

# Talkback

Newsletter of Keniston Housing Association

Autumn 2020

## Your community champions



Keniston residents have been doing their bit to help those most in need. We think the incredible work being done in our communities should be celebrated, so we asked you to nominate your Community Champions.



Jelani & Zuwena Blagrove – Merrow Street

*"I would love to nominate some very brave young people, who helped during a dangerous incident. Their actions helped save a life. I have known them since they were very young and can honestly say they are a credit to their mother."*

Jelani and Zuwena (pictured) each received a commendation from Cressida Dick, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service. Amazing!

Keith Skinner – Sunningdale Court

*"He has taken care of the gardening at the back of our flats and, when asked if he could help with anything, he never hesitates to oblige, so please give Keith what he deserves – a gold star."*

*"Very kind and helpful to most residents and very good to me. Helps keeps my garden pretty."*



# More community champions



## John Wade – Whites Meadow



"He does a lot for the whole area, picks up leaves and litter."

"He's always going around our area picking up rubbish and keeping Whites Meadow tidy. He's helpful, polite and I've even seen him cleaning neighbours' windows and ledges."

## Sarah Delaney – Darrick Wood

"This woman goes above and beyond for anyone and everyone."



## Caleb, Kezia, Samson and Jessie – Silver Court

"I nominate Caleb, Kezia, Samson and Jessie for all their hard work during this pandemic. These young people are real heroes! They've had to change their daily routine and add so much more to it. They are learning and demonstrating new skills, whilst staying positive through it all. They've all also had the time to bond well as neighbours..."



## Simon Kempton – Whites Meadow



"Exceptionally kind and very caring and been giving a lot during this crisis."

## Paul Clift – Foxley Hall

"He is always doing just about everything and anything for everyone on the estate. He helps people with moving, getting their cars started, putting parts in their cars, cleaning down and bagging rubbish up after the foxes have had a go at bags and the recycling area. He's helped people in need, given them lifts, helped take shopping to people's doors. He is there for everyone and they all know they can go to him."



## Jeylan Eratli – Merrow Street



"I'm nominating my neighbour, because I have been helped by her and her husband. They're so dear to me and I have told her before that I wish she had been my Mum, due to what they have done for me and my family. Christmas of 2018 was made possible for me and my family, especially our daughters, when they gave us a brand-new Christmas tree and everything else we needed so we could have a successful Christmas with our children. I have missed her dearly during lockdown."

## Fred James – Hornsey Road



"Fred helped call the ambulance and gave assistance when a neighbour suffered a medical emergency. He also contacted the family."

## Hilda Kaggwa – Silver Court



"I nominate Hilda. She had just recently moved in before this pandemic, but luckily for us we had a brief moment to introduce ourselves to Hilda and her lovely son. Once the whole pandemic started, Hilda was the most supportive neighbour I've had. Very early in the lockdown, she knocked on my door and offered to share her shopping with us and also some of the other neighbours too. She has been a blessing to me and my family exactly at the right moment..."

## Sue Owen – Nethewode Court



"Sue makes sure I am well, safe and that I am ok if I have had a fit. She was there for me when my Dad passed and is always there to talk to."

## Maureen McKervill – Darrick Wood



"Was a godsend to me when I had my operation. She walked my dog, got my shopping and visited me at the hospital bringing gifts."

## Anthony Mills – Foxley Hall

"He has helped with the gardening and always plays an active role in residents' forums. He takes a vested interest in his community."





# Pandemic Office update

Our office remains closed, but we are still working and providing you with services.

While some staff have returned to the office, we are not accepting any visitors just yet. When the office does reopen, visits will be by appointment only.

Now lockdown has been eased, we are able to offer a wider range of services.

- We have re-opened our routine repairs line. Call us on **01689 889704**, Monday to Friday, 9am to 12.30pm.
- We are letting empty homes, with arrangements to ensure social distancing.

- We can assist you with mutual exchanges – providing your swap partner's landlord agrees. Please contact your housing officer for more information.
- We are re-starting Management Team Walkabouts. We will advertise them on our website and, if your scheme is due for a visit, we will send you a flyer in the post.
- We have started this year's programme of planned repairs, including boiler, kitchen and bathroom renewals. We have contacted you if your home is

affected, to explain how the work can be carried out safely. (More details on our website at: [www.kenistonha.co.uk](http://www.kenistonha.co.uk))

## Keeping you informed

We will update you if anything else changes, either by letter, email, text or via our website and social media pages. Please make sure the contact details we have for you stay up to date, so we can keep you informed.

Thank you for your support during this exceptional time.



## A new home for Mrs Clifton

Mrs Clifton was: "So happy I nearly cried" – when she first saw her new home at Tarling Close.

Mrs Clifton's recent move took her from Islington to Bexley, to be nearer to her daughter. She had been feeling a bit isolated and lonely in London, and had waited patiently for a transfer.

"I have a lovely flat – it's brilliant. The gardens are beautiful and all the neighbours are so lovely. They all talk to me. It's very quiet here and I am just 20 minutes away from my daughter now.

"Thank you, Keniston!"

# Supporting you during lockdown

**We worked hard for you during lockdown and we were really pleased to get lots of very positive comments from you.**

*"So pleased with the service. The lady who took the call was so good and the contractor turned up within half an hour of reporting it. The man who did the repair is such a nice man. Always so polite and good, and he always turns up smartly dressed. Thank you!"*

*"Thank you all so much for being so cheerful and helpful through all of this. You really have pulled out all the stops, worked outside the box and you've just made it work."*

*"Thank you. So far, your action plan seems to be working and I am grateful for your help especially during this time. Also, thank you for listening, understanding and responding so quickly. I think your help in addressing the situation has also improved other lives of various neighbours involved, which is very positive and supportive for us."*

*"Thanks for the calls. It really means a lot to me as it's the only call I get."*

*"Thank you for your 'Being a good neighbour' leaflet. It's a great prompt to take care of ourselves and each other!"*

*"I'm really impressed with your continued service and believe that working remotely is working very well for us and Keniston."*

*"Doorbell all fixed thank you. I really needed it, as I was in bed with a chest infection and had to get out of bed to answer the door. The guy who came was brilliant, understood to keep his distance and was well masked up with gloves. One happy resident."*

## Vermin & rubbish

To keep our estates tidy:

- don't feed the birds or throw food on the estate – this attracts birds and animals
- only use your own bins – bin store areas are for flat residents only
- don't dump large items – it costs a lot to remove them, which is added to your service charge. (Contact your council to collect them instead), and
- use dog bins – but for dog waste only.

## Benefits update

Jobcentre appointments and DWP health assessments are still suspended until further notice.

If you need to make a claim, don't delay. If you are affected by the virus, you can apply for Universal Credit or Employment Support Allowance and get a month's advance upfront.

To claim quickly, call Help to Claim on 0800 144 8 444 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm). This service is run by the Citizens Advice Bureau.

For more help with rents and benefits, see our information leaflet at [www.kenistonha.co.uk](http://www.kenistonha.co.uk)

## Struggling to pay?

If your income has reduced due to Coronavirus, please contact us straight away. Don't just stop paying your rent.

We will be as flexible as possible. If you need it, we can give you extra time to pay.

Call Chris Little on 01689 889708, Jan Lewis on 01689 889719 or Paul Alderson on 01689 889707. Our phones are usually answered from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.





# Fundraising for Samaritans



Our plans to fundraise for Samaritans in Keniston's 50th year were interrupted by lockdown. But we recently hosted a successful socially distanced cake sale and a table sale.

We had great support from the residents, who came along to Darrick Wood and Whites Meadow and raised plenty of money.

We are raising money all year and hope to organise some more fundraising activities soon. If you would like to try your own sponsored activity for Samaritans, please let us know.

Here are some ideas:

- grow a beard or shave your head
- do a sponsored walk, run or cycle – this could include climbing your indoor stairs or walking laps of your garden
- try a sponsored silence, or
- hold a dance marathon at home.

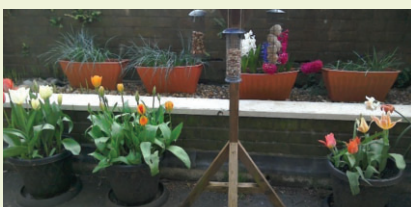
If you film your fundraising activity, we can share it on our Keniston Housing YouTube channel. Thank you for your donations and support so far.

Money raised  
**£100.70**  
Cake sale



Money raised  
**£185.50**  
table sale

## Planting success in lockdown



Since lockdown, many of you have been getting outdoors – growing your own veg and adding a splash of colour with pretty flowers.

Radishes, lettuce and spring onions are very easy to grow, even in a small space, so no matter whether you have a garden, patio, balcony or just some pots, you too can grow your own.

Residents at Merrow Street have been making good use of the new planters (see top left). It's lovely to see them coming on so well.



## Starters and leavers

We say farewell and a big thank you to Sue Nelson our Finance Officer and David Vaughn our Maintenance Operative, who have been with Keniston for a combined total of 48 years. Both have taken retirement and we wish them well for the future.

We welcome back Tara Couldridge who will be covering Sue's finance duties.

Our new Operations Director Sue McDonnell (pictured above) has been settling in well during lockdown.

Sue has more than 30 years' experience working in the housing sector, most recently as Head of Empty Homes and Lettings for Southern Housing Group. She is an experienced leader who has worked with a number of small and large associations during her career.

Sue says: "I'm really pleased to have been appointed as Operations Director and am looking forward to working with residents, staff and the Board to continue to develop Keniston's vision for the future."

## Beware test & trace

# SCAM

The police are warning that scammers are using the pandemic to target victims – including pretending to be the test and trace service.

Here is advice from OFCOM about what to expect from a genuine test and trace call.

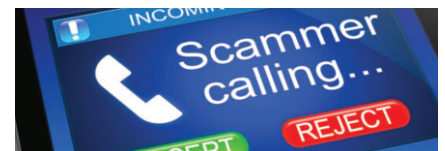
Firstly, the only valid website is: <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk>

Secondly, genuine contact tracers will never ask you:

- to dial a premium rate number (starting with 09 or 087)
- for any form of payment
- for any bank account details
- for your (or someone else's) social media or login details

- to tell them, or set up with them, any passwords or PINs
- to purchase a product, including a test, or
- to download any software, or hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet.

If you receive a call like this, hang up and phone Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040, or visit [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)



## Stop nuisance sales calls

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is the UK's only official 'Do Not Call' register for landline and mobile numbers.

It allows you to opt out of sales and marketing calls, reducing the nuisance calls you get.

To register your phone, go to [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk)



## Ways to pay

**You can pay your rent and service charges:**

- at a PayPoint outlet, using your rent card
- by setting up a recurring card payment method
- by setting up a bank standing order or direct debit (ask us for details)
- using your debit card via Allpay online, or using the Allpay app on your smartphone, or
- using your debit or credit card over the phone with your Rent Income Officer.



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