



An important update from the Chair – 17 June 2021

The outcome of our process to appoint a preferred transfer partner

I wrote to you in April 2021 on behalf of our Management Committee to let you know the outcome of our strategic options appraisal and that we had decided to begin the search for a suitable housing association to transfer all of Faifley's engagements into.

You will remember that we made this decision in the best interest of tenants and community, set against the range of challenges that we faced as a small housing association if we decided to stay independent. Based on the appraisal, we were confident that such a transfer would lead to the best outcomes for tenants, while safeguarding the local, community focused, and personalised services that tenants, owners and our staff team value.

To find the best transfer proposal, we advertised in the Scottish housing press. Interest was restricted only to registered housing associations and charities, just like Faifley. We sought a strong, well performing partner with the capability to deliver what Faifley needs. We made clear all of the priorities that tenants told us matter to them most and that we want to address through a transfer. The early priorities that we set were as follows:

- Keeping rents affordable
- Investment in homes (kitchen, bathrooms etc.)
- Improving the environment (managing the area, fencing etc.)
- Modernising the service (better payment options, on-line services)
- Being more than just a good landlord (wider role services)
- Accessible local services

The good news is that we had lots of initial interest and at the closing date for bids, we had several strong submissions to become our preferred transfer partner. As the bids were commercially confidential, we have agreed not to reveal the identity or the details of each bid, except for the successful submission. A subgroup of the Management Committee supported by our expert advisers closely examined each submission. After careful review and scoring, a recommendation was made to the full Management Committee at a special meeting held on 15 June 2021. I am delighted to inform you that the Committee approved the recommendations and we have now appointed **Caledonia Housing Association** (Caledonia) as our preferred transfer partner. We wanted to share this news with you as soon as the decision was taken.

You may have heard of Caledonia. Whilst they operate in various parts of Scotland, they have a strong local presence here in the West Dunbartonshire Council area. We will share all the detail that



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you will want to know over the coming months, but for now, you can log on to their website <https://www.caledoniaha.co.uk/> to read a bit more about Caledonia and their achievements.

Their submission was assessed as strong, and it responded well on each of the priorities that we set. It also included very positive initial commitments on rent levels over the first 5 years for Faifley tenants if the transfer proceeds and at the same time, a substantial catch-up programme of investment in our homes and the environment, far in excess of what Faifley could afford if the transfer did not happen.

With their appointment as preferred transfer partner, the next step over the coming months is to turn their initial offer into a detailed joint Business Case. The Business Case will set out the whole range of promises that Caledonia will commit to if Faifley's tenants support the transfer plans and how they will be paid for. As the Business Case is developed, Faifley with Caledonia will continue to engage with our tenants and other stakeholders to shape the transfer plans and make sure they meet your needs.

You might also recall that Caledonia are already providing assistance to us with asset management and other services under a services agreement. With this, they are already actively getting to know our area, homes, tenants, service users and staff team and will be continuing to support us in this capacity over the time ahead. We will still have our own Interim Director (Catherine Lowe) and we have also engaged our own Transfer Adviser (Mags Lightbody) to make sure Faifley's interests are represented as we develop the detail of the transfer plans. Mags is very experienced in the successful delivery of these types of transfers.

We have also now appointed the Tenants Information Service (TIS) as the independent tenant advisers. The role of TIS will be to provide free and independent advice to tenants and help answer any questions you have through the process. As we consult with you over the coming period, TIS will be there to help at each step and to make sure your voice is heard.

Once the Business Case is agreed, we would then begin formal tenant consultation, with the final transfer offer being the subject of an independent tenant ballot, likely into next year, where every tenant would get to vote on whether the transfer goes ahead. Please be assured that a transfer would only happen if the majority of tenants voting support it.

We hope that this first big step in appointing Caledonia Housing Association as our preferred transfer is good news and takes us one step further on our journey to create the best future for the tenants, service users and staff team of Faifley. We have kept the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) updated on this positive progress.

We will be issuing regular updates, but if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email us at enquiry@faifleyha.co.uk or contact our Interim Director, Catherine Lowe on 01389 877924.

With our best wishes

Jackie Lorimer

Faifley Chairperson, on behalf of the Management Committee



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