

# Phoenix *Flyer*

A newsletter by residents for residents



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



**Phoenix resident Kajoriya joined our youth leadership panel, #Bein, two years ago and has taken the time to write about why she joined the group and her experiences since becoming a member. Kajoriya also encourages other young Phoenix residents to join the group.**

My name is Kajoriya, I'm 17 and I'm a Phoenix resident who's grown up in Downham. I first heard about #Bein at a Phoenix event that I took part in called Diversity Day and the person who ran the event suggested that I joined #Bein. I really liked the idea of working on projects with other young people similar to my age since I would be able to share my ideas and opinions to make a change in my community.

I joined #BEin because I wanted to get more involved in my community, connect with like-minded people my age and improve my opportunities.

Since joining the group I've had the chance to get involved in so many

things! One of my favourite things that I've done was running online workshops with special guests as part of Summer Fun last year. Every Thursday in August I ran a two-hour online workshop for other young Phoenix residents to take part in. We covered topics like how to get the job you want for the future, be money smart, how to develop a life plan for success, and a personal development workshop.

Jen, who runs #BEin, was there to help me and was really encouraging. Running the workshops really boosted my confidence. I was nervous to do it at first, but after the first workshop I realised that I could do it and I just needed to believe in myself more. It felt amazing to know I was helping other people my age on important issues. Plus, it was during lockdown so it felt good to connect with other young people and have some fun – even if it was virtually!

I also had the opportunity to sit on the judging panel for this year's Community Chest. I got to evaluate the projects that had applied and give

my opinion on which ones I thought would benefit our community. It was really interesting because I was able to use my voice to say what us young people need, especially during the pandemic.

Joining #BEin has helped me to develop my confidence by being part of a team and talking to new people virtually.

Because of #BEin I feel like I have an important role within my community and am looking forward to taking part in future projects. If like me, you want to do more in the community, have more opportunities and be part of a group of like-minded people, you should join our group. We're always looking for more people to join and you can really benefit as a member of the group. Also, we have fun while we're with the group and get to enjoy food when we meet up.

**If you'd like to find out more about #BEin, and join the group, get in contact.**

**We are very sad to learn of the passing of Phoenix resident Harry Bailey. Turn to page two to read his tribute.**

# And the winners are...

Thank you to everyone who voted in this year's Community Chest! Phoenix tenants had their say to choose which projects would receive a share of our £100,000 community funding.

## Your winners are:

### **Covid Recovery Therapies for Over 55s (£19,990)**

Group therapy sessions for Phoenix residents over 55.

### **Green Shoots (£20,000)**

New facilities to improve Forster Memorial Park.

### **Sports Fun 4 All (£19,777)**

Free football coaching for young people.

### **Young Carers (£20,00)**

Holiday club for young carers in Lewisham.

### **Youth First (£20,000)**

School holiday activities for young people.



#### **Chair of the Board and Phoenix resident Anne McGurk said:**

*"Congratulations to this year's winning projects! I'm looking forward to hearing all about your achievements throughout the year and seeing my fellow residents enjoying your projects. To those who missed out this year, please try again next year!"*

Small grants of up to £2,500 were awarded to Ambient Jam Sensory Library Experience, Bellingham Bats, Bellingham Dances, Block Business, Farmstead Road Community Garden, Kids Kitchen, Mary's Creative Crochet, Parent Partnerships, Recover Rebuild Restart, SAFE Theatre and WellBEin 4 Girls.

**The projects will be starting soon and are free for all residents. For more information and to get involved, visit our website.**

## Re-opening of The Green Man

Many of you will be aware that The Green Man – our headquarters and community building on Bromley Road – had been closed to the general public since March 2020.

We are pleased to announce that in line with the Government's coronavirus guidance, The Green Man is now open again. We are making every effort to ensure the building is COVID secure and ask that you do not visit The Green Man if you are experiencing any symptoms.

We are now offering face-to-face appointments with staff. The Cafe is also open and offering a new menu for eat in or to take-away.

We hope later this year we will be able to reintroduce some of the regular activities in the main hub of the building, such as our job club and digital drop-ins.



## Events

### **Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday 14 September, 6pm – 7.30pm**

All Phoenix resident shareholders are warmly invited and encouraged to take part in this year's AGM. Look out for more information soon.

### **Free advice session**

**Wednesday 29 September, 11am – 12noon**

Citizens Advice Lewisham is offering free and confidential advice via an online session for Phoenix residents on Council Tax, Thames Water and benefit deductions. Contact us to book an appointment.

## Remembering Harry Bailey

We're very sad to hear of the passing of Phoenix resident Harry Bailey who was 99 when he died.

Harry had lived in his home in Bellingham for 67 years and was known for his fundraising for the Taxi Charity, which supports military veterans like Harry to take trips across the UK and Europe. Our thoughts are with Harry's family during this time.



## News in numbers

We've recruited **5** apprentices since January 2020

**85%** of tenants said they were very or fairly satisfied with Phoenix as a landlord in our satisfaction survey for 2020-21

Since it was set up, **75** students have graduated the Phoenix Academy, **31** of whom were residents

**70%** of leaseholders said they were satisfied with Phoenix as a landlord in our satisfaction survey for 2020-21



# Phoenix is blooming!

Judging is currently taking place for our annual gardening competition – Phoenix in Bloom - which celebrates the contribution of residents to make our community beautiful.

Don't worry if you didn't enter this year. Now is the perfect time to start planting for next year's competition. Whether you've got a garden, balcony or windowsill, there's always space to create something green. Gardening is an easy way to make a space beautiful and it doesn't have to cost a bomb!

Why not discover your green fingers with some plant pots on a balcony, or a window box? You can buy pots, seeds and compost cheaply at big supermarkets and other local retailers. You don't even need any specialist tools. You can use ordinary



scissors to trim plants and use your hands to make holes for seeds and plant seedlings. Get your green on, grow something to enter in next year's competition and be in with the chance of winning a prize.

**To find out more about Phoenix in Bloom, visit our website or get in touch. Look out for this year's winning entries on our website and in the next Phoenix Flyer.**

## 100 residents sign up to new resident portal in first 24 hours



Since launching on 4 May 2021, over 400 Phoenix residents have signed up to our new look resident portal – MyPhoenix. The new portal allows you to access your information, make payments, keep up-to-date with news in your area, contact us 24/7 and book repairs online.

Registering for MyPhoenix is simple; all you need is internet access and your personal details, including your tenancy number. You can find your tenancy number on your most recent rent or service charge letter or by calling us.

**Find out more about the portal on our website.**

**Register your account at <https://my.phoenixch.org.uk>**



## School's back!

Our 'school of social housing, – The Phoenix Academy – is an opportunity for members of our community to get a qualification in housing from the Chartered Institute of Housing. The Academy will be starting again on Tuesday 28 September with online lessons. Whether you're looking for an introduction into social housing, want to start a career, or further one, you can find the right qualification for you with Levels 1 to 4. Enrol now!

***“The course has encouraged me to pursue a career in social housing and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to continue studying at a higher level.”***

Phoenix Academy Level 1 graduate

**For more information and to enrol, visit our website or get in contact.**



# Financial Wellbeing

Last year our Financial Wellbeing Team assisted over 860 residents with income and welfare benefits. This resulted in increasing residents income by over £437,000 in unclaimed benefits and challenges to benefit decisions.

We can help you access additional benefits and grants, complete or request forms and make referrals to other organisations for specialist services, such as debt and budgeting advice.

We offer one-to-one appointments throughout the week and can help with:

- completing a benefit entitlement check

- understanding what benefits you can claim
- making a benefit application
- challenging benefit decisions
- referring you for specialist money advice.

**If you need support or would like further information, get in contact today.**



## Reminder

The Government Job Retention Scheme has been extended until Thursday 30 September. From Friday 1 October, you will no longer be able to claim cover for wages if you are on furlough due to coronavirus.

# Use less, have more to spend!

## Could you be saving money on your energy bills?

From October 2020 to March 2021, Phoenix leaseholder and Energy Champion Sharon O'Connor has helped residents to save a total of £16,000 on their energy bills. Sharon has been our Phoenix Energy Champion since 2017 and has worked throughout the pandemic to help fellow residents with tips and tricks to make homes more sustainable and wallets heavier.

Saving on your energy bills means more money left to spend on other things. None of Sharon's tips are difficult to do, they just need a bit of organisation and thought. It is all worthwhile when you have a little extra left at the end of the month!

## Switching off your plug sockets

If you put all your electrical items that get left on standby onto one extension lead in each room, you only have to switch off one plug socket at night.

After all, you are paying for the red light that shines at you, or the extra clock on kitchen items blinking away – that's what costs you an average of £65 per year!

## Check the energy rating on your electrical items

When replacing electrical items, get the best energy rated replacement you can. Most large items have energy rating advice labels that say how energy efficient the appliance is.

## Check how much you pay per kilowatt-hour (kWh)

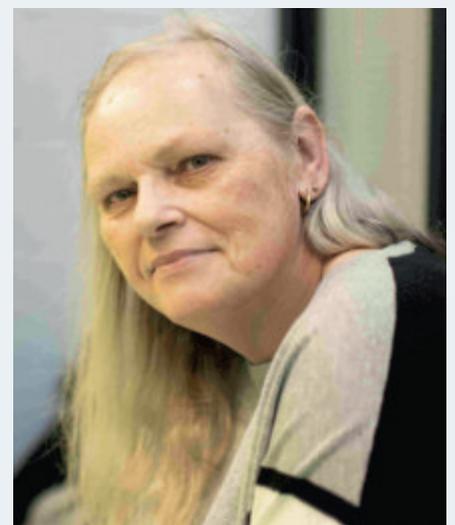
It's important to know how much you pay per kWh for your electricity – this will be shown on any energy bill you have had from your supplier. If you're a pay as you go customer, you'll be able to find this information on your metre.

On the energy rating labels, it will say 'energy consumption kWh cycle'. You can compare this with how much you pay per kWh and

this will tell you how expensive the appliance will be to use.

Some electrical items will tell you that they are 3 kW this just means they use 3 kW per hour, so if you pay 24p per kW, this item will cost 72p for every hour that it is used.

**If you'd like to book an appointment with Sharon for more energy-saving advice, please contact us.**



Sharon O'Connor

# Keeping you safe, now and for the future



Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Towers in 2017, the Government has introduced a new Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Act. We'll be undertaking a major review of the safety of our buildings to ensure we're in line with the new regulation.

Your safety is our top priority, and we want you to feel safe in your home. We've established a new Building Safety Programme to engage with you and review the safety standards of all our properties.

There are three main focusses of the programme:

- cultural change in our approach towards Building Safety
- responsibility across the organisation for raising any concerns about fire safety
- management of building data to develop Building Safety Cases
- collecting information on fire safety features
- promoting the voices of our residents in regard to safety concerns.

As part of the programme we'll be undertaking specialist building surveys of our high rise blocks (18 meters and above), so homes can remain sustainable and safe for you to enjoy. We'll also be engaging with residents through our 'Getting to know you' project to implement Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for those who may struggle to self-evacuate in the event of a fire.

Along with the new Programme, we've set up a Building Safety Programme Board, chaired by Phoenix resident and Vice Chair of the Board, Carmen Simpson, and supported by Lesley Johnson, Director of Property and New Business, as Vice Chair.

The Board will oversee our efforts to ensure we do everything we can to keep you safe in your homes now,

and in the future. The Board will ensure we're communicating with you and help empower you to raise any safety concerns.

As the Building Safety Programme develops and the Programme Board meet, regular updates will be published on our website to keep you up to date with what is happening. We will ensure we demonstrate our commitment to complying with new and changing legislations so that your homes remain safe places for you and your family to live and enjoy.

**We are also looking for a tenant and leaseholder to join our new Building Safety Programme Board. You can find more information about these opportunities on our website or by contacting us.**

## Our blocks...

At the end of March on our fire risk assessments we had...  
Completed **422** actions

Had **399** actions in progress

Had **134** actions that were overdue\*



By the end of March we had **completed 100%** of all fire safety inspections



We have

**244** blocks

**2382** homes are in blocks that are less than **6** storeys



**66** homes are in blocks of more than **6** storeys

**100%**

of our blocks have an up-to-date fire risk assessment.

**0** blocks are high risk

**3** blocks are moderate risk (due to their height)



**241**

blocks are at a tolerable risk

\*We want to reduce the number of overdue actions to keep everyone safe. Some delays are due to new fire doors being delivered, residents finding new places to store things and our fire safety works taking place later than we hoped last year, due to the pandemic.

## Community

### Be the first to know

Sign up to receive tailored email updates from Phoenix and stay up-to-date with the latest news, events, opportunities, employment and training, digital skills and more!

To sign up visit  
[www.phoenixch.org.uk/register](http://www.phoenixch.org.uk/register)

### Is it an emergency?



We understand that your home is important to you, and when things go wrong you want it repaired quickly. When you request a repair, we will ask you some questions so that we can prioritise what type of repair needs to be carried out. If there is a health and safety risk to you or the property, it's classed as an emergency repair and we'll aim to get an operative to you as soon as possible.

Otherwise, we will book a normal everyday repair at a date and time that suits you. We will also request that you ensure that the area being attended to is kept clear so that it is accessible for the operative.

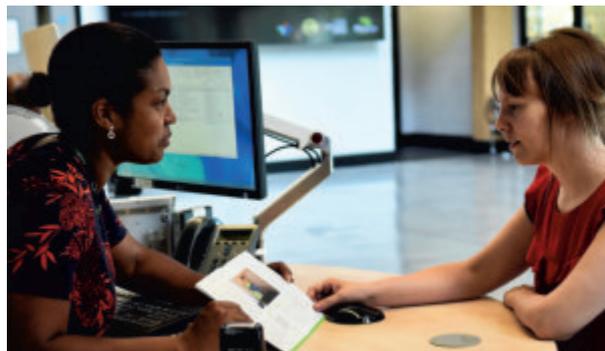
You can book a repair using the MyPhoenix portal, or by contacting us.

# Put us to the test

We're looking for Phoenix residents to help us improve our standards of customer care at Phoenix and will be offering training sessions this Autumn to become a Mystery Shopper. You'll choose a scenario to test the quality of our customer care for example, booking a repair, making a complaint or finding out

more about our policies. You'll then contact us either from the comfort of your own home, or if restrictions allow, visit The Green Man to test our customer care standards. In return you'll get a £20 gift voucher.

**To find out more or book your place on the training, contact us.**



**A Mystery Shopper** is a person that has been assigned a task from a company or organisation to go to a particular shop or office and critique the customer service given by the staff.

## Become a shareholder of Phoenix

One of the easiest ways for you to get involved with Phoenix is by becoming a shareholder. It's free and any tenant or leaseholder over the age of 16 can sign up.

As a shareholder, you can elect resident Board Members, attend and vote at our Annual General Meeting and share in the decision making of Phoenix. Shareholders also become members of the Phoenix Gold Club, which offers rewards in the form of vouchers to say thank you to residents who do things like keeping to appointments or paying their rent by direct debit. This saves us money which helps us to offer good, quality services.

**If you are interested in becoming a shareholder, please contact us for further information.**



For updates, visit our website.



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