



Keniston



Annual report to residents 2018-19

www.kenistonha.co.uk

A message from our Chair and Chief Executive

The year has seen significant forward progress with implementing Keniston's new five-year strategic plan, across different areas of our work.

Keniston has always made delivering excellent services a key priority, and we have a range of ways to test whether we are being successful, including a three-yearly resident satisfaction survey. This was carried out in the autumn of 2018, and we were delighted to confirm that our already high levels of satisfaction had been maintained, and in some key areas, increased further.

More details are set out elsewhere in this report, but it is notable that our overall 95% satisfaction rating has been maintained, and that a high and increasing proportion of our residents would recommend us to others. This comes not by accident, but as a result of dedication and hard work across the staff team, supported by clear direction from the board.

We made further progress during the year with our development

and growth plans. A key project was preparation of our successful bid to acquire an estate of existing social housing in Bromley from Stonewater Housing Association, with completion taking place shortly after the year end.

We warmly welcome our new tenants from Robert Whyte House, Southwood Close, White's Meadow and Meadow Cottage to Keniston, and we promise to work hard to ensure that they receive the same quality of service as all other Keniston schemes.

The acquisition delivers locally based services to 120 tenancies, while consolidating our presence in our core area of Bromley. Our plans to build much-needed additional homes within the Darrick Wood estate also moved forward, as we prepare to submit a planning application later in 2019.

In 2018, we also refurbished a valuable house in Elliott's Row, in Elephant & Castle in south London, maintaining high quality and genuinely affordable family homes in the area, and we bought back a former right to buy leasehold property in Bexley.

Keniston's staff are a vitally important resource. We were pleased that a survey showed high ratings for staff feeling proud to work for Keniston and for job satisfaction. We carried out a staffing review during the year. This led to some changed roles and a more cohesive approach to customer services. We introduced a new 'spot bonus' system to recognise and reward members of staff who strongly demonstrate Keniston's values.

Good governance is a key success factor for all housing providers. During the year we welcomed Sally Rice to the board. She brings valuable development expertise. We also established a collective understanding of our 'risk appetite', helping to guide consideration of future opportunities.

Looking forward, while the challenges facing organisations like Keniston – and our residents – are very real, we believe that we are fundamentally in a strong position to continue to deliver on our core aims while maintaining our values.

Julian Miles
Chair

Jonathan Card
Chief Executive

Left: Jonathan Card, Chief Executive.
Right: Julian Miles, Board Chair.



1 About Keniston



Our homes



On 31 March 2019, we owned and managed:

- 586 homes for general needs
- 139 sheltered housing flats for older people, and
- 34 leasehold properties.

We added three homes to our general needs stock, by buying back leasehold homes, when they came up for sale.

We sold the freehold of a block with two freeholders in London.

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 situated in Farnborough, where we have 369 homes.

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

Empty homes and lettings

We let 25 homes during the year. Our homes were empty for an average of 18 days before being re-let – better than the average for similar landlords.

On average, our general needs homes are empty a little longer (19 days) than our homes for older people (16 days).

2 Customer services

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

We recently restructured the team, to offer you a one-stop shop for all your minor enquiries.

Instead of just logging your repair requests and arranging a call back with an officer from one of our specialist teams, we have trained our new-look team to give you more information straight away. This upskilling of our staff has made us more efficient – and



gives our specialist officers more time to deal with their more complex cases.

Complaints

We received seven complaints during the year. Five complaints were about repairs, while two related to housing management.

One repairs complaints involved a leak from an upstairs flat and two to loss of water. Another tenant's property was damaged while operatives replaced windows. We will follow up a leaseholder complaint by improving our next cleaning contract. We apologised after accidentally blaming the wrong tenant for leaving rubbish.

We weighed up all the complaints carefully, offering compensation in several cases and explanations in others.

3 Housing management

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 for rent arrears against 12 households last year, which led to one eviction.

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

Anti-social behaviour

You reported 52 incidents of anti-social behaviour. Most (56%) were about noise or inconsiderate neighbours (17%). However, some referred to drugs (8%), harassment or intimidation (7%), a hate crime (3%) or pets (1%). Around 4% involved a dispute between neighbours.

We took action in a number of

ways, using mediation and acceptable behaviour contracts. We also worked closely with local authority safer partnerships, as well as mental health teams.

In half of these cases, either the person complaining, or the person being complained about, had a mental health problem.

One resident was evicted for anti-social behaviour.

4 Estate services

Staff at your estate or sheltered scheme provide your local services.

In 2018-19, 96.4% of estate repairs were completed on target.

We completed 16 Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods estate improvement projects this year. They included: replacing a recycling bin store and new garden furniture at Sunningdale Court; sensor lighting at Perryfield House; rubbish bins at Artington Close; and two cameras to help us tackle anti-social behaviour.



Residents join an estate walkabout.

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 27 members, from various schemes.

We set up a new Tenant Scrutiny Panel, which will play a formal role in checking our work and making recommendations. The Panel now has two members: John Bailey and Anthony Mill, who are developing their skills.

They have been assessing the success and outcomes of the Resident Panel so far and will report back later this year, with recommendations to the Board.

Education & training

Bromley Adult Education Service again ran courses for residents at our Darrick Wood Community Centre.

In addition, around a dozen Darrick Wood sheltered residents enjoyed eight weeks of free talks delivered by the Bromley Well Service.

The talks covered a range of topics from eating well to planning for the future.



6 Repairs & maintenance

Our Property Services Team keep your homes in good condition, prioritising your health and safety.



Responsive repairs

During the year, we carried out 2,999 repairs to homes and communal areas.

- Around 97% were completed on first visit (up 3% on the previous year).
- Repairs were completed on average within 6.4 days (down from 5.9 days).
- A total of 96.5% were completed on target (down 0.5%).
- All our homes had gas safety certificates at 31 March 2019.

Resident satisfaction with our repairs service stood at 94%.

Health and safety

In 2019, we created a new role in our Property Services Team. Our Property and Compliance Officer is responsible for making sure we comply with regulations around gas safety, electrical and portable appliance testing, firefighting equipment and asbestos.

We also upgraded an admin role to Health and Safety Officer. The job now includes carrying out estate inspections every other month and comes with all the necessary training.

These two roles bring together responsibilities that used to be covered by a number of staff.



7 New stock

In line with our development strategy, we continued working to increase our stock.

We are planning a significant development on under-used land we already own at Darrick Wood.

In May 2019, we successfully bought an estate with 120 tenanted homes from Stonewater Housing Association, for £9.4m.

Pictured above right: Keniston staff and partners at the official opening of a refurbished property in south London.



Planned works

In 2018-19, we spent £650,000 on projects that included:

- gas central heating upgrades to 30 properties at the Darrick Wood estate, with A-rated boilers and controls to reduce energy consumption
- replacing wooden windows and patio doors with UPVC at 12 homes
- upgrading lighting and electrics in communal areas at two schemes, to cut down on bulb changes and lighting bills
- replacing 35 front doors to improve fire safety
- refurbishing 35 kitchens
- replacing fencing for 18 homes at Darrick Wood
- doing periodic testing and repairing the electrics at 87 properties
- fully refurbishing a four-bedroom property in Southwark.

We also spent £96,000 on redecorations at Netherwode Court, Sunningdale Court and Dromore.

In addition, we adapted 27 homes for people with mobility problems, spending £17,000.

8 Staff

We now employ 39 staff.

The team is led by:

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

During the year, five members of staff left Keniston and four people joined us.



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 more than 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 became 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 our Co-Vice Chair in 2015.

Peter Voisey (Co-Vice Chair) Peter is a qualified solicitor, who has practised 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, Treasurer) Barry is Head of UK Mortgage Intelligence at Black Rock Asset Management and a qualified accountant. He is currently Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee and our 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.

10 Our financial performance



Our finances remained strong and we ended the year with a surplus of almost £1.37m, compared with £1.75m the year before.

- We collected 98.9% of the rent due for the year.
- Our rent arrears rose slightly to 3.9%. This meant we missed our target of 3.2%.

We are having to devote more of our resources to holding rent arrears steady, as more of our residents move across to Universal Credit.

11 Value for money

We have to demonstrate that we are offering good value for money in the services we provide.

We analyse our costs and performance across a range of activities, comparing trends over time and with our two peer groups:

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

Last year, our results compared favourably in a number of areas. Our running cost per unit at £4,218 and our housing management cost per home at £383 are both lower than average. Our repairs and management of empty homes are close to regional averages.

In the coming year, we know we need to focus on

Income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2019

	2019 £	2018 £
Turnover	5,183,452	5,241,929
Operating expenditure	(3,963,809)	(3,764,655)
Surplus on disposal of social housing properties	316,140	452,399
Operating surplus	1,535,783	1,929,673
Interest receivable and finance income	27,428	19,819
Interest payable	(169,738)	(185,710)
Other finance costs	(25,000)	(11,000)
Surplus for the year	1,368,473	1,752,782

Balance sheet at 31 March 2019

	2019 £	2018 £
Fixed assets		
Housing properties	37,693,965	37,558,602
Other fixed assets	359,188	362,941
	38,053,153	37,921,543
Current assets		
Debtors	268,131	218,438
Cash and cash equivalents	5,928,112	5,272,391
	6,196,243	5,490,829
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,426,279)	(1,763,098)
Net current assets	4,769,964	3,974,965
Total assets less current liabilities	42,823,117	41,896,508
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	25,935,182	25,830,047
Capital and reserves		
Non-equity share capital	9	8
Revenue reserves	16,887,926	16,066,453
	16,887,935	16,066,461
	42,823,117	41,896,508

rent arrears. We will also be reviewing the way we procure contracts for our planned maintenance work, to see if we can get better value for money in future.

We will continue to work for high levels of satisfaction from residents in all we do.

Resident satisfaction survey: what you told us

Independent company, Acuity Research & Practice, carried out our latest major satisfaction survey for us in the autumn of 2018.

We would like to thank the 380 tenants and 15 leaseholders who took part (52% of tenants and 40% of leaseholders). Your survey feedback gives us an important snapshot of your views – which helps us to improve services, make

sure we are giving you good value for money and track what you think over time. Because the survey asks 'industry-standard' questions, we can also compare the results to those of other landlords.

On the next four pages, we give you the key findings from last year's survey.

The separate results for Keniston's small number of leaseholders are shown on page 11.



Communication and information

- 95%** Feel informed about things that might affect you as a tenant ↑ 2%
- 96%** We provide clear and informative written information
- 84%** Satisfied that we listen to your views and act on them ↓ 2%

Key

Compared with our 2015 survey:
 ↑ x% shows a higher result than in 2015
 ↓ x% shows a lower result than in 2015
 = shows the same result as in 2015



How you find us

You are very happy with our approach to providing services.

- 98%** Find our staff friendly and approachable
- 96%** Satisfied we provide an efficient and effective service
- 94%** Satisfied we provide the service you would expect from a landlord
- 92%** Satisfied we treat tenants fairly
- 92%** Trust Keniston
- 88%** Think we have a good reputation in the area

Housing and services

The vast majority of Keniston's tenants are satisfied with the overall services we provide.



- 95%** Satisfied with overall services =
- 90%** Satisfied with quality of home ↓ 3%
- 82%** Satisfied with neighbourhood ↓ 8%
- 95%** Feel safe and secure at home
- 87%** Feel safe in community
- 89%** Satisfied with value for money of their rent =
- 81%** Satisfied with value for money of their service charge ↓ 3%

Customer service

We score highly for customer service.

- 95%** We are very easy to deal with
- 92%** Staff keep their promises
- 87%** We deal with queries at first contact
- 92%** Satisfied with your last experience of contact ↑ 1%



Estate services

- 85%** Satisfied with overall services =
- 89%** Satisfied with grounds maintenance ↑ 4%
- 82%** Satisfied with internal cleaning =
- 79%** Satisfied with external cleaning ↓ 1%

Repairs and maintenance

Satisfaction with our repairs service is high.

- 94%** Satisfied with overall repairs ↑ 1%
- 98%** Last repair was easy to report ↑ 5%
- 90%** Satisfied with contractor appointment
- 92%** Contractor kept appointment
- 90%** Satisfied with quality of work ↑ 4%
- 84%** Last repair completed at first visit ↑ 3%



Sheltered housing services

- 95%** Satisfied with the call centre or emergency call system ↑ 1%
- 88%** Satisfied with service provided by the scheme manager or a support worker ↓ 6%
- 86%** Satisfied with communal and other facilities provided at their sheltered scheme ↓ 4%
- 68%** Satisfied with opportunities to take part in health and wellbeing activities ↓ 24%

These disappointing results came during a period when one of our sheltered housing managers had a long period of illness, covered by temporary staff. We have since appointed a new member of staff on a fixed-term contract, so we hope tenants are now happier with these services.



Recommending Keniston

- 72%** Would recommend us to their friends and family

Using a measure similar to one used by big companies, we have a 'net promoter score' of **65**. This is high compared with other social landlords.



How we compare

Acuity tell us that our results are above average when compared with other social landlords in two benchmarking groups that include small housing associations: the BM320 and the SPBM (Smaller Providers Benchmarking) group.

Our results are also much better than for larger landlords.

The only exception was in satisfaction with your neighbourhood.

Overall, the findings of the survey highlight a high degree of tenant loyalty and satisfaction. Keniston should be congratulated on maintaining the very high ratings found three years ago – which is an achievement given the challenges faced by housing associations and their residents today.

Acuity Resident Survey Report

Resident satisfaction survey: leaseholders

In all, 15 of our 34 (40%) leaseholders responded to the survey.

Leaseholders told us that they are highly satisfied with Keniston. They gave us very high ratings for the quality of their homes and neighbourhoods.

The majority of leaseholders are satisfied with the contact they have with us as customers. However, they gave us lower ratings for estate services (grounds maintenance and cleaning of external areas).

Leaseholder ratings are lower than the ratings awarded by tenants, which is typical of the pattern found at other landlords. However, we compare well with other landlords.



Suggestions for improvements

You made more than 100 comments about how we might improve our services. They included ideas for improvements to your neighbourhood and security, the way we handle noise and anti-social behaviour, as well as the way tenants look after their estates.

A total of 38 tenants told us they had no comment to make as they were happy with things as they are.



About you: internet use

59% Use the internet almost every day

79% Access the internet on their smartphone

Among those of you who don't use the internet, 42% do not want to use it, 27% have no access and 22% said they lacked confidence or skills. Others said their mobile network was poor.

About you: hopes for the future

57% Happy with things as they are

51% Held back by poor health or disability

20% Held back by lack of suitable jobs

80% Expect to be living in the same home in five years' time



What advice and support you said you need

- benefits advice (70 responses)
- help to move or swap homes (48 responses)
- help to move to a smaller home (10 responses)

- information to help meet household bills including utility bills (24 responses)
- help with budgeting (19 responses)
- help meeting loan/debt repayments (10 responses)
- help to sort out contents insurance (17 responses)
- help with banking (6 responses).

Housing and customer services

87% Satisfied with overall services

100% Satisfied quality of home and neighbourhood

80% Satisfied with value for money our services offer

83% Find us easy to contact



Estate services

87% Satisfied with overall services

69% Satisfied with grounds maintenance

77% Satisfied with internal cleaning

67% Satisfied with external cleaning

79% Satisfied with external and common area maintenance

How you find us

87% We provide an effective and efficient service

87% Our staff are friendly and approachable

80% Trust Keniston

80% Satisfied we treat people fairly

80% You can rely on staff to do what they say they will do

67% Think we have a good reputation in the area

Communication and information

73% We keep you informed

73% We keep you involved

80% We provide clear and informative written information

73% Satisfied that we listen to your views and act on them

Recommending Keniston

43% Would recommend us to their friends and family

Using a measure similar to one used by big companies, we have a 'net promoter score' of **29**. This is high compared with other social landlords.

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