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Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM  
Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner  
5th Floor, Globe House  
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25 January 2021

Dear Dame Sara,

Many thanks for your letter dated 24 November. As you point out, since my team here at Kingfisher last spoke with you in January, the world does indeed feel changed.

Managing the impact of Covid-19 on our business, supply chains, and our people, has been a priority for us, as for all businesses. And yet, despite this – and perhaps because of the societal pressures of the past year – our Responsible Business agenda has never been more important.

In June, we published our Responsible Business strategy, with four priorities we want to lead on, around Colleagues, Planet, Customers and Communities. Underpinning these priorities are our 'Fundamentals', including our approach to Human Rights and Responsible Sourcing. We also set up our Responsible Business Committee, a Board sub-Committee, which has ultimate oversight of these issues, including the risks and our management of them.

Earlier this year, we also published our [2019/20 Modern Slavery Statement](#), in which we detailed our approach to managing the risks of modern slavery. We also detail the Operation Fort case, and the resulting actions from our own investigation into it, where we reviewed our approach to labour providers in our supply chain.

As a result of our investigations, earlier this year, we began a partnership with the Slave Free Alliance to strengthen our due diligence on modern slavery. Their independent experts conducted a review of our policies and approach to modern slavery, and we are working our way through their recommendations. We are also sponsoring the Responsible Recruitment Toolkit from allianceHR, a specialist trade organisation. This provides a package of free training and support to help suppliers and their labour providers to embed responsible recruitment practices. It is voluntary and, this year, a small number of our UK suppliers have taken it up. Progress is steady but has not been helped by Covid, however we expect to make more progress next year as we roll it out internationally. And we also developed a new protocol for handling incidents of modern slavery, to help us coordinate future responses more effectively and consistently.

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In addition, we have also embarked on a cross-business Human Rights' due diligence process to highlight our most salient human rights' issues. We have finalised a detailed risk and gap assessment to understand where salient risks are most likely to appear, what we should prioritise and next steps for 2021 and beyond. We will be working to improve our governance, management and mitigation of our wider human rights risks across our business and business relationships, which is a significant step in our journey to keep improving our management of human rights, including modern slavery.

We welcome the Framework developed by your office. We find the ability to benchmark a useful exercise, which allows us to pinpoint where we are in our journey, and ultimately, where we would like to be. The Framework comprises several levels of practice: 'leading on human rights innovation'; 'evolving good practice'; 'meeting basic expectations'; and finally, 'barely achieving compliance'. Having reviewed our data and practices with external, independent experts, we feel that Kingfisher meets 'basic expectations' set out in the framework, and is showing elements of 'evolving good practice'. In time, it will be helpful to see more detail behind the Framework, as well as guidance on good practices and how to achieve these.

As many of our peers, we have much work to do to continue to ensure respect for human rights is consistently applied throughout our business, and we will be making a conscious effort to work with our colleagues and suppliers to ensure we progress our Human Rights and Modern Slavery agenda into 2021.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thierry Garnier".

Thierry Garnier  
CEO, Kingfisher plc