

community news



Check out your
fire safety
pull-out
inside

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Welcome...

Have you got a story that you would like to include? We'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch or send your story to info@phoenixch.org.uk

Welcome to Community News

Thank you to everyone who attended the Phoenix Festival in May. The live performances hit the right note and more than 6,000 people enjoyed a day of family fun.

We've got so much to look forward to over the next few months with our Chat & Chips van making its way across our Phoenix area and our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 12 September. The AGM is your opportunity to have your say, meet other residents and find out about our future plans, so please do come along.

We've been busy over the past few weeks working on our next Annual Report. This will give you an overview of how we've performed over the past year, and we'll be looking to the future as we approach our 10th birthday in December.

The news has been dominated lately by the tragic events at Grenfell Tower and we know that some of you will have concerns. We want to reassure you that fire safety is our top priority and we have measures in place to ensure the safety of our properties. Included with this edition of Community News is your pull-out copy of our fire safety advice. Please make sure you read this and keep it in a safe place.

As members of the Residents Communications Group we are always looking for people to join and get involved. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Best wishes, from the Residents Communications Group



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WIN! 'Spot The Difference!'

Can you spot the eight differences from this picture from the Phoenix Festival? If you think that you've spotted them all, please contact us by Friday 18 August for your chance to win a £25 prize.



If you would like help and support with training or getting into work, visit our Job Club every Tuesday from 10am.

My Phoenix – Assanatu Cooper

We feature a different Phoenix resident in each issue of Community News. Assanatu worked with our Property and New Business team in a work experience placement for four weeks after finding out about our opportunities at our Job Club.

How long have you been a Phoenix resident?

I've always lived in Lewisham, but I've only been a Phoenix resident for five years. I was originally with Lewisham, but they knocked the building down where I lived. A friend recommended Phoenix to me as she said that they were a great housing association. I bid for a Phoenix property and was lucky enough to be chosen to view a house, and here I am.

What changes have you seen?

I've seen changes in myself. I feel that Phoenix has helped me be the person that I am today. I've gained so much confidence in the last few months from building relationships with the staff. They've been so helpful and I've started to believe in myself. I feel inspired.

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

I love that Phoenix is open and I always feel welcome when I come to The Green Man. I've found everyone so helpful and easy to talk to and I'm so happy that I came into the Job Club and met Asharne (one of Phoenix's apprentices). He's been amazing and has given me so much confidence to improve and do more. I feel so lucky that I got my work experience placement with Phoenix to see the other side of a housing association.

What would you change?

Phoenix are doing so much to help the community. I originally came into the office for a repair enquiry and ended up joining the Job Club. Everyone is so friendly and I've gained so much from the training courses on offer that I now have five certificates! I've had so much support that I would like Phoenix to reach out to more residents and let them know that they can get help if they need it.

What are your hopes for the future?

I've been given so many opportunities and I'd love to continue developing myself and learn even more skills. Technology is changing so much and Phoenix have given me an educational platform that I can build on. I've got so much to give. I hope that someone gives me the chance to work with them so that I can start to rebuild my career.



Assanatu at her desk at The Green Man



Getting a grilling!



Assanatu during her work experience placement, June 2017

Look out for the latest opportunities at Phoenix by visiting our website



Round the houses

Would you like to receive the latest news and updates by email? If so please let us know.



Just the job

We've received London Living Wage accreditation! We're pleased to let you know that we've been recognised as an employer that is committed to ensuring our staff receive the pay that reflects the true cost of living in London.

Festival fever takes over Forster Park



Our annual Phoenix Festival brought over 6,000 people together for a family friendly day of fun that included a haunted house, prettiest pooch competition and a host of activities to keep everyone entertained.

We look forward to seeing you all at next year's Festival!

Hazelhurst Court – show open days



Anyone who has been around Beckenham Hill Station will have seen that our new development is nearing completion.

The 60 new extra care properties will provide older people with a comfortable home and the support they need.

Interested residents were given a preview of what the homes have to offer at a special open day. Dozens of people took the tour of a show flat and had the chance to ask questions about the new development.

Please get in touch if you would like to find out more information.

Planning for a celebration

Our residents' annual report 2016-17, 'Planning for a celebration' will be available later this month.

Printed copies of the report will be available at The Green Man and on request. A digital version will be available on our website and sent to residents by email.

This year we have chosen not to send a printed copy of the report to every resident.

Making the report available online, and printing and posting copies only to residents who tell us they'd like a copy, will save an estimated £4,000.

Top apprenticeship award



Congratulations to our apprentice Asharne Litchmore who's been named London's top housing apprentice!

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) awarded Asharne 'London Apprentice of the Year' for coordinating training for more than 400 residents and assisting more than 80 residents into work over the last two years.

Phoenix resident Marjorie King said: "When I met Asharne I was feeling very low. He helped me with my CV and was always positive and encouraging. Now that I'm back in work I'm going to miss him!"

Under review



Members of our Resident Scrutiny Panel have been hard at work finalising their latest report on the handyman service.

The service is aimed at residents who are over 60 or disabled and can offer a range of services to help you with odd jobs or DIY around the home.

Look out for the summary report which will be available soon.



Round the houses

Top dogs!

We're very proud to have been named the best landlord in the country for involving residents.

The Outstanding Approach to Tenant Involvement accolade at the UK Housing Awards reflects our commitment to giving all residents the chance to influence our services and future plans.

Judges particularly liked our unique 'school of social housing' – the Phoenix Academy – which gives residents a detailed understanding of all aspects of our work.

More than 30 residents have just graduated from the academy or completed Chartered Institute of Housing qualifications. Congratulations to all!



Housing moves

Residents came out in force to find out what their rehousing options were at our first Phoenix Home Show event.

80 visitors posed their housing questions to representatives from Trading Places, House Exchange and Seaside & Country Homes.

Resident Juliana said: "I came today because I'm looking for somewhere new and just wanted some guidance of what choices are open to me. I'm hoping this will be an opportunity to get some help and advice."

Works in progress

As part of our works programme to maintain the standard of our properties, we will be carrying out roofing work and other associated work to five blocks on the Meadows estate this year. The works include:

- roof renewals and repairs
- works to expansion joints
- blocked drain outlets
- painting of stairwells
- electrical works
- lightning protection (upgrade works).

We have consulted with tenants and leaseholders and have formed the Meadows Working Party. This resident group will work closely with us to appoint a contractor and will be part of the interview panel and selection process.

Look out for the works which are due to start in October this year.

Share your stories as part of Fellowship arts drive

As part of our lottery funded restoration of The Fellowship Inn in Bellingham, we're working with three arts groups to create a community play, tapestry and oral history project.

The Working Party Theatre Group, Stitches in Time and the Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre are now looking for volunteers to get involved.

If you are interested in getting involved with The Fellowship Inn or contributing to the art projects, please call 020 8854 1316 or email fellowshipparts@glypt.co.uk

Our next Chat & Chips event will take place on Weds 9 August at 5.30pm, contact us for details.



Chat & Chips has been fantastic!

The waft of salt and vinegar has drawn hundreds of residents to our Chat & Chips events on Shroffold Road and Scarlet Road, to speak to our teams, ask questions and find out about our plans.

Guests enjoyed portions of free fish and chips and chatted with staff about what's important to them and how we can improve services.

Resident Charlotte said: "It was really useful to speak with staff members. I got lots of questions answered. A really unusual concept but I really enjoyed coming out today!"

Our chip van still has two locations left to visit at the Meadows and at Playgreen Way. We love getting out into the community to meet residents so please come along!

How are we doing?

We explore a different area of our work and performance in each issue of Community News. This time we look at fire safety and the practices we have in place to protect our residents in the event of a fire.

What's happening?

Figures from the London Fire Brigade show that from April 2015 to March 2016 there were 702 fires in Lewisham, which was an increase from the previous year.

Fire safety is everyone's responsibility and with over 6,000 properties we take our own responsibilities for fire safety extremely seriously. Your safety is our top priority. We continually update our fire safety checks and work to ensure we have robust fire safety measures in place.

In light of the horrific events at Grenfell Tower, we understand that many residents may have some questions or concerns about fire safety.

We would like to reassure our residents that there is no overcladding at any of blocks. None of the ACM (aluminium composite material) products that have since failed fire safety tests at high rise buildings elsewhere, are used on any of our properties.



What are we doing?

Our approach is to adopt good practice to prevent, detect and protect you and your home in the event of a fire. So far this year we have completed all of our fire alarm and emergency lighting tests.

Part of our process includes Fire Risk Assessments. These are a legal requirement and can help us identify any fire hazards. An assessment also identifies any dangers in our buildings and helps us prepare a plan of action to prevent the risk of fire.

We have valid Fire Risk Assessments in place for all of our blocks with shared communal areas. All of our Fire Risk Assessments are carried out by an independent, accredited specialist contractor. Then any required actions are monitored by our Board.

To ensure that all exit and escape routes are clear, trained staff carry out weekly fire safety checks to ensure that the communal areas are free from flammable materials and obstructions. Please support us with this by keeping communal areas clear at all times.

How can you help?

We would firstly ask you to ensure you have a smoke alarm in your home. If you don't have a fire alarm, please let us know and we can install this for you. You should test that it's working at least once a week.



We will clean and test your alarms once a year, at the same time as we carry out the annual gas safety check at your home.

Make sure your doors are closed before you go to bed. This will help to prevent a fire from spreading quickly through your home.

If you live in a block, please familiarise yourself with the Fire Safety Notice on the ground floor and ensure that fire exits are kept clear and free from obstruction.

Plan and practise your escape route and make sure that everyone in your home knows where they can access keys for doors or windows.

If you are a leaseholder and let your home, please ensure that you have fire safety plans in place.

For further information please refer to our fire safety in the home booklet and make sure you are aware of what you should do in the event of a fire.

If you have concerns about the safety of your home, you can contact the London Fire Brigade and arrange a free home safety visit on 0800 028 4428.



Money matters



A bright idea!

If you're in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to get a grant from a charitable trust to help pay it off.

The following energy companies offer grants and schemes that are open to anyone - you don't have to be a customer:

- **British Gas Energy Trust**
- **EDF Energy Trust**
- **Eon Energy Fund**

There are also companies which offer grants specifically for their customers:

- **Npower Energy Fund**
- **Scottish Power Hardship Fund**
- **Ovo Energy Fund**
- **SSE (Southern Electric) Priority Assistance Fund - check if you're eligible by calling 0800 072 8616**

To get advice on how to make these applications contact our Financial Inclusion team.

Stay safe online

As more services are go online, its important that we all know how to protect ourselves from online fraud.

We're working with Lloyds banking group to provide free training for staff and residents, to keep safe online.

If 150 residents complete the training before December 2017, Lloyds will award £1,500 to our training and employment programme to help more people in the Phoenix community.

Each module takes 15 to 20 minutes to complete. You can do as much training as you like but you only need to complete the online safety module to help us qualify for the grant.



Look out for our energy advice desk at **The Green Man**, starting in **September**.

Are you covered?

Did you know that you can insure the contents of your home for as little as £1.20 per week?

We offer an easy and affordable way to protect items like your household goods which include furniture, TV, clothing, carpets and electrical goods from fire, theft, vandalism and water damage.

The scheme is open to tenants and leaseholders and could be just the thing to keep you covered.

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact us.



Gold Club members get 20% off our Aviva contents insurance!

Tap into saving on your water bills

Cut your water bills in half with the Thames WaterSure Plus Scheme. If you are eligible, you could receive a 50% reduction to your future water bills. To check eligibility or to apply call Thames Water on 0800 009 3652.

Do it online

View your rent account, including your account balance and recent payments and transactions online at any time.

Visit www.phoenixch.org.uk to register for our self-service portal or to log in to your account.



So, get online, get learning and stay safe.

If you have any questions about how to register, please contact us.



Flocks away

Pigeons can cause a nuisance in large numbers as they nest and roost on balconies. Their droppings can be unpleasant on balconies and walkways and can cause a slip hazard on pavements.

We want you to enjoy your home and we are working with our partners to address the issue of pigeons in our areas.

In the meantime, please do not feed the pigeons and ensure that you put your rubbish in lidded bins. We also ask that you keep your balcony clean and free from food as this will deter the pigeons from flocking to our area.

Down the drain

Did you know that the main cause of blocked drains and pipes are due to inappropriate items being flushed down the toilet?

Blocked sinks and toilets can be inconvenient and messy. Follow our top tips to keep your water pipes running clear and free from blockages.

Top tips

- Dispose of nappies, wet wipes, kitchen towel and sanitary items in the bin – do not flush them down the toilet.
- Never pour food items such as rice or fat down your sink.
- Use a plughole filter to catch food in the sink and hair in the shower or bath, to ensure that nothing but water goes down the plughole.
- Ensure that your washing machine has been plumbed in correctly.

Your home, your views

We need your thoughts to help us to shape the future vision of your home and local area. Your opinion matters. No idea is a bad idea and we want to hear from you. Online? Visit our website to take our short survey. Prefer paper? Come and see us at The Green Man and fill out our survey to help steer our plans.



Any information that you give us will be in the strictest confidence and the results of the survey will help guide the creation of our new Asset Management Strategy.



Gas safety week takes place 18-24 September.

At your service

Every year we carry out a gas safety check at all our rented properties, which includes servicing of any appliances that we own.

Gas appliances may include your gas boiler, gas fire, gas cooker or hob, central heating system, radiators or your hot water system.

We will also check that all carbon monoxide detectors placed in your home are working correctly to protect you from carbon monoxide poisoning as you can't see, smell or taste the gas.

Please help us keep our 100% gas safety record by allowing us into your home to carry out your annual gas safety check.

Leaseholder? Please ensure that you arrange your own annual gas safety check and if you have tenants in your property provide them with a copy of the report.

Top marks!

Our Phoenix Repairs Service has received a top health and safety accreditation. The OHSAS 18001 is an internationally recognised stamp of approval for good health and safety practices.



Changes to your benefits
needn't be a
"scary thing"

Are you ready for Universal Credit?

Universal Credit will roll out across Lewisham by the end of 2018. Universal Credit is a single monthly payment that combines other benefits and tax credits together.

Anyone of working age who makes a new benefit claim from 2018 will automatically need to apply for Universal Credit.

Universal Credit will replace:

- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Income Support**
- **Child Tax Credit**
- **Working Tax Credit**

People who are on existing benefits that are replaced will be transferred in one of two ways:

Natural migration

If you experience a significant change of circumstance that affects your benefit entitlement the opportunity will be taken to move you on to Universal Credit at that point.

Managed migration

If your circumstances don't change, once Universal Credit has been rolled out in every part of the country, the Department for Work and Pensions will begin to move people over to Universal Credit on a systematic basis

Take our quiz to find out if you are up to date:

1. Universal Credit is being introduced...

- Gradually across the country and to different groups of people.
- All at once to all people on benefits
- Only in Scotland

2. Universal credit will...

- Replace only your housing benefits
- Be an additional payment on top of your existing benefits
- Bring together a range of benefits into a single monthly payment.

3. From April 2018, everyone who makes a new claim for benefits in Lewisham must claim Universal credit

True or False

4. Universal Credit will be paid...

- Monthly in arrears
- Weekly in arrears
- Monthly in advance

5. If you switch to Universal Credit how will your housing benefit be paid?

- Directly to my bank account
- Directly to my housing association
- Directly to my next of kin

6. Existing benefits claimants will be moved to Universal Credit over the course of the next few years.

True or False

We're here to help. If you need support with the benefit changes or would like further advice, please contact us.



Answers: 1. A 2. C 3. True 4. A 5. A 6. True



If you would like to sign up to Direct Debit, please contact us.

Changing rooms

Congratulations to our lucky winner of a room makeover in May's Gold Club prize draw.

Our winner, who would like to stay anonymous, said: "I can't believe it. It's been amazing to see the difference in the room. I didn't think I'd win something like this, just for being a gold member. Thank you."

If you would like to join the Gold Club reward scheme, please contact us.



Direct Debit

Direct Debit is a hassle free way to pay your account and is easy to set up.

Every six months you could be entered into free prize draw to win £250 and you could earn 1000 points by becoming a Gold Club member

Good luck found its way to lucky resident Susie who won £250 as part of our latest Direct Debit prize draw.

Resident Susie Lambo said: "I didn't realise that paying by Direct Debit could reward me in this way. I'm so excited to win. I'll be spending the money on my house."

Green fingers go for gold!



Keen gardeners have been putting their trowels to good use to win a prize in our annual Phoenix in Bloom gardening competition.

Dozens of green fingered residents have entered our competition to be winners in the best balcony, best residential garden, best fruit veg or allotment and young gardener of the year categories.

Judging will take place this August and the winning buds will be announced on our website. Good luck!



On going back to school...



I'm so excited to be writing my first article for Community News!

My back to school experience with the Phoenix Academy started in April this year and I've learnt so much about social housing and about Phoenix over the nine weeks.

The Phoenix staff who run the academy are passionate about housing and taught us in a really easy to understand way. We had lots of group discussions and

loads of fun too! No homework (which was a bonus) and only 18 hours of sessions.

I'm new to the area and through the academy I have met some great friends who along with the staff have spurred me on and given me my confidence back.

We had an amazing graduation event in the Barn, full of passion and love. The tenants and staff really are together at Phoenix. I feel very lucky and proud to have been a part of it.

Tina Heyfron is a member of the Residents Communication Group.

Community Chest winners announced!

Our Community Chest offers £100,000 of funding to projects that will make a difference to the lives of Phoenix residents. This year we received a record number of votes cast online, by post and in person at the Phoenix Festival. There are a number of amazing activities taking place across the area over the summer holidays and throughout the year, so please look out for upcoming dates on our website.

After tenants voted for their favourites, larger grants of up to £20,000 were awarded to the following projects:

Pathways 2 Employment & Training Hub £11,000:

Employability skills training and workshops to help residents to overcome barriers to employment.

Tel: 020 8317 7380



Chit Chat Change £19,990: Through camping, day trips, training and activities, Phoenix residents get together and get involved to help shape the local area. Tel: 07854 782 835

Bellingham Gateway £6,787: A summer scheme to informally educate and keep young people engaged in fun, new, exciting and life changing activities.

Tel: 07580 777 874



Friends of Forster Park Nature Trail £11,000:

Improving Forster Memorial Park, including a nature trail, design sessions, better seating and a new picnic area. Tel: 07864 516 748



Dumps Fun Activities £6,383: A summer programme, offering 5 days a week of fun with BBQ's, trips, cooking and a gardening project to help the environment.

Tel: 020 8698 2991

Community Project Worker £15,000: Promoting and delivering health/wellbeing community led projects, including the Bellingham Festival. Tel: 020 8461 2213



Get Out & Go Wild £19,968: 5-day residential adventure programme to improve young people's wellbeing and resilience, including rock climbing and canoeing. Tel: 020 8294 8160



Young Carers Holiday Club £20,000: For young carers aged 5-16 to increase their access to positive, engaging activities. Tel: 020 8699 8686



Noticeboard

Enjoy a community camping trip by the sea from Monday 7 August - Wednesday 9 August or how about a day trip to Margate on 23 August? Contact one of our Community Chest projects Impact Matters on 07513 053 631.

Want to kickstart a new healthier you?

Come along and join the free Health and Wellbeing event on Saturday 16 September 12-4pm.

Save the date and join Diversity Day at The Green Man on 21 October. It's the perfect opportunity for residents to come together in the community, make friends and celebrate the diversity of our area.

Use your vote, have your say

Our Phoenix Annual General Meeting (AGM) is an important date in the calendar and an opportunity for all shareholders to have your say.

Our 9th AGM will take place on Tuesday 12 September at The Green Man, and everyone's invited.

The AGM will begin at 4.30pm with light refreshments and a chance to meet with fellow residents, staff and partners. The formal AGM will begin at 6pm and finish at 7.30pm with a buffet afterwards.

Look out for your invitation soon!



Fun in the sun

Young Phoenix resident aged 10-15? Get Out and Go Wild this summer and enjoy a 4 day residential programme with Wide Horizons from 21-25 August. Contact Wide Horizons for more info on 020 8294 8160. Funded by the Phoenix Community Chest.

Get in the driving seat!

Do you have a passion for driving and working with people? We're looking for volunteer drivers to help residents get to The Green Man from our new extra care scheme Hazelhurst Court. If you're over 21, have a clean driving licence and a permit to drive a minibus, we'd love to hear from you.

Your photos

We're looking for residents to share their photos of their home and the community over the past ten years. If you've any favourite pics that you'd like to share, please send them to us.

Stay in touch



By phone: 0800 0285 700 from 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday (and for emergency calls at all other times)

Please note: every other Tuesday, 2-3pm, we have an emergency phone service only as a result of staff training.



Email: info@phoenixch.org.uk



Web: www.phoenixch.org.uk



Twitter: @phoenixtogether @greenmanhub



YouTube: www.youtube.com/phoenixtogether



Visit: The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, SE6 2RP

We will be closed on Monday 28 August for the bank holiday.

We will also be closing early on Friday 29 September.

Our out of hours' emergency will be in operation at these times.