

May 2014 • Issue 27

A newsletter by Phoenix residents



www.phoenixch.org.uk



@phoenixtogether

Phoenix



[Click here](#) to meet your Gateway Local Advisor

Festival fun for all the family!

Page 3

Support towards jobs and training Pages 6-7
Up for the cup! Page 11

Spot yourself and win

See inside!



Welcome...

Welcome to Community News

Thank you for picking up this copy of Community News.

We hope that you enjoy reading about all that's been happening at Phoenix and what's coming up in our area over the next few months.

In the next couple of weeks we will begin work on this year's resident annual report.

We're keen to involve as many residents as possible in the production of the report and value your opinions on content, style, design and everything else!

If you'd like to get involved with this year's annual report, we'd love to hear from you. Please give us a call or email communications@phoenixch.org.uk for more information.

Read on for information about the Phoenix Festival, new job and training opportunities, and lots more!

Best wishes,
from the Residents
Communications Group



The Residents Communications Group hard at work



WIN! 'Spot yourself!'

If you're the person circled in this photo from our Community Links event, visit the Resident Communications Group tent at the Phoenix Festival to claim a £25 shopping voucher!

How to keep in touch



By phone: from 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday (and for emergency calls at all other times)
Freephone from your landline: 0800 0285 700
Standard cost from your mobile: 0844 264 2844



Email: correspondence@phoenixch.org.uk



Web: www.phoenixch.org.uk



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



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 – we will be closed on the bank holidays on **Monday 5 and Monday 26 May.**

Contents

- 3 Phoenix Festival
- 4-5 Round the houses
- 6-7 Money matters
- 8 My home
- 9 My Phoenix
- 10 My neighbourhood
- 11 My community
- 12 Noticeboard
- Inside Meet your Gateway Local Advisor

Cover: Summer fun at the Phoenix Festival

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



Phoenix Festival

~ Let's celebrate our community ~



Phoenix's Got Talent Final

Free Event

11.30am-4.30pm

Phoenix Festival

Saturday 10 May 2014

Forster Memorial Park,
off Whitefoot Lane, BR1 5SD

- Archery - Graffiti Workshop - Sillympics - Face Painting - Climbing Wall - Balloon Modelling -
- Animals from Surrey Docks Farm - Punch & Judy - Puppet-making Workshop - Story Telling -
- Shed Theatre performances - Young People's Zone - Design your own T-shirt - Massage -
- Music & Entertainment - Live final of Phoenix's Got Talent and lots more! -

Join us from
11.30am to 4.30pm
for a fun packed day
for all the family.

Enjoy creative
activities, sports
and competitions,
entertainment and
much more.

Phoenix staff will also be on hand to update and involve you in shaping our future plans. Find out more about how to get involved and make a difference!



Register for MyPhoenix today!

Do it online!

You can now report repairs, pay your rent and check your rent account at the click of a button!

Our new online resident portal – MyPhoenix - means you can easily manage your tenancy at your convenience, whether that's at home or when you're on the move through a tablet or smart phone.

It's easy to register. Visit our website to find out more.

Grape expectations

Volunteers at the Farmstead Road Community Garden took advantage of the good weather in March when they hosted a vine growing workshop.

Residents received grape growing advice and top tips from winegrower Markus Bojkun, before planting their new vines. They are looking forward to their first harvest later this year. To join the Farmstead Road Community Garden, **call Maria on 020 8461 3153.**



Farmstead Road Community Gardeners

Help us stamp out housing fraud!

We've launched a campaign to stamp out housing fraud in the Phoenix area – and we're calling on you to help.

It is now illegal for any tenant to rent the whole of their property to another person. This is called unauthorised subletting and stops people in genuine need from enjoying a good quality home.

If you believe that any Phoenix property is occupied by someone other than the real tenant, please get in touch. Please be assured that your information will be

treated in the strictest confidence. If you think that you may be renting your home illegally and pay your rent to anyone other than Phoenix, please contact us to let us know. If you are renting your home illegally, you will have to move out.

More information about housing fraud can be found on our website.

Recycling gets a boost

Live on an estate? Lewisham Council is making improvements to communal recycling bins to make sure that only the right items go into each bin. Look out for information from the council soon and let's all work together to recycle as much as possible!



Make sure the right items go in the right bins



Earn and learn

Throughout National Apprenticeship Week, we celebrated the 23 apprenticeships that we have delivered for local young people, together with our partners over the last 12 months.

Our apprentices were visited by Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham, and enjoyed lunch together, prepared by The Green Man apprentice chefs, Sianne and Becky.

Apprentice Surveyor, Huy Ngo, said: "My apprenticeship is fascinating and a great experience. If a young person asked me for my opinion, I would definitely say go for an apprenticeship. You develop your experiences, gain knowledge and skills, all while having fun!"



Our apprentices meet with Sir Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham

Apprentices go extra mile

Apprentices working for our contractor Willmott Dixon have raised £350 after completing a sponsored walk in Forster Park during National Apprentice Week. The money raised will support Dekamile, a charity supporting a small village in Toga, West Africa, and FairShare, a national charity that tackles food poverty and food waste.



Get your garden ready for summer

With summer just round the corner (we hope!), give your garden a makeover with the help of our new gardening scheme. We can offer a regular garden tidy throughout the year from just £1 a week and services can include lawn mowing, hedge trimming and more. Contact us to keep your garden green and pleasant!



Get on Board!

Are you interested in helping Phoenix improve its services and change the lives of thousands of residents for the better?

Then why not think about standing for our Board? Residents form the largest group on our Board and we want more residents to get involved in making the decisions that matter.

Being a Board member is an opportunity to steer the future direction of Phoenix, set our priorities and ensure we are spending money in the most effective way. You'll also pick up

lots of skills and experience that could help you in your career and your day-to-day life.

We'll be writing to all shareholding members later this year to invite applications for the Board, so look out for that letter and for more information on our website.

And if you're not a shareholding member, then why not join today?



Help with jobs and training

Two residents have landed jobs just days after completing Phoenix training courses in March.

More than 50 residents completed a range of courses during the month and we hope that more will get into the workplace over the coming weeks.

If you need help to find a job, or support to develop your CV and interview skills, please contact us.

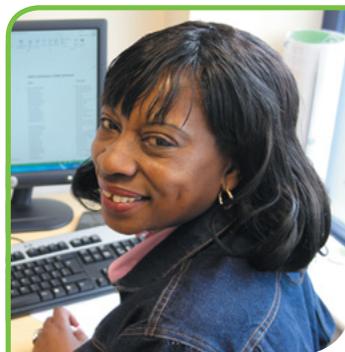
Our team can help you to access a wide range of training and work opportunities that will help you to take the next steps towards employment.



Tell us what you need!

To help us develop our training programme, please take a moment to complete our training survey so that we can deliver the training that you need!

Scan the QR code below, visit our website or pop into The Green Man to complete the form.



Marian's story

Marian Nandu has started a new role with a local training provider.

Marian says: "I contacted Phoenix for support to find work in January. Helen helped me secure a work experience placement to help build my experience and confidence and also helped me to find training. I really enjoyed my work experience and learnt a great deal. This voluntary placement has now turned into a paid role with Be Totally You. Thank you, Phoenix!"

Karlene's story



Karlene Davidson works part-time but signed up for one of our free IT classes to improve her skills. All course participants received a voucher to purchase a second-hand PC for just £50. "The course was really great and made things seem a lot easier," she says. "I'm much more confident now and use the computer much more often."



Kickstart your career with MyWorkSearch



We've teamed up with a leading jobs website to give you information about thousands of current job vacancies.

Lots of residents have already signed up to **MyWorkSearch** for free online support to find work, build their CV and improve their interview skills.

It's easy to sign up and completely free. Visit our website to register.

Quids in!



We're pleased to announce the three winners of our first ever £250 direct debit prize draw.

Congratulations to Kevin Knight, Malvina Logue and Adewale Ajayi, who were drawn at random from all Phoenix tenants and leaseholders currently signed up to direct debit.

Make the switch

Direct debit is the easiest and most convenient way to pay your rent or service charge.

Once you've signed up to the scheme, payment is made automatically by your bank or building society whenever a payment is due.

You can now register to pay your rent or service charge by direct debit over the phone, making it easier than ever to sign up. We'll be holding our next prize draw in September, so why not sign up now?

Fair banking, affordable loans



Colleagues from Lewisham Plus Credit Union (l-r Pamela, Louise, Susan and Maria)

A new branch of the **Lewisham Plus Credit Union** is now open at **The Green Man**, offering local people access to a range of friendly, safe and sensible banking services and products.

Janet Greenwood, Chief Executive of Lewisham Plus Credit Union said: "We are delighted to open our new branch

and look forward to serving our existing and new members. Do pop in to see us soon!"

Visit the new branch for advice and information on:

- savings accounts
- affordable loans
- current accounts
- budget accounts
- pre-paid cards
- children's accounts



Asbestos update

We have now completed surveys at all Phoenix tenants' homes to check if asbestos is present and where it's located.

We want to share this information with all of you and will be writing to all Phoenix tenants over the coming few weeks. We'll tell you where any asbestos is located in your home and offer you some general information about asbestos.

Your safety is our priority.

Asbestos presents no risk to health unless it is disturbed. If there is any risk to your health, we will already have made arrangements to remove asbestos from your home, but often it is safer to leave asbestos in place than remove it.

We know that some of you may have concerns about asbestos. Please look out for the letter and, if you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We will also be providing some more information about asbestos on our website at www.phoenixch.org.uk

About asbestos

- Asbestos is a name given to a group of naturally occurring minerals, that were used in products to resist heat, corrosion and provide insulation.
- Asbestos was commonly used in construction until the 1980s, when the government started to ban its use.
- Asbestos fibres are only a danger to health if you breathe them in. That means undisturbed asbestos presents no risk.

Pet corner

Meet **Alfie** the Bearded Dragon, who lives with Phoenix resident Rita Dennard. Rita said: "He's an unusual pet but a very good boy and is always very well behaved."

We want to hear all about your furry, fluffy, feathered – or even scaly – friends. Nominate them to appear in Pet Corner!



Phoenix'll fix it!

We want our repairs service to be the very best it can be, and we're working on proposals to improve services from April 2015. So far more than 650 residents have been involved in giving their views and ideas. We're now looking to form a 'repairs forum' group which will meet every 6-8 weeks, to shape plans for our new repairs service.

Please contact us if you would like help us improve the new service. We'd love to hear from you!

Free handyman service

Did you know that we can offer a free handyperson service for vulnerable or older tenants over the age of 60?

Whether you need help to change a light bulb or assistance to move a piece of furniture, contact us to see how we can help.



Top tips to save energy

Energy bills may seem to be rising all the time, but there is a lot we can do to save energy and keep costs down.

- close curtains at dusk to prevent heat loss
- take a shower rather than a bath (and use 60% less water!)
- use energy efficient light bulbs – they last longer and use 80% less electricity

For more top tips and advice to be energy smart, visit our website, or call to book a free energy saving assessment at your home.



My Phoenix – David Neale

David Neale moved into Whitchurch House with his family in February 1954. One of the very first families to move into the new block, David contacted us to share his memories as his mother Eileen celebrated 60 years in her home.

1. How long have you been a Phoenix resident?

I moved into Whitchurch House in February 1954, with my parents and three brothers. I moved out of the flat when I got married in 1971, but my mum has lived there ever since (my dad passed away in 2009). She celebrated 60 years in her home earlier this year.



Whitchurch House in 1954

2. What are your early memories of the area?

When we moved in, there was still a lot of work going on around us, roads were being built and other estates were still going up.

I remember, as a young boy, climbing over the fence at the back of the flats with my brothers to catch sticklebacks in the River Ravensbourne. This used to get us in a fair bit of trouble with Mr Heath, who was the porter for the estate – he'd tell us off for climbing the fence and for playing on the green areas in front of the flats! It was all lots of good fun for us though and there was so much space to play compared to where we'd lived before in Forest Hill.

We also used to go to Peter Pan's Pool as a treat as it was a sort of fairground back then. We'd get our hands stamped to show that we'd paid and this would give us access all day long.

3. What was the best thing about the area?

It was a great place to grow up and there was a real sense of community. There were lots of other children in the blocks who we all played and grew up with.

In the school holidays we'd have bike races down the estate road – you'd never be able to do that now! But back then, there was barely any traffic and no speed bumps.



The Neale brothers at Whitchurch House in the 1960s (l-r: Alan, Derek, David, in front: Peter)

I have three brothers, Alan and Derek are both older and Peter is younger than me. When I'm back in the flat to visit my mum, I wonder how we ever all crammed in there. Alan had his own bedroom but the three youngest all shared a room. I've no idea how we fit three beds in the room!

4. What's it like to be back?

It's really special to be able to come back to the flat – I lived there with my family for 18 years. While all of my brothers have moved away from the area we're always back to visit mum as often as we can.



David, Eileen and Peter Neale in early 2014

She's lived in the flat for 60 years now and I thought it was something worth celebrating.

We've had lots of good times at Whitchurch House and it holds a lot of special memories for my mum.

I got in touch with Phoenix at the beginning of the year and mum was really pleased to share her memories of the estate with Pat and Jim (Phoenix Chair and Chief Executive) when they visited her in February.

Here's to many more happy years and memories at Whitchurch House!



Are you the blooming best?

Are you the forget-me-not of the Phoenix gardening scene?

We want to make our 2014 Phoenix in Bloom competition the best yet, and are now on the hunt for those residents who brighten up our area with brilliant blooms and dazzling displays.

Phoenix in Bloom is an opportunity for all of you to get involved in gardening, no matter how large, or small, your outside space.

Enter now or nominate a neighbour to celebrate a beautiful garden, hedgerow, balcony or container that brings colour to your area!

Categories for 2014

- 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



Entries are now open
Closing date for entries Friday 11 July

Visit www.phoenixch.org.uk for more information and to download an application form or contact us.

Need a helping hand?

Visit the Phoenix in Bloom stand at the Phoenix Festival to claim your free seeds and for some top tips and advice – younger residents can also take part in a free planting workshop.



Budding young gardener?

Younger residents can take part in our creative workshop at The Green Man on Wednesday 28 May to decorate their very own plant pot. Book your space today!

Remembering Homes for Heroes



Many Phoenix properties were built in the 1920s as part of the Homes for Heroes programme for First World War veterans and their families.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the

Great War, we're keen to learn more about the original tenants at these homes.

Whether you're related to a First World War veteran and are happy to share your memories, or you have photographs of your neighbourhood from the period, we'd be delighted to hear from you.



Up for the cup?

We're all set for a football fiesta when our Community Chest gathering comes to The Green Man on Saturday 7 June.

The gathering, which runs from 11am to 3pm, is an opportunity to learn more about bids for a share of our annual £100,000 Community Chest pot. Tenants can decide which projects receive funding by voting for their favourites and you can meet the bidders on the day to learn more about their ideas.

But there's lots more to do and enjoy. As the World Cup 2014 approaches, we've given the event a football theme.

We've even won the cup! The Barclay's Premier League Trophy will be paying a visit to The Green Man on the day, and you'll be able to pose for a photo with it.



You will also be able to enjoy free food and refreshments, pick up useful advice from Phoenix and lots, lots more.

Look out for your invitation and more information soon!



Fancy a kickabout? Turn over to find out more about the Phoenix 5-a-side tournament.

What is the Community Chest?

Last year Phoenix introduced a new £500,000 funding pot to support projects that will benefit people in our area.

Residents, groups and organisations can bid for a share of £100,000 on offer each year.

And it's up to you to decide who should receive the funding.

All tenants can vote at the Community Chest gathering. The bids that win the most support will be the ones that win the money.

Make sure you have your say on projects for your area by voting at the gathering on 7 June.

Kestrels and Kingfishers!

Did you miss your last Community Links gathering? Not only did you miss out on some tasty pancakes. You also missed the chance to have your say on rent and antisocial behaviour, and vote on names for your Community Link.

Almost 300 people came to The Green Man for Community Links in February.

They agreed the following names for their Link area:

- residents from Bellingham and Sedgheill voted for Bellingham Farm

- residents in North Downham and Upper Downham voted for Kingfisher

- residents in Lower Downham and Whitefoot voted for Kestrel

Make sure your voice is heard by getting involved in your next gathering.



Agnes Techie-Menson
"It's been very interesting. I've learned about what Phoenix is providing."



Hannah Watkins
"It's been amazing. I hope it happens again. We're normally bored at home at half term."



Jean Vecchi
"I always enjoy your events and I thought the information you gave was very good."



Noticeboard

We list local events on our website. If you would like to add an event to our calendar, email communications@phoenixch.org.uk

Get groovin!

Join us for Zumba at The Green Man and enjoy a Latin-inspired dance workout. Classes for all ages and abilities on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

i Call Patricia on 07773 527 033 for more info.



Listen out loud!

Community News is now available as an audio recording for our visually impaired residents, thanks to Lewisham Talking Newspaper.

i If you have a friend or neighbour that would benefit from this new service, please contact us.

Swim for free!

We have a free family swim membership to give away to a lucky reader. Valid for one year, the membership will give your family free access to the pools at Downham Health and Leisure Centre.

i To enter, visit www.phoenixch.org.uk/WIN and complete the short online form by **Saturday 31 May**. Good luck!



Anyone for tennis?

Congratulations to Catford Wanderers Tennis Club on Beckenham Hill Road, SE6 who celebrate their centenary this year.

i To find out more about coaching and social games, contact Angela on 07709 881 383.



Fancy a kickabout?

We're hosting a 5-a-side tournament in early June to warm us up for the World Cup. If you're aged 16-24, pick your players and contact us now to enter your team!

Trophies and prizes will be presented to the winning team at the Community Chest gathering.



Till the Boys Come Home

Love musical theatre? Fancy appearing on the stage? Take part in an exciting community musical theatre show to mark the centenary of the First World War, as part of the Sydenham Arts Festival.

i Contact Jonathan Kaufman on 07904 505 923 for further details or email jonathan@sydenhamartsfestival.co.uk

Dates for the diary

Phoenix Festival	Saturday 10 May, Forster Memorial Park
Community Gathering	Saturday 7 June, The Green Man
Downham Celebrates	Saturday 14 June, Downham Health and Leisure Centre
Bellingham Festival	Saturday 28 June, Bellingham Green
Lewisham People's Day	Saturday 12 July, Mountsfield Park
Summer Fun	Throughout August, various locations

Don't miss out!

There's lots going on at The Green Man. Sign up to receive our monthly event email so you don't miss out! Email communications@phoenixch.org.uk or visit www.thegreenman.com