

Continued from page 1

very soon on how to put this into practice.

The second area you have asked us to improve is handling problems more effectively. The key thing we need to do about this is set realistic expectations for you on what will happen, by when, and by whom.

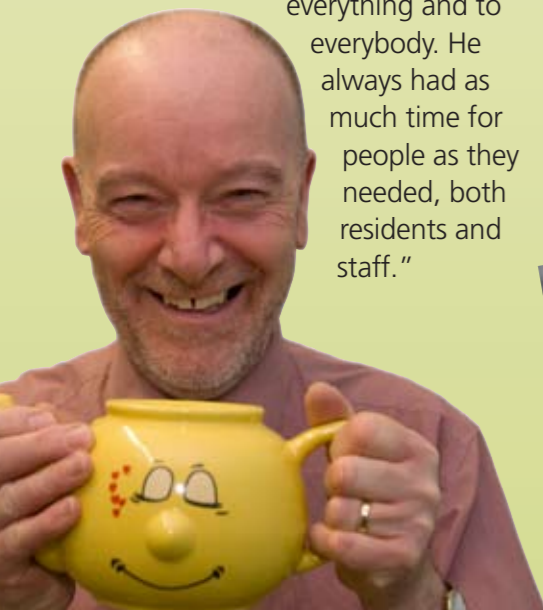
The third issue is repairs. While residents were fairly complimentary about Keniston's own contractor, you were less satisfied with outside contractors and their quality of work.

We have started to act on all these suggestions, beginning with tackling anti-social behaviour. For more information about the survey and how we are responding to your suggestions, or to see a copy of the full report, email us at enquiries@kenistonha.co.uk

Farewell to Chris

Chris Bryant, Keniston's housing manager, is leaving the association in January. In his 20 years at Keniston, Chris has always promoted resident involvement, and he has chaired or helped at hundreds of residents meetings and other social events. It was his idea, too, to get the youth club going at Darrick Wood.

Chris' goal was to deliver excellent services for residents. Nevil Osborne, Keniston's chief executive, said: "Chris will be remembered for his keenness to be completely fair about everything and to everybody. He always had as much time for people as they needed, both residents and staff."



Keniston kids raise £32,000 for community centre

Darrick Wood will soon have a new home for its youth club, thanks to the efforts of some of the estate's younger residents.

Members of the youth club successfully applied for a £32,000 grant to replace the decaying old community centre building with newer premises. In their grant application the young residents said they wanted: "A safe place to meet friends ... a place to use computers and do our homework" and, strikingly, "somewhere we can go without people moaning at us."

The grant was awarded by the London Borough of Bromley Youth Capital Fund, which is a fund of money that has borough wide young people as the grant decision makers. The council also runs the youth club at Darrick Wood, which is jointly funded by the Council and Keniston.

The new(er) community centre building should be ready for use early in the New Year.



A demountable building, it will be painted, connected to electricity and utilities and made wheelchair accessible. There are also plans to create rose beds under the windows.

The youth club won't have it all to themselves though; the residents' group Darrick Wood Community hope to set up more community activities too.

Anyone who is interested in starting up a parent and toddler club, coffee mornings, keep fit or other community activities should contact Sharon Hobbs in the office, or Keith Farmer the Caretaker who chairs the Darrick Wood Community.

The building should provide a warm, secure community centre for at least the next five years. Keniston's Wendy James added: "Our long-term goal is eventually to build a permanent community centre for Darrick Wood."

Be safe not sorry

Did you know that you are twice as likely to die in a house fire if you don't have a working smoke alarm?

The harsh reality is that 200 people die in accidental house fires each year in the UK caused by smoking materials, candles, unattended cooking utensils and factors such as faulty electrics.

The good news is that you can reduce the risk of fire by taking a small number of fire safety steps (see the advert on the next page), and talking to your housing officer if you have questions or concerns.

Estate round up

Residents and staff have worked together on a number of initiatives across Keniston's estates during 2009:

Burnhill House....People at the recent residents' meeting were keen to see the communal area around the flats used more by residents. Consultation is underway to generate some ideas.

Darrick Wood....More planted areas have recently been created on the estate, and more bulb planting is planned for the spring.

Dromore....A very successful combination of social and residents meeting took place at in the summer, which we hope to repeat next year.

Foxley Hall....Residents are keen to have recycling facilities and Keniston is in contact with Croydon Council to provide this.

Hornsey Road and Tollington Park....Improved security has been identified as a need which will be considered as part of Keniston's Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods initiative.

Elliotts Row and Hayles Street....65-66 Elliotts Row, which contains four flats, was named 'Brenda Crozier House' in September in memory of Brenda who was secretary of the Hayles Community Housing Association for many years. The Association became part of Keniston in 2002.

Lyham Road....New signage has been fitted to improve security.

Merrow Street....The caretaker Steve Swaden is currently working hard on a planting programme on the estate.

Nethewode Court....A new entrance has just been completed; this was done under Keniston's Better

Homes, Better Neighbourhoods initiative.

Perryfield House....The project to develop a seating area around the block continues. More planting is also planned.

Pound Green Court....At a residents meeting/social event in the summer there was enthusiasm to develop more community get togethers. We have now got some communal furniture for residents to use at these events.

Silver Court....The residents are currently considering ways to improve the communal garden. A small community garden and vegetable area is planned for the spring.

Sunningdale Court....Shin rails have been fitted around the front of the scheme to improve its appearance and security.

Tarling Close....The lounge has had a facelift with decorations and new blinds. It looks great!

DO YOU HAVE A WORKING SMOKE ALARM AT HOME?

IF NOT YOU ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO DIE IN A FIRE



200 people die each year in accidental fires in their homes, caused by smoking materials, candles, and other factors such as cooking appliances.

You can reduce the risk of fire in your home by following some simple fire safety steps.

Social Housing landlords have a responsibility to you and your home and must ensure that gas and electrical appliances they supply are safe and in good working order. Your landlord may also fit smoke alarms in shared accommodation and communal areas. Speak to your landlord if you have any questions or concerns.



Fit smoke alarms on each level of your home.



Test your smoke alarms weekly. Never remove the batteries.



Put it out. Right out! Make sure you put cigarettes out properly and never smoke in bed.



Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows it and where door and window keys are kept

Your local fire and rescue service offers free Home Fire Risk Checks and may be able to fit free smoke alarms in your home. For more information visit our website below:

www.direct.gov.uk/firekills



Mississippi mud pie

What better way to chase away winter blues than with this fabulous dessert? Housing officer Sharon Hobb's Mississippi Mud Pie is legendary in the office. Do you have any favourite recipes to share? Send or email them in to us at the Darrick Wood office.

Base

9x13" round pie dish
4oz softened butter or margarine
Pinch of salt
4oz plain flour
4oz chopped pecans or walnuts

Method

Mix together and pat into greased dish. Bake at 350F, 180C or gas mark 4 for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Cool.

Filling

8oz pack of cream cheese (Philadelphia or similar)
1 cup of icing sugar
Large carton of whipping or double cream
2 packs of angel delight (1 chocolate & 1 vanilla flavour, or 2 chocolate)
1 pint of milk
Semi sweet choc shavings or similar (decoration)

Method

Mix cream cheese with icing sugar
Add approximately half of the whipped cream
Spread evenly over the cooled base
Beat chocolate and vanilla angel delight with milk.
Pour evenly over cream cheese layer
Refrigerate until set
Top with remaining whipped cream and garnish with chocolate shavings.
Refrigerate for a minimum of 2 hours

We regularly get calls asking us for help or information. We thought that more of you might find the answers to those questions useful. If you have a question call us on 01689 889700 or email your question to: enquiries@kenistonha.co.uk

I have an elderly relative whom I would like to live near me so I can care for them. Do you have a waiting list for sheltered housing for the elderly?

Usually, new residents come to Keniston when they are nominated by either a local council or a referral agency. However, we do hold a small waiting list for our studio sheltered flats for the elderly, and we sometimes have vacancies there. There are a limited number of places on the waiting list. Please contact your housing officer to find out more.

What's new?

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) replaced the Housing Corporation a year ago. The TSA is developing a new regulatory framework for social housing in England. Tenants' views are really important in how this framework develops. We would love to hear from you if you would like to discuss further. Please contact your Housing Officer. You can also access information at <http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show.ConWebDoc.19730>.



Keniston Housing Association Limited

13 Artington Close • Farnborough • Kent • BR6 7UL
t. 01689 889 700 • f. 01689 889 701
www.kenistonha.co.uk

QUESTION & ANSWER CORNER

My home is too big. How can I move to a smaller property?

The best thing to do is to talk the matter over with your housing officer. There are schemes with some local councils where you can receive a payment for moving to a smaller property.

How can I find out which repairs are my responsibility, and which ones Keniston is responsible for?

You can find this information in the leaflet Repairs and Maintenance which is available from the office – you want to check the section called Repairs - whose responsibility?. Please contact the office to receive a copy of the leaflet.

Zero tolerance for racism

Keniston has a policy of no tolerance for racism or racial harassment. These are not issues that are reported to us very often, but we take those few complaints very seriously and will prosecute if we need to. Please call us straight away if you are racially harassed.

Talkback

Newsletter of Keniston Housing Association

It's thumbs up!

– from Keniston residents

same level of service to those schemes. My thanks go to everyone who took part."

Around 2 out of every 3 Keniston residents took part in the survey, which was carried out during the summer. Some of you came along to focus groups, others talked with the researchers on the phone and some returned a form by post.

Keniston's main role is to provide a good service to its residents, so your comments on our work are the best feedback we could have.

The researchers (from The Leadership Factor) specialise in customer service. At their suggestion, they started the process by asking residents what the most important issues were, so that your priorities shaped the whole survey.

"Lots of residents who took part suggested ways we can improve our services, and we are now looking at how to act on those suggestions," Nevil Osborne said.

Keniston staff are delighted with the positive feedback from residents who took part in the resident survey in 2009.

Keniston chief executive Nevil Osborne said: "We have read the results of the survey very carefully and are pleased and proud that so many of you are happy with the service Keniston provides. We are working hard on the areas you want us to improve, like anti-social behaviour and keeping you well informed.

"It was good to see that some of the estates which are further away from our main office were expressing high rates of satisfaction as we do worry about whether we can deliver the

Where we need to improve

One of the key findings of the survey is the need to tackle anti-social behaviour. In particular you've asked for more information about what residents themselves can do to stop it, and what you can expect us to do. We aim to review our policy on this by the New Year and hope that residents will then work with us on finding solutions to this long-standing problem; we'll be in touch again

Continued overleaf

Survey key findings:

Unlike previous research, this survey asked which issues you think are most important, as well as how satisfied you are with our service.

89.1% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with Keniston's services overall. This puts us in the top 10% of housing associations in London.

And 82.6% are satisfied that Keniston is doing best what matters most to residents, putting us in the top third of customer service organisations generally (including private companies).

You are most satisfied with:

- Helpfulness of staff
- Respect as a tenant
- Helpfulness of contractors

You said the most important issues for you are:

- Safety and security
- Respect as a tenant
- Affordable rents

