

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	Sara McWilliam
Position	Customer Engagement Officer
Organisation	Kingdom Housing Association
Email address	saramcwilliam@kha.scot
Telephone number	01592 630922

About the nominee

Please note information about the housing organisation you are nominating:

Organisation	Kingdom Housing Association
Email address	engagement@kha.scot
Telephone number	01592 630922

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.

Kingdom Group is made up of three organisations: Kingdom Housing Association with over 6200 homes for social rent, Kingdom Initiatives with over 900 homes for mid-market rent and Kingdom Support and Care providing care and support to over 350 people. Kingdom covers a large geographical area across four local authorities; Fife, Perth and Kinross, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire. We are continually expanding to provide more homes in these areas.

Kingdom are also involved in a number of initiatives which go beyond the mainstream housing provision, in support of our mission 'More than a Home' including:

- Managing the Fife Care and Repair and Small Repairs Service.
- Private Sector Adaptations Service in Fife.
- Kingdom Works, which provides employment and training initiatives.

Over 550 people are employed by the Kingdom Group, with around 243 full-time equivalent staff in Kingdom Housing Association and 225 full-time equivalent staff in Kingdom Support and Care.

Kingdom recruited its first Tenant Participation Officer in 2015 and developed its Tenant Participation Policy shortly after that. Over the next few years, Kingdom worked to embed tenant participation and scrutiny in its processes. Kingdom Now employs a team of 3 Engagement officers to make sure that engagement opportunities are offered accessible to all customers of the Kingdom Group. The Group offers a wide range of participation options at all levels such as:

- hybrid surveys with response rates reaching 43%;
- an improved system for managing participation activities (CX-Feedback Engagement+)
- topical roadshows and focus groups;
- large community events and learning tours
- bi-annual Gatherings;
- innovative participatory budgeting scheme (Choices) and other funding options;
- award-winning Scrutiny Panel;
- customer involvement in recruitment and procurement processes; and
- bespoke support to community initiatives and and service user groups.

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.

This submission is going to highlight Kingdom's Choices scheme and how this has allowed us to embed tenant participation, scrutiny and wider community engagement into the organisation as a whole.

Choices is the participatory budgeting scheme which all Kingdom customers can access to make a difference to their community.

In 2017, our Scrutiny Panel carried out an investigation on Estate Management services. Through this investigation, they were made of Kingdom's Enhancements budget of £10,000 per year. This funding was for Housing staff to use for improvements to communal areas. After the Scrutiny Panel consulted other tenants, they made a recommendation to the Board that tenants should be able to apply for Enhancements. The Board made the decision to keep the Enhancements budget and created a new budget of £15,000 per year for tenants to use. During 2018, a series of consultation events took place with the Scrutiny Panel, other tenant groups, staff members and PB Scotland. PB Scotland advised what participatory budgeting is and how to do it and from this, Choices was created. The scheme was promoted internally and to tenants, officially launching during Summer Gathering at Craigtoun Park.

Initially, Choices was limited to applications of up to £1000. Customers applied for funding for items like plants, bird boxes and gardening tools. 2 years after Choices began, the process was reviewed by those who had used the scheme and other tenants to make it more accessible and streamlined. The £1000 cap was lifted to allow for larger projects to be undertaken.

How does Choices work? Customers submit an application explaining their idea or project. The form is available 24/7 online, although we ensure no one is digitally excluded by doing applications in person and over the phone. After the organisation carries out a feasibility check for the proposed project, the idea is put back to the local communities for the final decision. Customers may vote in favour or against the idea or raise concerns. This consultation is done using CX Feedback Engagement+, a significant tool for Kingdom's digital engagement. If funds are not sufficient to meet the costs to implement the idea, we look for alternative solutions like cross funding, or we ask the customers to decide which project should have priority. Kingdom then works with the residents to help them deliver the projects.

Over the years, the budget allocated for Choices has continually increased as more and more customers have used the scheme, now sitting at £20,000 per year. Choices is available to Kingdom Group customers of all tenures. It also gives front-facing staff an additional tool to encourage customers to use the funding to improve social issues and foster community spirit. It is also available to community groups who may wish to use the funding for community development activities.

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.

Choices has a significant positive impact on tenants and their communities. The projects themselves are excellent and make a tangible difference. However, there are many positive outcomes from Choices that go above and beyond the project delivery:

Empowerment:

Customers are empowered to make decisions through access to funding. They are involved in all stages of the process from proposing ideas to walkabouts to consultations. As part of Kingdom's ethos to provide 'More Than A Home', it is crucial we provide customers with tools to develop their communities.

Relationships:

Relationships between Kingdom staff and customers are developed as they collaborate through the Choices process. Often a significant part of the process is a walkabout and this gives customers a chance to get to know the staff who work in their area.

Choices requires staff from Housing, Estates, Maintenance, Accounts, Finance and Customer Engagement to work together on rewarding projects meaning tenant participation is embedded across Kingdom.

Choices provides an opportunity to collaborate with our partners who work and volunteer in communities. At a new development in Gauldry, many of our customers were new to the area. We were approached by a Community Councillor to request funding for a notice board to be installed to ensure new residents were notified about local activities and integrated into the village. Our customers voted unanimously in favour of this project.

Problem Solving:

Social/estates issues are able to be tackled with Choices funding. When presented with issues, Kingdom staff can suggest solutions to customers knowing they can use this funding source. This allows customers to be part of tackling local issues.

Choices has proven to be a successful tool in tackling mental health issues and social isolation. The funding has been used to create outdoor green spaces in developments where people did not have gardens. This has allowed customers to use these spaces to socialise and have somewhere they can be in nature.

A resident involved a project to turn communal gardens to private gardens told us:
"Having our own private gardens has made a huge difference to the residents. I am so happy to have security for my dog and my own space to relax outdoors. I was thinking of moving from the property but, after we were helped to implement our idea, I am really delighted with my home".

Engagement:

Choices has been a springboard for tenants and groups, who after being involved in a project, go on to attend our events, take part in recruitment exercises and other consultations. Through getting to know Kingdom staff, barriers are removed and customers learn where they can become involved in the organisation. Although not all customers have an interest in more formal Tenant Participation, Choices consults everyone impacted by a project and gives an opportunity for participation to people who might not have otherwise engaged with us.

We have recently created a video about Choices to allow us to promote the scheme widely:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSI_xbqv8x8

Choices photos:

Before



After



Earlsgate and Baron House, Scone: Customers transformed a flower bed into an outside seating area.



Pottery Street, Kirkcaldy: A secure communal garden space created giving a social space for customers to share.



Gothenburg Terrace, Coaltown of Wemyss: Choices provided batteries to power the Christmas lights which are very popular with local residents.



Kirkland Farm Lane, Ballingry: The bin store previously did not have the gate or mesh roof. This resulted in flytipping and waste being left piled up around the bins. The adaptations were the idea of the Estates Officer and Housing Officer. They proposed the idea to tenants who then used Choices to fund the project. The tangible result is a much tidier area and has also improved relationships between staff and tenants.

Before



After



Lorimer Gardens, Dunfermline: A customer applied to turn this large communal garden into 12 private gardens. Initially customers rejected the proposal as this would have caused an increase to their rent. Instead of rejecting the project as a whole, we proposed to create three smaller communal gardens, giving the security for children and dogs and keeping rents from increasing. A second consultation was carried out, and customers voted in favour of the compromise idea.

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.

Kingdom has made a commitment to ensure our customers of all tenures have their voices heard and Choices is just one of the many ways we give customers a platform within the organisation. Choices allows us to truly embed Tenant Participation across all departments. In a challenging time for Housing as a sector, we hope we have demonstrated how we continue to champion our customers and their communities.

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	Sara McWilliam
Signature	Sara McWilliam
Date	15/07/2024

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.