

Talkback

Newsletter of Keniston Housing Association

Spring 2026

Resident survey

What you told us

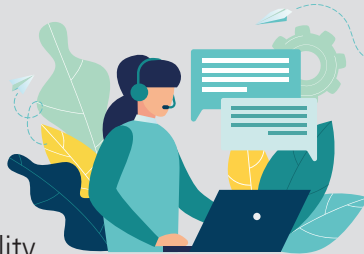
89%

Overall satisfaction with Keniston HA

Thank you to everyone who took part in our two-yearly resident satisfaction survey, which was carried out in late 2025. We are pleased to share that overall satisfaction with our services remains high at 89% – well within the top quarter of housing associations.

Your overall experience

You continue to tell us that you value prompt repairs, friendly staff and clear communication. Many of you praised the professionalism of our teams and the quality of recent improvement works, such as kitchen upgrades. You told us:



- "Any problems you've got, you just drop them a call... and within a few days the fault's been repaired."
- "They are always friendly and helpful. The estate is kept in pristine condition."
- "I've just had a kitchen put in. The workers exceeded expectations."

Property services



Satisfied their home is well maintained



Satisfied with how safe their home is



Satisfied with a repair done in the past 12 months



Satisfied with how long their last repair took

You pointed to quick response times, polite contractors and effective communication during repair visits.

Damp and mould

Thirty-nine residents said they had problems with damp and mould. Fourteen had not yet reported it to us.

Our Property Services team have contacted everyone to assess and deal with the issues reported. Fourteen cases are already resolved, with others underway.



Prize draw

Three lucky winners, including delighted Richard from Darrick Wood, won shopping vouchers in our prize draw, as a thank-you for taking part.

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Housing services



Satisfied with communal areas

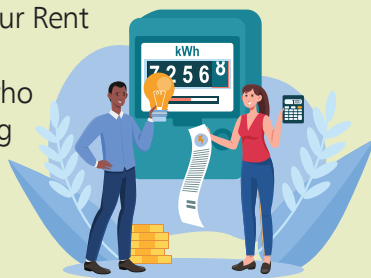


Satisfied with how we manage anti-social behaviour

You appreciate the work our gardening and cleaning teams do to keep estates looking their best. Satisfaction with our handling of anti-social behaviour has risen – but it is still an area with room for improvement. Some persistent cases have resulted in evictions, and residents noted prompt responses and good communication when reporting concerns.

Cost-of-living worries

One in 10 respondents told us they are struggling with day-to-day bills. Our Rent Income Officers have reached out to those who provided details, offering support, referrals and arranging payment plans where needed.



Engagement & communication



Satisfied Kenston is easy to deal with



Satisfied they are kept informed



Satisfied they are treated fairly and with respect



Satisfied Kenston listens and acts

Residents praised the politeness and helpfulness of staff, as well as communication through calls, texts, emails and newsletters.

What you think we do well

Your feedback shows strong appreciation for our:

- good communication and approachable staff
- prompt and reliable repairs
- care for tenants' wellbeing, and
- well-maintained homes and communal areas.

Where we can improve

You highlighted areas for us to focus on, such as:

- tackling anti-social behaviour
- improving property maintenance and repairs
- better communal cleanliness, and
- addressing issues such as fly tipping, parking and facilities for children.



We are reviewing all the comments and will act wherever possible. Where requests aren't feasible, we will explain why.

Looking ahead

In all, **69%** of residents expect to be living in their current home in five years. For those considering a move, we have shared information on House Exchange and other moving options.

We will share updates in the summer issue of Talkback, detailing further actions we have taken in response to your feedback.

Kindness competition

In the winter edition of Talkback, we invited nominations for our kindness award.

We have since presented a £50 voucher to one of our Bexley residents, in recognition of their thoughtful contributions to their community.

The nomination we received read:

"They are very neighbourhood minded and always doing thoughtful things for others throughout the year. They also keep an eye on the communal plants, watering them so they flourish and look their best. They are an all-round good person and truly deserving of this award."



About your complaints

Recent complaints

Between November 2025 and March 2026, we received a total of five Stage 1 complaints.

Two were about our repairs service – we upheld one of them and not the other.

One – not upheld – was about a member of staff.

Two complaints were later withdrawn, after residents discussed things with the teams involved.

We did not receive any two Stage 2 complaints during this period.

All complaints were responded to within the timescales set by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

How to complain

You can complain by email, phone or letter, meet us face to face, use our social media, or the contact form on our website. Alternatively, you can call the office to ask for a form – on paper or by email.

If, at any stage, you aren't happy with our responses, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

You can do this:

- online at: www.housingombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint
- by email at: info@housingombudsman.org.uk
- by phoning: 0300 111 3000, or
- by writing to: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET.



Our performance

Our complaints performance and service improvement report for 2024-25, together with the Board's response, are available at: www.kenistonha.co.uk/about-us/publications/complaints

You are welcome to contact us for more details

What the resident survey told us about complaints

The survey carried out for us by Acuity showed that:

- 27% of respondents said they had made a complaint in the last 12 months, and
- 70% were satisfied with how we handled it – an increase since the previous survey. Among the positive comments we received, there were examples of times where we had resolved a complaint quickly, with praise for individual staff members.

However, when we looked in more detail, we saw that the number of people who said they had complained did not match the formal complaints we had logged. We think residents are sometimes confused between formal complaints and service requests.



Complaints vs service requests

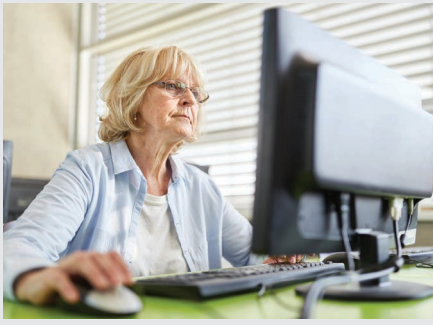
Here are some key differences between service requests and complaints.

- A service request is asking for a repair or action. ("Please fix my heating.")
- A formal complaint is saying the service was poor. ("You

didn't fix my heating within the promised time.")

- We aim to meet your service request immediately. But if you make a formal complaint, we have to follow our complaints policy. We log your complaint and handle it in line with our two-stage process, which works to strict timescales.
- Our Regulator requires us to track formal complaints, whereas service requests are often handled as routine maintenance.

So, if you aren't satisfied with our handling of your service request, you can turn it into a formal complaint. And if you aren't happy with our complaints process, or the outcome, you can opt to involve the Housing Ombudsman Service (see details in the article above.)



Email comms

To add to our efforts to reduce paper waste and printing costs, we are bringing our sheltered housing communications into line with the way we contact our general needs residents.

From now on, we will send you routine information by email, including surveys, walkabout and meeting invitations and notes, Talkback, and the Annual Report.

To make sure you never miss our messages, please make sure you don't let your mailbox get too full and check your junk/spam folder at least once a week, or mark us as a 'safe' sender.

We will still send paper copies if we don't have an email address for you, or if you have told us you prefer this.

Please remember to keep the contact information we hold for you up to date at all times.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Robert Whyte House

Robert Whyte House in Bickley (pictured right) is a building we inherited, which does not meet our fire safety standards. Our long-term plan is to demolish and rebuild it.

In the meantime, the property is being looked after for us by guardians from Dot Dot Dot.



Darrick Wood new homes

We are working on the next stage of our plan to build new homes at the top of Isabella Drive on the Darrick Wood estate, to provide 26 much-needed new homes for local residents (see below).

We are now waiting for Bromley Council to confirm some minor amendments to the scheme design

that got planning permission. This is a formal process and includes them consulting with local residents. We expect this to be finished during the next month.

We are preparing to tender a contract for the building works. Our aim is to start building later this year. When we know more about timings, we will give you further updates.



Are you feeding foxes? Please stop!

Many people enjoy seeing foxes in their gardens, especially playful cubs in spring.



It's understandable to want to encourage these visits by putting food out – but feeding and attracting foxes is a bad idea.

- Leftover food attracts pests such as rats and mice.
- When foxes get bolder, they can damage gardens and disturb pets.
- Even tame foxes will bite or scratch if they feel threatened.
- Well-fed foxes stop defending wider

areas – allowing other foxes to move in.

- Relying on human food leaves foxes vulnerable if you stop – for example if you move or go on holiday.
- Unsuitable food can make them unhealthy.
- When foxes bury their food in other gardens, this can trigger neighbour disputes.

Foxes are capable of foraging and thriving without our help. By not feeding them, you help keep them healthy, independent and truly wild.

New beginnings

Our Chair reports on his first months at Keniston

When I was appointed Chair of Keniston Housing Association in November 2025, I knew there would be a learning curve. What I didn't fully anticipate was just how rewarding that learning would be.

My first months have been a genuine education – not just in governance and housing management, but in what makes a housing association truly matter: the people who live in its homes.

One of my earliest visits as Chair took me to Tarling Close on a cold January morning. Walking round the scheme with Dee, I was struck by a simple but powerful thing – the sense that residents own their space. The communal areas were tidy and well looked after. There was pride there. That's not something you can legislate for; it grows over

time, through relationships and through an organisation that listens. It reminded me why Keniston's work matters.

I followed that with a walkabout at Robert Whyte House in Bickley, where I met Dot Dot Dot guardians Peter, Kit, Jamie and Ruth, Sandy, Dave and others (see page 4). Chatting with people in their own backyard, hearing their views, understanding what daily life is actually like for them is something no Board paper can fully replicate. It grounds you. And I came away energised.

Reading those Board papers, of course, has also been a significant part of my early weeks! I won't pretend that wading through 100s of pages of committee reports, financial summaries and strategic plans is always the most scintillating



Peter Brown is pictured with his wife.

weekend evening activity. But it is essential, and gradually the picture of the organisation has come into sharper focus. Keniston is an organisation with genuine ambition – developments progressing, committees working, staff committed to the mission.

My first Board meeting was, I'll admit, not without its technical hiccups – software glitches and a frozen screen meant I was briefly 'just a voice'. But I think that rather set the tone for what this role is really about: finding your way through the unexpected, adapting and keeping focused on what counts. The substance of the meeting went well.

I have also been building relationships by meeting every fellow Board member over a coffee and a chat and through regular discussions with our Chief Executive, Jonathan. We are different people with different styles, and that's a strength. Good governance benefits from a range of perspectives, and I am learning from those around me.

What have I learnt in these early months? That housing associations like Keniston carry real responsibility – to their residents, to their communities, and to the future. The challenges are not small, but neither is the commitment of the people involved.

I am proud to be Chair, and I look forward to the months ahead. If you see me at your scheme, please do say hello. I'd love to hear from you to learn from your experience.

Resident involvement policy

We recently updated our resident involvement policy in line with new regulatory requirements and our refreshed company values.

As part of the process, we asked our Resident Panel to review the document. They told us:

- "I think it's a great document and it seems to cover everything – well done."
- "So far as I can see, Keniston does everything it can to make it easy, despite those institutional and cultural barriers, to involve anyone who wants to be involved and in the way that best suits them."

The revised policy is available in the About us/Publications section of our website.

Why not join us?

In our resident survey, **23%** said they would be interested in working with Keniston.

Getting involved is easy. You can take part in a variety of ways, both formal and informal. It doesn't have to mean joining a formal panel.

To find out more, please contact Lynn Russ by email at: lynnruss@kenistonha.co.uk, by phone on: 01689 889700, or by text or WhatsApp on: 07713 388010.

Around your estates

Gardening clubs

Are you interested in starting or joining a gardening club in your community?

Gardening is a great way to:

- boost wellbeing and lift your mood
- connect with neighbours and build community
- relieve stress and support mental health
- stay active and enjoy the outdoors, and
- take pride in improving shared spaces.

We may be able to provide tools, plants and materials through



our Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods fund, and we can also support you to raise funds if needed.

To find out more, please contact Lynn Russ by email at: lynnruss@kenistonha.co.uk, by phone on: 01689 889700, or by text or WhatsApp on: 07713 388010.

Improving your neighbourhood

Merrow Street residents asked us to improve security and put up new signage. This is being paid for partly by the Better Homes, Better Neighbourhoods fund and partly by the service charge. We also met a request from a resident and bought a new sign and gardening shears for the community garden.



Nethewode Court's gardener completed further works to a bank area.

Tarling Close's gardener asked for a skip so that they could finish tree reduction and reduce the compost dump.

Using e-bikes and e-scooters

e-bikes and e-scooters are becoming more popular – but there are potential risks. Here are some important pointers for Keniston residents.

In our buildings

Storing or charging these vehicles indoors can be a fire risk. We will allow you to keep them in a bike storage area, but not on communal landings, walkways, corridors or means of escape. If you ignore this advice, we may remove your item to a safe place without warning.

On our estates: e-scooters

It is illegal to ride your privately owned e-scooter on any public roads, pavements or cycle lanes, unless they are part of an approved rental trial scheme. You can be fined, receive penalty points or have your e-scooter seized.

To keep things safe for everyone, we apply the same rules to our own shared outdoor spaces.

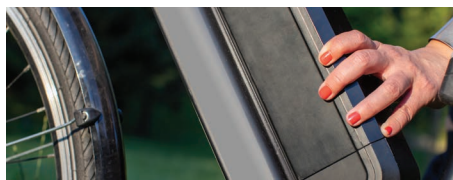
This means that you cannot ride

your privately owned e-scooter on our estates. If anyone in your household ignores this advice, we may treat it as a breach of the nuisance and safety clauses of your tenancy or lease agreement.

On our estates: e-bikes

On our estates, just as on public roads, your e-bike must be road-use legal and used responsibly. It should have pedals, a motor capped at 250 watts, and assistance that cuts out at 15.5 mph. If your e-bike exceeds these requirements, it must be licensed, taxed and insured.

Please leave any vehicles you hire on public paths and not on our estate.



e-vehicles and fire risk

These vehicles use lithium-ion batteries. If faulty, they can catch fire spontaneously. In a fire they burn at very high temperatures and generate toxic gases, such as carbon monoxide and hydrogen cyanide – which can look like innocent steam.

The number of e-vehicle fires reported has shot up from just two in 2017, to 211 by 2024. Between 2022-24, there were 21 fatalities and 226 casualties.

To stay safe, make sure you only buy vehicles, batteries and charging equipment from reputable sources, and use them only as recommended.

Disrepair claims firms: beware of scams



Across the country, residents are being targeted by rogue legal firms and unlicensed claims companies promising 'quick wins' around housing disrepair.

We want to make sure every Keniston resident knows how to spot these scams.

What are the risks?

A growing number of law firms are failing to follow their legal guidelines and are leaving people with unexpected bills. These firms often claim to offer 'no win, no fee' services, but the small print can hide substantial charges. If a claim collapses, is abandoned or the firm goes bust, a resident can be left liable for court costs that run to thousands of pounds.

What to watch out for

Residents across the country have reported several worrying trends:

- **Cold calling** – firms phoning residents unexpectedly about repairs issues. **This is illegal.**
- **Door to door canvassing** – unlicensed teams knocking on doors, offering quick payouts or encouraging residents to sue their landlord.
- **Bogus surveyors** – people falsely claiming to work for the council or a housing association to gain access to your home.

They often gather information, so that they can pass it on to claims firms.

- **Misleading phone numbers** – calls or texts from organisations with names like 'Tenant Support', designed to look official.

These tactics are not only deceptive – they are against the law.

The impact on your home

Claims firms often advise residents not to allow their landlords or repairs operatives into the property while a claim is ongoing.

This leads to:

- repairs being delayed or stalled
- homes ending up in worse condition
- more stress for households, and
- higher costs, if the claim is later dropped.

Meanwhile, these firms show little interest in resolving the actual issue. Their priority is profit, not your wellbeing.

Four things to remember:

- **It's illegal** for solicitors to make cold calls for legal claims – and they are not allowed to misrepresent their service.
- **Beware of** 'no win, no fee' promises – hidden fees can still apply.
- **Never** let anyone into your home without proper ID – genuine surveyors and housing staff will always carry this.
- **Call us** if you aren't sure whether a call or visit is legitimate.

If you're worried or have been approached

Please contact us directly. We are here to support you, answer questions, and ensure your home stays safe and well maintained – without unnecessary legal risk.



Appointments in your home

Please make sure that an adult aged 18 or over is at home for all appointments.

Our contractors are not allowed to enter a property if someone under the age of 18 is alone in the home.

Starters and leavers

We are pleased to welcome **Nathan Moore** (featured opposite) who has joined us as the new Customer Services Team Leader. Also **Holly Eaton**, our new Rent Income Officer.

Gerry Daley, who had been supporting us on a temporary basis, has now been appointed as our Finance Manager.

In addition, **Michael Chung** has joined the Finance Department to support the delivery of key projects alongside Gerry.

Natalie Marchant remains part of the Housing Services team but has now returned to her former role as one of our Housing Officers.

Meet Nathan Moore

Customer Services Team Leader

We recently caught up with Nathan Moore to see how he's settling into his new role since joining Keniston in January.

He told us: "I have really enjoyed the first few months at Keniston. I like the fact that residents are familiar with the staff, and I've



already built great professional relationships across all departments."

With a strong housing background and experience as a Housing Officer, Nathan brings valuable insight into the needs of our residents.

"I wanted to join an organisation that is customer focused and truly values its residents. I'm convinced I've found that here at Keniston. Both residents and staff have been incredibly welcoming, which has really helped me settle in."

Outside of work, Nathan enjoys watching football and tennis, and unwinding with a good film. He's also begun reading more. But his proudest achievement so far has been becoming a dad.

"Being a family man has shaped who I am today, and it influences the way I approach life."

Reporting tenancy fraud

Housing providers are under ever-increasing pressure to provide social housing, so we must make sure that our homes go to, and are occupied by, people who are entitled to them.

The National Fraud Authority estimates the cost of tenancy fraud to be £900 million each year.

Tenancy fraud is a criminal offence and offenders can be prosecuted under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013. Convictions can result in a fine, imprisonment or both. The courts also have the power to make the tenant pay back any profit made from the fraud.



If you suspect tenancy fraud, you can report it to us confidentially.

- Phone: 01689 889700
- Email: fraud@kenistonha.co.uk
- Go to www.kenistonha.co.uk/you-and-your-home/advice-and-information/tenancy-fraud

Parking on our estates

Please be considerate when parking. While a few of our estates have marked bays managed by the Housing Officer, most parking areas are not allocated.

If you are using a disabled bay, you must display a valid Blue Badge. Please also remember that not all disabilities are visible.



Keniston Housing Association

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