

# Phoenix *Flyer*

A newsletter by residents for residents



All information correct at time of printing. Please visit [www.phoenixch.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.phoenixch.org.uk/coronavirus) for up-to-date information.



## Getting connected

**Amel Kebladj has been a Phoenix tenant since 2017 and lives in Downham with her husband and three children. Amel received a new laptop from our Connected Together programme which has helped with daily life, and she encourages other residents to apply for a digital device.**

With three children, online lessons and lots of homework, it's really important to have a digital device for the kids to use. We have a laptop but it's very old and doesn't work anymore so the kids get by with smartphones, which is less than ideal.

I wanted to get a new device for the kids to use, but during the first lockdown, my fridge and washing machine broke, so I had to prioritise buying those essential appliances.

By summer, the kids were really fed up with not having the right or necessary equipment. We were looking forward to the Phoenix's online summer event, Summer Fun, but as I was signing the kids up, I read that we'd need a digital device to join the workshops. My heart sank as I knew the phones wouldn't be enough.

Then I saw a link to the Connected Together Programme which gives Phoenix residents devices to keep families and friends connected, not only to the internet, but to each other.

I followed the link and read about the programme, which would be a massive help to my family, all that was left to do was apply!

Not long after I applied, we were told we'd be receiving a shiny new Chromebook laptop and a few weeks later it arrived! My eldest couldn't contain her excitement; she was very happy!

With the new laptop, not only were we able to take part in the Summer Fun workshops, but it's been much easier for my daughter to do her homework, online learning and of course, gaming. Previously she could blame not doing her homework on her smartphone, but that excuse has gone out of the window. Thank you, Phoenix!

**If you're isolated or in need of a new device, but can't afford to buy one, I'd really recommend getting in touch with the Connected Together Programme. It was a really quick and easy process to get the device, and it's been such a big help having the new laptop!**

**To find out more about the Connected Together Programme, please visit our website or get in contact.**



[info@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:info@phoenixch.org.uk)



[www.phoenixch.org.uk](http://www.phoenixch.org.uk)



0800 0285 700

# Applications for this year's Community Chest are open!

Our £100,000 Community Chest fund is now open for applications! Local projects can apply for small grants of up to £2,500 and large grants of up to £20,000. Who wins will be decided by our residents later this year.

Anyone can apply including Phoenix residents, local businesses and voluntary groups; you just have to show how you'll benefit the Phoenix community.

Since 2013 we've awarded over £800,000 to a wide range of projects including family trip days, art and craft projects, exercise classes, women's football and a choir.

Our Board Chair Anne McGurk said:

*"With so much of life restricted or on hold at the moment I was truly thrilled to hear that the Community Chest has launched. This is a 'life-changing' grant that reaches so many people in our community and has done so for eight years."*



Applications close at midday on Friday 5 March. We'll be running Applicant Support Sessions via telephone and video calls on 9, 10 and 11 February.

To find out more, visit our website or get in contact.

## When Santa came to Phoenix!

Thank you to the 411 residents who came out to meet Santa and get a present in December!

Due to the pandemic, our Christmas Community Links event at The Green Man couldn't go ahead as usual. So, we got in touch with Santa to see if he and his elves would visit us. Santa and his sleigh visited six different locations across the Phoenix area to give out presents and collect letters addressed to him.

We also wanted to celebrate the crafters in our community with our Christmas Competition. We had an adult and child winner in each of our three categories: Christmas

decoration, Christmas poem and Christmas knit. Thank you to everyone who took part and congratulations to our winners and to our runners up.



Best Christmas Knit winner, Temidayo, with her Christmas hamper

To read more about when Santa visited south Lewisham, and stay up-to-date with the latest news and events, visit our website.

## Events

### Be your own boss

Starting in March

We're working with award-winning Enterprise Cube to offer 40 residents the chance to learn how to set up their own business on this free 12-week course. Applications close 24 February. Visit our website or get in contact to find out more.

### Career Coaching

Mondays and Wednesday, 12.30-3pm

Join our Roots into Work team who can help you find a job, whether you're returning to work, just starting out or looking for a career change. Visit our website to find out more and book your place.

## News in numbers

From January – November 2020...

Find out more about what's going on:  
[www.bit.ly/EventsAtPhoenix](http://www.bit.ly/EventsAtPhoenix)



122 Phoenix households were given a stocking and 244 children were given presents during Phoenix Festivities.

We supported residents to obtain grants or benefits worth £287,000

Our Grounds Maintenance team completed 1,204 inspections.

Our Roots into Work team supported 7 residents into work.

# Phoenix could be expanding

**We're pleased to announce that we're in talks with another housing association, L&Q, about the possible transfer of homes in Grove Park to our management and ownership.**

The plans involve just under 1,500 homes and would be an opportunity for us to extend our model of resident leadership and shareholding membership to people living in an area next to our existing homes.

Residents in Grove Park are currently being consulted on the proposals. If

the transfer proceeds later this year, then these residents would have the same access to all of our involvement and engagement opportunities, up to Board membership.

Phoenix Community Housing's Chief Executive, Jim Ripley, said: "This would be a fantastic opportunity to take on hundreds of new homes right on our doorstep and we're very grateful to L&Q for offering it."

Our existing services will remain the same. We are committed to providing the best possible service to you and continuing to invest in Downham, Bellingham and Catford.



## Access Phoenix services online

We're revamping the 'My Phoenix' online resident portal so that you can access services online! Once you've created an account, you'll be able to do everything from paying your rent to reviewing and updating the information we hold about you. The new portal will make it quicker and easier for you to contact Phoenix and is safe and secure. Look out for more information on our website and sign up to receive an alert when the new portal is launched.

## WIN WIN WIN!

Everyone who signs up to use the new portal within 30 days of launching will be entered into a free prize draw. Watch this space!

If you're struggling to pay your rent or service charges, we're here to help. We can help you claim additional benefits that you may be entitled to and help work out a payment plan for your rent. If you need support, please get in touch.



## Enrol now for the Phoenix Academy!

Our 'school of social housing' will be offering Chartered Institute of Housing Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 qualifications to anyone in the community. Taught via video call, you will gain a more in-depth understanding of housing associations and their work alongside Phoenix residents and staff, with support from a professional tutor. If you'd like to take the next step and enrol, get in contact. You can find out more about the Phoenix Academy on our website.

## Keeping us in the loop

It's important that you keep us and all benefit departments informed if circumstances change in your household. Your benefits will need to be reviewed and there are instances where you may be entitled to more support.

### This may include:

- if someone moves in or out of your home
- if you have a child turning 16 or 18 and any changes to their finance or education
- change in benefit entitlement
- your income going up or down
- bereavement in your household
- medical conditions
- change in employment.

If you're worried about a change in your circumstances, or if you think you may be eligible for extra support, we're here to help. We can make sure that you are accessing the help you are entitled to. For more information and support, contact us today.



# Repairs and safety checks during the pandemic

We have continued to deliver emergency repairs, gas servicing and other essential compliance and safety checks throughout the coronavirus crisis. It's a legal requirement that you allow our operatives access to your home so that we can make sure it's safe. Due to the coronavirus restrictions we are prioritising emergency and essential repairs, and may not be able to carry out some other repairs. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

### How will we keep you safe during the visit?

- when our operatives arrive, they will explain which rooms they need to access and will use hand sanitiser before entering your home
- our staff will always wear a face mask when they are inside your home and will assess if other PPE is needed for the job

- our staff are following social distancing guidelines, including keeping two metres from residents and colleagues.

### How can you help us to keep you safe?

- please help to maintain social distancing during the appointment and stay in a different part of your home wherever possible
- please open any windows in the rooms that we will be working in to help ventilate the space
- to minimise what we need to touch in your home, please open any internal doors and clear the work area.

**We want you to feel safe in your home and reassured by the steps we are taking to keep you safe when working in your home. If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch.**



Our operatives and anyone working on behalf of Phoenix will wear an ID card. If you want to check the identity of anyone who arrives at your home on behalf of Phoenix, please contact us.

## Essential repairs

Our priority for any essential repair is to make the situation safe for you, your household and your neighbours.

We will always try to carry out the full repair on the first visit.

Examples of an essential repair include:

- total loss of electricity, gas or water
- a reported gas leak
- broken boiler with no heating or hot water
- serious water leaks
- a blocked or non-flushing toilet if it's the only one in your home.

Our out of hours service (5pm - 8am) is there to make the situation safe until our repairs team can visit. For more information about our emergency out of hours service, please visit our website or get in contact.



**Remember: if you think can smell gas, open all windows and doors, do not switch on any electrical appliances or switches, leave the property and call the National Grid straight away on 0800 11999.**

## Focus on

# Tackling antisocial behaviour

It's been tough for everyone during the lockdown, but now more than ever, we need to pull together and consider our impact on each other.

Since the first lockdown in March last year, we've seen a sharp rise in complaints of antisocial behaviour (ASB). ASB is an unwelcome activity that causes alarm and distress to people and can take on many forms, including:

- verbal or physical abuse and or violence
- homophobic or other harassment

towards members of the LGBTQ+ community.

- domestic abuse
- vandalism and graffiti
- noise nuisance
- fly-tipping
- threatening or intimidating behaviour
- racial or sexual harassment.

We will treat all reports of ASB in confidence and discuss with you the next steps that will be taken, involving other agencies such as the police where appropriate. We are currently prioritising the most serious cases of ASB.



**If you are experiencing domestic abuse, or are worried about another Phoenix resident, please contact us. We are here to support you and keep you safe.**

## If you need to speak to someone, there is free and confidential help available:

- Call Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline for free and confidential advice, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247
- Women's Aid offers an online chat service for victims of domestic abuse who do not want to be heard by their abuser. Visit their live chat at <https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/>

- You can 'Ask for Ani' at any pharmacy displaying the 'Ask for Ani' logo. They will offer you a safe space, provide a phone and ask if you need support from the police or other domestic abuse support services
- The Men's Advice Line offers free support, advice and information to male victims of domestic abuse

You can call them on 0808 8010327, Monday-Friday, 9am-8pm

- Call Galop's National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans+ Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0800 999 5428 Monday to Friday 10am-5pm, Wednesday to Thursday 10am-8pm.

**If you are in immediate danger, call 999.**

## April 2019 - November 2020...

We received **166** new reports of antisocial behaviour



It cost us an average of **£1,700** to resolve each case of ASB

We had **132** open cases



**58%** of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with how their ASB case was handled

We cleared **672** tonnes of rubbish from Phoenix land, including **190** fridges and **642** mattresses

It cost us **£110,000** to clear fly-tipping



We issued **125** Fixed Penalty Notices to repeat fly-tippers

We have also seen a big increase in fly-tipping. This is more than a costly nuisance, it is a threat to health and safety and a **criminal offence**. Phoenix does not tolerate fly-tipping and will take action to stop it. Please report fly-tipping to us by getting in contact.

Please dispose of your household rubbish in the bins provided. Lewisham Council offers a collection service for a small fee for large household items such as fridges, freezers, carpets, chairs, sofas and beds. They will also collect and recycle mattresses for free. You can find more information at [www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk)

## Community

### Could you be the new Youth Voice of Phoenix?

Our Youth Leadership Programme, #BEin, is looking for Phoenix residents aged 16-25 who are interested in working with like-minded individuals to pitch ideas and develop their creative, personal and professional skills through workshops and mentoring. If you're interested in getting involved, get in touch.

### Pay by Direct Debit and be in with the chance of winning £250

Did you know that if you pay your rent or service charges by Direct Debit, you're automatically entered into a prize draw to win £250? We select three winners twice a year!

Direct Debit is the easy way to pay your rent without having to remember each month. Contact us today to switch your payments to Direct Debit.

Congratulations to Swarna Ragu, one of our three Direct Debit prize winners in October.

*"I prefer to pay my rent by Direct Debit as it is easy and convenient. It prevents late payments and stops me falling into arrears."*



# Keeping in contact

We're committed to delivering the best possible service to you. To do this, it's important that we hold your up-to-date contact details and other key information so that we can keep you informed and use the information to plan and improve our services.

Over the next few months, we'll be checking and updating the key information we hold about our residents. We've written to some of you already and will be contacting all residents over the next few months. We ask for your support in this process.

You can be assured that all personal information provided to Phoenix is kept safe and secure as set in our data protection policy.

Thank you for helping us keep you informed.



## Remembering Micky May

We are sad to learn of the passing of Michael (Micky) May who many of you will know as a former member of our Estates Team. Micky was a hard-working staff member who will be remembered fondly and missed greatly. Our thoughts go out to Micky's family.



# Welcome to Phoenix!

We'd like to welcome our new residents at Springbank Court! Springbank Court is our first shared ownership development, featuring eight homes from one to three bedrooms. Residents received the keys to their new homes in January and moved in shortly afterwards. We hope you enjoy your new homes as well as becoming a part of the Phoenix community!



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Phoenix Community Housing, The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, London, SE6 2RP

@ info@phoenixch.org.uk

@phoenixtogether

www.phoenixch.org.uk

0800 0285 700

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