



Knowle Green  
Estates Ltd



**2022/23**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

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## Welcome

### People...not just property.

Knowle Green Estates Ltd (KGE Ltd), with Spelthorne Borough Council as the sole shareholder, is continuing to serve residents of Spelthorne by delivering affordable and sustainable homes to live in, now and in the future. Above all, our mission focuses on delivering impact and change for our communities by supporting them through all aspects of their lives.

The lack of affordable housing in Spelthorne continues to be the driving force behind our aspirations and ambitions but the focus has shifted to encompass how we can best serve our tenants, ensuring that they have the appropriate opportunities and support network in place so they can live fulfilling lives.

KGE Ltd, in partnership with the Council, has played a pivotal role in supporting our Afghanistan and Ukrainian refugees. Under government initiatives including the Afghan Relocation Scheme, which was designed to help Afghans who helped the UK armed forces and their families, we have been assisting with resettling and integrating families into our local community. Most recently, homes have been secured for 18 Afghan households and KGE Ltd will manage a number of these longer-term tenancies and work with the families, many of whom have employment in the area or whose children are settled into local schools. The homes will offer the residents a new lease of life, with kitchen and gardens and much more space than overcrowded hotel rooms.

Our residential team are responsible for the day-to-day management of 101 homes in the Borough, which includes both apartments and houses. Across the team there is over 60 years' experience of property management. Our Tenancy Sustainment Officers' primary role is supporting residents with their tenancies. But this goes much broader than that, with KGE Ltd offering support and advice with finances, mental health support and later in this report (page 8) you can read residents testimonials on what this support means to them.

All our residents are referred by the Council's Housing Options team, which ensures that those who most need this accommodation are prioritised. Residents are being offered five-year tenancies which provide far more stability that they would have in the private rented sector, as we believe everyone has the right to feel settled in their homes and able to seek long-term employment and education opportunities.

We are developing some fantastic initiatives for our tenants which you will read more about in this report. This includes plans for a community garden, a swap shop and we have also appointed a new Board Member (see page 4) following the local elections.

Finally, we remain proud of the achievements this year and our appreciation goes to the KGE Ltd team and Spelthorne Borough Council, as our sole shareholder, for their support and efforts in progressing our priorities.

As we look forward to the year ahead, the team at KGE Ltd will be developing strategies for how we change our approach to the direct delivery of new residential accommodation within the Borough. Our focus will remain our people, not just our properties.



## Our Directors



### Terry Collier

Terry, is an accountant by profession and is also Spelthorne Borough Council's Chief Finance Officer. Terry has been on the Board since the creation of Knowle Green Estates Ltd in May 2016.



### Lawrence Nichols

Lawrence has been a Spelthorne Borough Councillor for the ward of Halliford and Sunbury West since 2019. He joined the board earlier this year and is a local resident and understands resident's need for accessible, good quality housing in the Borough.



### Darren Levy

Darren has over 30 years' experience delivering housing, property, asset management and development services across public, private and charitable sectors. He brings the Board a focus on business growth and development.



### Anne Fillis

Anne is a Chartered Accountant and has had a varied career with roles in healthcare, government, financial services and the voluntary sector. She is passionate about ensuring that all residents are able to access housing that they can afford.

## Our team



### Rachael Fry

Residential Management Advisor



### Vicki Ellis

Principal Residential Property Manager



### Akin Akinyemi

Residential Estates and Facilities Manager



### Taran Gahunia

Residential Tenancy Sustainment Officer



### Russell Davis

Property Accounts Manager

## Vision and Values

### Vision

A property business with a commercial head and a social heart

### Mission

Homes for the future: working with the Council and for the residents of Spelthorne, increasing the availability, affordability and quality of housing in our Borough

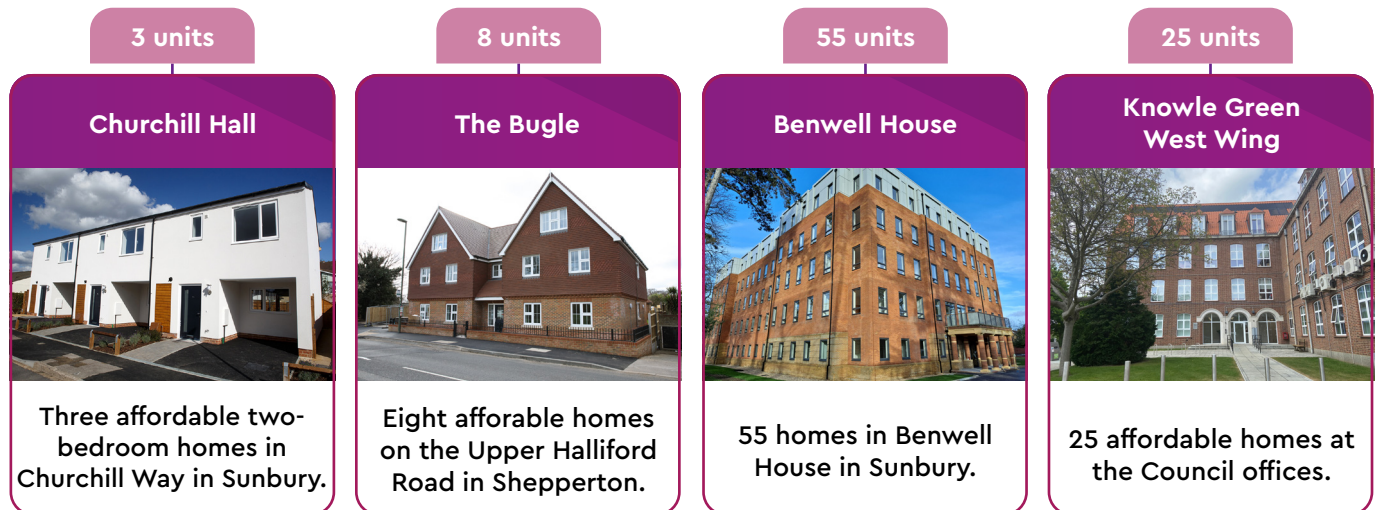
### Values

- > Affordable for our residents
- > Better quality housing
- > Local homes, locally managed
- > Environmentally friendly

### Corporate Priorities

- > Protect and expand affordable rented housing stock
- > Regenerate areas
- > Invest locally
- > Deliver quality low carbon living for residents
- > Economic long-term investments

## Our homes



## Supporting our residents

This year KGE Ltd has been supporting its communities through the cost-of-living crisis which has affected so many people. Our team have committed to helping our residents as much as we can and have implemented a package of support for families and individuals across our communities to overcome pressures, both financial and social.

### Meet Taran Gahunia

Taran is our dedicated Tenancy Sustainment Officer and is the primary support officer for all KGE Ltd residents.

I have been in my role for one year and one of the main benefits of doing this job is getting to know all of our tenants. My primary goal is to offer practical and emotional support, advice and information to residents so they feel settled in their new homes and help with any short or long-term concerns and issues that they may have. This could include financial worries, mental health support or questions relating to their property, the area and job and education opportunities in the Borough.

#### My responsibilities include:

- acting as a first port of call for residents who need advice
- building professional relationships with residents to assist with their needs
- collaborating with appropriate Council teams such as Housing Benefits to provide the best support
- carrying out relevant administrative tasks
- maintaining residents' records in line with data protection and confidentiality policies and procedures
- networking effectively between residents and relevant voluntary and statutory agencies to maximise all the available resources for the residents



#### Contact:

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## Support and initiatives



### Household Support Fund

The government's Household Support Fund helped vulnerable households with the rising cost of energy bills and food. Spelthorne Borough Council provided £470k\* of financial assistance to residents who need it the most.



### Food bank referrals

There are five food banks in the Borough KGE Ltd will signpost residents for referrals.



### Council Tax Support

KGE Ltd will work with Spelthorne Borough Council to advise tenants that, if required, there is a Council Tax Support local scheme that helps people with low income to pay their Council Tax. Visit [www.spelthorne.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport)



### Swap Shop

KGE Ltd launched a Swap Shop at Benwell House in 2022, encouraging residents to swap items that are no longer needed, including clothes, toys and books. This initiative not only fosters a sense of community between neighbours but is better for the environment and saves money.



### Agencies and support

During the winter there were 27 warm hubs in the Borough which KGE Ltd signposted residents to. We also liaised with the Spelthorne Jobs and Skills Hub and will promote the information, including job fairs and CV writing support. Help is always available through organisations in the Borough that can help residents, including mental health support, domestic abuse help and cost of living assistance.

\*between April 2022 and April 2023.

## Sustainability

KGE Ltd has committed to becoming a Net Zero company and this underpins how we deliver our housing projects and what we do to minimise our effect and play our part in tackling the threat of climate change.

As we continue to focus on our sustainability outcomes, we are confident that we will deliver our objectives for the benefit of present and future generations in Spelthorne.

This year our measures include:

- solar panels into conversions and refurbishments
- sustainable building design
- positive biodiversity impact through suitable planting
- sustainable procurement
- recycling initiatives and information for tenants



### Underground bins

Working with Spelthorne Direct Services (SDS), a local commercial waste company which focuses on helping the local community minimise the amount of waste going to landfill and increase recycling rates, KGE Ltd have installed underground bins at The West Wing.

The unique underground bin system is a different approach to managing recycling and waste, where wheelie bins do not feature at the development at all, instead residents place their recycling and waste into sleek steel bin chutes set into the pavement outside their homes. The waste falls into an underground chamber and a sensor notifies SDS when it is full so that collections are only carried out when they are needed. A special lorry then hoists the container out of the ground with a crane and empties the waste into the vehicle. The many benefits for the residents include not having to store or move wheelie bins or remember when and which bins to put out for collection. And of course, it encourages residents to recycle without the worry of over spilling bins.

### Community garden

We recognise the benefits of residents having access to open spaces and gardens. In fact, we will always ensure that our developments are close to one of the many parks that are in the Borough. The West Wing, in Staines-upon-Thames, is in fact opposite the award-winning Staines Park which has twice been recognised nationally for its biodiversity initiatives.

However, KGE Ltd are planning on going one step further by creating a dedicated community garden for residents to develop and enjoy, directly outside the West Wing.

We know that too often, affordable housing settings face numerous challenges, such as providing access to fresh, healthy and affordable food for residents whilst addressing carbon footprint and enhancing social value. The community garden will provide a fun and attractive solution to this challenge.

The aim of the community garden project is to provide a space for residents to grow their own flowers, plants and food, which we know will not only increase social cohesion but also promote sustainable living practices. The garden will be run by volunteers, both residents and Spelthorne Borough Council staff.



## Residents Feedback

“I have been supported since the start of my tenancy and have been given great advice, regarding housing, finance and personal matters by the team at KGE Ltd.”

“I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the invaluable assistance I received from you during a difficult situation I have recently been facing. Your dedication, professionalism, and willingness to help have exceeded my highest expectations. Your valuable knowledge, ability to listen, and understanding of my situation not only helped me find a solution to my problem but also provided me with relief and peace of mind. Thanks to you, I truly felt supported and reassured that I am not alone in my struggles.”

“Thank you very much for your help and support to us. Your service was excellent and offered with a clear explanation and understanding. My family and I appreciate all your effort, many thanks again for everything.”

“The support I have received from KGE Ltd and the Council has more than met my expectations. They are always available to help me mentally, financially and emotionally and provide solutions immediately to make sure we are safe and looked after.”

## People...not just property.





## Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Actuals
Rent arrears as % of income	4%	0.69%
Average re-let days	10 days	6.8 days
Complaint response time	5 days response time	1 day
Homeless households housed	n/a	2 households
<b>Repairs and Maintenance*</b>		
Defects completed within timescale	85%	54.5%
High priority repairs completed within timeframe	85%	65.9%
Medium priority repairs completed within timescale	85%	58.6%

\* 258 repairs were completed during this period, including defect works and planned/cyclical works and delay in include obtaining parts and access issues resulted in target not being met.

Data represents the period between 01/04/2022 and 31/03/2023.

## Governance

KGE Ltd is overseen by four Directors, including two Non-Executive Directors appointed through a competitive recruitment process. To ensure full and compliance governance is adhered to, KGE Ltd undertakes the following:

- monthly (minuted) Board meetings, monitoring financial performance, resident feedback and range of operational performance indicators
- [www.knowlegreenestates.co.uk](http://www.knowlegreenestates.co.uk)
- accounts independently audited
- yearly annual report
- policies in place including safeguarding and tenancy support
- monthly health and safety reviews with compliance reports

## Looking ahead

Our focus will remain our people, not just our properties and we will look to continue to support our communities. KGE Ltd, in partnership with the Council, has played a pivotal role in supporting our Afghanistan and Ukrainian refugees.

Two years ago, the United Kingdom took the historic decision to welcome tens of thousands of Ukrainians fleeing the invasion of their country. Since then, and thanks to the generosity of the British public, more than 150,000 Ukrainians have been welcomed into homes and communities under the Homes for Ukraine and Ukraine Family schemes.

Under the Afghan Relocation Scheme, the UK has also welcomed around 23,000 Afghans. The scheme was designed to help Afghans who helped the UK armed forces and their families, and here KGE Ltd in partnership with Spelthorne Borough Council have been assisting with resettling and integrating families into our local community.



The Department of Levelling Up of Housing and Communities (DLUHC) introduced a £500 million capital fund to support the local authorities who are facing the greatest challenges in providing move on and settled accommodation for refugees. Later in the year, the fund was extended to provide further £250 million to extend the scheme. However, over 9,000 refugees are still living in bridging hotel accommodation, making it difficult for families to fully integrate in their local community and live a life they deserve.

The aims of the fund are to alleviate housing pressures on local authorities arising from recent and unforeseen conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine. The government's humanitarian response to these crises, has unavoidably created additional demand for housing at a time when local authorities are already under strain. This fund enables us to resolve some of the housing pressure in the community. The actions we take now, will have a long-term positive impact on the community.

KGE Ltd, in partnership with the Council, has acquired and manages properties for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. Homes have been secured for 18 Afghan households and KGE Ltd will manage the tenancies and work with the families, many of whom have employment in the area or whose children are settled into local schools. The homes will offer the residents a new lease of life, with kitchen and gardens and much more space than overcrowded hotel rooms.

As we look ahead to next year we will continue to identify homes that will be suitable for families and the KGE Ltd team will provide ongoing support measures to all our residents that need them.

## Financial Summary

The Annual Report contains the audited statement of accounts for the year ending 2022-23. The rents received (turnover) increased significantly in the year, as both West Wing and Benwell House phase 1 became fully occupied. The company saw the valuation of its properties rise significantly during the year, creating an unrealised gain of £2.98m (2022: £4.0m). As the Directors are holding the property assets for the long term, i.e. the next 50 years, they expect the property values to continue its overall upward trend in valuations. The balance sheet shows £4.112m (2022: £3.179m) in total equity.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Turnover	1,140,166	781,359
Administrative expenses	(1,357,254)	(536,373)
<b>Operating profit/(loss)</b>	<b>(217,088)</b>	<b>(244,986)</b>

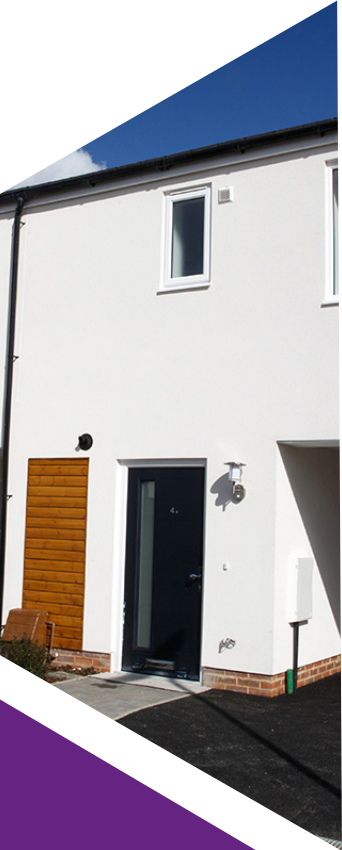
Interest receivable	20	0
Interest payable and similar expenses	(812,389)	(100,652)

<b>Loss before taxation</b>	<b>(1,029,457)</b>	<b>144,334</b>
Tax on loss	132,600	0
<b>Profit/(loss) for financial year</b>	<b>(896,857)</b>	<b>144,334</b>

<b>Other Comprehensive income</b>		
Profit/(loss) for the financial year	2,981,145	4,052,176
Tax on other comprehensive income	(851,564)	(731,535)
<b>Loss for the financial year</b>	<b>1,232,724</b>	<b>3,464,975</b>



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