

# Bulletin

## Bield celebrates awards for Leadership in Tenant Engagement and Equality

**We're overjoyed to share some fantastic news with you! Recently, we had the honour of winning not just one but two prestigious awards for our work in supporting tenants and building inclusive communities across Scotland.**

We were named Housing Organisation of the Year at the TIS National Excellence Awards in November. This recognition highlights our commitment to putting tenants at the heart of everything we do - whether it's creating welcoming communities, involving

you in decisions or making sure our homes and services meet your needs.

We also received the Marion Gibbs Award for Equality in Housing at the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland Awards, celebrating our efforts to make housing fair and accessible for everyone. This includes the work of our tenant-led Equality Network, which has launched initiatives like the Rainbow Network to support

LGBT+ tenants and improved access to our services for those who don't speak English as their first language.



L-R: Kaye Adams (host), Robert Black (Policy & Insight Officer, Bield), Claire Macbeth (Head of Customer Contact Services, Bield), Maria Martin (Customer Contact Services Co-ordinator, Bield), Kalli Fox (Customer Standards Administrator, Bield), Tracey Howatt (Director of Customer Experience, Bield), Zhan McIntyre (Head of Policy & Customer Standards, Bield), Callum Chomczuk (National Director of CIH Scotland)

# Bield celebrates awards for Leadership in Tenant Engagement and Equality (continued)

Debbie Collins, Interim Chief Executive Officer at Bield, said: "Winning these awards means a lot to us because they show that listening to our tenants and working together really makes a difference. For example, the Housing Organisation of the Year Award reflects how we've worked side-by-side with tenants to shape policies and services that matter most to them."

Zhan McIntyre, Head of Policy & Customer Standards at Bield, added: "The Marion Gibbs Award for Equality in Housing recognises how we're addressing specific community needs. Thanks to input from tenants, we've introduced changes to ensure everyone feels welcome and included, from creating better connections for LGBT+ tenants to removing language barriers that might make it harder to access services."

We're proud to keep building a community where everyone feels heard, respected and supported. These awards aren't just about us - they're a celebration of what we've achieved together. Thank you for being part of our journey!



Robert Black (Policy & Insight Officer, Bield), Zhan McIntyre (Head of Policy & Customer Standards, Bield), Kalli Fox (Customer Standards Administrator, Bield), Alan Morris (Tenant Engagement & Participation Lead, Bield)



L-R: Representative from award sponsor, Citrus Energy, Zhan McIntyre (Head of Policy & Customer Standards, Bield), Deborah Docherty (Bield tenant), Tracey Howatt (Director of Customer Experience, Bield), Eddy McKelvie (Bield tenant), Kalli Fox (Customer Standards Administrator, Bield), Robert Black (Policy & Insight Officer, Bield), Alan Morris (Tenant Engagement & Participation Lead, Bield), Gary Lamont (host)

We also received these trophies for being the runner-up in two separate categories at the TPAS National Good Practice Awards in June!



# Win a £50 voucher

## for sharing your views - rent levels for 2025/26



We would like to hear your views on our proposed rent levels from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. As you may know, your rent pays for your homes and the services we provide. This year, we face additional financial pressures, including increased employer contributions for National Insurance and the rise in the Scottish Living Wage – challenges shared by many third sector providers and businesses right now.

To maintain the quality of our services and meet these rising costs, we're proposing a rent increase of at least 4.5%, and we'd like your feedback on the possibility of increasing it by 5%.

As part of this consultation, we're also eager to understand your thoughts on value for money. Your feedback will help us ensure we're delivering services that meet your needs and expectations.

### How to complete the survey

A survey is enclosed with this newsletter to gather your feedback. You have several options for returning it:

- **Complete it online** using the QR code provided.
- **Give your completed survey to your local manager.**
- **Send it by Freepost** to our Glasgow office.

**Please complete and return the survey by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**

**Don't miss out! By sharing your views, you'll be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win a £50 voucher. Thank you for helping shape our approach to rent levels. Your input is invaluable as we make decisions for the year ahead.**





# Strategy update

Since our last newsletter, Bield has continued to deliver our Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 'Setting the Pace...Our People, Our Homes, Our Communities'. This strategy is our vision for how we will continue to improve customer experience, invest in our homes and further achieve our purpose: *to make it possible for more people to live their best lives, at home, surrounded by a supportive community.*

Below are some highlights from the past year which we wanted to share with you:

## Updated Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Since April this year, our Customer Engagement Team have updated how we conduct our Tenant Satisfaction Survey. Rather than sending the survey to everyone at once, we now survey sections of our tenants quarterly. This new approach will allow us to see trends from specific areas, enabling us to 'deep dive' into local issues affecting each area. Thank you to everyone who has participated in this survey so far, we are very excited to see an increase in response rate from previous years!



## Independent Living Offer

In partnership with our tenants, we have developed a new Independent Living Offer which focuses on personalising our approach and the services we offer. Before delivering this new offer to all our tenants, we need to make sure we have got it right. Implementation will be gradual, starting with pilots at selected developments. The first pilot is being worked on at the moment, in collaboration with staff and tenants. Tenants and staff will be involved in how the pilot is delivered, and the team will be using feedback to inform the next pilot and overall implementation. See page 24 for more on this.



## Improved Tenant Insights

Bield's Customer Engagement Team has also been working closely with tenants to create Tenant Personas. Personas are fictional characters, based on examples of real-life Bield tenants, representing our tenants' different needs and expectations in a more visible way. Tenant personas make it easier for staff to consider the impact that service changes have on our tenants, to ensure we are putting you at the heart of everything that we do. Bield's Tenant Personas were created with our many tenant engagement groups, as well as using the insights that we get from surveys and speaking to tenants. They are being used this year to inform our rent review process, service changes and strategy delivery.



## Care Management System

Bield has implemented a new Care Management System to help us deliver our Supported Living Services. This went live a couple of months ago. In one month alone, Bield's Support Workers delivered 13,517 hours of care, administered 25,473 medications and completed 32,857 care tasks. The new system allows for an easily-personalised approach to Supported Living and Care, reducing the time taken for administration work. This frees up valuable staff time to focus on better meeting the needs of our Supported Living customers.





## Bield's Design Principles for New Build and Remodelling

Consultation on Bield's new Design Principles is under way. The Design Principles give direction for our new build and retrofit projects, ensuring that they are designed to meet the needs and expectations of tenants both now and in the future. We have identified five key principles within the Design Principles: value for money, independent living, health, safety and regulatory compliance, co-production and sustainability. These may be subject to change following consultation. If you would like to be involved in the consultation, please get in touch at: [info@bield.co.uk](mailto:info@bield.co.uk)



We are developing our Strategy Delivery Plan for the next 12 months, to ensure we continue to deliver the goals set out in our Strategy to 2028. Within this work we are identifying the actions we need to take to continue to deliver high-quality services, as well as those to bring our Strategy and priorities to life in the coming months.



We are closely reviewing the recent UK Government budget to understand its impact on Bield and the social housing sector. Our goal is to ensure that Bield remains sustainable while staying focused on what matters most to you - delivering high-quality services that are affordable and meet your needs. More information on our Strategy and Delivery Plan will feature in our spring newsletter.

## Bield Leadership team changes

**We wanted to share some news with you about changes to our leadership team and reflect on the great progress we're continuing to make together.**

After the recent departure of our CEO (Dr Lynne Douglas), we've put in place a temporary leadership arrangement to make sure everything runs smoothly and stays on track with our plans and commitments. Our Chief Operating Officer, Debbie Collins, has stepped up as Interim CEO. She is dedicated

to supporting tenants and delivering projects that really make a difference.

The Board is confident that Debbie's experience and steady hand will keep things moving in the right direction while they take the time to carefully find the right person for the CEO role. Recruitment for this position is planned to start in early 2025, and we'll keep you updated throughout the process.

As always, our focus is on working with and for you, and we'll make sure to keep



Debbie Collins - Interim CEO

you informed every step of the way as we take this next important step forward together.

# Supporting tenants affected by Domestic Abuse: Draft Policy Update

We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all our tenants, and we are working to finalise a policy that ensures survivors of domestic abuse receive the support they need. We take this issue very seriously and our draft policy, which will be presented to our Board for approval early in the new year, is designed to put survivors first. This means our approach will be flexible and tailored to individual needs,

whether that involves helping a tenant remain safely in their home or providing support to relocate, based on their preference.

As part of this work, we are securing role-specific training for our staff to ensure they are well-prepared to respond to situations involving domestic abuse with the sensitivity and understanding they require. Additionally, our properties are designed with safety in mind. Features

like dual-pin door locks and forced entry prevention provide a strong foundation for tenant security and peace of mind.

The draft policy will be available on the Bield website for your comments until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025. We encourage you to review it and share any feedback you may have. Your input is important to us as we work to create a safe and supportive environment for everyone in our community.

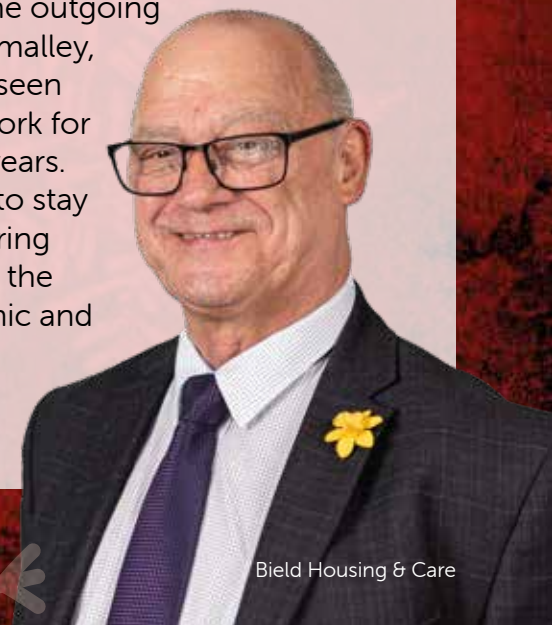
## Engaging together for stronger communities

Tenant engagement and participation are vital for creating thriving communities. By joining different groups, tenants can share their voices, contribute ideas and help shape the services and support that matter most to them. These groups foster collaboration, ensure diverse perspectives are heard, and strengthen the sense of belonging among tenants. Here's an overview of the various tenant engagement and participation groups available to you at Bield - find one that matches your interests and get involved!

## Partnership Forum

The Bield Partnership Forum is an independent group run by tenants and supported by Bield. The purpose of the Partnership Forum is to provide a national group within which tenant participation proposals at a strategic level are discussed and decided. The group represents tenants across Bield and provides a voice for tenants in relation to decisions made by Bield.

We would like to offer our gratitude to the outgoing Chair, Willie Smalley, who has overseen the groups' work for the past few years. Willie agreed to stay in this role during and following the covid pandemic and will remain a member of the group.





# Communication Champions

The Bield Communication Champions is another independent group run by tenants and supported by Bield. They work together to influence and review communications between Bield and our customers to improve the services customers receive. They meet with our Communications Manager as well as other staff to influence future communications and review and update new and existing communications. The group influenced our spring 2024 newsletter and this winter edition, providing valuable tenant insight regarding its content and appearance.



# Equality Network

The Bield Equality Network is a group of tenants who work with officers at Bield to improve the awareness and understanding of the needs of people with protected characteristics and improve services provided to them. The group also works to identify changes or campaigns to promote equality and diversity across the organisation.

The group was recently expanded to include officers from across Bield as well. The group was shortlisted for a TIS Excellence Award this year and recently won the Marion Gibbs Award for Equality in Housing at the CIH Scotland Housing Awards (see front page and page 2).

# Tenant Action on Sustainability



This new group will work with Bield officers to review and influence work to improve our sustainability. We are close to agreeing our first meeting of this group and wanted to thank those who came forward to join. The group will look at ways for Bield to become more sustainable, for example, exploring installing more solar panels on buildings, encouraging better recycling and re-use and looking to future technology. A lot of these schemes cost money and, to avoid putting pressure on rents, Bield relies on grant funding to pay for them. You may be aware that there has been a decrease in grant funding for social housing providers which will have a serious impact on what can and cannot be done.

# Compliment and Complaint Collective

**This group of tenants invites staff to review the compliments and complaints Bield have received to make recommendations on how services can be improved for customers.**

The group was recently shortlisted at the Tenant Information Service (TIS) National Excellence Awards for their work.





## Rainbow Network

The Rainbow Network provides a friendly and supportive space for LGBTQIA+ tenants. The group meets informally every month online and are seeking new members who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community. A new poster campaign will be rolled out shortly to encourage more people to join.

## Registered Tenant Organisations

Tenants can form a Registered Tenant Organisation at their own developments. This is a more formal group which can be consulted on wider issues within Bield. We are aware of a few such groups and are actively encouraging more to form.

## Scrutiny Group

We are in the process of establishing a new group which supersedes the Bield Improvement Group (BIG). This group will consist of tenants who want to help improve Bield's processes and policies. The group will function independently to scrutinise how Bield operates and will offer their recommendations come the end of the task.



## Regional Forums

Work is ongoing in a few regions to establish groups who want to make improvements closer to home. These groups can only function if everyone works together. If you would be interested in seeing a regional forum established in your local area, please get in touch with the team at: [engage@bield.co.uk](mailto:engage@bield.co.uk)



## Small Grants Fund - 2nd round

The second round of the Small Grants Fund will be launching soon so, if you think your development is missing something, please get in touch with the Development Manager to make an application.

We received a total of 19 applications in the last round, of which five were successful. We are working with colleagues in procurement to increase our options. Some of the applications from the first round included garden furniture, plants and pots, items for a quiet room and new games. One of the successful recipients was Langvout Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Biggar. They used the funding to purchase large piece jigsaws, large playing cards and a jigsaw table and Retirement Housing Manager Kirsty set up a fun jigsaw challenge for the tenants!





# Tenant Insight Network

The Tenant Insight Network (TIN) is a digital mailing list of tenants who are willing to be contacted with information about what is going on in Bield and are happy to provide their insight and opinions online via email.

The Tenant Insight Network will replace what used to be our Interested Parties List - by implementing this change it will allow Bield to get a better understanding of the needs of our tenants in a more time-effective manner. This could be through pulse surveys or email updates on policies or matters of interest to our tenants.

Tenant Engagement & Participation group	When do the groups meet?	Where do the groups meet?	Vacancies
<b>Partnership Forum</b>	Quarterly – First Thursday of the month in May, August, November and February.	Hybrid – Via Teams and in person at our West Port development in Linlithgow	6 vacancies
<b>Communication Champions</b>	Three to four times a year	Online – Via teams	Vacancies (No limit)
<b>Rainbow Network</b>	Last Wednesday of every month	Online – Via Teams	Open to all
<b>Tenant Action on Sustainability</b>	Three to four times a year	Online – Via Teams	Vacancies (No limit)
<b>Compliment and Complaint Collective</b>	Twice a year	Online – Via Teams	Vacancies (No limit)
<b>Equality Network</b>	Quarterly	Online – Via Teams	Vacancies (No limit)

If you're interested in joining one or more of Bield's tenant engagement and participation groups, please get in touch by emailing: [engage@bield.co.uk](mailto:engage@bield.co.uk) and one of our Policy & Customer Standards team members will provide you with more information.

# A new Rent Policy: what you need to know

**Bield undertook a review of our Rent Policy in 2018, which resulted in changes to the way that we presented our rents and service charges to tenants. Since this time, tenants have indicated to us that they would like greater transparency in the way we show our service charges, so that it is easier to see changes in charges for the services they use.**

We have listened to you and are now working on updating our Rent Policy, taking into consideration what you have been telling us over this time.

We value your input as we move forward with these changes. In the new year, we will send out a survey to gather your feedback and hold focus groups for direct discussions. Your feedback is crucial to ensure the changes meet your needs.

Our aim is to complete the survey and present the results for Board approval by March 2025. After that, we will test the changes over several months to ensure everything runs smoothly, aiming for full implementation of the new charging arrangements by April 2026.

## Welcome our new Board Members!

**We are pleased to introduce two new members who joined the Bield Board this year, bringing fresh ideas and valuable expertise to help us serve our community better.**

Gillian Merrett is a tenant in Blairgowrie with experience working in NHS Research and Ethics. As a member of Bield's Partnership Forum, she brings experience in scrutinising policy and providing a voice for tenants. Gillian has an interest in health equality and social justice in old age and, with shifting demographics over the coming years, she is keen to play a part in how Bield deliver our services in these areas.

Katie Smart is a housing professional and currently the Director of Places for



Gillian Merrett

People Scotland. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing and the Institute of Directors. As part of her current role, she oversees strategic initiatives, maintaining operational priorities and delivering continuous improvement projects. Katie recognises the challenges facing the sector and the opportunities Bield have to make a difference to



Katie Smart

the lives of our current and future tenants.

Both Gillian and Katie are committed to listening to tenant feedback and ensuring your needs remain at the heart of our services. They've already hit the ground running and we're confident their dedication and skills will make a positive impact. Please join us in welcoming them to the team!



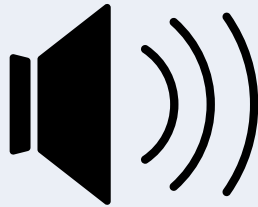
# Being a good neighbour: building a welcoming community together

At Bield, we believe in creating a positive, respectful environment where everyone feels comfortable and at home. Recently, we've noticed an increase in situations where some tenants may not be as considerate of their neighbours as they could be. This is something many communities are facing after the pandemic, and it's a great reminder of how important it is to show care and respect for those around us.

## How we can all be good neighbours

### Noise Awareness –

Whether it's in your own flat, the communal lounge, or in hallways, please remember that noise can carry. Keep voices and music at considerate levels, especially in the evening.



**Shared Spaces** – Our communal areas, like lounges and laundry rooms, are for everyone's enjoyment. Taking turns, tidying up after use, and respecting any guidelines in place can make sure they're welcoming for all.



### Considerate Use of Facilities –

When using shared spaces like the laundry room, remember that others may be waiting. Sticking to a fair rota and taking your items out promptly can help everything run smoothly.



### Considerate Use of Alcohol

– Socialising is encouraged, but please be mindful about drinking alcohol, especially late into the night. Excessive noise or disruption caused by late-night gatherings can disturb others, so we ask everyone to be considerate if they choose to have a drink in shared spaces.



## Good Neighbour Policy

To promote a positive environment, we're currently developing a Good Neighbour Policy. This policy will outline ways to support harmony within the community and provide guidance on how to address any concerns or disputes if they arise. Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to making our community a respectful, enjoyable place for everyone. By being mindful and showing respect, we can all contribute to a peaceful and friendly living environment.



# Foodbank donations

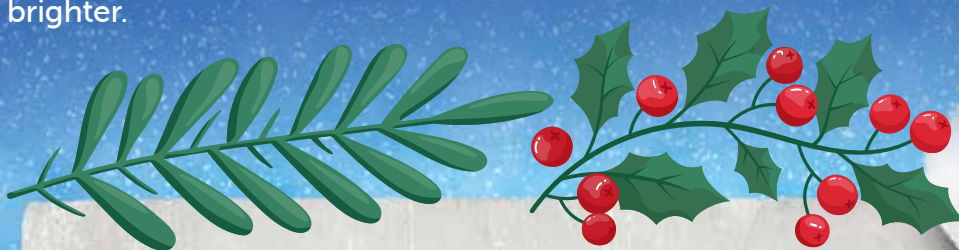
Bield Response 24 (BR24) is delighted to be supporting Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels (OKFP) this Christmas, helping bring comfort and joy to vulnerable families and elderly individuals within its community. OKFP was founded by Maureen and Gordon Cummings during the first covid lockdown and has since provided food and toiletries to over 12,000 people, thanks to a dedicated team of nearly 100 volunteers.

This festive season, the team at BR24 have been collecting a wide range of essential items to contribute to OKFP's annual Christmas drive. Donations so far include staple foods such as soup, pasta sauce, and tinned meals (like macaroni cheese and meatballs), along with toiletries like deodorant and toothpaste. Additional seasonal items, including small treats and Christmas puddings, are also being donated to help make the holidays a little brighter.



Some of our BR24 staff with the latest foodbank donations

With the combined efforts of both the BR24 team and the generosity of supporters, the OKFP can continue to provide meaningful assistance to the community's most vulnerable members this Christmas.



## A reminder about our Unacceptable Actions Policy

**We're committed to ensuring all interactions between tenants, staff and contractors are respectful and positive. To support this, we have an Unacceptable Actions Policy in place to address behaviours such as verbal abuse, harassment, or any form of threatening conduct. This policy helps us maintain a safe and supportive environment for everyone in our community.**

We understand that housing issues can sometimes be stressful, and we're here to listen and work with you to find solutions. However, we ask all tenants and their visitors (including family members) to communicate with kindness and patience. By respecting this policy, we can continue to provide the best possible service and create a welcoming community for everyone. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.



# Upcoming competition – help us name the Bield Tech Hub robot dog!

**We're excited to announce an upcoming competition early in the new year, where Bield tenants will get the chance to name one of the star attractions at our Bield Tech Hub – the friendly robotic dog that's quickly become a favourite among visitors!**

As part of the innovative tech hub, a fully equipped two-bedroom ensuite flat located at our West Port development in Linlithgow, the robotic dog joins a variety of technology-enabled devices designed to make home life more comfortable and supportive. Tenants can explore the latest in smart home tech, from robotic window cleaners and smart lighting to non-invasive falls sensors and microbead shower heads.

Keep an eye out for more details on the competition in the new year

and be ready to help us name our beloved tech companion! The winning name will be announced in an upcoming newsletter. If you'd like to meet our robotic dog and experience the Bield Tech Hub firsthand, please email: [br24@bield.co.uk](mailto:br24@bield.co.uk) to arrange a visit.



The robot dog is ready for Christmas at the Bield Tech Hub!

## Improving digital literacy

Bute Advice Centre approached our Foley Court Retirement Housing development earlier this year to offer digital literacy training for tenants. Thanks to support from Ross, some of our tenants completed the two week training course and are now the happy owners of Apple tablets!



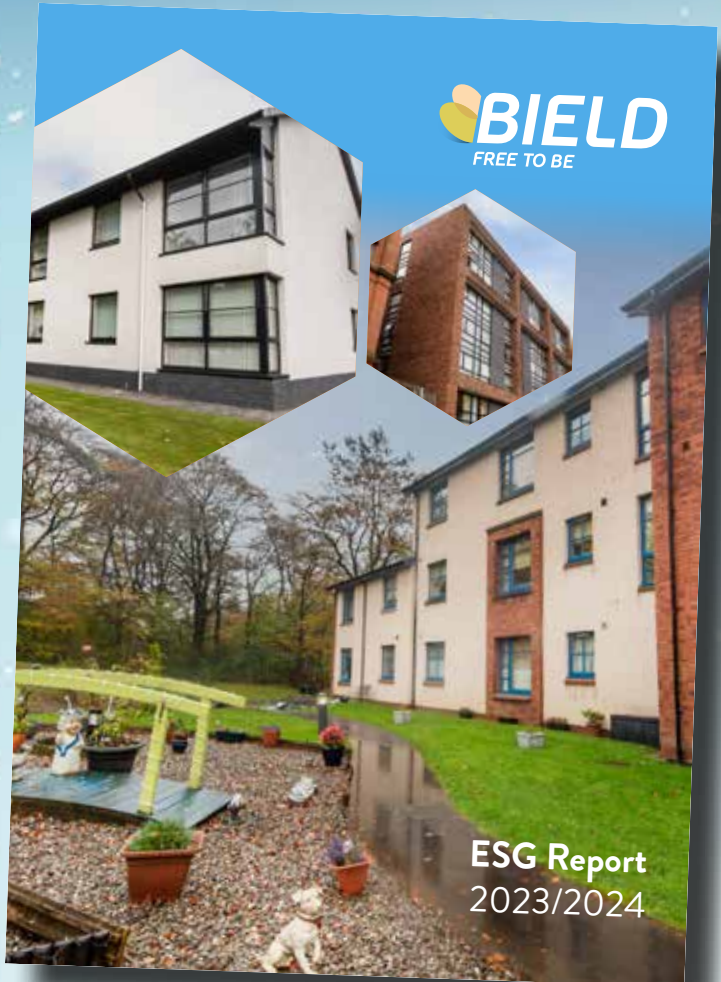
# Development and Investment update

Bield have published our first Environmental, Social and Governance Report (ESG) which can be found on our website at [www.bield.co.uk/business-plans-reports-and-strategies](http://www.bield.co.uk/business-plans-reports-and-strategies). Our ESG report reemphasises Bield's commitment to reducing our environmental impact and behaving sustainably for the benefit of our existing and future tenants and staff, as well as the communities we are part of.

Over the coming reporting year, we will deepen our commitment by collaborating with tenants and partners to co-develop new design principles for both new and existing homes. Additionally, we will explore and test innovative technologies to support the ongoing evolution of our communities, paving the way toward a Net Zero future.

To assist with future planning, our Development & Investment team have begun work to assess ways in which our buildings can be made as energy efficient as possible in order to minimise the cost of heating our homes. The team have been gathering and analysing data to identify poor-performing buildings in order to prioritise and establish solutions to deliver retrofit programmes of work.

Some early work to research various retrofit solutions has commenced by commissioning a specialised consultant to carry out a heat demand analysis and feasibility studies. These feasibility studies establish the existing performance of buildings, and their potential by implementing energy efficiency measures.



Due to Scottish Government cuts and no guarantee in funding to deliver Net Zero retrofit projects, our Development & Investment team have had to refocus the delivery of large scale retrofit projects, by initiating a "fabric first" approach to housing insulation. This involves improving the efficiency of walls and lofts before replacing heating systems. Over the course of the next year, our team will work to establish the most pragmatic approach to identify "fabric first" investment projects whilst determining and preparing a pipeline of potential deep retrofit projects and seek funding opportunities to allow these to be progressed in future years.



As this work progresses, investment programmes to upgrade major components within homes (as identified within our asset strategy) will continue. To date, we have carried out:



**125 kitchen replacements**



**105 bathroom replacements**



**92 window and door replacements**



**3 roof replacements**



**3 communal boiler plant replacements**

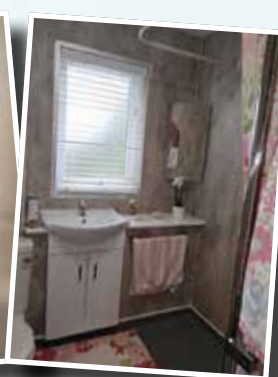


**117 digital alarm unit upgrades**

Bield remain committed to providing new, modern, affordable homes that meet our tenants' needs as demographics continue to change throughout Scotland. In a collaborative approach to help tackle the housing crisis in Scotland and increase the independent living offering in Dundee, Bield have acquired 24 homes within the Charleston area. The new homes, delivered in partnership with Blackwood, have been designed to ensure ease of accessibility, connectivity, affordability and can be easily adapted for future needs.



Check out some of the photos of recent bathroom upgrades at our Maxwell Court development in Musselburgh.



# Tenant satisfaction

Bield's 2024/25 tenant satisfaction survey is currently being carried out. This year, Bield devised a new approach to gathering tenant satisfaction with tenants being asked to complete their satisfaction survey per locality over four quarters from April 2024 to March

2025. This new approach is to ensure the data collected is being analysed and actioned within the business.

A full report will be published on the 24/25 tenant satisfaction once all tenants have had the opportunity to participate.



The information below covers Quarter one (June) and Quarter two (August). The developments that participated were in the following localities: Edinburgh, Midlothian, Scottish Borders, Fife, East Lothian, West Lothian, Perth & Kinross, Falkirk and part of West Dunbartonshire.

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by Bield?		
	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	8	1%
Very dissatisfied	21	3%
Fairly dissatisfied	33	4%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	66	9%
Fairly satisfied	294	38%
Very satisfied	347	45%

How good or poor do you feel Bield are at keeping you informed about the services we provide and the decisions we make?		
	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	18	2%
Very poor	38	5%
Fairly poor	42	5%
Neither good nor poor	85	11%
Fairly good	327	43%
Very good	259	34%

Thinking about the last time you had repairs carried out, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the repairs service provided by Bield?		
	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	107	14%
Very dissatisfied	37	5%
Fairly dissatisfied	40	5%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	45	6%
Fairly satisfied	216	28%
Very satisfied	324	42%

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities given to you to participate in Bield's decision-making processes?		
	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	64	8%
Very dissatisfied	29	4%
Fairly dissatisfied	42	5%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	217	28%
Fairly satisfied	259	34%
Very satisfied	158	21%



# survey update



Would you be interested in getting involved in our tenant engagement and participation programme? Through this you can help shape the services we offer to tenants.

Already involved	21
Yes	134
No	586

Would you be interested in Bield working with you to identify ways of ageing well?

Yes	237
No	471

Do you have access to the internet in your home?

Yes	449
No	307

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Bield's management of the neighbourhood you live in?

	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	40	5%
Very dissatisfied	13	2%
Fairly dissatisfied	21	3%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	72	9%
Fairly satisfied	283	37%
Very satisfied	340	44%

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of your home?

	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	18	2%
Very dissatisfied	9	1%
Fairly dissatisfied	21	3%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	44	6%
Fairly satisfied	316	41%
Very satisfied	361	47%

Taking into account the accommodation and services Bield provides, to what extent do you think that the rent and service charge for your property represents good or poor value for money?

	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Don't know/no opinion	43	6%
Very poor	27	3%
Fairly poor	54	7%
Neither good nor poor	127	17%
Fairly good	346	45%
Very good	172	22%

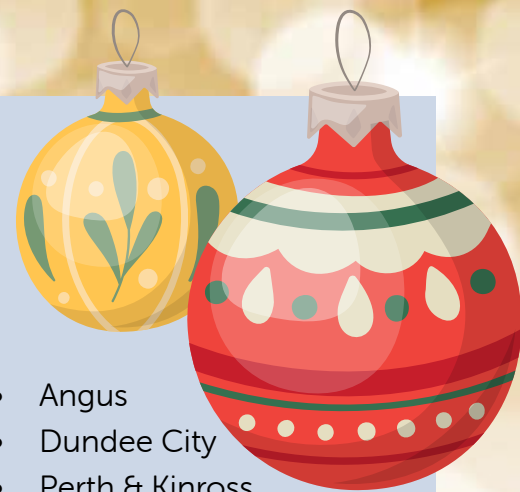
How satisfied are you when using your BR24 alarm?

	No. of responses	% of overall responses
Very dissatisfied	10	2%
Fairly dissatisfied	15	3%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	33	7%
Fairly satisfied	140	29%
Very satisfied	284	59%

Tenants in Angus, Dundee, Stirling, South & North Lanarkshire were invited to complete the survey in Quarter three that ran throughout the month of October and we are already working hard to analyse the data we have received. 557 surveys were returned in Quarter three which is a 40% return rate. We had a few developments returning 35+ surveys and one development had an amazing 46 returns (highest return to date). Out with those figures, one development has also had a 100% return rate.

Quarter four will see tenants in Argyll & Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, Glasgow, North & East Ayrshire and the rest of West Dunbartonshire invited to complete the survey during February 2025.

# Important welfare advice updates



**From 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024, Pension Age Disability Payment – the replacement for Attendance Allowance – will be piloted in Argyll & Bute, Highland, Aberdeen City, Orkney and Shetland.**

Pension Age Disability Payment will be available in the following areas from 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025:

- Aberdeenshire
- East Ayrshire
- North Ayrshire
- South Ayrshire
- Na h-Eileanan Siar
- Stirling
- Clackmannanshire
- Falkirk
- Fife

- Angus
- Dundee City
- Perth & Kinross
- Moray

From 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025, it will be available across all of Scotland. To find out more, visit: [www.gov.scot/news/new-disability-benefit-for-pensioners](https://www.gov.scot/news/new-disability-benefit-for-pensioners)

## Pension Age Winter Heating Payment (PAWHP) for winter 2024/25

**The Pension Age Winter Heating Payment has now replaced the Winter Fuel Payment in Scotland. If you're eligible, you will receive your payment automatically from the DWP in November or December. You will be notified by letter.**

A person will be eligible if, during the qualifying week (the third week in September), they were:

- Of state pension age
- Receiving a relevant benefit
  - Pension Credit
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
  - Income Support
  - Universal Credit
  - Working Tax Credits or Child Tax Credits (where the award is not less than £26 in respect of the tax year 2024-25)

For more information, visit: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-security/help-with-heating-costs/>

From 2025, the Scottish Government will have a more inclusive approach to winter fuel payments. More details will follow in future newsletters and on our website.



Did you know Bield's Income Advice Officers have helped tenants to save a remarkable £1.8m in the last 18 months? Contact your Development Manager, or speak to your Area Housing Manager at the next 'Lets Meet'/drop-in session at your development, if you would like a benefit check and they can make a referral to our Income Advice Officers on your behalf. Alternatively, you can call **03000 132 162** or email [incomeadvice@bield.co.uk](mailto:incomeadvice@bield.co.uk) to speak to them directly.





# Preparing your home for winter

**As the colder months set in, it's important to prepare your home to stay warm, safe and comfortable. Here are some tips to help you get ready for winter:**

## Prevent Frozen Pipes

Frozen pipes can cause costly damage. Keep your home warm, even if you're away, by setting your heating to a low, constant temperature. Open cabinet doors under sinks to allow warm air to circulate around pipes, and ensure outdoor taps are turned off and insulated.



## Control Condensation

To prevent dampness, try to maintain good ventilation in your home. Use extractor fans when cooking or showering and keep a small window ajar



when possible. Wipe down windows and sills if condensation appears, and avoid drying clothes indoors unless well-ventilated. For more tips, check out the Dampness and Mould leaflet available on our website: [www.bield.co.uk/leaflets](http://www.bield.co.uk/leaflets)

## Stay Warm and Save Energy

Use draught excluders or sealant around doors and windows to reduce heat loss. Keep your curtains closed in the evening to retain heat and ensure radiators are not blocked by furniture. If you're struggling with heating costs, remember to reach out for advice - we're here to help.



Taking these simple steps can help you enjoy a cozy, hassle-free winter. If you have any concerns or need assistance with preparing your home, don't hesitate to get in touch with us. Stay warm and safe this winter!

## Protect your belongings with contents insurance

**While we take care of the building you live in, it's important to remember that your personal belongings are not covered by our insurance. Contents insurance provides peace of mind, protecting your possessions against unexpected events like theft, fire or water damage. Without it, replacing damaged or stolen items could be costly and stressful.**

There are many affordable contents insurance options available. These policies can cover items like furniture, clothing and electronics, and some even provide additional benefits like accidental damage cover. Don't leave your valuables unprotected - get covered today!





# Fire safety at Christmas

Here are some top tips to keep you and your home safe over the festive season:

- Check your Christmas tree lights carry the British Safety Standard design. 
- Never place candles near your Christmas tree or materials that can catch light easily.
- Most fires start in the kitchen. Avoid leaving your cooker unattended. Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol.
- Make sure your family and visitors know how to escape in an emergency.
- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly. NEVER smoke in bed.
- Decorations can burn easily – don't attach them to lights or heaters.
- Keep candles, lighters and matches out of the reach of children.
- Never leave burning candles unattended.
- Don't overload electrical sockets. Always switch your Christmas lights off and unplug them before you go to bed.
- Take time to check on older neighbours/relatives as they are at greater risk from fire.

## Additional safety advice

- Keep your front door locked at all times.
- Don't let unknown visitors into your development via the main door security entrance.
- In the event of bad weather such as ice and snow during the festive period, please contact your Development Manager during working hours or use your pull cord to contact BR24 out with working hours to request that pathways are cleared and gritted.
- If you need to contact our Housing team urgently during the festive period please call 03000 132 162 during normal business hours and you will be transferred to the on-duty Area Housing Manager. See the back page for contact details and festive operating hours.
- In the event of an issue, your first point of contact should be your Development Manager.

Service users at our Oakburn Park Day Care service in Milngavie enjoyed a fire safety talk from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service in August and one or two couldn't resist a chance to sit in the fire engine!

Colin from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service attended at our Foley Court Retirement Housing development in Rothesay in September for his annual fire safety talk to tenants. This was Colin's last visit as he recently retired.





# How we're performing

The Scottish Housing Regulator has now published performance information about us and all other Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) in Scotland. They do this every year so that tenants can see how well their landlord is doing and how they compare to others.

You can access Bield's performance information for 2023/24 online at: [www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/landlords/bield-housing-care](http://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/landlords/bield-housing-care)

Our performance has improved in a number of areas since last year including the amount of rental income collected, the average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs and the number of repairs completed 'right first time'.

However, we know that we still have areas to improve on. In the coming year, we'll focus on enhancing our tenant engagement programmes to ensure your feedback shapes

our services and guides our decisions. We're also planning to modernise our repairs service to make it faster and more efficient.

Our latest Tenant Performance Report was co-produced with Bield tenants and can be found on our website at: [www.bield.co.uk/performance](http://www.bield.co.uk/performance)



## Holiday Club update

For many years, Bield, Hanover and Trust have had a mutual agreement in place allowing tenants to book guest rooms from each other. This arrangement has been known as the 'Holiday Club'.

Unfortunately, due to new Government legislation regarding short-term lettings, this arrangement can no longer continue. No

bookings can be made under the 'Holiday Club' arrangement.

**Bield tenants can however still book and stay in other Bield guest rooms.**

For more information about our guest rooms, please refer to our Guest Room Leaflet on our website: [www.bield.co.uk/leaflets](http://www.bield.co.uk/leaflets)

# Special birthdays



Marlene from Foley Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Rothesay, celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in August with a party in the communal lounge. Marlene worked for Bield as a Scheme Assistant before she retired.



Ada from Craigengar Park, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Livingston, celebrated her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday in August with a party in the communal lounge attended by her friends and neighbours.



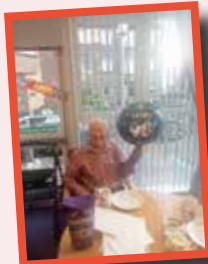
Betty from Maxwell Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Musselburgh, celebrated her 99<sup>th</sup> birthday in October with family and friends. Grandson Max even attended to play the bagpipes!



In September, Nan from Foley Court celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and had the best time at her party.



Edward from Oakbank, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Alexandria, celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in November with a delicious afternoon tea.



Peggy from Highcrofts, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Dalmellington, turned 102 years young in October and enjoyed celebrating at home with her friends and family.



Elizabeth from Campsie Gardens, one of our Retirement Housing with Meals developments in Cumbernauld, celebrated her 76<sup>th</sup> birthday in July with a party attended by tenants, friends and carers from Quarriers. As a special birthday surprise, the local fire brigade attended to wish her a happy birthday!!!







# Oakburn Park Day Care shines a light on Alzheimer's awareness

**Bield's Oakburn Park Day Care service in Milngavie celebrated World Alzheimer's Day by bringing together the local community for a powerful awareness session.**

Held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September, the event titled "I Am Still Me" highlighted the importance of recognising the person behind the illness, and explored how individuals with Alzheimer's see themselves compared to how they are seen by others.

Attendees were treated to an afternoon tea while participating in various sessions. Staff members read heartfelt poems to create a reflective and supportive atmosphere and participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences of Alzheimer's, fostering open discussions and strengthening the sense of community. There was also a light exercise class to engage everyone in gentle physical activity to help promote their overall well-being.

One of the highlights of the day was the creation of a personalised scrapbook, which showcased the lives of attendees and how Alzheimer's has impacted them.

Donna McCallum, Manager at Bield's Oakburn Park, said: "We are incredibly grateful to everyone who joined us for this special day.

"Alzheimer's is a deeply personal journey for those affected, and it's important that we continue to celebrate the individuality and history of each person.

"We wanted to remind everyone that, despite the challenges, each individual's unique life and personality still shine through.

"It's very important for us to work together as a community to break the stigma around Alzheimer's. By doing so, we create a more supportive environment for those living with the disease.

"The support from the local community has been overwhelming, and we hope this event helps to raise further awareness and understanding."

Oakburn Park's long-standing dedication to dementia care was at the heart of the event. For over 13 years, it has been a pillar of support for both those living with dementia and their families, offering professional care and vital social activities.

A family member in attendance said: "Today was really special for us. It's easy to feel like we're losing pieces of our relative to Alzheimer's, but this event reminded us that those pieces are still there.

"Watching them smile and relive memories through the scrapbook brought us so much joy. It's a gift to celebrate who they are beyond the disease, and to know we're not alone in this journey. Events like these give us hope and a sense of community that we so deeply need."

Oakburn Park Day Care is a well-known care facility that promotes a strong community spirit. The centre fosters connections with local organisations, shops and churches to ensure that its members remain engaged and integrated within the local area. It offers support for over 20 members three days a week, providing access to professional care and social activities for those living with dementia. Additionally, Oakburn Park offers a two-day-a-week service for elderly individuals who are frail and may have limited ability to stay connected with others.

# Supporting you to live independently

We're excited to let you know about our new Independent Living Offer, 'My Life, My Way – Empowering Independence', designed to help you live safely and comfortably in your own home for as long as possible.

We will be working with staff and tenants in several areas in the coming months before we introduce this enhanced service across our other developments. Within our first Independent Living Hub areas, local staff will work with individual tenants to provide practical advice, identify support options and access resources that promote independence and wellbeing.

Whether you need help with small adjustments around your home, connections to local services, or advice on staying active and social, our Independent Living Offer will be designed to help link you to your local community and identify how you can be supported. Our goal is to give you the confidence to enjoy the comfort and security of your own home.



## Your one-stop Customer Contact Centre

**We wish to remind you about our Customer Contact Centre, designed to make it easier for you to get the support you need. As your single point of contact, the centre is staffed by our friendly and highly trained Customer Contact Centre Advisors, who are ready to assist with a wide range of enquiries.**

Since its launch in May, the Customer Contact Centre has made a real impact - handling calls more efficiently and ensuring customer queries

are answered and resolved quickly. Whether you're reporting a repair, seeking help with a housing application, using the My Bield online customer portal, or just have a general enquiry, our advisors are here to help via phone or email. We're proud to provide this improved service to make communication simple and effective for all our tenants.



03000 132 162

**19,333**  
**calls**  
have been  
handled from  
**May-September**



# Access your tenancy services anytime with the My Bield Customer Portal

Did you know you can manage many of your tenancy-related services at any time, day or night, through My Bield, our online Customer Portal? The portal is simple to use and available 24/7, making it convenient to access services from the comfort of your home.

With My Bield, you can report and track repairs, view rent statements, update your contact details, and much more. It's designed to save you time and keep you in control of your tenancy. If you haven't already registered, it's easy to get started – simply visit [www.bield.co.uk/my-bield](http://www.bield.co.uk/my-bield) and contact us for guidance if you need help. Take advantage of this quick and easy way to stay connected with us whenever it suits you!

## Updates to our Property Team

We wanted to let you know about some recent changes to our Property Team to make sure we're providing the best possible service to you. Whether it's responding to repairs, improving your homes, or planning new projects, our team is here to keep everything running smoothly.

With these changes, we've added some fresh faces and new roles to strengthen the team. Everyone has been fully trained and is ready to help with all your property-related needs. From the people managing repairs to those planning maintenance works, we're all focused on making your homes safe, comfortable, and well-maintained.

If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to us through the usual channels. We're excited about these improvements and look forward to continuing to support you!

- **Gavin Wright** is our new Head of Property Management. He has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of our Property Management function which includes our Repairs Service and compliance activities.



- **Selina Campbell** is our new Compliance Manager. She is responsible for the day-to-day management of our service and compliance contracts.
- **Kirsty Azboy** is our new Repairs Manager. She oversees our maintenance and repair services, ensuring work is completed efficiently, to a high standard, and in line with our commitments.



# Support over the festive season

The holiday season can be a challenging time for many, but it's important to remember you're not alone. Whether you're struggling financially, emotionally, or mentally, there are many agencies and services available to provide support.

If you're feeling overwhelmed or in need of someone to talk to, Samaritans are available 24/7 to listen. You can call them for free on **116 123**. Find out more at: [www.samaritans.org.uk/scotland](http://www.samaritans.org.uk/scotland)

For mental health support, speak to your GP. Mind, the mental health charity, can also help – you can call them on **0300 123 3393** or visit: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Veterans and their families can reach out to SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity for practical, emotional and financial support. Call them on **0800 260 6780** or visit: [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

For financial challenges, including debt advice, your local Citizens Advice Bureau offer free, confidential support. Your local authority may also have a free, confidential Money Matters service to help you claim benefits and deal with debt.

Bield tenants can access the Tenant Energy Support service from Changeworks for advice, information and support to help you save energy, be affordably warm and obtain financial support. You can contact Changeworks on freephone **0800 870 8800** between 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday or by emailing: <https://changeworksinfo.org/bield-tes>

If you need food assistance, please contact your Development Manager, who can provide information about foodbanks and soup kitchens in your area. These resources are there to help if you're struggling to make ends meet. The Salvation Army also supports individuals with meals and other assistance during the festive season. Find out more at: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/christmas](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/christmas)

**Remember, reaching out is a sign of strength, and support is just a phone call away. Take care of yourself, and don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it.**





# Development activities

## Halloween

Staff and tenants at our developments really got into the Halloween spirit and we LOVED seeing you all have so much fun!



### Almondell Court

Tenants at Almondell Court made their own Halloween decorations.



### Coxton Gardens



### Foley Court



### Clyde Court

Clyde Court's frightfully tasty Halloween lunch menu included Spookaleeky soup, Bat steak pie, Spiderweb baked cheesecake and Mummy chocolate chip cookies!



### Whitehill Lodge

Thank you to Geoff for sending in photos of Halloween fun at Whitehill Lodge!



### Jamaica Court



### Lynn Court

Lynn Court had the pleasure of welcoming some P5 pupils from Rockfield Primary School who came down to show off their costumes, tell jokes and hand out some hand-drawn posters.

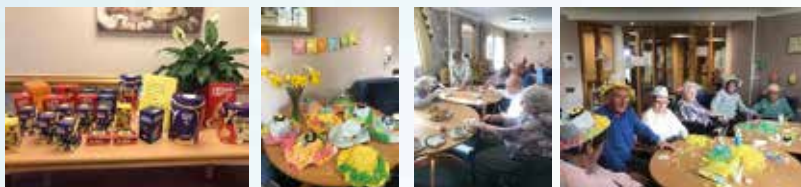


## Easter fun



### Foley Court

One of our Retirement Housing developments in Rothesay, held an early Easter afternoon tea complete with a fabulous table decoration made by one of the tenants, Brenda.



### Clyde Court

One of our Retirement Housing with Meals developments in Arbroath, held an Easter bonnet completion and enjoyed hot cross buns donated from Morrisons. Staff and tenants also donated easter eggs to the local foodbank. They finished off the day with plenty dancing and cake at a party.



### Crosshill Gardens

One of our Retirement Housing developments in Port Glasgow, tenants donated easter eggs to a local school for children with special needs. They also very kindly donated an egg in memory of a tenant who passed away in December who was incredibly passionate about supporting children in poverty in the Inverclyde area.



### Loch Laidon Court

One of our Retirement Housing Plus developments in Sandyhills, hosted an Easter coffee afternoon which a local business owner came along to for a clothing sale. All who came had a great time.



# Development activities

## Special anniversaries



### Jamaica Court

One of our Retirement Housing with Meals developments in Greenock, celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in March. Tenants enjoyed a party full of sandwiches, sausage rolls and music/singing from the very talented Kay. Cakes were cut by Linda, the former manager at Jamaica Court and now retired, and Betty, one of the first tenants to move in.



### Almondell Court

Mr & Mrs McDermott, tenants at our Almondell Court Retirement Housing development in Broxburn, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in July. Tenants and staff surprised them with a special afternoon tea.



### Maxwell Court

Mr & Mrs Baillie, tenants at our Maxwell Court Retirement Housing development in Musselburgh also celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in July. They organised a special party which was attended by family, friends, tenants and staff.

## 80th anniversary of D-Day landings

The D-Day landings of 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944 was the largest seaborne invasion in history. Along with the associated airborne operations, it marked the beginning of the liberation of France and western Europe.



### Oakburn Park Day Care

Our Oakburn Park Day Care service in Milngavie celebrated their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday alongside the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the D-Day landings in June.

A great day was had by all with a buffet lunch, birthday cake and some extra special Spitfire muffins! Children from a local school also attended to sing war songs and enjoyed learning about the D-Day landings from our service users. To end the day, a time capsule filled with stories from the last 15 years at Oakburn Park for someone to find in years to come.



### Waverley Court

As part of their celebrations to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day, our Waverley Court Retirement Housing development in Helensburgh had the pleasure of a visit from Dr Gill Aitkenhead MBE, Deputy Lord Lieutenant for the County of Dunbartonshire, after she had been to lay a wreath at the Hermitage Park war memorial on behalf of the King. Also present at the celebration was Retirement Housing Manager, Elizabeth Saunders B.E.M. Tenants and friends enjoyed a wartime lunch and sing-along and raised over £400 for Erskine Home for retired servicemen and women.

### Strathallan Court

Not only was 6<sup>th</sup> June the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings, it was also National Fish and Chips Day! Tenants at Strathallan Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Bridge of Allan, celebrated with a chippy tea followed by a wartime sing-song.



# Development activities



## Kirkton Court

Tenants from our Kirkton Court Retirement Housing development in Kirriemuir are pictured enjoying a high tea they organised in March. They also get together every Tuesday for a biscuit swap.



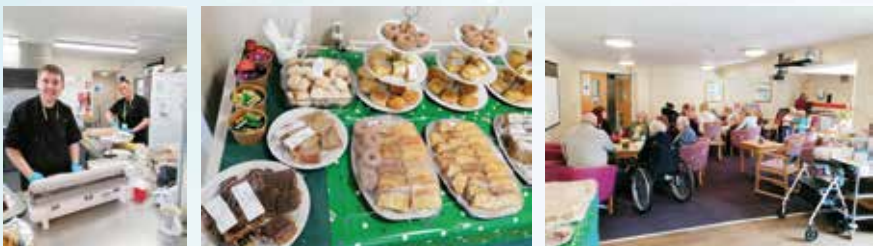
## Strathallan Court

Tenants from our Strathallan Court Retirement Housing development in Bridge of Allan held a very successful fundraiser coffee morning with a raffle, arranged by manager Rachel. Altogether, they raised £191 for flowers and bench cushions to brighten up the gardens.



## Langvout Court

Tenants from Langvout Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Biggar, held a Macmillan Cancer Support coffee morning in October and raised £490.18 from tea, cakes and a raffle. The event was very well supported by local businesses with over 50 raffle prizes. A great day for a good cause.



## Campsie Gardens

Our wonderful cooks, James and Katrina, provided a delicious buffet as part of the MacMillan Cancer Support afternoon tea at Campsie Gardens, one of our Retirement Housing with Meals developments in Cumbernauld. They more than doubled the target set and raised £541.10.



## Blackfaulds Court

We were very proud of Margaret and Wendy, tenants from our Blackfaulds Court Retirement Housing development in Fauldhouse, who arranged two fundraising events for Marie Curie – a 'Hamburger Day' and a cream tea. Both were thoroughly enjoyed and raised a total of £366.

## Craigengar Park

Craigengar Park, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Livingston, recently had a sale of clothes and bric-a-brac, organised by tenant Kate. Well over £800 was raised which will be used towards the tenants' Christmas dinner and some entertainment nights.



## Springfield Gardens

Tenants from our Springfield Gardens Retirement Housing development in Uddingston raised an incredible £1,060.50 at their MacMillan coffee morning – they are pictured enjoying themselves on the day and also with their official cheque.



# Development activities

## Stewart Court

Tenants and volunteers at Stewart Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in West Calder, raised a total of £631.80 for MacMillan at their coffee morning in September. They were too busy having fun and forgot to take any photos!



## Strathmartine Court

Tenants from our Strathmartine Court Retirement Housing development in Dundee held an afternoon tea for MacMillan and raised over £700. They made a fantastic poster with photos from the event and the amount raised.



## Campsie Gardens

With the colder days coming, the Quiet Lounge at Campsie Gardens (one of our Retirement Housing with Meals developments in Cumbernauld) has been transformed into an Arts & Crafts workshop every Monday afternoon. The tenants are making use of every available resource and asked the kitchen staff to save empty glass jars for them to paint.



## Crosshill Gardens

Tenants and staff from Crosshill Gardens, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Port Glasgow, recently held a charity games day to raise money for a local boy (6-year-old Kieran) and his family. Kieran received a heart transplant at Great Ormond Street Hospital after many operations and a stroke at just one year old. The tenants had a great day taking part in the games - Beat the Goalie, Play Your Cards Right, darts and Toss the Beanbag. Tenants, visitors and staff raised an incredible £490 which will hopefully help Kieran's family with some of the costs of staying in London during this hard time. A massive well done to everyone involved!



## Holmes Gardens

In May, staff and tenants from Holmes Gardens, one of our Very Sheltered developments in Broxburn, held a 'Tea and Blether' afternoon tea party in aid of Alzheimer's Scotland and raised £210.



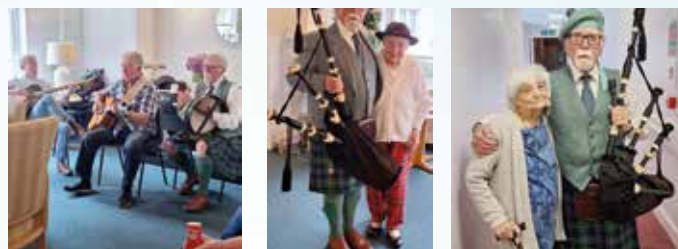
## Craigengar Park

In June, a very successful coffee morning took place at Craigengar Park, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Livingston. They regularly host events and thought it was about time that they shared some photos with other Bield tenants!



## Dean Court

The tenants' craft group at Dean Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Bo'ness, organised a fundraising coffee morning and sale in August. The event raised a fantastic £1,180 for the Beatson Cancer Charity, specifically for the Hypersight Appeal.



## Foley Court

Foley Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Rothesay, held a Highland Gathering event in August to coincide with the Bute Highland Games which take place every year in the local public park opposite. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed an afternoon of partying in the lounge!





# Development activities



## Langvout Court

Tenants from Langvout Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Biggar, enjoyed their first Art Club in August - it was a great success with 14 people attending.



## Coxton Gardens

A party wouldn't be a party at Coxton Gardens without a theme! Staff and tenants from our Retirement Housing Plus development in Garthamlock enjoyed a Country & Western event in July. Events like this bring tenants together and foster good community spirit.



## Waverley Court

Staff at Waverley Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Helensburgh, threw a Mad Hatter's Tea Party to cheer everyone up after some rubbish summer weather!



## Castlebrae Glebe

At our Castlebrae Glebe Retirement Housing Plus development in Edinburgh, our staff have arranged a host of fun activities for tenants including visits from therapy ponies, chicks, ducklings, bulb planting and intergeneration mixing.



## Wheatley Gardens

In July, staff and tenants at Wheatley Gardens, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Saltcoats, arranged a special celebration for one of their volunteers. Marion worked within Bield for many years before becoming a volunteer. Staff and tenants say Marion goes above and beyond for them so they decided to show their appreciation.



# Development activities

## Pentland View Court

Alex, one of the very talented tenants from our Pentland View Court Retirement Housing development in Livingston, is a member of the Livingston Players, a Scottish Charitable Organisation (SCIO) that has won numerous drama awards for the quality of their acting, production and staging. Back in May, Alex invited staff to the dress rehearsal of their production of Oliver at Howden Park Centre. The show was a great success and Alex really did the role of Mr Bumble justice. Bravo!



## Crosshill Gardens

Tenants from Crosshill Gardens, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Port Glasgow, are pictured being put through their paces with their own personal fitness instructor! The development holds an exercise class every Thursday morning for any tenants who wish to attend.



## Blackfaulds Court

The committee at Blackfaulds Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Fauldhouse, approached the local Prison Services store to see if they could purchase furniture for the gardens. Following a meeting with Adele from Prison Stores, staff were informed that items would be gifted for free as part of their community project! In total, the development received five arbours, three companion chairs, seven benches, four tomato plants and some raised planters. We think you can agree the gardens look fantastic with the new furniture and we're incredibly grateful to Adele and Prison Stores for their generosity!



## Mungo Park Court

In June, tenants at our Mungo Park Court Retirement Housing development in Selkirk welcomed the Selkirk Children's Class, a dance group founded by Margaret Pritchard, a former Casual Worker at Bield, 48 years ago. (See page 34). The girls gave tenants a dress rehearsal for a Scottish country dancing competition they were taking part in Plattling, Germany - the town Selkirk is paired with. Everyone had a fabulous time with cream meringues, tea and coffee after the performance.



## Langvout Court

Tenants from Langvout Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Biggar, are pictured enjoying soup and cake at their lunch club which was followed by an entertaining quiz.



## Pentland View Court

Tenants from Pentland View Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Livingston, welcomed some special young visitors from the local nursery who helped them to freshen up the raised beds and pots in the gardens. The tenants and children enjoy a variety of activities together once a week that suit all ages.

The tenants plan to do some fundraising to pay for future plants and storage and were very grateful to receive a recent donation of plants from the local allotments.

## Crosshill Gardens

Tenants and staff from Crosshill Gardens, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Port Glasgow, were incredibly grateful to be presented with a donation of £350 from local business, McGowan Fitness, following a charity boxing night. The funds were raised by owner David, who is the son of a tenant at the development. David also attends at Crosshill Gardens every Thursday to run an exercise class for tenants. Thank you so much for your support David!







# CHRISTMAS

word search puzzle

I	P	C	I	R	F	B	E	L	L	M	F
S	K	C	X	G	A	R	L	A	N	D	I
T	X	S	K	U	Y	S	N	O	W	O	R
A	S	N	S	A	N	T	A	H	S	E	E
R	T	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	P
I	O	H	B	G	X	E	S	H	H	U	L
Z	C	G	C	R	O	T	G	D	O	D	A
E	K	P	J	C	H	I	R	S	L	K	C
V	I	D	F	G	E	A	D	J	L	T	E
E	N	O	I	L	C	I	L	J	Y	R	D
S	G	L	S	S	F	X	C	O	J	E	Y
E	L	F	M	W	R	E	A	T	H	E	B

ELF  
STOCKING  
WREATH  
FIREPLACE

SNOW  
GARLAND  
EVE  
TREE

HOLLY  
BELL  
LIGHTS  
SLEIGH

CARD  
CHRISTMAS  
STAR  
SANTA

# Celebrating 40 years of dedication: A fond farewell to Margaret Pritchard

**This September, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Margaret Pritchard, who, after an extraordinary 40 years of service, stepped back from her casual role at Mungo Park Court, one of our Retirement Housing developments in Selkirk. Margaret has been nothing short of a cornerstone in our community, leaving an indelible mark on both tenants and staff alike.**

Her warmth, dedication and tireless efforts have shaped our community in ways words cannot fully capture. Over the years, she has gone above and beyond in her role, fundraising for important causes, organising countless events, and creating spaces for tenants to connect and thrive.

Tracey Howatt, Director of Customer Experience at Bield, said:

"Margaret joined Bield in October 1984, the year that Mungo Park Court, Selkirk was built by Bield, and has been a valued and much loved member of staff throughout her time there. She has supported hundreds of tenants over her 40 years, experiencing changes in service, colleagues and the odd major snow storm and power cut, ensuring at all times that the tenants received the support they needed when they needed it.

Margaret will be sincerely missed as a valued employee, however, she will always be welcomed within Mungo Park Court as a much loved visitor and friend.

Our sincere appreciation and thanks to Margaret for all of her hard work and dedication over the last 40 years."

Please join us in thanking Margaret for her monumental service and wishing her a wonderful "retirement." We are so fortunate to have had her as part of our story.





# Spiced Sweet Potato & Coconut Soup (serves 4 - 6)

The food we eat can play an important part in keeping us healthy in mind and body especially in the dark winter months. When it comes to good sources of cold-busting, immunity-boosting vitamin C, we think of citrus fruits and berries. However, sweet potatoes are also an excellent choice - if you're after an all-round nutritional powerhouse, look no further. Other significant nutrients in sweet potatoes include potassium for healthy blood pressure, and some B vitamins, to support your nervous system, psychological wellbeing and energy release.

## Ingredients

- 1 x tablespoon of cooking oil (light olive oil or vegetable is ideal)
- 1 x medium onion
- 2-3 garlic cloves (crushed)
- 2 x medium carrots
- 2 x celery sticks
- 1-2 sweet potatoes, dependent on size (peeled) - frozen diced sweet potato will also work well (about 600-700 grams)
- 1 x teaspoon of ground cumin
- 1 x tin of coconut milk
- 2 x vegetable stock cubes (made up as per pack instructions - usually 450ml of water per stock cube but can vary from brand to brand)

## Method

- 1) Peel, wash and chop all the vegetables and crush the garlic, add to the bottom of a heavy based pot along with the oil and ground cumin, cover with a lid and allow to sweat for 10-20 minutes to release the flavour from the vegetables.
- 2) Make up the vegetable stock, add to the pan and allow to cook for 20-30 minutes or until all the veg is tender, top up with water as required.
- 3) Add the coconut milk and bring back to a simmer before blending the soup to a smooth consistency.

### Each serving contains:



of your daily reference intake.

## Allergy Information

Key:

Contains

May Contain



May Contain  
Cereals



Does Not  
Contain  
Milk



Does Not  
Contain  
Eggs



Does Not  
Contain  
Nuts



Does Not  
Contain  
Shellfish



Does Not  
Contain  
Crustaceans



May Contain  
Mustard



Does Not  
Contain  
Fish



Does Not  
Contain  
Llamas



Does Not  
Contain  
Pets



Contains  
Celery



Does Not  
Contain  
Spices



Does Not  
Contain  
Molluscs



Does Not  
Contain  
SO2

# Festive season opening/closing times


Over the Christmas and New Year period our main offices will be closed on the following days: **25th and 26th December** and **1st and 2nd January**. Our Retirement Plus developments and Retirement Housing with Meals developments will have no changes to operational hours. Our Retirement Housing development offices will be closed on the **25th and 26th of December** and the **1st and 2nd of January** - during this period BR24 will provide support to tenants.

## Emergency contact details

Even though our office staff won't be working over the festive period, you can still report an emergency at any time by contacting BR24. Use your pull cord or call **0141 950 1025**.

If you require this bulletin in a different format or language, please email **communications@bield.co.uk**

Please contact **communications@bield.co.uk** if you require this document in a different format or language.

 **bieldhousingandcare**  
 **bield-housing-&-care**  
 **BieldScotland**

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