



Play scheme feast

included decorating wands, creating charms and potions, a Quidditch match and a feast for would-be wizards and witches.

The week also included a magic show and a visit from the 'Animal Man' who brought along a variety of owls to meet Lyng youngsters.

Wizard trip casts a spell

Lyng youngsters learned all about the wonders of wizardry during a magical day trip to Harry Potter World.

Two coachloads from the estate – members of our Youth Club and children taking part in the summer play scheme – enjoyed the visit in August.

As well as looking round film sets at the Warner Brothers Studio in London, they got to experience life as a trainee wizard at Hogwarts by trying their hand at a game of Quidditch, mixing potions and performing charms.

Amy Rushton, Community Events Coordinator at Lyng Community Association (LCA), said: "The trip was truly amazing. The children were in awe of it all, and so was I. It was a fantastic day and we had a lot of fun."

The trip tied in with the magical theme of LCA's summer play scheme, which attracted 35 young people this year.

Activities



Lining up for the Harry Potter trip



An owl visit

Make a difference

Why not have a greater say in your estate and your community by joining the LCA Board?

We are looking for more tenant members to join, to help us manage our services and plan for the future.

As well as an opportunity to raise concerns and influence decisions about the estate, it can help you develop your knowledge and skills around housing, finance and project management.

Call us on 0121 525 5969 to find out more.

Community allotment re-launches

Our community allotment has been re-launched, having become very overgrown in recent months.

We have cleared the site ready for planting and are appealing for local residents of all ages to join us in cultivating the plot.

Children can use the raised beds to develop their green-fingered skills and adults are invited to take on their own patch to grow fruit and vegetables.



BEFORE



AFTER

If you might be interested, drop in to the LCA office in Frank Fisher Way or call us on 0121 525 5969.

Need a hand?

LCA has a small grants fund to help our tenants with expenses related to education and training or to support community activities and events.

If you think it could help you, get in touch!

Creativity unlocks potential

LCA's Youth Club exists to offer a range of opportunities to our young people, helping them to reach their potential.

The club now has 68 members, following a recruitment drive this summer which involved a 'Bring your Friend' invitation on our free day trip to Drayton Manor theme park in June.

Over the summer, youngsters talked about their aspirations and how they could achieve them during a visit from the Creative Academies Network, which focused on the youth-led social media 'iCAN' campaign.

They also learned about mental ill health and ways to combat it during visits from representatives of West Bromwich Albion's charity, the Albion Foundation.

Other activities have included movie nights, pizza making and trips to the ice-cream shop!

To get involved, contact Amy Rushton on **0121 525 5969**.



Club members at the 'Flip Out' trampoline arena

Meet Amy

Many of you will have seen our new Community Events Coordinator, Amy Rushton, out and about on the estate.

The 23-year-old, from West Bromwich, is in charge of organising trips, training courses, youth activities and community events for Lyng residents.

Amy, who studied history at the University of Birmingham, joins us after working for West Midlands Fire Service educating young people about fire safety.

She said: "I love my job. I grew up on an estate not far from here, so I enjoy working with people from the kind of community that I grew up in. It's really nice to bring people together – we never had anything like this when I was little."



ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS

As an LCA tenant, you may occasionally have questions such as 'Can I decorate my flat?', 'Am I allowed to keep a pet?' or 'How do I apply for a transfer?'

We have policies covering all kinds of housing-related subjects, including:

- adaptations
- allocations
- anti-social behaviour
- Board member recruitment
- compensation for improvements
- data protection
- health and safety
- property improvements by tenants
- pets
- rechargeable repairs
- redecoration
- rent arrears
- repairs
- service charges
- tenant compensation
- void management (empty properties).

To see any of these policies – or leaflets which summarise the key points – drop in at our office at 3 Frank Fisher Way (Monday-Friday, 10am-1pm), call **0121 525 5969** (Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm) or email mail.lca@btconnect.com

Seaside fun

A record number of Lyng families joined us for a sunny day trip to Wales over the summer.

Three coachloads, totalling 171 people, enjoyed the outing to Barry Island in August.



Repairs – who pays?

As your landlord, LCA is responsible for repairs needed due to long-term wear and tear.

But we will re-charge you for the cost of repairs due to deliberate or accidental damage caused by you, another member of your household or visitors.

Repairs which are your responsibility – and for which you will be re-charged – include:

- unblocking sinks, toilets or drains due to misuse
- replacing keys, fobs and locks where the lock is not faulty (eg. when keys are lost)
- getting into a property where you have locked yourself out
- replacing lightbulbs or fluorescent tubes
- work needed due to you not carrying out routine repairs that are your responsibility or not reporting repairs which are our responsibility
- damage caused by faulty appliances or installation.

If you call out a heating engineer to a fault caused by your mistake (such as failing to turn on the heating or set the timer) you may be re-charged the cost of the call.



Curiosi-tree

'Jupiter Jack', from Mad Science, visited to perform various experiments with smoke and fire before getting down to the serious business of slime-making.

Another visit involved West Midlands artist Alex Vann working with club members to create a 'curiosi-tree'.

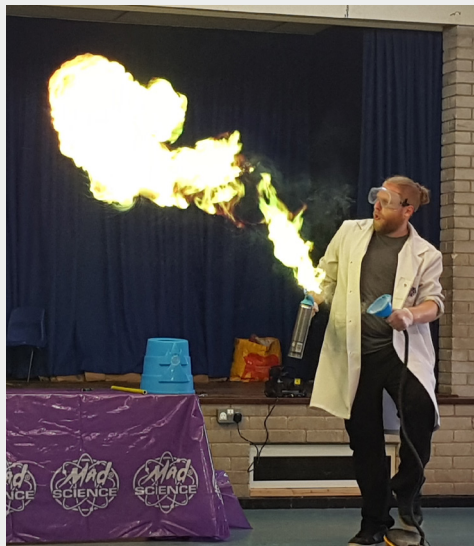
Youngsters then wrote science questions that they wanted



Mask making

Curiosity broadens horizons

Members of our Curiosity Club have enjoyed a host of fun science-based activities in recent months.



A 'Mad Science' experiment

answered on tags which they hung on the tree – ranging from 'Why isn't the earth flat?' to 'What happens when the world ends?'

More recently Tom Ellis, of Curious Oddities, ran a workshop with club members making masks out of natural materials.

To find out more, call Amy Rushton on **0121 525 5969**.

Improving life on the Lyng

Following our Tenant Satisfaction Survey last year, we are continuing work to tackle the issues you flagged up.

DOG FOULING/ STREET CLEANING

Sandwell Council has confirmed that street cleaning will be carried out every six weeks. To report dog fouling, call **0121 368 1177**.

Council representatives have also attended factory units in Lyng Lane to speak to owners about rubbish blowing off the site.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

We continue to run lots of activities to open up a range of opportunities for Lyng youngsters.

NEIGHBOUR NUISANCE

We aim to visit residents experiencing problems as soon as we are made aware of them. To report such issues, call our Housing Officer Stuart Cant on **0121 525 5969**.

PARKING PROBLEMS

Sandwell Council does not want to issue additional parking permits for residents in Newhall Street, but we will continue to press for a relaxation of its policy.

REPAIRS SERVICE

There has been a gradual improvement in our repairs service. There have been a few difficulties in recent months due to the temporary absence of our handyman, but we are working to get cover so this improvement can continue.

PLANTED AREAS

Barratt West Midlands has still not completed planting work across the estate but we are hopeful that this will be finished over the coming winter.

Stamp out damp

A build-up of condensation can make your home feel damp and cause problems with mould. Mould prevention is a tenant responsibility so, to prevent such issues, follow these simple tips.

- Open windows to allow moisture to escape when you are cooking, washing up or bathing.
- Use an extractor fan if you have one, and please clean regularly.
- Cover boiling pans when cooking.
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when cooking or bathing to prevent steam spreading.
- Reduce steam by running the cold water first when taking a bath.
- Every morning wipe off condensation that has formed overnight on window sills.
- If you have to dry clothes inside, hang them in a small room with the windows open.
- Keep wall vents clear.

Benefit changes

All working age Sandwell residents who claim benefits will move onto Universal Credit from November 2018. So what does it mean for you?



- 1) **Take care of your rent first.** Get your rent account into credit by paying a little extra on your current rent now, to reduce the risk of being in arrears when you are switched over to Universal Credit.
- 2) **Bank account.** You need a bank or similar account to receive payments.
- 3) **Set up a Direct Debit.** The quickest and easiest way to pay your rent. Call us at LCA to set this up.
- 4) **Budget for monthly payments.** Universal Credit is paid once a month IN ARREARS, so you need to pay your rent first and other bills, leaving enough money for essential outgoings for the rest of the month.
- 5) **Manage your money.** Get help with budgeting – contact the Welfare Rights advice line on **0121 569 3158** or email welfarerights_team@sandwell.gov.uk, or check out www.sandwell.betteroff.org.uk
- 6) **Apply for Local Council Tax Reduction.** Make a claim to Sandwell Council.
- 7) **Gather information for your Universal Credit claim.** You will need details of your postcode, National Insurance number, bank or similar account, accommodation, savings, income, childcare costs, Child Benefit reference numbers, photo ID (eg. driving licence or passport) and any other benefits.
- 8) **Get online.** Make sure you have a valid email address. If you need help, contact UC Start support at Citizens Advice Sandwell on **0121 726 3408**.

For more information, go to <http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/universalcredit>

Supporting young families



Extra support for families is on hand during our Toddler Group sessions this autumn.

Members of the 'Action for Children' team will regularly be popping in to chat to parents who may need additional help with the challenges of bringing up a young family.

The Toddler Group meets at The Church of the Good Shepherd with St John every Monday, from 1.15pm-2.45pm, and Tuesday, from 9.15am-10.45am.

Sessions, which cost £2 per family, involve a host of fun activities for pre-school children, with recent events including a 'Music Bugs' workshop and a cake sale planned for 25th September in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support.

WARM AS TOAST

We are urging all our tenants to please check your heating now, ahead of the cold weather starting to bite.

Turn your heating on and let it run for an hour or so to flag up any problems, so that we can sort them out well before the winter.

Keep safe



With the longer nights looming, here is some basic crime prevention advice to keep your home and property secure.

- Lock doors, windows and garden sheds every time you leave your home.
- Hide keys, including car keys, out of sight and away from your letterbox.

- Keep ladders, tools and bikes stored away.
- If you're away for a while, leave lights or radios on a timer to make it look like someone is at home.
- Ensure side gates are locked to prevent access to the rear of your home.
- Remove valuables from view of ground-floor windows.

To report any crime call the police non-emergency number 101 or, in an emergency, 999.

Check us out online

Why not keep up-to-date with what's happening on the Lyng by going online?

Check us out at:

- **website** – <http://www.lyng.org.uk/>
- **Facebook page** – <https://www.facebook.com/lyngcommunityassociation/>
- **Twitter page** – @LyngLCA



What's on

Wednesday 31st October – Community Cinema, time to be confirmed, at the church hall.

Date to be confirmed – Christmas Market trip to York. Contact LCA for more details on **0121 525 5969**.

Various dates and times – Adult evening courses. Pottery, digital photography, cake decorating, Christmas crafts and much more! For details, contact LCA on **0121 525 5969**.

Useful numbers

Here's some handy numbers to keep by you, in case of emergencies.

- **Lyng Community Association (including repairs)** – **0121 525 5969**
- **Repairs out-of-hours** – **0300 333 6540**
- **Lyng Medical Centre** – **0121 612 2000**
- **Allpay** – **0844 225 5729**
- **Sandwell benefits** – **0121 368 0800**
- **Sandwell Council Tax** – **0121 368 1001**
- **Sandwell Council** – **0121 358 2200**
- **National gas emergency service** – **0800 111 999**
- **National electricity emergency service** – **0800 404 090**
- **Police/Fire/Ambulance emergency** – **999**
- **Police non-emergency** – **101**
- **Fire brigade non-emergency** – **0800 389 5525**
- **NHS non-emergency** – **111**
- **Sandwell General Hospital** – **0121 553 1831**
- **City Hospital** – **0121 554 3801**
- **Crimestoppers** – **0800 555 111**
- **South Staffs Water** – **0800 389 1011**