



PhoenixMilton

supported work and life skills development
handmade paving and garden accessories



Phoenix Trust has a vision:

To help build a society where everyone has a right to participate fully, regardless of ability or disability, creating a culture where all contributions are respected and appreciated.



We try to achieve this through our mission:

To enhance the lives of people with learning disabilities or complex needs, through the provision of a meaningful experience of work and the development of employability and social skills.

Within the Phoenix community, our values are to:

- Respect and celebrate everyone's differences and support everyone's rights.
- Encourage the growth of self confidence and the desire to learn and progress.
- Act with honesty, fairness and integrity.

Chairman's Report

Dear Friends,

Firstly, I would like to thank David Cook and Norman Jones, our joint Chairs who both stepped down earlier this year. Norman is continuing as a trustee and we are grateful to still have his skills and valuable experience available to us. David has retired from our Board after many years of dedicated service. David's son, Neil, has joined as a trustee taking over from where his Dad left off. This sets a precedent and I have yet to break the news to my son that being a Phoenix trustee is hereditary. We are also delighted that Becky Munns has joined the Board.

Of course, COVID has dominated our year. We closed during the first lockdown but due to our educational classification, remained open through the second and third. The staff have worked hard to ensure that Phoenix is a safe place for all who attend.

Our co-worker placements have been fully subscribed and sales of our concrete and garden products have remained strong. Further details can be found in other parts of this review.

In the year we have signed a new lease for the site which secures our position for many years and will enable us to commit to major site development projects in the coming years.

As ever, the trustees are very grateful for the support and contributions Phoenix gets from staff, volunteers, co-workers, support workers, family members, customers, councils, local businesses and tradespeople plus the organisations within our network.

The Board is committed to the ongoing development of the unique experience Phoenix provides.

Brian Guinee, Chairman

The Phoenix Board of Trustees consists of Brian Guinee, Jackie Teasdale, Charles Hobley, Neil Cook, Becky Munns, John Harradine and Norman Jones.

Operations Report

If writing for Phoenix's first ever proper annual review wasn't daunting enough, I find myself reflecting on one of the most extraordinary and challenging periods in Phoenix's history, and of course, in the history of the nation as well.

We started 2020 in lockdown, closing Phoenix completely on 24 March. When I took this 'farewell' photo of the staff above I little realised that 18 months later, COVID was still going to be a major part of our lives.



Since then we have adopted new ways of working – become used to wearing masks, have sung countless verses of 'Happy Birthday' while washing our hands – and we could not be prouder of the way our whole Phoenix community has adapted. Staff, co-workers, volunteers, support workers, family members and customers have all been amazing and we are very appreciative.



When we re-opened in July 2020, we had no idea that we would face more national lockdowns and a new familiarity with terms such as LFTs (lateral flow tests) and PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests. However, everyone has risen to the challenge and with a few hiccups, we have been able to provide since then a fairly uninterrupted service to co-workers who wished to attend and were able to do so.

In addition to the *esprit de corps* mentioned previously, we are very grateful for the assistance provided by the Learning Disability Partnership, both financial and in terms of advice and guidance. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council also deserve honourable mentions for their financial support, along

with local businesses and private donors – our heartfelt thanks to you all. A particular shout-out to COEL, who have helped us so much with our site repairs and maintenance – the sometimes unnoticed and rather less glamorous aspect of assisting a small charity, but so vital. Similarly, colleagues and organisations in our networks, particularly STEnG (Social Training Enterprise Group) and GET (Guidance, Employment, Training), have provided what networks do best, a sense of a common goal and similar aims and objectives, to get through the most testing of times.

Onward and upward – lots of great things have also happened during this time, especially the arrival of new volunteers who beat a path to our door. Volunteers are a vital part of life at Phoenix, supporting co-workers in all areas – kitchen, garden, concrete factory and woodsheds. So step forward for a bow – Janet, Chas, Rob, Trish, Claire, Ashley and Richard. You have made such a difference and we thank you!



Cambridge Country Club (previously Bourn Golf and Country Club) made us their Charity of the Year and, undaunted by lockdown, instigated an indoor putting challenge to raise money for us. Since then we have had an outing to their driving range and putting green and helped with the refreshments on their Captain's Day. It has been wonderful being associated with such a great bunch of people, who make us feel so welcome and included.



During these strange times, life at Phoenix has mainly continued apace. Some highlights include:

- Starting up a bijou outside catering business of homemade cakes – we have a small but very loyal client base and hope to be able to scale up in the future.
- Further refining our wooden products range and responding to customer interest by developing log stores, wheelchair accessible raised beds, bike sheds and compost bins – always with one eye on the emerging circular economy and our role in it.
- Ever the opportunists, we have also tapped into the nation's reconnection with nature, with our wildlife range of birdboxes, hedgehog homes and other assorted animal residences.

Finally, we must never forget Phoenix's beginnings as a concrete factory. The sale of slabs is still the mainstay of our social enterprise income and reputation. This side of the business has been robust and to all those who waited until we re-opened to build their patios, we say, a mighty THANK YOU!

Jude Tustian, Manager



Finance Report

Year ended 31 March 2021

The year to 31 March 2021 has been the most financially uncertain year Phoenix has faced. The year brought multiple financial issues, including periods of full and partial closure, following government guidance on applying for and accounting for financial support, all while still trading. Although government constraints continue to be a challenge, we recognise the amount and swift availability of financial support provided by the government during the COVID pandemic. Despite the ongoing uncertainty, we have a strong financial base to grow from and a more certain future in Milton with a renewed lease.

Income increased to £174,349 (2020 £115,814) and costs reduced to £128,919 (2020 £136,714), resulting in a surplus of £46,420 (2020 deficit £31,624).

Income from training provides the main income for Phoenix and we have worked hard to increase spaces available and maximise utilisation of all spaces. Income from the local authority continued

during the lockdown periods and we are grateful for the support provided.

Donations increased in the year to £24,577 (£22,735) and we enjoy continued valuable support from existing donors, including Pye Foundation and Rugby Benevolent Fund.

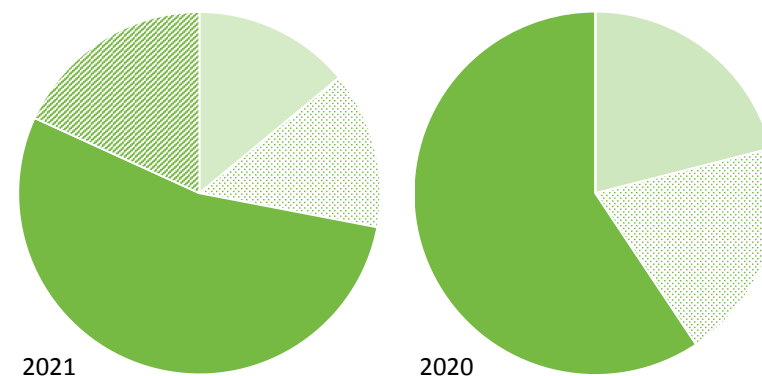
Product sales increased to £22,329 (2020 £17,967), however our canteen income suffered due to the site closures.

Salary costs are the main expense of Phoenix and we benefited from the government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme during the early periods when the site was closed and also from the flexibility it gave as the site was re-opened.

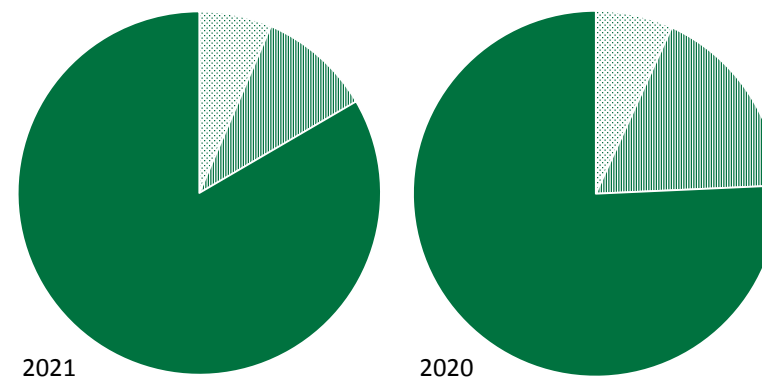
At 31 March 2021 the total reserves and unrestricted funds totalled £78,054 (2020 £31,624).

Charles Hopley, Treasurer

Income	2021	2020
Product sales and other income	£24,536	£24,341
Fundraising and donations	£24,577	£22,735
Training	£94,300	£68,727
Government support	£31,888	£0



Expenditure	2021	2020
Materials	£8,033	£8,949
Overheads and other costs	£12,597	£22,910
Employment costs	£103,718	£99,320



Phoenix's History

As the top photo shows – we have come a long way from our formation in 2006, on the site of the Silver Fern concrete factory.

Over the years, we have added a portacabin, providing office, kitchen, and dining facilities, not one but two woodsheds and outside show area, developed a vegetable garden, and now even have a pool and darts room!

The additional facilities have helped us, as a relatively small provider, to offer considerable variety in our placements, with our co-workers producing not only concrete paving slabs and ornaments but also a range of wooden items, such as mud kitchens, planters, bird boxes and tables, and providing a daily two-course lunch for co-workers, volunteers, and staff.



Being able to access our site from Milton Country Park was another major improvement, considerably increasing our customer footfall. We often have visitors who discover us for the first time through this surprise opening in the trees and it is lovely to introduce new people to what Phoenix is all about.

Many of the improvements we have been able to make have come through financial donations and particularly groups of volunteers coming on site – Virgin Media, Pulse and Cambridge Assessment to name but three.



Support for Phoenix

One definition of the word 'support' is a force that aids, protects, complements or sustains.

For a small organisation like Phoenix, support in all its many forms is vital and helps us develop and grow both our charitable and social enterprise aims.

Financially, it seems invidious to single out companies or individuals, but mention must be made of two very long-term supporters, Pye Foundation and the Rugby Benevolent Fund.

We are grateful to all our donors, large and small, and would also like to recognise those who choose to remain anonymous – thank you all.

The online social platform JustGiving, is one of the most straightforward ways of helping us and often individuals will donate in lieu of another expense – sending Christmas cards being an obvious example.

www.justgiving.com/phoenixtmlltd

We are also always delighted when people fundraise on our behalf. It doesn't have to be running a marathon – just a simple box on a

reception desk or shop counter raises not only funds but our profile too.

You can also help us from the comfort of your home, by shopping through easyfundraising or Amazon Smile, both giving Phoenix a small amount of money when we are nominated as your charity of choice. Simply log on to the websites and follow the instructions.

www.smile.amazon.co.uk

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/thephoenixtrust



Support isn't just financial of course. Our volunteers bring enormous skills and talents with them. The support workers who are at Phoenix to assist particular co-workers are invaluable to us too, with their array of creative and culinary skills and even more importantly, intuitive understanding of the world of learning disability. Sarah, Charlotte, Sue, Jill, Annette and Tracey – thank you!

We are fortunate in having good neighbours – step forward The Gaskin Brothers and Jim Andrews, down the (bumpy, not yellow brick) road, Dulux and Brewers and of course, through the secret gate, Milton Country Park.

Finally, one of the easiest ways to support us is by spreading the word; please follow us on social media and tell people about the products we make here on site.

 **Phoenix Trust Milton**

 **@phoenix_trust**



Our Products

Making and selling our products is a vitally important part of life at Phoenix. Not only does it provide an income stream and experience for the co-workers in the development of work and interpersonal skills, it also brings to our door another key component of our community – our lovely customers!

We have at least one member of staff, one volunteer and one trustee who discovered us initially as customers and ended up with a deeper involvement – so if you are thinking of visiting us, be warned!

Customers bring much more to the table than just money – they provide an opportunity for co-workers to gain experience in serving, taking orders and assisting with loading and delivering. Customers underpin the fact that we are a charity, we are a social enterprise and we are also a business. This last aspect adds an extra layer of learning and understanding for co-workers, introducing elements such as product display, packaging and presentation, stock control and sales targets.

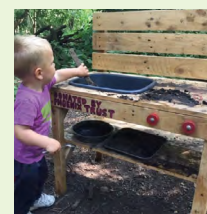


Most of our customers completely 'get' Phoenix and our unique selling point, namely our co-workers and their pride and enthusiasm in the items they have produced. This engagement from the community is wonderful to have and we are very grateful.

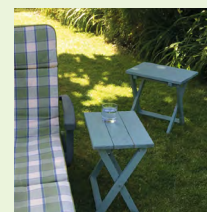
As a retail outlet, we are off the beaten track. However, we like to think that once found, we are never forgotten. Please do help us in spreading the word about our wonderful handcrafted and eco-friendly products.

We also love it when customers send in pictures of our products *in situ*, often accompanied by some words of appreciation. So please forgive us a proud moment and allow us to share a few photos and comments.

Thank you so much for donating this to Wild Beginnings at the Wild Place. Believe me, they all really love it!!
Jane, Milton



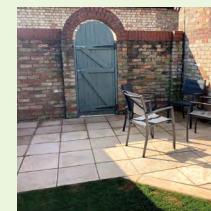
I commissioned Phoenix to make me two small folding garden tables to my specification. They arrived in the colour of my choice and they are completely perfect, also very reasonably priced. Great service, I will be back again. **Sheila, Girton**



I just wanted to say a big thank you for the brilliant rainbow cake you made for my friend's leaving party – it tasted absolutely amazing. It looked fantastic when it was cut, and certainly made everyone have a big smile on their faces.
Dave, Cambridge



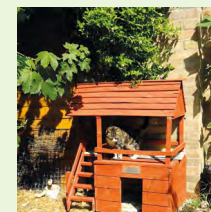
The quality of your work is fantastic, and everyone has been very helpful and accommodating.
Christina, Cambridge



The best birthday cake ever! Deliciously succulent chocolate sponge – you can tell how good it was because we scoffed half of it before we remembered to take a photo! Thank you, Phoenix. **Imogen, Cambridge**



Thank you for building my new garden house, the steps are ideal and I can hide from the rain under the shelter and keep my paws dry. It is also a lovely position to watch the butterflies in the sun. **Pooh the Cat, Cambridge**





Lunch time Dilly Dog walks at Milton Country Park



Our son has been going to Phoenix for several years now and thoroughly enjoys the mixture of practical tasks, outdoor spaces and fresh air and friendly community he experiences there. When we've visited, we've always found it a warm and welcoming place. There is a special, cheerful feeling that fills Phoenix, which is underpinned by the values on which it is built: it's a place where 'everyone has the right to participate' and where 'all contributions are respected and appreciated'. This gives those who work there a sense of self-worth as well as the enjoyment of making things. In addition, Phoenix provides a very good built environment, both the workshops for the variety of products and also the kitchen and the garden, where there are also opportunities for co-workers.

Phoenix is led by a wonderfully kind, helpful and practical team, who work with energy and efficiency. Last but not least, Phoenix products are beautiful! One of the pleasures of visiting it is walking around and looking at the varieties of paving, garden furniture and garden ornaments available. We recently bought tiles for a garden patio and we are delighted with what a nice space they have made. Thank you, Phoenix community, for everything you do!

Co-worker's parent



I like working in the woodshed and factory and next year I would like to work in the kitchen. I like working with Woody, Mark, and Stuart as well. I like lunch at Phoenix. I am learning to use a chop saw. I like seeing my friends at Phoenix and walking Dilly Dog.

David, Co-worker

I have been coming to Phoenix since 2015. I like working in the garden. I like weeding. I water and sow seeds. I have grown cosmos, tomatoes, pumpkins, sunflowers, lots of herbs – and lots more! I like working with the volunteers. Next year, I'd like to grow pineapples!

Joel, Co-worker

I have been volunteering at Phoenix for the last five months and I have really enjoyed being here every Friday, in fact, it has been the highlight of my week. I recently left a full-time office job and I get so much from working outside in the garden, helping the co-workers to grow flowers and some tasty vegetables, hopefully to use in the kitchen. It has been great for my own wellbeing and given me some really valuable experience, working with a wide range of lovely people.

Claire, Volunteer

I have been here at Phoenix Trust for over a year now. I enjoy the independence of working on my own. I enjoy using the sander, because it relaxes me. I like painting wood because it's fun. We get tea and it's my best drink.

I enjoy speaking with customers when they visit. I like to help customers and show them around. I am proud that I have been polite to customers and remembered to distance myself from them.

I have sanded and painted an outside bar blue and I did it all on my own.

Marick, Co-worker



It is fair to say that Phoenix is completely unlike anywhere I've worked before and the day that I wandered in from Milton Country Park turned out to be quite a milestone – I've even ended up changing my name!

No two days in the woodshed are the same, but we follow the same process, turning donated pallet wood into all sorts of products, from mud kitchens to planters, log stores to storage seats.

The days may be varied, but what is constant, is my passion for the job – I really enjoy teaching the co-workers new skills but have also learnt so much about and from them. If they walk away at the end of the day, happy and with smiles on their faces, then so do I.

Woody, Woodshed Supervisor

(formerly known as Mark!)





The World of Work

Before I began writing this, I had a chat with the Phoenix co-worker I know best – my son Joe. A few quotations from that conversation: *‘Phoenix is good for my health.’ ‘It helps me get up in the morning.’ ‘The staff are patient.’ ‘You can ask questions.’ ‘You can have a chat and a joke.’*

Into this positive atmosphere Phoenix welcomes on average 12 co-workers a day, both male and female. They range in age from 15 to 69. Most attend once or twice a week. They are referred from a number of sources including the Learning Disability Partnership, social workers from other areas, families, local regional colleges and local special schools.

This is a real workplace, giving experience of making products in the woodshed, factory or garden, for display and sale to customers who come on site. A hot meal is cooked for colleagues and staff to eat at lunch time and there are wider catering events. There is the opportunity to gain a variety of technical skills and experience, in a supported way, the pressure of meeting orders and time deadlines. Relationships with colleagues, staff, support workers, volunteers and customers are all a natural part of working life.

Co-workers generally work in groups of three with one staff member and voluntary support as appropriate. Some come with their own support worker. Health and safety issues are part of both initial and revised instruction. Technical skills are broken down into small sections so that co-workers can have a sense of mastery and staff can make any necessary adjustments to enable progress and independence. Co-workers are encouraged to be aware of their own goals and achievements.

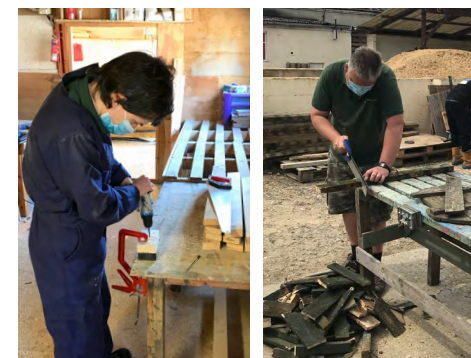


Social and communication skills are an important additional focus. This might include work on timekeeping, following instructions, working as part of a team, managing free time and becoming confident to ask questions, check out instructions and offer ideas. Co-workers take part in setting their own goals during regular informal reviews.

This person-centred approach continues into the area of employability. Co-workers may be helped to write their CV or vocational profile, to visit local firms, and to develop customer service skills. The aim is to match jobs to the strengths and interests of the co-workers and links are regularly explored with local businesses.

There is of course time for fun, with a pool table for lunch time relaxation and a recent very successful trip to Bourn Golf Club (now Cambridge County Club). Staff are pleased to notice that some of the friendships made by co-workers through working together are beginning to continue outside Phoenix.

Jackie Teasdale, Vice Chair



Community Report

Nestled between Milton Country Park and the industrial estate, Phoenix is very proud to be part of the thriving Milton community and we are pleased and grateful that we have so many local residents and businesses as part of our wider community – as customers, staff, volunteers, supporters and trustees and of course our co-workers who live locally.

During the trials of lockdown, Milton community as a whole really stepped up to support all our shared neighbours in many ways and Phoenix is very pleased to have been able to contribute towards that by donating a Little Library to the village.

As well as keeping our woodshed busy when customers were not allowed on site, this project allowed people within the community to donate and borrow books in a low contact way and gave residents a much appreciated destination for those daily exercise outings.

This was a whole new design and build challenge for Woody in our woodshed and it was supported by donations of both money and

materials from the local community. Both Phoenix and the village were delighted with the results and with the hard work that Marick, Joe and Sofia in particular put into building it.

Since the success of the first library, we are pleased to have also donated a plant swap stall which has been equally well used and appreciated by local residents, a mud kitchen to the 'Wild Place' in Milton Country Park and we have fulfilled a unanimously supported commission from the Parish Council for a second library, situated at the Lion & Lamb pub.

Looking back over what has been a difficult year for so many people and also for charities, we are very pleased to have been able to make these contributions to village life and are delighted to consistently receive so many referrals and lovely comments whenever there is any mention of paving slabs or wooden products on any of the village social media pages!

We look forward to growing and continuing our involvement with village life and building our relationships with our local business community over the next 12 months.

Becky Munns, Phoenix trustee



The Phoenix Family

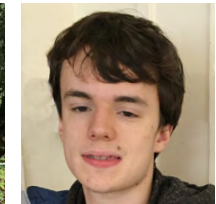
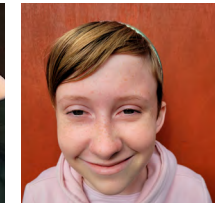
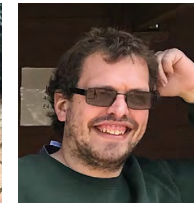
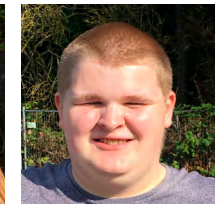
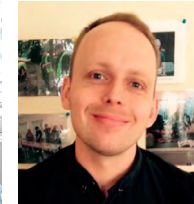
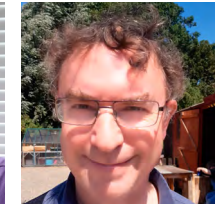
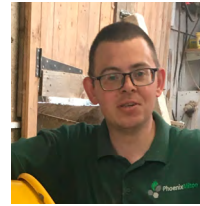
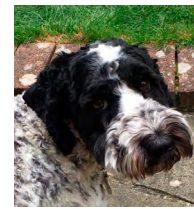
Co-Workers: Adam, Alex, Amber, André, Becca, Ben, Braydon, Callum, Chris F, Chris S, Conor, David, Ewan, George, Harry L, Harry S, Jake, James, Jodi, Joe, Joel, Jonathan, Kodie, Luke, Marick, Mark F, Mark G, Michael K, Michael S, Nuala, Paul, Rob H, Sophia

Volunteers: Ashley, Charlie, Chas, Claire, Janet, Richard, Rob, Trish

Support Workers: Annette, Charlotte, Jill, Kasia, Sarah, Sue, Tracy

Trustees: Becky, Brian, Charles, Jackie, John, Neil, Norman

Staff: Alie, Chloe, Jude, Mark, Noeleen, Stuart, Woody



About Phoenix

You can find us at:

Phoenix Trust, Unit 8, Milton
Trading Estate, Cambridge Road,
Milton, Cambridgeshire CB24 6AZ

Our opening hours are:

Tuesday to Friday,
8.30 am to 3.30 pm

Phone: 01223 420669

Email: info@phoenixtrust.org

Please follow us on
social media:



www.phoenixtrust.org



Phoenix Trust Milton



@phoenix_trust



Directions

We are a little bit tucked away so even in the days of sat nav, some old-fashioned directions may help.

If you are approaching Milton from A14 West/ East or Cambridge City, take the Milton turn-off at the roundabout, then:

- proceed towards the village
- at the Tesco roundabout, turn right
- at the Dulux paint shop, turn right (if you end up at Milton Country Park, you have gone too far!)
- follow the road round, one bend to the left and then straight on along a bumpy road
- come through the double metal gates at the very end. Park here, come and meet us and have a look round.

If you are approaching Milton via Histon:

- turn right via the Park & Ride exit
- proceed up the A10
- turn into the village – first exit
- then, as above.

If you are approaching Milton via A10 from Waterbeach, Ely and beyond:

- turn left into Milton, as signed, after Waterbeach and Landbeach villages
- proceed through the village
- at the Tesco roundabout, turn left
- then, as above.

The Phoenix Trust (Milton) Ltd is a registered charity
(Registration Number 1118548)

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