

Phoenix *Flyer*

A newsletter by residents for residents

 @phoenixtogether 

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

Art for all



Phoenix resident Emma Thirkill-Kirk lives in Downham with her husband and two children. Emma is a freelance illustrator and designer who recently took on a muralism project in her area as part of the Lewisham School of Muralism and with help from fellow Phoenix residents. Emma explains why and how the mural came about.

I joined the Lewisham School of Muralism, which teaches Lewisham residents to bring art to the streets and has produced more than 17 murals in Lewisham over two decades. The final part of the project was to do a solo mural. I'd never done a mural by myself before, so this was a new adventure for me.

There's a small piece of wall in my neighbourhood that I thought would be perfect for my mural. I couldn't wait to get designing, but first I needed to get permission to paint it. I contacted Phoenix and explained what I wanted to do and they were more than happy to give me permission to paint the wall and brighten up the community.

I wanted to involve local children in the design process and thought Phoenix's Summer Fun event would be the perfect opportunity. I knew that I wanted my mural to celebrate city wildlife and local nature, so I decided upon a fox as the main feature. I didn't want to plan the design too much so I drew a blank silhouette of a fox and asked children to collage it. They used origami paper to collage, and I found that lots of people were drawn to try and create origami pieces, so I wanted to incorporate that too. I also offered children the opportunity to weave flowers from scrap material, which also fed into the design.

Now for the tricky part. I spent a long time going over different designs, with lots of different versions of the fox. I wanted something that was lively and colourful but still reflected the Summer Fun activity. Once I realised that the fox should be origami, everything fell into place. I decided to keep all my shapes really simple to fit in with the origami feel.

Now all I had to do was paint it! I contacted a local forum who gave me some free masonry paint to use as

the base, then I used acrylic on top. I took me three coats and 20 hours to paint the mural.

Once it was done and people started noticing it, I received some lovely feedback. People have commented on how it brightens up the area. Growing up in the city in lower income areas means people don't always have access to art. I think it's important that everyone has the opportunity not just to create but to enjoy art. The mural is open to people who might not have access to art. I hope it gives people the opportunity to be inspired and want to create art of their own.

Now I've dipped my toe in the water, I don't want to stop! I've just won a small grant from this year's Community Chest to do another mural at the WG Grace Centre with Phoenix and local children this summer. I'm grateful to Phoenix not only for giving me permission to paint the wall but for giving me a space to get the community involved at Summer Fun.

If you've got an idea to run your own community project, go for it! It's so rewarding, not only for yourself but for those you affect/help/support.



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Phoenix Festival 2022

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, our annual free festival is back!

Join us for the Phoenix Festival 2022 at Forster Memorial Park, Whitefoot Lane, SE6 1UA on Saturday 14 May from 12-5pm.

Join us for live music performances, dog show and competition, African drumming, graffiti painting, carnival workshops, t-shirt decoration and much, much more! Plus, you can meet this year's shortlisted

Community Chest projects and vote for who you want to win a share of £130,000!

Chief Executive Denise Fowler said:

"This will be my first Phoenix Festival and I can't wait! The day is a chance for us all to get together and enjoy what's best about our corner of south Lewisham – the people, the culture, the music and the food. I hope you will all join us for what will be a fantastic day!"



Phoenix weathers the storm

Back in February, storm Eunice swept across the UK causing five large trees to fall and considerable damage to fencing and roofs across the Phoenix area. From 10am until 3pm, our repairs team had to suspend their scheduled jobs and bunker down at home or The Green Man. On Saturday, a massive clean-up effort began as a team of Phoenix Repairs and Estates services staff, came together to co-ordinate repairs, remove, and clear debris from our estates. Our repairs team completed 100 emergency repairs jobs from Friday to Sunday; this included removing debris and making safe and repairing windows, fencing, roofs and even bricklaying. Our General Enquiries team took 411 calls on Friday, 65 linked to the adverse weather.

We'd like to say a big thank you to our staff who went above and beyond during the storm.



Events

Phoenix Festival

Saturday 14 May, 12-5pm

Join us at Forster Memorial Park for a day of live music, food and drink, activities and more. Look out for more information on social media and our website.

Summer Fun

Thursdays in August

We're bringing free, family-fun to a green near you this summer. Look out for more information.

Vote for your Community Chest projects!

Each year we award small and large grants from our Community Chest fund to local projects that will benefit our residents and community. 10 large grant projects have been shortlisted and voting is now open! It's time for you to decide who wins a share of £130,000!

Look out for your voting pack which will have more information on each of the shortlisted projects and a postal voting form. Have your say: return your voting form to us for free in the post, vote on our website, by telephone or in person at The Green Man or the Phoenix Festival. Chair of the board

and Phoenix resident Carmen Simpson said: "This year we're giving away an extra £30,000 and you decide who gets the money! These are all great projects so make sure you have your say and choose who you want to see benefiting our community."

10 projects have been selected by our judging panel to win small grants of up to £2,500. Find out more on page 3.

Online, postal and telephone voting closes on Friday 13 May. Don't forget you can meet the projects and vote in person at the Phoenix Festival on Saturday 14 May! To find out more

about the projects and this year's Community Chest, visit our website or get in contact.



Your Community Chest projects

With voting for this year's large grant Community Chest winners now open, we're delighted to announce the winners of small grants, selected by our resident panel.

They are:

- Castillon Unity Garden (£2,470)
- Fitness & Friendship (£2,400)
- Fun & Fitness with Afro-Caribbean Music (£2,423)
- Girls-R-Us (£2,814)
- Grove Park Carnival (£2,500)
- Grove Park Mural (£2,480)
- Spread the Word (£2,490)
- Street Trees for Living (£2,500)
- WG Grace Senior Citizens (£2,000)
- Wuntanara African Drumming (£2,230)

Keep a look out for more information on when these projects will be starting and how you can get involved.



A visit to Velo House

In March, we welcomed the Mayor of Lewisham Damian Egan and Rushey Green Ward Councillors Louise Krupski and James Walsh to Velo House to see the progress of the new homes we are building in Catford. Named after the Catford Velodrome and located on the site of the Catford Job centre, local residents will benefit from 45 new affordable-rent homes with private balconies, a communal garden and free membership to Zipcar club.

Phoenix resident and Chair of the Board Carmen Simpson said: *"We are pleased to show the Mayor and Ward Councillors around one of our newest developments to discuss our plans for the site. As a resident-led organisation, people are at the heart of everything we do, so we look forward to delivering much needed affordable homes to local people in south Lewisham."*



News in numbers

In February 2022...



Our Financial Wellbeing team helped residents claim over **£83,000** in new benefit claims, overturning benefit decisions and grants

100 free gardening kits were given to Phoenix residents

News from the Fellowship and Star

The Fellowship and Star has been closed since the start of the pandemic but that's about to change!

We're currently in discussions with a new operator and hopeful that the pub will re-open this summer.

Look out for updates on our website.



Finding light at the end of the tunnel

Samantha Benton has been a Phoenix resident for three years and shares how she took control of a challenging time by seeking advice through the Phoenix Financial Wellbeing service.

“My circumstances a few years ago were very different to how they are now. I was made homeless with my family after privately renting and we were moved to temporary accommodation after a long struggle to secure somewhere that was safe and clean.

With the support of my MP, we were moved out of temporary accommodation, and I was offered a home with Phoenix. It was when I went in to collect my keys that I first met Jackie from the Financial Wellbeing Team.

“I walked into The Green Man with a folder filled with letters and bills that I was struggling to manage. The support Jackie gave me changed everything. She explained the letters to

me, gave me advice about budgeting and work, and even spoke on my behalf to organisations who were chasing me for money I didn’t owe.

Fast forward until now, I’m progressing in my career and feel in control of my situation. This experience has taught me that I can, and that I do not need to doubt myself! It’s been a real confidence boost.

“I think it’s important to seek support if you’re struggling or even if you’re not and just want a second opinion. It’s a hard thing to talk about, but everyone has difficult times and there’s no shame in taking advice.”

Read Samantha’s full blog on the Phoenix website.



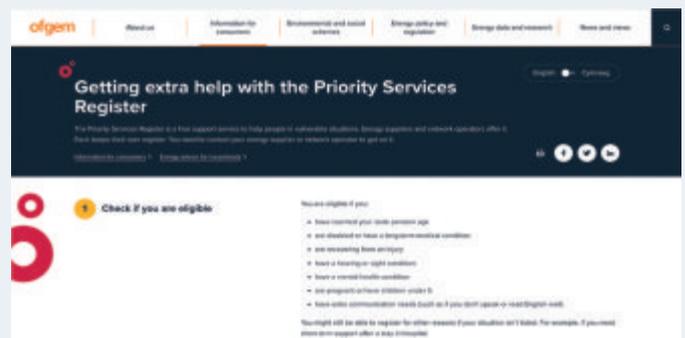
If you’d like advice about your finances, our Financial Wellbeing team are here to help. Get in contact by calling 0800 0285 700 or email info@phoenixch.org.uk.

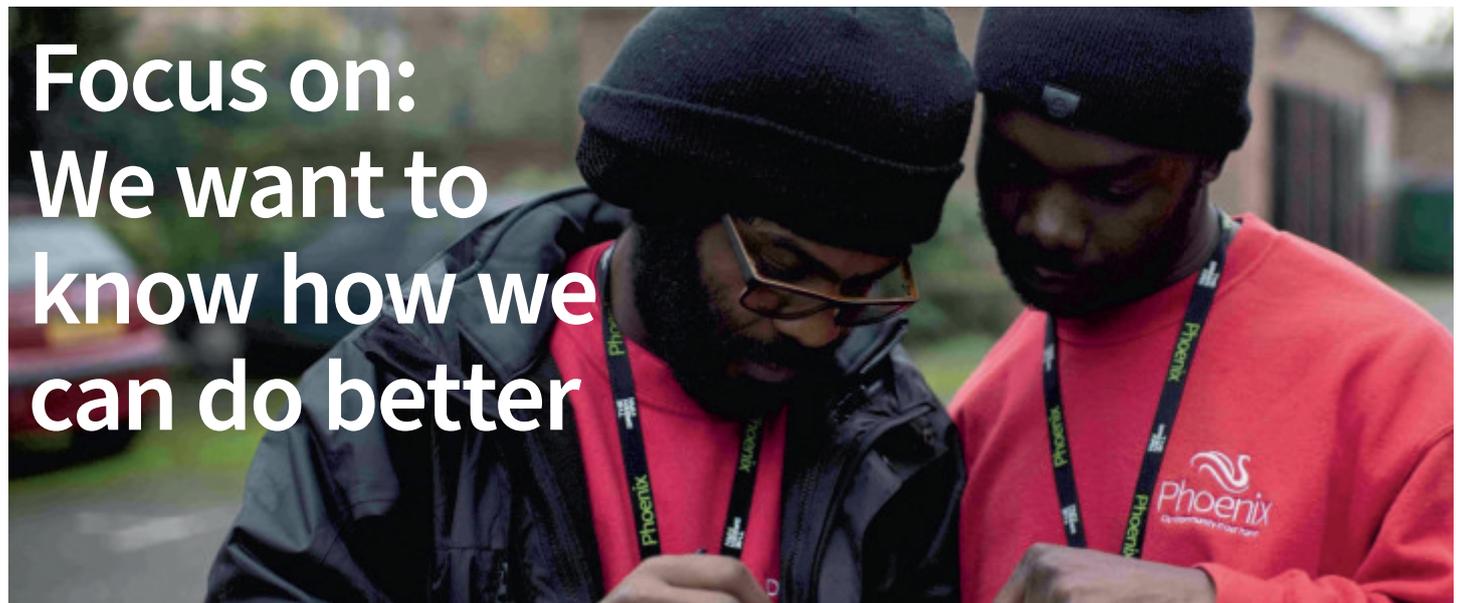
Get extra help with the Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register is a free support service offered by energy suppliers and network operators for anyone over state pension age or if you have a disability, medical condition, extra communication needs, are pregnant or have children under five. You can register by contacting your energy supplier or operator directly.

Help you can get:

- advanced notice of planned power cuts
- priority support in an emergency
- reminders and support to check your meter
- nominee scheme: you can nominate someone who you trust to receive communications and bills from your supplier
- accessible information.





Focus on: We want to know how we can do better

After taking over the management of homes in Grove Park, Phoenix has grown to over 8,000 residents. That is 8,000 people who are at the heart of everything we do. We need your views so we can prioritise improvements to our homes and services.

Currently, we carry out a full satisfaction survey every three years. Starting in May we will be surveying 10-25% of residents every quarter so that we have much more up to date information and can make changes as and when they are needed.

The surveys will be done by telephone on our behalf by an organisation called K-West. We want you to feel confident in being honest about our performance so the surveys will be anonymous. K-West will call you from a UK mobile number. If you are unsure whether the number calling you is genuine, or if you can have any concerns, you can call our General Enquiries team (0800 0285 700) who will confirm if the

number is from K-West. If you call the number back you will receive a recorded message explaining that the call was about a survey and they will call back later.

The surveys will ask your views on Phoenix's overall service, our repairs service, health and safety and the extent to which you feel that Phoenix listens and acts upon your views. There will be a chance for you to give us more information on what we do well and what we could improve if you would like to do so.

We will publish the results on our website each quarter so you can see how we are doing. We will also benchmark the results against other Housing Associations. This will allow

us to focus our resources to make improvements where they are most needed.

We have already trialled regular surveys within our Caretaking team which has helped us improve the service and increase the satisfaction rate from 83% in Quarter two to 91% in Quarter three. Residents gave feedback that it was not clear when the blocks had been checked and cleaned so our caretaking team started displaying rotas that would be ticked each day once the blocks had been checked and then signed each week once they'd be cleaned. We know that sometimes small changes can make a big difference.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Phoenix as 100 people...



Tenancy

91 are tenants
9 are leaseholders



Age

22 are under 18
19 are 18-30
37 are 31-59
18 are 60+
4 haven't told us their age



Gender

56 are female
44 are male



Ethnicity

33 are White
26 are Black
4 are Mixed
3 are Asian
3 are Other
33 refused to tell us
1 haven't told us



Religion

22 are Christian
3 are Muslim
2 are Other
11 have no religion
9 refused to tell us
52 haven't told us



Disability

12 live with a disability
27 have no disability
62 haven't told us

* This is based on the 31 December 2021 report of all occupants living in Phoenix tenant and leasehold properties.

Community

#Beheard.

#BEinvolved.

#BEin.

Our Youth Leadership Programme, #BEin, is looking for Phoenix residents aged 16-25 who are interested in working with likeminded individuals to pitch ideas and develop their creative, personal and professional skills through workshops and mentoring.

Get involved in workshops, one-to-one mentoring and developing your own projects, whether that be a public speaking event, a talent show or running your own workshop.

If you're interested in joining the group, get in touch.



Phoenix Building Safety Programme

Lia Green has been a Phoenix resident from the very start and recently joined the Phoenix Building Safety Programme Board as a Tenant Member. Lia shares why she decided to apply and what it involves.

"Fire and building safety have always been at the forefront of my mind due to my own personal circumstances, so when I heard about the Building Safety Programme Board, I knew it was something I had to get involved with.

"It can seem like an overwhelming amount of information and I'm still learning about it through meetings, training and self-education. As a



full-time working Tenant Member on the Board, I will endeavor to attend as many meetings as I can and will bring my opinions and comments towards the steps required to keep residents safe."

Read Lia's full blog on the Phoenix website.

Remembering Lionel John Wright

We are deeply saddened to learn of the death of Lionel Wright, an active member of the Bellingham community who was known by many for his kind and considerate nature.

Friend and neighbour, Mr Richards, said:

"Lionel Wright was a pillar to the community of Bellingham. If there was something happening, whether it being good or bad, Lionel would be there to help and guide anyone who needed it. He was our very own neighbourhood watch."



Keep balconies safe this Summer

Keep private balconies clear

Keep balconies clear of personal belongings, especially those that are combustible such as paints, solvents and fuels.

Safe smoking

Ensure cigarettes are extinguished and disposed of properly. Do not flick cigarettes off a balcony, this could cause a neighbouring balcony to catch fire.

Barbeques

Barbeques are not allowed on balconies. They burn at a high temperature and hot embers can be blown on to neighbouring balconies, causing fires to start.

Candles

Do not leave candles burning unattended and make sure not to light them or leave them under flammable materials.

For updates, visit our website.



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Gold


Phoenix
Our community in our hands

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