



BIELD HOUSING & CARE

Minutes of the meeting of the Partnership Forum

1st of February 2024

Stirling Court Hotel

Present:

Maria Duncan	MD	Inchkeith Court
Deborah Docherty	DD	Bridge Court
Gillian Merrett	GM	Ashgrove Court
William Smalley	WS	Lynn Court Oban (Chair)
Joe McLean	JM	Jamaica Court
Charles Craske	CC	Kingsburn court

Apologies:

Iain Kirkman	IK	Dean Court
John Thompson	JT	Craigengar Park
Margaret Smith	MS	Gordon Court

In Attendance:

Zhan McIntyre (ZM)
Head of Policy & Customer Standards

Alan Morris (AM)
Tenant Engagement & Participation Lead

Robert Black (RB)
Customer Standards Administrator

Caroline Picker (CP)
Service contracts & Compliance officer

- Action 1. PMO for Ashgrove to look into hot water temperatures in flats and take appropriate action where possible to make the hot water temperatures safe.
- Action 2. Inconsiderate parking letter to be issued to Inchkeith court
- Action 3. Liaise with property to find out who is responsible for the road markings at Bridge court and if it is Bield look at having this repainted.
- Action 4. ZM to raise with head of Housing regarding good housekeeping (posters in developments)
- Action 5. RB to liaise with colleagues to arrange Tappi visit for Mid-April.
- Action 6. ZM to liaise with head of housing regarding the disruption of the bulletin.
- Action 7. ZM to send a reminder via the end of week wrap up email that contractors should not be parking within the development car parks as stated in their contract. (there will be exemptions to this)
- Action 8. PMO for Lynn court to look at adjusting bathroom extractor fans so they run for longer and not turn off instantly once the light is switched off.
- Action 9. ZM – to look into having the Damp, mould & condensation leaflet added to the tenant handbook for new tenants. Possibly look at RB Printing and sending out leaflets to developments for manager to distribute or have an insert for the next bulletin.
- Action 10. ZM – to liaise with head of housing regarding the issuing of Tenant handbooks to new tenants.
- Action 11. AM – to look at adding a section on Anti-social behaviour and what type in the Tenant satisfaction survey.
- Action 12. ZM – Liaise with housing regarding locked lounges in developments.
- Action 13. RB to issue vouchers for rent consultation.
- Action 14. ZM speak to head of housing regarding possible ASB training.
- Action 15. ZM feedback to Head of Assurance to review CCTV policy also look at location of our CCTV in developments.

1. Welcomes & Introductions

WS extended a warm welcome to the Partnership Forum (PF) meeting.

Members introduced themselves.

2. Apologies & Absence

Apologies received by Iain Kirkman, John Thomson & Margaret Smith.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and matters arising.

Minutes for the Partnership forum meeting held on the 2nd of November Agreed.

ZM – Updated on actions 1 – 14 that arose from the partnership forum meeting in November.

Matters arising from the update on previous meetings actions

(Previous Action 4)

GM – Could it be possible to look at hot water as well as the heating as the hot water at Ashgrove is scalding to ensure that the water temperature is safe for tenants.

CP – stated that hot water should be 60 degrees and rising to stop the risk of legionella. However, if the water is scalding would be good to link in with the Property maintenance officer for Ashgrove to investigate this.

(Previous Action 5)

MD – The signage at Inchkeith court states staff, visitors and Tenants parking.

ZM – The signage will only be replaced as and when required due to the cost and this will be on a case-to-case basis. All new signage should state Tenants parking only.

(Previous Action 7)

GM – Stated there has been no action and there is still an abundance of posters at her development.

CP – stated that there should be no posters in the lift apart from those that relate to Health & safety.

ZM – Will raise this again with the head of service for housing to get the clutter removed.

4. TP Updates

PF Current Membership - 8

BIG Current Membership – 5

No meetings held – Members contacted to update on the Tp strategy.

Communication Champions Current Membership – 5

Current programme of work:

Performance report

Rent setting

Bield Calendar

Bield Bulletin

Future programme: **TP review**

Compliments & Complaints Collective Current Membership – 3

Current and future Programme of work: **TP review**

Equality & Diversity Network Current Membership – 4

Current and future Programme of work: **TP review**

RTO's – 0.

Interested tenant list – 46 to 105 tenants on list.

Letters issued: Tenant portal, Allocation policy review Engagement Strategy

5. Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy.

CP – Bield's damp, mould & condensation policy is being drafted and we would like to engage with this group to get some feedback to ensure that the policy meets our customers requirements.

CP - Damp is "moisture diffused through the air or a solid substance or condensed on a surface, typically with detrimental or unpleasant effects." several factors can lead to dampness occurring, this includes; condensation, poor ventilation, drying clothes indoors, poor insulation along with many other factors.

CP - "Mould is a fungus that grows from tiny spores that move naturally around the home. Spores need enough moisture and a food source, such as emulsion, wallpaper and wood."

CP – Condensation is "water which collects as droplets on a cold surface when humid air is in contact with it." Condensation is the food to which mould uses to grow.

CP – Awaab as most of you will know was the young boy who lost his life due to the severe Damp and mould within the property that he stayed in. Although the first reports of mould were made in 2017 the landlord done nothing throughout the following 3 years and tragically Awaab died due to "a severe respiratory condition due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home".

CP - The government has tabled amendments to the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill to introduce 'Awaab's Law', which will require landlords to fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes and aims to prioritise tenants' rights.

This regulation requires landlords to guarantee properties are mould-free and provide adequate ventilation. If there are any health or safety concerns that are ignored within the property, landlords may face severe penalties under Awaab's Law.

On 9 January 2024 the British government launched a consultation into Awaab's law – a law passed in response to the tragic passing of two-year old Awaab Ishaq.

The law will impose stringent requirements including timescales for social housing providers to investigate and repair damp and mould. This will be incorporated into the policy.

GM – Ventilation is a big thing regarding the reduction of moisture. However, some of the vents that are on the windows are sealed shut or tenants can't reach them.

CP – liaise with PMO if any vents are sealed/ stuck shut.

RB – Local staff should assist tenants if any of their vents are out of reach including in the communal areas.

WS – Since we got our new bathrooms fitted our extractor fan turns off straight away when we switch off the light.

DD – This should be able to be adjusted so it stays on for a period after you have turned off your light.

CP – Raise this with the PMO they can have a look or have the contractor out to adjust.

CP – presents tenants guide to damp & mould. This leaflet is to help tenants keep moisture to a minimum. It is the tenant's responsibility to report damp and mould as small as 2mm. Air flow is essential to help reduce the risk of damp and mould. Please raise any concerns you have through the appropriate channels.

CP – Top tip for bathrooms invest in a fern plant this will help massively and if mould has started to grow use a weak bleach solution on it but wear the appropriate PPE.

WS – how will leaflet be distributed to tenants.

CP – Issued through a multi-channel approach.

ZM – would hope to have the leaflet in the tenant handbook for new tenants. Would be looking at having an insert in the next bulletin or have batches sent out to developments for the managers to distribute.

GM – How would you ask people to remove clutter, especially those who hoard.

CP – we would look to give advice and signpost – stating it would be dangerous to health and escalate to social services if required.

6. Communal Washing Machine Cleaning Protocol.

GM - Communal washing machines are potentially high risk for the age group of the tenants that Bield allocate housing to. There are several factors that could potentially make this situation worse which are - Unknown users, soiled laundry and damp laundry. Any bacteria from this could be killed in a high heat tumble dryer (60 to 90 degrees) and a self-clean cycle should be used after every wash due to unknown users.

GM – What are the protocols for staff at developments cleaning out the laundry equipment? Is there's a cleaning record if so, this along with maintenance records should be visible.

ZM – I believe this is something we should take forward and I will laisse with the head of housing to see if we can come up with a best practice to share with development staff to ensure that the laundry equipment is not just maintained but are cleaned to prevent any cross contamination.

GM – Stated that staff should be cleaning the machines at least once a day to break the cycle.

CP – It would be good to guidance and best practice document for staff.

7. Personal Tenants Safety.

A discussion was had regarding Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and violent incidents regarding neighbours and the policy and procedures that should follow.

ZM – Stated that Bield does have an ASB policy and that training was given to staff however this could be something that could be reconsidered due to the recruitment of new area housing managers and housing staff.

AM – Stated that the ASB policy would available also to anyone on Bield's website.

ZM – If there are any violent incidences at a development this should be logged by a member of staff. This creates a workflow for the health and safety officer to look at but also ensures a record of the incident has been created.

ZM – There are steps if either the ASB policy or violent incident policy has had to be used to help deescalate the situation. These are mediation with the parties, the option of potential internal transfer or if these didn't work and things escalated then Bield would look to evict but this takes time and evidence.

MD – stated that CCTV might be a deterrent.

WS – CCTV in most development is only situated at exits not in communal corridors where there are no external doors.

ZM – Could be worth while raising if there is a need for more CCTV and to review the CCTV policy.

8. Tenant Engagement & Participation Review.

AM – explained Bield's current engagement position, with the 6 tenant groups. Stated at present these groups are either poorly attended or had the same tenants giving up their time to contribute to a few groups.

AM – Outlined the steps the team have been working on to improve what Bield offers to our tenants and how we get more participation. The team has been out talking to tenants and have visited 54 developments in 18 local authorities. We found that tenants were very receptive and wanted to get involved but in different ways than we currently offer. We created a survey to gather further information as to what we could offer to encourage tenants to get involved.

RB- The Survey asked the tenants on our interested parties list several questions to help us engage what tenants would be looking for to help them get involved. We asked questions like,

- What level of involvement would encourage you to get involved?
- If you were to get involved in tenant participation and engagement, would you prefer meetings to be? If there anything hindering, you from taking part?
- How would you prefer the group setting?
- How often should meetings be held?

AM – the survey results stated that,

- The majority of those surveyed wanted meetings to be held regionally and locally as opposed to nationally e.g. Glasgow, Edinburgh or Dundee.
- The majority of those surveyed wanted meetings to be held face to face.
- The majority of those surveyed did not want formal meetings.
- The majority of those surveyed wanted to be contacted via email with post a close second.
- The majority of those surveyed wanted meetings to be held every 2-3 months.

AM – What tenant engagement & participation might look like going forward. We propose to have a national partnership forum, National scrutiny group along with regional partnership forum serving local authorities at the moment we have drawn up 14 regional groups. Along with these group we propose to continue with the Communication champions, Compliment and complaint's objective

and the Equality & rainbow network. Along with these groups we are working with other colleagues to help establish a sustainability, digital and a property maintenance group as these are groups of interest that came back from the survey.

AM – We are also proposing different ways for you to communicate with the engagement team. As well as the engagement groups and interested party list we are looking into having a dedicated tenant engagement hub and we have a new Engagement email. This is Engage@bield.co.uk.

GM - Asked if there could be a bit in the tenant handbook going forward about the engagement offerings so new tenants are aware that they exist and how to get involved.

ZM – This can certainly be looked at; currently new tenants should be made aware of the engagement groups by the local managers or area housing managers.

AM – We will run a few pilot schemes as its essential to go to people we can't expect them to come to us.

9. Rent Consultation – initial results

ZM – initial results of those 333 that responded in time to submit the papers to the board are as follows however a full report will be sent out along with the minute.

ZM – The board has approved the following figures for the 2024/2025 financial year. This decision was made based on the draft budget presented to them.

Rent	+6.7%
Staffing	+8.0%
Domestic energy	-30.0%
Communal energy	-0.0%
Meals	+6.7% on contract, +10% ad hoc

10. Learning and Networking Events

Opportunities for latest quarter

TIS, Tenant Member forum Net Zero Standards, 21st February
(zoom)

SFHA, Housing Management Conference, 22nd February (Glasgow)

TIS, Safe & Sound, 20th of March (Glasgow)

TIS Member gathering, 16th of May (TBC)

SFHA Annual conference, 11th & 12th of June (Glasgow)

11. AOB, Expenses

Draw for Rent consultation vouchers. 6 numbers to be chosen
from 1- 310. 298, 187, 200, 80, 59, 296

Dates for 2024/2025

Date of next meeting: All subject to change to TP review

2nd of May 2024

1st of August 2024

7th of November 2024

6th of February 2025