



# Tenant Engagement Report 2025/2026



## Foreword

Welcome to the Tenant Engagement and Participation for 2025/26.

This year has been one of change, continuity, and growth for tenant engagement at Bield.

While our Community Connections Officer, Kalli Fox, was on maternity leave after welcoming a beautiful baby girl to her family, the wider team continued to support and develop our tenant engagement activity.

We were also pleased to welcome Alison Cameron as our new customer Standards Administrator, contributing 21 hours per week and providing valuable support across engagement, customer standards and participation work.

This year has shown the strength of the foundations we have built. Our Tenant Insight Network has grown from 200 tenants to 352, representing an increase of around 76%. This gives tenants the opportunity to share their views in a flexible and accessible way. Our Partnership Forum met four times and continued to influence important areas of work, including how we respond to antisocial behaviour, compliance and safety, budget and rent setting, and the development of Tenant Insight Network (TIN) Surveys. We launched Bield Blether, an online group where tenants can come together to chat, share stories and build relationships. Alongside this, the

Small Grant Fund continued to demonstrate how modest investment can make a meaningful difference locally, supporting tenants to improve outdoor spaces, create more welcoming communal areas, reduce isolation and strengthen community life.

We have also made progress with strengthening tenant scrutiny. Training for the Scrutiny Group has now been completed, and we look forward to supporting the group to begin its first scrutiny project in 2026/27.

I would like to thank every tenant who has taken the time to contribute over the past year. Your insight, experience and ideas continue to help us improve. Speaking of which, TIN helped with a number of surveys this year, including pet policy awareness, charities to support as well as shaping changes to the Customer Contact Service.

Zhan McIntyre | Head of Policy and Customer Standards





## Our engagement framework: Connect

Our tenant engagement and participation strategy, Connect, continues to provide the framework for how we involve tenants in shaping services, influencing decisions and strengthening communities.

During 2025/26 our focus has been on making engagement more visible, accessible and meaningful. This has included growing the Tenant Insight Network, supporting formal tenant groups, launching Bield Blether, progressing tenant scrutiny and continuing to support local tenant-led improvements through the Small Grant Fund.

Our engagement activity continues to recognise that tenants want to be involved in different ways. We engaged with 170 tenants over the year, over nearly 18 separate occasions, including through the formal groups, tenant meetings, assistance with surveys, consultations and development visits.

During the year, tenant engagement activity was supported through a range of routes, including:

Engagement route	2026/26 position
Partnership Forum	Met four times during the year
Tenant Insight Network	Increased to 352 members
Scrutiny Group	Training completed; first scrutiny project to begin 2026/27
Bield Blether	New online tenant group launched
Small Grant Fund	Continued to support local tenant-led improvements
Communication Champions	Continued to support tenant-centred communications
Compliment and Complaint Collective	Continued to support learning from customer feedback
Bield Equality Network	Continued to provide a forum for equality-focussed discussion and influence
Tenant Handbook review	Tenant feedback gathered, with ideas to be taken forward in 2026/27



## **Formal tenant groups**

### **Partnership Forum**

The Partnership Forum remains Bield's representative tenant body and met four times during 2025/26.

During the year, members discussed and influenced important issues including antisocial behaviour, compliance and safety, budget and rent setting, and development of Tenant Insight Surveys. This helped ensure tenant perspective were considered across both strategic and operational areas of work.

There was also a change in leadership during the year. John Thompson stepped down as Chair, and we would like to formally thank him for his commitment, leadership and service to the Forum. We are pleased to welcome Deborah Docherty as the new Chairperson of the Partnership Forum. Deborah's appointment provides continuity for the Forum while also supporting the next stage of tenant involvement at Bield.

This year, we also held a Christmas lunch for Partnership Forum members. This was an opportunity to recognise the time, commitment and contribution members give to Bield, while also strengthening relationships between tenants, staff, and each other.

For 2026/27, there is an opportunity to further strengthen the role of the Partnership Forum by ensuring that key service developments are brought to members at an early stage, allowing tenant views to help shape proposals before decisions are finalised.

### **Communication Champions**

The Communication Champions continue to provide feedback on Bield communications, helping ensure information is clearer, more accessible and more relevant to tenants.

### **Compliments and Complaint group**

The Compliment and Complaint Collective continues to support learning from tenant feedback, complaints and compliments. This group provides an important tenant perspective on what Bield can learn from customer experience.

### **Bield Equality Network**

The Bield Equality Network continues to provide a space for discussion on equality, inclusion, and accessibility. The group remains an important route for understanding the experiences of tenants and staff with different needs, backgrounds and perspectives.



## Increase participation

A key priority during 2025/26 has been continuing to increase the number of tenants who can share their views in a way that suits them

The Tenant Insight Network (TIN) has grown from 200 tenants to 352, representing an increase of approximately 76%. This provides a stronger platform for flexible and accessible consultation.

This growth is important because it enables Bield to hear from tenants beyond formal meetings and established groups. It also allows tenants to take part in a way that may be more convenient, particularly where they do not want to attend meetings or commit to a formal group.

## Tenant Insight and Service Improvement

Tenant insight continues to play an increasingly important role in how Bield understands tenant priorities and identifies opportunities for improvement.

During 2025/26, tenant insight was used to inform discussion on key service areas, including budget and rent setting, antisocial behaviour, compliance and safety, and future survey activity.

The Tenant Insight Network is a key part of this approach. It gives Bield a practical way to test proposals, gather feedback and understand tenant views before decisions are finalised.

The Partnership Forum has also played an important role in shaping Tenant Insight Network survey activity. This creates a stronger connection between representative tenant discussion and wider tenant feedback.

During the year, tenant feedback also informed the review of the Tenant Handbook. The response generated a range of useful ideas, which will now be taken forward during 2026/27. This provides a clear opportunity to show tenants how their comments have influenced the final handbook.

A key priority for 2026/27 will be strengthening our approach to **“You said, We considered, We did, What happens next.”** This will help tenants see not only that their views have been heard, but how those views have shaped decisions, actions or future work.



## **Scrutiny Group**

The refreshed Scrutiny Group has made good progress during 2025/26, with training now completed.

This is an important milestone. The previous 2024/25 report noted that Bield was developing a refreshed scrutiny model following the closure of the Bield Improvement Group, with a focus on transparency, constructive challenge and evidence-based reviews.

With training now complete, the group is well placed to begin its first scrutiny project in 2026/27. This will provide tenants with a more structured opportunity to review services, consider evidence and make recommendations for improvement.

The Scrutiny Group will support service improvement by bringing a tenant perspective to how services are designed, delivered and experienced. It also strengthens Bield's wider approach to assurance, accountability and learning.

## **Bield Blether**

During 2025/26, we launched Bield Blether, an online group for tenants to connect, share stories and build relationships.

This is a positive development because it broadens engagement beyond formal consultation and governance structures. Bield Blether supports social connection, reduces isolation and gives tenants a more informal space to engage with each other.

This aligns strongly with Bield's Independent Living Approach. For many tenants, engagement is not only about influencing policies or services; it is also about feeling part of a wider community.

For 2026/27, we will continue to develop Bield Blether as part of our wider community connections activity. We will also use learning from the group to understand what tenants value, what topics encourage participation and how online engagement can complement local and face-to-face activity.



## Small grant fund

The Small Grant Fund continued to demonstrate strong value during 2025/26, supporting tenant-led improvements that help make developments more welcoming, sociable and connected.

Demand for the Fund has increased steadily. Applications rose from **28 in early 2025**, to **39 in late 2025**, and then to **51 in the January/February 2026 round**. The average grant requested in the January/February 2026 round was **£175.21**.

Applications focused strongly on:

- improving outdoor spaces;
- supporting gardening and planting;
- providing furniture and equipment for communal areas;
- supporting indoor social activity, including games, bingo, arts and crafts;
- improving health and wellbeing;
- reducing social isolation;
- supporting digital inclusion through technology-based requests;
- creating more homely and welcoming communal environments.

The Fund shows that modest investment can have significant local impact. Tenants repeatedly highlighted the importance of creating homely, community-centred spaces and supporting opportunities for social connection.

At **Quayside Court in Perth**, the Fund helped support improvements to the front court area, including tidying, replanting, renewing broken pots and creating a more open and welcoming outdoor space. Feedback from the Development Manager described the impact as “life changing”, with tenants sitting outside in good weather in a way that had not happened previously.

The Fund has also supported practical improvements such as repainting garden furniture. In one example, paint was purchased through the Fund and a volunteer carried out the work. This shows how small amounts of money, combined with tenant and volunteer effort, can prolong the life of communal resources and improve shared spaces.

The Fund also highlights the importance of collaboration. Because grant amounts are modest, many successful projects depend on volunteer time, staff support and community effort. Previous winners are now being invited to help score future rounds of applications, strengthening tenant involvement in how the Fund is managed.

In 2026/27, we will continue to develop the Fund, improve feedback to applicants and explore opportunities to work with other Bield teams to maximise its impact.



## Community Connection

Community connection remained an important part of our tenant engagement work during 2025/26.

Alongside formal involvement routes, we continued to recognise the importance of informal connection, local relationships and opportunities for tenants to participate in ways that support wellbeing and reduce isolation.

The launch of Bield Blether provided a new online space for tenants to connect, share stories and build relationships. The Small Grant Fund also supported this wider aim by enabling local projects that improved communal spaces, supported social activity and helped tenants feel more connected to where they live.

This community connection activity is important because tenant engagement is not only about formal consultation. It is also about helping tenants feel that they belong, that their contribution matters and that they can play a role in shaping the life of their development and wider Bield community.

## Learning from 2025/26

The main learning from 2025/26 is that Bield has a strong engagement infrastructure, but the next phase needs to focus on consistency, visibility and impact.

The key learning points are:

Learning area	What this means
Tenant interest is increasing	Growth in the Tenant Insight Network and Small Grant Fund applications shows appetite for involvement
Informal engagement matters	Bield Blether and local community projects support connection, not just consultation
Feedback loops need to be stronger	Tenants need to see what changed because of their involvement
Scrutiny needs to move into delivery	Training is complete and the first project should now generate practical learning
Engagement needs cross-service ownership	Tenant engagement should not sit only within Policy and Customer Standards
Small investment can have high impact	The Small Grant Fund shows strong wellbeing and community benefits
Tenant insight should inform improvement	Feedback should be used to shape service planning, not only reported after activity has happened

In previous years, we explored regional forums as a way to support local tenant participation. Learning from that work has helped shape our current approach, with a stronger focus on flexible engagement routes, online connection, tenant insight and



local community activity. We are committed to moving this forward through the Independent Living Hubs.

## You Said, We Considered, We Did, What Happens Next

A key priority is making sure tenants can see how their views influence decisions and services.

During 2025/26, tenant feedback and involvement helped shape a range of areas. The table below summarises some of the key examples.

<b>You said / showed us</b>	<b>We considered</b>	<b>What we did / what happens next</b>
Tenants want more opportunities to influence services flexibly	We need to provide involvement options beyond formal meetings	The Tenant Insight Network has grown to 352 members and will continue to be used for targeted consultation
Partnership Forum members want to influence wider tenant surveys	Tenant representatives should help shape questions before wider consultation	Partnership Forum members have influenced Tenant Insight Network survey development
Tenants value local improvements that reduce isolation and support wellbeing	Small grants can have high impact despite modest funding levels	The Small Grant Fund continued, with increased demand and previous winners now helping score future applications
Tenants provided useful feedback on the Tenant Handbook	The handbook should be updated in a way that reflects tenant experience	Feedback will be taken forward during 2026/27
Scrutiny Group members need support before undertaking reviews	Training is necessary to enable effective, evidence-based scrutiny	Training is complete and the first scrutiny project will begin in 2026/27
Tenants benefit from informal connection, not just formal meetings	Online groups can support community connection and reduce isolation	Bield Blether has been launched
Tenants want services to be safe, clear and accountable	Engagement should include key operational topics, not only engagement-specific matters	Partnership Forum discussed antisocial behaviour, compliance and safety, budget and rent setting



For 2026/27, we will strengthen this approach so that tenants can see more clearly what has changed, what has not changed, and why.

## Looking Ahead to 2026/27

In 2026/27, our focus will be on making tenant engagement more visible, more consistent and more clearly linked to service improvement.

Our priorities will include:

- supporting the Scrutiny Group to begin its first scrutiny project;
- continuing to grow and develop the Tenant Insight Network;
- strengthening **“You said, We considered, We did, What happens next”** feedback;
- taking forward tenant feedback on the Tenant Handbook;
- developing Bield Blether as an online space for connection and shared stories;
- continuing to support tenant-led local improvements through the Small Grant Fund;
- using tenant satisfaction insight to focus on areas where we can make the greatest difference;
- working with colleagues across Bield so that tenant engagement becomes part of service planning, not something that happens after decisions have already been made.

We will also continue to explore how planned engagement visits can support greater visibility across developments, particularly where tenant satisfaction insight suggests there may be opportunities to improve communication, awareness or local service experience.

The learning from 2025/26 will inform the next stage of Bield’s tenant engagement approach. In particular, we will focus on making engagement more visible, strengthening feedback loops, and ensuring tenant voice is clearly linked to service planning, improvement and accountability.

We remain committed to working alongside tenants to shape services that are practical, inclusive and responsive to what matters most to them.

2025/26 has been a year of moving from engagement structures to engagement impact. In 2026/27, our priority is to make that impact clearer, stronger and more visible to tenants.