

Phoenix *Flyer*

A newsletter by residents for residents



All information correct at time of printing. Please visit www.phoenixch.org.uk for up-to-date information.

A smoother repairs service

By Chief Executive, Denise Fowler and
Resident Chair of the Board, Carmen Simpson



The Phoenix Repairs Service was set up in 2015 after residents told us that they wanted a repairs service that was Phoenix owned and operated. After running as a subsidiary of Phoenix, the repairs service has now come fully in-house, making it easier and smoother for staff to work collaboratively to provide you with the best repairs service possible.

We know that for our residents, the most important thing is having a home that is safe, warm and dry. As a resident-led organisation our biggest responsibility is to make sure that your

home meets our quality standards. Getting repairs done to that standard promptly and communicating with residents at all times is key to delivering a good service and in a timely fashion.

By bringing our repairs service fully in-house and collaborating as one organisation, our staff will be able to make each repair journey more efficient. We want to improve the process, from when you first get in contact to when the operative leaves your home.

We now want to work with residents to improve our service, making sure it is properly joined up and effective from a residents' perspective.

While you have been complimentary about our repairs operatives and we have maintained good satisfaction levels, we know that there is always room to improve.

This is an important milestone in our journey as we look towards the future. Our homes are our havens, our safe spaces, and by working as One Phoenix we can work together with you to create a place you're proud to call home.

If you want to get involved or if you want to learn more about an area that interests you, please get in touch! Your voice matters.



info@phoenixch.org.uk



www.phoenixch.org.uk



0800 0285 700

We're resident-led.

In February 2023, we reflected on our history as a resident-led Community Gateway Housing Association and asked for your views as we look ahead. Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey or joined us at a focus group.

We've received some fantastic suggestions and have contacted everyone who expressed an interest in getting involved.

Based on your feedback, our Board has agreed recommendations to sustain our resident-led Community Gateway model:

- The Phoenix Gateway group will have an enhanced role, overseeing all our resident involvement activities. The group meet quarterly to offer advice to our Board and is made up of residents, staff and Board members.
 - We will seek views from all residents regularly and ensure that those views are fed back to the Board and Committees via the Phoenix Gateway.
 - We will ensure involvement opportunities are flexible and will help to remove any barriers to taking part through a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- From June 2023, we will start to move to a neighbourhood-based approach called Community Links. This means that our teams can work more closely together with you and with local partners to deliver a better service.



Use your voice at our Special General Meeting!

We will be welcoming Shareholders for a special meeting on Tuesday 13 June to vote on new proposals before our Annual General Meeting in September. For more information, and to register your interest in becoming a shareholder, see enclosed leaflet.

If you are interested in joining our Phoenix Gateway or any of our other groups, please contact resident.involvement@phoenixch.org.uk or call 0800 0285 700

Meet our new resident Board Members

Eileen Davies

"Having spent many years as part of Phoenix's Scrutiny Panel and as an Involved Resident, I'm excited to have joined the Board so that I can continue to support Phoenix and our resident-led model."



Evelyne Colley

"I am passionate about residents having a voice and that voice being heard throughout Phoenix, up to and including Board level."



Looking to the future

The Phoenix Board have agreed a new Corporate Plan which focuses on improving the quality of our existing homes and supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis. We want to "get the basics right" and deliver the homes and services you need.

The Board has taken the difficult decision not to hold the Phoenix Festival this year. We will use the money to instead increase our hardship fund for residents and to support local community activities including the Bellingham Centenary celebrations and the Downham Celebrates Festival.

Events

Downham Celebrates Summer Festival

Saturday 17 June, 11am-4pm

Head down to Downham Leisure Centre for a day of free fun and activities.

Bellingham Festival

Saturday 24 June, 12-4pm

Head down to Bellingham Green for a fun-filled day to celebrate the Bellingham Centenary and community with activities, food, live performances and more.

Pride at The Green Man

Tuesday 4 July, 5-7pm

Join us for an evening to celebrate LGBTQI+ Pride. See enclosed leaflet for more information.

We're celebrating 100 years of Bellingham

This year marks 100 years since the Bellingham Estate was built. To celebrate its centenary, we will launch a mobile exhibition at The Fellowship Inn on Wednesday 14 June. The exhibition, highlighting Bellingham's rich history, will stay at The Fellowship for one week before moving to various locations in the Bellingham area. Keep an eye out for your invite to the launch.

Lots of organisations are taking part in the celebrations, including Lewisham Music, who are calling for your photographs, objects and personal stories to capture life in Bellingham. You can contact Lewisham Music at community@lewishammusic.org



Bags of evidence!



We want everyone to feel proud of where they live and take fly tipping very seriously.

From March 2022 to February 2023, we collected **651** tonnes of rubbish, including **1044** mattresses and **360** fridges – costing us **£132,592** to remove!

Our Estates Services Team can spot flytipping while working to keep our community clean and are often able to investigate, identify and re-charge people dumping rubbish.

When we have identified the perpetrators, we gather evidence to issue a fixed penalty notice (FPN) which can result in fines of up to £2,500.

From April 2023 to Feb 2023, **40** FPN requests were sent to Lewisham Council and **21** have been confirmed as served to the perpetrator.

For information on how to dispose of bulky items, visit www.lewisham.gov.uk

Clamping down on abandoned vehicles

We've also been working to reduce the number of abandoned vehicles. In 2018-2019, there were 90 abandoned vehicles on our estates. We have now reduced the number to 20 using our Abandoned Vehicle Policy.

Changes to our fencing policy

Keeping homes safe is our top priority, but like many housing associations, Phoenix is facing additional financial pressure as we navigate the cost-of-living crisis and support our residents.

This year, we have reviewed our fencing policy that sets out a priority-based but transparent and fair approach to our service delivery.

Our new policy, applicable to this year, highlights the repairs we are responsible for undertaking. For example,

if it constitutes a severe health and safety hazard or the individual circumstances are seriously vulnerable enough to restrict a resident from maintaining sufficient boundaries between properties.

It also highlights what costs will be recharged to residents who have fencing damaged due to neglect, wilful damage, misuse or vandalism by a tenant, family member, visitor of a tenant, or an animal owned by a tenant. You can view the policy on our website.



The power of conversation

Through a conversation at one of our events, our Financial Wellbeing advisor discovered that a resident was potentially entitled to additional support.

After meeting with the resident they were awarded a backdated payment of **£5,500** and an extra **£92** per week.

If you're struggling with your finances or if you want some advice to maximise your income, contact financial.wellbeing@phoenixch.org.uk or call 0800 0285 700 to book a one-to-one appointment with the team. They can support you with:

- understanding benefit entitlement
- applying for benefits and grants
- budgeting and money management
- getting grants for essential household items
- accessing help from other organisations.



Join the next Scrutiny Panel review!

Our resident Scrutiny Panel are a group of residents who put Phoenix under the microscope by working with staff to review how we're performing and recommend improvements. The next Scrutiny Panel review will focus on financial wellbeing. If you would like to get involved, please email scrutiny@phoenixch.org.uk or call 0800 0285 700.

Free mental health and wellbeing support

We've partnered with tenant support provider Life & Progress to give Phoenix residents free 24/7 access to:

- mental health support
- unlimited counselling
- wellbeing advice
- legal information
- financial guidance
- child/dependent care information.

You can also access the Life & Progress wellbeing portal which will share practical support to help tackle challenges you may be facing.

The service is confidential and can be accessed online or over the phone. Call 0330 094 5593 or visit www.tsws-access.co.uk

Login details:

Username: **phoenix** Password: **tenant**



Digital drop-ins

Are you struggling to get online or use your mobile, laptop or tablet? Our Digital Skills advisors are on hand to support you with getting the most from your digital device.

Whether you need help with online banking, paying bills, checking your emails or staying in contact with family and friends, whatever it is, they can help. If you need support, drop-in to The Green Man on Wednesdays from 10am to 12pm.

Need to get online but don't have the right tools? Our Connected Together programme can offer you a digital device and/or data-loaded SIMs. Get in contact and talk to us about your needs and we will tell you what support is available.

Focus on: Resident Satisfaction

In May 2022, we moved to surveying 10-25% of residents every three months so that we can make changes to our services based on your feedback.

3,709 surveys have been completed between April 2022 and March 2023.

The survey asks residents' views on our overall service, our repairs service, health and safety, how we can improve, and the extent to which residents feel that we listen and act upon their views.

The areas that residents have told us they would like to improve are customer care, complaints and repairs. The year to date results also highlighted areas where we are performing above our targets.

Phoenix treats me fairly and with respect.
86% agree

I am satisfied with the overall service provided by Phoenix.
76% agree

Phoenix listens and acts upon my views.
70% agree

My home is safe.
76% agree

Time taken to complete most recent repair.
68% satisfied

Phoenix's approach to complaint handling.
32% satisfied



Phoenix's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.
72% satisfied



How we're responding to resident feedback

The survey results go to our Board, Phoenix Gateway and Resident Experience Committee and form key indicators for our corporate plan. We use comments from residents to help with team planning and changes to our services.

We have logged nearly 1,221 call back requests where residents have let us know that they would like us to contact them.

Our Phoenix Repairs Service has moved fully in-house to drive stronger collaboration across Phoenix and service improvements for residents. View the cover page to find out more.

In response to an increase in complaints and a decline in our complaints handling performance, we invited residents who had been through our complaints process to share their experience and suggest ways we could improve. Thank you to everyone who got involved. We've listened to your feedback and are establishing a new complaints policy and a new Complaints Investigation Team to improve our process.

How we collect your views

The surveys are carried out anonymously by phone on our behalf by an organisation called K-West.

K-West will call you from a UK mobile number. No calls will be made after 6.30pm or on Sundays.

If you are unsure whether the number calling you is genuine, or if you have any concerns, please contact us on 0800 0285 700. If you call the number back, you will

receive a recorded message explaining that the call was about a survey and K-West will call back later.

If you are unable to carry out the survey by telephone and require an alternative format, please contact us.

There are lots of opportunities for residents to get involved with Phoenix and we welcome your views and feedback at any time.

Community

Fire safety in Phoenix buildings

We have created a fire safety guide for residents who live in Phoenix buildings.

This guide contains some extremely valuable information about building safety measures found in both your block and your home.

We encourage you to take the time to read it all. This information could save your life.

To access the guide scan the QR code, visit our website or contact us to request a print copy.



For home safety advice for all phoenix homes, visit www.phoenixch.org.uk/advice-support

Remembering Helen Whiteley

We are saddened to learn of the death of Helen Whiteley.

Helen was a Phoenix Residents' Group member in the early days of Phoenix and remained involved in our Communications Group and Policy Working Group.

At the Communications Group, Helen would often challenge what we were doing, but it was clear that this was sprung from a deep passion for making a success of Phoenix and underlaid with a wonderful sense of humour. She was always particularly keen for us to include more images of pets in our residents' newsletters, including her own.

Our thoughts are with Helen's family and friends.



Press to test!

Have you tested your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors recently?

We have a legal duty to check that you have working detectors as part of your annual gas safety check but it's important to test them regularly.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.



Making a complaint

You can register a complaint by telephone, in writing, in person or by email at complaints@phoenixch.org.uk. Visit our website or contact us for more information on our complaints process.

If you are unhappy with how we've handled your complaint, you can discuss your complaint with the Housing Ombudsman at any point during the complaints process. The Housing Ombudsman can formally investigate your complaint when the Phoenix complaints process has ended.

To contact the Housing Ombudsman, call them directly on **0300 111 3000**, visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk or write to: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ.

For updates, visit our website.



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Gold



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