

Bield's Customer Charter

Why this matters

At Bield, our **Independent Living Approach** is the foundation of how we support older people to live their best lives, surrounded by a supportive community.

It's not just about services; it's about creating the right environment and relationships that empower people to take control of their lives, stay connected, and feel safe and supported.

This **Customer Charter** is the practical expression of that philosophy. It sets out clear standards that every customer can expect from us, and defines what excellence in customer care looks like, grounded in respect, inclusion, co-production and accountability.

Everything we do – from how we greet someone at the front door to how we resolve a concern – should reflect our Independent Living Approach.

This Charter also reinforces key priorities in Bield's:

- **Setting the Pace Strategy** – driving excellence, accountability and innovation in customer care
- **2025 – 2030 Business Plan** - where personalised, modern services and empowered staff are essential to delivering our mission.

What Customers Can Expect from Us

Every Bield customer has a right to live independently, feel heard, and be treated as an individual. These rights are not just best practice – they are integral to our Independent Living Approach and embedded across housing, support and community engagement.

Customer Rights	What This Looks Like in Practice
Respect and Dignity	Treat all customers with empathy, patience and consideration.
Independence and Choice	Support individuals to make their own decisions and respect those decisions.
Privacy	Always knock. Always ask. Keep personal information confidential.
Cultural and Religious Needs	Honour Individual identities, customs and beliefs in how we deliver services.
Social Participation	Encourage Customers to stay connected and take part in meaningful activities.
Safety and Protection	Actively maintain a secure and abuse-free environment. Escalate risks.
Access to Help and Services	Signpost or arrange support services promptly when need is identified.
Information and Voice	Involve customers in decisions, updates, and reviews that affect them.
Right to Complain	Welcome concerns and resolve them constructively – without defensiveness.

Local Manager Role in Making This Real

Local Managers are leaders in the delivery of our Independent Living Approach. Decisions, interactions, and behaviours set the tone for the whole service. The Customer Charter is not just a document – it is a tool for leadership, quality assurance and team culture.

Key Practices:

- Lead by example in professionalism, respect, and inclusive behaviours
- Set expectations aligned to the Charter and Bield's values.
- Ensure the service environment is emotionally and physically safe.
- Model proactive engagement and follow-through with tenant concerns
- Escalate safeguarding, wellbeing, or service quality issues promptly.

Customer Care: How We Deliver It

All staff must uphold the following principles to embed excellent customer care across services:

Customer Care Principle	In practice
Professionalism & Efficiency	Be organised, timely, and solutions-focused.
Equality & Inclusion	Ensure everyone feels welcome, heard and valued – challenge bias.
Honesty & Courtesy	Communicate clearly, respectfully and without jargon.
Confidentiality	Protect customer data and never discuss sensitive matters in public areas.
Empathy & Understanding	Ask questions, listen actively, and responds with compassion.
Supportive Engagement	Be helpful and action-orientated – own the issues until resolved
Ongoing Development	Participate in training and reflect on practice to improve.
Respect for Staff	Create a workplace where colleagues feel safe, heard and supported.

Learning from Customer Feedback

Continuous improvement is a key pillar of Bield's strategy. Feedback is vital to our learning culture and tailoring services that genuinely reflect customer needs.

Local Managers should ensure feedback is:

- Actively Encouraged – through conversations, suggestion forms, and tenant meetings.
- Easily Accessible – customers know how and where to share feedback or complaints.
- Consistently Recorded – concerns, compliments and suggestions are captured clearly.
- Shared and Acted Upon – outcomes are reported back to tenants and improvements are documented.

Staff are expected to take part in surveys, complaints investigations, and service reviews to ensure a full-circle improvement process.