



WINTER 2020

Lyng Community Association is on Facebook - so look us up and "like" us!



Crafting a jolly Christmas

Families gathered to enjoy the festive spirit at our popular Christmas Crafts Day earlier this month.

Over 50 children and their parents joined in the fun at the event, held at the Church of the Good Shepherd with St John.

They made Christmas cards, wreaths, baubles and reindeer food, wrote letters to Santa and even got to meet the great man himself in his grotto.

One grateful parent said: "Thank you to all involved. Even with the social distancing measures in place, it was a magical experience for the kids with such a lovely atmosphere."

Another commented: "The work that has gone into it behind the scenes shows. You've all worked very hard and made it possible despite the odds."



Meeting Father Christmas



Getting to grips with craft-making



Showing off some home-made decorations

Christmas opening

We hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Over the holiday season, the Lyng Community Association office will be open on these days:

Monday 21st December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Tuesday 22nd December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Wednesday 23rd December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Thursday 24th December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Friday 25th December (Christmas Day) – CLOSED

Monday 28th December – (Bank Holiday) – CLOSED

Tuesday 29th December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Wednesday 30th December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Thursday 31st December – 10am-1pm, phones open 1pm-4pm

Friday 1st January (New Year's Day) – CLOSED

We are open as usual from Monday 4th January 2021.

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 2021.

Are you currently looking for work?

If you are currently looking for work, the National Careers Service West Midlands can help you to assess and develop your skills, plan for your future and move into employment.

We can support you with:

- access to up-to-date vacancies in demand sectors
- matching your skills and experience to current vacancies
- job application techniques
- developing interview skills
- skills assessments and identifying transferable skills,
- identifying skills gaps and how to fill them using online learning
- referral and signposting to current online learning opportunities available via partners and training providers.
- signposting to additional services in support of wellbeing including mental health and financial support
- providing information about volunteering opportunities

You can contact us for one-to-one support by telephone, email, online workshops and webinars provided by qualified Careers Advisers.

Call us on 0800 100 900 or visit <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk> for more information.

National Careers Service West Midlands including Staffordshire

National Careers Service
Helping you take the next step



Rent increase on the cards

We want to remind all Lyng Community Association tenants that we will be increasing our rents from April 2021.

This follows government guidance which allows housing associations to increase their rents in line with the Consumer Price Index (0.5%) plus 1%.

So, along with other housing association residents across the country, our tenants will see an increase in their rent from 2021.

However, our rents are still around 40% less than those for equivalent housing in the private rented sector.

We will write to you all in February 2021 to confirm your new rent charges.



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www.homeswapper.co.uk

Know your rights!

Many of our residents have been with Lyng Community Association (LCA) since 2004-2006, when our first groups of properties were developed.

So we thought it might be helpful to publish a reminder of the most important rights that apply to all LCA tenants.

All Lyng tenants have an assured tenancy. This provides a range of rights, some of which are statutory rights (rights in legislation) while others are contractual rights (rights written into the tenancy agreement).

The terms of your tenancy agreement can only be changed with your agreement.

The Regulator for Social Housing expects us, along with other registered providers of social housing in England, to meet regulatory standards.

Your tenancy gives you the right to:

- ✓ **live in your home**
- ✓ **repair your home**
- ✓ **information from your landlord**
- ✓ **be consulted by your landlord**
- ✓ **be treated fairly**
- ✓ **take in lodgers**
- ✓ **pass on your tenancy after your death**
- ✓ **exchange with another tenant.**

You have the right to remain as a tenant and live in your home as long as you keep to the conditions set out in your tenancy agreement and live in the property as your only or main home.

As an assured Lyng tenant, you have 'security of tenure'. This means that your landlord, LCA, can only evict you in specific circumstances and must satisfy a court that this is reasonable.

The main breaches of tenancy that could lead to eviction include:

- ✗ **failing to pay the rent or consistently paying it late**
- ✗ **giving a false statement to get a tenancy**
- ✗ **if the tenant, people living with the tenant or visitors cause a nuisance to other people or commit a criminal offence near the property**
- ✗ **if the tenant, people living with the tenant or visitors have been convicted of using the premises for illegal purposes**
- ✗ **the tenant, people living with the tenant or visitors causing serious damage to the property or to other Lyng property**
- ✗ **if the tenant has broken other terms listed in the tenancy agreement.**



Toddlers buck the trend

Our Toddlers Group is thriving on the Lyng, despite the upheaval of national lockdowns this year.

The group has been able to stay open as normal, subject to new rules and restrictions.

It is so popular that, unfortunately, we have had to turn away families as we are running almost at capacity under current guidelines.

LCA Community Development Officer Amy Rushton said: *"Parents have adapted really well to the new rules, such as wearing face coverings and maintaining social distancing, so we want to thank them for their understanding."*

"It means that, by working together, we have helped to create a really supportive environment for each other. I think the additional support network offered by the group has been really important for many families during such uncertain times."

Activities have included making Christmas decorations, Remembrance Sunday wreaths and handprint paintings in recent months, as well as enjoying the usual games and toys.



Making poppy wreaths



Creating a festive hat



An LCA youth worker accepts the Morrisons donation

Supporting families

LCA has donated a trolley full of food to Lyng Primary School, which is making up food hampers for families needing a little extra help over the festive period.

We also received a donation to our Youth Club of 20 free packed lunches, courtesy of Morrisons supermarket in Wednesbury.

Community activities with a difference

Lockdown restrictions have closed our 5-11 Club and Youth Club for many months this year.

But we were pleased to be able to open them for a short while before the second lockdown started, so youngsters could enjoy some activities themed around Halloween and Bonfire Night.

The clubs are being run differently due to strict new rules – including a one-way system, social distancing, face coverings, stepped-up hygiene and cleaning rotas to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus.

LCA Community Development Officer Amy Rushton said: *"Despite this, there has been a huge demand for places. We have even had to start a waiting list as we have reached capacity at the 5-11 Club."*

"The support we have received from the community has been overwhelming and it really makes all the hard work worth it."

The clubs reopened in early December, focusing on Christmas crafts and activities.

Amy added: *"We felt as though the children and young people really deserved something special this Christmas after the year we've all had!"*



Bonfire Night sparkles for the 5-11 Club

Boiler know-how

If your boiler plays up, it may be something simple you can sort out yourself. Here are some checks you can do before calling out an engineer unnecessarily.

• Reset

If your boiler shows an error code or won't fire up, it may need a reset. Just press the reset button on the front of the boiler. But, if you're continually needing to reset it, call an engineer.

• Thermostat and timer

If it's not firing up for central heating, check your boiler's and room's thermostat and timer to ensure they are set correctly.

• Pressure

Check the boiler's pressure gauge. If it's below one bar and you have an Ideal boiler:

- make sure the boiler is turned off
- check the ends of the hoses underneath are attached to the valves, so there are no leaks
- open the valves and you should hear water filling up the system
- when the pressure gauge reaches 1.5, close the valves
- switch the boiler back on.

If you have a Worcester boiler and need to top up your system:

- check to see if you have an internal filling key or keyless filling link fitted underneath your boiler
- follow the directions in these helpful videos:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUsBw1ZpiKY>
(for internal filling key)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekophZh3T5I>
(for keyless filling link)

• Gas

Make sure gas is going to your boiler. Check the supply by seeing if your gas cooker is still working. If you're on a pay-as-you-go gas meter, make sure it hasn't run out of credit.

• Electricity

Check the power to the boiler. Check your fuse box to make sure a switch hasn't tripped and, if you have a pay-as-you-go electric meter, make sure you're in credit.

If the problem still isn't sorted, get in touch and we'll send out a qualified gas engineer to fix it.



Be prepared for winter!

We've rounded up a few top tips to help you keep well and safe this winter.

1) Get your flu jab

For young children, older people and those with chronic health conditions, flu can be very serious. The annual flu vaccination is free for people most at risk. Find out more from your local GP.



2) Keep your car kitted out

Keep your anti-freeze screen wash topped up, check tyre pressures regularly and keep a winter kit in your car – including an ice scraper, de-icer, jump leads, shovel, blanket, sunglasses (for low sun glare) and a torch.

3) Stay warm

Cold weather can be a health risk, particularly if you are over 65 or have a long-term condition. Your home should ideally be at least 18°C. Keep windows and curtains closed at night to keep in heat.

4) Check plumbing

Make sure you know where the stop-tap is (usually under the kitchen sink) and check it regularly, so you can turn off the water quickly if you get a burst or frozen pipe.

5) Be ready for a power cut

Keep a torch handy in your home and your mobile phone charged, in case of power cuts.

6) Look out for your neighbours

Keep an eye out for neighbours, to check they're okay or if they need a helping hand.



Don't let a home emergency spoil all your plans.

Tenants' Contents Insurance covers burst pipes, fire claims, escape of water, theft, storm damage, smashed glass, lost keys and leaks from above.

Call: 0300 555 6666

Terms and conditions apply, contact above.
Price includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) charged at the appropriate rate.
The policy is underwritten by Aviva Insurance Limited and administered by Wessex Administration Services Limited who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
FPENT24VCLCA



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