

May 2015 • Issue 31

A newsletter by residents for residents



# Phoenix

Our community in our hands

# community news



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Welcome...

# Welcome to Community News

**Thank you for picking up the May issue of Community News.  
We hope you enjoy your read.**

We love to receive feedback from other residents about Community News. It's your newsletter! At the Phoenix Festival in May we'll be asking what you think about Community News and your suggestions for improving it. We'll also be scouting for cover stars for our August issue, so make sure to visit our stall and have your picture taken!

If you have other ideas on how we can improve communications to residents, we'd love to hear from you. If you can't make meetings, then we welcome your feedback online.

Enjoy this issue, and we'll see you on 9 May at the Phoenix Festival!

Best wishes, from the Residents Communications Group

## WIN! 'Spot yourself!'

If this is you, pictured at our Spring Community Links Gathering in March, please contact us to claim your £25 shopping voucher.



Easter bonnets at our Spring Community Links Gathering

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## How to keep in touch

**By phone:** from 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday  
(and for emergency calls at all other times) 0800 0285 700

**Email:** correspondence@phoenixch.org.uk

**Web:** www.phoenixch.org.uk • www.thegreenman.com

**Twitter:** @phoenixtogether @greenmanhub  
for all the latest news and opportunities

**Youtube:** www.youtube.com/phoenixtogether

**Visit:** by appointment from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday  
at The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, SE6 2RP

**Staff training:** emergency phone service only,  
2-3pm every other Tuesday

Please note, The Green Man  
will be closed on the  
May bank holidays on  
Monday 4 and  
Monday 25 May.

Our out of hours emergency  
phone service will operate  
on both days.



Phoenix Community Housing Association (Bellingham and Downham Limited) is a  
Community Benefit Society, number IP30057R. VAT number 162 4926 03.  
Homes and Communities Agency number L4505.



## May Day Alert!

Join together at the Phoenix Festival 2015 and celebrate May Day!

As the festival returns for its eighth year we're bringing back some of your favourite attractions along with some fantastic acts and activities that are ALL NEW FOR 2015!

# Phoenix Festival 2015

## Saturday 9 May

Forster Memorial Park  
11.30am – 4.30pm



Featuring  
Aswad live  
at 1pm



- Circus - Live Music - Maypole - Climbing Wall - Aerosol Arts -
- Food and Refreshments - Arts and Crafts - Youth Chillout Tent - Entertainment -
- Face Painters - Balloon Modelling - Massage Zone - Archery - Live Storytelling -
- Line Dancing and Lots More ! -

**Forster Memorial Park, off Whitefoot Lane BR1 5SD**

With thanks to our sponsors:



Chris Edge  
Tree Care



ESSEX & SUFFOLK  
WATER living water



Rydon



Adams Builders



## Round the houses

Congratulations  
Nickala!



Nickala Lowe

One of our former apprentices has been announced the winner of a prestigious award at Lewisham's annual 'Celebrating Achievement' awards.

Nickala Lowe was named as the winner of the 'Outstanding Progression' award by Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock. The annual event celebrates the achievements of Lewisham's young apprentices.

Nickala now works full time for a training provider. Apprenticeships are available from Phoenix, our partners and other Lewisham employers throughout the year.

Register to receive alerts with Lewisham Council at:  
[www.lewisham.gov.uk/apprentices](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/apprentices)

## Fellowship on film



Inspecting the condition of the lower hall

(left) The pub in 1924.  
London Metropolitan Archives, City of London

Excited to hear more about our plans for The Fellowship Inn?  
Keen to see more of some of the hidden spaces within the building?

We've produced a short film about our new Lottery funded proposals, including a cinema and live venue. Visit our website or The Fellowship Inn stall at the Phoenix Festival to take a look and get involved!

## Springboard to work



Guests take steps into work

Hundreds of local residents were given a helping hand into long-term employment at our Spring Job Fair. More than 200 people took the opportunity to speak to employers and training providers, to visit our CV surgery or to try their hand at practical skills including tiling.



Getting to grips with grouting



# Phoenix call for Homes for Britain

'End the Housing Crisis'. That was the message from Phoenix residents as they marched on Westminster to join Britain's biggest housing rally.

Our apprentices and residents created banners and flags for the day and joined staff and resident Board

Members to make the case for Homes for Britain. Thousands of people from across the country came together at the rally ahead of the general election to demand that politicians commit to ending the housing crisis within a generation.



Residents, staff and apprentices at the rally in Westminster



## Driving repairs satisfaction

Members of our new Resident Scrutiny Panel have challenged Phoenix to improve repairs satisfaction levels in their first report to the Board.

The report, produced as our new in-house Phoenix Repairs Service went live, makes key recommendations to improve satisfaction levels including:

- to revise the existing satisfaction survey and
- to develop a separate survey for gas servicing.

A summary version of the report is available on our website or on request. Turn to page 6 to read more about repairs satisfaction levels and how you can help us to deliver the best possible service.

The scrutiny panel is currently recruiting for new members. If you'd like to help drive improvements for residents and help to make a real difference at Phoenix, please get in touch!

## Get it online

Would you like to receive the latest Phoenix news and events by email? Contact communications@phoenixch.org.uk to be added to our mailing lists.



## How are we doing?

We explore a different area of our work and performance in each issue of Community News. Here we look at repairs satisfaction levels and how we're working with residents to make sure that our new Phoenix Repairs Service helps to increase satisfaction levels.

If you'd like to know more about our performance in a particular area, please let us know.



### What's the issue?

In 2013-14 we completed more than 20,000 repairs in your homes. It's a key service and we want to make it the best it can possibly be.

In April we launched our new in-house Phoenix Repairs Service. Previously the service was managed by a contractor - Willmott Dixon. We hope the new service will allow us to offer more flexibility, achieve better value for money and help to improve resident satisfaction levels.

We've been working with our resident repairs panel since 2012 to improve our repairs service. These are the key priorities agreed with residents to improve satisfaction:

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

### Latest numbers

Resident satisfaction levels for repairs have been consistent since 2012, with 94% of residents satisfied with the outcome of their last repair.

When we compare ourselves with other housing associations of a similar size in London, our performance is within the top quarter.



Satisfaction levels dropped slightly from 94% to 93% between April 2014 and March 2015, just missing our target of 95%. We hope our new Phoenix Repairs Service and the recommendations made by our Resident Scrutiny Panel will help to increase satisfaction. We will report on any changes to satisfaction levels as the service develops.

**"If you can no longer keep an appointment, please contact us as soon as possible"**

We completed 88% of all repairs on the first visit. This means we're able to get access into the property and complete the repair the first time around.

### How you can help?

For every ten appointments, one is missed, because there is no one home to let our operatives in. This

costs us money and means we're not able to complete repairs as promptly as we'd like.

If you can no longer keep an appointment, please contact us as soon as possible so we can rearrange it at a more convenient time.

Your feedback is really valuable to us as we work to improve our service. You will be invited to complete a short feedback survey after any repair so we know what you think is good about the service and what can be improved. At the moment, only one in ten of these surveys are returned to us. Please take a moment to complete the survey – we don't know what's good and what could be better unless you tell us!

If you have general comments or feedback about our new Phoenix Repairs Service, please share these online via the comments form on our website.



# GO FOR GOLD



**Do you want to make your money stretch that little bit further?**

**Why not take advantage of our Gold Club scheme, now bigger and better than ever before?**

For simple things like keeping to repairs appointments or signing up to direct debit, you receive Phoenix Rewards points which are then exchanged for shopping vouchers. We'll even give you some Rewards points just for becoming a Gold Club member!

It's easy to sign up and there's no catch. Look out for more information at the Phoenix Festival, on our website and in the next edition of Community News.

## Save time, pay online

Did you know that you can check your rent account online? Our online resident portal – MyPhoenix – also allows you to report repairs and pay your rent account at the click of a button, at a time that suits you.

It's quick and easy to sign up to the service. Visit our website or speak to us at the Phoenix Festival on Saturday 9 May to find out more.



## FREE advice

If you're struggling to pay your rent, or have worries or questions about which welfare or benefits you may be entitled to, please contact us.

We are able to offer a range of free advice services and support, together with the Citizens Advice Bureau and other partners.



## Just the job!

Are you looking to find work or training? Our FREE employment and training programme, Roots into Work, could be just the job!

We've supported over 70 local residents to find employment in the last 12 months and can offer you:

- access to free training
- support to find work
- 1 on 1 advice and interview training
- work placements
- CV and application skills.

Come along to our weekly job club every Tuesday from 10am-12noon at The Green Man or call 0800 0285 700 for more information!

## Freebies to save water

Take advantage of Thames Water's free range of water-saving goodies to help reduce annual water usage. Freebies include shower heads, tap inserts and a shower timer.

Claim your free water saving goodies at  
<http://freebies.thameswater.co.uk>



## Stay fire safe

Last year, over 200 people in Britain died in fires in the home.

Look out for our new seasonal fire safety tips and keep fire safe.

With summer just around the corner, barbecue season is on the way. Follow our top tips to stay safe around barbeques, and remember, for safety reasons, barbeques are not permitted in communal areas or on balconies.

### Always

- Barbeque outside in a well-ventilated spot
- Keep children and pets well away
- Only use approved barbecue fuel or fire lighters - never use petrol or paraffin

### Never

- leave the Barbeque unattended
- put hot ashes into a bin, they could melt the plastic and cause a fire

Take extra care when turning bottled gas barbecues on and off. Make sure the controls and the gas cylinder valve are turned off before you change the cylinder and make sure all joints are tightened, safe and secure.

## How does your garden grow?

**Phoenix in Bloom**  
returns this summer to celebrate and reward the most beautiful gardens, balconies and community plots in our area.



If you bring colour to our area with brilliant blooms and dazzling displays, enter now! Categories include:

- Best residential garden
- Best vegetable plot or allotment
- Best balcony display
- Best community garden
- Young gardener of the year (16 years and under)
- Judges' special prize.

Visit the Phoenix in Bloom stall at the Phoenix Festival or our website for more information and to enter!

## Pet Corner

In their second feature for our newsletter, Battersea Dogs & Cats Home talk to us about a subject some of us are keen to avoid...

- Did you know that by law, you are required to pick up the poo if your dog fouls in a public place? If you don't, you could be fined up to £1,000!
- It takes less than a minute to clean up after your dog, but it takes years for infectious dog waste to become harmless.
- Parasite eggs in dog poo remain dormant for around three weeks, and then become infectious. Even when the dog waste disintegrates, and you can no longer see it, the surrounding soil can remain contaminated. Children between two to four years old are most at risk, as infection can cause fever, respiratory problems, skin lesions, heart problems and blindness.





# My Phoenix – April Taylor

April Taylor, 20, lives in Downham with her family. She joined Phoenix as the Communications Apprentice in February 2015.

## How long have you been a Phoenix resident?

I live with my Mum, Step Dad and two younger brothers and we've been residents since 1999. My mum was very pleased when she managed to get an exchange from New Cross. She found that Downham was a much more pleasant area for us as children to live in.

## What are the main changes you've seen?

Things have got a lot better since Phoenix took over in 2007. They've taken a lot of action on flytipping as lots of people used to do this outside my house.

Another change I've seen in the area is when Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy was being built. I went to Malory for one year and then when the new school was complete I moved into the Academy.

A big change was when Phoenix came into our home and repaired things. The major works that Phoenix did with the kitchen and bathroom were really good. It made us a lot happier and our kitchen was a nicer place to cook as a family.

## What's the best thing about living in the Phoenix area?

One of the things I like most about living in the Phoenix area is the community. The people who live around me are all very friendly and all have the same views on how they want their community to be.



April with some of her fellow Phoenix apprentices,  
l-r: April, Nicole, Stephanie, Asharne and Jack.



April outside her old school  
Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy

## What would you change if you could?

I wouldn't really change much – Phoenix provides lots of training opportunities and support, and I will be starting the Phoenix Academy soon as well. Since I've started my apprenticeship I've had a real insight into how much is on offer for residents.

One thing I would like is to see more social events for young adults, as there are lots of activities for older residents and young children but not much for young people aged between 16 and 25. I think social events would be a great way to get younger residents involved and engaged with Phoenix.

## What are your hopes for next year?

I want to complete the Phoenix Academy course and to do well in my apprenticeship. I'd love to get a job with Phoenix at the end of my apprenticeship as I'm really enjoying my time here.

Most of all, I hope that Bellingham, Downham and Whitefoot remains a great area for people living here and a great place for children and young people to grow up.



## Phoenix builds homes for Lewisham

There is a severe shortage of affordable housing in Lewisham and Bromley, and across the rest of the country.

We've been looking at how we can help to tackle this problem by building new homes. In the last issue of Community News we were happy to announce that our plans to build 60 new extra care homes for older people were approved by Lewisham Council.

Works have now started on the site at Hazelhurst Court and we're looking forward to updating you as works progress. In the meantime, we are actively looking for other potential development sites and have started to explore opportunities to build new homes adjacent to existing homes at Forster House.

We have begun consultation with existing residents at Forster House and will bring you updates on our development plans in future issues of Community News.



## Garden gripes?

In celebration of their 25th birthday, environmental contractor Glendale is offering a FREE garden makeover worth up to £1,500! If you could do with a helping hand in the garden and think your patch deserves some love, email your nominations to [correspondence@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:correspondence@phoenixch.org.uk) or call us by Friday 31 July.

**SPACE  
INVADERS**

**TRANSFORMING SPACES  
TRANSFORMING LIVES**

## Prepare for launch!

Could you spare some time this summer to create green spaces to feel proud of?

Thanks to your votes we won £50,000 Lottery funding last winter to transform five outdoor spaces in south Lewisham. Now we're looking for volunteers to help to revamp and revitalise these spaces for all of our community.

If you're aged 16-24 and think you'd be handy with a trowel and want to get involved, please get in touch!

## Now you see them, now you don't

Driven crazy by the sight of abandoned vehicles on our estates? We've good news for you!

We're cracking down on untaxed, unregistered or abandoned cars. We'll give notice to owners in advance, but will remove all abandoned vehicles.

Please help us by reporting details of any abandoned vehicles by calling 0800 0285 700.



## We love our place!

It's probably the biggest ever snapshot of young people's thoughts on our area. We've gathered more than 1,000 views from young residents to find out how we can make our neighbourhoods safer, greener and more exciting.

The survey was undertaken as part of 'Our Place' a government funded national initiative to support communities to take control on local issues.

Some of the involved young residents will share their findings at the Community Chest event on Saturday 6 June. To get involved, speak to them at the event or contact us.



# Community Chest makes a difference

So far, we've awarded £200,000 from our £500,000 Phoenix Community Chest to support local projects. To date these projects have benefited more than 2,000 local residents.

Residents decide who receives a share of the funding, so make sure your voice is heard and have your say! Ahead of resident voting for the next round of Community Chest funding, take a look at how the money has been awarded to date and the impact it's had in our community.



## How would you spend

£100,000?

Make your voice heard at our Community Chest gathering on Saturday 6 June, and use your vote to help decide which charities and groups should receive a share of our £100,000 Community Chest 2015!

We received 24 bids for funding this year and representatives from the shortlisted organisations will be on hand to talk about their projects and plans for the money. Look out for your invitation in the post shortly!



## Noticeboard

### Save the Date!

All Phoenix residents and shareholders are warmly invited to attend the Phoenix Annual General Meeting 2015 on Tuesday 8 September. More info soon!



### Health and wellbeing fair

FREE advice and support for older people and their families is on offer at the 60 Up health and wellbeing fair on Saturday 16 May from 1pm to 4pm at The Green Man.

Top tips to keep healthy and happy, plus nutrition advice and tasters, craft and gift stalls, exercise demonstrations and complementary therapies. Contact Christina on 020 3667 3704.



### Summer Market

Enjoy a spot of retail therapy at The Green Man Summer Market on Saturday 13 June. Stalls will offer handmade jewellery, arts and crafts, health and beauty products, locally made food, clothing and lots more!

Limited number of stalls still available at £5 each. Call 020 3121 0210 or email [bookings@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:bookings@phoenixch.org.uk)

### Mini Market Mondays

Head to The Green Man on a Monday and enjoy a spot of retail therapy while supporting local traders. A range of products are available, including handmade jewellery, cosmetics and greetings cards.

### Growing Buds

Keen young gardener? Come along to The Green Man on Wednesday 27 May from 2-4pm to create your own plant pot, and sow some seeds. FREE session for children aged 12 and under.

### Tai Chi for beginners

Every Thursday, The Green Man hosts Tai Chi with Matt. Enjoy a basic exercises class from 6.30-7.15pm or a beginners class in the Laojia form from 7.15-8pm. Call Matt for more info on 07989 209558.

### Game, set and match

With Wimbledon just around the corner, why not improve your game with Catford Wanderers Tennis Club?

Classes for all ages and abilities - rackets supplied. Call Coach Alex on 07872 578284.



### Space for hire

Whether you're planning a party, a meeting or looking to run a class, we have a wide range of spaces available for hire at reasonable rates at The Green Man. Discounted rates for Phoenix residents. Contact us for more information!

