



Kensington Housing Trust Tenants' Annual Report 2008/09



Kensington
Housing Trust

Welcome

Welcome to our Annual Report for the year ending March 2009, in which we tell you how well we perform against particular standards. We have also used this opportunity to share with you our successes and improvements, which make a real difference to our residents' lives.

We are strongly committed to working with you in continuously improving our services and to providing them effectively and efficiently. We will continue to improve to ensure you receive even better services in the future.

Last Year in brief

These are our key achievements over the last year:

- We reviewed our caretaking service and now employ and manage our caretakers directly, so we can provide cleaning and estate maintenance services more quickly and to better meet your needs.
- We introduced an incentive scheme for residents to move into a smaller property, freeing up larger homes for families, as well as saving themselves money in terms of rent and bills. We have helped 8 people through this scheme so far.
- We have reviewed our Succession Policy and have extended the succession rights for residents with Assured tenancies so they have the same rights as residents with a Secure tenancy.
- We joined the rapidly growing Homeswapper Mutual Exchange scheme. This is currently the best mutual-exchange scheme, allowing people to exchange their home with other tenants in areas throughout the UK.
- We negotiated an improved contract with our main repairs contractor, Mears, and we have addressed poor performance by our gas contractor, TA Horn, by bringing them within our office to make them more accountable to you.
- We are an active partner in the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team (CASBAT). CASBAT brings together landlords, the Police, Social Services and other organisations to share information and agree how to deal with difficult or complex cases of anti-social behaviour in the borough. This includes the police offering surgeries in our office.
- As part of our early intervention, supportive approach to rent arrears, we have worked with the independent housing advice service (HASKC) to make arrangements to encourage residents to pay off arrears by instalments, instead of court orders where possible.
- We worked in partnership with Norwich Union (now Aviva) to introduce an affordable home contents insurance scheme for our residents, to encourage them to protect their possessions

from loss or damage.

- We held a summer fun day held in Avondale Park, organised jointly with Octavia Housing and Care, which attracted over 1,000 people.
- Our Pathways 2 Progress youth mentoring project continued to provide a valuable service to the young people who live in the neighbourhoods in which we operate with 150 young people involved in the project this year.
- Our Youth Involvement Team arranged a 5 week programme of parenting workshops to help residents with teenagers. The facilitators were some of top practitioners in the fields of prevention and intervention work in the UK & US.
- We continued to provide work experience opportunities with our repairs contractor for local unemployed people who attended college and worked towards a qualification in the construction industry.
- We used our Community Fund to work in partnership and support local community projects, one example included a Community Festival of Fun day in North Kensington. The Fund has one million pounds to use over 10 years.
- We hosted a successful residents' conference to give residents the chance to meet staff and find out more about how we work. We used the opportunity to identify improved ways of working with our residents.
- Progress has continued with the plans to regenerate the Wornington Green Estate, to provide new homes built to the highest standards for those tenants who wish to remain living there. We appointed an Independent Tenant Advisor, First Call, to give residents independent advice about the regeneration plans for Wornington Green. In addition, focus groups have been held to enable residents to influence the design and layout for the new estate, and we produce a monthly newsletter to keep residents informed of progress.
- We revised our Tenant Handbook to ensure we're providing the most up to date information about your home and our services.
- We revised our Service Standards to make sure they were up to date and relevant to the needs of our residents.

How we performed

Complaints

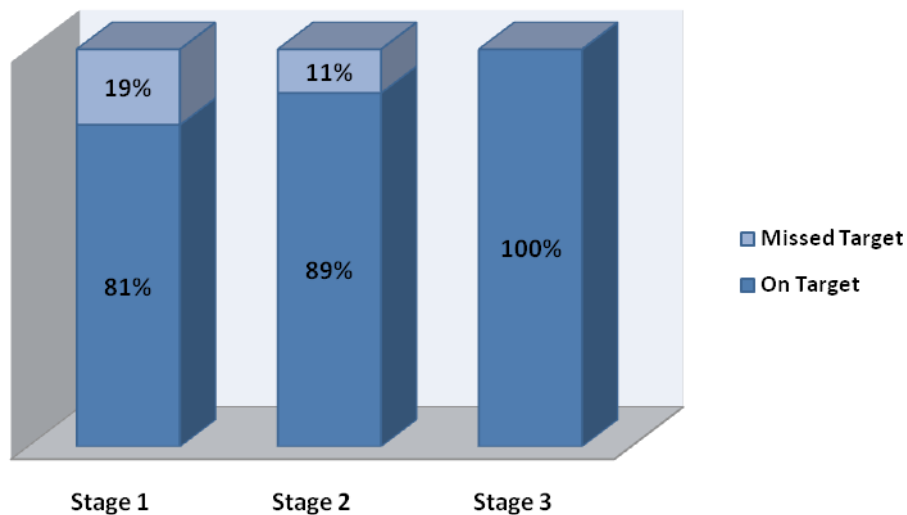
Providing an excellent, responsive service is very important to us and we always try to get it right. However sometimes things can go wrong and when they do we want to know so we can put them right as quickly as possible.

If you tell us you are unhappy with any part of our service, we will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. Our complaints procedure has three stages. The target times for stage 1 and stage 2 complaints are 10 working days and 30 working days for stage 3, where an appeals panel reviews the complaint. If you are still unhappy at the end of these three stages, you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to investigate your complaint.

In 2008/09 we responded to 80% of the 119 complaints received within target, which is an improvement on the previous year, when 71% of all complaints were responded to in time and on the year before when we responded to 76% of all complaints within target.

98 (82%) of the complaints received in 2008/09 were resolved at stage one.

In 2009 we have continued to improve how quickly we deal with complaints, with 92% being responded to within the target date, as at September 2009.



The following table shows that almost two thirds of residents' complaints relate to the repairs service, reflecting the period in winter 2008 when some repairs were not completed within target. A large number of your complaints were about gas repairs. In response to this, we have changed the way we work with TA Horn our gas contractor, and they are now based at our office so we can work more closely to ensure a better service.

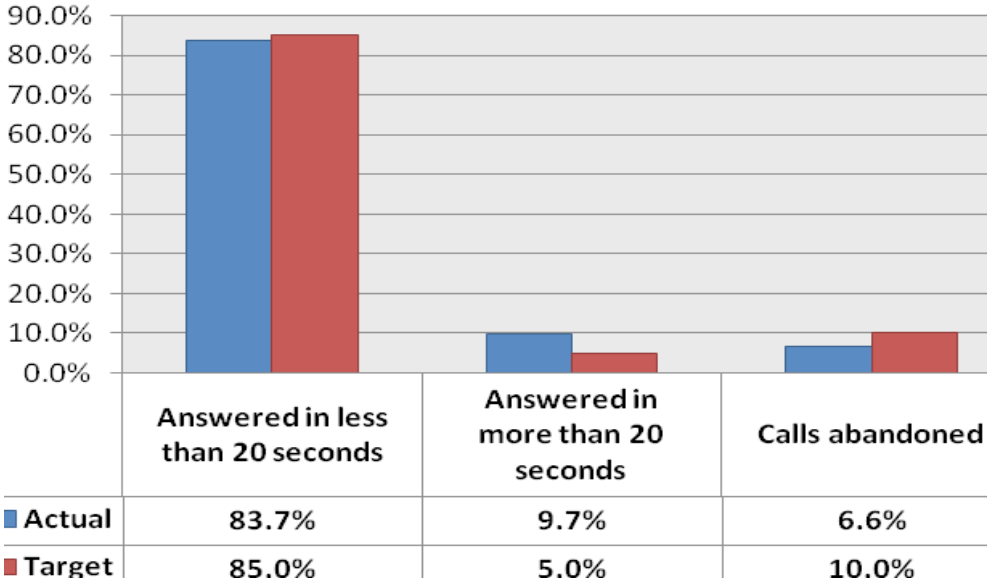
The breakdown of complaints by types is as follows:

Reason for complaint	Number of Complaints	Percentage of Total Received
Repairs	77	64.7%
Estate Management	15	12.4%
Administrative	8	7.2%
Handling Nuisance	7	6.0%
Rehousing	5	4.1%
Rent Arrears	3	2.4%
Customer Service	3	2.4%
Housing Benefit	1	0.8%

Call answering

The main way that our residents contact us is by telephone. We received 34,070 calls in the year to March 2009, an average of 11 calls per household. We answered 83.7% of those calls within the target of 20 seconds which is an improvement of almost 6% from the previous year (77.9%). As a result, only 6.6% of calls were abandoned, compared with 10.2% the previous year.

Phone Statistics 2008/09



In 2009 we have continued to improve how quickly we answer your calls, with 94% being answered within 20 seconds, resulting in only 2.5% being abandoned, as at September 2009.

Anti-social behaviour

We believe that all tenants should be able to live in their homes free from fear or from nuisance caused by other people. We take all reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) very seriously and investigate them, taking appropriate action wherever possible, using a range of methods.

In early 2009 we reviewed the way we handle cases of ASB and introduced some improvements to ensure we take early action to prevent cases becoming more serious where we can.

For the year ending March 2009, we received 74 reports of Anti-social behaviour, which is a reduction of 20 cases compared with the previous year. The majority of those related to noise nuisance but included 4 reports of harassment, 2 reports of racial harassment and 1 of domestic violence.

The solutions to these cases include the use of:

- Issuing an acceptable behaviour contracts
- Getting an injunction
- Referring cases for mediation
- Issuing notices of seeking possession for ASB

In 2009 we have introduced closer monitoring of ASB cases and are introducing a satisfaction survey to get residents' feedback about the service and how we could improve it.

Our repairs service

We aim to carry out repairs quickly and efficiently to provide a high-quality repairs service at all times in order to keep your home safe, secure and watertight. We monitor how well we are doing in this area by looking at the percentage of repairs that we complete within a target time. We aim to achieve the following timescales:

- 100% of emergency repairs within 24 hours
- 95% of urgent repairs within 7 working days
- 96% of routine repairs within 31 working days

We completed a total of 9608 repairs in the year to March 2009, which is almost 15% more than the previous year; this increase is largely due to stock condition issues at Wornington Green which will be tackled by the regeneration of this estate. Almost 40% of the repairs were gas and or electricity related and so are categorised as emergency or urgent.

The table below shows that our performance for the year was significantly below target for emergency and urgent repairs and 0.5% below target for routine repairs. The main reason for this was during winter 2008 our gas contractor, TA Horn, failing to complete gas repairs within target as the table shows all other repairs completed by Mears exceed the urgent and routine targets.

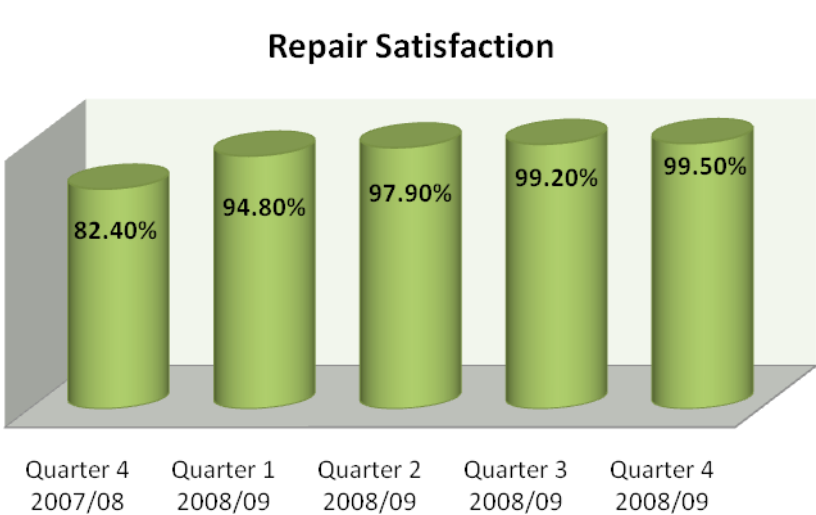
By bringing TA Horn into our offices and having a member of staff focused on gas performance the contract is being more closely managed with the repairs targets monitored weekly. As a result, performance from January to March 2009 improved significantly, exceeding the targets, with 99.46% of emergency repairs, 96.73% of urgent repairs and 99.18% of routine repairs being completed within target.

Repair Description	Our Target	Maintenance Performance 2006/07	Maintenance Performance (MEARS)		Maintenance Performance (MEARS & TA Horn)	
			2007/08	2008/09	2007/09	2008/09
Emergency	100%	95%	98.6%	97.8%	90.3%	87.9%
Urgent	95%	88%	95.1%	96.6%	80.4%	83.5%
Routine	96%	92%	97.7%	97.5%	97.6%	95.6%

In 2009 our performance on repairs has been consistently high, with 99.3% of emergency, 96.2% of urgent and 96% of routine repairs completed in target as at September 2009.

Satisfaction with our repairs service

Another key measure of our repairs performance is resident satisfaction with the service. We check your satisfaction with the repairs service by conducting telephone surveys and carrying out post repair inspections. During 2008/09 this was carried out by our main contractor, Mears. The information collected showed satisfaction with the service increasing from 82.4% to 99.5% during the year, which was well above our target of 90%. At the same time, we recognised that there were some performance issues with the service and realised that the way we collect satisfaction information could be improved. From July 2008 we started carrying out our own in-house satisfaction surveys and by February 2009, we had significantly increased the number of residents we ask about satisfaction to ensure we were collecting better quality information.



Maintaining your home

In total for the year April 2008 to March 2009, we spent £8.7 million repairing and improving your homes.

We provided 215 kitchens and bathrooms and 218 boilers. Residents were closely involved in the timescales of the works and given choices on the design and style of kitchen units, including flooring, tiling and wall-paint colour.

We spent over £2 million on external repairs and decoration on 13 major projects. The largest of these was at Crossfield House where we provided full window replacement in all 164 flats. The residents were involved in deciding on paint colour, communal flooring styles and window styles.

The government has said all our homes must meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. This means they must:

- be in a reasonable state of repair
- have reasonably modern facilities
- provide effective insulation, and
- meet minimum standards, which include basics like hot and cold water, heating, lighting and adequate facilities for preparing food.

By March 2009, 97.4% of our homes met the Decent Homes Standard. We only have 68 properties which do not meet the standard and works will be carried out on them by March 2010.

We also measured the energy efficiency of our homes. This tells us how much energy is needed to run the heating and hot water systems in your home. The higher the energy efficiency score, the less energy needed to heat your home. The government measures energy efficiency using the SAP (standard assessment procedure) rating system. This takes into account things like the type of heating and windows and the amount of insulation in your home. Houses are rated from 0 to 100 for energy efficiency – 0 is the least efficient and 100 the most efficient. The SAP rating for our homes was 66.5, which is well above the average for England of 51.

Wornington Green regeneration

In 2007 we committed to regenerating the 538-household Wornington Green Estate for the benefit of our residents. Since then we have been consulting widely on the proposals.

In late 2008, an independent survey showed that 69% of residents who responded agreed that the redevelopment of Wornington Green was the best option. With this significant support, we have progressed with the design of a masterplan for the regeneration that is endorsed by our residents, the surrounding community, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and other local groups.

Rent collection and rent arrears

As we are a non-profit organisation all the money that we receive in rent and service charges is put into providing our services for you. This means that we have to be firm but fair to manage rent arrears and not let them build up.

We aim to collect more than 100% of the rent that is due each year which enables us to collect a portion of the outstanding arrears.

Period	Rent Collection
1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009	100.23%
1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008	100.16%
1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007	99%

In the year to March 2009 we collected 100.23% which was slightly better than the previous year, although just below the target we set of 102%. Given the difficult economic climate we are working closely with independent advice agencies such as HASKC in helping residents manage their money.

In 2009 we have sustained our performance on rent collection, at 100.13% and arrears have reduced slightly to 5.26% as at September 2009, despite these difficult economic times.

Period	Arrears
1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009	5.82%
1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008	5.62%
1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007	6%

We have taken many actions to ensure the level of our residents' arrears are minimised, including our agreement to avoid court action where possible and instead using repayment agreements with our residents.

However, we cannot avoid court action in all cases and in the year to March 2009 we served 219 Notices of Seeking Possession compared with 177 for the previous year. We evicted 6 residents in the year compared with 4 in the previous year but this remains a last resort as we will support residents experiencing economic hardship as much as possible.

Rent Comparisons

Ours rents are broadly in line with comparable housing associations such as Notting Hill Housing Group and Stadium Housing Association, in relation to all three boroughs where we work. There are variations between bedroom sizes which may relate to the ages of the properties as newer properties tend to have higher rents. KHT has relatively few properties in Westminster but the majority were built fairly recently, hence the higher rent levels.

Kensington & Chelsea

	Bedsit	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six +
KHT	£76.59	£82.38	£91.91	£102.99	£114.16	£125.73	£126.27
Notting Hill Housing Group	£70.57	£79.33	£88.45	£99.24	£110.59	£117.42	£110.97
Stadium Housing Association	-	£84.46	£97.81	£112.83	£129.49	£136.96	-
Woman's Pioneer	£71.35	£77.70	£87.35	£101.71	-	-	-
Octavia Housing and Care	£63.90	£71.23	£78.60	£89.12	£97.43	-	-
Acton Housing Association	-	£79.05	£96.51	-	-	-	-
Average	£68.61	£78.35	£89.74	£100.73	£112.50	£127.19	£110.97

Hammersmith & Fulham

	Bedsit	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six +
KHT	-	£83.10	£97.54	£113.67	£117.91	-	-
Nottinghill Housing Group	£76.56	£80.35	£91.33	£99.68	£109.23	£112.24	£115.65
Stadium Housing Association	-	£122.69	£98.08	£108.75	£115.08	-	-
Woman's Pioneer	£72.92	£80.69	£89.53	£104.26	-	-	-
Octavia Housing and Care	£64.31	£71.59	£85.09	£87.29	£108.37	£126.39	-
Acton Housing Association	£75.92	£74.98	£88.84	£106.27	£113.77	-	-
Average	£72.43	£86.06	£90.57	£101.25	£111.61	£119.32	£115.65

Westminster

	Bedsit	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
KHT	£88.63	£92.61	£104.66	£114.07	£113.16	-	-
Nottinghill Housing Group	-	£77.20	£95.01	£107.38	£120.36	-	-
Stadium Housing Association	£78.41	£83.53	£93.50	£104.99	£117.02	-	-
Woman's Pioneer	£68.12	£81.40	-	-	-	-	-
Octavia Housing and Care	£66.45	£82.32	£93.71	£106.03	£110.21	£117.53	-
Acton Housing Association	£67.10	£76.43	£91.82	£103.63	£112.31	£117.61	-
Average	£70.02	£80.18	£93.51	£105.51	£114.98	£117.57	-

The table below present the average weekly market rent in the RBKC.

Studio flat	One bedroom flat	Two bedroom flat	Three bedroom flat
£215	£325	£450	£500

It is worth noting that the cost of renting a studio flat in RBKC costs almost twice as much as the highest rent we charge in Kensington Housing Trust.

Vacant homes

We aim to re-let empty homes as quickly as possible, to reduce the amount of time people have to wait for a property. Furthermore, the longer our homes are empty, the more rent we lose.

In the last financial year to March 2009 58 homes became empty and were re-let. The average time it took us to re-let those empty properties was 37.8 days. This is notably higher than our target of 25 days and is due to ensuring that Wornington Green residents who needed to relocate due to the regeneration were given the opportunity to consider moving to available homes.

We anticipate that the regeneration of the Wornington Green Estate will continue to affect our performance in this area throughout the next year. We are committed to working with Wornington Green residents to match their needs to the right homes with as little disruption to their lives as possible.

About our homes

We own and manage;

- 2,263 General Needs homes
- 882 Key-Worker units
- 35 Sheltered homes for Older People
- 23 Supported units
- 34 Shared-Ownership homes

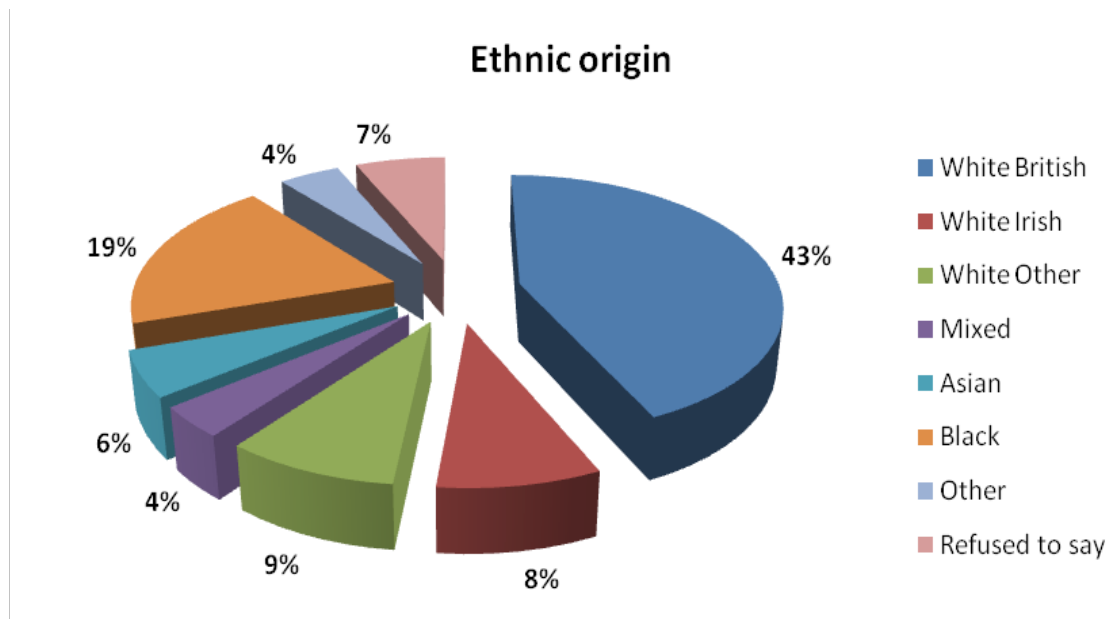
The table below shows the breakdown of our General Needs housing stock across the boroughs by number of bedrooms. The majority (70%) of our General Needs properties are one or two bedrooms.

	Hammersmith & Fulham	Kensington & Chelsea	Westminster	Total
Bedsit (1 person)	0	63	1	64
1 Bedroom	35	764	13	812
2 Bedroom	90	638	25	753
3 Bedroom	47	378	16	441
4 Bedroom	21	145	5	171
5 Bedroom	0	8	0	8
6+ Bedroom	0	1	0	1
Total	193	1997	60	2250

About our residents

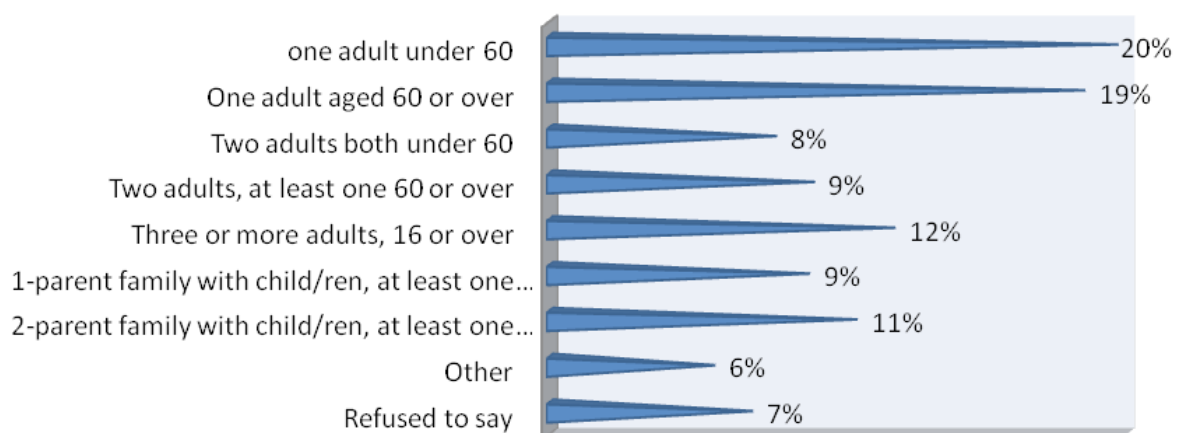
During early 2009 we carried out a STATUS survey. This is a standardised survey used by Housing Associations and Local Authorities to find out how satisfied their residents are with the services they receive. 608 KHT residents agreed to fill in the questionnaire.

The findings show that 60% of our tenants regard themselves as White British (43%), White Irish (8%) or White Other (9%), with the remainder (40%) coming from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. This is quite a diverse tenant population.

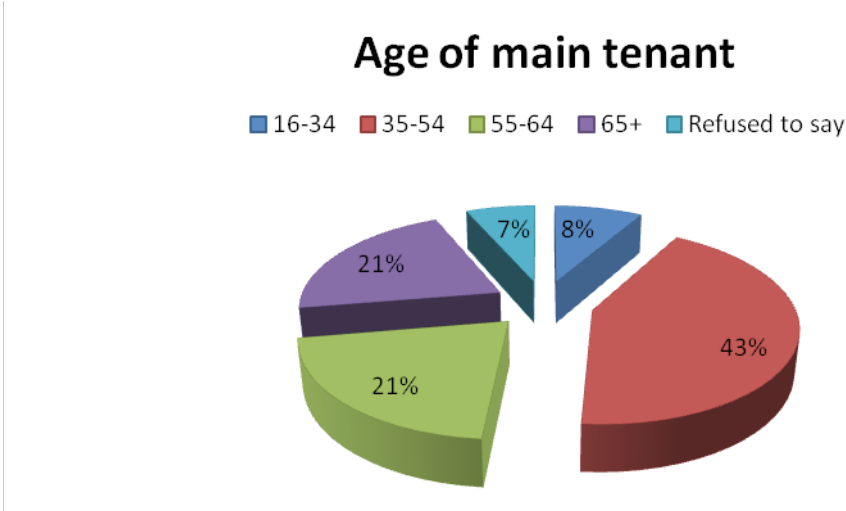


As shown below, the majority of our residents (39%) said they live on their own, with half of those residents aged 60 or over. Only 20% of our households responded as having one or more children under the age of 16.

Composition of household



A large number of our residents (43%) are aged between 35 and 54, with a further 42% of residents aged 55 and over. Only 8% of our residents are under 35 years old.

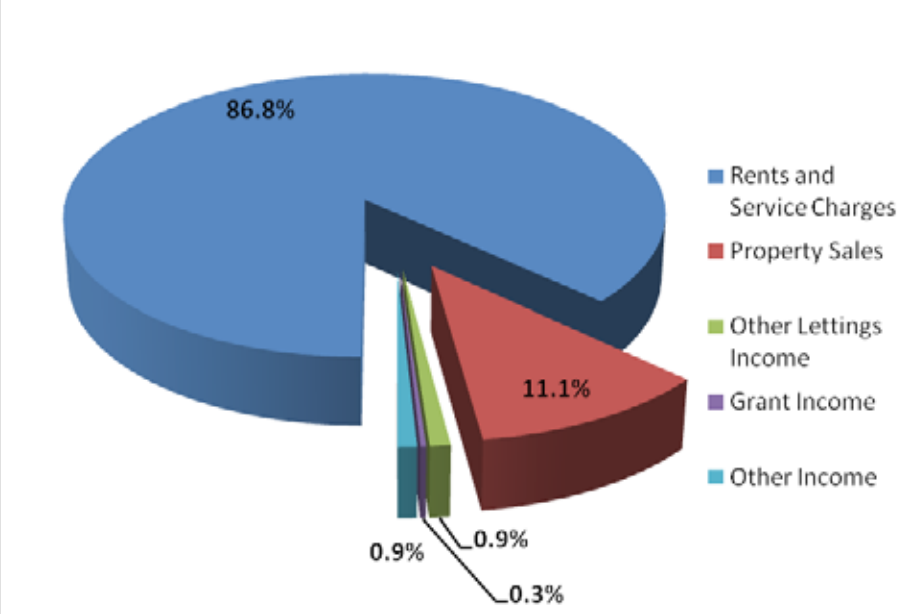


Finance

Where our money came from in 2008/09

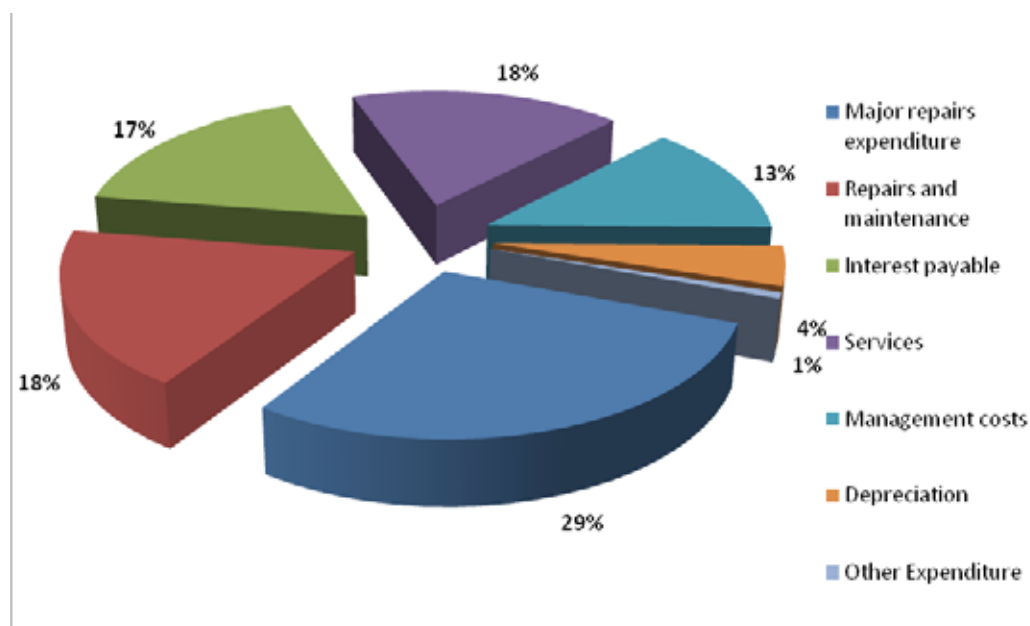
The total money coming into KHT was £19.5 million, an increase from the £17.3 million in 2007/08. Most of the income is from rents and service charges. The rest of our income is from property sales and other income.

We are a non-for-profit company, so all the income is reinvested in KHT to enhance and improve the services provided to residents.



What we spent our money on in 2008/09

In 2008/09 KHT spent £8.7 million on improving homes for customers and an additional 124 dwellings were brought up to the decent home standard.



Overall

The result of the above is a surplus of £968K compared with the previous year's deficit of £300K. The Association needs to make surpluses to continue to maintain existing properties, to provide new homes to meet the continuing demand for social housing in our areas of operation and to keep rents at affordable levels.

Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March

	2009	2008
	£'000	£'000
Turnover	17,241	16,564
Operating costs	(15,324)	(14,128)
Operating Surplus	1,917	2,436
Surplus sale of fixed assets	2,167	661
Interest receivable and similar income	72	42
Interest payable and similar charges	(3,188)	(3,453)
Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year	968	314

If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille, on CD or explained in your own language please contact us on the number below.

Arabic

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على أي جزء من هذه المعلومات مطبوعًا بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو مسجلًا على اسطوانة مدمجة أو شريط صوتي أو مشروحًا باللغة التي تتحدثها، يرجى الاتصال بنا على الرقم الموضح أدناه.

Gujarati

જો તમારે કોઈ પણ ભાગની આ માહિતી શ્રેઈલ, સીડી ઉપર, ઑડિયો ટેપ અથવા તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં સમજી શકો તેની જરૂર હોય તો નીચે જણાવેલ નંબર ઉપર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Portuguese

Se necessitar de parte desta informação em caracteres aumentados, em Braille, em CD cassete áudio ou apresentada no seu idioma, por favor contacte-nos, através do telefone abaixo indicado.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਸੀਡੀ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Urdu

ان معلومات کے کسی حصہ کی اگر آپ کو بریل، سی ڈی، آڈیو ٹیپ یا اپنی زبان میں وضاحت کی ضرورت ہو تو، براہ کرم ہم سے نیچے دیے گئے نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔

Chinese

此文件含有關於一般副標題的說明。若您想要將此文件列印為大型字體、製作成點字版、燒錄為光碟、錄製成錄音帶或翻譯為您的母語，請撥打以下電話號碼與我們聯繫。

Hindi

अगर आप इस जानकारी के किसी भी हिस्से को ब्रेल, सीडी, ऑडियो टेप में चाहते हैं या अपनी भाषा में समझना चाहते हैं, तो कृपया नीचे दिए गए नम्बर पर हमसे सम्पर्क करें।

Polish

Jeżeli potrzebujesz aby całość lub część tego tekstu były przedstawione większą czcionką, w języku Braille'a, na nośniku CD, na kasecie audio lub zostały przetłumaczone na Twój język ojczysty, prosimy o kontakt pod numerem podanym niżej.

Somali

Haddaad u baahan tahay warkan afkaaga-hooyo, afka loogu talagalay dadka aan arki karaan – afka faraha ama CD-ga ama ajeladda rekorka nala xirir. Namberkan isticmaal.

020 8960 5544



Kensington
Housing Trust

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A charitable housing association