

Warwickshire
Rural
Life

The residents' newsletter for
Warwickshire Rural Housing Association
WINTER 2014
www.warwickshirerha.org.uk



Season's greetings

Our offices will close for Christmas at 12 noon on Wednesday



24th December and will reopen on Friday 2nd January. If you have an **emergency repair** call **01530 278080** and select option 1. If this number is unavailable, call **0203 701 3553**.

Let's celebrate!

What a day! It was great to see so many residents joining in our 25th Anniversary celebrations at our special Open House at Ettington Community Centre on 5th December.

Everyone enjoyed reminiscing about the past 25 years over a festive lunch before raising a glass to next 25 years. We couldn't have come this far without the support of all our residents. Celebrating our anniversary together made the day all the more special.

**FOR YOUR
BENEFIT**

Don't lose out

Remember - if you have non dependent children living in your household, this could affect how much housing benefit you receive. If you have a child who left full time education in the summer and isn't yet employed, make sure they're claiming any benefit they're entitled to.



It's coming!

Universal Credit is still on its way!

It'll be fully implemented in the North West by the end of the year and then rolled out to the rest of the country from February 2015.

If your rent is currently paid by Housing Benefit, once Universal Credit comes in, it'll be your responsibility to pay. We suggest you pay an extra £3 - £5 per week now to get your rent account in credit.

Expert on hand

As well as carrying out the annual service of your renewable energy system, Garry Hamilton is also keen to share his expertise with residents to help save you energy and money. Ask him about any issues or concerns you have about renewable energy.

Shared owners can also use Garry's services by contacting him direct for a quote. Email garryhamilton@virginmedia.com



Food bank support



Times are tough but local food banks are there to help. If you're struggling to feed yourself or your family, they can provide a minimum of three days' emergency food.

Talk to your Housing Officer about gaining a foodbank voucher or visit www.trusselltrust.org

Service standards

We will acknowledge your emails and letters within three working days. If, for any reason, we cannot answer your query, we will let you know the expected timescale.

It's snow time!



Do you want to build a snowman? Here's a great simple Snowman Cupcake recipe for all ages. Give it a go and send your photos of your finished cakes to enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk. If you can't take a photo, ask your Housing Officer if they can take one.

Ingredients

- 100g butter or margarine
- 100g golden caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 100g self raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- Icing sugar for dusting
- 150g ready to roll white icing
- 3 tbsp apricot jam
- Marshmallows
- Red fizzy laces
- Tubes of coloured writing icing
- Sugar or silver baubles

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas 4.
2. Place the butter or margarine, sugar, eggs, flour, baking powder and vanilla essence into a bowl and beat until the mixture is light and fluffy.
3. Line a bun tin with 8 paper cases and divide the mixture between them. Bake for about 20 minutes until the cakes are lightly golden.
4. Lift out of the tins and leave to cool on a wire rack.
5. Dust a clean working surface with icing sugar and roll out the icing to about 5mm thick. Cut out 8 circles the same size as the top of your cakes.
6. Put the apricot jam into a small dish and stir in 1 tablespoon of hot water. Brush this over the cakes and stick the icing circles on top.
7. Make the snowman's head by sticking a marshmallow on the top of each cake using apricot jam.
8. Wrap a fizzy lace around each head and use writing icing for the eyes and mouth. Stick sugar baubles on with writing icing for the nose and buttons.

Pets!

A dog is for life, not just for Christmas - but don't forget to ask us first!



If you're planning on getting any kind of new pet – even if you've kept one before – you need to gain our permission. Please speak to your Housing Officer.



If you're interested in downsizing or exchanging for a smaller property, visit www.homeswapper.co.uk to swap your home with another tenant from a housing association or local authority.

As Midlands Rural Housing is a partner of Homeswapper, it's free to join. Simply register online and Homeswapper will email or text you with any potential swaps.

Small rise

To try to keep rents as affordable as possible for residents, the Board has decided that they should only be increased by 0.5% next year. This annual rent rise will take affect from 6th April 2015.

Festive wordsearch



Why not relax for a few minutes this festive season with our Christmas wordsearch?

Simply find the 9 words from a well known carol listed below. Don't forget they can appear forwards, backwards or diagonally.

- | | | | | |
|------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Drummer | Rings | Dove | Geese | Lords |
| French Hen | Ladies | Piper | Swan | |



Noticeboard

MP POPS IN

When Stratford MP Nadhim Zahawi came to visit our new development at Shaw Close in Snitterfield, he called in to see residents Margaret and Roger Derry!



Mr Zahawi wanted to learn more about the challenges of finding an affordable home in the area and heard what a difference Shaw Close has made to Mr and Mrs Derry.

www.warwickshirerha.org.uk

REPAIRS CONTRACTOR

A new contractor, Emmdee Electrical Services Ltd, has been appointed to carry out your day to day repairs and is already getting good feedback from residents. To report a repair, call the Customer Care Team on **01530 278080**.



£2,500 awarded

Congratulations to Mariah Clarke, Studley, Anna Harper, Harbury, Jennifer Yates, Snitterfield, Susan Martin Castano, Ryton on Dunsmore and Suzanne Coop, Barford, the residents to be awarded £500 bursaries through our 25th Anniversary Bursary Scheme.

To mark our special year, the scheme was launched to help local people in terms of their personal development, education, employment or how they contribute to their local community.

More than ten residents applied – read in our next issue how the bursaries are being used

A new look!

Have you seen our new look website at www.warwickshirerha.org.uk?

You'll find lots of interactive services when you click on 'Living in your home'. You can pay your rent online, click to report a repair or contact our Customer Care Team with any enquiries you have.

There's loads of useful information and don't forget to keep looking at the news section for all the latest on your housing association. If you need help please ask for a copy of our step by step guide.



My Home Online



Our new website makes it even easier to use My Home Online. It's simple to register – visit www.warwickshirerha.org.uk/living-in-your-home. You can then use the customer online service to view information about your tenancy, report repairs, make payments or contact the customer service centre via email.

Need a translation?

If you need a copy of Rural Life newsletter in another language we will happily provide a translation for you. All you have to do is call the office on **01530 278080** with your request.

Warwickshire
Rural
Life



is published by Warwickshire Rural Housing Association, Whitwick Business Centre, Stenson Road, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4JP.

Tel: 01530 278080.

Fax: 01530 278086.

E-mail: enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk

Website: www.warwickshirerha.org.uk

Warwickshire Rural Housing Association Limited is registered as a Community Benefit Society with charitable status 26636R

