

# STAGE 2

## A REMINDER OF THE KINGDOM TRANSFER PROMISES



CAST YOUR VOTE BETWEEN

31<sup>st</sup> August - 28<sup>th</sup> September

What's in this proposal for you if you vote 'yes' to the transfer?



Invest £5.12 million in your homes in the first 3 years



Expand housing choice and options



Freeze rents until April 2023. Average savings of £520 over the next 3 years



Provide an effective in-house repairs service



A well managed financially viable organisation



Keep the local Fairfield office and staff



A strong community voice



Ballot open between 31st August - 28th September

The transfer to **Kingdom Housing Association** can only happen if you vote 'Yes' in the ballot.

This leaflet has all the information you need to help you make up your mind.




fairfield housing  
association


WHEN THE BALLOT OPENS VOTE **'YES'** TO THE TRANSFER TO KINGDOM

# Kingdom Housing Association Transfer Promises

If Fairfield tenants support the transfer and vote 'Yes' when the ballot takes place, we have negotiated an excellent package of benefits for our tenants and staff. Specifically, Kingdom Housing Association promise to do the following:


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**1.** Provide a high-quality responsive repairs service from Kingdom's in-house maintenance team from July 2022. This will ensure a quality and better value for money service with local job opportunities. Kingdom commits to the following repair timescales:


Category	Target
Emergency	Within 4 hours
Urgent	Within 3 days
Routine	Within 10 days
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**2.** Spend **£5.12 million** improving Fairfield's homes by March 2025. (Almost £3 million more than Fairfield is able to spend in the same period.)


**This includes:**


  - ✓ £860,845 spent to improve the local environment (over £300,000 more than Fairfield plans to spend in the same period)
  - ✓ 376 new kitchens
  - ✓ 216 homes - replacement windows
  - ✓ 217 homes - replacement doors
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**3.** Introduce a range of new support services for tenants such as access to energy and money advice, employability and digital support, and the covid assistance fund. Improve customer service ensuring that tenants are listened to and looked after. In addition to the local office, access to Kingdom's Customer Service Centre and 24 hour online access to the tenant portal.
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**4.** Ensure rents remain affordable with a **rent freeze until April 2023** and restrict rent increases in **years 2 and 3 to CPI inflation only**. If the transfer does not happen, Fairfield rents would rise at inflation plus 1% each year for the next 15 years. This commitment will mean **average savings per household of £520** over the first 3 years after transfer. **Review the service charges** across all properties and introduce a revised service charge structure from April 2023 that is fair and transparent.
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**5.** **Keep the local Fairfield office with your local staff** that you know and trust plus **more specialist staff and management operating from the office** as required providing better customer service and support.
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**6.** Retain Fairfield staff ensuring their terms and conditions are protected. Staff will have access to new learning and development opportunities as well as career enhancement opportunities and have a greater say on how the organisation is run through representation on the Employee Forum.
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**7.** Be financially viable in the long term with a robust new 30 year business plan allowing for major investment in Fairfield homes while keeping rents affordable.
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**8.** Provide strong and stable governance. Kingdom's skilled Board will ensure the association is well managed and complies with legal and regulatory requirements. There will be a reserved place on the Kingdom Board for a tenant member or shareholding member of the existing Fairfield Board. This will allow Fairfield to have a voice on the Kingdom Board and to bring the skills developed at Fairfield to the Kingdom Board.
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**9.** Create an influential new Local Area Committee with direct links to the Kingdom Board to ensure a strong tenant voice. The Local Area Committee will oversee local investment and community budgets and Kingdom will work with the committee to improve services, ensure the transfer promises are delivered and explore and facilitate access to community facilities that can be used by tenants and the wider community.
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**10.** Support tenants to have more housing choices and options. Provide 288 new build social and mid market rented homes in the Perth and Kinross Council area over the coming 4 years including a mix of house types suitable for families, single people, older people and people requiring wheelchair accessible homes.

Discussions are underway with Perth & Kinross Council to explore Kingdom either managing or acquiring the 18 new homes that the Council will build on the former Fairfield Centre site due for completion in 2022. These include wheelchair accessible adapted ground floor flats.

# What you loved about the transfer plans

Tenants are excited about the proposed transfer and tell us they are looking forward to:

- **Windows and Doors** - It is clear that there's a huge demand for upgrading properties. Doing so will improve energy efficiency, save tenants money on fuel bills and make their homes more secure.
- **Enhanced Repairs Service** - Tenants have been dissatisfied with the repairs service they have been receiving. They like the idea of taking the repairs function in-house as they see that it will offer tenants greater value for money and guarantees of service delivery.
- **Rent Freeze** - Freezing rent and promising reduced increases in the future has been really welcome news with tenants saying that it allows them to better plan financially and also reflects the financial challenges many face post-pandemic.
- **More Investment** - Kingdom has promised a significant investment in both homes and the local environment. Tenants say they want to feel the area around their homes is looked after as well as the homes they live in

Compared to Fairfield's investment plan, Kingdom's transfer promise will provide an improved living environment in a much shorter timeframe.

# What you said during the consultation

Bringing homes up to date with windows and doors is great. We've been residents for nearly ten years. This has always been promised but has never happened.

Looking forward to the transfer.

Glad staff are being looked after.

Really happy with the proposals.



# What Kingdom tenants say about their landlord

"I have to compliment everyone that works with Kingdom. We have a fantastic forever home, kids are happy, inside is being decorated as we go, any repairs have been carried out fast and extremely professional, the people in the offices are fantastic and lovely to speak to and very helpful. All I can say is, we're extremely happy and grateful that you guys have gave us our home; I wished I had went with Kingdom Housing years ago - thank you all very much!" **Mrs Anderson**

"I am truly grateful that I'm in the property. It's my dream home with my own garden, nice community, shops and a park planned in the next phase. It's so exciting to see the development and know it's focused on family living." **M McGilvary**



# Your questions answered

## **This all sounds too good to be true. Will Kingdom be able to afford all that they promise and how will the transfer promises be monitored?**

A joint Business Case has been agreed between both associations and this has received positive review by TIS (the independent tenants adviser) and the Scottish Housing Regulator. This sets out all of the savings that can be made from Fairfield joining Kingdom and how these have been used to pay for the transfer promises to tenants over the next 30 years. Monitoring of tenant promises will fall to Kingdom's Board of Management and the new Local Area Committee. A member of the current Fairfield Board will join the Kingdom Board after transfer to ensure commitments are delivered.

## **How can tenants trust that Kingdom will do what they say they will do?**

The full business plan, including the transfer commitments has been provided to a full range of stakeholders, including the Scottish Housing Regulator, who will monitor the progress with the plans. The full proposals have been detailed as part of Kingdom's financial plans and approved by the Kingdom Board, who will ensure the promises are delivered. As stated above the Local Area Committee will also have a key responsibility to monitor the transfer promises.

## **What specialist services do Kingdom offer to tenants?**

Kingdom offers a range of advice and assistance services to customers that help tenants to sustain their tenancies. Kingdom will introduce a range of support services for Fairfield tenants, including energy assistance, welfare and money advice, employability support and tenant participation opportunities. These services will all be provided free of charge to tenants.

## **What is Kingdom's approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour and neighbour disputes?**

Kingdom appreciates the difficulties anti-social behaviour can create and takes this matter very seriously. Where there is a complaint about anti-social behaviour, Kingdom has detailed procedures in place. This includes a review by the front line staff who will investigate the complaint and arrange intervention where required to address the issues.



## **Would all areas enjoy improvements if the transfer happened?**

Yes - all three areas (the Fairfield estate, our Muirton and City Centre developments) will all enjoy positive changes if the transfer happens and Kingdom becomes the landlord. Investment and regular maintenance is essential to ensure the housing stock continues to meet needs and remains sustainable in the future. Kingdom achieves this by having Major Investment, Repairs & Cyclical Maintenance Programmes in place for their properties.

## **How would I report repairs and would there be any changes to this service?**

You'll still be able to report repairs in the same way you do now and Kingdom is looking to improve the service by introducing appointments for some repairs. The new system will also provide notifications to tenants to remind them about the repairs appointment and alert them when the trades operative is on their way to carry out the repair. Tenants will be able to report repairs through the web site or tenant portal and track progress with the repairs through the new appointments system.

## **Would the landscaped areas be improved?**

Yes. Kingdom Housing Association has an Estate Management Policy that ensures Kingdom will manage the environment in and around their developments so that they are safe and well maintained. Kingdom carry out regular inspections in developments and encourage customers to report areas of concern. Kingdom encourages tenants to get involved in estate inspection so that everything is happening as promised and any issues are addressed quickly.

## **What will happen to my shareholding if the transfer goes ahead?**

If you hold an existing £1 share in Fairfield, this will be cancelled if the transfer proceeds. Unfortunately, the Rules do not allow Fairfield or Kingdom to refund these £1 shares. The plan is therefore to agree with the new Local Area Committee that a donation of an equivalent value of the Fairfield shares is made by Kingdom to a local charity. Kingdom will, however, welcome new £1 share membership applications from former Fairfield tenants post-transfer in line with its Rules. Unlike when Fairfield was a Cooperative, it is not a requirement of your tenancy to become a shareholder. This is optional if you want to be more involved in how the Association works.

## **Do I need to sign a new tenancy agreement if the transfer goes ahead?**

No. You will not have to sign a new tenancy agreement as this would transfer automatically to Kingdom Housing Association. Fairfield tenants would retain all their existing rights.



If you want free independent advice, contact TIS, the Tenants Information Service

Freephone: 0800 488 0982

Email: [info@tis.org.uk](mailto:info@tis.org.uk)

