



Keniston



**Annual report to residents 2021-22**

[www.kenistonha.co.uk](http://www.kenistonha.co.uk)

# A message from our Chair and Chief Executive

Jonathan Card, *Chief Executive* and Emma Keegan, *Board Chair*

**Keniston has started on its second 50 years, in a world that continues to throw up new challenges, while some existing challenges are still with us.**

We have all experienced another year of the effects of Covid, which is thankfully not, at present, having the same impact as it was before on our everyday lives and on how we operate as a social landlord.

Newer challenges include the cost of living crisis squeezing already tight household budgets, the war in Ukraine and the pressing need to combat global warming. Through all of this, we have aimed to stay true to our principles and values, focusing on delivering services that matter to our residents, at the highest standards we can, while achieving value for money in all that we do.

Keniston has always made it a priority to achieve good feedback from our residents. We listen closely to the resident 'voice', and build what we hear into how we work. As well as local estate surveys and feedback following repair and improvement works, every three years we carry out a major survey of all our residents.

The 2021 survey showed a slightly mixed picture. While the headline satisfaction rating dropped from a very high 95% in 2018 to 88%, this still compares well to others in the sector. Some very positive results included that nine out of 10 Keniston residents said that we had performed well as a landlord during Covid.

While we like to recognise where we are performing well, we mainly need to use the survey results to

see how we can improve. Part of this involves developing local action plans with residents at each scheme.

It's now five years since the horrific and devastating Grenfell Tower fire. The official inquiry is still ongoing, but already there are some clear lessons for all landlords to learn. Some of the dangers at Grenfell were known by those living there, but the landlord wasn't listening. Corners were cut and risks taken.

Social housing has also been in the news with shocking stories about damp, mould and unfinished repairs – again with landlords that appeared to be not interested or not listening.

At Keniston, we need to make sure this couldn't happen here. We want to encourage more Keniston residents to actively engage with us, and to strengthen the links between residents and our Board during 2022-23. At the same time, the Government regulator for social housing is gaining new powers alongside the Housing Ombudsman.

## Key aims

We are looking forward to meeting our current priorities, as well as looking more widely at how we listen to and involve residents in what we do and how we do it. Our key aims are:

**Firstly**, we are developing a new approach to how we look at and invest in keeping all our homes fit for the future, through a new Asset Management Strategy. This will include improving energy efficiency and starting to prepare for the switch to alternative heating systems, which will move away from fossil fuels, while keeping costs to residents affordable.



**Secondly**, we will refresh our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. We work across different areas and provide housing and services for a range of diverse needs, and we recognise that it's timely for us to look again at this important area.

**Thirdly**, we aim to move forward with providing much-needed new homes, and we are at the planning stage with both our Darrick Wood and Bickley projects.

Overseeing all this is our Board, whose members – recognising the commitment they make – now receive a small payment for their work. An important element of their role is to monitor how we manage risks. Every Board meeting carefully considers the main risks facing Keniston and how to manage them, in a fast-changing world.

## Finally...

We live in uncertain times. Many of you are facing pressures to make ends meet, while having a good quality affordable home has never been more important. We recognise that an important role for Keniston is supporting those who need it to keep their homes secure.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch, if you are finding things difficult and need to speak with us.

# 1 About Keniston

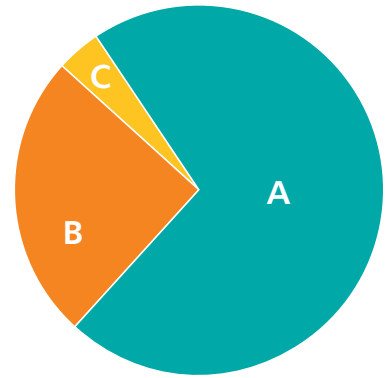
We are a housing association and are a non-profit-making organisation, providing low-cost social housing for people in need of a home.

We provide homes of all sizes on estates across the London boroughs of Islington, Southwark, Lambeth, Bromley, Bexley and Croydon, and also in Crawley.

In total we own:

**A** 628 general needs houses and flats   **B** 219 sheltered flats   **C** 33 leasehold properties

## The homes we own



# 2 Star survey results

We carry out a STAR satisfaction survey with all our residents every three years.

In all, 363 residents completed our latest survey. Nearly nine out of 10 (88%) said they were satisfied with our overall services. We will follow

this up, because it is lower than our score of 95% three years ago.

We will use these survey findings to develop an individual estate focus, to aid our discussions with tenant associations and to inform our "You said, we did" sections in customer publications.

**88%**

Satisfied with overall service

**92%**

Friendly and approachable staff

**89%**

We are easy to deal with

**86%**

Able to make your views known

*Overall, I do believe Keniston is one of the top housing providers we have in this area. I would never move.*

**85%**

Satisfied with maintenance and repairs

**92%**

Satisfied with attitude of repair workers



*Keniston has been great since moving here. I feel it's a safe place to live, which allows me peace of mind to raise my daughter. I know I can always call Keniston, and a friendly, non-judgemental person will be on the other end of the phone. Keniston, you've been great. Thank you for having me.*

**83%**

Satisfied with quality of home

**90%**

Satisfied with how we managed the pandemic\*

*Very secure and well-maintained housing, with excellent staff and great customer service.*

\* Most gave us 10 out of 10



# 3 Lettings



**45**  
Homes let in 2021-22  
(2020-21: 46)

Average relet time  
**16 days**  
(2020-21: 17 days)  
Target: 18 days

**4**  
Households got a  
Keniston transfer

**8**  
Households helped to complete  
a mutual exchange



Our lettings performance	Keniston 2020-21	Keniston 2021-22	Other small HAs 2021-22	Keniston target 2021-22
<i>Average relet time (days)</i>				
General needs	16	12	27.1	18
Housing for older people	17	21	31.5	18

## Feedback from new residents

In all, **40** new residents completed our new home survey, with **39** satisfied or very satisfied with the way we dealt with the whole allocation process.

- **100%** agreed we kept them up to date during the process
- **100%** felt our staff were polite and helpful throughout
- **98%** were satisfied or very satisfied with how Keniston dealt with the whole allocations process
- **98%** agreed we gave enough information about their new home and the local area, and

*In an ideal world would have had longer to move into the property.*

*How helpful everyone at Keniston has been and the contractors that have been to the property have been very professional and helpful.*

*I want to use this opportunity to say thank you to all Keniston staff. You have all been wonderful, making the moving process as easy and comfortable as possible. Thank you very much.*

*Keniston have always been very supportive and understanding of my situation.*

- **90%** felt that the time between getting their offer and the tenancy starting was reasonable.

## 4 Estate services

### Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods

Estate improvements funded through our scheme included:

- an extra salt bin
- a new bench for a communal garden
- CCTV cameras at several sites, to deter anti-social behaviour
- new, steel, bike-store doors
- more planting and landscaping improvements at three estates
- several dog bins at estates
- getting a façade canopy professionally cleaned
- new composting bins
- helping to re-site recycling bins.



### Satisfaction at estates What you told us

- Dromore: 100%
- Hornsey Road/Tollington Park: 100%
- Pound Green Court: 100%
- Darrick Wood houses (general needs): 94%
- Foxley Hall: 92%
- Darrick Wood flats (general needs): 89%
- Bickley Estate: 88%
- Darrick Wood sheltered housing: 86%
- Tarling Close: 77%
- Lyham Road: 75%
- Merrow Street: 67%



**You said, We did:** We scored lower where you were unhappy with the cleaning and gardening. We have improved this at three estates by changing the site staff/ contractor.

**You said, We did:** You asked us to improve estate lighting in some areas. We are upgrading to more energy efficient LED lighting, which also gives better value for money.

*I love the service that you give to us on repairs. They are so quickly done. Very satisfied.  
(Darrick Wood resident)*

*Thank you for your very high standard services, support and being very approachable. One of the best.  
(Foxley Hall resident)*

### Anti-social behaviour

Staff received 34 reports of anti-social behaviour during the year (29 the previous year). Of these, 65% were low-level complaints (the majority about nuisance caused by inconsiderate neighbours and their visitors).

We work with the police, social services and other agencies, such as mediation services, to help us resolve anti-social behaviour.

*Keniston Housing Association is probably the best of them all. You attend our needs promptly and I'm always satisfied with the contractors you chose to carry out the job. They do well all the time. Keniston staff go out of their way to sort out any issues we have and they are so friendly. I would just like to say a big thank you Keniston staff.  
(Merrow Street resident)*



### Complaints

We continue to receive a low level of complaints.

As in the previous year, in 2021-22, we received two complaints. The first was about repairs and we resolved it at stage 1.

The second was about noise nuisance and was resolved at stage 2 by our Complaints Panel. We learned that involving the mediation service hadn't helped. Instead, we should have communicated better with our resident – showing that we had listened. We could also have tackled parts of the complaint more quickly.

In line with the new Code of Governance 2020, we will publish our annual Housing Ombudsman self-assessment and follow this up by refreshing our Complaints Policy.



## 5 Repairs and maintenance

# 2,485

## Repairs completed



### 2,165

Day-to-day repairs

### 320

Repairs to empty homes, planned maintenance and servicing

### 95.4%

Repairs completed on time  
(2020-21: 97.5%)

**Target: 97%**

*National small HAs, 2021-22: 97%*

### 74%

Repairs fixed first time  
(2020-21: 87%)

**Target 90%**

*National small HAs, 2021-22: 90%*

*We are working with our contractors to improve this important score.*

### 94.5%

Satisfied with their repair  
(2020-21: 88%)

**Target: 95%**

*We did much better than the previous year. We take this figure from your texts and paper feedback – so, do give us details if our service needs to improve.*

### 6.9

Average days to complete day-to-day repairs  
(2020-21: 5.7)

**Target: 7.1**

*National small HAs, 2021-22: 6.5*

### £992

Average spend per property on day-to-day repairs and empty homes (2020-21: £776)

*National small HAs, 2021-22: £741*

*We had to spend £298,850 on empty homes (2020-21: £228,986) because many homes were left in poor condition by the previous tenants.*

### £2,188

Average spend per property on planned maintenance (2020-21: £1,203)

*National small HAs, 2021-22: £836*

*This cost was especially high this year, partly because we were catching up with work delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic*

### In total, we spent:

- **£1,095,425** on major renewals to 351 homes
- **£163,927** on external decorations to 118 homes
- **£21,675** on improvement works at 12 schemes
- **£15,511** adapting 15 homes to make them more suitable for people with disabilities.

**100%**

Properties with a valid gas certificate

**100%**

Properties meet the Decent Homes Standard

## Health and safety

We use an independent consultant to check and report back to us on our health and safety arrangements.



## Feedback on our major works programme

We asked for your feedback on major works completed at your scheme. Some of these works programmes rolled over from the previous year.

- **100%** were satisfied with heating upgrades and new kitchens at Nethewode and Nethewold sheltered block.
- **100%** were satisfied with new and refurbished kitchens at Darrick Wood.
- **100%** were satisfied with the first phase of heating upgrades at Darrick Wood and **91%** with the second phase.
- **100%** were satisfied with kitchens at Dromore.
- **100%** were satisfied with kitchen refurbishment and heating upgrades at Sunningdale and Sunningdale Court.
- Residents scored their scheme's redecorations at **97%** (Foxley Hall), **85%** (Burnhill House) and **84%** (Merrow Street).
- **100%** were satisfied with window and door replacements at Darrick Wood.

**95%**

Satisfied with work done at their scheme



*I just wanted to say the new front door at Burnhill is absolutely amazing. It closes so quietly and definitely looks like an update to the front of the building cosmetically – Thank you KENISTON!*

*Great selection offered, great communication and great work by the contractors. (Kitchen upgrade)*

*I liked the choices of kitchens that were available, the planning of the kitchen and the efficiency of the kitchen fitters. (Kitchen upgrade)*

*Customer focused, courteous, clean, tidy, efficient, and professional. (Redecorations)*

*Fresher and brighter looking. (Redecorations)*

*Easy to operate. (Heating upgrade)*

*I particularly liked the quality, the colour, the workmanship and the overall experience from the consultation to the completion. (Kitchen upgrade)*

*The work was carried out well to a high standard and has improved my home (Heating upgrade)*





## 6 Resident involvement

**24**

Paper and phone surveys  
287 residents responded



**234**

Welfare calls  
(2020-21: 1,400  
– while Covid restrictions still applied)



**10**

Management team walkabouts

### A year of work with the Resident Panel

We consulted with our Resident Panel throughout the year via email and Zoom. We asked them for their views on new policies, their comments on untidy gardens and whether we should introduce a new staff award. (They were in favour and we will launch this award during 2022-23.)

*In general it is a model of clear, plain and eminently understandable English with an excellent exposition of Keniston's standards and expectations. I particularly like the 'Accountability' section. (Feedback on service standards leaflet)*

*This looks good to me. I did wonder why smoke alarms were not mentioned and if they should be. (Feedback on fire safety policy)*

*...here at Sunningdale some of the gardens are disgusting and they have so much rubbish in. They put it outside their back gates, resulting in the increase of rodents, rats and mice.... But I don't know how you can make it better because some just don't care. I think the one way would be more home visits by Keniston housing staff. (Feedback on untidy gardens)*

*If Keniston starts new developments, will staffing increase? We don't want services to get worse. We support Keniston growing and taking on more properties, but we want the personal quality service to continue – for existing and new residents. (Feedback on strategic plan)*

*Sounds like a good idea, but I don't think I have found a baddie yet! (Feedback on the new staff award)*

### Foodbank support

We advertised the benefits of the Bromley Foodbank and the Church Community Larder at St Nicholas Church in Orpington. We issued foodbank vouchers to residents in need throughout the year.

Staff were able to deliver goods donated by residents and we got special letters of thanks from Bromley Foodbank in July and September 2021.

### Special events

Staff and residents got together for fundraising events at Perryfield House and Whites Meadow, raising over £600 for Woodlands Mead Special Educational Needs School and Samaritans. We also celebrated Daphne's 100th birthday at Tarling Close.





## 7 New homes

We are awaiting a planning decision from Bromley Council on our proposal to build 26 new rented homes at Darrick Wood. Residents were given a formal opportunity to comment.

We are working with architects on plans to develop new housing on the site of Robert Whyte House in Bickley. These will be a mix of general needs and housing for older people, all to be let at social rent to local people. Property guardians are living in the building in the meantime.



## 8 Our staff

36

Staff fill 27.3 full-time-equivalent roles

32

White British staff

4

Ethnic minority staff

6

Staff left

4

Staff joined us



£2,629

Spent on 65 staff training sessions (mostly online)  
2020-21: £2,278

## 9 Our Board

Our Board contribute a rich mix of strategic, legal, financial, housing, asset management and development experience.

**Emma Keegan** (Chair)  
*Social housing professional*



**Shehla Husain** (Co-Vice Chair)  
*Deputy Director Home Office*



**Peter Voisey** (Co-Vice Chair)  
*Solicitor*



**Barry Luhmann** (Chair of Audit & Risk Committee and Treasurer)  
*Retail banking/financial services consultant*



**Sally Rice** (Chair of Development & Growth Committee)  
*Independent housing consultant*



**Simone Bailey**  
*Director, train service provider*



**Antonia Bance**  
*Head of Campaigns, communications & digital at the TUC. Joined us in 2022*



**Samantha Herelle**  
*Director of Operations at Homes for Lambeth. Joined us in 2022*



**Stephen Hoad**  
*Property Director, Diocese of Rochester. Joined us in 2022*



**Seema Jassi**  
*Head of Risk and Policy at St John Ambulance*



**Lucy Worrell**  
*Research and Public Policy Manager, Peabody*



**Sheila Sackey**  
*Service Delivery Manager, Westminster Council. Stepped down in September 2021.*



## 10 Help with finances

Our Income Team did a great job supporting residents to stay on track with their rent. As a result, rent arrears at year end were just 2.11% (2020-21: 2.59%) against a target of 3.25% – the lowest level for many years.

The team referred residents for specialist debt advice to:

- Christians Against Poverty
- Help on Your Doorstep in Islington (for access to over 150 referral partners)
- Citizen’s Advice Bureau
- SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity, and
- Thames Water Sure Plus Customer Assistance Fund.

We assisted many residents to apply for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payments.

We also successfully secured:

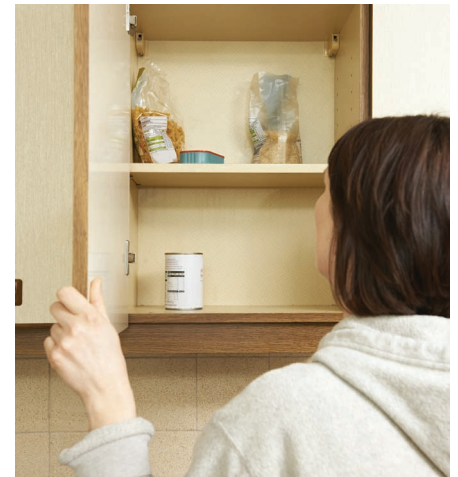
- grant funding from local authority household support



funds, so that three residents could replace household items

- Housing and Council Tax Benefit backdated to 2018 following appeal, and
- 14 Discretionary Housing Payments for residents in need of extra help towards their rent.

Residents told us they were really grateful for the assistance they got from our Income Team – and for being such a patient landlord.



## 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 all range of activities, comparing trends over time and with our two peer groups:

National Smalls London (around 50, comparable, small, London-based associations and Small Providers Benchmarking Group (around 140 small associations nationally).

In 2021-22, our costs rose because we had to catch up with

repairs and planned maintenance that had been deferred during the pandemic. So, our overall running cost per unit was higher at £5,711 (2020-21: £4,462), and our spend on day-to-day repairs and repairs to empty homes averaged at £992 (2020-21: £776). However, both figures compare well with our benchmarking groups.

Short-term staff sickness levels are 7.7 days on average (3.5 days last year), with the most common time out being 2.7 days. Our long-term sickness average is 19.1

days. This is attributable to four staff members, three of whom have longstanding chronic health conditions, and for whom there is no ongoing salary cost to Keniston.





## 12 Our financial performance

### Surplus

We generated a surplus of £1.53m on a turnover of £5.867m. Whilst this was a stronger financial performance than last year (turnover: £5.846m; surplus: £866,000), a large part of the increase was due to including £696,000 that was raised by selling one of our London street properties.

Our income management improved over the year, exceeding our target of 100% with a 103.7% collection rate. We have also outperformed our arrears target of 3%. At year end, only 2.11% was outstanding.

Even with continuing complications of the pandemic, on average, we completed our day-to-day repairs within 6.9 days – only slightly missing our targets (see p6).



### Income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Turnover	5,867,732	5,846,842
Operating expenditure	(4,083,797)	(4,712,003)
Operating surplus	1,783,935	1,134,839
Interest receivable and finance income	3,770	5,461
Interest payable	(217,708)	(243,694)
Other finance costs	(39,620)	(30,620)
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,530,377</b>	<b>865,986</b>

### Balance sheet at 31 March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Housing properties	46,448,419	46,257,532
Other fixed assets	347,379	365,520
	<b>46,795,798</b>	<b>46,623,052</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	276,253	285,756
Cash and cash equivalents	3,030,665	2,649,791
	<b>3,306,918</b>	<b>2,935,547</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,870,515)	(1,467,826)
Net current assets	<b>1,436,403</b>	<b>1,467,721</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>48,232,201</b>	<b>48,090,773</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	27,532,011	28,790,959
Provision for liabilities	813,000	866,000
<b>Capital and reserves</b>		
Non-equity share capital	8	9
Revenue reserves	19,887,182	18,433,805
	<b>48,232,201</b>	<b>48,090,773</b>

## Keniston Housing Association

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Phone: 01689 889700

### Bankers

National Westminster Bank Plc  
235 High Street  
Orpington  
Kent BR6 0NS

### Auditors

CLA Evelyn Partners (formerly  
Nexia Smith & Williamson)  
45 Gresham Street  
London EC2V 7BG

