

Nomination Form

Housing Organisation 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 **Housing Organisation of the Year** award recognises an outstanding housing organisation who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to embedding tenant participation, scrutiny, and wider community engagement into the culture of the organisation.

Submissions must **evidence how the organisation is dedicated to going above and beyond, to ensure tenants' rights are at the forefront,** have a meaningful say, and are pivotal in influencing housing policies, services, and standards. The organisation must promote quality and recognise that tenants are at the heart.

Who you can nominate

This award is open to housing organisations operating across the Scottish social housing sector.

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	z.mcintyre@bield.co.uk
Telephone number	

About the nominee

Please note information about the housing organisation you are nominating:

Organisation	Bield Housing and Care
Email address	z.mcintyre@bield.co.uk
Telephone number	

Background

Maximum 250 words

Please outline background information about the housing organisation that you are nominating.

For example, detail:

- The background of the organisation, including: total number of homes, total number of employees, and the geographical areas the organisation covers, etc.
- A brief background of their tenant participation, scrutiny, and wider engagement practices.

Please use this space to input your answer.

Bield Housing and Care is a housing association dedicated to providing homes for older people in 21 local authority areas across Scotland. We have around 4,353 homes across around 160 developments. Bield employs around 600 employees, including onsite staff, care, and office staff, to support and maintain these properties and services.

In recent years, Bield faced challenges impacting tenant engagement, including a major restructure in 2019/20, followed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. These events necessitated a concerted effort from both tenants and officers to revitalise engagement activities. To address these challenges, Bield introduced an interim strategy called 'Engage', which outlined several actions aimed at reinvigorating tenant engagement and participation.

Following 'Engage', Bield launched a broader business strategy named 'Setting the Pace', which emphasised tenant engagement and coproduction as central values. This strategic focus highlights the organisation's commitment to involving tenants in decision making processes and ensuring their voices are heard and respected.

Bield's updated tenant participation and scrutiny practices are being updated to be inclusive and comprehensive, providing multiple platforms for tenants to express their views and contribute to the organisation's operations. Regular meetings and surveys are some of the methods used to gather tenant input. Additionally, we place strong emphasis on wider engagement, including digital platforms and community events.

Actions

Maximum 500 words

Please outline specific actions the housing organisation has taken to make an exceptional commitment to embedding tenant participation, scrutiny, and wider community engagement into the culture of the organisation.

For example, outline:

- How the organisation has gone above and beyond to ensure tenant rights are at the forefront.
- How the organisation has made a real difference to the lives of tenants.
- How the organisation promotes equality and recognise that tenants are at the heart.
- How the organisation has explored innovative new ways to get people involved.
- The work involved and their overall aim.

Please use this space to input your answer.

Bield recognised the need to make sure that customers are at the heart of our decision-making and ensuring their voices are not only heard but valued and acted upon at all levels of our organisation. This commitment emerged from a critical evaluation of disappointing results in our satisfaction survey and employee satisfaction surveys, which highlighted areas requiring improvement in meeting the needs of both tenants and employees.

Our journey towards enhancing tenant engagement commenced during the challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. An interim review of our tenant engagement strategy revealed several gaps in opportunities for tenant involvement. To address these, we introduced the interim strategy 'Engage' to supplement existing groups including Partnership Forum and Bield Improvement Group (BIG). Several new groups were established to facilitate greater tenant participation:

Compliment and Complaint Collective – this group, initially comprising tenants and later officers, plays a pivotal role in reviewing complaints and providing recommendations for improvement. Their insights have led to enhancements in formation provision for bereaved tenants transitioning to sole tenancy and improvements in emergency key procedures and tenant compensation processes.

Communication Champions – comprising tenants, this group actively shapes Bield's communications strategy, including the tenant performance report, tenant bulleting content and feedback on the My Bield tenant portal.

Bield Equality Network – focused on issues related to tenants with protected characteristics, this group spearheaded initiatives such as establishing the Rainbow Network for LGBT+ tenants and co-funding research on accessing services for non-English speakers.

These groups helped to make some progress to ensure tenant voice is heard, listened to and acted upon at all levels of the organisation.

For instance, the compliment and complaint collective identified a gap in the information we offer to bereaved tenants who experience going from a joint to sole tenancy, highlighted the need for

an update to emergency key procedures, and improved processes relating to tenant compensation process.

The communication champions have become the driving force behind the tenant performance report, as well as being involved in the content relating to the tenant bulletin and calendar. They also played a significant role along with tenants on our interested parties list in testing and giving feedback on guidance for our tenant portal My Bield, that had a soft launch in October 2023 and official launch in February 2024.

The Bield Equality Network identified the need for the Rainbow Network – an online group for LGBT+ tenants, as well as co-funding research by Happy to Translate into accessing services on the telephone by people who don't have English as their first language.

This was a great start, but we knew this was not enough. The 'Engage Strategy' included the recruitment of a tenant engagement specialist. Since coming into post in August 2023, the Tenant Engagement and Participation Lead, with support from the Customer Standards Administrator, visited around 60 developments to meet and talk face to face with tenants about what they wanted. These discussions highlighted the need for 'regional' forums as well as the national groups on offer. Work is now underway to establish regional forums to allow tenants at a local authority level to meet together to discuss and act on issues important to them.

Through these concerted efforts, Bield tenants and officers have revitalised the tenant engagement offering, bolstered by an organisational commitment to embedding tenant participation, scrutiny, and wider community engagement into the culture of the organisation. These initiatives ensure that tenants rights are at the forefront, promoting equality and ensuring tenants are at the heart of Bield's operations.

Outcomes

Maximum 700 words

Please outline positive outcomes achieved as a result of the housing organisation's commitment to embedding tenant participation, scrutiny, and wider community engagement into the culture of the organisation

For example, detail the impact on:

- The delivery of housing services.
- The improvement of satisfaction levels.
- The strategic approach of the organisation.
- The culture of the organisation and its core values.
- Communication, strengthening relationships, and partnership working.
- The inclusion and lasting benefits of tenants, residents, and/or communities.
- The skills and knowledge of other tenants, residents, and/or communities.
- How others can learn from the organisation's good practice now and in the future.

Please use this space to input your answer.

At Bield, fostering tenant engagement is a priority, and we have implemented a multifaceted approach to encourage and support tenant participation after a period when tenants were not keen to get involved.

Delivery of services

The active involvement of tenants in decision-making processes has directly improved delivery of our services. For instance, the Compliment and Complaint Collective made recommendations to streamline our response to tenant complaints and improved processes for bereaved tenants transitioning to sole tenancies.

Strategic approach

The strategic approach of Bield has been significantly influenced by our commitment to tenant engagement. The introduction of 'Engage' interim strategy and the broader 'Setting the Pace' business strategy underscore our dedication to placing tenants at the heart of our operations. This strategic focus ensures that tenant engagement and coproduction are central values, guiding our decision-making processes and long-term planning.

Communication

Enhanced communication and strengthened relationships are significant outcomes of our recent tenant engagement initiatives. Regular face-to-face meetings through Lets Meet and the active role of groups like Communication Champions have improved the quality of our communication. Furthermore, partnerships with organisations such as Happy to Translate have been strengthened, further enhancing our service delivery.

Inclusion and legacy

The establishment of groups such as the Rainbow Network and the Equality Network has promoted inclusivity and support for tenants with protected characteristics. These initiatives ensure that all tenants feel welcomed and valued.

What makes this nominee stand out from the rest?

Maximum 100 words

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

Please use this space to input your answer.

Through these multifaceted approaches, Bield has achieved significant progress in relation to tenant engagement and participation, and we are looking forward to going further. Efforts so far have enhanced service delivery and fostered a culture of inclusivity and collaboration, demonstrating Bield's exceptional commitment to placing tenants at the heart of its operations.

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	Zhan McIntyre
Signature	Zhan McIntyre
Date	10/07/2024

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.