to what mattered most to each individual. This played a vital role in empowering the participants, ensuring they had the correct support in place to live the life they wanted, without constraints or a heavy dependence on social work or public services.

Key results from the project included:

**72%**  
reduction in  
emergency  
alarm usage

**75%**  
reduction in  
the need for  
ambulance  
call-outs

**68%**  
reduction  
in hospital  
admissions

**57%**  
reduction in  
physical visits  
being required  
after an alarm  
activation

**60%**  
reduction in the  
need for a funded  
health and social  
care responder  
visiting

**91%**  
reduction in  
family members  
being called  
out to an  
emergency

We envision a future where our tenants feel secure and confident, knowing that advanced telecare technology is readily available to support them when needed. Inspire – Phase 2 is only the first step on our journey of innovation, and we are eager to witness the positive and transformative effects technology will bring to our communities.

## FEEDBACK FROM THE PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

*I never thought I would get out my house again but thanks to the support and encouragement I am making great progress with getting outside and walking.*

*I now have friends in my area that I never had before thanks to your help.*



# TAPPI

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

Bield was one of just six providers across the UK, and the only one in Scotland, to be awarded this funding and, in the last year, we have been exploring how TAPPI can elevate the use of technology in our housing and care services to enrich the lives of our ageing population.

As part of our efforts, we have undertaken work to determine the digital literacy levels of our tenants and staff. Through this collaborative effort, we sought to identify and overcome any barriers to digital inclusivity, ensuring everyone has access to the vast possibilities that technology offers. A key aspect of our vision was to create a digital space, allowing for hands-on exploration of consumer

and technology-enabled care, raising awareness of the endless possibilities available to our communities. In March, we welcomed tenants to the Bield Tech Hub at our West Port development in Linlithgow. The hub allows tenants, staff and other stakeholders to trial and give feedback on digital care advancements of the future which can empower individuals to maintain their independence, enabling them to live confidently in their own homes while staying active, healthy and socially-connected to their loved ones and communities.

In the spirit of co-production, Bield is excited to move forward with the TAPPI project alongside our tenants. Together, we are dedicated to shaping a new co-production strategy, crafting a digital design brief and exploring pathways that promote digital inclusion. We take great pride in being at the forefront of the technological revolution and are dedicated to enriching the lives of our communities and ensuring a brighter, more empowered future for everyone we serve.



# Development & Sustainability

## SAMS

Like other social landlords in Scotland, Bield are operating in challenging times – the economic outlook, the climate emergency, increasing regulations and expectations, older properties not built to modern standards and broader pressures on public finances mean that our social infrastructure is unaffordable longer-term.

Our new corporate strategy confirms our ambitions to play a leading role in meeting the housing needs of future generations of older people by providing high-quality, highly responsive and personalised housing and support services. It has also confirmed our vision to support ageing in place with home at the centre of an integrated network of preventative services, within established communities.

Our new Strategic Asset Management Strategy (SAMS) sets out details of our strategic approach over the next ten years. Highlights include:



Investing over **£225m** to support **healthy ageing** at home



Ensuring our homes are **safe, warm and affordable**



Developing a new **'Bield design standard'** collaboratively with various stakeholders including tenants and other service users



# NET ZERO

As we move away from fossil fuel based heating, we must carefully consider our buildings' energy performances and suitability by transforming heating systems, improving thermal performance and reducing energy costs for our tenants.

We are looking to apply EnerPHit standards (or equivalent) to existing buildings and PassivHaus (or equivalent) for new homes. The aim of EnerPHit is to reduce the need for heat as much as possible and to include ventilation to reduce humidity and airborne allergens. PassivHaus is a standard for the design and construction of comfortable, highly energy efficient buildings with set performance targets. It is the gold standard and first step towards achieving a net zero operational carbon building.

2045 is the target date for net zero emissions in Scotland

Both EnerPHit and PassivHaus are likely to be the preferred standard for homes in the future. Our Energy Manager and Net Carbon Manager have commenced a review of Bield developments with a future vision of achieving net zero.

We hope that by continuing to deliver energy efficient and affordable homes, Bield will remain at the forefront of the sector and be considered the provider of first choice for older people who wish to live independently.

Our Net Carbon Manager, Dr Ron Mould, was appointed as co-Chair for the SFHA Energy and Net Carbon Forum. Ron has a wealth of expertise within the energy sector, in particular fuel poverty. He has embraced his position as Chair by voicing concerns within the sector, and learning from others to assist Bield with our net zero ambitions.



## DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

**A decision was taken to consolidate both of our Edinburgh offices into 79 Hopetoun Street and to sell 35 Hopetoun Street. The move and sale were completed in March 2023.**

We completed a redesign of the communal areas at our Fife Court development, with input from our tenants, to create a much brighter and welcoming environment. Proposals put forward at co-production meetings were

implemented including the removal of net curtains on the ground floor, the removal of pictures in the corridors and the tenants' choice of colours on feature walls. New directional signage has meant that unsightly temporary notices have been removed and we await delivery of contemporary furniture designed to fit with the décor and flooring. A special mention must go to the new Development Manager, Kirsty, for engaging the tenant group with the redesign.

# SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

We made some significant savings throughout 2022/23 and are undertaking various projects to further save on energy consumption.

We achieved a **5.8% reduction in energy consumption in 2022/23**

Consumption (in particular gas) over the very cold winter months was higher than forecast

This resulted in cost savings of **9.4%**

**22 smart solar panels are being installed at our Glasgow office**

These are estimated to save **£1,088 per year**

If successful, this installation can be extended to our developments

**Various communal lighting projects have been identified**

Installing LED light fittings will save on running costs

**A trial to enhance the ecological diversity of one of our developments is being considered**

An additional outdoor seating area will benefit tenants' physical and mental wellbeing

This will involve the planting of mixed endemic species hedge with a variety of orchard and fruiting shrubs

# ENERGY ADVOCACY

We know that the increases in energy costs have had an impact on our tenants and are pushing more and more people into fuel poverty. In order to support our tenants in dealing with energy issues, Bield were awarded £40,000 via the Independent Age Fund to implement an Energy Advocacy Service until the end of 2023. A small team from Changeworks have been seconded to Bield's Development & Sustainability Team and are currently assisting tenants on a personal basis via a referral process.

The new Energy Advocacy service can:

- Advise tenants on energy efficiency and energy saving actions in their homes
- Explain electricity and gas bills to tenants
- Support tenants to resolve disagreements with their electricity or gas suppliers
- Work with our Income Advice Officers to maximise tenants' disposable income
- Support tenants to access energy-related welfare payments, e.g. Warm Home Discount



**514 tenants supported so far**



**1/5 of those supported said they now had an increased level of financial awareness**



**Over 15% of those supported have gone onto claim additional benefits that they previously didn't claim**



**This equates to an estimated £222,591 of additional benefits secured**

# AIR FRYER PROJECT

Following our very successful initial SFHA-funded project offering energy saving air fryers/slow cookers to our tenants in electrically heated properties, we obtained a further £90,000 via the SFHA Social Housing Fuel Support Fund. This money will allow us to extend our previous offer to more homes throughout Scotland.



# Property Management

## IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF OUR HOMES

A combination of sharply rising prices, disrupted supply chains and a shortage of labour have impacted the construction sector and added to a difficult period following the coronavirus pandemic and Brexit. We are now catching up on some of the slippage, caused by various restrictions in place over the past three years, and our works programmes are now returning to a normal level.

Against this backdrop, it is even more important that we ensure that innovation, digital connectivity, quality, safety and value for money are at the top of our agenda. Our Property and Procurement Teams are working together to prepare for the proposed increase to our programme of works, as we catch up on backlogs and future-proof our properties.



We also spent £7.9m on our properties to maintain stock condition and systems.

This included:

- **£3.6m on responsive and void repairs**
- **£1.5m on service maintenance of grounds, lifts, telecare, laundries and communal kitchens**
- **£1.3m on cyclical maintenance of our fire alarms, gas appliances, water systems and décor**
- **£576k on the maintenance of other plant and equipment**
- **£884k on major repairs to landscaping, trees, external structures/boundaries and internal refurbishment**



This year we spent **£6.3m on our Programme of Works**, improving our properties and our customers' homes.

These works included:

- **installing new kitchens at 7 developments at a cost of £1.58m**
- **installing new warden call systems at 20 developments at a cost of £555k**
- **installing new bathrooms at 7 developments at a cost of £1.99m**
- **upgrading the passenger lifts within 2 developments at a cost of £89k**
- **installing new windows and doors at 2 developments at a cost of £289k**
- **upgrading the water supply system at 2 developments at a cost of £300k**
- **upgrading the passive fire systems (fire doors and signage) at a cost of 600k**
- **installing 100% of interlinked smoke and heat detection systems to meet new Scottish Government regulations**

# STAGE THREE ADAPTATION PROGRAMME

Equipment and adaptations are essential to enable some of our most vulnerable customers to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. This enables them to achieve the quality of life they wish, as well as being a cost effective model of intervention.

**In 2022/23 we carried out 122 major adaptations**

**These included wet floor shower room installations, automatic door openers and ramps**

**The total cost of these adaptations was £322k**

The programme for 2023/24 has now started, following grant awards of £353k to date. A self-referral form (to request minor adaptations such as grab rails or adaptive telecare technology) has been introduced to encourage tenants to apply for smaller installations and aids, and is now available on the Bield website.



## ACCESS FOR INSPECTIONS

Ensuring access for inspection and testing of gas appliances, fire smoke detection systems and electrical inspections is now increasingly important to make sure that all tenants' homes are safe. Our Asset Team have developed a new set of procedures to ensure that programming is flexible and that tenants have a choice of alternative dates and times.



## GAS SAFETY

**100% of gas safety inspections** were completed during 2022/23

A new **E-Learning module** has been developed for all staff regarding responding to gas leaks and emergencies



## FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

**Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) have been completed at all 148 Bield premises to reflect the requirements of new Scottish Government Fire Safety Guidance**

**Our Fire Risk Assessor is now carrying out three-yearly reviews**

**£600k of work was completed during 2022/23**

**£1m of upgrade works is programmed for completion during 2023/24**

## DAMP & MOULD PROCEDURES

New procedures have been introduced to ensure that all instances of Damp and Mould reported are recorded, inspected, remediated and followed up appropriately. Extensive training has taken place, with a new E-Learning module now available for all local staff and specialist classroom training to be completed by our Property Management Officers.

# Corporate Services

## HR

### PAY AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS (T&C) IMPROVEMENTS

We want to recognise the hard work and continued effort from everyone working across Bield. Although we are continuing to operate in a changing and challenging financial environment, this year we have:



continued to **invest in our workforce**



put **improving pay** at the heart of our decision-making



ensured that all staff receive the **Scottish Living Wage (SLW)**



introduced a two-tier band for social care staff to reward those achieving their **SVQ2 qualification**



agreed to **reimburse the cost of SSSC membership** to those who require it for their roles

These are important steps in our drive to modernise our T&C. These measures support our People Strategy objective of developing our employer value proposition to help attract and retain the best talent.

As part of our drive to bring equity and flexibility across all roles and to support the Scottish Government's agenda for improving work/life balance, the last 12 months have seen the decision to harmonise the working week to 35 hours. This is an important decision which will impact positively on all development-based employees and support our ambition to be an Employer of Choice in the sector.



working week harmonised to **35 hours** for development staff to improve work/life balance

We are aware of the cost of living issues that are affecting parts of all of our lives. We implemented several initiatives to support Financial Wellbeing Week; signposting staff to sources of information and support as well as money saving tips. It is our intention to build on this initiative in the coming year, with further activities to support financial wellbeing which features highly on our wellbeing calendar.

# LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

This year we participated in an innovative training research project – the Skilled Managers Programme. This was a project led by the universities of Westminster and Sheffield, in conjunction with ACAS. The programme aimed to help Line Managers build strong relationships with their team members and develop the communication skills they needed to prevent difficult workplace

issues from escalating. Easily accessible E-learning training resources and online toolkits were designed for managers with limited time and busy roles.

During 2022/23 we also enhanced our corporate training through the introduction of our Corporate Training Calendar. This ensured we supported shaping a shared vision by:



Delivering clear Corporate Standards that set the tone for all staff



Providing practical and measured ways to ensure all staff are supported in being clear on roles and responsibilities



Reviewing the calendar annually to support shared practice and prevent gaps in knowledge or performance



# PEOPLE STRATEGY

During 2022/23 we continued to develop our post-pandemic working practices. We recognise that many people are looking for more flexibility in their work, particularly around office/home working. Teams have been given the opportunity to agree ways of working that achieve a balance between the flexibility that staff may want, whilst still meeting the needs of their customers. This is an area where we will continually review and develop our approach to help ensure that we can offer

a working environment that is attractive to our existing staff and to recruitment candidates.

We have continued to modernise our recruitment and induction practices during this year. We have introduced an Induction & Probation Policy, which supports employees to settle into their new role successfully. We have also reviewed and updated our induction module to ensure that new employees receive the information that they need when they join Bield.



## FINANCE

### Appointment of COO

We appointed our first Chief Operating Officer earlier this year to assist with the roll out of our new corporate strategy.

Debbie Collins joined Bield in March to help us make positive contributions to our people, homes and communities and ultimately achieve our 10 year vision of leading, setting and delivering the global standard for ageing at home.

As Chief Operating Officer, Debbie is responsible for overseeing the Finance, IT, Governance, Business Assurance (Performance and Risk), Procurement and Strategic Projects departments.

As a CIMA-qualified accountant, Debbie brings a wealth of experience in Finance across both the public and private sector.

# Financial Highlights



**Turnover from affordable letting activities** was **£37.6m** with a deficit of **£0.2m**



**Turnover from other activities** was **£7.4m** with a **surplus of £0.7m**



We invested **£8.9m** on **improvements and maintenance** on our properties



At the end of the financial year, our **borrowings have reduced to £0.4m**



We made a **net financial loss of £0.9m** after a **pension adjustment of £1.0m** and **supporting tenants with £1.6m energy costs**

# Performance Highlights

Have a look at some of our highlights from 2022/23 and how our performance compares to last year:

## CUSTOMER SERVICE & SATISFACTION



**80.3% - overall satisfaction with landlord services.**

We conducted our Customer Satisfaction Survey in January 2023 and will use the results to improve services.



**71% of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within target.**

This is down 4% from last year (75%).



**98.4% of rent was collected this year.**

This is an increase of 3.7% on last year (94.7%)



**Average relet time (days) increased by 0.72 days to 97.42 days.**

This was impacted by a number of longer-term voids being let during the year.



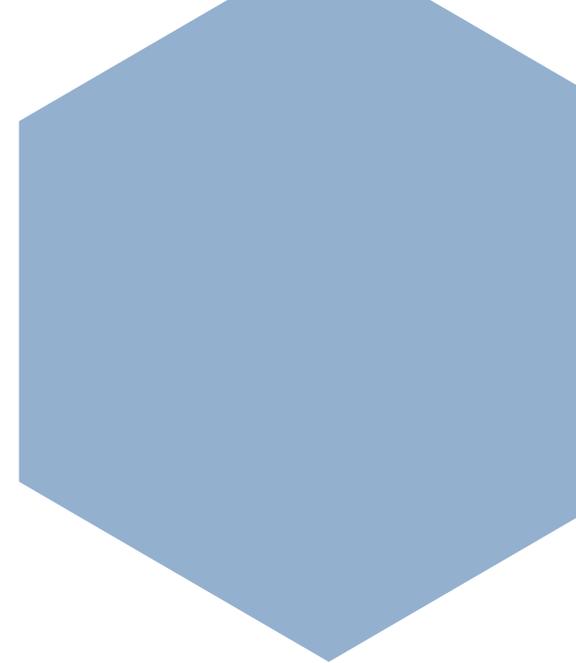
Rent arrears (as a % of gross rent) **have increased by 1.55% to 2.55%.**

Reducing this will be a focus for 2023/24.



**Former tenants arrears written off have decreased to 7.19%.**

A new process has been developed for write-offs which is being implemented in 23/24.



## REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE, MANAGING YOUR HOME



**The average time for emergency repairs increased (1.17%) from 5.98 to 6.05 hours.**

Reducing this will be a focus for 2023/24.



**100% of properties**

have a valid gas safety certificate. This remains the same as previous years.



**95.34% of our properties met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.**

This is an increase of 5.9% from last year.



**96.97% of BR24 calls were answered within 60 seconds.**

This was a very slight decrease of 0.24% compared to last year.



## BOARD

Board Members during the year:

Lesley Holdsworth *OBE, PhD, MPhil, FCSP, FFCI, FWCT, SRP, DPT (Chair)*

Margaret Moore

Pat Dawson – *resigned 14/2/23*

Ingirid Deuling, *Dip COT, COTSS-Housing, HCPC (Retired), BEM – retired 22/9/22*

William Smalley\*

Isabel McGarvie *B'Acc, CA, ATII (Vice Chair),*

Graeme Russell *BA(Hons) FCIH*

Carole Lamond *FCIPD, MAC – resigned 11/1/2023*

David Fisher *BA (Hons), DipH, MBA, FRGS (co-opted 25/9/2021 - 24/3/2023)*

Robert Fernie, *ACMA, CGMA (Vice-Chair)*

Eric Lewis \*\* *(resigned 25/6/ 2022)*

Elisabeth McNeil *(co-opted 25/9/2021 – 11/11/2022)*

Cath Strachan, *MBA (co-opted 23/2/2023)*

Dougie Peters, *BCom (Hons), CA (appointed casual vacancy 23/3/2023)*

Angus MacRae, *LLB, Dip LP (appointed casual vacancy 23/3/2023)*

Brian McLaren *(appointed casual vacancy 23/2/2023)*

Derek Breingan *(co-opted 20/10/2022)*

\**Tenant of Bield*

\*\* *Sharing Owner of Bield*

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