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Christmas 2013

www.wittonlodge.org.uk

PERRY COMMON MATTERS

PUBLISHED BY WITTON LODGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

WELCOME

Welcome to the festive edition of Perry Common Matters.

Christmas and the holiday season is a time for celebrating with family and friends and if you're very lucky you may get chance to put your feet up! It is also a great time to reflect on the past year and importantly an opportunity to look ahead. After Christmas, some of us will be thinking about our New Year's resolutions - possibly getting fitter or healthier? Learning a new skill or finding a new job? You may want to volunteer or get involved in local community life to share your experiences or gain work experience? Whatever you feel like doing - you are sure to get a warm welcome, meet new people and make friends.

Inside this edition there are examples of how Witton Lodge Community Association and our local partners have supported residents to get involved and improve Perry Common. So, if you feel inspired by the stories or motivated by the opportunities, please get in touch with us because we'd love you to be involved.

Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year

Afzal Hussain,
Chief Officer -
Witton Lodge
Community
Association



Bike North
Birmingham

Birmingham
City Council

BITA
Pathways

Urban
Devotion
Birmingham

PERRY
COMMON
CHRISTMAS
LIGHTS
SWITCH
ON 2013

Community
First

Wilson
Stuart
School

Creative
Moments

West
Midlands
Police

Mike
Overton

Storywood
School and
Children's
Centre

St Martin's
Church

Neil
Robinson

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SUCCESS FOR CREATIVE MOMENTS

Creative Moments (based here at WLCA's Perry Common Community Hall) greatly impressed judges at the 'Entente Florale Europe' Awards back in September.



The creative ladies knitted flowers and embroidered pin badges for all 12 judges (from across Europe) of the competition – having a rose to represent Britain. Not content with this, the group also knitted pots and flowers.

These creations blossomed according to the judges, so much so that members of the group were invited to the Birmingham Repertory Theatre to watch the final results being unveiled in Nieuwpoort Belgium on Friday 27th September.

The results were excellent for Birmingham, with our city winning a Gold award and a special award for 'an Outstanding Public Green Space'.

With all of this creativity from the ladies, including knitted poppies (to raise funds for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal) and knitted bulbs (for the Perry Common Christmas Lights Switch On), we all look forward to seeing what treats Creative Moments have planned for 2014.

WLCA SURVEY PRIZE DRAW WINNER



Congratulations to Diane Long who won our WLCA Neighbourhood Survey Prize Draw. Diane won a £50 Tesco voucher which was presented at the Christmas Lights Switch On event by students from the University of Birmingham. Happy spending!

WITTON LODGE 2020

March 2014 marks a key milestone here at Witton Lodge Community Association (WLCA) – as we will be celebrating our 20th anniversary.

To mark this occasion, in the New Year we are launching the Witton Lodge 2020 project to establish a historical archive so that we can document the numerous changes that have occurred in Perry Common and to look ahead to the future.

As many readers may remember, back in 1994 Perry Common was a very different place. It was an area in the middle of major change, with the demolition of 908 'Boot Houses', families being moved out of their homes and others boarded up. Anti-social behaviour and other crime was also an issue, with the whole future of the community in doubt.

WLCA (established for residents – by residents) and in partnership with Birmingham City Council (BCC) helped guide the area through this traumatic period

and has helped shape the Perry Common we have today – something that we hope to continue right through the final phase of regeneration and over the next 20 years.



We look forward to launching Witton Lodge 2020 in the New Year and will keep you up to date with the many developments that will take place.

We are also very grateful to Wilson Stuart School who have worked with WLCA to design the project logo.

If you have any personal memories, archive material or anything else you feel would be useful to the project we would be very pleased to see this. Please contact Joyce Wallace at WLCA, Tel: 0121 382 1930 or email Joyce.Wallace@wittonlodge.org.uk.

RING IN BLOOM FOR WITTON LODGE 2020

Everyone has been getting green fingered around Perry Common lately. In March next year, to mark WLCA's 20th anniversary, two local schools Wilson Stuart School and Story Wood School and Children's Centre enthusiastically helped out with planting bulbs.

The students from both schools got stuck in straight away and planted daffodil and hyacinth bulbs in the shape of a '20' on The Ring opposite the shops and in the raised bed outside Perry Common Community Hall. It will be good to see the bulbs flower next spring just in time for WLCA's 20th anniversary celebrations in March – and the colourful display these flowers will bring.



CHRISTMAS CARD DESIGN WINNER!

Congratulations to Samantha Gwafa (age 5) from Story Wood School and Children's Centre for winning our WLCA Christmas Card Design Competition. It was a tough decision to make as the designs were all very good. As the competition winner, Samantha got the honour of turning on the Christmas Lights and had her design on the Event Programme for the evening.



WARM WELCOME FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY



WLCA would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our tenants for supporting the Boiler Survey and Installation Programme.

Following feedback from our tenants, WLCA has been installing new energy efficient boilers in our properties. The Grade 'A' rated Worcester Bosch Greenstar boilers are being installed in properties where it is felt that a new boiler is necessary. This will mean that old outdated boilers are replaced and will help reduce household energy use and lower energy bills.

One resident commented " I am on a pre-payment meter and have noticed a difference straight away. I put £10 in my meter on Wednesday and it would usually cover me till Friday, I was so surprised to find the meter was far from empty Friday morning and still had £4.60 left!"

An initial survey of all WLCA properties commenced on Monday 21st October 2013 and was quickly followed by an installation programme that started on 11th November 2013. WLCA have been working with Cenergist (Energy Brokers), Just Energy Solutions (Installers) and Npower (Energy Company) to deliver this programme.

Where the results of the initial survey have suggested that a new boiler was required, the replacement boilers have often been provided using Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding. In situations where this funding has not been available, WLCA have paid for the new boiler directly.

If you would like to know more about the Boiler Replacement Scheme, please contact Gurdev Singh Tel: 0121 382 1930 or email: Gurdev.Singh@wittonlodge.org.uk.

KEEPING PERRY COMMON SAFE AND WARM

With Christmas just around the corner and the winter months ahead, it is probably now a good time to mention Keeping Perry Common Safe And Warm.

Every year WLCA contacts vulnerable residents in Perry Common to check that they are safe and warm. This was especially important last year with the long cold winter that lasted well into April.

This year, as always, we would ask that all readers look out for each other, especially keeping a check on neighbours that are elderly and vulnerable. The dark nights can be a lonely time for many people, with the cold weather and icy pavements leaving many of our most vulnerable residents trapped indoors. Even simply checking that vulnerable neighbours have essential supplies and contact with the outside world in cold weather can make a tremendous difference. If you are worried about a neighbour, please contact WLCA to discuss this situation.

For any emergencies over the festive season outside office hours please call 0121 675 4806. Birmingham



City Council Local Welfare Provision Team will also be contactable at <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/LWP> or call 0121 303 1111.

Also with Christmas just around the corner, it is that time of year to be extra vigilant as crime tends to increase around this time, especially burglaries. All residents should have received a leaflet from Perry Common Community Watch giving advice for helping to reduce crime over the festive season and contact details for the Community Watch Team. Community Watch are also looking for new members to help keep Perry Common a safe and friendly community.

Here's wishing everyone a Safe Christmas and a Warm New Year.



PERRY COMMON HANDYMAN IS HERE TO HELP

Do you need any household repairs doing?

Do you want someone who has been recommended?

Do you want someone who you can trust?

Gul Nawaz will be on hand to carry out all types of repairs to homes in the Perry Common area. The types of repairs Gul will be doing will range from electrical works (replacing light fittings, extractor fans etc), plumbing (minor fittings and pipework), carpentry (doors and skirting boards) to fencing and minor external repairs.

Gul charges reasonable rates for these works and can be contacted directly on his mobile: 079 5652 5940 or via WLCA Tel: 0121 382 1930.



WIN £50 CASH WITH WLCA FREE PRIZE DRAW.

See Facebook, Twitter and our website www.wittonlodge.org.uk - or come into Perry Common Community Hall to discuss

PERRY COMMON MASTERPLAN UNVEILED

In October the final phase of the Perry Common Masterplan was published. The plan covers the area between Perry Common Road and Witton Lodge Road, that has still to be developed. This area includes sites to the north and south of the Dove Medical Centre and the park area. The plan provides a view of the whole site, while the text boxes highlight the specific features that have been given planning permission.

1 ENERGY EFFICIENT HOUSING TO NORTH OF DOVE MEDICAL CENTRE



The site to the north of the Dove Medical Centre will see 39 new homes constructed. These homes will be built for Birmingham City Council and will all be rented properties, designed to maximise energy efficiency.

2 GREEN LINK AND CYCLEWAY LINKING THE CENTRE OF PERRY COMMON WITH THE PARK

Linking the area near Sycamore Court and The Ring, this green link (including a new cycleway) will link this part of Perry Common to Dovedale Road and the park area.

3 IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING CAR PARK AREA

The car park leading off Perry Common Road will be improved, with resurfacing and improved access. This will also provide much improved access to this part of the park and the play area.



4 20 NEW HOMES FOR WITTON LODGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



In its 20th year WLCA has secured over £500,000 of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for 20 new family homes to be constructed. All of these homes will be social housing constructed for WLCA and will provide further affordable homes in Perry Common.

5 NEW EVENTS AREA IN THE CENTRE OF THE PARK

An Events Arena, providing an area where outdoor events can take place.

6 SWALES AND LINK TO PARK FROM DOVEDALE ROAD

This area will link Dovedale Road with the central area of the park, creating a new access point from Dovedale Road. Swales (small watercourses) will help improve drainage in the area, with houses fronting onto this area and the main park.

7 IMPROVED ACCESS TO THE NORTH AREA OF THE PARK

Access will be improved from Witton Lodge Road to the park, including a new cycle path, creating a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment.

For further information please contact WLCA on 0121 382 1930, visit www.wittonlodge.org.uk, check the WLCA Facebook and Twitter pages or come into Perry Common Community Hall to see the plans.

£435 RAISED AT COFFEE MORNING

We are pleased to say that our WLCA Macmillan Coffee Morning raised £435 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

The event was a great success, with a very good turnout of people. Alongside the usual tea, coffee and biscuits, we also had a buffet with loads of tasty sandwiches, delicious homemade cakes, a bookstall, raffle and line dancing. It was the perfect opportunity for everyone to have a chat and was good to see lots of familiar faces and a number of new faces too!

On behalf of WLCA we would like to say a big 'Thank You' to everyone who helped out at the event, giving their valuable time and expertise and to everyone who came along and donated. Special mention should also go to the Perry Tree Centre and St Martin's Church – both of whom hosted the event with us. We would also like to thank Perry Common Pentecostal Church for their support and for very kindly donating £200 to Macmillan. A good morning was had by all.



DEVOTED TO PERRY COMMON FOR 10 YEARS

This year Urban Devotion Birmingham (UDB) celebrates ten years of serving children, young people and families across Perry Common.

Over the past decade UDB have grown to a staff team of 15 and a fantastic army of volunteers, always keeping the very same ethos they started with and working in partnership with others. Andy Winmill of UDB says 'we don't think we have got all the answers but we do have an important part to play and have enjoyed serving Perry Common alongside local schools, churches and community groups.' This is also reflected in our priority of prayer – we ask God to help us make a difference and have seen some amazing answers to prayer as a result.'

You may have seen the UDB team walking the streets, teaching in local schools, playing football or throwing a frisbee about on the recreation ground, playing Xbox from the back of their Mobile Youth Venue or maybe running in and out of the Underground (the amazing basement youth centre at St Martin's Church).

UDB will continue to invest in the lives of children and young people and see seemingly hopeless situations filled with an incredible sense of hope, purpose and value.

If you would like to know more please visit their website, www.urbandevotion.org, follow UDB at twitter.com/urbandevotion, like them on [facebook.com/urbandevotion](https://www.facebook.com/urbandevotion) or even pop into their new home, Hope House (148 Witton Lodge Road) for a cup of tea.

UDB always place great importance on building positive relationships with the children, young people and families that they serve. Andy says 'It's not enough to put on great activities as they're not going to change people's lives; it is long term relationships that matter'.

GRANT HELPS PERRY GRAPHICS ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

As part of the WLCA Small Grants Programme, £500 grants have been awarded to a number of local entrepreneurs to help set-up their own business.

Steve Abbott is one such entrepreneur. With the £500 grant Steve was able to make his idea of setting up a graphic design business a reality, using the money to purchase much needed equipment. Steve's company 'Perry Graphics' is now a flourishing local business going from strength to strength.



Steve says 'starting my own Graphic Design business has been an ambition of mine for a long time now. Having worked in the industry for many years, I had the business idea but did not have the money to set it up. With the £500 from WLCA, alongside money from the government's Enterprise Scheme Initiative I was able to purchase the equipment I needed and get the business up and running'.

people but do not have the funds to make these ideas a reality.

The grants are designed to help make business ideas (that benefit the local community of Perry Common) into a reality. All too often, people have very creative and viable business ideas that can directly benefit local

If you have any ideas for a local business or a community project, please contact Jagwant Johal at WLCA on Tel: 0121 382 1930, email: Jagwant.Johal@wittonlodge.org.uk or come into the office at Perry Common Community Hall to discuss.

ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT PERRY COMMON?

Do you care about what happens in Perry Common? Would you like a real say in the decisions made that shape our neighbourhood? Would you like to join an ambitious community organisation and gain new skills?



If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then why not think about becoming a Director at Witton Lodge Community Association (WLCA). If you live in Perry Common and would like to share your ideas and enthusiasm, we would be very happy to hear from you. Alongside everything that you can bring to us, we can offer a wealth of knowledge, new skills and experience.

For more information, please contact Linda Hines by phone on 0121 382 1930, email: Linda.Hines@wittonlodge.org.uk or come into the WLCA office at Perry Common Community Hall to find out more. We look forward to hearing from you.

JOYCE JOINS THE WITTON LODGE TEAM



We have a new member of the team here at WLCA. Joyce Wallis, our Volunteer Coordinator, started with us in mid November and has settled well into the office especially at such a busy time.

Joyce is working closely with the local community on a number of projects including Witton Lodge 20/20. Alongside this, Joyce will also be seeking out volunteers for many projects that are coming up alongside volunteers for all kinds of jobs in the WLCA office, Perry Common Community Hall and with the many groups that WLCA support.



CHARITY OF THE YEAR 2014

It gives us great pleasure to announce that John Taylor Hospice have been chosen as WLCA's charity of the year for 2014.

Based in Erdington, John Taylor Hospice provides help and support for people with cancer – having provided excellent Palliative Care for over 100 years. The hospice has a wide geographical catchment area covering Perry Common and much of North Birmingham.

In October 2011, John Taylor Hospice took the brave step of becoming an independent Social Enterprise, being the first hospice in the country to do this. They are also a Community Interest Company (CIC) and as such, reinvest profits back into the local community, in the best way that they can.

Throughout next year WLCA will be working closely with John Taylor Hospice, taking part in each other's events, helping to raise the profile of John Taylor Hospice and helping to raise as much money as possible. Most importantly, it is hoped that all of this partnership working will be of most benefit to the people who use John Taylor Hospice – helping to ensure that the essential services they provide are able to be continued for many years to come.

JOBS BOOST FOR PERRY COMMON

New training and employment opportunities are set for Perry Common in 2014.

Witton Lodge Community Association (WLCA) will be working in partnership with Castle Vale Community Regeneration Service (CVCRS), Castle Vale Tenants and Residents Alliance (CVTRA), Merlin Adventure and John Taylor Hospice to host employment skills training throughout the Erdington district.

WLCA will be undertaking a series of workshops to directly engage with employers in the Erdington district, offering the opportunity for young people who are currently unemployed and between the ages of 16 and 24 to promote themselves and also tell other young people about the opportunities on offer.

In total 18 work placements will be available, leading to 6 permanent jobs. These opportunities are especially important for the local area as Kingstanding has the highest number of NEETS (young people not in education, employment or training) in the whole of Birmingham.

If you would like to benefit from these excellent opportunities or know somebody else that can, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Tse at WLCA, Tel: 0121 382 1930 or email: Paul.Tse@wittonlodge.org.uk.

ARE YOU 16-24? DO YOU WANT A JOB? DO YOU WANT TO GAIN NEW SKILLS AND WORK EXPERIENCE? WE CAN HELP!

ERDINGTON WORKS!

FIRST STEPS TO FINDING WORK!
PERSONAL ACTION PLANS!
C.V. ADVICE!
MARKETING WORKSHOPS!

BACK TO WORK TRAINING!
PAID WORK PLACEMENTS!
APPRENTICESHIP & WORK PLACEMENTS!

CONTACT PAUL TSE ON 0121 382 1930

FOR YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS, THINK WITTON LODGE

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

From hints and tips on writing your CV, choosing a job to apply for volunteering and gaining workplace experience, skills and knowledge; we can help.

CV HELP AND SEARCHING FOR JOBS

Help with writing a good quality CV that employers will want to read. We can also help with Job Searches – choosing what jobs to apply for and completing application forms.

VOLUNTEERING AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Why not boost your employment skills by volunteering at WLCA or one of our partner organisations. Volunteering is an excellent way of boosting your CV and gaining new workplace skills. We have a wide range of opportunities on offer, so please contact us for more information.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Why not make the New Year a healthy one. Take a Healthy Walk, Aikido, Tai Chi, or for those feeling really energetic Kick Boxing could be the ideal healthy activity.

AIKIDO

WEDNESDAYS 7:30 – 9:30PM
£6:00 for persons 18 years and over

BOXERCISE

FRIDAYS 7:00 – 8:00PM
£4:00 per person, per session

HEALTHY COOKING

Please contact for further details

HEALTHY WALKS

MONDAYS 11:00AM – 12:00PM
Free admission and everyone welcome

PILATES

MONDAYS 5:15 – 6:15PM
Please attend via GP referral only

KICK BOXING

TUESDAYS 6:00 – 7:00PM
Under age 16 – £4:00
per person per session

TUESDAYS 7:00 – 8:00PM
Over age 16 £5:00 per person per
session

PAIN CLINIC

MONDAYS 9:30 – 11:30AM
Please attend via GP referral only

THURSDAYS 9:30 – 1:00PM
Please attend via GP referral only

TAI CHI

THURSDAYS
1:15 – 2:15PM
£2:00 per person per session

Please contact WLCA for further details as these listings are subject to change



CREATIVE AND SOCIAL

From Arts And Crafts, Gardening Advice and Singing, there is something for everyone on offer.

ARTS & CRAFTS 'CREATIVE MOMENTS'

1st and 3rd Monday of each month
11:45AM – 2:00PM
£2:00 per person for non members / £1:00 for members

CUPPA & CHAT

2nd and 4th Monday of each month
11:45AM – 2:00PM
£2:00 per person for non members / £1:00 for members

FAMILY LEARNING ARTS SESSION

Please contact us for further details

GARDENING ADVICE

Please contact us for further details

RING OF SOUND CHOIR

TUESDAYS 7:00PM AT SYCAMORE COURT,
46 BUXTON ROAD, B23 5GA
Free for children / £1:00 for adults

TEA AND TALK

THURSDAYS 2:00 – 4:00PM
Free admission and all welcome

WHY NOT CHECK US OUT ON:



Witton Lodge
Community
Association

twitter

@WittonLodge • @Afzal_H
@LindaSHines

flickr

Website www.wittonlodge.org.uk
Tel: 0121 382 1930