

phoenix news

Losing Fitzgerald House

Unfortunately we were recently told that Phoenix are to lose a significant number of units as a result of the closure of Fitzgerald House in Poplar - we currently house 27 members there.

Not only does the closure of Fitzgerald present a huge challenge for Phoenix in terms of re-housing members, but it reinforces the lack of care shown to existing communities in areas of London that are deemed suitable for regeneration. The Chrisp Street Market plan was approved in 2018, and whilst it promises 'reinvigoration' with new homes and local amenities, there has also been a lot of discussion about the potential displacement of residents and the many businesses in the area. Regeneration is not a bad thing in itself and is a necessary part of maintaining cities but it starts to be very divisive if the original residents are unable to stay and enjoy those new amenities or the new housing they were displaced to make way for.

Losing Fitzgerald also supports the idea that short life housing can be allowed to run down to a point past repair, which is a shame because as we know in Phoenix, short life can provide a great solution to housing need. I have lived in two different short life flats in Poplar over (at least) five years and have really been able to make it my home. And despite not having a permanent agreement, my current situation is by no means any less secure than renting through a private landlord outside of Phoenix.

I think it is really important that housing in less affluent areas of London are not allowed to degenerate so that they can be knocked down and built up again in a new guise. I would rather see urban areas enriched and preserved so that they can move towards the future without bulldozing the communities and histories that came before.

The loss of Fitzgerald is another reason to be looking at development options for Phoenix. London Community Led Housing are hosting an (online and free) event looking at 'people powered homes' and exploring projects designed by community led schemes. While this may not necessarily be a route Phoenix goes down, it is a good opportunity to look at alternative housing ideas and be inspired.. [Sign up for the event here.](#)

The pros and cons of high rise living - [an article on the BBC exploring the rise of tower blocks](#)



Fitzgerald House, Poplar E14, London

Suke Driver 2020

illustration by ex-member
Suke Driver



George Kelly (pie and mash) in 1939
[from this article](#)

Mile End cemetery is so beautiful as the leaves start to fall and is also a very grounding and restorative space to visit

Not a local business but [this tree on Bow Road](#) is still watching over the comings and goings of commuters in East London

Using your local area after Covid

As an East London based co-op, our members have a real connection to the area they live in, and for many local businesses and amenities, it is more important than ever to support them after a prolonged closure over the summer. Some in my area are below...

JP's cafe and Maureen's Pie & Mash are both open again in Chrisp Street.

Poplar Union cafe is still closed but is running a programme of events including pilates, art classes, sustainability workshops, talks including *Creative Communities Responding to C-19* and *Canoes, Canals and the Environment* ([find their calendar here](#))

The Greenwich Pensioner in Poplar has reopened and is a great place to have a beer. They also do good pizza, show football and have deals and happy hour



Way Making Workshops - from member Omikemi

Way Making is a BIPOC-centered healing and restorative community developed in response to my own need for a non-professionalised space to connect, rest and restore in conjunction with the extreme acts of anti-blackness. Since then we've had sessions by Valerie Mason-John and most recently Langston Kahn leading a practical session on establishing and developing grounding and boundaries as black and people of colour navigating racist and anti-black spaces

Upcoming sessions for October: we have *Reclaiming Our Magic for Liberation Struggle*, (15th October 7.30-9.30pm) QTIPoC event led by Lama Rod Owens, [author of Love and Rage](#). The session will focus on reclaiming the parts of ourselves that have been lost due to systemic oppression. We will take a look at our specific magic, in this context, magic means how we use our sexual expressions to cultivate connection and to belong, as well as how to use our laughter and joy to consume experiences of being erased. We will also have a session, *Plant Medicine for Soul Support* (29th October, 6.30-8pm) with Community Herbalist Rasheeqa Ahmad of [Hedge Herbs](#). The session will revolve around seasonal herbs and healthcare, looking at the wild garden medicines that are around us and how they can support our systems for healthy balance. Focusing on medicinal plants that help our nervous system and emotional health, we'll learn to find new ways to prepare them to nourish our daily lives

If you would like to know more or sign up for sessions, please send an email to: wewaymaking@gmail.com



top tracks

Link to Andrew's most [recent playlist here](#)



To our self-employed members...

If you are self employed, make sure you have claimed any funds you are eligible to through the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, you have until 19th October to apply. This is the final payment scheduled by the government so it is definitely worth making sure you receive what you are entitled to. [Follow this link](#) to the gov.uk page.

collective cookbook

At the beginning of lockdown I sent out a callout email to some friends, chefs and other people to help me write a collective cookbook - a shared resource and platform for creativity. You are welcome to [download it here](#) and use and share as you wish. I hope you enjoy the recipes!

