

watmos  
COMMUNITY HOMES  
creating strong communities  
through tenant management

# community roots

Autumn 2010



## in this issue

- Win a Canon Camera
- Keeping Safe  
This Bonfire Night
- The Glow Factor



Pictured are Pat Edwards & Pauline Walker from Sandbank TMO at the Meet the Neighbours Event



### BOB'S HEADSHAVE HELPS CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

Residents from Leamore TMO have raised £600 after one of their residents had a very close shave!

Bob Stock, one of Leamore TMO's brave committee members, dared to bare his head for the estate's chosen charity, Acorns Children's Hospice.

Speaking before the shave, Bob said; "I'm a bit nervous but at least I won't have to worry about styling my hair for a while!"

Joanne from Chatabox on Leamore Precinct gave Bob his new haircut. He was given plenty of support from members of his family, friends and residents who all crammed in to the salon to see his charitable efforts.

Acorns Children's Hospice provides care and support for children and young people who have life limiting or life threatening conditions and is currently supporting nearly 600 children and 800 families, including those who are bereaved.



### CRIME PREVENTION WITH PC MOLE

PC Mole and the Chuckery/Parkhall and Hatherton Neighbourhood Police Team organised a BBQ at Chuckery TMO as a fun way to meet and greet local residents.

During the day PC Mole and his team distributed crime prevention material to over 80 members of the community who attended. Officers were able to inform residents of organised activities and events they could get involved with as well as sharing a free burger!

PC Steve Fowkes who organised the event said; "The team has undergone a few changes over the last few months, and a community BBQ seemed an excellent opportunity for local residents to meet their neighbourhood team".



### DELVES ECO WARRIORS!

Val Nicholls, Chair of Delves Tenant Management Organisation, has turned eco warrior and is looking to inspire local residents to look at ways to cut their energy costs, reduce their household carbon footprint and take responsibility for the safe future of the planet.

Val, along with Kath Tottey and Kath Instone from Delves TMO, attended a national environmental eco warrior course at a renowned training centre in Chester. The two day course informed people about insulation of homes and community centres, energy efficiency through low energy light bulbs, local food use and recycling effects of transportation.

An energy awareness day held in Delves and supported by Delves United Charity and WATMOS Community Homes will be held in the near future to give information to local residents on the issues Val learnt on the course.

Val said: "We all need to encourage others and act on these issues. Years from now I don't want to go down in history as being part of the generation that knew better but did nothing. Act now or lose it!"



### NEWS FROM THE AVENUES

Children at Avenues TMO had a fun filled summer holidays this year with lots of multi sports and football coaching sessions laid on throughout the school break. The bravest of children tackled the climbing tower which also made an appearance on the estate this summer.

A fine day was had on 5 August for the TMO's Open Day where residents could browse cake, bric-a-brac and book stalls as well as see what had happened at the TMO over the last 12 months. Moms and dads had a break whilst their toddlers were kept busy with a variety of activities.

## Rain Didn't Stop Play On Inflatables Day!

On Saturday 21 August, Leamore TMO held their summer inflatable fun day.

There were bouncy castles, rides, donkeys, table top sales, BBQ, a disco and lots and lots of rain!!!



Despite the poor weather the day was a success and well attended by TMO tenants as well as many people from the surrounding areas.

Thankfully the rain did stop for a while and allowed the donkeys to stretch their legs and the bouncy castles to be bounced on.

The fun days at Leamore TMO are organised by members of the social and entertainments committee, volunteer tenants and members of the management committee. All monies raised at the fun day events are ploughed straight back into the community and are used to pay for the next fun day or event or to buy prizes for the weekly bingo sessions, as well as donations to the TMO's chosen charity.

There are further events planned for Halloween and Christmas but if you have an idea for a community event you would like to see then let Leamore TMO know.

Leamore TMO would like to give a big thank you to everyone involved in making the fun days this year such a success.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Chuckery TMO**  
**Christmas Event**  
**Thursday 9th**  
**December 2010,**  
**5 p.m.**



The Mother and Toddler Group is nearly ready to open it's doors following a re-furb of the venue, look out at the estate office for further details.

**Watch out for the Walsall Council trailer on the estate this October half term. On Thursday 28 October this trailer will be at Avenues where children will have the opportunity to sing on the karaoke machine and take part in other musical activities.**



## The Big, the Bad and the Ugly

Get ready for Halloween by joining Melvyn Rawlinson at the Leather Museum in the town centre and make your own scary puppet!

Tuesday 26 October  
10.30am – 12.30pm (5-7 yrs)  
(must be accompanied).  
1.30pm – 3.30pm (8-12 yrs)  
£1.50  
Booking essential.



## Childrens Drop-In Christmas Card Workshop

Saturday 27 November 10.30am – 12.30pm & 1.30pm – 3.30pm at Walsall Leather Museum.

Create your own hand-made Christmas card to send to someone special.  
FREE – no need to book.

## A Pelsall Victorian Christmas

A traditional Victorian Christmas festival will be held on Pelsall Common on Saturday 4 December.



## Walsall Textile Group

Walsall Museum,  
Central Library Building,  
Lichfield Street  
6 November and 18 December,  
2-3.30pm

Do you knit, crochet or sew?  
If not, would you like to learn?  
Everyone welcome for a cup of tea, a bit of stitchin' and some new ideas!



## Baby Palace at the Art Gallery

On Friday 26 November the Art Gallery in Walsall town centre will be holding a Baby Palace sensory experience.

There will be three sessions throughout the day, 10.30-11.30am, 12-1pm and 2-3pm for parents and their babies to take some time to relax in a multi sensory environment and explore smells, sights and senses with your baby at your pace.

This is also a chance to meet other new parents and share your experiences.

Please book in advance on 01922 654400 for this FREE session.

### Half Term Movies

The Forest Arts Centre on Hawbush Road in Leamore will be showing daily children's movies over the half term period.

Tickets are £1-2 with all movies beginning at 11 am.

Monday 25 October – How to Train Your Dragon (PG)

Tuesday 26 October - Space Chimps 2: Zartog Strikes Back (U)

Wednesday 27 October - Nanny McPhee and the Big Band (U)

Thursday 28 October - Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief (PG)



### Childrens Halloween Drop-In Activity at the Leather Museum

On Wednesday 27 October between 10.30am – 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 3.30pm, Melvin Rawlinson will be giving a FREE workshop on how to create your own creepy ogre mask to take away with you.

### AFTERNOON VARIETY CONCERTS

Darlaston Town Hall on Victoria Road will be holding variety concerts on 11 November and 9 December.

Doors open at 1 pm with the concerts starting at 1.30 pm.

Paul Roberts will be singing on 11 November and the West Midlands Salvation Army Brass Band will be taking part in the Christmas variety concert on 9 December.

Entrance price on the door is £1.50.



### Interactive Art with CBBC's Kirsten

On Friday 29 October, Kirsten O'Brien from CBBC's SMart will be performing an interactive children's show at the Forest Arts Centre in Leamore.

This production is a fantastic 'theatre style' art show, great fun for all ages! You can watch Kirsten draw, paint and make something out of nothing - you may even get the chance of helping her on stage!



**IT'S FULL OF FUN, ENERGY AND PLENTY OF PAINT!**

Meet Kirsten after the show for a special meet, greet and autograph signing session. For more information contact the Forest Arts Centre on 01922 654555.

### ACCESSORISE, ACCESSORISE, ACCESSORISE!

For all of you budding designers out there, talented local jeweller, Jolene Smith, will be holding an adult workshop at the Walsall Leather Museum on Saturday 13 November between 10.30 am and 3.30 pm to show you how to create your own stunning jewellery accessories. Booking is essential and costs £12.50 (price includes all materials). To book your place call 01922 721153.

### RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT GETS THE GLOW FACTOR

Day-glo fluorescent necklaces were used as an innovative way for residents at WATMOS Community Homes to engage with each other at their annual Meet the Neighbours event.

Florescent green necklaces were worn by residents who work closely within their local communities and pink were worn by people who were new to their estate and wanted to learn more about the involvement opportunities available to them.

This annual event encourages local residents from all of our TMOs to meet and exchange ideas, make contacts and learn about the importance of getting involved in their local neighbourhoods.

Terry Edis MBE, Chair of WATMOS Community Homes said; “The necklaces were a great tool for distinguishing who you needed to welcome to the WATMOS family and promote resident involvement to. This annual event grows in strength and popularity year on year with more residents taking an active part in their community, which helps to create strong and stable neighbourhoods in the local Walsall area.”



### FUN AND GAMES AT BLOXWICH CARNIVAL

In August, WATMOS with volunteers from Central Services, Chuckery, Delves, and Burrowes Street TMOs took part in the Bloxwich Carnival.

Volunteers manned stalls swamped with games and competitions to help raise money for the Air Ambulance Charity.

Lesley Smith from Delves East TMO designed and made the dress for the ‘Name the WATMOS Lady’ competition as well as the clothes for the WATMOS teddy bear competition.



## “ACORNS EXPRESS” TOPS £5,000 FOR CHILDREN’S HOSPICES

Over fifty WATMOS tenants were among the 350 guests who enjoyed a steam train ride on the Severn Valley Railway in glorious spring weather on 10 April (as previewed in our Easter edition). The free charity event was organised and sponsored by Richard Worrall, of Burrowes Street TMO, who worked in partnership with the Acorns Hospice Trust, West Midlands Special Needs Transport (WMSNT), the Severn Valley Railway and numerous other sponsors to make it all happen.



A very special feature of the “Acorns Express” was that we were joined by all of the life-limited youngsters from both the Walsall and Selly Oak hospices who were fit enough to travel on the day, accompanied by family members and carers, a major exercise made possible only by the close involvement of West Midlands Special Needs Transport (whose operation went like clock-work!) and by the Severn Valley Railway’s unique accessible carriages which were able to accommodate all wheelchair users and their carers in comfort and dignity.

For WATMOS tenants who needed it, free road transport to and from the Severn Valley Railway was provided by a Burrowes Street-sponsored Community Transport coach and by Kevin Ellis, of Pelsall, with his vintage Greater Manchester double-decker bus.

Walsall Town Crier Cyril Richardson did the honours with a rousing send-off for the Acorns youngsters at the Walstead Road hospice before seeing off the coach at Burrowes Street, then jumping on the double-decker to Kidderminster, where he saw off the train to Bridgnorth with Acorns Chief Executive David Strudley.

But, while everything was sponsored and therefore free to guests, the really serious purpose was to raise funds for Acorns. Tenants, Management Committees and staff throughout the WATMOS Group played their full part in raising a magnificent £4,730 on the day, which was generously topped up to £5,000 by an anonymous donor.

Said Richard, “I would like to take this opportunity, through your newsletter, of thanking all tenants, TMO officers and WATMOS for their part in making the day such a success.”

Jorg Jarvie, who with Acorns colleagues, worked closely alongside Richard throughout the planning stage, and on and after the day itself, said: “This day was the result of many, many long hours spent by Richard and his volunteers. And, it resulted in one of the most memorable and enjoyable days for Acorns children, families and staff in the year. The superb total donated was the icing on the cake. On behalf of our children and families, we would like to thank all involved from the bottom of our hearts.”



### Postscript: Acorns Express 2012?

At our final de-brief following the event, partners talked about whether or when to run another “Acorns Express”. We agreed to leave it a year and reconvene in Autumn 2011 with a view to a possible second event in Spring 2012. A key to achieving this will be to identify commercial sponsorship (to cover the cost of train hire especially, which does not come all that cheap!), so that guests once again travel free, and every penny donated goes in full to “Acorns”.

Watch this space!





## Events in Your Area

### Saturday 30 October

Bloxwich Bonfire & Firework Display

KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELDS

Car Park Entrance through Stafford Road. Pedestrian Entrances through Bealeys Lane, Stafford Road and Bell Lane. Gates open at 6pm.

### Saturday 6 November

Brownhills Bonfire & Firework Display

HOLLAND PARK

Car Park Entry off The Parade. Pedestrian Entrance is through Chester Road North & The Parade. Gates open 6pm

### Saturday 13 November

Willenhall Bonfire & Firework Display

WILLENHALL MEMORIAL PARK

Car Park Entry Through Pinson Road. Pedestrian Entrance is through Pinson Road & Parkside Avenue. Gates open 6pm

## Keeping Safe this Bonfire Night



Fireworks are dangerous and can be lethal so the utmost care is necessary in their storage, handling and use if you are organising a display for family and friends.

The best and safest way to enjoy a fireworks display is to attend a professional event. Not only does this save you money, effort, and time to make a display, it also ensures that you will view a great show in a safe environment.



## Top Tips

If you still decide to have your own firework display this year, here are a few tips in order that you do it safely;

### Fireworks

- Keep fireworks in a closed metal box and take them out one at a time.
- Follow the manufacturers' instructions on each firework. Read them by torchlight - NEVER by naked flame.
- Light fireworks at arms length using a safety firework lighter or fuse wick.
- Stand back after lighting.
- NEVER go back to a firework once lit - it may go off in your face.
- Keep a bucket of water handy.
- Used fireworks should be collected after the display with care. Douse with water, bury or place in a metal container.
- Keep children under control
- Please note that clause 2.4.8 of your tenancy agreement forbids the storage of paraffin, petrol or any other potentially dangerous, flammable or explosive thing or substance in your home or in any communal areas around your home.

### Bonfires

- Site well away from houses, garages, sheds, fences, overhead cables, trees and shrubs AND ALWAYS AWAY FROM FIREWORKS.
- Before lighting the fire, check that no pets or children are hiding inside it.
- Build the stack so that it is stable and will not collapse outwards or to one side.
- NEVER use flammable liquids - paraffin or petrol - to light the fire.
- Don't burn foam-filled furniture, aerosols, tins of paint or bottles.
- Keep everyone away from the fire - especially children, who must be supervised all the time.
- For an emergency - keep buckets of water, the garden hose or a fire extinguisher ready.
- Pour water on the embers before leaving.
- Bonfires present additional hazards when it's dark.

## WELEPHANT'S TIPS FOR A SAFE BONFIRE NIGHT



Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves  
Never give sparklers to a child under 5  
Buy fireworks marked BS 7114  
Keep fireworks in a closed box  
Follow the instructions on each firework  
Light them at arms length using a taper  
Never go back to a lit firework  
Never throw a firework or put them in your pocket  
Keep pets inside

WATMOS Community Homes wishes everyone a safe and enjoyable Bonfire Night, and remember a properly organised display is always the safest way to enjoy Bonfire Night.



# Helping You To Manage Your Money

We keep hearing about the credit crunch and the recession and the effect it's having on everyone. People are finding it difficult to pay their bills and their rent and some people have lots of debts that they find impossible to manage. WATMOS evicted 4 tenants in the last financial year because of unpaid rent arrears and this can always be avoided. The last thing we want is for you to lose your home and this will never happen so long as you make arrangements to pay.

Over the last 18 months, WATMOS has been working in partnership with the Walsall Money Advice Project. They are an independent body who are able to help you manage your rent arrears and any other debts you might have. You cannot contact them directly but we can refer you to them, even if you don't have rent arrears but have other debts that you are worried about. An experienced debt advisor will visit you at home (or at one of our offices or at their office if you prefer) and go through all your debts with you. They will help you to prioritise your debts, make offers of payments to companies you owe money to, check to see if you are getting the right benefits, and attend court with you to present your case. They can even help you with budgeting tips. Although the debt advisor will speak to us about any rent arrears you might have, anything else you tell them will be confidential. The debt advisor will continue to support you to manage your money if you need them to after they have helped you get back on track.



If you would like to speak to someone who is independent about debt or money worries, please contact your TMO and ask them to refer you to the Money Advice Project.

## Annual Reports

### TMO ANNUAL REPORTS

By now you should have received a copy of your TMO's new look annual report.

The regulator for housing, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), requires us to provide all of our tenants with an annual report detailing how we are performing against the national standards and the local standards that have been set with you.

Earlier this year we asked you through a questionnaire whether you were happy with the services standards in place, whether you wanted them changed and how you wanted us to review, monitor and report our performance to you.

The new standards are in place and your report sets out:

- Your TMOs performance
- What your TMO has planned for this year
- How your TMO and WATMOS are providing value for money
- What action your TMO and WATMOS have taken on the suggestions you have made.
- How service delivery and performance is going to be monitored, reviewed and reported to you.

We hope you find your TMO report useful and if you have any suggestions or ideas on what you would like to see in it next year please complete and return the feedback sheet that was sent out to you with your report and return it to your TMO or WATMOS.

# Design the WATMOS Christmas Card Competition

ATTENTION! All young, budding artists out there!

This year we are holding a design a Christmas card competition for children and young people aged between 4 and 18 years.

There are three age categories;

4 to 8 year olds

9 to 13 year olds

14 to 18 year olds.

The winner from each category will win £20 in high street vouchers.

The prize of a Canon PowerShot A480 10MP Compact Digital

Camera will be awarded to the overall winner of the three categories and their design will appear on our WATMOS Christmas cards.

For your chance to win please draw your Christmas card design on the next page, complete your details and which age category you are entering and send your artwork to WATMOS Community Homes, FREEPOST WATMOS Community Homes, Christmas Card Competition, Freepost RXLA-RRTL-RZZZ, 29 Stafford Street, Walsall WS2 8DG by **Monday 22 November 2010.**

Winners will be notified by Monday 29 November.

\*This competition is only valid to residents of WATMOS Community Homes.



## JUST FOR FUN!

### Witches Hats Recipe

A Halloween treat that you can have fun making. Get your mom or dad to melt the chocolate for you first – then you can do the rest.

Happy Halloween Hat making!

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 box jaffa cakes
- 1 bag marshmallows
- 1 bar plain or milk chocolate
- glacé cherries or jelly beans (optional)

#### PREPARATION METHOD

1. Melt the chocolate in a bowl over boiling water, or in the microwave. Set aside to cool.
2. Cut glacé cherries in half.
3. Spread melted chocolate over the biscuit side of jaffa cake.
4. Then place marshmallow on the biscuit. Shape it so it has a pointed top if possible. Then cover with cooled chocolate again.
5. Place cherry halves or a jelly bean on the front of the witches hat.





# DESIGN A CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE CATEGORY: 4 – 8 YRS  9-13 YRS  14-18 YRS

(PLEASE TICK)



Send your entry to: WATMOS Community Homes, Christmas Card Competition,  
Freepost RXLA-RRTL-RZZZ, 29 Stafford Street, Walsall WS2 8DG.

