

Keniston Housing Association

Value for money report 2016

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Why a value for money report?

The Homes and Communities Agency, which regulates housing associations, requires a value for money self-assessment report to be produced annually. The review should be across all areas of the Association's activities, including both operational matters and assets. It should reflect

- both the association's social mission and the interests of stakeholders
- how the standard is being met
- financial, social and environmental performance

The report should also enable stakeholders

- to understand the return on assets measured against objectives
- include absolute and comparative costs for specific services, and
- evidence value for money gains that have been made and how they will be realised over time.

This is the fourth report of this kind which Keniston has produced. The Homes and Communities Agency continues to take a close look at the Value for Money reports produced by associations with more than 1,000 homes; each year some associations have their regulatory governance assessment downgraded where the regulator is not satisfied with their Value for Money reports. Keniston is currently below the threshold for regulatory monitoring at this level but we intend to approach Value for Money reporting as if it is subject to regulatory scrutiny. We expect our approach to assessing and demonstrating value for money to develop further as we learn how to improve our own approach.

What is value for money?

At Keniston, we define value for money as:

- the cost that we are prepared to pay for our services
- good quality, appropriate and locally focussed services to the right people at the right time
- the best use of our resources to deliver our objectives which balance cost, quality and added value.

What Keniston aims to do

At Keniston our purpose is to meet housing need by providing good quality well managed affordable homes. We will deliver the services tenants want through exceptional and innovative customer service and by listening to feedback from residents..

At Keniston we are clear about our three key objectives of:

- 1 maintaining very high resident satisfaction
- 2 provide more homes for people who need them
- 3 support communities and enable opportunities for individuals

Our approach to value for money

We are clear about what we want to achieve and every year there are further demands on our resources. As we also aspire to provide more homes for people in need by acquiring or developing new homes, achieving value for money in our day to day activities enables us to do more of this. We work with the ethos that whoever our tenants are we should provide a service which we can be proud of and which adds to the respect and dignity that will help build independence amongst individuals and enhance their contributions to building strong communities.

In order to achieve value for money the Board and Management Team must be focused on having the right people and the right number of staff to provide the right level of service at the right cost. This involves ensuring staff are properly trained to do their work and providing staff with the right resources to enable them to carry out their roles effectively. Keniston has a remuneration strategy which describes how we set pay to recruit staff with the right skills and achieve good staff retention.

An annual strategy review by the Board provides the direction for the Association's plans and ensures that our values are embedded within everything we do.

Keniston has an integrated IT provision which provides a cost effective way of providing many essential functions, including rent accounting, financial accounting ledgers and repairs. These systems allow us to manage, report on and monitor our performance.

There is an annual programme of investment in the housing stock which is based on a 35 year forward projection of the need for replacing building components such as windows, roofs, kitchens etc. The costs associated with this projection are tested in the long term financial plan to ensure that the Association can continue to afford them. The Association's policy is that ongoing and timely investment in the condition and quality of its housing is fundamental to maintaining the physical asset and the public

investment in Keniston's social housing. This way the properties remain lettable for the foreseeable future in a market where demand continues. The Association also makes an annual budget available for estate improvements. Together these programmes help to maintain the overall look of the Association's housing stock; by investing in estate improvements we believe residents are more likely to be proud of and respect where they live and this will result in more cohesive communities and better neighbourhoods.

Building in value for money

There are established policies and arrangements, or strategies, at Keniston for ensuring that value for money is being obtained.

- In day to day maintenance we only use contractors who are on the Association's approved list and where standard hourly rates are agreed in advance. (Occasionally for specialist work which occurs infrequently we may make other arrangements.)
- For larger repairs or development contracts we tender for the work.
- For lower value works or services two or three prices are obtained prior to placing the order.
- In an ongoing programme of works, where a contractor has demonstrated quality and has been the lowest tenderer we may enter a partnering agreement at a price based on previous tenders.
- Keniston is a member of Procurement for Housing and purchases through this organisation for a limited range of services or products where price advantage can be achieved.
- Keniston is also a member of the South East Consortium, a procurement club for a limited number of organisations.
- Budgets are set annually and results are monitored against these on a monthly basis.
- The Board has a keen interest in seeing Value for Money delivered and helps to set the annual strategy as well as reviewing this annual report.
- Surveys which ask residents about the value for money of their rent, service charge and other matters.
- Distribution to all tenants of detailed service charge accounts.

- Comparison of costs and performance through a benchmarking club.
- Our annual report to tenants, which includes performance and cost information.

Our performance over the year to 31 March 2016

Purchasing and procurement – following up from previous years

Revenue savings instigated in the year to March 2015

Postage

We purchased a franking machine to save money on postage. We estimated that it would save about £1,500 a year. We have saved £2,622 since we implemented the change.

Mobile phones

We renegotiated our mobile phone contract and estimated that we would save about £3,000 a year. In fact over the two years we have saved over £12,700.

External audit tender

This year will be the second year of annual savings of external audit of £1,000 for each audit going forward.

Rent collection

After renegotiating the contract for rent collection through a third party provider we have saved around £500 a year.

Void schedule of rates

We changed our arrangements with contractors for carrying out repairs to void properties by introducing a schedule of rates. This means that there are fixed prices for specific tasks and when a lot of work has been necessary, as increasingly has been the case, it has avoided the period of time and rent loss where we have previously had to tender the works. We estimate that this has saved approximately £3,422 in lost rent during the year.

Lift servicing

There are continued savings for lift servicing of £7,100 from the lift servicing agreement entered into in 2014.

Insurance

Included in our insurance premiums are a number of additional benefits which would otherwise come at an additional cost to the Association. The benefits include a bereavement counselling service, a probate helpline, a second medical opinion service, and an employee counselling service.

If the Association had purchased these services separately, it would have cost in the region of £3,000 a year.

Ongoing savings

There are ongoing savings from 2013 of £2,500 for maintenance of the Burnhill House

water pump, the warden call alarm and sheltered door entry maintenance contract and the fire alarms and emergency lighting maintenance contract.

Purchasing and procurement – changes this year

Cleaning and Gardening service review and tender

We reported last year that a full review of the cleaning and gardening services was being undertaken. This was in relation to services at seven of our schemes where we don't have staff. The specifications were reviewed, clarified and updated to ensure that the services are meeting our standards and in response to residents feedback.

All the services were tendered. At one scheme we saved a modest amount. At two schemes we had increases of less than 5%. At the remaining four schemes the tendered costs were considerably more than previously.

The development of the specifications and the resultant changes to service charges were the subject of consultation with residents at the relevant schemes. In this review we have not achieved cost savings but by the tendering process tendering good value is demonstrated.

Responsive repairs

Last year we described how we had done some detailed comparison of repair costs across associations within our benchmarking group, known as BM320. On a like for like comparison Keniston's cost per property per week for repairs that took place in 2013/2014, we discovered that almost 25% of our responsive repair costs related to communal areas. Not all associations have the extent of communal areas that Keniston does.

In 2015/2016 the average cost of responsive repairs per property was £12.10.

This benchmark average (2014/2015) for responsive repairs for Keniston was £10.11 compared with a Benchmark average of £15.12 and a national average of £8.72.

The annual budget of £400,000 for responsive repairs has been at the same level since 2012. In 2015/2016 we underspent the budget by £54,473.

Office Phones

Last year we purchased a new office phone system as our maintenance company could not guarantee sourcing spare parts. During the negotiation for the supply and installation cost, we achieved a reduction in cost of around £2,500. We achieved a small reduction in maintenance costs of £26 per year. The new system has technology which allows us to take advantage of lower call costs although we have not been able to quantify this.

After tendering, we have switched the provider of phone lines and as a result we estimate saving about £4,000 (or about 30%) of similar costs in the previous year.

Service contracts

There was no increase in the price of the maintenance contract with our key IT software provider over the previous year.

Hardware support increased by 4% in the year but the cost will be held through next year.

Training

Altogether staff and board attended 220 sessions of training during the year at a cost of £22,875. This was more than last year because of leadership training that was provided for members of the Management Team. 11 training sessions were provided without cost saving an estimated £1,081.

Development costs

During the year we retained the services of Adam Integra to help us with our plans for development. This cost us £16,287. There was no increase in the charge rate for the year. The overall cost of the development agent was higher than the previous year partly because the retained arrangement was not implemented until part way through that year. Several new schemes have been identified during the year but none has so far come to more than a proposal. Adams Integra enabled us to successfully bid for grant of £50,000 on a property that we purchased.

Insurance

Our brokers were able to negotiate a significant reduction in premiums in the last year. Across all policies placed through our broker we achieved a saving for the year of £6,867 (11.1%). This was pleasing as we already were aware from benchmarking that the rate for property insurance was already competitive.

Cyclical repairs

After a significant increase in costs last year, around 50% higher and £30,000 in excess of our budget, costs this year were lower than we expected. We budgeted for costs of £90,000 – but in fact the contract values (arising from a tender exercise) total just less than £29,000. We have budgeted cautiously for 2016/2017 as we have found pricing to be so unpredictable. Cyclical repairs were tendered last year.

Lifts

There was no increase in the cost of the lift maintenance and servicing contract as the agreement is for a fixed rate for three years. 2015/2016 was the final year of the agreement.

We have replaced lifts at Tarling Close and Silver Court under a contract priced three years ago. We have also installed a new platform lift at Tarling Close at a cost of £62,550, for flats which are not serviced by the existing lift. This has been invaluable

to tenants with decreasing mobility who are unable to get to the ground floor unassisted.

Gas heating service, maintenance and gas safety agreement

The increase in the cost of the gas servicing and maintenance contract for the year was 3% compared with an RPI inflation figure of 2.5%.

Adding value in our communities

Training has been made available to residents at no or little cost to the Association, helping to build confidence and therefore help some tenants gain confidence in preparation for work readiness. The Darrick Wood Community Group has used some of its receipts from letting the community centre at Darrick Wood to fund some of these training courses. We have enabled a volunteering opportunity to take place at one scheme and have hosted a work placement for a student who lives in one of our properties.

At our sheltered schemes we have helped tenants stay in their own homes by organising teams of external support including dementia support, psychiatric nurses, day centre staff, GPs nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and domiciliary care. Such help not only helps the tenants feel independent but saves local authorities significant sums while these tenants are supported outside of residential, nursing or dementia care homes.

We have also:

- worked proactively to support tenants with mental health problems and have helped those tenants to achieve improvements in their wellbeing not previously anticipated;
- supported a young person to gain an achievement award for helping with youth work;
- worked proactively to secure multi agency support for a family;
- intervened where we were aware of exploitation of a vulnerable elderly resident – the situation is now satisfactorily resolved;
- assisted vulnerable tenants switch utility supplier to gain a reduction in costs
- worked with London Fire Brigade at one of our schemes who undertook home visits and gave advice to tenants.

Rent income

We are pleased with the way that the members of the team have managed rent arrears over the last year. There has been a small increase of £4,211 in the amount of rent owed to the Association by current tenants; the proportion this represents of the

annual rental income is almost unchanged at 2.71% at 31 March 2016 (2.70% at 31 March 2015). With rent reductions starting this year, even if the amount owed to us remains steady, the arrears as a percentage of annual rent income will grow simply as a result of the maths. We will continue to provide intensive support through our Rent Income Officers but with ongoing welfare reform and cuts to various benefits we are expecting life to be harder for many tenants and that this will have a negative impact on our rent arrears performance.

Affordable warmth

We have installed gas central heating to 18 flats which previously had electric storage heaters. We estimate that these new heating systems will provide tenants with more affordable and controllable heat with better comfort levels. The gas infrastructure installation to the block of flats was provided by Southern Gas Networks and supported by a grant of £20,252.

At another block of flats which was difficult to heat, we have spent nearly three years researching options to replace ageing night storage heating systems which have been the subject of significant dissatisfaction expressed by residents. As gas is not permitted at this block we piloted a central heating system with conventional radiators and an electric boiler. We were recommended to provide external thermal cladding to the building but estimates suggested that this would double the cost of the exercise. We considered that upgrading the heating took priority over the external insulation and at the end of the pilot and after consultation with residents, decided that this electric central heating system was the most suitable in the circumstances.

After commencing the installations it was evident that the new heating system did not work satisfactorily in all locations. While some residents appreciated and benefitted from the new systems a small number found them unsatisfactory, expensive to run, and leaving them feeling colder than with the previous system. After installing 11 out of 31 of these new systems we ended the contract early to take stock of the situation. We agreed to reinstall storage heating in two of the flats where there was evidence that the heat losses were greater and we want to monitor the differences between the two systems to give those residents who have not had their heating upgraded, an informed choice about how they might wish to proceed.

The contractor has agreed not to invoke penalty clauses for terminating the contract early and so our additional costs are restricted to the re-installation costs of two electric storage heating systems together with some further independent monitoring costs.

Fun days for residents

Each year Keniston funds two community action days for residents. In 2014 we organised these at Merrow Street and Sunningdale Court. The residents at Darrick Wood wanted to provide a funday and got involved so that Keniston's staff input was reduced. This way, with resident involvement, there were three of these community action days.

Other issues

Rental income

Our rent increases averaged 2.73% for the year and were calculated according to the government's guidance on "formula rents". The inflation rate this was based on CPI (of the previous September) of 1.2%.

For the 15 years to 2014 the government guidelines about rent increases were that we could increase most rents by inflation (RPI) plus ½% plus £2.00 per week until the "formula rent" was reached. From 2015 the inflation link was changed to CPI plus 1%. From 2016

Stock reinvestment

In 2014-2015 Keniston spent £1,144,672 (including VAT) on replacing building components in its housing stock. The contracts we undertook were:

Location	Description of works	Contract value (excluding VAT)
Darrick Wood, Farnborough	Refurbishment of 52 bathrooms	£220,000
Nethewode Court	Refurbishment of 33 bathrooms	£191,000
Tarling Close, Sidcup	Refurbishment of 27 bathrooms	£147,415
Sunningdale Court, Crawley	Boiler replacement and heating upgrades (16 houses)	£47,508
Tollington Park	Hot water cylinder replacements	£3,740
Darrick Wood, Farnborough	Fencing	£16,388
Foxley Hall, Purley	Renewal of 2 flat roof over 2 blocks of 6 flats each	£75,898
Miscellaneous	Electrical testing and repairs	£48,834
Burnhill House, London	Replacement of lifts	£158,000
Darrick Wood, Farnborough	External decorations to 160 properties	£64,895

Lyham Road, Lambeth	External cyclical decorations to 10 properties and common parts	£15,700
Hornsey Road, London	External cyclical decorations to 21 properties and common parts	£8,960

The above works were procured by various methods: tenders, negotiated on the basis of previous tenders, a framework tendered by the South East Consortium and partnership agreements for ongoing works.

Stock reinvestment tenders

Our experience from tendering is that in total the costs we have eventually incurred were within budget. There were inevitably some variations within the total. We also observed considerable ranges of prices for each tender, which is potentially a cause for concern about whether the winning tenderer has priced over-competitively. In the event, nothing that we saw during the management of the stock reinvestment programme this year led us to believe that any contractors were delivering an inferior product as a result of over-competitive tendering.

Electrical testing and repairs

We continued with asking for basic repairs to be carried out at the same time as electrical testing thus gaining value by not sending the contractor out again. Our contractor performed less well this year and we were disappointed that he did not complete the full programme of inspections despite having been given the schedule early in the year. We will be reviewing how we manage this going forward so as to avoid ongoing slippage in the programme.

Bathroom refurbishments at sheltered housing

We have continued with our programme of bathroom refurbishments at our sheltered housing flats. The previous solution of providing very nearly level access showers was not practicable at the scheme we were working at this year, and instead we have provided level access bathrooms. We were pleased that these came in at a lower per unit price (£5,234) than the previous year. Tenant feedback is very positive.

As referred to in our last report, this will save significant sums for the eventuality that tenants who have conventional bathrooms can no longer use them because of mobility difficulties.

Major tenant survey

We carried out our three yearly survey of tenants to find out how satisfied they are with the service we provide – that being a key strategic objective. The headline from this survey was that satisfaction had increased to 95% across all tenants. Satisfaction was recorded as increasing in 7 of the 8 key satisfaction areas.

Achieving high levels of satisfaction is hard work and it is only through the application and dedication of our staff that this can be attained. We regard the effort staff make to achieve this to be excellent value for money.

The cost of the survey this year was £6,110 compared with the 2012 survey cost of £5,545. Both of these are, however significantly less than the costs of the surveys in 2009 and 2006.

Return on assets - staff

The Association's staff are, in many ways, its most important assets. If staff don't get service delivery right then one of our main aims, for very high levels of resident satisfaction, will not be achievable. We pay at the upper quartile level because we have to compete for good staff who are attracted by central London salaries.

We assess the return on our staff assets as very good, not least by the assessment of satisfaction as recorded in the 2015 resident satisfaction survey – at 95% compared with 93% in the previous 2012 survey. Satisfaction was up in 7 of the key areas measured.

There is also low staff turnover with the associated lower than average recruitment costs.

Return on assets - properties

The Association's most significant physical assets are of course its housing properties. The simplest way of testing the return on these assets is to look at the Income and Expenditure account in the end of year audited accounts. For the year to March 2016, the Association made a surplus of over £990,000 after interest (based on pre FRS 102 accounts). Much of the surplus is from non-cash items that we are required to account for. The Association ended the year with an increase in cash of approximately £63,000 – much lower than last year because we purchased a flat during the year and we spent more (as planned) on stock reinvestment.

Each year the expenditure and budget include stock reinvestment costs for the replacement of building components such as kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, windows etc. The annual budget for this expenditure is based on the average spend required as projected over 30 years. We have reviewed this forward projection of spend and found ways of reducing the average cost per year without, we believe, compromising the quality of work and value and lettability of our properties.

We applied a more rigorous test to our assessment of impairment and were able to draw the conclusion that none of our properties required the recognition of an impairment transaction in our financial statements. Many of our properties have a strong value in use. With only three exceptions all schemes net book value can be

recovered with five or less years of rental income. This means the relationship between historic cost and current rental income produces a good return.

The Net Present Value of each housing scheme was also considered. This is an accounting way of describing the value of property based on net income. The overall Net Present value is 4.2 times greater than the Net Book Value and in no cases is it less.

Return on assets - viability

The long term financial forecast has been updated and suggests the Association remains financially healthy with 7 units of development which we anticipate will occur in the next three years. The Association also remains healthy with a projected ongoing development programme added with or without grant; some borrowing is required.

In accordance with the regulatory standards we have also “stress tested” our long term financial forecast. This is now harder than last year as rent decreases have been imposed on Registered Providers, For example, the Association can manage a loss of £920,000 in cash without its future being jeopardised. We understand that continuing rent decreases after this present four year period are prejudicial; we also know that it is interest cover rather than gearing which reduces our capacity to borrow to develop more homes. We tested a number of scenarios and even assuming that the Association can revert to increasing rents after 2020, we know that 2022 and 2023 are potentially challenging for the Association under certain financial pressures. We are confident that we can survive as there are a number of relatively easy mitigating actions we can take.

On this basis we are satisfied that the Association’s assets produce a reasonable return as well contributing to the Association being stable financially.

Return on assets - providing more homes for people in need

We have purchased one additional unit at Nethewode Court. This was a property, previously the subject of Right to Buy, which became available to purchase on the open market.

We have obtained planning permission to build a new home at Burnhill House and we are pursuing the additional homes on two other sites – Perryfield House, Crawley and Hornsey Road, London N7. We are also now in discussion with Orbit Homes about them identifying suitable small sites for us.

We have also been testing our ability to finance further developments by developing and refining our long term financial projection.

Treasury

The Association has two loans, one of which was fixed historically at 11.38%. The Association has considered refinancing this loan but the penalty for early redemption is too costly.

A second loan has been fixed at 3.93% until September 2028. The Board reviews its risk strategy annually.

The Association has capacity to borrow more in terms of uncharged assets, its current low gearing ratio and its high interest cover, but when considering new borrowing we make sure that we can afford the repayments. Future plans and risks will also be taken into account when considering how to invest in the future. For example the Association is aware that it will have to make significant investment at two of its schemes in the medium term: Burnhill House and Merrow Street both require significant expenditure on heating and insulation to achieve affordable warmth. Also, there are further properties within the Hayles portfolio requiring full refurbishment.

Investment returns are low at present mostly because of the Association's risk appetite and because of market conditions. The Association will use its surpluses to provide new homes and improve or widen services, and ways to increase surpluses will be found to make the most of these opportunities.

Comparing with others – costs and performance over time

Keniston is a member of a London based benchmarking group of 15 smaller housing associations known as BM320. The following information is taken from the annual BM320 (London smaller housing association benchmarking club) report for the year ended 31 March 2015 (the data for the year ended 31 March 2016 is not yet available). Where possible the information is compared with the median of the SPBM group (national small housing associations data).

Description	Keniston at 31 March 2013	Keniston at 31 March 2014	Keniston at 31 March 2015	Keniston at 31 March 2016	Rank in BM320 in 2015	Median for BM320 (2015)	Median for SPBM (2015)
Overall satisfaction with the service	93%	93%	93%	95%	4 th of 13	91%	90%
Satisfaction of tenants with the value for money of rent	87%	87%	87%	89%	5 th of 10	86%	83%
Satisfaction of tenants with the value for money of service charge	79%	79%	79%	84%	4 th of 8	74%	67%
Satisfaction of tenants with the overall maintenance service	91%	91%	91%	93%	4 th of 12	86%	86%

Description	Keniston at 31 March 2013	Keniston at 31 March 2014	Keniston at 31 March 2015	Keniston at 31 March 2016	Rank in BM320 in 2015	Median for BM320 (2015)	Median for SPBM (2015)
Rent collected expressed as a percentage of the annual rent charges	99.4%	102.1%	99.9%	99.25%	11 th of 14	100.09	100
Rent arrears expressed as a percentage of annual rent charges	3.0%	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%	4 th of 15	2.9%	2.8%
Weekly operating cost per unit	£81.27	£87.68	£87.10	£95.75	6 th of 12	£90.37	£84.11
Operating cost as a percentage of turnover	74.15%	78.5%	82.1%	76.4%	11 th of 15	71.0%	73.6%
Average weekly management cost per dwelling	£14.52	£15.71	£16.82	£17.66	3 rd of 12	£23.73	£19.82
Average weekly cost per home of responsive repairs	£26.03	£28.32	£10.11 (new definition)	n/a	2 nd of 7	£15.12	£8.72

Description	Keniston at 31 March 2013	Keniston at 31 March 2014	Keniston at 31 March 2015	Keniston at 31 March 2016	Rank in BM320 in 2015	Median for BM320 (2015)	Median for SPBM (2015)
Average weekly cost of cyclical, major repairs, fees	-	£40.27	£39.94	n/a	5 th of 7	£32.80	£19.46
Percent of repairs completed on time	96.3%	97.2%	96.8%	96.3%	8 th of 15	96.8%	97.9%
Average days void (general needs properties)	28.2	19.2	29.4	21	7 th of 15	29	25
Average days void (sheltered housing properties)	24.2	21.9	14.0	21	2 nd of 6	29	25

Social value return on assets

The G320 group of smaller Housing Associations in London commissioned work to help its members describe and think about the social value of the work they do.

We used this tool to identify 58 activities or aspects of our work which contributed to social value. The following table helps to describe the number of occasions that there was added social value in what we did.

Health and well being	8
Neighbourhood focus	7
Training and employment	4
Volunteering opportunities	4
Skills development and increased employability	2
Work placement	1
Career advice for young people	2
Reduced crime	2
Increased community cohesion	4
Social inclusion	8
Work with SMEs local voluntary and community organisations	1
Community facilities	3
Procurement for social, economic or environmental gains	2
Fuel poverty	4
Digital inclusion	3
Advice and information	7
Active lifestyle	2
Community assets	2
Local initiatives, fun days	3
More widely do you think that the work of your organisation contributes things such as happiness, wellbeing, health, inclusion empowerment, increased aspirations.	14
Financial inclusion	7
Reduced cost on public services	4

Additionally we would describe some of what we do as adding social value, as follows:

Housing Management

- Providing a secure long term tenancy means that tenants are more likely to seek work
- Older tenants live independently for longer in sheltered housing
- Sheltered Scheme Managers can prompt early intervention in situations of declining health
- The presence of Sheltered Scheme Managers at schemes for older people gives peace of mind to relatives
- Communal lounges at Sheltered Housing Schemes are used for family events thus reinforcing the sense of home and belonging
- By providing a named housing officer for each tenant and adopting a personal approach to housing management, we work towards maintaining tenancies responsibly which results in more stable communities which are mutually supportive
- We support tenants to manage their finances which we think results in less debt, stress and crime
- Resident involvement increases self confidence
- Training for residents (e.g. budgeting, food hygiene, book-keeping) can increase employability
- Keniston pays for Bromley Youth Service to provide a youth club at the Darrick Wood estate. This provides “diversionary” activities and helps to keep antisocial behaviour off the streets
- By joint funding the Darrick Wood Community Centre and supporting the centre’s committee, the hall is hired out which generates income which in turn produces funds for neighbourhood activities
- Well maintained housing results reduces the impact on health services and supports school attendance
- Clean and tidy estates increase the sense of well-being and provide safe areas for play
- Employing our own caretakers (Keniston has 4) reduces vandalism, crime, graffiti, provides housing officers with concerns about individuals, enables repairs to be carried out more quickly, provides communication for repairs on behalf of those who do not have English as their first language, facilitates

access for other professional or trades people working for the Association, provides a central point for local information, supplements knowledge and information about local issues to assist housing officers to take appropriate action, can provide a greater feeling of security, makes the Association more accessible and can strengthen the sense of community.

- Our housing staff's relationship with tenants enables us to have early warning of a wide range of issues, where we can provide intervention or bring in the resources of other agencies, reducing the cost of crisis intervention
- The provision of community activities improves neighbour relations, strengthens the sense of community and reduces isolation
- Through nomination arrangements we house people in need from local authorities' waiting lists
- Through our own direct waiting list we provide an option for housing for people in housing need who cannot access local authority waiting lists

Maintenance

- Providing choices to residents when kitchens and bathrooms are refurbished improves pride in the home and may reduce maintenance
- By having a prompt fair payment arrangement we enable small local contractors to become established in their businesses

Environmental gains

The Association has four sites where solar panels have been installed. The largest of these sites has saved over 6000 kilogrammes of carbon dioxide, a well-known greenhouse gas.

When bathrooms and kitchens are refurbished water saving devices are used.

All paper and cardboard from the office is recycled.

Future improvement of Value for Money assessments

We will continue to review the way we deliver Value for Money with the aim of achieving improvements each year.

Value for money assessment

I consider, for the reasons stated above, that Keniston Housing Association is achieving value for money in its operations.

Nevil Osborne, Chief Executive
May 2016