



Keniston



Annual report to residents 2017-18

www.kenistonha.co.uk

A message from our Chair and Chief Executive

2017-18 is the year when the pace of change at Keniston – aimed at ensuring the organisation is truly ‘fit for the future’ – started to take on more momentum.

During the year, we made significant progress with our plans for development and growth.

We adopted a new five-year Development Strategy in January 2018, setting out our ambition to deliver 100 new affordable homes over the next five years.

The strategy envisages taking a range of routes to development, including looking at the potential for building additional housing on land we already own, as well as looking for partnerships with commercial developers.

We are moving forward with our plans for the Darrick Wood estate, and started a process of engaging with residents to learn more about their aspirations for their neighbourhood. While we believe that building additional housing on the estate is achievable, we recognise that this needs to be carefully designed and that the concerns of existing residents need to be carefully listened to and addressed.



Our plans for growth and development form one theme within our wider Strategic Plan, developed during the year. Equally important are the other key themes of Services, Homes and People. Overall, we are looking to move the organisation forward, continuing to ‘punch above our weight’ while keeping the personal touch and staying true to our key values of Respect, Openness, Accountability, Honesty and Excellence.

Keniston benefits from an established staff team of hard-working and committed colleagues – both those working in direct contact with residents, and those working ‘behind the scene’ in back office roles. We measure success by continuing to achieve high levels of satisfaction and by gaining positive feedback, for example when we carry out improvements to our homes. We would like to record our thanks and appreciation for the efforts of these staff.

The impact of the Grenfell Tower fire has been felt deeply across the whole of the housing sector and its wider impact will be felt for years to come. At Keniston, we continue to be focused on ensuring that all our homes are, and continue to be, safe places to live. While we are confident that our homes comply with all current standards, we are looking to the future to ensure that we anticipate any changes and that we are making the right provisions for investment.



Keniston’s voluntary Board members continued to work hard to help the organisation deliver its objectives. In 2017, we carried out a review of how the Board works and streamlined and modernised some of our practices. Our thanks go to Board members and staff who helped with this.

During the year, we also said goodbye to our resident Board member Anthony Mills, who stepped down after eight years of exemplary service. Anthony has always been diligent and passionate in his work with Keniston, and we are looking forward to him continuing to make a valuable contribution as part of our resident scrutiny panel.

We look forward with confidence to continuing to deliver quality services and making an impact on the neighbourhoods we work in.

Julian Miles
Chair

Jonathan Card
Chief Executive

1 About Keniston

Keniston Housing Association is a small registered provider of housing, with homes in Islington, Lambeth, Southwark, Bexley, Bromley, Croydon and Crawley.

Our largest estate is in Farnborough, where we have 369 homes.

Our vision is to provide better homes, better services and better neighbourhoods.

The homes we provide

On 31 March 2018, we owned and managed 765 homes. They included:

- 567 for general needs
- 16 let as 'affordable rent'
- three homes for staff
- one empty while we planned its future
- 139 for older people, and
- 39 leasehold properties.

In August 2017, we sold the lease of one of our Southwark flats.

Selling a property like this raises



money to help us provide more, affordable, rented homes.

In February 2018, we bought an additional leasehold flat at Nethewode Court. We own the freehold of this building.

Lettings and voids

We let 23 homes during the year – eight of them to black or ethnic minority households.

Our homes were empty for an average of 16 days before being re-let. This is better than the average for other small housing associations.

On average, our general needs homes are empty a little longer (17 days) than our homes for older people (15 days).

2 Customer services



The Customer Services Team takes your calls and your repair requests.

In the summer of 2017, we introduced interactive SMS texting as a new way to communicate with you.

We have been using it:

- to confirm your repair orders
- to get you to confirm when your repair is complete
- to give us feedback, and
- to send messages to groups of residents – for example, to warn when your block needs a repair.

You can now text to check your

rent account balance and to order a statement.

This new service is popular with staff and residents, and it allows us to provide services more efficiently.

Complaints

During the year, a tenant from Dromore made a complaint about repairs, while a tenant from the Darrick Wood Estate complained about our housing service. We acknowledged and dealt with both complaints on target, settling them in the first stage of our complaints system.

3 Housing management

The Housing Services Team manages your tenancies and sorts out any problems developing at your estate.



Rent payments

Our Rent Income Officers track your rent payments and work with residents who owe us money.

They can offer support to people who are struggling to make ends meet.

We took court action against 20 households last year. Two were evicted.

Anti-social behaviour

We recorded 37 incidents of anti-social behaviour. Most (38%) were about noise from inconsiderate neighbours – or where neighbours' lifestyles clashed.

In five cases, we offered to bring in an independent mediator, but we couldn't get both sides to agree to this.

We dealt with two incidents of hate crime and two of domestic violence.

Around our schemes and estates, our most pressing problem currently is people dumping rubbish.

4 Estate services

Our estate-based staff provide your local services.

We also have three on-site Sheltered Scheme Managers.

In all:

- 98% of estate repairs were completed on target
- 94% of residents were satisfied with their estate services, and
- 89% agreed these services gave them value for money.



5 Community involvement

We actively encourage residents to get involved in our work and to take an active part in community life at our schemes and estates.



Consulting residents

The Resident Panel now has 31 members, from 11 schemes.

We asked for feedback on several issues. For example, what we should prioritise in our five-year strategic plan.

We began planning for a new Tenant Scrutiny Panel, which will have a more formal role in monitoring our performance, reviewing services and making improvement recommendations to the Board.

Education & training

Bromley Adult Education Service ran cooking and gardening classes for older people at our Darrick Wood Community Centre, as well courses on 'online basics' and food safety. Our staff ran workshops on budgeting and Universal Credit.

Since April 2018, Adult Education has provided fewer classes, so the Darrick Wood community group is considering using the centre's own funds to pay for future classes.

6 Repairs & maintenance



Planned works

We spent almost £500K upgrading 154 homes, including:

- 19 kitchens at Hornsey Road and Tollington Park
- gas central heating for six homes at Tollington Park
- at Darrick Wood, windows for 12 flats and heating upgrades to 34 homes
- 28 kitchens at Burnhill House
- 39 front doors and communal lighting at Tarling Close
- 24 front doors at Foxley Hall.

We also spent £158k on redecorations and adapted 19 homes for disabled people.

We prioritise getting the repairs service right, because we know this is really important to our residents.

Responsive repairs

During the year, we carried out 3,088 repairs.

- Around 94% were completed on first visit (up by 3% on the previous year).
- Repairs were completed on average within 5.9 days (down from 6.6 days).
- A total of 97% were completed on target (up by 2%).
- All our homes had gas safety certificates by 31 March 2018.

Resident satisfaction with our repairs service stood at 93%.



7 New homes

We drew up a new development strategy that will add 100 homes to our stock over the next five years.

We plan to buy existing properties and develop new ones to provide genuinely affordable homes for people to rent. We may also provide some homes for shared ownership.



8 Staff

We employ around 40 members of staff.

The staff team is led by:

- Jonathan Card, Chief Executive
- Vivienne Astall, Housing Services Director
- Tony Coward, Property Services Director, and
- Andrew Shiatis, Finance Director.



9 The Board

We currently have nine Board members, who are all unpaid volunteers.

Julian Miles (Chair) Since reading law at university, Julian has worked in the housing sector for a range of housing providers for over 19 years, where he has undertaken a variety of senior and strategic roles, delivering housing and support services. Julian joined the board in 2010 and was appointed Chair in 2015.

Shehla Husain (Co-Vice Chair) Shehla works for the Home Office as Deputy Director on programmes around national resilience in the fire sector. She previously worked for the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Housing Corporation and charities. Shehla became Co-Vice Chair at Keniston in 2015.

Peter Voisey (Co-Vice Chair) Peter is a qualified solicitor and has been practising as a partner in a large City law firm for many years.

His practice includes advising on bond issues and related finance transactions for housing associations. Peter became Co-Vice Chair at Keniston in 2015.

Barry Luhmann (Chair of Audit & Risk Committee and Treasurer) Barry is Head of UK Mortgage Intelligence at Black Rock Asset Management and a qualified accountant. He is currently the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and Keniston's Treasurer.

Simone Bailey Simone is a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and has worked as Asset Management Director at Abellio Greater Anglia Ltd since 2012. Prior to that she worked at Network Rail Property as Retail Director and then Commercial Director.

Seema Jassi Seema is Director of Strategic Planning at Action for Children, having initially joined the charity in 2015 as Head of Risk and Assurance. She previously led on a range of risk management and compliance functions for three social housing providers from 2008. Seema joined the Keniston Board in 2014.

Sally Rice Sally is an independent housing consultant. She previously worked for Moat, where, for the last nine years she was Director of

Development. She is a qualified planner and member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Chartered Institute of Housing. Sally joined the Keniston Board in July 2018.

Sheila Sackey Sheila is currently a Service Delivery Manager at Westminster Council. She was previously responsible for monitoring the Council's housing management provider, CityWest Homes, and she has worked on licensing and private sector housing policy with the Local Government Association. Sheila has an MSc in Public Policy and Management and a LLB Law degree.

Lucy Worrall Lucy has worked at Peabody since November 2017. As Research and Public Policy Manager, she is responsible for leading on Peabody's strategic research programme and public policy work. Lucy gained a distinction in her Postgraduate Certificate in Housing Practice at Westminster University.

Anthony Mills A retired gardener and longstanding Keniston resident, Anthony served on the Board during the early part of the financial year. He resigned in October 2017.

10 Our financial performance

Our finances remained strong and we ended the year with a surplus of £1.75m, compared with £1.07m the year before.

- We collected 101.1% of the rent due for the year, which was better than the previous year (99.6%), and better than average for other similar landlords.
- Our rent arrears rose slightly to 3.53%. This meant we missed our target of 3.2% and we performed less well than other similar landlords (average 2.65%). We are now working to improve this figure.

Income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2018

	2018 £	2017 £
Turnover	5,241,929	5,266,852
Operating expenditure	(3,764,655)	(3,997,297)
Surplus on disposal of social housing properties	452,399	–
Operating surplus	1,929,673	1,269,555
Interest receivable and finance income	19,819	17,939
Interest payable	(185,710)	(200,055)
Other finance costs	(11,000)	(17,000)
Surplus for the year	1,752,782	1,070,439

Balance sheet at 31 March 2018

	2018 £	2017 £
Fixed assets		
Housing properties	37,558,602	37,894,338
Other fixed assets	362,941	408,239
	37,921,543	38,302,577
Current assets		
Debtors	218,438	326,361
Cash and cash equivalents	5,272,391	4,095,829
	5,490,829	4,422,190
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,515,864)	(1,763,098)
Net current assets	3,974,965	2,659,092
Total assets less current liabilities	41,896,508	40,961,669
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	25,830,047	26,647,986
Capital and reserves		
Non-equity share capital	8	12
Revenue reserves	16,066,453	14,313,671
	16,066,461	14,313,683
	41,896,508	40,961,669

11 Value for money

Our regulator expects us to provide you with a home and services that give you good value for money.

We do this by constantly looking for ways to keep costs down, at the same time as continuing to give you efficient and effective services that you can rely on.

Our approach is regularly checked by the Board and its sub-committees. We also compare our performance with two groups of small housing associations:

- the 15 small London-based landlords in the BM320 group, and
- 140 small associations nationally, in the SPBM group.

Last year, these comparisons showed that our overall costs per home, and our housing management costs, were both lower than average for other similar landlords. Our repair costs were also lower than landlords in the BM320 group.

During the year, we focused particularly on:

- reducing the cost of planned works
- better use of text messaging and digital services
- keeping rent arrears down
- reviewing the use of empty homes, and
- making sure homes weren't being illegally sub-let.



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