



Getting crafty

## Families embrace festive spirit

Residents of all ages enjoyed making reindeer food, marshmallow snowmen and festive decorations at a Christmas Crafts morning earlier this month.

Families from across the estate gathered for the seasonal event, run by Lyng Community Association (LCA).

Residents created a host of festive delights, including mini Christmas trees, decorated pine cones, coasters and calendars.

They also decorated biscuits, made hot chocolate and wrote letters to Santa at the event, hosted by the Church of the Good Shepherd with St John on 1st December.

Youngsters also showed off their artistic talents in our ever-popular Christmas card making competition.



Santa drops in

## Learn new skills

**Why not have some fun while learning new skills this New Year?**

LCA is planning a range of adult learning classes for 2019, including pottery, photography, arts and crafts and healthy cooking.

There will also be classes on how to make candles, soaps and bath bombs for an extra-special pampering experience!

- ***If you're interested in finding out more or have suggestions for future courses, please get in touch. Pop in at the LCA office, at 3 Frank Fisher Way, or call us on 0121 525 5969.***

## Party time!

Our Children's Christmas Party is to be held on Saturday, 15th December, at the Church of the Good Shepherd with St John.

- ***Running from 1pm to 4pm, there will be festive food, party games, a disco and a chance to pop into Santa's grotto.***

## Christmas opening hours

These are the LCA office opening hours over the Christmas break:

**Mon 24th Dec** – office closes at 1pm, phones close at 4pm

**Tues 25th Dec** – closed

**Wed 26th Dec** – closed

**Thurs 27th Dec** – office closed, but a phone only service available from 10am-4pm

**Fri 28th Dec** – office closed, but a phone only service available from 10am-4pm

**Mon 31st Dec** – office closes at 1pm, phones close at 4pm

**Tues 1st Jan** – office closed

**Wed 2nd Jan** – office open as normal

**The out-of-hours number is 0300 333 6540. This is for EMERGENCIES ONLY, so engineers will only attend to make safe and/or contain. All reported repairs will be recorded, then attended to in January 2019.**

***The LCA team would like to wish all our residents a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.***

## Steaming into Christmas

Lyng residents who take part in our community or youth activities will be steaming along to meet Father Christmas shortly before his big day.



Members of our Toddlers Group and Curiosity Club are among the crowd who will be travelling on the Severn Valley Railway's Santa Steam Special vintage train service on 23rd December.



# Fresh faces join the club

**Youngsters enjoyed lots of fun and laughter at our Youth Club's birthday party.**

The event, held to celebrate the first anniversary of the club's re-launch, took place in November at the Church of the Good Shepherd with St John.

We were delighted to welcome not just our regular members but also many new faces – young people eager to join the club on their 10th birthday.

Celebrations included music, dancing, limbo and Twister games, plus popcorn, candy floss and slush machines which were all a massive success.

The club currently has 70 members, with around 25 young people attending each week.

*Here are some of the things members say about our Youth Club:*



- “We get to try lots of new things that we can't do at home.”
- “I like that I get to choose the activities that we do and the trips that we go on.”
- “I have made some new friends that don't go to the same school as me.”
- “I feel more independent when I come to Youth Club.”

## Get involved

If you'd like to get more involved and influence decisions affecting the Lyng, why not consider joining the LCA Board as a tenant member? Contact the LCA for more information on **0121 525 5969**.

## Welcoming new youth workers

**Three new youth workers have joined the LCA team.**

A warm welcome to **Katy Donaldson** and **Karl Bradley**, from West Bromwich, and **Gail Welch**, who grew up on the Lyng but now lives in Tipton.

The trio will help Community Events Coordinator Amy Rushton with running a host of activities such as Youth Club, Curiosity Club, Toddler Group, day trips and the summer play scheme.

They have all been DBS checked, and are fully trained up in safeguarding matters and first aid.

## Right to Buy

**LCA is a charity so, unlike some affordable housing providers, there is no 'Right to Buy' for tenants in our homes.**

**The Association is also exempt from the 'Right to Acquire' and is not part of the Voluntary Right to Buy scheme.**



## Thrills and spills

**Youth Club members enjoyed plenty of thrills and spills on a day trip to Alton Towers in November.**

For many of the 25-strong group it was the first time they had visited the popular theme park, and the day ended with lots of cries of “When can we go again?”

We have an action-packed programme of events coming up for Youth Club members, starting with a trip to Birmingham on 22nd December to see the spectacular festive musical Elf at the Genting Arena.

LCA is currently working with our young people to plan Youth Club activities for 2019, but we are considering a visit to Cadbury World, ice skating or roller skating, food tasting dishes from around the world and cinema trips.



# Pumpkin extravaganza

**Pumpkin carving was the order of the day when our Youth Club started preparing for Halloween.**

Club members created some impressive lanterns and other decorations at the Halloween Workshop, in readiness for the October celebrations.



# Spooky movie delights

**A crowd of Lyng film-lovers enjoyed a scary Halloween treat at our regular Community Cinema screenings.**



Around 40 local residents came along for the showing of 'The Nightmare before Christmas' on Halloween.

At the event, held at the Church of the Good Shepherd with St John, we also raised £32 for Children in Need by selling snacks for 10p each.

# Illuminating seaside fun

**Children and their families experienced the bright lights of Blackpool on one of our recent day trips.**

Young people who are involved with our youth services – the Toddler Group, Youth Club or Curiosity Club – enjoyed free admission to the Alice in Wonderland-themed pleasure beach as part of the visit.

The coachload of 50 adults and youngsters, from across the Lyng estate, also got to see the seaside resort's famous illuminations on the drive home.



# Day-trippers head north

**A coachload of Lyng residents enjoyed a festive day out in York this winter.**

They picked up some bargains and unusual gifts at the city's Christmas Market during the November visit, organised by LCA.



Market elf

# Spotlight on ... mutual exchanges

**Every Lyng tenant (except for those on starter tenancies when they first become tenants) has the right to exchange their tenancy with another social housing tenant.**

So if you have a two-bedroom house on the Lyng and need to move to, for example, Smethwick you can check the Homeswapper lists and see if anyone in Smethwick is looking to move to West Bromwich.

If you see a suitable swap you can contact the other tenant and, if they are interested, you check out each other's properties for location, condition, etc.

If you both like what you see, you each need to contact your own landlord to ask for permission to swap tenancies. YOU MUST GET PERMISSION BEFORE ANY SWAP IS ARRANGED and please remember it is illegal for money to change hands to ease the process.

The landlord will only refuse permission if you or the other tenant have failed to keep to your tenancy conditions (for example, you are in arrears) or if the property is not suited to the family size (for example, a single man wouldn't get permission to swap to a three-bedroom house and a family of four wouldn't get permission to move to a one-bedroom flat).

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

# Tenants' repairs responsibilities

**As Lyng tenants, you are responsible for works to your home such as these:**

- *internal decoration*
- *replacing light bulbs (including strip lights in kitchen areas)*
- *replacing keys and locks (to front and back doors) if you lose them*
- *smoke alarms – replacing batteries and testing in between LCA's annual checks*
- *clearing blockages to sinks and basins*
- *TV aerials (unless a shared aerial provided by LCA)*
- *phone lines, satellite/cable TV and broadband connections*
- *doorbell and chain (unless fitted by LCA or a door entry system)*
- *garden sheds (unless provided by LCA).*



## Charity success

A big thank you to everyone who supported our World's Biggest Coffee Morning charity fundraiser.

We raised £175 for Macmillan Cancer Support by serving up home-made cakes, snacks and coffee at the event, held at a Lyng Toddler Group session this autumn.



## Looking ahead to sunny days

This year's Summer Play Scheme, themed around magic, was a huge success.

- **Look out for details of next year's summer holiday activities in future editions of Lyngline.**

## THINK ABOUT YOUR SINK!

As we all look forward to some delicious festive feasts this Christmas, please remember not to pour fat or oil down the sink.



Hot fat turns solid when it hits cold pipes and will end up blocking your drains – as demonstrated by this photo, taken on a recent call-out to one of our homes.

70% of all sewer blockages are caused by things like grease, fat or sanitary items – and please don't put things like wet wipes down the toilet. They don't dissolve and YOU may end up paying the £150 bill to clear the drain!

## Curiosity sparks explosive fun

Aspiring young scientists from the Lyng had an explosive time when they carried out experiments at a recent workshop run by our Curiosity Club.

Club members made model volcanoes from recycled materials such as plastic bottles, cardboard and papier mâché – then had fun 'exploding' them using a mixture of baking soda, vinegar and other ingredients.

At a previous 'sink or float' workshop, youngsters designed posters around what objects they predicted would sink or float in water. The session generated lots of enthusiasm and interesting scientific debate.

- **The Curiosity Club will return as the Media Club in the New Year – so look out for forthcoming activities.**

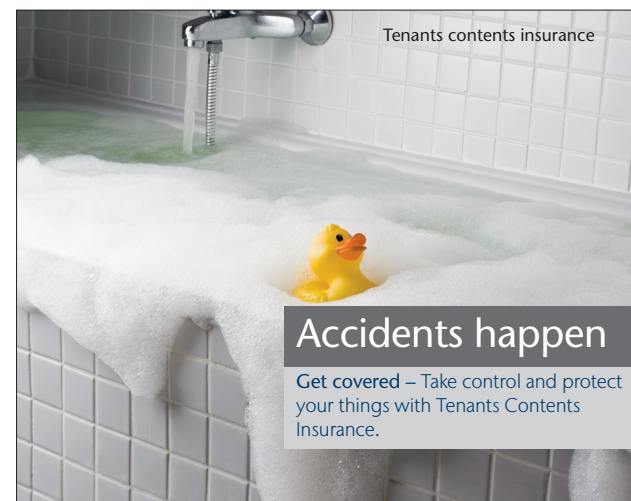


Creating volcanoes

## Good neighbours

Please remember to be considerate of your neighbours during the Christmas festivities.

Warn them if you're having a party, don't turn the music up too loud – and maybe even invite them along to enjoy your seasonal celebrations.



### Accidents happen

Get covered – Take control and protect your things with Tenants Contents Insurance.

Prices start from just £1.11\* per week...

- No excess – nothing to pay when you make a claim
- Contents replaced as new\*\*
- Rented goods included

Call our insurance team on 0300 555 6666

\*£1.11 is based on standard cover for £8,000 of standard contents cover.  
\*\*This excludes clothing and household linen.  
Quote is subject to eligibility criteria.  
Premiums quoted include insurance premium tax (IPT) at the appropriate rate.  
The policy is provided by Aviva Insurance Limited  
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## Keeping children safe

Parents learned some top tips on how to keep their children safe at an informative workshop held on the Lyng this autumn.

'A parental guide to risky behaviour' was run in October by the Up Front team from the West Bromwich Albion charity, the Albion Foundation.

They looked at risky behaviour to look out for in children and young people, covering topics such as online activity and mental health issues. The team will return to run a similar session in the New Year.

## 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**