

Talkback

Newsletter of Keniston Housing Association

Winter 2021

Resident milestones

In our own milestone year, we celebrated amazing milestones with some of you.

60th anniversary for Ann and David

Ann and David from Foxley Hall celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in September.

The couple have spent more than half their marriage as Keniston residents at Foxley Hall – they moved in back in 1976.

Ann and David both lived in Brixton as youngsters and met at a youth club. The boys were playing the girls at netball and David knocked Ann over during the match. After helping her up, he asked if she wanted to go to the pictures... and the rest, as they say, is history. Ann and David married in 1961.

Ann and David celebrated their anniversary with a lovely family meal and they plan to have a party some time next year. Happy anniversary!



Daphne turns 100

Daphne celebrated her 100th birthday with her neighbours and some of our staff at Tarling Close.

She was delighted to receive her birthday card from the Queen and proudly showed it off to everyone. Many happy returns, Daphne!

Update on contacting us

Our office remains closed to the public. Some of our staff are working in the office at certain times, but we are not yet ready to receive visitors. Future visits will be by appointment.

All calls to Keniston go to our main number, **01689 889700**. Customer Services are your first point of contact and will take calls between 9am and 5pm, with a break from 12.30pm to 1.30pm, when you will hear an automated message.

Christmas opening hours

We will be closed on the following days: Monday 27, Tuesday 28 and Friday 31 December, as well as Monday 3 January.

During these times, our contractors will only carry out emergency repairs. To report an emergency, please phone **01689 889700**. A recorded message will direct you to our emergency contractor.



We're swapping our mutual exchange service

For those of you looking for a home swap, we are now signed up to House Exchange instead of HomeSwapper.

The change means that if you carry on using HomeSwapper, you will now need to pay. But if you want to use House Exchange, it will be free, because we pay your fees. If you are already signed up as a paying customer of House Exchange, you will not be charged from 1 December.

House Exchange will help you swap homes with one of the thousands of housing association and council tenants registered. You can access the site from your computer, or by using the House Exchange App, available from the Apple App and Google Play stores.

Room going to waste or need more space?

Moving is easy with House Exchange.

houseexchange.org.uk



To join the scheme, you will first need to register online at www.houseexchange.org.uk, following easy onscreen steps. We will confirm your details within five working days. With your registration complete, the website will automatically match you with people who are interested in a property like yours.

We wish you all the best in your search for a swap and hope you like the new House Exchange website.



Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods

We recently carried out some landscaping at Nethewode Court in Belvedere.

We installed raised beds and planting, using our Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods fund.

If you have ideas for your scheme, please let us know.



Darrick Wood plans

We have now submitted our full planning application to Bromley Council for new homes (and landscaping enhancements) and are waiting for it to be processed.

Residents will be able to view it in full on the council website, once it is live. We will keep you posted.

We are still keen to hear from residents. Submit your comments or enquiries by calling our special phone line 01689 664514, or email futureofdarrickwood@kenistonha.co.uk



Food bank donations

We have delivered another 48.5kg of donated goods to Bromley Food Bank.

They say this is equal to 138 meals, including a main meal for a family of four for 34 days.

Many thanks to Darrick Wood residents for their support.

Perryfield House table sale

Residents at Perryfield House recently hosted a table sale, raising money for Woodlands Mead School in Burgess Hill.

Woodlands Mead is a school for children aged four to 19, who have special educational needs.

Residents raised an impressive £545.80 and local Crawley MP Henry Smith attended to lend support.

Well done to all and a special mention to Bridget and Stella.



Design your own handmade Christmas card

for a chance to win a shopping voucher



We have two age categories in our Christmas card competition – under-16s and over-16s – and we're inviting you to get creative.

You can share your final results in one of the following ways.

- Send a photo to lynnruss@kenistonha.co.uk
- WhatsApp your photo to 07713 388010.
- Put your card in the post.
- Drop it into the letterbox at Darrick Road.
- Hand it to a member of staff at your scheme, so they can pass it on (or take a photo).

We will pick one winner from each age group and they will win a £10 voucher. The closing date is Friday 14 January.



Resident satisfaction survey

We wish to thank everyone who completed our most recent three-year satisfaction survey, which was organised for us by Acuity.

The results are now being analysed and we will report back to you in the next edition of Talkback.

Digging up the past

Resident John Bailey has literally been digging up the past – with some truly special finds in his garden.

John's family moved from Tottenham Court Road to an address in Hayles Street in 1916 – and John was born there. At one stage, there were 34 members of his family in the street.

Today, he lives in a house on the street that, many years ago, was home to the young Tom Bennett and his family.

During the Second World War, Tom was conscripted by the Army, alongside John's Uncle George. The pair were sent to France and ended up in Dunkirk with four others.

During intense shelling, as they headed up a path, five of them turned left and Tom turned right. Sadly, Tom, who was just 19 years old, was killed. It's a story reminiscent of one told in the recent film made about *Dunkirk*.

Many years later, the remaining group arranged a reunion so that old friends could meet and visit Tom's grave in Dunkirk. Two of the ex-servicemen stayed with John at Hayles Street before they set off.



On the day the ex-servicemen were due to leave for France, John was pottering in his garden, doing a spot of digging, when he unearthed something unexpected. He found a little plaque with Tom Bennett's name on it (in the picture on the left) that Tom himself must have made when he was a young lad living at the house.

John had dug in his garden for years and had never found anything like this. He felt that Tom somehow had something to do with it.

Since then, John has found a 1934 flagon (pictured), ink bottles, clay pipes, toys, a Heinz salad cream bottle and an old milk bottle. Who knows what else he might dig up?



Starters and leavers

We recently said farewell to Marion Shakespeare, who moves onto pastures new after 26 years in our Customer Services team.

Donna Cole, Sheltered Scheme Manager at Tarling Close, has also left us – after 24 years.

Marion and Donna were both dedicated to their roles and will be greatly missed by colleagues and residents.

We welcome back Paul Alderson, who has now taken on a permanent role as Sheltered Scheme Manager at Tarling Close.



Keep your details up to date

If we have mobile numbers and email addresses on our system, we can send you important texts and email updates – especially about repairs.

However, we often find we have out-of-date contact details. So, please let us know if you have changed your email or phone number.

Get your booster Covid jab

With worrying news about the new Omicron variant of Covid-19, the advice is to get jabbed – including going for your booster jab, as soon as you are invited.



The new guidance from the Government means:

- everyone over the age of 18 will now be offered a booster jab
- the minimum gap between a second dose and a booster will now be three months, and
- children aged 12 to 15 will be invited for a second dose, three months after their first.

If you missed a previous dose, you can go online straight away to book it. Go to www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

New protections

The Government now says:

- you must wear face masks in shops and on public transport
- if someone close to you tests positive with the Omicron variant, you must self-isolate for 10 days – even if you are vaccinated
- if you get symptoms, you should get tested
- if you test positive, you should self-isolate for 10 days.

Remember that face masks, open windows and vaccinations are our best protection against catching Covid-19, along with good hand washing and sanitisation.

Home fire safety checker



The London Fire Brigade has a Home Fire Safety Checker tool that you can access online.

You answer questions about your home, then it guides you around each room to help you find risks and give you advice.

We recommend using this tool. You can access it here: london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home



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