



Communications Strategy & Road Map



2024
2028

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Introduction



This communications strategy sets out the ambition of Bield Housing & Care (Bield) to increase its engagement with internal and external audiences across Scotland.

It is supported by a road map which details the specific actions the organisation will undertake to deliver the strategy.

It sits alongside other strategic programmes of work such as the Independent Living approach, Strategic Asset Management Plan, Digital Strategy and People Strategy and is intended support all we do.

Co-designed with Bield's staff, this strategy supports the delivery of the 2023-2028 Setting the Pace Corporate Strategy and Business Plan and the 10-year vision:

We will lead, set and deliver the global standard for ageing at home.



Communications objectives:



Build trust and increase understanding for tenants, staff, stakeholders and the media



Project a strong, positive and recognisable brand identity for Bield



Enhance our reputation as a provider of quality housing, care and other support services for older people within our communities



Support increase satisfaction levels of existing customers



Maintain a transparent and positive relationship with staff that empowers them to deliver effective communications starting from a local level



Support the development of our digital services

Narrative

- Established in 1971, Bield is a charity and one of Scotland's largest registered social landlords, providing housing and care services in Scotland
- We provide over 4,600 properties across twenty-two local authority areas and reaches around 20,000 older people with our care services
- Bield has, for over 50 years, dedicated itself to developing housing and services that enable Scotland's older people to live the life they want



- We promote a culture where age is not a barrier and where people are supported to make choices that help them to live independently in their homes as they age and their needs change
- The success of the Bield is achieved thanks to the skilled and experienced staff throughout the organisation who strive to deliver their best every day
- We continue to grow and invest in the business, to strengthen services and homes, and to grow the choices for everyone living in our quality homes as part of our inclusive communities
- We strive to deliver and embed our Independent Living approach through everything that we do
- Bield lives the commitment to make a significant contribution to the wider social and economic impact of Scotland's older people and champions their voices across Scotland, the UK and beyond



Audiences & channels



Our audiences are diverse, with varying involvement and interest in what Bield does and the services we provide. Each has its own expectations of us, what we do and how they engage with us.

To engage effectively with our audiences, we need to maintain and develop a wide range of channels, which enable audiences to access information when they need it and in a format that works for them, ensuring transparency and accessibility.

Our aim is to have relevant and targeted communications to strengthen our existing relationships and to develop new ones.

Audiences



Channels

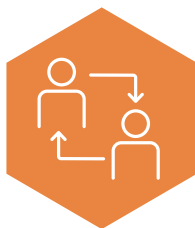


Road map & actions

12 - 18 months



The road map features four key themes:



Collaboration

Developing a shared understanding on the use of communications to support delivery of our strategic goals, maximising Bield's reputation and reach in collaboration with our people, tenants and stakeholders.



Brand identity

The Bield identity should effectively communicate who we are and what we do, while building trust with our audiences. It should bring to life our independent living approach, drive our purpose, vision, and values, and strengthen our impact across the sector as a trusted and high performing brand for tenants and stakeholders.



Annual planning

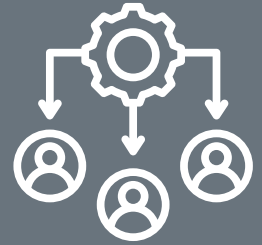
Bringing Bield's strategic delivery to life through an Annual Communications Plan with scheduled activity for internal and external milestones and industry activity, events with partners and stakeholders and key dates of interest shaped around our five strategic goals. This will be aligned to digital and social media activity.



Living our values through collaboration & partnerships

Embedding Bield's presence and tenants' voices through strong relationships to develop and enhance the reputation of Bield.

Resourcing



The communications function is led by experienced and qualified professionals. To bring this new strategy to life, the organisation and its partners have a leading role in the successful delivery and promotion of Bield's brand.

These partners include:



Board: high-level ambassadors supported with regular briefings and material to increase their understanding of the organisation and its successes

CEO/Executive Management Team : the public face of Bield who provide a strong voice for the organisation and the wider sector by leading from the front; they set the tone within their directorates and act as ambassadors for all staff and stakeholders; leading by example they use best practice communications and standards

Leadership Team: like the EMT they represent the organisation both internally and externally; they should be familiar with, and proactive and consistent in, communicating our key messages while raising the profile of their areas of expertise

All staff: representatives of Bield, on site and throughout our services; they are often the face and voice of Bield for our tenants, their families, local communities, and sector partners

Communications partners: identify relevant expertise to support the organisation to implement the strategy

Measuring success



To measure our success in delivering Bield's communications strategy we will assess the delivery of the road map and will evaluate:

- How we ensure our target audiences understand who we are and what we do
- Our support for the ambitions and strategic intentions within our strategy
- How we enhance our reputation as a provider of quality housing, care and other support services within our communities
- Our success in projecting a positive and recognisable brand identity with increased brand recognition and reputation
- Regularly test the satisfaction levels of existing customers with a focus on support and value
- Any increases in staff satisfaction results in our staff surveys
- Any increases in demand for and uptake in tenancies
- Support for the development of our digital services
- How we raise our profile within the housing sector in the UK and beyond, and our ability to attract prospective new partners and funding opportunities
- How we ensure all staff, volunteers and board members are aware of and share full responsibility for achieving our purpose, vision and values
- Bield's successes in external awards and accreditation

