

# Taking care of our neighbourhoods

It's been eleven years since residents took charge of improving our homes by setting up Phoenix – and one year since we took charge of our green spaces by bringing our grounds maintenance service in-house.

Previously, we used a separate company to cut grassy areas, trim hedges and maintain flower beds.

A year ago, following feedback from residents and a review to help us achieve more value for money, we created a new Grounds Maintenance team as part of our Environmental Services department.

Over the year, Phoenix has saved money that can be better spent in other areas of the community and we have more control over the new service. Our new in-house team better understands the needs of our residents and can really get to know the neighbourhoods.

Beyond that, bringing grounds maintenance in-house has meant that we can respond to what residents want to see in their neighbourhoods. For example, residents asked for hanging baskets in some parts of our community, and the team has put these up.



**176 tonnes**

of grass cuttings/green waste have been taken for recycling by us since grounds maintenance came in-house.

We'll be bringing more colour and greenery to the area with a new programme of planting over the coming months.

Pat Fordham MBE, our former tenant Chair, said:

“Having the grounds team only working for Phoenix means we have better relationships with the people who manage the hundreds of green spaces in our community. It's really helped a lot.”



## From April to September this year, our Environmental Services have:

<p>Removed <b>70</b> abandoned vehicles</p>	<p><b>344</b> tonnes of flytipping</p> <p>Spent <b>£49.9k</b> on removing flytips</p>	<p><b>100%</b> of all playground inspections completed</p> <p><b>315</b> problems dealt with in our play areas</p> <p><b>1</b> case of graffiti reported and fixed</p>
<p><b>1032</b> inspections of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grass</li> <li>Hedge</li> <li>Rose beds</li> <li>Shrubs</li> <li>Weeding</li> </ul> <p>And assessed all of these at high standards <b>(100%)</b></p>	<p><b>99</b> households are using our garden scheme</p>	<p><b>83</b> pest control reports received</p> <p><b>65</b> pest control reports sorted out</p>

## Advice and support



### Universal Credit and you

Universal Credit will benefit some people while others may be worse off. To find out how it will affect you, contact our advice team. They will be able to offer advice and help you work out what will be best for you.

Universal Credit currently only affects people who are making new benefit claims, but it will be rolled out to everyone by December 2023.

**What:** Get advice on your finances.

**When:** By appointment.

**Where:** The Green Man or Bromley Job Centre.

**How:** Call or email us.

### Our Christmas opening hours

Phoenix and The Green Man will be open at the following times over the Christmas holidays:

Monday 24 December	10am-4pm	Saturday 29 December	Closed
Tuesday 25 December	Closed	Sunday 30 December	Closed
Wednesday 26 December	Closed	Monday 31 December	10am-4pm
Thursday 27 December	10am-4pm	Tuesday 1 January	Closed
Friday 28 December	10am-4pm		

The Phoenix Repairs Service will carry out emergency repairs over this period.

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

@ info@phoenixch.org.uk @phoenixtogether www.phoenixch.org.uk 0800 0285 700

Phoenix Community Housing (Bellingham and Downham Limited) is a Community Benefit Society, number 30057R. VAT number 162 4926 03. Regulator of Social Housing number L4505.

## Working with you

If you have a disability, please let us know so we can tailor our services to suit your needs. This could include making adaptations to your home and asking our Repairs team to wait longer when they knock on your door if you're unable to answer the door quickly. Or if you can't make it to The Green Man and you have an appointment to meet our Housing Officers or advice team, Phoenix can meet you at home.



## We're putting on a show!

Our restoration of The Fellowship Inn continues and the new pub and community building is expected to reopen in February 2019, thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

As part of our celebrations, we're working with the Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre (GLYPT) to produce a community play that celebrates Bellingham and the pub.

GLYPT want Phoenix residents to get involved by starring on the stage, or providing behind-the-scenes support. No experience necessary, just lots of enthusiasm!

To get involved, come along to one of GLYPT's taster workshops.

**When:** Tuesday 6 November, 6.30-8pm  
Sunday 11 November, 2.30-4pm

**Where:** The Green Man

# Phoenix *Flyer*

A newsletter by residents for residents Formerly known as Community News @phoenixtogether



## Raising our voices

Young people enjoy themselves at Summer Fun.

Phoenix tenant and Chair of our Board, Anne McGurk, explains the importance of residents' voices.



Our wonderfully diverse community in Bellingham, Downham and Whitefoot is made up of individuals equally as wonderful. Some of us are struggling, and some of us are blossoming – but each of us is unique: a unique part of an amazing whole.

I often get told, as tenant Chair, I need to be the 'voice of the voiceless.' "No!" I say, "we will

not have any voiceless people in our community."

Residents don't need my voice or the voice of a Phoenix employee. They just need us to move away from the loudspeakers, the soapboxes, the editors' chairs and give them a platform – a chance to speak, and more importantly to be heard.

Our community is not full of people with problems to be fixed. It is full of people just like you and me. Take it from me: we residents know how to solve the problems that life throws at us. All we need is an opportunity to get our voice out there. Positive change will be the result.

Phoenix is resident led. Residents are the largest group on the board. Residents employ the staff. Residents interview new employees, residents scrutinise policies and procedures, residents agree development plans and, and...

Well you get the idea. Residents help run the organisation.

Let's now make sure everyone gets a chance to use their voice, tell their story, air their ideas and solutions, challenge stereotypes.

Let's begin with your newsletter: write for it, throw out your challenges and listen to others... make the Phoenix Flyer your voice.

Welcome to the Phoenix Flyer, our new resident newsletter. Find out how Phoenix can help you save on your bills and find a job, how our Grounds Maintenance team is doing, how to get involved, and lots more >>

## What's happening



## Your say on your homes

More than 160 resident shareholders attended our Annual General Meeting in September to hear from Chair of the Board Anne McGurk, Lewisham Mayor Damien Egan, and 21-year-old Fola Afolabi.

Fola, sharing her own experiences of getting involved, said: "Many of you will have children, or grandchildren, and we need those young people to get involved to have a voice in the future."

All resolutions were passed at the meeting, including previous minutes, financial statements, the annual report, and the appointment of external auditors. The AGM also agreed the appointment of Peace Ayiku-Nartey as a Tenant Board Member and Kerry Heath as an Independent Board Member – while thanking Andrew Harmer and Cllr Alan Hall, who stepped down at the AGM.

If you'd like to get involved, we'd love to hear from you! There are plenty of ways to improve your community: you can help us reach your neighbours on social media, review our services and performance, or volunteer to help others.

## Events

## One-to-one support for jobseekers to get online



Residents supported into work by our Roots Into Work programme this year



Using the internet brings lots of benefits – from online shopping to paying bills and searching for a job. Someone who doesn't have many internet or technological skills can earn £13,000 less than someone who does.

That's why Phoenix, supported by Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Council, launched Digital Skills for

Work. Our Digital Champions will help jobseekers gain the skills they need to succeed in a workplace.

Amelie Konan, a Phoenix resident who benefitted from one-to-one mentoring and support, said:

"My digital mentoring was fantastic. I've learned a lot in such a short period of time. Everything is online today, so Digital Skills for Work isn't just a benefit: it's necessary.

I would encourage everyone, like me, to come down to The Green Man and learn."



To benefit from the one to one mentoring that Digital Skills for Work can provide, why not join us at one of our Digital Drop-in sessions? They're free and take place every Wednesday from 10am-12noon at The Green Man.

## News in numbers

Visit our Instagram for more stunning shots from the last few months!

### 60

New homes at Hazelhurst Court were officially opened by the Deputy Mayor of Lewisham.

### 16

Prizes for winners and runners-up in our annual gardening competition, Phoenix in Bloom.

### 281

Residents attended our Chat & Chips events to have their say on Phoenix services – with some delicious fish and chips.

### 1000+

Of us descended on south Lewisham's green spaces for bouncy castles and face-painting at our Summer Fun events.



### Community Links

Saturday 1 December, 12-3pm

### The Green Man

Join us, the reindeer and your neighbours for food, drink and activities

### Carols on the Green

Monday 3 December, 4-6pm

### Bellingham Green

Sing your way into the Christmas spirit

## Community and good-to-knows

# A newsletter that works for you

By Helen Whiteley, Resident Communications Group Member

I hope you noticed our new front page. It's different because our newsletter is now the Phoenix Flyer. I've always loved our newsletter because it's a paper that belongs to us, the residents.

Our newsletter is changing. The Phoenix Flyer, in this shape, will provide better value for money and remains an important way for us to update you on important matters including health and safety and how Phoenix is performing as our landlord. It also means we can tell you about news, events and ways you can get involved.

You can write to us as many times as you like, tell us how you feel and contribute to the newsletter.

The Phoenix Flyer will make it easier to find training that Phoenix runs, as well as regular information on how Phoenix maintains and improves our homes and community.

If you prefer, we can send you the Phoenix Flyer by email – you'll get news and updates direct to your phone or computer.

This newsletter, like Phoenix, belongs to every resident – and if you'd like to get involved, we'd love to hear from you. We hope you like it.

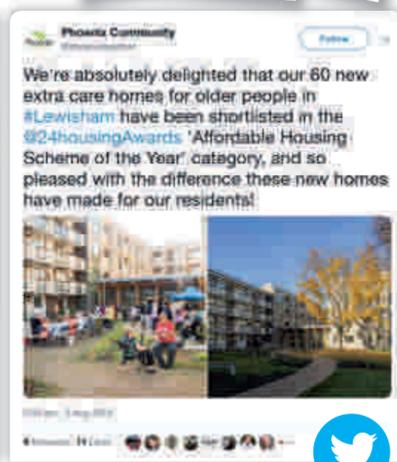


## Let's get social!



### Did you know you can find Phoenix on twitter and Instagram?

Follow us @phoenixtogether for the latest news and info. These are some of our most popular posts from the last couple of months...



### Looking for your quarterly rent statement?

You can access your rent statement at any time on our website or request one by email, phone or by visiting The Green Man. If you'd like to continue receiving your rent statements with the Phoenix Flyer, get in touch.

### Staying safe in your home

We've received reports of fraudulent callers in the area. If someone is due to visit you on behalf of Phoenix, we will let you know in advance. If someone knocks, open the door with the chain on, ask to see their ID, and call us if you have any doubts.

### Just celebrated your 74th birthday?

You'll qualify for a free TV licence when you turn 75, and should apply in advance. You'll only pay for the months until you turn 75. You can buy a licence online, by telephone, post or at a PayPoint. Do it soon, or you could miss out!

## Information

# Winter is coming

As the central heating rumbles into action after the long, hot summer, now is the time to plan ahead to save on your energy bills.

Our energy champion, Sharon, is at The Green Man every Tuesday and Wednesday, from 10am until 1pm, until the end of March.

The energy champion can give advice that could potentially save you hundreds by finding a cheaper energy supplier, and could help you to apply for a £140 Warm Homes Discount or a discount from your supplier.



And that's just a start! If you speak to the energy champion you will get a free energy-saving LED lightbulb, room thermometer card to help you heat your home to the right temperature, and a voucher worth £3.50 to spend in The Green Man café.

Most of our year's energy use happens between now and March, and this increased cost can be difficult to manage. Here are some top tips from the Energy Saving Trust to save on your bills:

**One:** Move furniture away from radiators

**Two:** Draught-proof windows and doors – possible yearly saving: £30

**Three:** Use energy saving light bulbs – possible yearly saving: £35

**Four:** Completely turn off things like your TV when you don't use them – possible yearly saving: £30

**Five:** Only fill your kettle with as much water as needed – possible yearly saving: £45

**Six:** Spend one minute less in the shower – possible yearly saving: £10



## Big resident survey – the results

Thank you to everyone who took part in our big resident telephone survey last month, by giving your views on our services.

We will publish the results of the survey in November and the results will be available on request and on our website. And we'll use the feedback that residents have given to help identify priorities for improvement.

If you didn't take part in the survey but would like to give your views, please contact us.



## Getting your house in order?

Misplaced your lease, or after copies of last year's service charge notice?

We can provide you with additional copies of paperwork and documentation related to your lease in exchange for an admin fee, which covers our administration, print and postage costs.

Full details of fees for leaseholders are available on our website and from our Home Ownership team.

