Tenants Voices in Action

Constitution November 2026

Name, Purpose & Contact

The name of the group is Tenants Voices in Action of Bield Housing & Care ('Tenants Voices in Action').

The purpose of Tenants Voices in Action will be to provide a national group within which tenant participation proposals at a strategic level will be discussed and decided. Staff and Board members will be invited by group members to attend meetings as and when required.

Tenants Voices in Action will be specifically for Bield tenants.

The contact for the group will be the Engagement Team.

Membership

Membership of the group will be open to all tenants from Bield's rented and supported housing. Membership is limited to one tenant per development and cannot include tenants who are members of our Scrutiny Group. Membership will be capped at sixteen (16) tenants.

Tenant Elections

Nominations will be sought for when a vacancy arises, and all interested tenants, except for Scrutiny Group members and tenants from the same development, will be notified to apply.

Should there be more than one candidate, tenant members will receive background information on proposed candidates and decide whether to accept those put forward or put it out to an election.

In the case of an election, each candidate will be asked to provide the aforementioned background information. This can include reasons for wanting to join and what the candidate will bring to the group.

Current group members will then conduct a ballot and the next available meeting.

In the event of a draw, the Chairperson will have the deciding vote.

There is no fixed period of office once a member has been elected onto the group. Members can resign via letter/email or in person. If a tenant is elected and resigns up to 6 months following their first meeting, then the position can be offered to the next best placed candidate.

If a member misses four consecutive meetings the group will discuss the matter and agree if the member in question will be asked to step down from the group.

Role of Tenants

The role of tenants is to participate in Bield's affairs at a strategic level. This will allow a tenant perspective to be introduced to the decision-making process within Bield.

Tenant members are expected to be broadly representative of the views held by Bield tenants. Members should be free to discuss the work of the group, except for confidential items from meetings. Information will be shared via appropriate engagement channels.

This is not the place to discuss development specific issues which should be discussed with housing and property staff.

Chairperson & Vice Chair person

A tenant member will chair each of the meetings with a vice-chair position also in place to support the Chair in their duties. The post of Chair and Vice Chair shall be for three years from the date of their first meeting in that role. After the three-year period has ended the Chair

will step down from the post with the Vice Chair then offered the position. Should no one come forward then the Chair and Vice Chair can stay in their current position.

For electing each post candidates should put themselves forward for nomination and if there is more than the required number for the positions available an election will be held among tenant members to determine the outcome. In this event each candidate will be asked to provide a short summary on why they would like to stand which will be incorporated into the ballot paper. The election will take the form of a vote with only tenant members getting the opportunity to vote. If there is a tie for one post the position will be offered to the member who has served longest.
If the Chair resigns then the post should be offered to the Vice Chair for a three-year term. Role descriptions for both the Chair and Vice Chair positions are in place which explains their duties in serving the group and training will be offered to those taking up either of the posts.

If there is an indication that a Chair or Vice Chair is not performing in their duties, then tenant members will meet as a group with the person(s) present to try and resolve any potential issues. If the situation is still not satisfactorily settled after this then formal mediation will be sought.

Training Opportunities
Members will be given the opportunity to undertake a range of training opportunities, including induction, up-skills, Chair/Vice Chair training and skills audit training. One meeting each year should focus on a particular area of training as agreed by members.

Equal Opportunities

The group is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation).

Acting on these principles, we aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination, and one that values diversity.

We seek to treat people fairly, with dignity and respect, and to uphold human rights for all.

Meetings

The group will usually meet four times per year although sub-groups will be convened to progress various issues if required.

Members will have access to good meeting facilities and will determine future agendas, and have a record of the meeting. In this regard:

- Meeting times will be set having full regard to travel time involved.
- Meeting venues will be accessible for all.
- Travel arrangements will be agreed which are appropriate to individual need, including the use of taxis, accessible public transport and where appropriate, Bield vehicles.
- Agendas will be prepared after consultation with the Chair.
- The members will agree on necessary staff representation at each meeting.
- Final agenda and papers will be issued at least two weeks before the meeting date.
- A record of the meeting will be issued to all members shortly after the meeting is held.

Expenses

Expenses will be paid to cover all costs incurred by tenants when engaged on the business of the group.

Relationship to Bield Board and Committees

Board members are invited to attend meetings at the behest of members.

Independence and Inter-dependence

All parties will recognise and accept the legitimate need for both independence and inter-dependence within the group.

They will recognise and accept independence which ensures:

- Resources and funding are available to allow tenant members to fulfil their responsibilities.
- That tenant members are able to seek independent advice and assistance if desired.
- That tenant members are able to discuss and consider matters outwith the meetings and are given adequate time, resources and support to do so.
- Compliance with statutory and contractual obligations placed upon Bield as a Registered Social Landlord, employer and provider of services.

They will also recognise and accept Inter-dependence which ensures: -

- A true partnership approach to consultation at the national (strategic) level.

- Acknowledgement of the different but complementary input each member can make.
- A strengthening of the ethos which already exists within Bield regarding partnership working.
- Open and honest sharing of information.
- Open and honest sharing of ideas.
- Open and honest sharing in decision making.
- A strengthening of the mutual trust and respect which already exists with Bield.
- Improved decision making based upon increased awareness.

Review of the Constitution

The constitution will be reviewed on a three yearly basis, or as required, in consultation with the group and, where appropriate, by obtaining feedback from tenants.