



Keniston



Annual report to residents 2022-23

www.kenistonha.co.uk

A message from our Chair and CEO

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

We continue to live in a world with challenges all around us. Global warming is fast becoming an unavoidable reality for all of us, inflation and the cost of living crisis seem at present to be here to stay, public services are under threat in many ways, and further afield the war in Ukraine is showing no signs of ending any time soon. Through all of this, we believe that organisations like Keniston, by providing genuinely affordable, well-managed and maintained homes to those who need them, and by giving our residents meaningful opportunities to influence the services we provide, is as important as it has ever been, now more than ever.

High performance

As set out elsewhere in this report, we are proud that Keniston continues to be a high performing housing association, achieving high levels of satisfaction. Our staff work hard to deliver the services our residents need and want, in ways that they want them. Our size means that we can maintain a personal service, and we know that this is valued. We don't get many complaints, but when we do, we focus on what we can learn from them.

In the last year, the national media has continued to highlight poor

conditions and service in the social housing sector, focusing in particular on dampness, mould and condensation. At Keniston, we can't say that all of our homes are free of these problems all of the time. But we can say that we are treating the issue as a high priority. We encourage all residents to report any concerns to us, and we follow up and inspect their homes. In most cases, we are able to resolve the issues quickly and easily.

During the year, we successfully recruited two new Board members. For the first time for several years, we now have a Board member who is a Keniston resident: Liz Emmanuel, who lives at Nethewode Court. She will help to ensure Board discussions include hearing the resident 'voice'. Our second new Board member is Ian Pinches, who has taken over in the key role of Chair of our Audit & Risk Committee from Barry Luhmann, who stepped down at the end of his nine-year term, as did another Board member, Seema Jassi. Our thanks and best wishes go to them both.

Standards and behaviours are central to everything we do at Keniston. To reinforce this, we adopted the latest Code of Governance and Code of Conduct, based on models developed by our trade body, the National Housing Federation.

Involving residents

We continued to work with residents who can commit to a greater level of involvement via our Resident Panel, getting their valuable feedback on topics as varied as our asbestos and resident involvement policies, and estate walkabouts. We held resident events throughout the year, including Platinum Jubilee parties, Christmas buffets at our sheltered schemes and a tree planting ceremony as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative.



We are very aware of the critical need for more social housing in the areas where we work. Having worked hard over an extended period on our plans for more homes within the Darrick Wood estate, it was therefore very disappointing that Bromley Councillors overturned the recommendation by their officers to support our planning application for 26 new homes. We know that this project has been controversial, and that some residents are strongly opposed to our plans. We regret this, but remain clear that the benefits of the project – 26 new homes at social rent to local people in great housing need – outweighed the costs. At the time of writing, the Board is considering the options for the future.

Keniston makes investment in our existing homes a top priority. We know that this work can be disruptive, but we pride ourselves in managing the work in ways that our residents want. So, we are delighted that this year we achieved our best-ever satisfaction feedback for our planned works programmes.

While our programmes of providing new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors and heating continue, we started work during the year on looking at the longer-term improvement needs. We have developed a new strategic approach to guide our work over the next five years, with a key initial focus on gathering good solid data on the condition of our homes, their energy efficiency, and what



investment we need to make in the coming years to make them truly fit for the future.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are qualities we aim to embed into everything we do. Work has started with a significant project to refresh and update our approach, covering all our activities as a landlord and as an employer.

A key role for our Board is to oversee our approach to risk management. The world around us presents Keniston with many risks. We look to achieve our aims while managing risks realistically and having appropriate measures to protect the organisation. During the year, we enhanced how we do this, and each Board meeting assesses current risks and updates our approach to managing them.

Priorities

Looking forward to Keniston's priorities for the current year, as well as looking more widely at how we listen to and involve residents in what we do and how we do it, we have some specific aims.

Firstly, we will now be running a major survey of all residents every other year, to better understand what our residents think of Keniston and their priorities. This will next take place in September 2023.

Secondly, we are developing a new strategic plan to guide the organisation through the coming years. The aim is for this to be finalised in early 2024.

Finally, we will complete our review of equality, diversity and inclusion and start to deliver the aims that arise from it.



1 About Keniston

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

We provide **628 general needs**, **219 sheltered housing** and **33 leasehold** properties, of all sizes, on estates across the London boroughs of Islington, Southwark, Lambeth, Bromley, Bexley and Croydon, and also in Crawley.

2 Lettings



100%

Satisfied with lettings service

We let 32 homes during the year (2021-22: 45).

Our average re-let time was 14 days (2021-22: 16), ahead of our target of 17 days.

We helped five households transfer within Keniston and completed 10 mutual exchanges.

Of the 40 new residents who completed our new home survey:

- 100% were satisfied or very satisfied with the way we dealt with the whole process.
- 100% felt our staff were polite and helpful throughout.
- 98% agreed we kept them up to date during the process.
- 93% agreed we gave enough information about their new home and the local area.
- 90% felt they had had a reasonable amount of time between receiving their offer and the start of their tenancy.

New tenant feedback

- “ I would have liked instructions for the heating, water and electrics.
- “ Staff were very helpful.
- “ Love the new kitchen.
- “ Very quick offer which made it difficult... and I didn't have much time to get furniture.
- “ Extremely happy with the whole process.
- “ Every phone call has been dealt with. Everything is efficient and great. Staff are kind and helpful.
- “ Scheme manager has been very helpful and gone over and above.

Our lettings performance <i>Average relet time (days)</i>	Keniston 2021-22	Keniston 2022-23	Other small HAs 2022-23	Keniston target 2022-23
General needs	12	15	28	17
Housing for older people	21	13	30	17

3 Estate services



Tenant feedback

- “ The cleaners are fantastic and come a few times a week. The communal areas are always clean.
- “ Every time I call Keniston my issues are solved.
- “ The estate is kept to good standards. Keniston provides things for the block. The gates keep security. The flowers make the block look pretty. The caretaker makes it very clean for us to live in – keeps it maintained for us.
- “ I have been here for many years now and have been very happy with my flat and with Keniston. They are always happy to help.
- “ Keniston provide a brilliant service – not like other housing associations. Got to be the best in London.



100%

Satisfaction at three estates

Estate satisfaction

We carried out seven estate satisfaction surveys. The overall satisfaction rate at each scheme is shown in the table opposite.

At the estates where you gave us a lower score, more of you had made comments about the cleaning and gardening services.

We inspect your estates regularly and raise any problems we find with our contractors and caretakers.

Our contractors deliver a set number of hours of gardening and cleaning each month. If you wanted us to increase the hours, this would also increase your service charge. We would need the majority of residents to agree this change.

Satisfaction with your estate

Dromore Court	100%
Nethewode Court	100%
Perryfield Court	100%
Burnhill House	91%
Sunningdale Court	74%
Silver/Byers Court	73%
Foxley Hall	67%

Anti-social behaviour

We received 47 reports of anti-social behaviour (2021-22: 34). Of these, 53% were low level complaints, 41% medium level and 6% high.

Most cases (60%) involved noise and neighbour nuisance.

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



Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods

We carried out improvements to estates via our Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods initiative.

These improvements included:

- CCTV cameras at several sites to deter anti-social behaviour
- A notice board
- Additional planting and improvements to landscaping on several estates
- New composting bins
- Additional signs on an estate
- Golden Jubilee plaques and trees
- A contribution towards gates and fencing
- A contribution towards the re-siting of re-cycling bins
- New steel bin store doors to prevent fly tipping
- Additional lighting



Learning from complaints

We received just eight complaints: all at stage 1 (2021-22: one at stage 1 and one at stage 2).

Complaint types

Four complaints involved day-to-day repairs. They referred to:

- a rodent issue
- contractor performance
- the replacement of a water tank, and
- mould and condensation.



Four housing management complaints referred to:

- automatic deductions for arrears
- a challenge to our tenancy agreement over visitors
- a delay in a mutual exchange, and
- an applicant who had been turned down for housing.

We resolved all but one of these complaints at stage 1. We upheld one case and partially upheld three more. One person was given compensation to make up for delays.

We turned down a request to take a complaint to stage 2 and the resident took it to the Housing Ombudsman. However, in May 2023, the Ombudsman found in our favour.

What went well:

- We met our timescale targets in all these cases.
- We did a better job of resolving

complaints after visiting the resident involved.

- We answered every point raised, to stop complaints going further.

What we learned

We learned to be more proactive when situations first arise. We are also going to check the condition of all of our water tanks.

In line with the Code of Governance 2020, our annual Housing Ombudsman self-assessment around complaints is approved annually by our Board and can be found on our website.

We now have a Board complaints champion. Their role is to be a critical friend, who liaises with staff before Board meetings to discuss:

- the type of complaints we have received
- how we have responded
- any concerns arising
- anything we have learnt about what worked well, and
- what needs to be improved.

5 Repairs and maintenance

2,794

Repairs completed

Repairs performance

We carried out 2,794 repairs.

- 2,467 were day-to-day repairs.
- 327 were for empty homes, servicing and planned maintenance.

As you can see from the table opposite, we beat our target times for completing day-to-day repairs. However, your satisfaction with the repairs services (taken from your text messages and feedback on paper) dipped a little (2021-22: 94.5%). Please do help us identify where our service is not performing well.

We completed more of your repairs in one visit.



Our repairs performance	Keniston 2021-22	Keniston 2022-23	Other small HAS 2022-23	Keniston target 2022-23
Repairs fixed first visit	74%	79%	92.5%	90%
Repairs completed on time	95.4%	98.4%	95%	97%
Average days to complete responsive repairs	6.9 days	6.3 days	9.6 days	6.5 days
Cost per property – responsive repairs and voids	£992	£1,042	£793	–
Cost per property – major and cyclical works	£2,188	£1,775	£1,216	–



£649

Average cost of day-to-day repairs and repairs to empty homes

Repairs spend

The average cost per property of day-to-day repairs was £379 (2021-22: £422).

We spent an average of £270,000 on empty homes (2021-22: £299,000). In some cases, we had to spend a large amount on homes left by tenants in poor condition.

We also spent around:

- £873,400 on major component renewals to 310 homes
- £265,400 on external decorations at 103 homes (which included putting up scaffolding for one of our high rise blocks)
- £17,400 on improvement works at 14 schemes, and
- £30,500 on adapting 29 homes for people with disabilities.



Investing in our homes



95%

Satisfied with major works

We carried out major works and redecoration at a number of our schemes.

We share our satisfaction survey results with our staff and contractors, and publish them on our website and in this report.



Satisfaction with works completed at your estate

Darrick Wood: boiler renewal kitchen refurbishment	100%
Nethewode Court: kitchen refurbishment	100%
Silver Court: cyclical decoration	100%
Whites Meadow: cyclical decoration	100%
Southwood Close: kitchen refurbishment	100%
Perryfield House: cyclical decoration	98%
Whites Meadow, Meadow Cottage and Southwood Close: new flat entrance doors	97%

Health and safety

We continued to prioritise health and safety. By year end:

- 100% of our properties had a valid gas safety certificate, and
- 100% of our properties met the Decent Homes standard.

We reported two accidents and incidents – but they were not serious enough to report to the Health and Safety Executive.

We pay a consultant to carry out regular fire risk assessments on our



blocks. Blocks with more than four floors are checked every year. The rest are checked every two years.

Our two assessments in 2022 recommended that we take a number of actions. Only one low priority action had not yet been completed by the end of the year.



Tenant feedback

New kitchens:

- “ Always reliable. Quick in responding to emails and repairs. Always very helpful.
- “ Very friendly, punctual and very respectful of our home. Expertly carried out a great refurbishment within the timeframe promised.

Boiler replacements:

- “ From the surveyor to the fitter, the electrician and builder – everyone showed understanding, care and were so respectful of me and my home. Simply outstanding and very much appreciated, and work carried out to an extremely high standard

Cyclical decoration:

- “ Keniston seem to be far better than the previous landlord at carrying out cyclical decoration work.
- “ The planned work done, and the communication by Keniston about the work, were excellent. The workman were very good.

Front door replacement:

- “ Communication by Keniston about the work was excellent, the workmen were very good and everything looks a lot smarter. I am very pleased and grateful.
- “ The guys who fitted my door were considerate, friendly and explained how my door should work and about the benefits – thank you!
- “ The fitters are a credit to Keniston, they are very professional, and their workmanship is nothing more than superb!

6 Resident involvement

Consulting you

We carried out 15 different postal and phone surveys during the year and got 183 resident responses.

We held 13 estate walkabouts.

We consulted with our Resident Panel throughout the year on new policies. You can see some of their contributions opposite.



Health and wellbeing

Our sheltered schemes arranged for a local pharmacy to give flu jabs to our residents in their communal lounge – visiting more vulnerable residents at home.

Our Darrick Wood sheltered scheme hosted a health and wellbeing talk run by Bromley Wellbeing.

Foodbank

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

Residents also made donations and our staff delivered them to the foodbank.

Staff awards

The Resident Panel liked the idea of a new staff award. Last summer, you put forward four staff members. They all received a voucher and certificate.



Jonathan Mavunga, caretaker

You said: “We would both like to nominate Jonathan, our caretaker, for a staff award which is well deserved. He always has a pleasant smile and is a true gentleman, and we are truly blessed to have him around. Many thanks.



Jan Lewis, Rent Income Officer

You said: “I am nominating Jan Lewis for all the help she has given me. If it was not for Jan, I would be homeless, and she helps me with my mental health. So, thanks to Jan, I am much happier.”

Lorraine Bull, cleaner

You said: Lorraine is so lovely. She does extra things that she doesn't need to. Heard other people say she is a gem. She's so good and very sweet.”

Andrea Spittle, Housing Officer

You said: “Hi, I would like to nominate Andrea Spittle, my Housing Officer. In the last nearly two years, she has gone above and beyond, helping with an awful situation, and still trying for us now.

Pictured: Jonathan Mavunga and Andrea Spittle receiving their award from Jonathan Card CEO.

Resident Panel feedback

Asbestos policy:

“ I have added a suggested paragraph... keeping of a register of anyone – resident or staff – who may have come in contact with loose and potentially hazardous ACM's.

Resident involvement policy:

“ I feel the policy could be improved by being more specific about communication ... not all residents are computer savvy and may need communication in paper form.

Estate walkabouts:

“ It would be advantageous to have a rotation that ensured visits moved round the year and did not visit at the same time of year for each site.



Special events

We held:

- five Platinum Jubilee parties
- a tree planting ceremony as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative
- four Christmas buffets at our sheltered schemes
- two Easter tea parties at sheltered schemes
- a four-week cookery course at Darrick Wood sheltered scheme, led by Bromley Adult Education (pictured).

7 New homes

We continued to take forward two proposed new developments within the borough of Bromley.

We were disappointed that in May our planning application for 26 new rented homes at Darrick Wood, together with improvements to landscaping, was refused by Bromley Council, despite a recommendation by the planning team to approve it.

We know that some residents are unhappy with the planned new development, but in a time of an acute shortage of affordable homes, we want to provide new homes to those in need. We are considering our next steps.

At Bickley, we are working with architects on development plans for new housing on the site of Robert Whyte House. These will be a mix of general needs and housing for older people, all to be let at social rent to local people. The current building continues to be occupied by property guardians.



8 Our staff

About our staff

During the year, we had 39 staff, filling 29.8 full-time equivalent roles.

- We have 15 male and 24 female staff.
- We have five staff from other ethnicities.

Starters and leavers

Three members of staff left us this year, including two long-standing employees who retired.

Six people joined the staff team.

Training

We held 89 (2021-22: 65) staff training sessions – mostly online. The cost was £4,017 (2021-22: £2,629).

Staff sickness

Our average staff short-term sick leave was 5.29 days (2021-22: 7.7).

Our average long-term sick leave was 20.2 days (2021-22: 19.1). We have two staff members who both have longstanding chronic health conditions. There is no ongoing salary cost to Keniston.



9 Our Board

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

Emma Keegan (Chair)
Housing professional



Ian Pinches (Chair of Audit & Risk Committee)
Semi-retired portfolio Non-Executive Director



Stephen Hoad
Chartered Surveyor



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



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



Lucy Worrell
Head of Corporate Strategy & Change



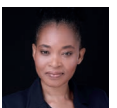
Peter Voisey (Co-Vice Chair)
Solicitor



Simone Bailey
Director, train service provider



Liz Emmanuel
Chartered Management Consultant



10 Help with finances

Rent arrears

Our rent arrears at the end of the financial year stood at 2.28%, (2021-22: 2.11%) against a target of 3%. This was an amazing achievement in the current climate.

Debt advice

Our rent income team referred residents 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
- Thames Water Sure Plus Customer Assistance Fund
- British Gas Energy Trust
- Stepchange, and
- National Debtline.

These services offer free specialist debt advice.



Benefit claims

We assisted many residents throughout the year to apply for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payments and support funds held by local councils.

We successfully secured:

- nine Discretionary Housing Payments for residents in need of additional help towards their rent, and
- council grants for two residents to help them buy household appliances.

11 Value for money

We seek 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 our activities, looking at trends over time and comparing ourselves with our two peer groups. These are:

- **National Smalls London** –approximately 50 comparable, small, London-based housing associations, and
- **Small Providers Benchmarking Group** – around 140 small associations nationally.

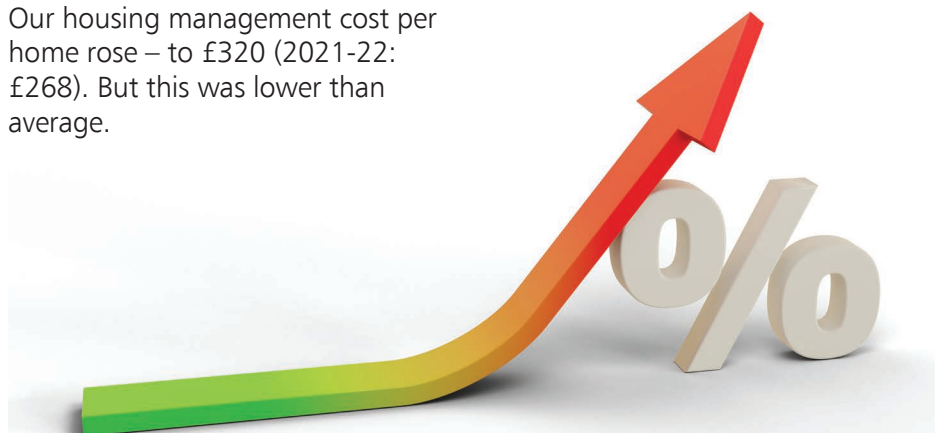
For 2022-23, our results compared favourably in a number of areas.

In the previous year, we had had catch-up repairs and maintenance

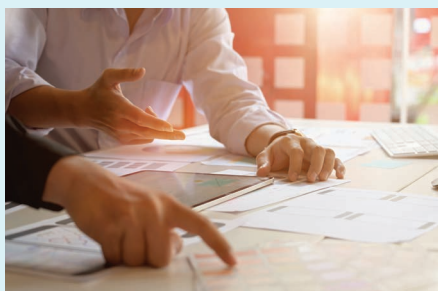
work to do following the pandemic. Without this factor, in 2022-23, our average running costs per unit reduced slightly, to £5,505 (2021-22: £5,711). This compared favourably with our benchmarking groups.

Our housing management cost per home rose – to £320 (2021-22: £268). But this was lower than average.

Our average spend on repairing and managing empty homes rose to £1,042 (2021-22: £992). This was due to high inflation, but also because we provide a high standard of remedial work before we relet empty homes.



12 Our financial performance



Surplus

We generated a surplus of £320,000 on a turnover of £6.06m.

Although this is £1.2m lower than last year, it includes a property impairment cost (an accounting adjustment) of £384,000. We also made a profit of £696,000 on the sale of one of our London street properties. Allowing for these two items, the surplus was only £130,000 lower than last year.

We consider this a pleasing result, especially given the significant rise in costs due to high inflation and at a time when our rents have been limited to 7% – a reduction in real terms. We also decided to apply this cap to our sheltered housing, to assist our older tenants, although there was no regulatory requirement to do so.

Income management once again improved over the year, essentially matching our target of a 100% collection rate. We also beat our arrears target of 3%. At the year end only 2.3% was outstanding.

Our repairs performance is set out on pages 6-7.



Income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Turnover	6,060,316	5,867,732
Operating expenditure	(5,043,625)	(4,779,514)
	1,016,691	1,088,218
Profit on disposal of a social housing property	–	695,717
Impairment of property costs	(383,565)	–
Operating surplus	633,126	1,783,935
Interest receivable and finance income	15,531	3,770
Interest payable and other finance costs	(329,112)	(257,328)
Surplus for the year	319,545	1,530,377

Balance sheet at 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets		
Housing properties	45,691,249	46,448,419
Other fixed assets	462,951	347,379
	46,154,200	46,795,798
Current assets		
Debtors	288,186	276,253
Cash and cash equivalents	2,137,808	3,030,665
	2,425,994	3,306,918
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(5,950,686)	(1,870,515)
Net current assets	(3,524,692)	1,436,403
Total assets less current liabilities	42,629,508	48,232,201
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(21,738,771)	27,532,011
Provision for liabilities	(726,000)	(813,000)
Total assets	20,164,737	19,887,182
Capital and reserves		
Non-equity share capital	10	8
Revenue reserves	20,164,727	19,887,182
	20,164,737	19,887,182

Keniston Housing Association

13 Artington Close
Farnborough
Orpington
Kent BR6 7UL

Email:
enquiries@kenistonha.co.uk
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

