

Phoenix



OUR COMMUNITY

A walk through Bellingham, Downham and Whitefoot

Residents' Annual Report **2013-14**



WELCOME...

We're pleased to introduce your Phoenix residents' annual report for 2013-14. Join us on a walk through our community.

We've listened to your feedback from last year's annual report and worked hard to make this year's even better.

Phoenix is all of us. Our homes, our streets, our green spaces, tenants, leaseholders and staff alike. In this year's annual report you'll pass lots of familiar places and well-loved landmarks within the Phoenix area, and meet lots of people along the way. You'll find out how Phoenix has performed over the last year

and hear what's planned to improve our community even more over the next 12 months.

It's impossible to include EVERYTHING that goes on within this report, so we've highlighted the things that we feel are the most important. We've examined our performance against our agreed standards and we're pleased to be able to say that we comply with all of them. There are still areas where we need to make improvements and we've highlighted these throughout the report.

Do make sure to visit our website www.phoenixch.org.uk to read the digital version of this report, which includes lots of additional information and videos.

Finally, if you care about the future of our area and the community, we'd love to hear from you. Please join us as we work towards our vision of a better future for all.

We hope you enjoy this year's report and we'd love to hear your thoughts.

Best wishes,
Residents Communications Group

OTHER LANDLORDS

Throughout this report we compare our performance against other medium-sized housing associations (5,000-10,000 properties) in London and the south east and nationally. This information comes from Housemark, an organisation that gathers performance information from lots of other housing associations.

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Unless otherwise stated, figures or performance information included in this report relate to the period April 2013 to March 2014.

OUR COMMUNITY GATEWAY

Our community gateway model means **we're more than just a housing association**. We believe the best results are achieved by combining the skills, experience and energy of our residents and staff. We strongly encourage residents to become shareholding members and get involved at every level of the organisation.

Phoenix in numbers

130 Miles of streets, roads and avenues
 +3,207 Flats +13,003 Residents
 +3,042 Houses +150 Employees
 +823 Leaseholders +3 Community Links areas

It all adds up to: **A fantastic Phoenix community!**

A key priority this year was to involve even more residents so that we can act on your feedback. We want residents to participate in decision making from the very highest level and to have real influence on our work in the local community.

In early 2013 we asked residents to vote on whether they would like us to create a new way of getting involved with us. Almost 90% of respondents said 'yes'. Our three **Community Links areas** - named Bellingham Farm, Kestrel and Kingfisher in a resident vote in early 2014 - are just one of the many ways for residents to get more involved in their area.

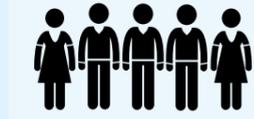
Almost 300 residents attended our first Community Links gatherings in February 2014. This new model has enabled us to reach many more people than we did with our former local area panels, and delivered **much better value for money**.



Guests took part in rent setting and community safety workshops, and set priority issues to tackle in their areas.

It's been an interesting event. I've learned about what Phoenix is doing.

Agnes Techie-Menson



At the end of **March 2014**

2,620

residents were **shareholding members**, with the right to stand for our Board and vote at the AGM. That's an increase of 6% compared to last year. Meanwhile, 54% of shareholding members are now Gold Members, an increase of almost 10% since last year.

Associate membership is also available to Phoenix staff, and more than 60% of employees have now joined - demonstrating our shared commitment to work together to build a **better Phoenix community for everybody**.

Resident involvement stretches right to the top and **residents remain the largest group on our Board**. Among them are Margaret McCarthy and Peter Lewis, who were re-elected to the Board at our AGM in 2013.

Board attendance at meetings was 79.4%. When Board Members were unable to attend a meeting, they sent on comments and queries in advance.

Our Board is responsible for the overall running of Phoenix and to make sure that we are working within our rules and regulations.

Being a member has given me lots of opportunities, like voting for things that matter.

Ann Robinson



As a Board Member, I'm trying to get the best deal for Phoenix and residents.

Margaret McCarthy, Resident Board Member.

We piloted a **new tenant induction scheme** and hosted three sessions for new residents, offering them an immediate introduction to the local community and ways of getting involved with Phoenix.

I've learnt a lot of practical information and I'm looking forward to enjoying my new home!

Samantha Cox

In the last 12 months, our **residents' Policy Working Group** reviewed 14 new policies, and our Performance Monitoring Group made recommendations on how we can offer the best customer service.

The results of **resident consultations**, surveys, our mystery shopping panel and other feedback all influence our plans, including:

- how we let empty properties
- how we handle complaints
- how we support residents through recent changes to welfare benefits
- how we meet vulnerable residents' needs.

SOUTHEND LANE SE6

SPENT £147K CLEARING ILLEGAL FLYTIPPING

I'm proud to be part of a group that helps Phoenix to improve services. It's rewarding to know this will help tenants enjoy their homes to the fullest.

Mystery shopper

Our community is vibrant and diverse and we want to ensure everyone can get **involved**. Our events and spaces are accessible, and we provide crèches and transport assistance to help everyone have their say and shape our services.

Please do let us know if you have any suggestions for how we can improve opportunities for residents to get involved.



We received **313**

complaints, down from 388 in 2012-13. **We welcome complaints and feedback** as it helps us to improve our services. 15 residents took part in focus groups to develop a new complaints policy, which was approved by our Board in September 2013.



I've been a resident for four years now and have seen first-hand the problems that some residents can face.

I believe residents need to work together with staff to make things better and I'm looking forward to making improvements as part of the new scrutiny panel.

Komi Noudoukou,
Resident Scrutiny Panel member

To support our efforts to improve our services, we began recruitment to a new Resident Scrutiny Panel in early 2014. The panel will monitor Phoenix's performance and report their recommendations directly to the Board.

HOW WE COMPARE

We had the third fewest of complaints of 9 landlords in London and 28th fewest of 46 housing associations nationally.

PERFORMANCE AREA

	13-14	12-13
NUMBER OF SHAREHOLDING MEMBERS	2620	2465
NUMBER OF STAFF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	91	92
% INVOLVED RESIDENTS OF ALL RESIDENTS	5.3%	4.6%
% OF CALLS ANSWERED OF THOSE RECEIVED	90.3%	89.7%
% OF CALLS ANSWERED WITHIN 30 SECONDS	57.3%	58.6%



FUNDED AND CARRIED OUT INTERNAL DECORATIONS FOR 172 VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

OUR HOMES

We introduced a new **Gateway Local Team** in late 2013. Our gateway local advisors are here to support tenants with a wide range of tenancy issues and each cover a particular area.

Our Gateway Local Team introduced new **estate walkabouts** and handled 140 reports of antisocial behaviour, an increase of 32% compared to last year.

Antisocial behaviour was identified as a priority area by residents again in 2013. So tackling antisocial behaviour is a key priority for us.

HOW WE COMPARE

We had the most antisocial behaviour cases reported to us out of five housing associations in London and came 21st out of 28 housing associations nationally.

Satisfaction with day-to-day **repairs** stayed at 94%, the same as last year. Our contract with Willmott Dixon will end in March 2015 and offers an opportunity for us to review our existing **repairs** and maintenance service.

In July 2013 a group of residents, Board Members and staff joined together for a 'Repairs 2015' innovation day. They agreed priorities for the new repairs service that included:

- flexible appointments
- better diagnosis of repairs
- improved materials and workmanship
- repairs completed right first time
- more empathy and caring.

It was great to be involved in developing ideas for our new repairs service. Delivering repairs in house will mean a better service for residents and better value for money.

Eileen Davies

We've since been working with our resident repairs panel and we'll be using your feedback to develop a range of new services in the future.

Meanwhile, resident satisfaction with **caretaking services** dropped slightly, from 91% to 90%. We'll be working hard to improve this area over the next year.

We spent more than £14.5 million on **major works** to improve your homes. In July 2013 we organised a major works safari, inviting residents to join us on a walkabout in our area and to inspect recently completed works.

Sandra Alexis

It was good to be involved in the consultation process before the major works started. Everyone involved was very professional and it was good to be able to visit some of the completed sites to see what had been achieved.

Sandra Alexis



One key project was to replace older balconies in many of our properties in North Downham. We invested £2m in the project as part of overall investment of £6m to improve estates in North Downham and delivered more than 324 **new balconies**.

Caretaker Tolquay Aziz at work



Gateway
Local Team

RANDESDOWN ROAD SE6

Forster Memorial Park

Last year we made 32 major and 142 minor adaptations in our homes, to support residents living with physical disabilities to live more independently.

We want everyone to be able to live in a home that suits their needs. Our **tenant incentive scheme** helps us to make best use of our adapted properties and to deliver good value for our residents.

Under this scheme, rather than making new adaptations to a property, we support residents to move to an already adapted property and offer an incentive of up to £3,500.

For example, in mid-2013 we received a request to adapt a property for a disabled resident. The adaptations would have cost around £20,000.

We supported the residents to transfer to an already adapted property that was empty, and offered an incentive payment of £2,000, as well as assistance with moving and reconnection costs.

By transferring our disabled resident to an already adapted property, we were able to **save around £18,000** while meeting everyone's housing needs.

A total of 464 tenants were affected by the 'bedroom tax' and their income from housing benefit reduced by £457,000. This meant that each household lost an average of £18.60 in housing benefit each week.

We were able to support these residents to maximise their income and to access additional support services.



£116,000

From July 2013 to April 2014, our income team helped residents obtain £116,000 of **additional income** which might otherwise have led to increased arrears or possible eviction.

Our partnership with the **Citizens Advice Bureau** led to further backdated or new benefits for residents. We also referred residents affected by the 'bedroom tax' to the Lewisham Plus Credit Union as another source of support.

We supported 40 **mutual exchanges** - up on 25 last year - helping residents and families to downsize or upsize into more suitable and affordable homes.



HOW WE COMPARE

We are the top performing housing association for gas safety, that's in London and out of 35 associations nationally.

When we look at the percentage of responsive repairs completed on time, Phoenix came 3rd out of 10 in London and 22nd out of 36 nationally.

PERFORMANCE AREA	13-14	12-13
% OF HOMES MEETING DECENT HOMES STANDARD	99.96%	99.98%
% SAP (STANDARD ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE WHICH MEASURES HOW ENERGY EFFICIENT A HOME IS)	67.73%	68.23%
NUMBER OF HOMES RE-LET	226	270
AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS TO RE-LET A PROPERTY	27.87	31.35
NUMBER OF EVICTIONS	36	21



Farmstead Road Community Garden

Downham Health and Leisure Centre

OUR COMMUNITY

We don't think our work should be limited to looking after the homes that our residents live in. We want to offer you and your family the best possible life chances, in an area that you are proud of. Thousands of families joined us at our community events last year, and came together to celebrate our Phoenix community.

What a wonderful space! I love the green roof and all of the opportunities that The Green Man will bring to our area.

Gail Nicholas



BROMLEY ROAD SE6

The Green Man

We were proud to deliver our new community space for south Lewisham, **The Green Man**, in November 2013. Hundreds of guests attended our grand opening and more than

 **6,500**

visited the building during the first four months. The building was hired out for

 **300**

hours in the same period, showing a clear demand for new community space in our area.

The new building includes a café, a new branch of the Lewisham Plus Credit Union and the Lewisham Training Kitchen, delivered by Chartwells and Lewisham Council. Along with meeting spaces and consultation areas for the Citizens Advice Bureau, The Green Man brings new opportunities for residents in the heart of our area.

If ever there was a statement of ambition of making a community better, then The Green Man is that statement. In ten or 50 years, people will be talking about how important The Green Man was to their childhood.

David Orr, Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation.

In March over 80 people attended our 'Business Breakfast' for information and support to set up their own business.

Already, The Green Man has created 13 new jobs and apprenticeships.



Sianne and Becky, apprentice chefs at the Green Man



 More than **6,000**

people attended the **PHOENIX FESTIVAL** in May 2013 for a day of family fun. The festival also allows us to consult with thousands of residents on a range of projects like the changes to benefits and upcoming works. We raised £14,000 in sponsorship for the festival from our suppliers and partners, which meant we were able to deliver better value for money for residents.



Summer Fun attracted more than 1,300 residents in August 2013. We worked with local partners to deliver a range of activities across the Phoenix area, including sports and active play, arts and crafts and performing arts.

Thanks for the brilliant events that you put on throughout August. My baby and toddler really enjoyed them and the fact they're local and free is a bonus.

Laura Igiehon



BECKENHAM HILL ROAD SE6

Phoenix in Bloom, our annual gardening competition, celebrates the residents who brighten up our area with brilliant blooms and dazzling displays, and we received 37 entries in 2013.

It's brilliant to see so many gorgeous gardens and I hope the competition will encourage other residents who are thinking about giving gardening a go, to pick up a trowel and get growing!

Patrice Newman-Sheaf, resident judge.

Phoenix in Bloom



During **Black History Month**, we welcomed Nkosingithi Biko, son of the anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko, to Steve Biko Lane, Bellingham - one of four UK streets named after his father. The event included presentations to promote empowerment and citizenship.

Thelma Daniels



STEVE BIKO LANE SE6

OUR MONEY

Our Board has a responsibility to ensure Phoenix's financial viability. This means ensuring that we have the money to do what we say we will now, and in the future. After reviewing our budget for 2014-15 and long term business plan, the Board has a reasonable expectation that Phoenix has adequate resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Phoenix has undrawn (unused) loan facilities of £17m as at 31 March 2014 to use to fund the major works and improvement programme and the development of new homes.

Consolidated income and expenditure account

for the year ended 31st March 2014

	2013-14 in £ 000	2012-13 in £000
Turnover	32,659	34,089
Operating costs	(25,303)	(26,650)
Operating Surplus	7,356	7,439
Surplus on sale of fixed assets (this includes sales of properties through the Right to Buy scheme)	420	5
Interest receivable and similar income	37	100
Interest payable and similar charges	(2,142)	(2,089)
Surplus for the year before taxation	5,671	5,455
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	(1)	-
Total recognised surplus for year	5,670	5,455

Consolidated balance sheet

as at 31st March 2014

	2013-14 in £ 000	2012-13 in £000
Fixed Assets		
Housing assets	94,964	96,604
Other fixed assets	7,828	4,549
Total fixed assets	102,792	101,153
Current assets	12,738	23,814
Current liabilities	(19,758)	(22,364)
Net current liabilities / assets	(7,020)	1,450
Total assets less current liabilities	95,772	102,603
Liabilities due after more than one year	64,667	77,778
Pension liabilities	950	871
Capital and reserves	30,155	23,954
	95,772	102,603

The figures in brackets are minus figures

£127million spent on major works and improvements to our homes since Phoenix was created in 2007!

TURNOVER

The income we receive.

OPERATING COSTS

The money we spent on managing homes and running costs like staff salaries. This does not include money spent on major works and improvements.

SURPLUS ON THE SALE OF FIXED ASSETS

This includes sales of properties through the Right to Buy scheme.

TOTAL RECOGNISED SURPLUS FOR YEAR

The money we make after we take off what we spend.

INTEREST PAYABLE

The interest charge on our loan with Barclays to carry out Major Works and improvements minus any interest we gain from our bank accounts.

INTEREST RECEIVABLE

For example, cash in hand at the bank.

HOUSING ASSETS

Cost of major works and improvements to our properties.

OTHER FIXED ASSETS

This includes The Green Man, IT equipment and furniture.

CURRENT ASSETS

The money we have in the bank or is owed to us (including tenant and leaseholder arrears).

CURRENT LIABILITIES

The money we owe to suppliers and other organisations

LIABILITIES DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

The money we have borrowed and the amount to be spent on major works and improvements.

PENSION LIABILITIES

Our share of the liabilities of the Lewisham Pension Scheme.

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 31st July 2014. The audited financial statements are available on our website www.phoenixch.org.uk and printed copies are available on request.



In 2013/14 we achieved a **rent collection rate of**

100.4%

This is because we collected rent due in the financial period, along with more than £200,000 of arrears owed to us. Without your rent, we don't have the money to pay for essential services and maintenance of your home or to make improvements to the Phoenix area.

HOW WE COMPARE

Compared to other housing associations, when it came to the percentage of rent collected against rent due, we came 4th out of seven in London and 7th out of 15 nationally.

Major works income from leaseholders is below target. Last year the value of arrears owed to us by leaseholders rose to £5.7 million – an increase of £400,000. We recognise that leaseholders are facing often large bills in a difficult financial climate, and we'll be working on new payment terms and other support for leaseholders over the coming year.

Residents were invited to take part in **rent setting workshops** in February 2014. All housing associations adjust their rents in line with government guidance to ensure that rents across the country are fair.

Last year our Board agreed to **increase target rents** by 5% as allowed in the government's rent framework. We'll use this extra income to fund new homes, particularly housing for older and vulnerable people.

Bellingham Green

HOW WE COMPARE

Phoenix charged the 4th lowest rent in Lewisham out of 24 social landlords. For one, three and four bedroom properties, our rents were the lowest in Lewisham.

It's a difficult decision to increase rents, but we know that the additional money raised will help us to provide a better environment and future for all of our community.

Pat Fordham MBE, Tenant and Chair of the Board

Ensuring value for money for residents is a major priority. Value for money means getting the most from our money while maximising the social value of our work. In 2013, resident focus groups helped to shape our new value for money strategy, which has been approved by the Board.

Sometimes comparable costs are higher but deliver additional social benefits. For example, The Green Man has higher security and cleaning costs than our previous rented offices, but delivers lots of additional social benefits for the local community.

We will share details of these savings with you in next year's annual report.



In July 2013 we established a new subsidiary company to provide staff for our repairs and maintenance programme managed by Willmott Dixon. This has already saved us more than £140,000 on the delivery of repairs and maintenance of empty properties while they are being prepared for new tenants.

The Board has reviewed our value for money statement and is satisfied that the value for money standard, set by our Regulator, is being met. However the Board has stated, as set out in our Corporate Plan for 2014-15, that improvements can be made. Our value for money statement is available in full on our website or on request.



£500,000

The savings that we've made as a result of our approach to value for money have been reinvested in different areas. Most significantly, we've committed £500,000 to our new Community Chest which will award funding of £100,000 each year until 2017 to organisations or projects voted for by residents.



Residents voted for projects to receive the first round of £100,000 funding at our Community Chest gathering in November last year. Six large grants and two smaller grants were awarded to a variety of projects that would benefit jobseekers, younger residents and older people. The programmes have already had a positive impact.



Gill Griggs took part in 'Art from the Heart', a creative workshop that ran for ten weeks.

The course has been brilliant, it's very gentle and there's a lovely atmosphere. Everyone's very chatty and friendly.

There a whole smorgasbord of things to do and Vicky is very encouraging. She plants a seed in your head and lets you get on with it.

I lose myself in this class and I feel all the better for it at the end of each session.



Jemma Mason, 18, is attending monthly support sessions for Phoenix carers with Carers Lewisham.

I'm a carer for my mum full time. The sessions are a really big help to me, they're very relaxing. Meeting people in the same situation has made me feel much less isolated and alone.

I really look forward to the sessions and I'd definitely recommend the classes to other young carers.

You get a lot out of it and if you're worried about leaving the person you care for alone, Carers Lewisham can make sure there's someone there to look after them.

OUR FUTURE

We want our current and future residents to live in high quality homes in an area that they can be proud of. We're working hard to develop more opportunities for our residents and to ensure a bright future for all of our communities.

Together with our partners, we supported 26 **apprenticeships** for local, young people in a range of different areas. From apprenticeships in surveying and electrical engineering, to community regeneration and communications, our apprenticeships give people the skills and experience to find work and develop their career.

I'd been unemployed for two years and was volunteering in a mental health centre while looking for work when I applied for the apprenticeship. It's been a very rewarding experience and I've learnt so much. It's been great to be part of new projects. I'm very involved in supporting our new job and IT clubs and help provide admin support to manage the different training courses that we run.

I'm also gaining lots of skills and knowledge at college. I'd recommend apprenticeships to anyone - you get great experience and earn a qualification, fantastic!

Nickala, Community Regeneration Apprentice

Apprentice Nickala Lowe



A total of **66** residents benefitted from IT **training** and we delivered basic skills training for residents that was funded externally, saving up to £5,000.

We're really stepping up our efforts in this area and over the next year plan to introduce a new Phoenix job club, a bigger range of free, resident training opportunities and additional services to support residents into work, training or volunteering.

We're set to receive a share of £275,000 National Lottery funding, awarded to a number of Lewisham organisations, to deliver a new ICT training programme. This will help more residents to be able to use computers and online services in 2014/15.

There is a huge shortage of homes in south Lewisham, as in other parts of the capital and across the country. We are now looking to explore opportunities for the **development of new homes**. We received external funding of almost £5m to develop new homes for older people. Following extensive consultation with neighbouring residents, a planning application was submitted in the summer of 2014 for the development of an extra care scheme next to Hazelhurst Court.

We received £20,000 funding to deliver a new pocket park for the whole community on the site of a neglected piece of land on the corner of Bromley Road and Beckenham Hill Road. Residents voted to name the new park 'Peter Pan's Park' in a nod to the history of our area. Work to develop the green space and **improve the local area** began in mid-2014.

Peter Lewis



Dumps Adventure Playground



Next year we'll be building on our work **to ensure even better value for money for the whole community**. Some of these changes will mean clear cost savings (for example, we expect to save £15,000 a year by centralising our marketing budget). Others will **deliver better social value for the whole community**, such as the possible development of a new training academy that would engage and train 150 local residents a year.



Plans to have repairs delivered by a subsidiary of Phoenix, rather than by an external repairs contractor, will potentially save £300,000 from April 2015.

We've got a **busy few years ahead of us** and a lot to look forward to, as we work together towards our vision of a **better Phoenix community**. We're excited to look at development opportunities for new homes, delivering new services from some of our community centres, launching our

new repairs service, reinvigorating The Fellowship Inn in Bellingham and increasing services and activities delivered from The Green Man.

We're also determined to offer great customer service to all of our residents. We know there is more work to be done here and your ongoing feedback will be invaluable.

We can't do all of this on our own. We can only succeed if everyone pulls together to deliver the very best for our Phoenix area. **We hope you'll join us and help us make the changes you want to see.**

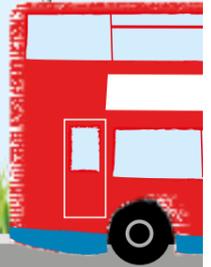
THANK YOU

TO ALL OF THE RESIDENTS, GROUPS, PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES THAT HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO SUPPORT OUR VISION **"TO WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR PHOENIX COMMUNITY"** AND TO ALL OF THE RESIDENTS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL REPORT.



Bellingham Leisure and Lifestyle Centre

DOWNHAM WAY BRI



Phoenix



GET IN TOUCH

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0844 264 2844 (standard cost from your mobile)

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Phoenix Community Housing Association (Bellingham and Downham) Limited
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Homes and Communities Agency number L4505.

... ALL ADDING UP TO A BETTER PHOENIX COMMUNITY FOR EVERYONE