

Nomination Form

Tenant Group of the Year



TIS National Excellence Awards 2024

The **TIS National Excellence awards** recognise and celebrate housing organisations, staff, volunteers, tenants, residents, and community groups **who are leading the way and making positive change in the Scottish social housing sector.**

Categories honour excellence in everything **from partnership working, tenant participation and scrutiny practice, to digital creativity and innovation.** Hotly anticipated, the awards offer a seal of approval for the most outstanding work.

Finalists are selected by an expert and independent judging panel, and **winners announced at an awards ceremony on Thursday 7th November 2024 at the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow.**

The closing date for applications is 5:00pm on Thursday 11th July 2024. TIS accepts submissions in more than one award category.

Category Overview

The **Tenant Group of the Year** award recognises a tenants, residents, or community group who has made an outstanding contribution and achieved great practice that others can learn from in the future.

Submissions must **evidence how the group has added value to their local area and improved community spirit,** strengthened relationships and communication, championed tenant participation, found innovative new ways to get people involved, **influenced decisions and housing policies, services and standards,** or driven community regeneration projects forward.

Who you can nominate

This award is open to tenant, resident, and community groups.

About you

Please note information about the individual, organisation, or group submitting the application:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Name | Zhan McIntyre |
| Position | Head of Policy and Customer Standards |
| Organisation | Bield Housing and Care |
| Email address | engage@bield.co.uk |
| Telephone number | 07980046156 |

About the nominee

Please note information about the group you are nominating:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Group name | Bield Equality Network |
| Email address | engage@bield.co.uk |
| Telephone number | 07980046156 |

Background

Maximum 250 words

Please outline background information about the group that you are nominating.

For example, detail:

- The background of the group, including: when the group was established, the number of individuals involved in the group, and the aims of the group, etc.
- The specific role the group undertakes.

The Bield Equality Network was established in 2022 to address a recognised gap in our tenant engagement efforts, specifically focusing on tenants with protected characteristics. Formed in response to the need for greater inclusivity, the group began with a proactive recruitment campaign, using emails, online platforms, and newsletters to attract interested tenants. This approach successfully brought together a dedicated team passionate about advocating for equality and inclusivity within the community.

The group, comprising three tenants with various protected characteristics, meets every six months to exchange ideas, review progress, and discuss new initiatives. These regular meetings ensure that the group's goals and strategies remain aligned with the evolving needs of the community. Additionally, the Bield Equality Network holds ad hoc meetings as necessary, allowing for timely responses to emerging issues and opportunities.

The primary role of the Bield Equality Network is to foster an inclusive environment where all tenants feel valued and heard. By actively promoting equality and addressing the unique needs of tenants with protected characteristics, the group works to eliminate barriers and enhance the quality of life for all residents. Their efforts include developing and implementing policies, organizing community events, and providing resources and support to tenants.

Since its inception, the Bield Equality Network has become an important part of our tenant engagement strategy, playing a crucial role in ensuring that our community is welcoming and supportive for everyone. Their commitment to inclusivity and proactive approach to advocacy make them an essential part of our organization, continuously driving positive change and fostering a sense of belonging for all tenants.

Actions

Maximum 500 words

Please outline specific actions the group has taken to make an outstanding contribution.

For example, outline:

- How the group has added value to their local area and improved community spirit.
- How the group has made a real difference to the lives of tenants.
- How the group has influenced decisions and housing policies, services, and standards.
- How the group has explored innovative new ways to get people involved.
- How the group has driven community regeneration projects forward.
- The work involved and their overall aim.

Please use this space to input your answer.

Despite its small size, the Bield Equality Network has made a significant impact through a series of targeted actions:

1. Establishing Rainbow Network:

Recognising the limited support for LGBT+ tenants, the network spearheaded the creation of the Older People Rainbow Network. This virtual platform fosters connections and support for LGBT+ tenants across sheltered housing in Scotland. By promoting inclusivity and combating social isolation, the Rainbow Network is a resource offered to enhance community spirit ensuring that LGBT+ tenants feel welcome and supported.

[Home - Older People Rainbow Network \(mailchimpsites.com\)](http://mailchimpsites.com)

2. Research for non-English speakers:

Addressing concerns raised by network members, the group co-funded research with Happy to Translate to assess services for non-English speakers. This initiative aimed to identify barriers faced by tenants with limited English proficiency. This research is publicly available for the sector to use as required. We are using the recommendation to inform the development of Bield's Customer Contact Centre, ensuring that all tenants have equitable access to essential services. The findings will inform the development of Bield's Customer Contact Service, ensuring equitable access for all tenants.

[happytotranslate.com/assets/files/Who is Hard to Reach - Time to Close the Communication Gap - June 2023.pdf](http://happytotranslate.com/assets/files/Who%20is%20Hard%20to%20Reach%20-%20Time%20to%20Close%20the%20Communication%20Gap%20-%20June%202023.pdf)

3. Influencing Allocations Policy:

The Bield Equality Network played an important role in reviewing and influencing Bield's allocation policy, which was updated in November 2023, and enacted in April 2024. Through active participation in a focus group, network members provided valuable insight that highlighted historical biases and discrimination faced by some groups in relation to accessing housing. As a result, Bield's literature now explicitly acknowledges these issues, sending a clear message that people with protected characteristics are welcome in Bield homes and

communities. This change not only promotes equality but also sets precedent for inclusivity in housing practices. In our literature, demonstrating that people with protected characteristics are welcome in our homes and communities. Find a Home (bield.co.uk)

4. Ensuring accessibility of surveys

To ensure that all tenants can participate in feedback processes, the network advocated for making Bield surveys available in multiple languages using the multi-lingual function on MS Forms. This action ensures that non-English speaking tenants can provide input and have their voices heard, fostering a more inclusive and representative tenant engagement process.

Through these actions, the Bield Equality Network has made a solid contribution to the procedures and approaches of Bield, making incremental changes to improve access to services and enhance equality and inclusion. Their work embodies the overall aim of promoting equality and ensuring that every tenant feels valued and supported.

Outcomes

Maximum 700 words

Please outline **positive outcomes** achieved as a result of the group's work.

For example, detail the impact on:

- The delivery of housing services.
- The improvement of satisfaction levels.
- Adding value to their local area and improving community spirit.
- Communication, strengthening relationships, and partnership working.
- The inclusion and lasting benefits of tenants, residents, and communities.
- The skills and knowledge of tenants, residents, and communities.
- How others can learn from the group's good practice now and in the future.
- A specific community regeneration project.

The Bield Equality Network's diligent efforts have led to numerous positive outcomes, significantly impacting various aspects of housing services, tenant satisfaction, and community spirit. Below are the key outcomes resulting from the group's work:

Delivery of services

The network's initiatives have directly improved the delivery of services at Bield. By addressing the needs of tenants with protected characteristics, the group has ensured that services are more inclusive and equitable. The research conducted for non-English speakers has resulted in enhanced language support within the Customer Contact Centre, ensuring that all tenants can access information and assistance without language barriers.

Adding Value to the Local Area and Improving Community Spirit

The establishment of the Rainbow Network has added value by providing a dedicated support system for LGBT+ tenants. This initiative aims to foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity, contributing to a stronger, more cohesive community.

Inclusion and Lasting Benefits for Tenants, Residents, and Communities

The Bield Equality Network's focus on inclusivity has created lasting benefits through the acknowledgment of historical biases in Bield's allocation policy and the implementation of more inclusive practices. These changes ensure that tenants with protected characteristics feel welcomed and supported, fostering a more inclusive community environment.

Learning from the Group's Good Practice

We would be happy to extend membership of the equality network and the rainbow network beyond Bield tenants. The rainbow network is available on a public platform to allow others to sign up, with tenants of all landlords welcomed.

What makes this nominee stand out from the rest?

Maximum 100 words

Please provide a short testimonial on why this group deserves to win.

The Bield Equality Network has achieved remarkable positive outcomes through its dedicated efforts to promote inclusivity and equality. Their impact on services and our approach to delivery has been important as we move forward in the spirit of equality and inclusion. The network's work demonstrates that focused, inclusive actions can lead to significant, positive changes, making them a deserving candidate for recognition in tenant group of the year.

Declaration

As the proposer I have completed this nomination form to the best of my knowledge, and the information provided is a true representation of the nominee's achievements.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Signature | |
| Date | |

Thank you for taking the time to complete this nomination form.

Please submit your nomination by **5:00pm on Thursday 11th July 2024** to TIS by email at: **info@tis.org.uk** or by post to: **TIS – Clockwise Offices, 77 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, G2 3BZ.**

Next steps

- **All applications will be acknowledged on receipt by TIS.** If you do not receive acknowledgement within 3 working days, please contact us to ensure your application has been received.
- An **independent judging panel** will rate your application against the award criteria. The panel will consist of representatives from organisations across the Scottish social rented sector.
- Your award submission will provide the basis for both the shortlist and final decision of the winning entry.
- **TIS welcomes applications in more than one award category.**
- Please ensure you answer all questions as fully as possible and keep the content of your nomination focused – avoid exceeding the suggested word count.
- **TIS will inform all proposers of the outcome of their application Thursday 29th August 2024.**
- Finalists will be invited to the **TIS National Excellence Awards Ceremony**, as part of the TIS National Housing Conference and Exhibition, on **Thursday 7th November 2024** at the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow.