



Chair Recruitment

September 2019



Keniston





September 2019

Many thanks for your interest in Keniston. As the outgoing Chair, it has been a privilege to have been closely involved with the organisation for the last nine years, watching it grow and develop while in many ways demonstrating the best that the social housing sector can offer. Following good practice in ensuring renewal and refreshment my own direct involvement now needs to draw to a close – hence the need to recruit a new Chair. I am confident that Keniston has a bright future, and the new Chair will have an important role to play in this.

Our acquisition earlier this year of the Bickley estate brings both opportunities and challenges. The 120 residents are already benefiting from a more locally based responsive landlord, while the staff are working hard to absorb the new stock into our management, as we work to ensure that all the homes there are truly fit for the future.

At Keniston, we have many strengths. We deliver quality services that are recognised by our residents and our partners. With a headline satisfaction rating of 95% and a Net Promotor Score of 65 we are the envy of many. We have an experienced and capable staff team. We are in a healthy financial position and have a strong asset base. We also have a Board that has the vision and courage to grow and innovate so that we continue to make a real difference to our residents and their local communities.

Our core purpose has always been clear – to meet housing needs by providing well-managed affordable homes and good quality services to our residents. We have grown and progressed, but we have not strayed far from that resolution, and in the current environment we strongly believe that our purpose is still as relevant. Our continued independence as an organisation is important, but not because we are afraid of change. Locally focused housing providers like Keniston have a crucial contribution to make to the social housing landscape.

Our existing Board members are committed individuals with a wealth of skills and experience. They are motivated to make that important difference, so our new Chair will be joining a team who are attuned to our core values of respect, openness, accountability honesty and excellence. We will be working in a fast changing and demanding environment. The Board recognises that the commitment required from the Chair is of a different order to that of other members, so for the first time, has decided to make the post remunerated. Other members continue – at least for the time being – to be unremunerated.

The information that follows in this pack will provide you with a feel for what Keniston is about. I hope that the contents will help you decide whether this is the right opportunity for you. If it is, Keniston looks forward to receiving your application. If you have any questions, please contact Tony Clark at our consultants, The Housing Executive, in the first instance and we can also arrange an informal chat with me, or with Jonathan Card the Chief Executive, if that would be helpful.

I wish you well in the process.

Julian Miles
Chair

KENISTON

Better Homes, Better Services and Better Neighbourhoods

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INTRODUCTION

Keniston Housing Association is a registered provider of housing, with homes in Bromley, Islington, Lambeth, Southwark, Bexley, Croydon and Crawley, as well as Kent. Our office and largest estate of 369 homes is situated in Farnborough, Kent and we are also easily reached from London, Surrey and Sussex. We have a mix of general needs, sheltered housing for older people and leasehold properties.

Keniston's mission is to provide better homes, better services and better neighbourhoods and our consistent 95% satisfaction levels have been reached through the hard work of our staff in delivering the vision of a strong and focused Board. Our current Chair, Julian Miles is stepping down in 2019, having given dedicated service on the Board for the maximum 9 years. He leaves the organisation in excellent shape and this provides a fantastic opportunity to join a successful, independent and financially sound association in a leadership role.

Keniston is committed to an independent future, has opportunities for development in the pipeline, and will continue to invest in our current stock of over 800 properties.



OUR VALUES

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| Respect | we will be courteous and considerate, treat everyone as individuals and value diversity. |
| Openness: | we will listen, be accessible and communicate clearly. |
| Accountability | we will take responsibility for our actions and decisions. |
| Honesty | we will say what we mean, accept our mistakes and learn from them. |
| Excellence | we take pride in what we do and go beyond what is expected. |

OPERATIONS

Keniston has an annual turnover of £5M, more than 800 properties and we employ 39 staff. The staff team are led by Jonathan Card, Chief Executive, Vivienne Astall, Operations Director, Tony Coward, Property Services Director, and Andrew Shiatis, Finance Director.

On 31 March 2019, we owned and managed:

- 586 homes for general needs
- 139 sheltered housing flats for older people
- 34 leasehold properties.

In the last year, we added three homes to our general needs stock, by buying back leasehold homes, when they came up for sale. We sold the freehold of a block with two freeholders in London.

We recently acquired 120 social housing properties from Stonewater and are bringing these to the same high standards we strive for in the rest of our services.

Last year, we carried out 2,999 repairs to homes and communal areas. Around 97% were completed on first visit (up 3% on the previous year). Resident satisfaction with our repairs service stood at 94%.

We collected 98.9% of the rent due for the year. Our rent arrears rose slightly to 3.9%. Like many associations, we are having to devote more of our resources to holding rent arrears steady, as more of our residents move across to Universal Credit.

Residents can view their rent accounts and view their repairs history online.



Residents:

An independent Resident Survey Report by Acuity shows that our results are above average when compared with other social landlords in two benchmarking groups that include small housing associations: the BM320 and the SPBM (Smaller Providers Benchmarking) group. Our results are also much better than for larger landlords.

Acuity commented: *“Overall, the findings of the survey highlight a high degree of tenant loyalty and satisfaction. 95% overall satisfaction with housing and services. Keniston should be congratulated on maintaining the very high ratings found three years ago – which is an achievement given the challenges faced by housing associations and their residents today.”*

We actively encourage residents to get involved in our work and to take an active part in community life at our schemes and estates. Consulting residents The Resident Panel has 27 members, from various schemes. We set up a new Tenant Scrutiny Panel, which will play a formal role in checking our work and making recommendations.

Bromley Adult Education Service again ran courses for residents at our Darrick Wood community Centre. In addition, around a dozen Darrick Wood sheltered residents enjoyed eight weeks of free talks delivered by the Bromley Well Service. The talks covered a range of topics from eating well to planning for the future.



Going Green:

We are working in partnership with Groundwork who provides the Green Doctor. Green Doctors are independent, impartial experts and are working in our communities across our homes, offering practical support to people, often those most at risk of fuel poverty that helps them to make their homes more environmentally friendly and cheaper to run.

The Green Doctor has worked effectively with our residents in different areas to help them compare current tariffs to check they are on the cheapest energy tariff, and helping with utility debts and in some cases have applied for grants to get the debt written off.

In addition, we actively look at ways in which we can reduce waste and CO2 as much as possible and we do the following:

- boiler upgrades are of appliances with at least energy rating A when we upgrade heating installations
- use water saving fittings in bathroom refurbishments
- insulate lofts in houses to at least 150mm
- encourage and facilitate recycling initiatives where we can

We have also replaced the communal lighting at two schemes with smart LED systems, enabling significant savings on service charges, and are looking to roll the approach out across other sites.

Value for Money:

We annually compare our Value for Money performance with others across a range of cost and performance measures, including those identified by the Regulator for Social Housing, setting forward targets as appropriate.



GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

Keniston is accountable to the Regulator for Social Housing, in legal terms we are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority as a Co-operative and Community Benefit Society. We are also a member of the National Housing Federation which represents the social housing sector.

The voluntary Board of Management is responsible for the work of the Association. Members bring a wide range of skills and experience. The Board develops overall policy and monitors the Association's performance to see that its objectives are achieved. There are nine Board members, with a range of backgrounds and length of service. The Board

meets five times a year and comprises not less than 7 and not more than 15 members, including one tenant. There are also one or more Awaydays every year, which give the opportunity to take a broader strategic overview of the Association's activities and future objectives. Keniston carry out regular Board Appraisal and Skills Audit exercises.

Keniston has an annual turnover of £5M, our finances are strong and last year the association had a surplus of £1.37M. We have £42.8M assets and a reserve of £16M. We are well regarded externally and have a revolving £10M loan facility from Clydesdale Bank.

The Board use the financial strength of the Association to continue to improve existing properties as well as looking at opportunities for development.

The Board's goals within its strategic plan are:

- Keep homes safe and well maintained, now and into the future
- Deliver good quality, cost-effective services and put residents at the heart of what we do
- Deliver a programme of new affordable homes over the next five years
- Achieve excellent standards of governance, and value, support and develop staff.

Further information, including annual reports, financial reports and value for money is available at: <https://www.kenistonha.co.uk/about-us/our-policies/>



KENISTON BOARD

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

Shehla works for the Home Office on national resilience in the Fire sector. Prior to this Shehla worked for the Department for Communities and Local Government for 10 years. During her time there Shehla took the Housing and Regeneration Bill through Parliament to Royal Assent in 2008; set up the Homes and Communities Agency; and delivered the Supporting People Programme. Previously, Shehla worked for two other Government Departments; the Housing Corporation; and charities. Shehla became Co-Vice Chair at Keniston in 2015.

Peter Voisey – Solicitor (Co-Vice Chair)

Peter is a qualified solicitor of over 28 years' standing and has been practising as a partner in a large City law firm for many years, specialising in capital markets and finance. His practice includes advising on bond issues and related finance transactions for housing associations. Peter became Co-Vice Chair at Keniston in 2015.

Barry Luhmann – Head of UK Mortgage Market Intelligence, international asset management company (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee and Treasurer)

Barry is Head of UK Mortgage Intelligence at Black Rock Asset Management. He has a deep knowledge of the UK residential mortgage market having worked in the retail financial services industry for 22 years, including 18 years at Lloyds Bank. Barry is a qualified accountant and holds a certificate in mortgage advice and practice. Barry is currently the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Treasurer at Keniston.

Simone Bailey – Director of Train Service Provider

Simone is a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and has worked at Abellio Greater Anglia Ltd (a train operating company) as Asset Management Director since 2012. As Asset Management Director she has full responsibility for improving customer satisfaction and driving value from 132 stations across East Anglia. Prior to that she worked at Network Rail Property as Retail Director and then Commercial Director.

Seema Jassi – Director of Strategic Planning, Action for Children

Seema spent a number of years working in the NHS as a clinical auditor and has a Master's degree in mental health studies. She transitioned to a career in social housing in 2008 where she led on a range of risk management and compliance functions across three providers. Seema observed the crucial support offered by housing associations to families and individuals in significant housing need during this period, and upholds and endorses the values of such organisations, and this prompted her to join the Keniston Board in 2014. In 2015, Seema was appointed as Head of Risk and Assurance at Action for Children, a national children's charity, but more recently has taken up a position as Director of Strategic Planning to lead on the delivery of the charity's corporate strategy and business plan.

Sally Rice – Independent Housing Consultant

Sally currently works as an independent housing consultant. She previously worked for Moat, a leading South East Housing Association, in various senior positions and for the last 9 years as Director of Development. During this time she was responsible for the delivery of substantial new affordable housing programmes and estate regeneration projects. She has also worked for a major national developer in land acquisition and in Local Government. She is a qualified planner and member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Sheila Sackey – Service Delivery Manager, Westminster Council

Sheila is an experienced local government practitioner with over 10 years industry experience in performance management improvement and commercialisation of public sector activities. As part of her current role at Westminster Council she is responsible for delivering the staff engagement plan for the Growth, Planning and Housing Department. In her previous role with Westminster Council, she was responsible for the monitoring its former housing management provider, CityWest Homes. Sheila's track record includes improving operational effectiveness and performance across a number of services in multi-stakeholder environments by 19% and she successfully assisted CityWest Homes to reduce their complaints numbers by more than 50%. In her previous role, she worked on Licensing policy and Private Sector Housing policy with the Local Government Association. She has an MSc in Public Policy and Management and a LLB Law degree.

Lucy Worrall – Research and Public Policy Manager, Peabody

Lucy has worked at Peabody, one of the oldest and largest Housing Associations in London, since November 2017. She is responsible for leading on Peabody's strategic research programme and public policy work. Previously Lucy worked as a Consultant at Altair where she supported on a number of service, strategy and governance reviews. Lucy has also achieved a distinction in her Postgraduate Certificate in Housing Practice at Westminster University.



ROLE PROFILE

Chair of the Board

The Chair, working alongside the Chief Executive, will manage the Board of Keniston HA and lead the organisation through changes in both the sector and the wider environment.

The Chair's role is to manage the Board to deliver its strategic role and maintain excellence in its governance, accountability, financial stewardship and working relationship with the executive. To achieve this, the Chair ensures that the Board behaves as a coherent whole, focusing on strategic issues, is effective in both debate and decision-making processes, holds the executive to account and protects the integrity and probity of the organisation. The Chair (along with the Chief Executive) is a driving force in presenting the organisation's mission, aims, values and policies to stakeholders and to the media. Working closely with the Chief Executive, the Chair ensures that Keniston is positioned and seen as a key player in delivering housing policy and engaging in the wider neighbourhood agenda and providing appropriate and relevant agendas for Board meetings.

The Chair is responsible for the assessment of the performance of the Board collectively and individually, including through appraisal of members. In addition, the Chair leads the process of any appointment of a Chief Executive, together with their appraisal and remuneration review. Working with colleagues, the Chair leads on the recruitment of new Board members.

Skill and Competency profile

| Competence | Description |
|--|---|
| Strategic Thinking | The ability to scan the environment and communicate messages and priorities that are consistent with the mission and strategy of the organisation |
| Effective Chairing and managing | To ensure the effective and efficient conduct of the Board business including Board appraisal, recruitment of Board members to ensure the right skills mix and overseeing Board member induction. The ability to discuss and agree strategy for the organisation, disseminate the information to both internal and external audiences and build a strong and credible external profile for Keniston. |
| Communication and interpersonal skills | Communicate the success of the organisation to Keniston staff and stakeholders. The personal credibility and interpersonal skills to represent Keniston and engage effectively with stakeholders. Demonstrates practical application of equalities and diversity issues. |
| Working with others | The ability to work with the Chief Executive and the Board to drive the business forward in a positive way. To enable all Board members to make a full contribution to Keniston's objectives and create a |

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| | positive atmosphere at Board meetings and a collegiate approach to corporate governance. |
| Corporate Citizenship | Sets a personal example to others by demonstrating the highest standards of ethics, integrity and probity. Commitment to equal opportunity and diversity. |



Person Specification

The Chair will have a proven track record in leadership to fulfil this key role, someone who will work with the Chief Executive to ensure the Association remains credible within the sector.

The Chair will have exceptional leadership and communication skills, ideally including experience of chairing. They will ensure an effective working relationship between the executive and Board members, recognising the boundaries and being adept at giving direction and receiving guidance.

An enthusiasm for the mission of the sector as well as that of Keniston is key, and they will ensure that the diverse views of the Board members and the executive are represented and considered in the Board's decision-making process.

As Chair of the Board they will use excellent listening, communication, negotiating and influencing skills to set the style and tone of the Board meetings to promote effective debate and decision making.

Key qualities

- An inclusive approach
- Values driven
- A good cultural fit with the organisation
- Commitment to a strong teamwork ethos
- Ability to be an effective link between the Executive and Board members
- Availability – e.g. to liaise with the Chief Executive, sometimes at short notice (albeit noted that this required flexibility on both sides)
- An understanding of the realities of working in a regulated sector
- Ability to perform an ambassadorial role raising the organisation's profile externally
- Strategic experience, and previous Board experience, preferably within an organisation experiencing growth and change

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

(Subject to contract)

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|----------------------|---|
| Post: | Chair of the Board |
| Term: | 3 years (plus 3-year extension possible by agreement) |
| Remuneration: | £5,000 per annum |
| Location: | Farnborough, Kent |
| Commitment: | an indicative expectation of 12 – 15 days per annum |

The Board will normally meet in a formal capacity five times per year and, in any event, shall meet no less than three times a year. The 30th October Board meeting will be chaired by the outgoing Chair, with the 'Chair elect' invited to attend and observe.

In addition, the Board will also meet annually as part of a Board 'away day', this is planned for 22nd/23rd November, the newly appointed Chair will have an important presence at this Friday evening/Saturday daytime event, at a hotel in Bromley.

Keniston also has a presence at the NHF Smaller Associations' Conference at Olympia on 6th/7th November and this would be an ideal time to introduce our new Chair.

The Chair is a member of the Audit & Risk Committee (meeting twice annually) and the Development Committee (up to 4 meetings per annum). The Chair may also be a member of working groups for specific issues.

A quorum shall consist of four members of the Board.

The Chair will chair the meeting or, in his/ her absence, a Vice Chair.

The agenda for the meetings will be determined by the Chair and Chief Executive and consider the views of other members of the Board as necessary. The agenda and papers will be sent no fewer than 5 working days prior to the date of the Board meeting.

Recruitment Timetable & Process:

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| Closing Date: | 10.00 am, Monday 23 rd September 2019 |
| Invitation to interview: | by 5.00 pm, Friday 27 th September |
| First Interview: | Thursday 3 rd October – from 4.00 pm |
| Second Interview: | Friday 11 th October – from 5.00 pm |

To Apply: Please provide a CV (no more than 3 sides A4) together with a supporting statement (no more than 3 sides) and complete the confidential Monitoring form.

<https://thehousingexecutive.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Diversity-Monitoring-Form-Keniston-HA.doc>

The **supporting statement** should demonstrate why you want to join Keniston, your suitability for this key role and specifically address the key elements of the person specification enclosed in this pack. Please ensure you provide evidence, with examples, of your experience. Send your application (CV/Statement/Monitoring Form) by

10.00 am on Monday 23rd September: to: rec@thehousingexecutive.com

ALL applications will be acknowledged by email or telephone within 24 hours.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this post or the process, in confidence, please call Tony Clark or Carol Drummond, at The Housing Executive, on 020 7620 3048.

We look forward to receiving your application - do call if you have any queries.

Thanks again for your interest in Keniston.

ADVERT



Housing Association Chair, Farnborough, Kent. Remunerated.

Build on Our Success

Keniston's mission is to provide better homes, better services and better neighbourhoods and our consistent 95% satisfaction levels have been reached through the hard work of our staff in delivering the vision of a strong and focused Board. Our current Chair, Julian Miles is stepping down in 2019, having given dedicated service on the Board for the maximum 9 years. He leaves the organisation in excellent shape and this provides a fantastic opportunity to join a successful, independent and financially sound association in a leadership role. Keniston is committed to an independent future, has opportunities for development in the pipeline, and will continue to invest in our current stock of over 800 properties.

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We seek a new Chair who shares our vision and values and can work with our impressive Board (who bring experience from many sectors), Chief Executive and staff to shape and develop our future direction. As well as housing professionals, we are open to candidates from outside the sector who can inspire and empower our internal talent and bring the credibility of a successful career to act as a driving force in representing the organisation.

Our new Chair will have exceptional leadership and communication skills and ideally experience of chairing. You will ensure an effective working relationship between the Executive and Board members, recognising the boundaries and being adept at giving direction and receiving guidance. While you do not need to be a housing professional, an understanding of the realities of operating in a regulated sector is essential, as is strategic experience and previous Board experience, preferably within an organisation experiencing growth.

For further information, or an informal discussion about the role, please contact our consultants: Tony Clark or Carol Drummond at The Housing Executive on:

020 7620 3048, or email: rec@thehousingexecutive.com

Closing date: 10.00 am, Monday 23rd September 2019

First Interview: Thursday 3rd October

Final Interview Friday 11th October

Keniston and The Housing Executive are committed to equality and diversity.