

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.



Introducing Phoenix's new Chief Executive

Phoenix Community Housing is pleased to introduce our new Chief Executive, Denise Fowler. We caught up with Denise to find out more about her.

I'm beyond delighted to be joining Phoenix as your new Chief Executive. When the role was advertised I knew I had to go for it. I've been a long-time admirer of Phoenix – both for its resident-led model and for the important role it plays in the community.

I grew up in south London, on estates very similar to those managed by Phoenix, and finding a safe, secure affordable home transformed my life. I live with my wife just up the road in Catford and we brought up our children here. I want to play my part in ensuring that at Phoenix we continue to work together to build a better future for everyone in this community.

I'm joining Phoenix from my current role as Chief Executive of Women's

Pioneer – a housing association which was established by suffragettes in 1920 and is committed to providing much-needed housing for women. Before that I was the Housing Ombudsman for England, where I was responsible for determining complaints made by tenants about their landlords and making recommendations to improve service delivery. I also worked for many years as a lawyer, in government, and in private practice where I represented tenants.

I hope both my own personal background and career experiences help me understand issues from a resident's perspective. I don't underestimate some of the ongoing challenges in our community. I'm determined to listen and work with our Board to act on your feedback and ensure we provide you with the best possible service.

I'm also very conscious that I am stepping into very big shoes. I know many of you know Jim Ripley personally. He is leaving a

tremendous legacy after 14 years as Chief Executive, working with three successive tenant Chairs in Pat Fordham MBE, Anne McGurk and now Carmen Simpson. It's a legacy I want to build on and will look at ways we can involve even more residents in steering the future of Phoenix and our community.

I'm particularly excited to learn about the new Youth Council that has just been launched and the opportunity to engage more young people.

It was a pleasure to meet some of our involved residents when I came to The Green Man for my interview. It confirmed that residents really are at the centre of decision making at Phoenix. I also enjoyed meeting more of you at the fantastic Winter Wonderland event last December. We continue to live through extraordinary times, but I hope I will have the chance to meet many more of you in person over the coming weeks. If you see me, please come and say hello!

A Winter Wonderland

Thank you to the 2,000 residents and members of the community who joined us at Forster Memorial Park for a Phoenix Winter Wonderland!

The free event featured special guest snowmen from across the globe and Santa and his team of real reindeer who greeted families throughout the day.

Event-goers took to the ice for some twirls and tumbles, posed for a snow globe selfie and got creative with some Christmas crafts.



Farewell from Jim

It's been an honour and a pleasure to serve as Phoenix's Chief Executive for the past 14 years. I've seen Phoenix go from strength-to-strength during my tenure, but here are my top five favourite moments:

- Back in 2013, we opened our brand new HQ: The Green Man which is home to our offices, community hub, café, training kitchen, event space and Credit Union branch.
- In 2014, we set up our 'school of social housing', the Phoenix Academy, which offers local residents and Phoenix staff the opportunity to gain a qualification in social housing. Since then, over 250 people have graduated from the academy!
- In April 2015, we launched the Phoenix Repairs Service. Previously our repairs service had been outsourced but following feedback from residents, we created the 'in-house' service with the aim of offering greater flexibility and better value for money.

- I'm very proud for Phoenix to be acknowledged as one of the UK's best employers by achieving Investors in People Gold Award in 2017 and again in 2020.
- After almost two years of building restoration, the Fellowship Inn had its grand re-opening in 2019 as a pub, cinema and community hub. We're currently in discussions with a number of companies to bring it back into use.



Fire Safety Event

Saturday 19 February, 1-4pm

Join us for a day of fire safety made fun: fire engine, demonstrations & activities, goody bags, free food and more! Find out more on our website.

Phoenix Academy

April

Phoenix's 'School of Social Housing' returns with Level 1 qualifications in Housing. Enrolments are now open. Contact us for more information.

News in numbers

We've hired **7** Kickstart trainees

The Community Chest has given away over **£1million** since its creation in 2013



Events

Applications for this year's Community Chest are open!

Local community organisations and projects can now apply for a share of £120,000 Community Chest fund to benefit our residents in 2022/23.

Since its creation in 2013, the Community Chest has awarded £900,000 of funding to 102 projects. Over the years, there have been a wide range of winners including dance workshops, holiday activities for young carers, energy advice schemes, and a women's football team.

We recently took on 1,500 new homes in Grove Park so this year we're awarding an extra £20,000.

Phoenix resident and Chair of the Board, Carmen Simpson said: "If you're a local group or project I'd strongly encourage you to apply. This pot of money has helped so many projects over the years to carry on or expand the amazing work they do. Whether you go for a small or large grant – don't miss your chance to win a share of £120,000!"

If you're a local community organisation or project who benefits residents in Downham, Bellingham, Whitefoot and Grove Park, you can apply for a share of the money.

Applications close on Wednesday 2 March. To find out more and apply, please visit our website or call 0800 0285 700.



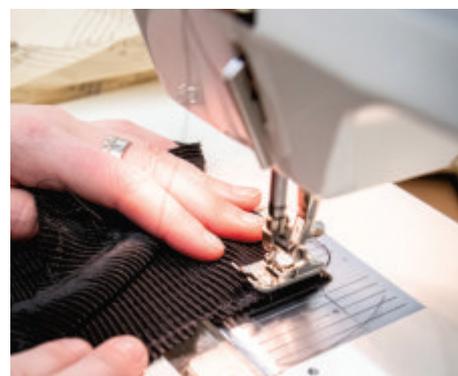
Try something new with Adult Learning Lewisham

Ever thought of taking up photography? Want to know how to make lino prints? Well, we've got you covered.

We've teamed up with Adult Learning Lewisham (ALL), the leading adult education service in Lewisham, to bring you a programme of free taster courses this February half term.

The taster sessions will take place at The Green Man and ALL's Grove Park centre on Baring Road between 14 - 28 February. Here's what's on offer:

- photography
- handknitting
- clothesmaking and sewing machine skills
- floristry
- upholstery
- upcycling for families



- glasswork (make a sun catcher)
- patchwork quilting
- vegan cooking for families
- baby/toddler yoga.

Spaces are limited. To find out more and book your place, visit www.phoenixch.org.uk/taster-sessions or call 0800 0285 700.



Introducing the Phoenix Youth Council!

A group of young Phoenix residents have launched the Phoenix Youth Council to influence decisions that impact them and the community.

The group will meet four times a year and will have a say on issues including safer communities, cleaner air and more opportunities for young people in the area.

Zhane, member of the Phoenix Youth Council and the youth group #BEin, said: "This is an exciting time as it's the first occasion where young people are represented at the governance level. We live in the community and should have a say in the decisions made at Phoenix. We now have the opportunity to make a real difference for future generations."

The Youth Council will play an active part in shaping policies and making recommendations which feed into our Board and governance structure at Phoenix. Their input will also help to influence events in the community and will provide a route for all areas of Phoenix to consult with younger residents.

Fencing repairs

Currently we are only carrying out emergency fencing repairs.

An emergency is classed as where a fence is unsafe, has a sharp object sticking out or is posing a security risk. Each fencing request will be reviewed and assessed to determine if an emergency repair is required. If your boundary backs on to public land it will be renewed if it is required to ensure a boundary.

Fences between properties, where fence panels are missing or severely damaged (but not an emergency) will be included in the 2022/23 planned fencing programme which starts in April.

Fencing in this programme will be



prioritised based on urgency.

You can find out more on our website. Please report an emergency repair by calling 0800 0285 700 or through the MyPhoenix portal.



How can we do better?

We want to identify areas within Phoenix where we can improve your customer experience. We've set up a focus group to get your views and feedback on areas where we can make improvements.

The focus group will meet four times a year to look at our services and areas where we can make a difference. The sessions will be a mix of online and face-to-face meetings and will take no longer than an hour and a half to discuss and agree actions or learnings for us to put into practice.

If you are interested in joining the group, please contact our customer



services team on 0800 0285 700 or by emailing info@phoenixch.org.uk.

The next session will take place in March.

Your feedback matters

As a resident-led housing association, our residents' satisfaction with their home and our services is very important to us.

We are also required to consult with you on any changes to our services as set out in your tenancy agreement or lease. We have carried out satisfaction surveys by telephone for a number of years and have received valuable feedback from a representative group of residents. We are now looking forward to incorporating our Grove Park residents into our surveys.

We currently carry out satisfaction surveys on repairs, customer contact, antisocial behaviour, complaints, caretaking and our lettings process.

Recent results show 76.5%* of residents (tenants and

leaseholders) are satisfied with Phoenix as a landlord. (*Collated results from April to September 2021)

We use the survey results to:

- set and deliver our corporate priorities
- improve services and complete service reviews
- respond to welfare reforms
- compare how we are doing to other landlords.

We value your feedback and thank you for helping us to improve our services by taking the time to complete these surveys.

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility

Phoenix resident, Monique Chang, recently joined the TPAS Health and Safety Week panel to educate others on the importance of involving residents in matters of health and safety.

Monique encourages everyone to familiarise themselves with the safety procedures for their home and to always raise any questions or concerns.

"Involvement can be allowing access for your safety check, familiarising yourself with a fire escape route or taking the time to read your resident handbook.

"All the things we do, big and small, have an impact. I'd encourage everyone to get into the habit of assessing risks in their homes and to ask any questions if you're not sure about something. Taking steps like testing your smoke alarm only takes a few minutes, but it could save your life."

Read Monique's full blog on the Phoenix website.



Focus on: Welcoming our Grove Park residents

Welcome once again to our residents in Grove Park. As a resident-led housing association we are proud to extend our model to more residents in the area.

All residents in Grove Park will have received a welcome pack from us and a letter giving details of tenancy numbers, which will allow you to access our online resident portal MyPhoenix. If you haven't received your welcome pack or tenancy number, please contact us.

Now that you are accessing services, we want to encourage all tenants and leaseholders to get involved and influence what we do. There are many opportunities to get involved – from shareholding membership and Gold Club membership, which will allow you to vote at our Annual General Meeting and take advantage of Phoenix reward points, to involvement opportunities up to Board level, where our rules state that the Chair and Vice Chair must be tenants. You can find more information on how to get involved in the enclosed 'Our Services' leaflet.

As part of the transfer from L&Q, we also took over the management of the WG Grace Centre, a well-used community space in the area. We have lots of plans for the centre as a thriving community centre. We will have a dedicated member of staff there once a week, who will be on hand to answer questions, host digital and employment drop-in sessions, and help with supporting community ideas.

When the transfer took place there were...

-  **16** homes empty (works ongoing)
-  **29** open antisocial behaviour Cases
-  **23** open complaints which L&Q are still resolving
-  **501** repairs being completed



We are sorry that the Covid situation meant we couldn't go ahead with a planned welcome session ahead of Christmas. As restrictions ease, we look forward to welcoming you to future events in the coming months – both at the WG Grace Centre and in the wider community.

We hope that you enjoy this edition of the Phoenix Flyer. Each edition of the Flyer is produced in collaboration with members of our Residents Communications Group. If you have ideas for future articles or features, or if you would like to have a wider say on the way that we communicate with you and your neighbours, then please get in touch. We would love to see you at future group meetings.

We only know whether 18% of Grove Park households have a disability so, over the next few months, we'll be contacting you to get to know you and find out more about your household's needs. We also have a number of important health and safety checks to complete and are making sure we are aware of all checks your homes need so we can meet our commitment to keep all residents safe.

Grove Park in numbers...



Homes for rent: **1086**



Shared ownership homes: **23**



Leaseholder homes: **335**



Garages and store rooms: **163**



Community centres: **1**



158 blocks



54% flats



46% houses

Community

Stay up to date

Want to stay up-to-date with the latest news, events and opportunities from Phoenix? Sign up to receive tailored email updates from Phoenix, whether you're interested in employment support, opportunities to join the board or our family events, never miss a piece of news again!

To sign up visit

www.phoenixch.org.uk/register

Enter our prize draw!

Thank you to the 1050 residents who have signed up for our resident portal! On the portal you can access your information, make payments, keep up to date with news in your area, contact us 24/7 and book repairs online.

All residents who sign up for the MyPhoenix Portal before 19 February, will be entered into our prize draw and have the chance to win a luxury food hamper! The winners will be notified after the prizetdraw closes.

Haven't yet registered your account?

Visit my.phoenixch.org.uk



Let's keep our community tidy

Our staff work hard to maintain green spaces across the Phoenix area. Please help us to keep our community clean and tidy by disposing of your household rubbish in the bins provided. Items of rubbish must not be placed on the communal grass areas or pavement.

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 or by calling 020 8314 7171.

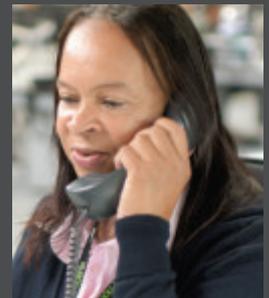


We want your views!

We'd like your feedback on the introduction of a new rent credits and refunds policy.

Please visit our website to read the consultation document and submit your views or contact us to find out more about our proposals.

The online survey will close on 11 February.



Introducing our new Building Safety Programme Board member

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Rosalia Green as our resident member to the Building Safety Programme Board.

We welcomed Rosalia to her first programme board meeting on 8 December and are looking forward to working with her to ensure

Phoenix continues to create, develop, and provide environments where residents can be safe and feel safe in their homes.

If you'd like to find out more about our Building Safety Programme please get in touch.

For updates, visit our website.



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We invest in people Gold



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