



Responding to Domestic Abuse Policy

March 2025





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Foreword

Bield make it possible for more people to live their best lives, at home, surrounded by a supportive community.

Domestic abuse remains a significant issue across Scotland, with approximately 62,000 incidents reported to Police Scotland during 2022-2023. Notably, **around 80%** of the victims were female (Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, 2023). These figures are just those reported to the Police Scotland, suggesting the actual prevalence of domestic abuse is higher.

Domestic abuse happens in all communities, irrespective of tenure or socioeconomic profile. While domestic abuse can and does occur regardless of gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, or belief, sexual orientation or relationship status (marriage, civil partnership, partners, or ex-partner), women and girls are disproportionately affected.

Incidents of abuse often occur multiple times before victims report them. Bield colleagues may engage with survivors early, providing a unique opportunity for intervention and support before police involvement. This places our team in a privileged position to provide assistance to survivors of domestic abuse, who could be tenants or applicants.

We also recognise we may have an important role to support perpetrators who wish to desist from this behaviour by helping them to access support and assistance. Developing this policy helps us to deliver our vision, which is to make it possible for more people to live their best lives, at home, surrounded by a supportive community.

We firmly believe that **domestic abuse is unacceptable**. As a social housing provider, we are committed to responding to domestic abuse, whether experienced by applicants or existing tenants. Our policies are built upon a strong foundation of core values, which define who we are and how we operate. These values are at the heart of everything we do:

- Honesty We believe in being transparent and truthful in all interactions and decision-making processes
- Equality and Diversity We value and celebrate diversity and treating everyone with equal respect and consideration
- Ambition We are driven by a determination to make a positive impact and continually improve the lives of those we serve.
- Dignity Every individual's dignity is of utmost importance to us, and we strive to uphold it in every aspect of our services
- Integrity Operating with integrity is non-negotiable for us and we are committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards
- Caring Our genuine concern and care for the wellbeing of our tenants and community are the cornerstone of our approach
- Kindness We believe in fostering an environment of compassion and kindness, creating a supportive atmosphere for all.

Through this policy, we take meaningful steps to ensure that no-one in our communities faces domestic abuse alone.

Tracey Howatt,
Director of Customer Experience





1. Purpose and objectives

Purpose

1.1. This policy provides clarity on our approach to responding to domestic abuse for our customers, colleagues, and Board members. Through this policy, we aim to:

- Respond quickly and appropriately to all reported incidents of domestic abuse
- Improve overall safety and wellbeing by recognising domestic abuse as a serious crime that adversely affects individuals and communities
- Increase awareness and understanding of domestic abuse among tenants and employees
- Encourage tenants and employees to report domestic abuse
- Improve the safety and welfare of tenants and applicants affected by domestic abuse
- Empower survivors by providing clear information on their housing options
- Enhance our response to survivors through engagement with appropriate external enforcement and support agencies
- Ensure a consistent approach for recording and monitoring incidents of domestic abuse

Commitment

1.2. Through this policy we will

- Implement a clear communication strategy to support prevention efforts, including information on support agencies and third-sector organisations
- Ensure our Allocation Policy supports survivors of domestic abuse
- Build strong partnerships with relevant organisations and proactively develop these relationships
- Embed a culture of early intervention
- Provide training for relevant colleagues on responding effectively to domestic abuse for relevant colleagues
- Raise awareness of domestic abuse, ensuring everyone in our organisation understands the importance of responding appropriately and supporting our customers.

Support for staff

1.3. Colleagues are encouraged to be mindful of the sensitivities and vulnerabilities of trauma survivors by being respectful, acknowledging, and understanding of their experiences.

1.4. Responding to domestic abuse can be emotionally challenging, and we recognise the potential impact of vicarious trauma on staff mental health and wellbeing. We are committed to supporting colleagues who:

- Are experiencing domestic abuse
- Assist survivors of domestic abuse in their professional roles.

1.5. Support is available through the Employee Assistance Programme, which can be accessed via telephone, Skype, Zoom or email. Appointments can be made by contacting Coaching & Counselling Solutions at 0141 228 6250 or by email: info@counsellingandcoachingsolutions.co.uk

Inclusive approach

1.6. We recognise that individuals experiencing domestic abuse may also face additional challenges such as disability, addiction, or financial dependence on their abuser. Our response will be:

- Non-judgemental and sympathetic
- Informed by a trauma-sensitive approach
- Focused on exploring a range of housing options and support services to achieve the best possible housing and support outcome.



Scope

1.7. This policy applies to all tenants, employees, volunteers, and contractors of Bield Housing and Care, as well as any individuals who are directly involved in interactions with the organisation or its services. The policy also applies to all actions taken by staff in the deliver of housing, support services, or other related areas.

2. Equality, diversity, and inclusion

2.1. When implementing this policy, we will adhere to our Equality and Diversity Policy which aims to promote diversity, fairness, social justice, and equality of opportunity. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out in relation to this policy, and this is included at [Appendix 1](#).

2.2. To further promote equality and inclusion, the following steps will be taken in relation to this policy:

- Large print version: available to assist those with visual impairments
- Translation and interpretation services: a message outlining how to access these services will be included on the back of the policy document to support tenants who may require translation or interpretation services
- Easy to read version: this version will be made available for individuals with a learning impairment or those who find standard text difficult to understand.

3. What is domestic abuse?

3.1. Domestic abuse can take many forms and may include physical, sexual, economic/financial, emotional, or psychological abuse.

3.2. Domestic abuse is often underpinned by **coercive and controlling behaviours**. These are a range of purposeful behaviours including but not limited to:

- Intimidation
- Isolation
- emotional abuse
- manipulation.

3.3. These behaviours are often used to achieve power and control in an abusive relationship and reinforce the threat or reality of physical abuse.

3.4. On 1st April 2019, legislation came into force in Scotland that made coercive control criminal, which can be prosecuted under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.

Definition

3.5. For the purposes of this policy, we will use the Scottish Government definition of domestic abuse which is:

“Domestic abuse, as gender based violence, can be perpetrated by partners or ex partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family and friends. It can be characterised by a pattern of coercive control often escalating in frequency and severity over time.”

3.6. The Coercive Control Law Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 came into force on 1 April 2019, creating an offence for engaging in a course of abusive behaviour towards a partner or ex-partner.



3.7. This complements the definition provided by Police Scotland and Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service nationally agreed definition of domestic abuse:

‘Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct, and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online’.

3.8. **Controlling behaviour** involves a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by:

- Isolating them from sources of support
- Exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain
- Depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape
- Regulating their everyday behaviour.

3.9. Coercive behaviour refers to acts or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation, intimidation, or other abuse used to harm, punish, or frighten the victim.

Other definitions

3.10. Other key terms included in the policy include:

Survivor a person who is or has experienced domestic abuse. This could be a tenant, staff member, or anyone within the scope of our services.

Perpetrator an individual who carries out acts of domestic abuse. This can include tenants, staff members, or anyone involved in a domestic abuse situation.

Examples of domestic abuse

3.11. Domestic abuse can take many forms. Below are some examples of common forms of abuse, through this list is not exhaustive.

Physical abuse

3.12. Includes all types of assault and physical attacks like hitting (including with objects), punching, kicking, and burning.

Sexual abuse

3.13. Sexual abuse ranges from sexualised name calling to unwanted sexual demands, threats, force, or intimidation to obtain sex, deliberately inflicting pain during sex, combining sex and violence, using weapons, forcing their partner or ex-partner to engage in sexual acts, including rape.

Psychological/emotional abuse

3.14. Includes threats (including threats of violence), criticism, name calling, controlling what the victim does, where they go, and who they speak to, threatening their children, isolating them from friends and family, accusing them of infidelity, or threatening to post intimate media online (referred to as revenge porn).

3.15. These tactics can be used in different ways with different client groups, such as threatening to expose someone’s sexual orientation or HIV/AIDS status or isolating a BME woman by preventing her from learning English.

3.16. Abuse may also include isolation from support services, making survivors dependent on the perpetrator, humiliation, degradation, exploitation, regulation of behaviour, and deprivation of independence and human needs.



Economic/Financial abuse

3.17. Includes controlling money and bank accounts, making the survivor account for all spending, running up debts in the survivor's name, denying the survivor a say in how money is spent, preventing them from working or studying, stealing their money, or ensuring all economic assets are in the abuser's name (e.g. sole tenancy as opposed to a joint tenancy).

Stalking and harassment

3.18. Includes unwanted attention or behaviour, such as phone calls, texts, or more threatening behaviour like appearing at the survivor's home or workplace, or monitoring them physically online.

4. Our role – survivor-centred approach

4.1. We encourage all tenants, household members, and staff to report domestic abuse, whether they are victims or witnesses to such incidents.

4.2. All disclosures or intelligence related to domestic abuse will be treated confidentially, and any information will be held securely.

4.3. As a social housing provider, our role in responding to domestic abuse includes:

- Raising awareness and recognising signs of abuse
- Providing a tailored housing response that meets their needs and supports their safety

4.4. In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to report our concerns to Police Scotland and/or the relevant Local Authority Social Work Department. For instance, if there is an immediate risk of harm to any tenant or colleague.

4.5. When we are made aware of potential domestic abuse within a household, it is critical that our response is swift and appropriate. We may become aware of domestic abuse through various sources, including,

- Disclosure by the tenant
- Disclosure by a third party
- Attendance at a multi-agency forum such as the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference, Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination forum or disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland Forum
- Identification by a neighbour or another tenant hearing / witnessing the abuse
- Identification by a member of staff.

4.6. Irrespective of how we become aware of domestic abuse, we will gather as much information as possible, provided it is safe to do so, in order to inform our response and take any necessary action. Anyone who approaches us with a disclosure of domestic abuse can expect the following response:

- Our starting point will be to believe them
- A survivor's disclosure alone is enough for them to receive priority advice and assistance from our staff
- With the survivor's consent, we will proactively refer them to specialist support agencies
- We will ensure that anyone experiencing domestic abuse is treated in an empathetic, supportive, non-judgemental and trauma-informed way
- All disclosures of abuse will be treated confidentially, with the key exception of situations where there is a risk of harm to others and information must be shared. We will explain why information needs to be passed on and reassure the survivor.

4.7. This approach reflects our commitment to a 'survivor-centred' response in dealing with domestic abuse.



- 4.8. We will handle all reports in a non-judgemental manner and with confidentiality. We will not require survivors to take legal action or to contact the Policy Scotland we provide assistance.
- 4.9. We will only act with the survivor's consent, except in cases where we believe a child is at risk, or there is a high risk of serious harm to anyone involved.

5. Reporting imminent danger

- 5.1. If there is imminent danger, threat or risk of harm to our customers or colleagues due to domestic abuse, the police should be contacted immediately. For non-emergency situation contact 101. In emergency situations, always call 999.
- 5.2. If concerns are being reported to us by a third party, (eg a neighbour) or disclosed by the survivor, it is good practice to inform the person making the disclosure that their concerns will be reported. However, this may not always be possible. If staff are unsure, they should discuss this with their line manager.

6. Prevention

- 6.1. As part of our arrangements to prevent domestic abuse, we will:
 - Inform all new tenants about our policies relating to rehousing, relationship breakdown and where applicable the implication of joint tenancies
 - Publicise this domestic abuse policy to all tenants and employees, clearly highlighting the consequences for perpetrators
 - Provide advice and information on our website.

7. Children

- 7.1. The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021) identifies domestic abuse as a significant risk factor. Children and young people living with domestic abuse are at increased risk of significant harm, both from witnessing abuse and being abused themselves.
- 7.2. Children can also be affected by domestic abuse even if they are not witnessing or being experiencing the abuse themselves.
- 7.3. Domestic abuse can profoundly disrupt a child's environment, undermining their stability and causing lasting physical, mental, and emotional harm.
- 7.4. While most of our tenancies are to older people without children, we do have a small number of general needs properties that could potentially be let to households with children.
- 7.5. If we become aware of domestic abuse in a household with children, we will assess whether it is necessary to report concerns to Social Work / Police as appropriate in line with our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult and Children Policy.

8. Adult support and protection

- 8.1. In some situations, individuals affected by domestic abuse may also meet the criteria for being deemed 'adult at risk' under the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, often referred to as 'the three-point test'.
- 8.2. An adult at risk of harm is any person aged 16 or over who:
 - Is unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests;
 - Is at risk of harm; and
 - Due to disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.



- 8.3. If we have concerns that an individual may be deemed an 'adult at risk', we will assess whether to report our concerns to Social Work / Police Scotland, as appropriate, in line with our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult and Children policy.

9. Partnerships

- 9.1. To effectively support our tenants and provide preventative and early intervention services, strong partnerships at the local level are essential.
- 9.2. We will work to establish and maintain partnerships with key agencies and actively participate in multi-agency forums, including:
- Violence Against Women Partnerships;
 - Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Meetings (MATAC) actively targeting domestic abuse perpetrators;
 - Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) to share relevant information and thereafter safety plan for high-risk victims of domestic abuse;
 - Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) Decision Making Forums. (see section 6.9);
 - Domestic Abuse Investigation/Safeguarding Units;
 - Domestic Abuse Specialist Services such as ASSIST and Women's Aid.

10. Housing options and solutions

- 10.1. Throughout the life of this policy, we will work to enhance staff knowledge of housing options, wraparound support, and pathways to specialist services for individuals affected by domestic abuse.
- 10.2. Recognising that each case of domestic abuse is unique, our response will be tailored to the individual circumstances and needs of the survivor. We will discuss the options available, including:
- Arrangements for immediate personal safety
 - Reviewing and, where possible, improving the safety and security of existing accommodation
 - Connecting with local Women's Aid services for support
 - Reporting incidents to the Police, if appropriate.
- 10.3. The safety and wellbeing of the survivor will be our priority.

Leaving

- 10.4. For individuals leaving an abusive relationship, whether victim or perpetrator, we will ensure a seamless transition to their new home, supporting them throughout the moving process.

Finding a home: Using domestic abuse points within the Allocation Policy to provide priority and choice, recognising the impact of domestic abuse. Survivors of domestic abuse will be awarded 80 points, with additional point categories considered as needed. We will assess the individual's situation on a case-by-case basis and, where appropriate, consider a management transfer to facilitate planned moves and prevent homelessness.

Moving into a new home: Referring to relevant supports such as Income Advice Officers, Fuel Poverty Advisors and signposting to local support services. New tenants will not be required to pay rent in



advance. In these situations, we will seek to establish an affordable payment arrangement.

Remaining in the property

- 10.5. Many survivors of domestic abuse prefer to remain in their homes. For these individuals, simple security measures can significantly enhance their sense of safety, allowing them to stay in their home with minimal disruption.
- 10.6. We will adopt a survivor-focused, property-based approach to identify additional measures that can improve safety.
- 10.7. Our homes are designed to be 'safe by design', with features such as dual-pin door locks, minimal glass, and forced entry prevention.
- 10.8. In addition to these features, we will conduct a survivor-focused risk assessment to determine further security needs, which may include:
 - Contact alarms for windows and doors
 - Window closers to prevent full opening
 - Temporary personal safety monitoring cameras
- 10.9. BR24 pull cords are available in each home, providing a means to summon assistance if required. We will continue exploring how assistive technology could further enhance safety.

Emergency rehousing

- 10.10. In cases where an individual reporting domestic abuse needs emergency accommodation, we will offer advice and assistance in accessing accommodation through the local authority or a women's refuge. If necessary, we will provide a referral letter and advocate on behalf our tenants.

11. Action against perpetrators

- 11.1. We will work with Police Scotland and other relevant agencies to address perpetrators of domestic abuse. The actions taken against perpetrators will be based on the individual circumstances, which may include legal action for recovery of possession against a perpetrator, where other members of the household have left the home due to domestic abuse.
- 11.2. In accordance with data protection regulations, we will share information with relevant agencies to help identify and appropriately address serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Special bail conditions

- 11.3. Special Bail Conditions may be imposed by the criminal court during the court process for domestic abuse cases. These conditions are designed to minimise further risk of harm to the survivor, such as prohibiting the perpetrator from entering the survivor's home or contacting them.
- 11.4. Special Bail Conditions may include electronic monitoring. It is the responsibility of Police Scotland to enforce these conditions, which may involve unannounced visits to locations from which the perpetrator is excluded.
- 11.5. Police Scotland will also conduct regular checks to ensure the perpetrator does not contact individuals named in the special bail conditions. If staff become aware of any breaches of these conditions, our priority will always be the safety of the survivor.
- 11.6. If we are made aware of a potential breach of a bail condition, we will report it to the police immediately by calling 101 or 999, depending on the severity of the situation.



Non-Harassment Orders (NHO)

11.7. A Non-Harassment Order (NHO) is a court order that can be granted to prevent a perpetrator from frightening or distressing the survivor through specific actions such as contact or approach (whether in person, via phone, email, or social media).

11.8. NHOs can be granted through two channels:

- In a civil court
- Upon conviction in a criminal court.

11.9. Breaching an NHO is a criminal offence. If we become aware of a breach, we will report it to the police immediately via 101 or 999 depending on the circumstances.

Domestic abuse protection notices (DAPNs) (to be enacted)

11.10. The new Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021, when enacted, will allow police officers and courts to ban suspected abusers from re-entering the home or approaching the person at risk, providing a temporary period to allow for safety and longer-term housing options to be considered.

11.11. This Act will also allow social housing providers to end or transfer the tenancy of the perpetrator of domestic abuse to the survivor.

11.12. Police Officers can issue DAPNs without the need for a court order. These notices will impose immediate conditions, such as preventing contact or entry to the survivor's home and requiring the perpetrator to leave the residence.

11.13. Once enacted, we will support individual survivors and Police Scotland in making use of these powers. Our assistance may include:

- Helping contact police if an infraction takes place (onsite staff or BR24)
- Providing support with guest rooms for short stays if needed.

Domestic abuse protection orders (DAPOs)

11.14. Following the issuance of a DAPN, Police Scotland will apply to the court for a Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO). A DAPO extends the protections of a DAPN and may impose additional conditions for a longer duration.

11.15. A court may issue a DAPO if it deems it necessary to protect an individual from domestic abuse. Interim DAPOs can be issued temporarily while the court considers the full application.

Breaching DAPN or DAPO

11.16. Breaching a DAPNs or DAPOs is a criminal offense.

11.17. These provisions aim to ensure compliance deter further abuse.

11.18. We will continue to assist survivors and Police Scotland in the event of a breach.

12. Promotion of the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS)

12.1. The aim of DSDAS is to allow a partner in a relationship to inquire about their partner's history of abuse if they have concerns about their safety.

12.2. Launched on 1st October 2025, DSDAS also allows concerned individuals, such as family members, friends, or other agencies, to ask about someone's partner if they suspect a history of abuse.



- 12.3. If a disclosure is deemed necessary, lawful, and proportionate, the individual at potential risk, or the person best placed to safeguard them, will be provided with relevant information.
- 12.4. The scheme creates a formal mechanism for Police Scotland to inform individuals who are potentially at risk of abuse about that partner's past.
- 12.5. The objective of DSDAS is to enable potential victims to make an informed decision about whether to continue the relationship, offering further support to help them make that choice. We actively promote this scheme amongst staff and customers.
- 12.6. An application form can be access here:
www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/disclosure/
- 12.7. After the application is submitted, it is passed to one of Police Scotland's domestic abuse departments. The information will be added to the DSDAS database.
- 12.8. A decision is then made to release information, which will only be done if there is a risk.
- 12.9. We will promote this on our website and with tenants as appropriate.

13. Training and competence

- 13.1. We recognise the importance in raising awareness of domestic abuse across our organisation. In addition to awareness, we are committed to developing role-specific skills to ensure that our colleagues are equipped to respond effectively and sensitively to domestic abuse situations.
- 13.2. We will identify and provide training for our colleagues, including Local Managers, Area Housing Managers and Property Management Officers. This training will cover both general knowledge of domestic abuse and specific skills tailored to their roles, ensuring they are competent in addressing domestic abuse with the necessary sensitivity and understanding.

14. Measuring Impact

- 14.1. We will know we are making a positive impact on our tenants' lives and our communities when:
 - Our communities are safer places for all, with our customers being confident in our response and feeling supported
 - Our staff are confident in dealing with all aspects of domestic abuse, being alert to signs of abuse;
 - We have appropriate pathways and referral systems in place to ensure customers are getting the right support, at the right time, first time;
 - Our customers affected by domestic abuse have real choice in the options available to them;

15. Policy Review

- 15.1. We will review this policy every five years.
- 15.2. Reviews will consider legislative, performance and good practice changes.
- 15.3. More frequent reviews may be considered where, for example, we need to respond to new legislation / policy, guidance, or any recommendations from learning reviews.

16. Publicising and Accessibility

- 16.1. The policy will be published on the Bield website and made available on the intranet for Bield colleagues.



16.2. We are happy to translate any of our policies and provide an interpreter if our customers need help.

17. Scheme of delegation

CEO

17.1. To make sure all employees and Board members are aware of the policy and their responsibilities under it.

Leadership team

17.2. To coordinate the provision of any training required to enable employees to recognise and responds to incidents of domestic violence or abuse.

Team leaders and managers

17.3. To ensure that relevant employees are fully aware of their responsibilities under the policy, in particular of the importance of reporting any incidents or patterns they become aware of.

Employees

17.4. To ensure they are aware of their responsibilities under this policy, and that they implement the policy and procedure when appropriate.

18. Complying with the law and good practice

18.1. This policy has been developed in consideration of a range of legislative and strategic drivers relevant to domestic abuse.

Legislative framework

18.2. The legislative framework includes:

- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Family Law (Scotland) Act 1985
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006
- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010
- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2011
- Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016
- Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004;
- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018; • General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679);
- The Data Protection Act 2018;
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; and • Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.
- The Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 5th May 2021, however, is not yet in force at this time. This new legislation will have a huge impact for Registered Social Landlords in further strengthening their response to domestic abuse.

Strategic Drivers

18.3. The strategic drivers include:

Equally Safe, Scottish Government Strategy 2018

The Scottish Government in association with COSLA and other partners have agreed a commitment to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. This is contained within Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence



against women and girls. One form of violence against women and girls is domestic abuse. Equally safe does not exclude men but rather recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected by particular forms of violence.

Social Housing Charter

18.4. As a Registered Social Landlord (RSL), we are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). The SHR's statutory objective is to safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants, homeless people, and other people who use services provided by social landlords. In developing our policy, we have taken account of good practice, including that developed by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

18.5. The SHR uses the outcomes and standards in the Charter to assess the performance of social landlords. The key outcomes that have been considered in the development of this policy include:

- Outcome 1 Customers have their individual needs recognised, are treated fairly and with respect, and receive fair access to housing and housing services.
- Outcome 2 Customers find it easy to communicate with us and get the information they need about us, how and why we make decisions about the services we provide.
- Outcome 6 Customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe
- Outcome 9 People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.
- Outcome 11 Customers get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and we ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by us or other organisations

18.6. As a provider of care, we are regulated by the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate uses Health and Social Care Standards to assess the performance of care providers. The key standards that have been considered in the development of this policy are:

- Standard 4 I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support

19. GDPR

19.1. Bield employees are responsible for ensuring that any child, young person, or adult at risk of harm is protected from potential abuse.

19.2. In certain circumstances, and subject to strict conditions set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and other applicable data protection legislation) personal information may be shared with other organisations and partners.

19.3. Before Bield can share personal information, we will consider all legal implications beyond the legislative requirements.

19.4. Any decision to share personal information will be recorded, including the reasoning behind the decision.

19.5. Information sharing will be on a “need-to-know” basis, and an audit trail must be kept. Staff must consult the Bield Data Protection Policy and if in doubt will seek advice from the Data Protection Officer.



Appendix 1 Equality Impact Assessment

1	Title of Policy to be assessed: Domestic Abuse Policy
2	Date: 19/06/2024
3	Lead Officer/Manager: Zhan McIntyre
4	EQIA Team (who will be involved):
5	Director/Manager: Tracey Howatt
6	Is the function or policy existing, new, or review: New
7	<p>Set out the aims/objectives/purposes/outcomes of the function or policy, and give a summary of the service provided:</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure a proactive housing response to prevent and eradicate domestic abuse.</p> <p>The policy applies to all Bield colleagues</p>
7a	Who should benefit from the policy (target population):
7b	<p>Linked policies, functions: Are there any other functions, policies or services, which might be linked with this one for this exercise? Please list.</p> <p>Allocation policy Adaptations</p>
8	<p>State whether the policy will have a positive or negative impact across the following factors and provide initial comments/observations.</p> <p>Age: Older people, people in the middle years, young people, and children.</p> <p>Disability: includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems.</p> <p>Maternity and civil partnership The policy will have no impact on people expecting or recently giving birth or within a civil partnership</p> <p>Race: Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, non-English speakers).</p> <p>Religion or belief: includes people with no religion or belief.</p> <p>Sex: Women, men, and transgender people (include issues relating to pregnancy and maternity).</p> <p>Gender reassignment: The process of changing or transitioning from one gender to another.</p> <p>Sexual orientation: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual people.</p> <p>People in remote, rural, and/or island locations</p> <p>People in different work patterns: e.g. part-/full-time, short-term, job share, seasonal</p> <p>People who have low literacy</p> <p>People in different socio-economic groups (includes those living in poverty/people on a low income)</p>



	Population groups	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Comments
	Age			
	Disability	++ long term		Research has shown that disabled women are more likely to experience domestic abuse and that women with disabilities also encounter differing dynamics of domestic abuse, which can include more coercion, control and abuse from carers. There are also additional barriers to support for disabled people
	Maternity and civil partnership			
	Race	++ long term		Women from ethnic minority backgrounds face additional challenges escaping domestic abuse. There may be challenges with language barriers and difficulty in accessibility of information and services.
	Religion or belief			
	Sex and Gender reassignment	++ Long term		Women are at higher risk of domestic abuse, women are predominantly the victims of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is a leading cause of homelessness amongst women. People transitioning from one gender to another face challenges and barriers to accessing support, stigma, and fear of disclosing
	Sexual orientation	++		LGBT+ people may face additional challenges due to barriers in accessing support and information such as stigma and fear of disclosing information on sexuality.
	People in remote, rural, and/or island locations			
	People in different work patterns			
	People who have low literacy			
	People in different socio-economic groups	++ long term		Evidence shows that women have lower incomes than men and domestic abuse presents additional risk in terms of financial circumstances, with financial and economic abuse often part of domestic abuse. Women who experience domestic abuse can also experience material deprivation as perpetrators can use control over finances and possessions to exert control over women
9	What evidence do you have for the statements you have made above? Focus on: Research from other organisations			

10	From the evidence set out what actions, if any, will you take where the negative impact has been identified:
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Population groups	Proposed action	How will it address the negative impact?
Age	N/A	N/A
Disability:	N/A	N/A
Maternity and civil partnership	N/A	N/A
Race	N/A	N/A
Religion or belief	N/A	N/A
Sex and Gender reassignment	Women ae	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A	N/A
People in remote, rural, and/or island locations	N/A	N/A
People in different work patterns	N/A	N/A
People who have low literacy	N/A	N/A
People in different socio-economic groups		N/A
<p>Briefly explain how the policy contributes to our equality and diversity values by answering the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will it provide equality of access to services, information, and employment? • Does it or could it celebrate diversity? • Will it or could it promote good relationships within and between communities? • How will it provide good quality, inclusive services? <p>N/A</p>		
<p>Any additional information, questions, or actions required? Please explain.</p>		
<p>Sign off: As Director I am satisfied with the results of this EIA The findings will be referred to within Service Plans and target set. The Action Plan will be reviewed annually within Business planning reporting.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>		



Speaking your language - we are happy to translate our policies on request.

يمكن ترجمة سياساتنا عند الطلب
إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة ، فيمكننا توفير مترجم

**Nasze zasady mogą być przetłumaczone na żądanie.
Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy, możemy zapewnić tłumacza**

**我们的政策可以应要求翻译。
如果您需要帮助，我们可以提供翻译**

ہماری پالیسی کا درخواست پر ترجمہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔
اگر آپ کو مدد کی ضرورت ہو تو ہم ایک ترجمان فراہم
کرسکتے ہیں