



BIELD HOUSING & CARE

Minutes of meeting of the Partnership Forum

5th February 2026 | Westport, Linlithgow

Present:

Deborah Docherty	(DD)	Bridge Court
Margaret Smith	(MS)	Gordon Court
Maria Duncan	(MD)	Inchkeith Court
Joe McLean	(JM)	Jamaica Court
Gillian Merrett	(GM)	Ashgrove Court

Apologies:

John Thompson	(JT)	Craigengar Park
Charles Craske	(CC)	Kingsburn Court
William Smalley	(WS)	Lynn Court

In Attendance:

Alan Morris	(AM)	Tenant Engagement & Participation Lead
Zhan McIntyre	(ZMc)	Head of Policy & Customer Standards
Kalli Fox	(KF)	Community Connection Officer
Robert Black	(RB)	Policy & Insight Officer
Billy Thomson	(BT)	Area Manager of Independent Living
Jamie Mackenzie	(JM)	Compliance Manager
Alison Cameron	(AC)	Customer Standards Administrator

Actions

- Lighting timer at Inchkeith Court - RM
- Bathroom storage following upgrades at Inchkeith Court - LP
- Number of calendars sent to developments – CB
- Temperature controls/heat timer settings in communal areas at Gordon Court – SMac
- Fire assembly point at Gordon Court – report that distance is not far enough away from building - JMac

1. Welcome & Introductions

In the absence of JT, DD chaired the meeting and extended a warm welcome to attendees of the Partnership Forum (PF). All parties present provided a brief introduction, including their role.

2. Apologies & Absence

Charles Craske

William Smalley

John Thompson

3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the Partnership Forum meeting held on 13th November 2025 were approved.

4. Hope Town, Independent Living and What Happens Next

ZMc introduced Paper 2 which had been issued ahead of the meeting for consideration. ZMc discussed the Hope Town Project and updated PF about the session that had taken place, facilitated by the social enterprise, Social Ludo. They were commissioned to design a bespoke 'serious game,' for Bield to help the organisation think differently and to identify priorities to support independent living now and in the future. The session

brought together staff from across the organisation as well as local authority representatives, health and social care partners and digital and technology specialists and provided participants the opportunity to understand what independent living looked like in practice, based on real life tenant experiences. Many of the findings were confirmation of what is already known and accepted and a few clear messages emerged, including:

- Independent living works best when organisations collaborate
- Prevention and early intervention matters
- Good homes support increased wellbeing
- Technology can support tenants to live well
- Tenant input in service design is essential

The conclusion and findings of game were published on 1st December 2025 in a report named '*A Roadmap for Independent Living: Reimagining Housing, Health and Ageing in Scotland*' with the hope that Scottish Government develop a 20 year National Independent Living Strategy.

ZMc stated that the report had been issued to First Minister and various Parliamentary committees and there had been interest back from the Cabinet Minister for Housing who wishes to meet Bield regarding same.

ZMc continued that she had wanted to update PF with progress of this and for the hope to work with current and future governments to establish real change.

MD asked if any tenants had been involved in the game, to which ZMc replied that a strategic decision had been made to include staff only in the first instance, however, given that Bield now

owned the game, it would be something that could be looked at in the future.

AM stated that links to Social Ludo and the report could be shared with PF for further information.

5. Billy Thomson (Area Manager of Independent Living)

BT stated that he was in attendance to provide information to PF on the Independent Living Hub Model. He continued that it was devised to put the focus back on individual tenants, making them safer and more comfortable in their homes rather than taking a whole development approach.

BT outlined some of the work he was currently involved with including: Community Cafes, SAMH partnership, Age Scotland information sessions on what is available for older people in their local area – with the focus being that information be brought to tenants. This was currently underway in Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and Fife.

BT stated that Digital Champions (staff volunteers) were being identified to support tenants to use digital tools that could support tenants in their home.

BT stated that the Hub model would bring developments together under the one staff team in their locality, which should see more staff cover at developments. Consultation with tenants had taken place at the initial hub areas and tenant feedback was taken on board to adapt the hub to what tenant needs were. There would be new staffing roles – Independent Living Coordinator - who in most cases would come from current staffing team.

BT summarised the following:

- Reintroduction of activities at developments
- More flexibility
- Give tenants more value for money
- Information would be provided to tenants prior to Hub model being rolled out in their area – full details available in staff office at development.
- Oban – started in Oct 25, North Lanarkshire meeting 2 in a few weeks, East Ayrshire – underway.

GM commented that some tenants can be wary of something new and would wait and see how things develop re staffing.

6. Jamie Mackenzie (Compliance Manager)

JM introduced himself as Compliance Manager and stated that his team consisted of 2 x Compliance Officers and 2 x Compliance Administrators.

JM stated he was in attendance to demonstrate new software that Compliance team were moving to called True Compliance. He stated that 280 staff would have access to the system and that all compliance standards would be stored there. This included electric, gas, fire, emergency lighting and lifts regulatory and good practice compliance. JM continued that it was a more transparent system, empowering staff and holding contractors accountable.

LUNCH

7. Rent Setting (Paper 3)

ZMc spoke to the paper on Rent Setting that had been shared

prior to the meeting and stated that she wished to give an update on consultation and proposals, after following guidance from Scottish Housing Regulator.

The following was highlighted:

- Rent consultation process was via short survey, delivered in a variety of methods to tenants – email, paper copies – 1053 returns
- Results showed that tenants place value on quality homes and understand that there must be investment made to properties
- Affordability was a key concern
- Support for transparency on what rents pay for
- Acceptance that some increase is required

ZMc stated that team was currently working through the comments received from tenants in the survey and that the Board was concerned re affordability and keen for support for tenants via a campaign to identify where tenants could claim Pension Age Disability Payment as this is a passport benefit to Housing Benefit.

Rent increase letters are due to arrive with tenants by the beginning of March and would list rent and service charge separately with the next steps for costs to be itemised more clearly in terms of window cleaning, garden maintenance, lift and laundry.

MD asked if a reduction of staff hours at developments would reflect in the rent amount?

The following was approved by Board on 28th Jan:

- 4.8% increase which is September CPI plus one per cent

- Rent and service charge to be detailed separately
- Next year increase will provide more detail in how rent is calculated
- Communal energy and individual energy costs will remain static

8. Tenant Engagement & Participation Update

AM introduced the paper and highlighted the following:

- Small Grants Fund will be scored next week – 50 applicants
- RB has been appointed to the TIS board who support strong governance of HAs and ensure that tenants are at the heart of their business
- Engagement calendar, including names and contact details for members will be distributed at next meeting
- Keep Scotland Beautiful will attend next Sustainability Group and have an online training platform including sustainability
- KF to attend Scottish Tenant Engagement Network next week

A discussion ensued re tenant engagement as a wider topic and it was agreed that there should be some concentrated work to focus on this, including recruitment of members of the Partnership Forum.

Plans are in the works to have an online TEAMS meeting with prospective members to let them know what will be expected of them and there will be an in person meeting at West Port.

In terms of TP groups, Tenant Information Network has over 300 members but needs more active participants.

9. AOB

Next meeting will be held on Thursday 7th May 2026 at West Port