



Proposed transfer to Cairn

Your views matter

Join us
for an
online chat:
Tue 8 Dec,
2-3pm or
6.30–7.30pm

Why are TPAS writing to you?

TPAS Scotland are an independent tenant-led organisation. We have worked for many years with tenants and landlords across Scotland. Pentland Housing Association asked us to be your Independent Advisor for the proposed transfer to Cairn Housing Association. You can be confident that all our information is impartial and independent and will help you make an informed decision about the future of Pentland.

Update on what has been happening

You would have got a letter earlier in the year to let you know Pentland were thinking about joining Cairn, but thanks to Covid-19 everything was put on hold. But with a bit of digital communicating, its back on!

The staff team have adapted brilliantly to the impact of the pandemic to continue providing your housing and repairs services. Pentland has strengthened its Board of Management with three new members and Paul Rydquist has been appointed as the Partnership Manager to work on the proposed Transfer of Engagements to Cairn. The Board of Pentland decided that merging completely with Cairn was in tenants' best interests going forward.

A Transfer of Engagements means that Pentland's homes, services and staff would transfer to Cairn and would no longer be registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Transfer of Engagements is still at an early stage and it's important you remember that IT'S NOT A DONE DEAL. Nothing can happen unless a majority of tenants vote yes in a secret ballot, which will be held next year.

Pentland are keen to make sure:

- Your views and priorities are reflected in the offer Cairn is developing about how it would provide services such as repairs and future rent levels, the local office, staff etc.
- Any concerns or questions are independently responded to right from this early stage.

What is the role of TPAS?

Our job is to...

- Find out your priorities for your home and housing services and ensure your views can influence the future of your homes and services
- Provide you with impartial independent information and advice about the future plans
- Answer your questions
- Make sure that the business case for transfer to Cairn, including the business plan and financial plans are robust and reflect your priorities
- Clarify any issues or concerns you may have

We give you have a number of ways to have your say and contact us:

- Email - lesley.baird@tpasscotland.org.uk
- Freephone - 0800 049 5761
- If we are not able to answer your call please leave a message we will always get back to you
- Facebook – go to TPAS Scotland – there is a tab for Pentland tenants
- Video calls and chats – we are happy to arrange these when it suits you in addition to 2 weekly video chats
- By post - TPAS, 3rd Floor, Erskine House, 1 North Avenue, Clydebank, G81 2DR

We have a small, friendly and very experienced team working on this project. Lesley Baird CEO of TPAS is the team leader, and she will be working with Paul McNeill and Graeme Wilson. Please feel free to contact us anytime.

You can find out more about TPAS Scotland at www.tpasscotland.org.uk

What tenants have said so far

Before lockdown we asked you for your views and your priorities for the future of your homes and services.

On the limited feedback received so far, Pentland tenants have said:

- It is important to keep an office in Thurso
- Will tenants still have a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement?
- Pentland have a good repairs service, would like this to continue
- It is important to keep rent rises to a minimum
- Will Cairn help the local economy by continuing to use local trades people?
- What will happen to Pentland staff?

Who are Cairn Housing Association?

Cairn are a registered charity and social landlord whose aim is to make affordable housing more accessible to more people in need of a home of their own. Across Scotland, Cairn provides vital accommodation and landlord services to over 3000 homes in 24 local authority areas, from the Highlands to the Scottish Borders. Cairn have 131 homes in Caithness and an area office in Thurso. They also have offices in Inverness, Bellshill and Edinburgh. For more information visit www.cairnha.com or look them up on social media.

Want to know more?

Find out more and tell us what is important to you over a cuppa, cake and chat from the comfort of your own home. We can arrange a phone call or a video call, you provide your own cuppa and cake. Due to Covid-19 we cannot meet you face to face, but we hope to be able to arrange meetings locally by next year, so its only phone or video calls for now.

You can come along to our virtual pop in sessions and have a chat to Lesley Baird from TPAS. The next pop in sessions are on **Tuesday 8th December 2 - 3pm and 6.30 – 7.30pm**. To come along contact Elaine Scoular by emailing elaine.scoular@tpasscotland.org.uk

In 2021 we will be starting **weekly pop ins at 2 - 3pm and 6.30 – 7.30pm, starting on Tuesday 12th January**.

We will be having a Question and Answer session in the New Year with the Chief Executive Officers of Pentland and Cairn – we will let you know the date and time of this session.

Prize draw

Everyone who contacts us will be entered into a prize draw every month, there are two £50 vouchers to be won monthly.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What will happen to Pentland if there is a yes vote?

A. Pentland will no longer be your landlord. Your tenancy agreement will be with Cairn Housing Association.

Q. Are Pentland in some kind of difficulty?

A. Pentland could choose to remain independent but they face challenges to modernise their homes to meet tenant expectations and the current legislative requirements for energy efficiency, alongside providing excellent repairs and housing services. By becoming part of Cairn, Pentland can guarantee affordable rents and earlier improvements to your homes.

Q. Will there still be an office in Thurso?

A. Yes. Caithness will continue to be an important area for Cairn, and they have committed to having an office in Thurso for a new combined team. We want to hear your views on what a future local service looks like.

Q How can I share my views on this or gain more information?

A. Contact TPAS Scotland, your Independent Tenant Advisor. There will be no change unless tenants vote yes. However, your engagement throughout the process is vital to ensure your views are at the heart of this process. There are a small group of tenants who are meeting (virtually) to have a look at what's happening, what should be in newsletters etc. It is very informal so if you want to come along please contact Gael at Pentland or Lesley from TPAS.

Q. Is it a done deal?

A. No! Pentland want to hear your views about what you think needs to be done to your homes and services to shape the future – get involved and let us know how you feel about this proposed change.

Q. What is the role of TPAS?

A. Our role is to provide you with independent, impartial information and give you the opportunity to ask questions. We will never tell you how to vote.

Q. Will my rights as a tenant change, will I still have a secure tenancy?

A. Your rights will not change. You will not be asked to sign a new tenancy agreement and will continue to have a Scottish Secure Tenancy with all the associated rights and responsibilities continuing unchanged.

Q. Do I have a vote in the decision?

A. Yes, all tenants and joint tenants will have a vote in the secret ballot which Pentland aim to hold in the second half of 2021.

Q. If the proposal goes ahead how will I report a repair, make a complaint, or make a general enquiry?

A You would contact the Customer Services team at Cairn, either at the office (Covid-19 restrictions permitting), by phone or digitally.

Q. What will happen with my rent?

A. Cairn will be offering a rent guarantee for a time. This means that rent rises would be capped. The detail of this guarantee would be drafted as part of the business case, and you'll get a chance to give feedback.

Q: What happens next?

A: Over the months ahead, the Pentland and Cairn Boards will be working on a business case for the partnership. They are looking for your views and priorities so that the promises that will be made to you are what you need from a transfer to Cairn.

When a business case has been drafted, which could be spring or early summer 2021, there will be time for formal consultation, when Pentland will set out, in detail, what a transfer would mean to you, and what would happen if it wasn't to go ahead. After this formal consultation you would be invited to vote in an independently verified ballot.

If you'd like to know more, please contact TPAS:

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