

# Bield Rent Policy – Easy to Read

## Helping You Understand How Your Rent is Set

### Why We Have a Rent Policy

We help people live better lives in welcoming homes, with supportive communities. This policy explains **how we set your rent** and any service charges.

It helps us make sure rent is **fair, affordable**, and supports **high-quality services**.

### What We Aim to Do

We want to:

- Make sure rent is **affordable**, especially for older people and people on lower incomes.
- Use the rent money you pay to pay for repairs, support services, and running costs.
- Be **fair and clear** in how we set rent.
- Make sure we have enough money to look after our homes now and in the future.

## What Your Rent Pays For

Your rent helps to pay for:

- **Repairs and improvements** to your home.
- Staff and office costs like phone lines, IT, and admin.
- Loans and other long-term costs (like borrowing money to build new homes).
- Other housing costs, like if a home is empty or someone can't pay rent.

You will get a list of what your rent and service charge covers when you move in.

## What We Mean by “Value for Money”

We want to give you:

- A **safe and comfortable home**.
- **Energy-saving improvements**, so you save money on bills.
- A rent level that is **fair for you and helps us run services well**.

## Being Fair and Equal

- We believe everyone should be treated **fairly and with respect**.
- We checked this policy to make sure it is fair for everyone, including people with different needs or backgrounds.

## Who This Policy is For

This policy applies to people living in:

- Rented homes with long or short agreements.
- Shared equity or shared ownership homes.

“Rent” also includes occupancy charges (money you pay for living in the home), unless we say otherwise.

## How We Set Your Rent

We have a standard rent we start with. Then we change the amount depending on:

- Size and type of home.
- If your home is new or in a special area.
- Extra services or special features your home may have.

### New Homes

New homes may have a **higher rent for the first 10 years** to help pay for the cost of building.

### Rural Homes

If you live in a **remote or rural area**, your rent might be **lower** to reflect higher travel and living costs.

## Service Charges

Service charges are extra payments for things like:

- Staff support
- Cleaning shared areas
- Grounds and garden maintenance
- Fire alarms, lifts, and safety checks

We work out the service charge by looking at **the actual cost** of these services.

You will be told **at least 28 days in advance** before your rent or service charge changes.

## How We Tell You About Rent Changes

We will tell you in **clear, simple ways** when your rent or service charge changes.

We use:

- Letters
- Newsletters
- Emails
- Our tenant website

We aim to make all messages **easy to read and understand**.

## How to Get This Policy

You can:

- Read it on the **Bield website**
- Ask for a copy in **large print, audio, another language, or Easy Read**

## Who Does What?

| Person or Team                  | What They Do                           |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Board                           | Makes sure the rent policy is followed |
| Chief Executive                 | Oversees the whole process             |
| Director of Customer Experience | Runs the yearly rent-setting process   |
| Head of Finance                 | Looks after the money side of things   |
| Head of Housing                 | Tells tenants about changes            |
| Head of Policy                  | Checks with tenants before decisions   |
| All Staff                       | Help explain and apply the rent policy |

## Keeping the Policy Up to Date

- We will check and update this policy **every 5 years** or when the law changes.

## Following the Law and Good Practice

We follow the rules set by:

- The **Scottish Housing Regulator**
- The **Care Inspectorate**
- The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

We also check we are meeting these goals:

- Giving **good value** for your rent.
- Being **open about how money is spent**.
- Making sure tenants get **clear information**.

## Helping the Environment

We are working to make homes:

- **More energy efficient**
- **Better for the planet**
- **Cheaper to run** for you

Sometimes we may include the cost of energy-saving work in your rent, but we'll always explain this clearly.

## Keeping Your Data Safe

We follow data protection laws.

We only use your personal data in line with our **Privacy Policy**.

You can ask us how your information is used.