

# community news

November 2014 • Issue 29

A newsletter by Phoenix residents



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# Phoenix



Claim your  
FREE 2015  
calendar!

**Podium place! Phoenix named third  
best landlord in Britain Page 5**

**Festive fun for all of the family Page 3  
Our plans for new homes Page 4**



Welcome...

Kestrel, Kingfisher or Bellingham Farm?  
Visit our website to find out which Community Link area you live in.

# Welcome to Community News

Thank you for picking up the November issue of Community News.

We hope that you enjoy reading about recent events and our plans for 2015 and beyond. Thank you to everyone who responded to this year's annual report survey – we received more than 200 responses and we'll include your suggestions in next year's report. If you haven't seen it already, do visit our website to see the interactive digital version.



Thank you to everyone who helped to choose our new logo. We received more than 800 votes and the winning design received 338 votes - 84 more than the second favourite option. The new branding will be rolled out over the coming months, so look out for your new-look Community News in the New Year!

We are always looking for new members to help us to improve the way Phoenix communicates with residents. If you're interested in joining us, please get in touch!

Best wishes, from the Residents Communications Group.



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Cover: Younger Phoenix residents at Summer Fun in August

## WIN! 'Spot yourself!'

If this is you, enjoying Summer Fun at Bellingham Green in August, contact us to claim your £25 shopping voucher.



## How to keep in touch

**By phone:** from 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday (and for emergency calls at all other times)  
Freephone from your landline: 0800 0285 700  
Standard cost from your mobile: 0844 264 2844



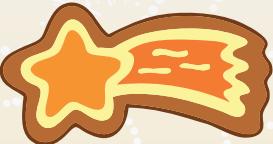
**Email:** correspondence@phoenixch.org.uk  
 **Web:** [www.phoenixch.org.uk](http://www.phoenixch.org.uk)  
 **Twitter:** @phoenixtogether @greenmanhub for all the latest news and opportunities  
 **Visit:** by appointment from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday at The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, SE6 2RP  
**Staff training:** emergency phone service only, 2-3pm every other Tuesday  
**Please note,** we will be closed from midday on Christmas Eve until Monday 29th December and on New Year's Day.

Phoenix Community Housing Association (Bellingham and Downham Limited) is a Community Benefit Society, number IP30057R. VAT number 162 4926 03. Homes and Communities Agency number L4505.



## Winter community gathering

Festive fun for all at your...



# Community Links Gathering

Join us at The Green Man on Saturday 6 December from 12pm – 3pm for FREE, festive fun for everyone at your Community Links gathering.

### Enjoy:

**Seasonal baking** – make your own Christmas decorations and greeting cards – Santa's grotto, free gift for every child – **free festive food** – carol concert and lots more!

Find out how Phoenix is working together with residents to make a difference in the Bellingham Farm, Kestrel and Kingfisher Community Link areas.

We'll be reporting back on the progress we've made on the action plans residents developed at the Community Link gatherings back in February.



Younger guests enjoy the June Community Gathering



Arts and crafts at your Community Gathering



**Bring a tin!** Donate non-perishable foods to support the Whitefoot and Downham Community Food Plus project



**Reduce your bills!** Get energy saving advice and top tips to keep warm this winter



**Find out more!** Learn about your Phoenix Gateway Committee representatives.

Book your place by Friday 28 November. Call us on 0800 0285 700 or email [links@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:links@phoenixch.org.uk)

CORRECTION. This event replaces the Community Links gatherings marked as taking place on December 2, 3 and 4 in our 2014 calendar. Apologies for the change and any confusion caused.



## Round the houses

### Challenge us to be better

Would you like to develop your skills and help us improve our services? We're looking for residents to join our new resident complaints panel to hear complaints and report findings directly to our Board and Executive team.

Successful applicants will receive training, travel expenses and the opportunity to develop their professional skills and experiences.

In return, you need to be fair, confident and committed to getting the very best for Phoenix residents.

### New way to get involved

We're creating a new Phoenix Gateway Committee to work with the Board and Executive team to help shape Phoenix services and place residents at the heart of all that we do. Shareholding members were invited to apply in October and more information will be included in the next Community News.

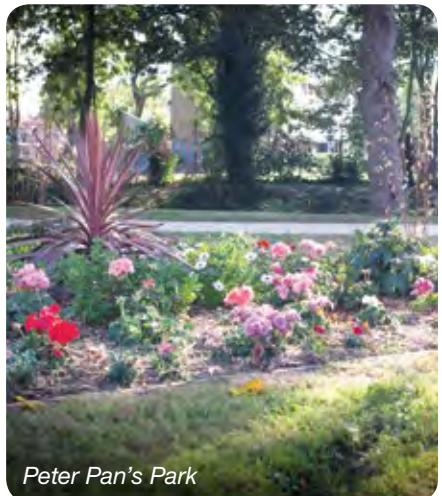


*Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham and Phoenix Chair, Pat Fordham MBE opens Peter Pan's Park*

## Peter Pan's Park opens

Our new pocket park is now open to the public after young Phoenix residents helped put the finishing touches to the new green space.

The park – opposite The Green Man – was opened by Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham, in September. It's a place for everyone to enjoy, so please pop in soon and enjoy our new nature reserve, wild flowers, riverside pathways and seating areas.



*Peter Pan's Park*



## New homes for older people

There's a major shortage of housing for older people in our area. As part of efforts to tackle this, we've submitted plans to build 60 new 'extra care' homes for older residents on a proposed site next to Hazelhurst Court. The plans have been made possible through funding from the Mayor of London and Lewisham Council.

We've been working to refine our plans with existing residents at Hazelhurst Court and other local neighbours since late 2013.

We hope people will support our plans and aspirations to provide decent homes for residents to enjoy later in life. For more information about this proposed development, visit our website or call in to The Green Man.



## Round the houses

Want to see more photos taken at recent community events in our area? Visit our flickr page to see hundreds of snaps: [www.flickr.com/phoenixch](http://www.flickr.com/phoenixch)



Mask making in Downham

## Fun, fun, fun!

More than 1,500 people helped to create our biggest and best Summer Fun yet over the summer holidays.

Younger residents had a go at making their own ice-cream, building bird boxes, gardening and lots more, thanks to funding from the Phoenix Community Chest.

With plenty to try, make and do, everyone left with new skills, new friends and great memories to go back to school with!



Fun with friends at Bellingham Green



Ice-cream making at Evans Road

## Annual General Meeting

Thank you to everyone who joined together for our 7th Annual General Meeting at the beginning of September.

Guests heard from Steve Stride, President of the Chartered Institute of Housing, who shared his experiences of changing the fortunes of an area in his role as Chief Executive of Poplar HARCA. Resident shareholders also voted to approve the minutes of last year's Annual General Meeting and to receive the annual report, financial statements and report of the Auditors among other business.

Residents also agreed to a rule change to reduce the size of the Board to 12. This is in line with the National Housing Federation's code of governance and Phoenix residents remain the largest group on the Board.

Our Chair Pat Fordham MBE said: "It was fantastic to see so many resident shareholders exercising their right to vote on how Phoenix is run, and I hope everyone enjoyed their evening."



Enjoying evening sunshine before the AGM begins

## Phoenix takes 3rd place in national landlord poll

We are very proud to have been named the third best landlord in Britain, from nearly 2,000 housing associations nationally, by 24housing magazine.

We were the youngest landlord to feature in the top 10. The magazine called it an 'amazing achievement' for a landlord of our size.

The award recognises all that has been achieved by residents working together with staff over our first seven years and celebrates our community gateway model.

We know that there is a lot more that we can achieve together, so next year let's aim for the top spot!



## How are we doing?

In our new feature, we focus in detail on particular areas of our work. Here, we look at antisocial behaviour and how we're working with residents to make sure that everyone can enjoy living in our community.

If you'd like to know more about our performance in a particular area, please let us know.

### What's the issue?

Antisocial behaviour (or ASB for short) is any unwelcome behaviour that causes alarm or distress to other people. Often this behaviour is also illegal. ASB has been identified as a concern by residents in all of our Community Links areas and tackling ASB is a key priority in our Community Links action plans.

Everyone has the right to enjoy their homes in peace and we take reports of ASB seriously. In most instances, we find that cases can be resolved if they are tackled early and by encouraging everyone to be considerate of their neighbours.

### Examples of ASB include:

- noise nuisance
- pets fouling public places
- verbal or physical abuse
- criminal damage
- vandalism and graffiti
- flytipping
- threatening or intimidating behaviour
- selling drugs
- nuisance driving and nuisance vehicles
- racial, sexual and other harassment.



### Latest numbers

In the six months from April to September this year 114 cases of ASB were reported:

- 41 reported by residents in Bellingham Farm
- 35 reported by residents in Kestrel
- 25 reported by residents in Kingfisher
- 13 reported by non-Phoenix residents

In this period, the most common types of ASB reported were:

- Noise related (34 cases)
- Verbal abuse/harassment/intimidation/threatening behaviour (34 cases)
- Pet and animal nuisance (9 cases)

We categorise all reports of ASB based on the level of risk and vulnerability of the person or people involved. Twenty one of the 114 cases reported from April to September were classed as grade 1 – the most severe.



### What we're doing

We work hard to sustain tenancies and work with different partners to resolve reports of ASB. Nearly 40% of the cases reported to us in the last six months have already been resolved and typically ASB cases are resolved within 46 days. This is a big improvement on our performance last year when the average time was almost twice as long.

We're always looking for new ways to tackle and prevent ASB.

Our new safer neighbourhood patrols are one of the ways we've worked with residents to ensure everyone can enjoy living in our community.

### How you can help

The law on ASB has recently changed and we need to review our policies accordingly. We will be hosting a special ASB workshop to discuss how we improve our approach to ASB at the Winter Community Links Gathering on Saturday 6 December. We hope that you will join us!



### Report it

You can report ASB to us at any time, using our usual contact numbers. Depending on the severity of the case that you are reporting, we will arrange to meet with you within either 24 hours or five days.



# Pay your rent before it's spent



Christmas is a wonderful time for giving, but it's easy to feel pressurised into spending money you don't have. You may even be tempted to spend your rent money on the festivities, but if you do you could be putting your home at risk.

**Please prioritise your rent this Christmas.  
Follow our top tips for a very merry Christmas  
and avoid a debt hangover in the New Year!**

### Shop online

There are fantastic savings to be had when you shop online, with lots of great price comparison websites to make sure you get the best deal! If you don't have access to the internet at home, pop along to our weekly internet club at The Green Man

### Make a budget and stick to it

It's easy to be seduced when you hit the shops so work out your budget before you leave home and stick to it.

### Plan ahead

We spend an average of £170 on our big Christmas food and drink shop, so make sure you minimise food waste and maximise the meals that you can enjoy. Contact Love Food Hate Waste for top tips, recipes and free workshops to help you make the most of your Christmas shop!  
[www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)

### Get creative

Christmas cards, treats and gifts are expensive and not nearly as special as a homemade offering. Why not get creative and make personal gifts for your nearest and dearest?

## Pay by Direct Debit and be quids in!



Paying your rent by Direct Debit is the easiest and quickest way to make sure rent is paid on time each month. Congratulations to the three lucky winners of our October prize draw, who all won £250. To be in with a chance of winning £250 in our next prize draw next March, contact us to sign up to the Direct Debit scheme.

## Training takes off



Our new jobs and training scheme is flexible to your needs, experience and aspirations. As part of our new Roots into Work programme and with funding from the Phoenix Community Chest, all residents can benefit from FREE training throughout the year.

**Visit our website or join us at our weekly job club for details of courses on offer.**

## A better deal for home owners

We believe the best results can be achieved by working together with our residents. Thank you to all of the leaseholders who attended focus groups to develop a new leasehold charter. We're looking for leaseholders to join our new home ownership working group to help us deliver a better deal for home owners. For more information and to get involved, please get in touch.

## New repayment terms for leaseholders

Leaseholders can often face large bills for major works. We understand it's not always possible to pay for these up front and our Board has recently approved new repayment terms for leaseholders.

When the bill is more than £2,000 Phoenix leaseholders can spread payments over a period of up to 36 months, interest free. If you're a residential leaseholder, in some circumstances this period may be extended by a further 24 months.

Contact the Home Ownership team for more information about the different ways to pay major works bills.



# Blooming wonderful!



Phoenix in Bloom winners celebrate at Farmstead Road community gardens

Congratulations to all our great gardeners! Our judges inspected over 45 gardens, balconies, vegetable plots and displays as part of Phoenix in Bloom 2014 and prizes were awarded at a special ceremony.

- ✿ Young gardener - Joseph Green
- ✿ Residential garden - John Galea
- ✿ Community garden - Farmstead Road Community Garden
- ✿ Balcony display - Linda Taylor
- ✿ Fruit and veg / allotment - William Cowley
- ✿ Judges' special award - Lynda Eastwood, Wendy Hiley, Brenda and Ronald Spicer.

## Keep warm this winter

As the weather turns colder, knowing how to keep warm and safe can make a big difference to your wellbeing and help prevent some serious health conditions.

### Top tips on keeping warm

- Draught excluders round doors, windows and letterboxes make a big difference - but remember not to block window vents.
- Use thick curtains or line thinner ones with a thermal material.
- Keep the door to your main living area shut to stop the heat escaping.
- Don't put furniture in front of radiators and make sure to keep your home well ventilated to prevent mould or condensation.

For more top tips and advice to be energy smart, visit our website, or call to book a free energy saving assessment at your home.

### Shop around for the best energy deal

Shopping around for your energy supplier could save you as much as £200 if you have never switched before.

Use a comparison website to find the best deal or contact the Citizens Advice Bureau on 0844 826 9691.

### Getting help with your bills

Many people worry about rising fuel bills. If you think you may be in fuel poverty or know someone who is vulnerable, please contact us to see if you might be eligible for additional support.

## Protect what's precious

Imagine coming back from the shops to find your home flooded. Are your belongings covered?

Contents insurance protects the possessions inside your home from loss, damage or theft. It isn't compulsory, but means your furniture, electrical goods and other items in your home are protected in case of burglary, fire or other damage.

We offer an affordable home contents insurance scheme for tenants and leaseholders from Aviva, from just 13p a day. With easy payment methods, it's quick and easy to apply for cover that can give you peace of mind.

Contact us for more information about this scheme. We always recommend you shop around to find the best deal.



# My Phoenix – Elizabeth Adebayo

Elizabeth Adebayo, 25, lives in Bellingham with her parents and four brothers and sisters. She recently took part in the Phoenix Academy, Phoenix's social housing school for residents.

## How long have you been a Phoenix resident?

I've lived in the Phoenix area since 2001 and before this we lived in temporary accommodation in Deptford – it was always very damp, cold and cramped. We were happy when we were offered a property in Bellingham, because of the location and because it was on the ground floor.

## What are the main changes you've seen?

Things have only got better since Phoenix was created in 2007. They've done so well and we're really glad that we ended up here!

## What's the best thing about living in the Phoenix area?

It feels safe and friendly, with a great sense of community. The Green Man is an amazing space and just around the corner from



Elizabeth wants to see more opportunities for young adults

home. There's always a reason to visit and you're able to build relationships with the staff.

I took part in the Phoenix Academy and it was really interesting and helpful. My degree was about housing and I learnt a lot, plus I got to meet new people. I'm hoping to do work experience with Phoenix soon.

## What would you change if you could?

I'd like to see more social opportunities for young adults, as there are lots of activities for children and older residents but not much for young people aged 16-25. I think social events would be a great way to get younger residents involved and engaged with Phoenix.

## Where are your hopes for the next year?

Other than developing more opportunities for young residents, I hope that Phoenix carry on doing what they have been!



Elizabeth is congratulated by Sir Steve Bullock after completing the Phoenix Academy



# A greener place to be

We've improved more than 20 green spaces and street corners within our area by introducing new plants and fencing. We hope these will create a better environment and deter people from dumping and flytipping on these sites. Please help us to keep these new green spaces clean and pleasant.

Work took place in September and October after pilots of the scheme earlier this year saw a significant reduction in flytipping.



Works to improve our amenity greens

## Parking update

We received almost 900 responses to our parking survey earlier this year. Thank you to everyone who got in touch. Our Board will review the results of the survey in November and consider the best way to address residents' concerns about parking in our area, based on your feedback. Please note that this will not cover parking on public roads, which is managed by Lewisham Council.

- 65% of respondents were concerned about vehicles parking where they shouldn't
- 62% of respondents were concerned about non-Phoenix residents parking on our estates
- 67% of respondents agreed that parking spaces are well lit and feel safe to use
- 34% of respondents felt abandoned cars are a problem.



To report an abandoned vehicle, call Lewisham Council on 020 8314 2057.

## SPACE INVADERS

TRANSFORMING SPACES  
TRANSFORMING LIVES

## Vote Space Invaders!

Five green spaces in our area could be transformed and new training opportunities created – if a new scheme receives enough support in a London-wide vote later this month.

The Space Invaders project, put together with adventure learning charity Wide Horizons, aims to get people working together to improve green spaces next to schools, reduce flytipping and antisocial behaviour, and offer accredited training for young people on managing the environment.

Space Invaders is one of two projects competing in the People's Millions on Wednesday 26 November, with the one receiving most public votes receiving up to £50,000 Lottery funding.

We will give details of how to vote on our website on the day, or call us for the number to call. Look out too for a short film about Space Invaders on ITV London that day.

Please take a few seconds to vote for Space Invaders on Wednesday 26 November. It could make a lifetime of difference for some of our young people.



# Community Chest makes a difference

Hundreds of Phoenix residents have already benefitted from the latest round of Community Chest funding, awarded following a resident vote in May. We're offering up to £100,000 of Community Chest funding each year for projects that make a difference to the lives of Phoenix residents.

## July

Fifty young people take part in 'Phoenix Get Out and Go Wild' a week long outdoors adventure programme in Kent.

New community safety patrols begin to help tackle antisocial behaviour and promote community safety. Working together with the local police and other agencies, the new patrols have already prosecuted three fly-tippers and identified abandoned vehicles for removal.



Activity briefing at 'Phoenix Get Out and Go Wild'



The new community safety patrol wear high visibility jackets

## August

More than 1,500 people take part in Summer Fun (awarded in November 2013) over 15 days in August.

Details of free training and courses available as part of the Phoenix resident training programme are announced, with 30 courses on offer from September to December.

Hundreds of young Phoenix residents attend the summer programme at Dumps Adventure playground.

Work begins on the site of the new Whitefoot and Downham Community Food Plus Project community gardens and free healthy cookery courses begin at The Green Man.



Residents take part in a first-aid course



Work progresses at the garden



Ice-cream making at Summer Fun

## September

Bellingham Golden Oldies exercise and social sessions begin, running on last Wednesday of every month at Bellingham Leisure and Lifestyle Centre from 1.30-3.30pm.

African Advocacy Foundation launch the My Health programme at The Green Man. Guests signed up to the programme which will run for the rest of the year to improve wellbeing and social inclusion.

## October

Free fitness classes for Phoenix residents run every Monday from 1.30-2.30pm at St John The Baptist Church Hall, Bromley Road, SE6 2RP. Call 07428 149082 for more info and to book your place.

## November

Free Zumba Gold classes for Phoenix residents aged 60+ begin soon. Turn to page 12 for more info!

**...with lots more still to come!**

# Claim your FREE 2015 calendar!

Every year the Resident Communications Group design a spiralbound calendar for residents, featuring vibrant photos from throughout our community taken over the last year.

The Phoenix calendar for 2015 will be available from December. Contact us and ask to speak to the Communications team or email [communications@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:communications@phoenixch.org.uk) to request your FREE copy!



## Art exhibition

Local resident Peter Rathbone will be hosting an art exhibition of his work from Monday 10 to Friday 14 November at The Green Man. Peter will be on hand to demonstrate his methods and items will be on show for viewing and sale.

## Festive table top fair

Pop along to The Green Man for fabulous festive gifts and decorations at our annual table top fair. The sale will take place on Saturday 22 November from 9am-2pm and feature arts and crafts, produce and gifts.



## Tai Chi

Lewisham Tai Chi are running classes for beginners at The Green Man every Thursday evening.

 Call Matt on 07989 209 558 or email [LewishamTaiChi@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:LewishamTaiChi@hotmail.co.uk) for more info.



## Free Zumba classes

Phoenix resident? Sixty plus and looking to have fun and keep active?

Join our free ten week course and enjoy low intensity dance workouts with easy to follow steps.

Classes every Wednesday at 11am-12pm from 19 November.

 For more info and to book your place contact Patricia on 07773 527 033.

## Bingo in The Barn

Bingo fan? Join our free bingo club every Monday from 2-4pm at The Green Man for fun and prizes!

## Green Music

Join us for a night of jazz and soul at The Green Man. Thursday 4 December, from 7pm. Bar open. Tickets available in advance from [www.thegreenman.com](http://www.thegreenman.com)

**There's always lots going on at The Green Man, email [communications@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:communications@phoenixch.org.uk) to receive our monthly email update or pop in to pick up leaflets of forthcoming events!**