

BULLETIN

SPRING 2019



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Susan Napier

Chair of Bield

At the risk of repeating a frequently used phrase, the one thing that remains constant in Bield is the need to adapt and change.

Since the last Bulletin there has been a number of changes – some we had planned and some we hadn't anticipated.

In the middle of January we said farewell to a number of colleagues in care and housing services many of whom had been with Bield for a considerable number of years. Together with my fellow Board members I want to acknowledge their substantial contribution and wish them well for the future.

Towards the end of 2018 we had finalised and completed the review of housing and care services. We did not anticipate further changes. We were therefore extremely disappointed when East Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership announced their decision to withdraw funding for Whitehill Day Care and Respite Service. They took the decision to consolidate Day Care services at another facility by an alternative provider. This was extremely disappointing. The much valued respite service ended on 31st March and the Day Care will close at the end of June.

Day care services will continue at Oakburn Day Care and the planning application for the replacement housing development at Whitehill Court has been lodged. Whilst this is positive news overall we are deeply saddened by the closure of Whitehill Day Care.

A further significant piece of news came when Brian Logan, Chief Executive tendered his resignation. I am both saddened and pleased by this news. Saddened that we have lost a first class Chief Executive, pleased that Brian has secured a new appointment as Chief Executive of Capability Scotland.

Brian joined Bield 14 years ago as Director of Financial Services and for the last nine years has served as Chief Executive. During this time he has worked tirelessly to ensure Bield has adapted to the changing external environment and is well placed to continue well into the future.

We are tremendously sorry to lose Brian but we understand the new post is a fantastic opportunity for him to take his considerable talents to a new challenge with Capability Scotland.

Brian will leave us with our best wishes, but more importantly, he leaves Bield solidly positioned to ensure it can continue to do what we do best – delivering quality homes and services for our customers way into the future.

Thanks to Brian's leadership, we have a clear strategy to continue the successes we have achieved to date – and to give the new senior management team the opportunity to ensure the momentum and drive for change continues.

Brian will remain Chief Executive for the next few months and we will update on plans for his successor in the next Bulletin.



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BieldScotland](https://twitter.com/BieldScotland)



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EXPLORING THE NEXT CHAPTER

Appearing on the cover of this edition is Mr Glen of Carntyne Gardens, Glasgow.

In the last couple of years, Mr Glen has unexpectedly found himself to be a media sensation after he penned his first book in 2017.

Mr Glen discovered a love of writing after attending writing classes in his retirement. Mr Glen said "I worked as a plumber, so exploring my creative side isn't something I ever had much of a chance to do".

To date, Mr Glen has published three novels which are available on Amazon Kindle under the ghost name Glen Williams: After the Panic, An Age for Murder and most recently Single File.

Mr Glen said "It's exciting to have my work available in a public space. I've had great feedback so far".

Carol Harvey, Deputy Manager at Carntyne Gardens said "Mr Glen's practically a celebrity here. Everyone's been so inspired by his passion for writing.

"We have a large glass cabinet in the front foyer with Mr Glen's work and copies of the media coverage - visitors are always intrigued and now shake his hand on arrival.

"Mr Glen proves that age should be no obstacle when it comes to taking up a new hobby. His free spirit is encouraging us all at Carntyne Gardens to seize the day and not be afraid to try something new".

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FAREWELL FROM BRIAN LOGAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

'To everything there is a season...'

And as many of you will know by now, my season at Bield is drawing to a close.

I have been offered and accepted the post of Chief Executive of Capability Scotland, a national charity providing care, support and education to children and adults with disabilities and I will therefore be leaving Bield in June.

It is a great opportunity for me to join an organisation in a different sector and to help them grow and develop their reputation for delivering high-quality services, maximising the potential of those with complex needs and disabilities.

I have spent 14 years at Bield, firstly as Director of Financial Services and then for the last nine years as Chief Executive.

I said when I was appointed as Chief Executive, succeeding Jim Thomson, that it was an honour to be involved with an organisation like Bield, far less to have the privilege of leading it.

From the minute I stepped across the door, I have been both humbled and inspired by the commitment of Bield's people. The people who live in our homes and use our services. And the people who work across Bield, dedicated to improving the lives of older people.

I have never wavered in that view and every day I continue to be moved by the stories of our tenants and services users.

We have had some challenging times of late, responding to funding cuts and seeking to re-shape Bield to position it well for the future. It has been a difficult few years but I have been supported by a dedicated Board and staff team who frequently go above and beyond.

It is with mixed feelings that I move on. There are some genuinely exciting developments ahead as Bield looks to make use of technology, develop new models of care and support, and invest in our housing, all of which will help older people live independent lives in their own homes.

But the time is right for a change and I am looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead for me.

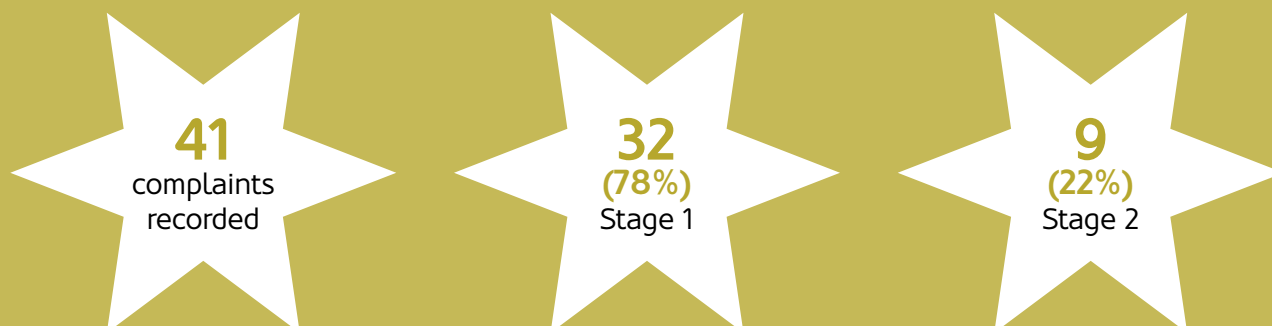
All that remains for me to do is to say thank you. Bield is a fantastic organisation, packed full of amazing people and with a strong future ahead. I leave confident of even more success for Bield in the years ahead and with some great memories of meeting and working with colleagues, tenants and service users.

I wish you all the very best.



COMPLAINTS UPDATE

1st October – 31st December 2018



This is a **24%** increase on the same period in the previous year when **33** complaints were recorded.

We responded to **62%** of stage 1 complaints within the 5 day timescale and **67%** of stage 2 complaints within the 20 day timescale.

This is below the targets set and we have work to do to improve these figures.



* There has been a change to the system where an option of 'not applicable' can be recorded against satisfaction.

Of the **41** complaints recorded and closed **28 (68%)** were upheld or partially upheld and **13 (32%)** were not upheld.

Complaints are received by various methods, the figures above show that email is currently the most popular way of making a complaint.



Follow Up and Communication continues to be the cause of the majority of complaints with **16 (39%)** recorded in this period.

RENT AND SERVICE CHARGE RESTRUCTURE

Last Autumn we began an exercise to review the many different rent levels and service charges Bield used. We wanted to create a system which was simple, fair and consistent across all tenants, where no one paid more or less than they should for the property they live in and services they receive.

This turned into a huge piece of work involving all tenants being sent a survey, focus groups, Partnership Forum consultation and staff working groups. All of this information was presented to Bield's Board of Management and they agreed to simplify the rent process.

The new model will be used from 1st April 2019.

Rents will now be based on:

- Property size (number of bedrooms)
- Property type (flat / house etc)
- Accommodation type (General Needs / Amenity / Retirement etc)
- Landscaping (Size of Grounds)

Feedback also told us that tenants wanted as many charges as possible to be included in one rent payment, not as separate service charges. So, we have included things like service inspections, equipment general maintenance, warden call systems and alarms, heating and lights and cleaning of communal areas into the rent charge.

The new model we are using to work out your rent payment looks like this:

Base Rent	Property Size		Property Type		Accommodation Type		Landscaping	
	Description	Charge	Description	Charge	Description	Charge	Description	Charge
£301.35	No Separate Bedroom	+£0.00	Flatlet	+£0.00	General Needs	+£0.00	No Grounds	+£0.00
	Single Bedroom	+£25.63	Flat	+£15.38				
	Double Bedroom	+£51.25			Amenity	+£52.28	Small Grounds	+£5.13
	2 x Single Bedrooms	+£76.88						
	1 x Double & 1 x Single Bedroom	+£102.50	Bungalow or Cottage	+£30.75	Retirement Housing	+£80.98	Medium Grounds	+£10.25
	2 x Double Bedrooms	+£128.13			Retirement Housing with Meals			
	2 x Double & 1 Single Bedroom	+£153.75	House	+£46.13	Retirement Plus	+£80.98	Large Grounds	+£15.38
	3 x Double Bedrooms	+£179.38						

These charges include a 2.5% rent increase for 2019/20 and will be used for new tenants from 1st April 2019.

RENT AND SERVICE CHARGE RESTRUCTURE

This new model will not lead to a change in overall income for Bield and is not about making more money, it is about making it simpler, consistent and more transparent across all our housing – what many tenants told us they wanted to see.

With any changes of this nature, some people will benefit and some will see increases in their rent costs. To limit the impact of any cost increases, tenants told us that the new model should be phased in. Therefore, these changes will be brought in over 3 years, so there will be increases above any agreed inflationary rises until April 2021, at which point, all tenants will have reached the new agreed rent level. People who started their tenancy before 1st April 2019 will have received a letter telling them about their individual charge and this may be slightly different to if you use the table, due to the phasing approach.

Depending on your accommodation type, there may be other charges – for example if there are staff working in development or if there is a meals service. These are specific to each development and will have been detailed in your personal letter.

If you have any queries or questions about how the new model has been put together or about the way Bield will be charging in the future, please speak to your Housing Officer or local office in the first instance.

RENT CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Taking into consideration the Rent and Service Charge Restructure Review and continuing financial challenges, setting the 2019–20 budget has been a more complex process than usual.

As part of the review work, tenants were consulted in October on how they thought rent and service charges could be set going forward. With this in mind, Bield began working on a draft budget for the year ahead. An essential part of setting rent and service charges within a budget is gathering tenants' thoughts on what is being proposed.

Therefore, in early December, tenants were issued a survey that outlined these draft 2019–20 charges and asked for their feedback. We received **740** returns, just below **18%**, which is a strong return rate when comparing to other similar-sized organisations rent consultation.

The feedback provided was delivered to the Partnership Forum, our tenant consultation body, and subsequently the Board of Management. Each group assessed these returns ahead of finalising the charges for 2019–20.

The key outcomes of the survey are outlined on page 8:

RENT CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

(Continued from Page 7)

The key outcomes of the survey are outlined as follows:

What are your thoughts on the proposed increase level for rents of 2.5%?		
61.2% agreed it was a fair increase or thought it was high but understood it was necessary	32.2% said they were not happy with the proposed increase.	6.6% had no opinion.

Analysis:

Previous surveys had separated these two – rents and service charges – with a proposed percentage increase for each so it is a little harder to compare to 2018/19. Although it is not as straightforward, the figures are broadly similar to last year.

What are your thoughts on the proposed increase level for meal charges of 3.3%?		
20.4% agreed it was a fair increase or thought it was high but understood it was necessary.	10.2% said they were not happy with the proposed increase.	69.3% had no opinion as they did not receive the service.

Analysis:

The 20.4% is a drop from 23.6% last year. Prior to 2018/19, the figure was generally around 35%. The 10.2% figure is a marginal increase from last year.

What are your thoughts on the proposed £1 increase to guest room rates?		
66.1% agreed it was a fair increase or thought it was high but understood it was necessary.	12% said they were not happy with the proposed increase.	21.8% had no opinion.

Analysis:

Last year we had a freeze on guest room charges as the ongoing guest room review neared its completion. We therefore cannot compare how these figures compare to 2018/19. However, in terms of 2016/17 and 2017/18, the percentage of those happy with the proposals is slightly lower. Those unhappy with the new charges are around the same against those 2 years.

How satisfied are you with the information provided and overall consultation on the charges review?		
78.4% were either very satisfied or satisfied.	13.7% were neither/nor.	7.9% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Analysis:

The 78.4% satisfaction figure represents an increase from 75.9% in 2018/19 and the dissatisfaction levels have decreased slightly too, from 9% last year.

RENT CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Many of you took the time to make additional comments on the rent consultation. Here we have asked Charlie Dickson, Interim Director of Housing and Chris McShane, Tenant Engagement Officer to provide feedback on some of the key issues raised.



Charlie Dickson

On the subject of rent and service charges being unfair, notably given the increasing cost of living:

“As you will be aware, Bield have recently conducted and now concluded a review of all our rents and service charges. Prior to the review, Bield had over 90 different rent levels and various different service charges that were cumbersome and difficult to understand.

Many of these rent levels, that had developed over time, were done so for good reasons, but we felt we now had the opportunity to reduce the number of rent levels and service charges to make it easier for people to understand, while at the same time ensuring that we were maximising fairness, transparency and consistency for all our tenants, across all Bield properties.

This has been a huge exercise that has involved tenants via a survey, many Bield staff, members of the Partnership Forum and external consultants, Arneil Johnston. We now feel that we have a new rent and service charge structure that is streamlined and fit for purpose, and also meets the aforementioned objectives that we had set.”

On the increase in guest room charges by £1 to £9 for tenants and £13 for others:

“We received a small number of comments questioning the rise in guest room charges for 2019-20. I think it is worth highlighting that we regularly receive survey returns from those who use guest rooms and, for the first quarter in 2018-19, we had 100% satisfaction, both in terms of the standard of rooms and charges. We didn’t have an increase last year as we were in the middle of reviewing this service.

With that review now complete, we have modernised the guest room brochure and have an ongoing programme to ensure rooms have the best possible facilities. The proposed charges were put to the Partnership Forum and they were happy, feeling it still offers fantastic value for money.

We look forward to hearing all feedback from those using guest rooms in the year ahead.”



Chris McShane

A WHISTLE STOP TOUR OF TENANT ENGAGEMENT

We continue to work hard ensuring tenants have their voice heard within the organisation. At Let's Meet sessions, tenants can meet with their Housing Officer and Property Officer to discuss issues important to them at their development.

As you will see elsewhere in the Bulletin, tenants are regularly surveyed on a range of subjects, including the rent and service charge review work. Their feedback from this fed into determining how this will be structured from this year onward. Tenants were also consulted on the charges themselves and this formed part of the budget review process.

At a more national level, we have 2 tenant bodies. The Bield improvement Group (BIG) are an independent tenant body that scrutinise areas of Bield's performance and put forward recommendations for improvement. They have already helped deliver changes to Bield's ending a tenancy policy and have also formulated an action plan of work to develop how we report repairs. They are currently hard at work reviewing our complaints process.

We also have the Partnership Forum (PF), which has been in place for over 15 years. This tenant group meet quarterly with senior staff to discuss current key Bield topics affecting tenants. At their last meeting, they discussed, among others, the ongoing business transformation work and the rent and service charge review, of which they played an important consultative role. The group will play a key role as we continue to explore new and different ways tenants can engage with the organisation.

Work is now underway on planning our 3rd annual Joint Engagement Session, which will take place in June. This session is a chance for members of BIG, the PF, Owners Forums, senior staff and Board to come together to share their engagement experiences and work on a particular topic. We look forward to sharing the outcomes from this soon.



You can contact Chris McShane, Tenant Engagement Officer, if you would like to learn more about the work of the Bield Improvement Group or Partnership Forum, or indeed tenant engagement in general.

If you have any questions about Tenant Engagement please contact Chris McShane, Tenant Engagement Officer on 0141 270 7208



INVESTING IN BR24



Bield has recently completed a full independent review of the BR24 service, which has confirmed the emergency monitoring/response services provided by them are fundamental to the support provided to tenants and service users.

The review confirmed the services are highly valued and worthy of our investment. We have therefore taken the decision to invest and grow the service over the next few years.

To help us do this we will need to make some changes and we wanted to let you know about what is happening in the background.

The first change is a move from Castlebank Gardens to our main Glasgow office, at Eagle Street, Glasgow, at the end of April where there is more space to grow in years ahead.

In the immediate future you will not notice any changes. The services provided by BR24 will continue to be delivered by an in house experienced team, skilled in emergency monitoring.

This is the first step in a series of enhancements that will take place across Bield over the next 24 months. We will be looking at improving technology and reviewing how we do things. Our aim is to simplify how you contact us and get access to our other services whilst also enhancing the BR24 service.

All of these improvements will take time but we will continue to update you as we progress. However, in the meantime, please be reassured your BR24 service remains unchanged. We are working behind the scenes to make sure we provide services that meet our customer expectations.

If you need to contact BR24 in a non-emergency, after 29th April, the new address is:

Bield Response 24, Craighall Business Park, 7 Eagle Street, Glasgow, G4 9XA.

Please note the telephone number is unchanged - 0141 950 1025.

NEW TENANT HANDBOOK

5 years ago, a detailed revision of the Tenant Handbook took place and from it, a new ring binder format was created. Since then, particularly over the last year, there have been some significant changes in legislation with the introduction of the latest Housing Scotland Act. There have also been changes in services that Bield provide and so another revamp was required.

The format of the revised Handbook is similar to that of this Bulletin. One of the most important considerations when redrafting the Handbook is minimising the cost and, with this new style, we have made some substantial savings since the last version. This was done in consultation with the Partnership Forum.

In terms of the content, you will see revised detail around issues such as the changes from Sheltered Housing to Retirement Housing among other updated information.

Copies of these new Handbooks will be issued to new tenants when they move into a Bield development. Current tenants can view the Handbook on our website. If tenants would like a physical copy, they can request this through their Local Manager or Housing Officer.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on this.



BENEFITS UP-RATING

The annual up-rating of benefit payments for claimants of Pension Credit age, currently 65 years and 2 months, takes effect in April 2019. The brief summary below is only a rough guide; following the changes you may find you are entitled to more money. To ensure you are receiving your full entitlement, please ask for a benefit check.

Further information is available from your Local Manager or by contacting the Pension Service on 0800 731 7898, or your Local Authority Housing and Council Tax Benefit Office.

All rates shown below are weekly rates.

a. Entitlement Based on National Insurance Contributions and/or Credits - Non-Means-Tested

State Retirement Pension (basic) - claimed before 6th April, 2016

Single person:	£129.20	Couple:	£206.65
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New State Pension - claimed on or after 6th April, 2016

Full rate:	£168.60 (entitlement calculated by qualifying years)
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b. Entitlement Based on Disability/Health Conditions - Non-Means-Tested

Attendance Allowance (65 and over)

Lower rate:	£58.70	Higher Rate:	£87.65
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Disability Living Allowance (Under 16, over 65 if claimed before 65th birthday, plus existing claims 16 - 64)

CARE	Low Rate:	£23.20	Middle Rate:	£58.70	Higher Rate:	£87.65
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MOBILITY	Lower Rate:	£23.20	Higher Rate:	£61.20
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Personal Independence Payment (16 - 64)

DAILY LIVING COMPONENT	Standard Rate:	£58.70	Enhanced Rate:	£87.65
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MOBILITY COMPONENT	Standard Rate:	£23.20	Enhanced Rate:	£61.20
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c. Entitlement Based on Income and Savings (Savings below £10,000 disregarded, no upper savings limit)

Pension Credit (Guarantee) and Savings Credit

Single person:	£167.25	Couple:	£255.25
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Maximum Savings Credit (age 65 and over and claimed before 6/4/16)

Single person:	£13.72	Couple:	£15.35
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KEEP YOUR BENEFIT LETTERS

If you get any benefits, you will recently have received letters telling you how much you are getting from April 2019. When you get these you should:

- Check the letter and if something is wrong contact the payer.
- Keep your letters. Put them somewhere safe. If you need to ask for advice about benefits it is important to have these. You may be asked for proof of income and original letters will be needed.
- Keep the letter we have sent you about your new rent charge.
- Keep copies of your payslips, pension statements, P60, bank statements, etc.

All of these may be needed from time to time.

If you have any change in your circumstances please report them.

The usual ones are if:

- someone moves in or out of your home
- your income changes
- your savings change
- you receive a windfall such as an inheritance or lottery win
- you start to receive Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance

If you don't report a change to your circumstances then you may have to pay back money that you have already received.

If you are claiming help with your rent it is essential you provide details of any change to your housing costs; to your local council if you receive Housing Benefit, or DWP if your costs are met through Universal Credit.

Changes to benefits for mixed age couples

In January the Government announced changes to benefits for mixed age couples that will take effect from 15th May 2019.

Pensioners who live together as a couple will only be able to make a new claim for pension credit when both partners are over the state pension age, under new rules set to come into effect in May. If you'll be affected and are eligible to claim, do it ASAP to avoid missing out.

Pension credit gives a guaranteed minimum income to those over the state pension age. Currently someone of state pension age, living in a couple, can claim pension credit regardless of their partner's age. From 15th May 2019, however, couples will only be able to begin claiming if BOTH partners are state pension age.

If you already claim pension credit and your partner hasn't reached the state pension age, you won't be affected by the change and will carry on receiving it for as long as you're eligible.

If you don't already claim, are state pension age or will be before 14th May, have a younger partner and meet the income criteria, make sure you apply as soon as possible. The official deadline is 14th May 2019, although in practice you have until 13th August 2019 to apply as claims can be backdate by up to three months.



If you have any questions about benefits please contact Ruth Sargaison, Welfare Benefits Officer on 0141 270 7272

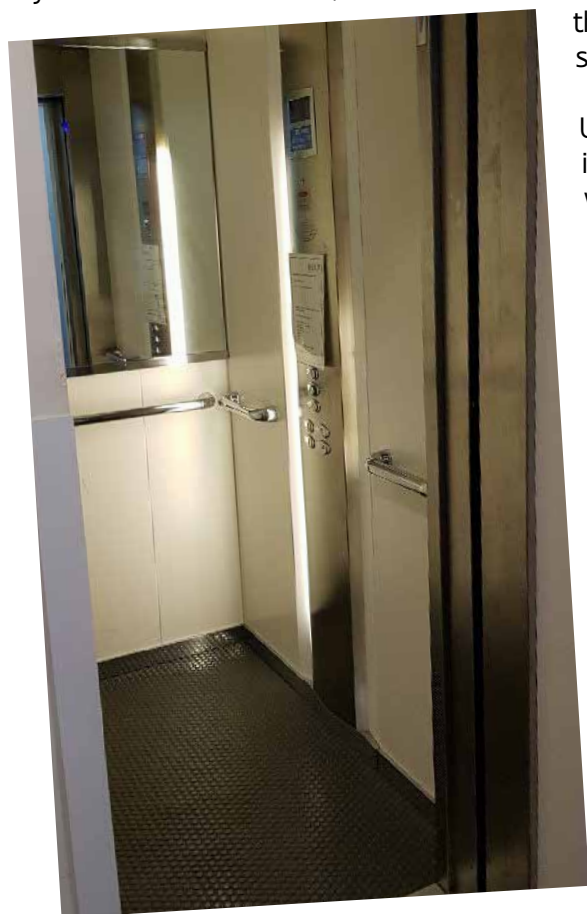
FOCUS ON PASSENGER LIFTS

As part of the Service Contracts team's work at Bield, all passenger lifts at our developments are serviced every 8 weeks. We also include lift improvements in our planned programme, with works taking place most recently at Crosshill Gardens in Port Glasgow and Coxtion Gardens in Glasgow.

Prior to a maintenance visit taking place every eight weeks, the Service Contracts team will inform each development of the intended date the lift contractor will attend, and this information will be passed on to you by your Local Manager. On a service visit, the lift contractor will check the safe operation of all parts of the lift and carry out tasks such as adjusting components and lubricating and cleaning parts. They will also check the correct operation of the warden call speech module (linked to BR24 in case of an emergency) and lighting within the lift cabin.

When the lift engineers are on site they will take steps to ensure that the area around the lift is safe and that tenants are protected from the maintenance works that are taking place. Notices informing you that the lift is out of service and that maintenance is taking place will be displayed by the contractor. Safety barriers will also be present. Typically, a service visit will take about one hour but some visits may take longer.

It is important to remember that when the lift engineers are on site it does not mean the lift has broken down. The lift contractor will carry out preventative maintenance and safety checks six times a year. In addition to this, Bield's insurance inspector will also carry out two inspections annually. On these occasions the lift will also be out of service for a short while, again for up to an hour.



Unfortunately there are occasions when the lift does in fact show a fault and may have to be temporarily withdrawn from service to allow a repair to take place. Bield have specific response times in regards to this just like any repair that arises at your development or in your home. Emergencies are responded to within an hour and all other breakdowns within 2 hours.

Normally the Local Manager would report these breakdowns, but there may be occasions when tenants may have to contact Bield Response 24 to report that the lift is not working. Regular meetings are held with our Lift Contractors to check that our strict repair response timescales are achieved.

Fortunately, lift breakdowns do not occur frequently but when they do it can cause great inconvenience. We are sorry if that has happened at your development, but please be assured that we strive to keep the lifts at our developments well maintained and safe to use.

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF WHITEHILL COURT, KIRKINTILLOCH



Computer Generated Image (CGI)

We reached a key stage in the proposed redevelopment of Whitehill Court, Kirkintilloch in December 2018 when our architects successfully submitted the planning application to East Dunbartonshire Council.

We are delighted to share the stunning CGI (above) which shows how the new development, which is to replace the existing development (below), will look once completed.

Tenants at Whitehill Court have been with us every step of the way. Regular consultation meetings have taken place to ensure tenants views are heard throughout the redevelopment process.

As you would expect, there is a great deal of work to do by various teams throughout Bield. The existing building is affected by water ingress and requires ongoing maintenance, this is overseen by the Property Team.

The Housing Team will pull together a lettings plan and meet with tenants to discuss all steps leading up to the move to the new development.

The Development Team will project manage various internal and external resources to ensure the successful redevelopment of Whitehill Court.

It is anticipated that work will begin on site in September 2019 with tenants moving into their new homes during October/November 2020.



Existing development

OWNERS' FORUM MEETINGS

The Forums met at the end of November 2018 to discuss a wide range of issues. As previously agreed these are now based on East and West areas and members are happy to continue with this approach moving forward.

Amongst the items discussed were:

- The new Fire Safety Regulations which will apply to all homes in Scotland. These mean that properties will need to have:
 - » **1 smoke alarm in living area.**
 - » **1 smoke alarm in hall area.**
 - » **1 heat detector in kitchen.**
 - » **CO detector located within property.**
 - » **All have to be hardwired and linked.**

There will be a period of time to allow this to happen and members agreed that regular updates are required on this.

- An update on the new Bield's Business Strategy and discussion on how this would impact on the services provided to owners.
- Information on the major projects being undertaken over the coming months at some developments including a major roof refurbishment and an extension to the lounge.
- A report on the Joint Engagement Session which had been held in the Summer and attended by a number of owners.
- The review of the AGM's where it was agreed that advance notice of meetings should be sent to owners. This would then be followed up by the issuing of all papers and accounts at least 2 weeks before the meeting took place.

The Chairs of the Forums are Christina Leitch (West) and Andrew Riches (East).

There are still vacancies at some developments and anyone who would like more information should contact Caroline Rielly in the Glasgow Office. The next meetings are due to take place at the end of May.

A copy of the minutes and papers can be obtained from Scheme Managers or Caroline Rielly.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Lorence Fizia who has Chaired both Forums for the past few years. In addition Bill & June Bain who have been members for many years have both stepped down and they have made an important contribution to the way services are delivered to owners.

THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT

At the time of writing we are still awaiting the publication of the new Code of Conduct for Property Factors. This has meant that there is no further progress on the new Statement of Services.

ANNUAL INFORMATION

Owners should receive a copy of the Buildings Insurance Policy and a statement of their payments over the coming months. This follows the copy of the approved budget for 19/20 which was sent in February & March. Anyone wishing further copies of any information should either contact their Scheme Manager or any member of the Owner Services Team.

PROPERTY MEETINGS



The Property Meetings at developments started in February and will continue into April. Essentially these meetings are to enable owners to discuss and agree a planned programme of works for the coming year.

OWNERS NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS



Congratulations to Bessie Keith of Liberton Park Court who celebrated her 90th birthday in January



Manager Valerie Gordon receiving a presentation from Owners on her retirement from Mearnsview Court in November



Owners at Pilrig House Close enjoyed a Christmas party held at nearby Donaldson Court

Bill Mabon



It was with great sadness that we heard the news that Bill had lost his battle with illness at the end of February.

Since moving to Rosehall Walk in Haddington, Bill defined what it means to be a good neighbour. This included making sure everyone was ok and offering to help them through to making sure that work was reported and done properly. Bill was also an active member of the Owners' Forum and his wise words during meetings were warmly received by all of the members.

Bill will be greatly missed by everyone who had been fortunate to meet him.



To contact David MacInnes, Owner Services Manager please phone 0141 270 7246

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN (SPSO) MOVED



The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) is the final stage for complaints about councils, the National Health Service, housing associations, colleges and universities, prisons, most water providers, the Scottish Government and its agencies and departments and most Scottish authorities.

Bield hope we are be able to resolve all complaints to your satisfaction but if you do need to contact the SPSO they have recently moved. We are in the process of updating our complaints brochure and the new address will be in the tenant handbook.

The new details are:

Telephone (Freephone) 0800 377 7330 or 0131 225 5300
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS

Open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm; Tuesday 10am-5pm.

By post : Freepost SPSO. This is all you need to write on the envelope, and you don't need to use a stamp.



GDPR PRIVACY NOTICE UPDATE



As part of implementing the New General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules, we have updated the Privacy Notice on our website, with a new Privacy & Cookies Notice.



The new Privacy & Cookies Notice explains how we manage personal information when people contact us or use our services – what personal information we collect, why, our lawful basis and how long we will use it for.

Do you know your Data Protection Rights? There is a section within the new Privacy & Cookies Notice which explains your Rights and how you can exercise these Rights.

We also explain how we use Cookies when users visit our website – what Cookies we use, why they are necessary and how to manage their settings.

Our new Privacy & Cookies Notice can be found here www.bield.co.uk/privacy-notice.

AGE UK

Recently published 10 top tips for living healthily in later life. How many do you do?

1. Watch what you eat and drink

An ideal balanced diet should be low in saturated fat, with lots of fruit and vegetables, wholegrains, oily fish, and small amounts of low-fat dairy and lean meat. Top-up with lots of water to avoid dehydration.

2. Look after your teeth

Brush your teeth twice a day and floss daily.

3. Stay active

Daily exercise helps you to stay strong and healthy. Government guidelines recommend that older adults do 150 minutes of moderate activity per week.

4. Make the most of your doctor

It's a good idea to get some routine tests done at the doctors to check your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Any problems are usually reversible with medication.

5. Get a vitamin boost

Try to get outside in the sunshine for at least 15-20 minutes a day for a vitamin D boost.

6. Take care of your feet

Look after your feet by applying moisturiser to prevent dry skin and cutting your toenails straight across. Make sure you have footwear that fits properly and supports your feet.

7. Sort out your sleep

Establishing a bedtime routine and going to bed at the same time each night. Try a warm drink such as chamomile tea or hot milk before you go to bed.

8. Take the tests

As we age our hearing and eyesight can be affected, so it's important to get them checked regularly.

9. Stay in touch

Spending time with other people can prevent you from feeling lonely or anxious. If you find that you are no longer able to do the things you used to do, try to develop new hobbies and interests.

10. Give up smoking

The good news is that if you stop smoking, regardless of your age, your circulation, your lung capacity and your energy levels will improve.

For more information about any of these areas visit:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing> or call Age Uk's free advice line on 0800 678 1602 8am-7pm, 365 days a year.

We'll Keep You Right



NHS
SCOTLAND

NHS 24 has launched the "We'll keep you right" campaign which provides people in Scotland with guidance on where to go for help when they are feeling unwell.

The campaign aims to increase public awareness of NHS inform - a range of

online self help guides - all available at the touch of a button. It also hopes to encourage people to seek help at their pharmacy, dentist and optometrist for conditions that don't need clinical support such as coughs and tooth ache.

It should make it easier for people to get the right care at the right time. It also tells people where to go if they are not sure which service to access. It means that our GP's and A&E departments can have more time to help people with more complex needs.

You may see adverts for the service across social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and STV Player.

For more information visit [nhsinform.scot](https://www.nhsinform.scot)



VOLUNTEER OPENS A NEW CHAPTER FOR TENANT

In recognition of Student Volunteering Week (11th-19th February) Bield have been calling for more student volunteers to join the team at various locations across Scotland. Many of our service users already receive fantastic support from student volunteers. Not only is it rewarding work for our volunteers, but it can support them in their studies and future career path.

Service User, Jenny, of Mansewood Court in Whitburn, has been receiving one-to-one IT support from a student volunteer. She tells us, "It's brilliant. Sonia has been great at helping me to develop new skills on the computer. I've learned how to make posters and meeting notes for our social club, and I can now shop online. Amazon is my favourite!

I'm enjoying using Microsoft Office too and hope to write my own book about my career and travels. I used to be a nurse and I've travelled all over the world. People keep telling me to write a book and now I will be able to! It's opened up a whole new chapter for me."

Sonia, who is studying Health and Social Care at West Lothian College said, "I really enjoy my volunteer role. I plan to do social work in the future so it's great experience being able to support people. It's also really satisfying to know that I'm helping someone live their life to the full".

INSPIRING VOLUNTEERING

With support from the Volunteer Team, our development at Coxtan Gardens in Glasgow is proud to have started a new project in February with St Andrew's High School in Glasgow's east end. Bield will be working with a group of 3rd year students to allow them to complete their Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

Part of our volunteer strategy is to work with local communities and we are very excited to be working with the pupils at St Andrews High and MCR Pathways, a Scottish charity that provides support and mentoring to disadvantaged young people in Glasgow.

The students will visit Coxtan Gardens with their MCR Pathways Mentor once a week to offer a range of activities to tenants. Managers, Jean Monteith and Pauline Newman, believe the students' ideas will go down well with tenants as they have previously enjoyed mindfulness, relaxation and meditation. Some of our young volunteers are very artistic and musical, offering lots of variety and an opportunity for everyone to get creative.

GOODBYE JONI

Sadly we say goodbye to our Volunteer Development Worker, Joni Mitchell, who has been with Bield for the past year supporting volunteers and managers in the West. Joni has done a fantastic job. We wish Joni well as she moves to East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action to support the third sector.



TAP INTO IT

The volunteer team are working in partnership with Tap into IT, an Edinburgh based charity that helps older people access the benefits of the internet and technology. We are recruiting volunteers to join the team, to help run a new computer club for tenants at Manderston Court in Leith.

The club, which will take place on Monday afternoons, 2 – 4pm from 11th March, will help tenants build confidence using the internet, social media and other forms of technology, such as iPads and smartphones. As well as learning new skills, the club will encourage social engagement, helping to reduce the risk of isolation and loneliness, which can have a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing.

Tenant, Mr Alfred Bash, said: "I'm looking forward to meeting new people who are also keen to learn and increase their skills in using technology. I think being part of a club with others that are new to this will also give me confidence to ask questions on things I may not understand and not feel embarrassed for asking."

Amy our Volunteer Development Worker said: "Our volunteer Silver Surfer Tutors provide similar support in other developments and our tenants get so much out of it. Our volunteers get a lot of satisfaction from it too and it's a great role to add to your CV!"



VOLUNTEERING IN ALEXANDRIA

Our Volunteer Co-ordinator Joni has been working on a project focusing on volunteering recruitment in our West Dunbartonshire developments. At Oakbank Gardens, the established 7-strong volunteer team already offer a great range of social options to tenants, from takeaway nights to regular coffee mornings.

Jim Robertson has been volunteering with Bield for around 5 years. Jim loves to sing and you can often see him with a microphone in hand at the twice weekly afternoon teas. "More people should volunteer as it's so fulfilling", says Jim. "I would love to see more young people volunteering as it helps build new skills and gives you a reference to help you get the job you want". Jacqueline Malarky, who is both staff member and Bield volunteer, hosts the monthly take away and film night. Jacqueline says "Without volunteers, social activities like afternoon teas, bingo, movie nights, take away nights could not happen."

Wonderful managers like Linda Hall at Oakbank help make the volunteering journey worthwhile and she really shows her appreciation to each volunteer. We recently worked with the local press in West Dunbartonshire to promote our volunteering opportunities and a lovely story about Jacqueline and Jim was picked up by the local press and has already resulted in new volunteer applications.

Contact us:

Volunteer Team, Department of Human Resources,
79 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh, EH7 4QF
Tel: 0131 273 4020 • Email: volunteering@bield.co.uk

Gingerbread Recipe

Ingredients

125g / 4 oz butter
 50g / 2 oz brown sugar
 175g / 6 oz dark treacle
 50g / 2 oz golden syrup
 150ml / 5 fl oz milk
 2 eggs
 225g / 8oz flour
 5ml / 1 teaspoon mix spice
 10ml / 2 teaspoons ground ginger
 5ml / 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda



Method

- 1 Put the butter, sugar, treacle and syrup into a saucepan.
- 2 Heat until the butter has melted. Remove from the heat, add the milk and set aside to cool. When cool, beat in the eggs.
- 3 Sift the flour, spices and soda into a bowl. Add the butter mixture and stir well.
- 4 Line a 1kg/2lb loaf tin with a double thickness of greaseproof paper. Spoon in the batter and put the tin in the oven preheated to cool (150°C/300°F or Gas Mark 2). Bake for 1¼ to 1½ hours, or until a knife inserted into the centre comes out clean.
- 5 Cool on a wire rack, and keep overnight before serving. Icing as desired.

A Christmas Feast at Donaldson Court



Many of our developments held Christmas events to celebrate the festive season.

Donaldson Court held a fantastic Christmas party and the buffet prepared by Janet the cook, disappeared very quickly!

Thanks to everyone who sent in festive photographs. These are featured on pages 30 & 31.

Preston Pantry



Preston Pantry, a restaurant style bistro, was launched at Johnny Moat Place, Preston in March 2016. Held every few months, the evening service offers a choice of three courses, with all food being prepared on site.

The service is always popular and extremely well attended – we can see why in the surrounding photos!

There is no charge for the evening but people are asked to make a donation.

The latest bistro evening was held in February. Fabulous food, friends and entertainment provided by Davie Martin.



Don't forget

If you are a tenant planning to cook food as a social event for other tenants in the development then you **must** have the necessary food hygiene certificate to do so.

This goes for all occasions, such as a one-off meal or something more regular and regardless of whether you are cooking the food in your own home or in a communal kitchen. This is a statutory requirement that covers all you need to know about health and hygiene in the kitchen.

To find out more, simply ask a member of staff.

ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL PILOT PROJECT NOW LIVE

BR24 were successful in a bid to work in Partnership with the Scottish Government on a pilot project transferring alarm calls to BR24 from analogue to digital technology.

The work is part of a pathway project in advance of BT's plan to switch off the analogue telephone network across the UK by 2025.

The pilot at three Bield developments means that calls no longer go via traditional telephone lines and now go via a digital connection (i.e. broadband / over the internet).

Tenants living at Mungo Park Court, Selkirk, Kirkton Court, Kirriemuir and Castlebank Gardens, Glasgow will now benefit from a faster connection to BR24 when they activate their alarm.

The developments were selected for the pilot based on size and geographical location taking account of rural and inner city locations.

The many benefits for BR24 and the tenants include:

- ✓ reduced telephony costs for Bield as most calls will link to BR24 via broadband
- ✓ the ability to instantly recognise faults, which has not been possible with older analogue systems
- ✓ increased resilience as the analogue connection will still exist providing a back-up to the new digital system should any problems arise

The impact of this change will be minimal for tenants; they will continue to use their pendants / pull-cords in exactly the same way. No property alterations are required as the changes being made only affect the main warden call system and how that equipment communicates with BR24.

The months of hard work have paid off and we are delighted to be the first of the project partners to implement the new technology.

More about the project and what it means

What does 'digital' mean, how does it differ from analogue?

Digital calls are sent over the internet, while analogue calls are transmitted in the traditional way via telephone wires and a telephone exchange.

What are the benefits?

Using a digital connection allows much more information to be transmitted than an analogue connection. Being able to transmit larger volumes of information has several benefits, not least the fact that alarm calls will be connected more quickly to our alarm monitoring centre Bield Response24 (BR24).

Other benefits include:

- ✓ improved fault monitoring and diagnosis due to the fact that the digital connection enables more detailed (and more frequent) information about faults to be communicated to BR24
- ✓ being ready, due to the establishment of digitally enabled call handling, for the new and improved monitoring systems developed by various manufacturers
- ✓ enabling BR24 to receive calls at different locations because they would not need fixed telephone wires to receive the calls. This provides greater resilience if the BR24 office or the Disaster Recovery site cannot be used.

Although not possible at present, moving to a digital connection will also have the following long-term benefits:

- ✓ the provision of a higher capacity connection between subscribers' homes and BR24, which provides the capability for the deployment of more sophisticated sensors / monitors and other devices
- ✓ the potential for Digital Telecare systems to link to home automation ('smart home') solutions, e.g. heating and lighting systems
- ✓ the potential to introduce video-based Telecare applications
- ✓ the potential for Telecare monitoring to be implemented on subscribers' own digital devices (for example, smartphones or tablets), rather than dedicated devices procured and maintained by BR24

Why are BT switching off the analogue network in 2025?

The existing analogue network can no longer meet the needs of the modern world, especially in terms of its capacity to deliver internet speeds suitable for things like video conferencing and streaming. The existing analogue network is gradually being replaced by alternatives such as superfast fibre optic broadband. Telephone calls will be transmitted digitally via the internet once the analogue phone network has been turned off in 2025.

What are Bield planning to do before 2025 switch off?

Bield are working with the Scottish Government on a digital pathway by enabling existing systems to be fitted with a digital communicator which upgrades calls to BR24 into a digital format. Further upgrades will be required for any systems that are incompatible with the digital communicator. All new system upgrades will be in a digital format as standard.

How does it affect the way alarm systems work?

Tenants will continue to use their alarms in the same way as they do at present.

Will any work need to be undertaken in individual properties?

No, the change relates to the connection between the development and the BR24 office. The relevant equipment, for example an internet router, has already been installed at each development. The alarm equipment that is already installed in each home will stay the same.

Will the digital system incur a cost?

No, the switch to digital alarm calls will not affect rent and service charges.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS



Many congratulations to Pat Mills of Kirkton Court, Kirriemuir who recently celebrated his 101st birthday.



Congratulations to Sadie McLellan of Bridge Court, Alexandria who celebrated her 90th birthday with a party.



Congratulations to Peggy Duff of Loch Laidon Court, Glasgow who celebrated her 100th birthday in January.



Best wishes to Mhari Coldwell of Bridge Court, Alexandria who recently celebrated her 80th birthday.



Best wishes to Agnes Boyd of Crosshill Gardens who recently celebrated her 80th birthday.



Congratulations to Lillie McQuilken of Crosshill Gardens who enjoyed her 90th birthday celebrations.



Bonfire Night dinner at Emily Court, Gorebridge.



Tenants of Inglefield Court, Airdrie enjoying their Burns lunch.



Burns night celebrations at Jamaica Court, Greenock.



Tenants of Armadale Court, Greenock enjoying Burns Supper celebrations.



St Andrews Day celebrations at Jamaica Court, Greenock.



Tenants of Emily Court, Gorebridge enjoying stovies on St Andrews Day



Tenants enjoying Valentines Day at Jamaica Court, Greenock.



Skelmorlie Stompers line dancers from Crosshill Gardens, Port Glasgow.



Mr Bishop from Whitehill Lodge in Dalkeith with his model collection.



Tenants from Moorfoot Court, Bonnyrigg with cheque from local community charity shop which will be used to buy garden furniture.



Tenants of Oakburn Gardens, Milngavie are supporting the local community by taking part in making Scottish themed tissue paper windows. Leo Rouse is pictured with the display.



Children from Carmondean nursey visited Pentland View Court in Livingston for a craft session.



The craft group from Southfield Court in Dunbar enjoyed an afternoon floral art demonstration.



Mrs Cathie of Whitehill Lodge, Dalkeith knits foot muffs for the local church to donate to Care homes for people with dementia.



Crosshill Gardens, Port Glasgow hold volunteer celebration at a local restaurant, everyone enjoyed good food in great company!



Crosshill Gardens tenants Rose Higgins, Gordon Coe and Margaret Sneddon off to the tea dance at Port Glasgow town hall.

Alternative Formats Available

We want to make communicating with you as easy as possible, every edition of the Bulletin is sent to each development and project on CD. Please ask your local manager if you want to borrow it. We can also arrange for you to be sent your own personal CD copy - just let us know if you would like this.

If you would like any Bield document in a community language, braille, large print or CD please contact your local manager, housing officer or the communications and marketing team, based in the Edinburgh Office.

Many of our documents are available to download on our website - www.bield.co.uk - within the resources section.





Armadale Court, Greenock



Brae Court, Linlithgow



Braehead Gardens, Buckhaven



Broomfield Gardens, Airdrie



Crosshill Gardens, Port Glasgow



Dean Court, Bo'ness



Donaldson Court, Edinburgh



Douglasfield, Dundee



Fife Court, Bothwell



Glebe/Warrick Court, Cumnock





Jamaica Court, Greenock



Kirkton Court, Kirriemuir



McCormack Gardens, Newarthill



Oakbank, Alexandria



Oakburn Park, Milngavie



Pentland View Court, Livingston



Quayside Court, Perth



Springfield Gardens, Uddingston



Whitehill Court, Kirkintilloch

Please send your neighbourhood news to the Communications and Marketing Team at 79 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh. EH7 4QF or by email to business.support@bield.co.uk

Some of your news is so lovely that we like to share it on Facebook and Twitter. Please let us know if you'd rather they are only published in the Bulletin.



WORDSEARCH

Tell us which word is missing from the wordsearch for your chance of winning £25 Marks & Spencer vouchers.

C	R	O	C	E	T	I	N	O	C	A	R	E	T	N	I	W
F	A	N	E	T	G	A	M	E	H	Z	N	O	L	I	S	I
Z	F	M	P	W	Y	O	B	E	I	E	C	E	U	R	M	N
I	H	A	E	H	M	O	L	I	O	R	A	B	O	H	I	T
G	Y	E	D	L	U	I	L	I	D	O	F	F	A	D	R	S
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R	C	S	E	T	L	I	J	M	O	E	L	O	W	I	G	A
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**ANEMONE
AZALEAS
CAMELLIA
CHIONODOXA
CROCUSES
DAFFODIL
FORSYTHIA
HELLEBORE**

**HYACINTHS
MAGNOLIA
PANSY
PRIMROSE
SNOWDROP
TULIPS
WINTER ACONITE
WITCH HAZEL**

WORDSEARCH WINNERS

Congratulations to **Mrs Matthew** of Tay Court and **Mrs Tough** of Strathmartine Court - the winners of the last wordsearch competition.

The correct answer was: **Snowy**.

ANSWER: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

**ENTRIES SHOULD BE
RETURNED BY 17TH
MAY 2019 TO:**

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