

CRS April 2025 Newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to the fourth edition of the CRS Newsletter! In this issue we cover our 54th AGM, our social events for 2025, what's on locally and the sad news of a fatality on our local roads last month.

I hope you enjoy this edition; our next Newsletter will be in June 2025.

CRS 54th AGM

The 54th CRS AGM was held on March 20th, 2025 at Edgbaston High School for Girls, Westbourne Road. The meeting was well attended with over 90 CRS members as well as local Councillors Deirdre Alden and Matt Bennett and representatives from Principle Estate Management.

CRS Chair Peter Arnold described some of the work of the Committee in the past year, including the production of a revamped Newsletter, regular presence at the Edgbaston Artisan Markets as well as meetings with Calthorpe Estate CEO, Haydn Cooper and other key local institutions including both the University of Birmingham and Birmingham City University.

The Committee's new lead for Social Events, Chrissie Twigg, outlined the social programme for 2025 and Peter Wall (Committee Member for "Community of Communities") described his work in defining and seeking redress for the fallout from the failure by FirstPort (previous managing agents) to produce agreed and audited accounts, as well as a failure to chase service charge arrears. He has worked tirelessly to bring matters to the attention of Calthorpe Estate and to encourage them to take appropriate and timely action.

The speaker, Bob Warman, gave a very personal address titled "Edgbaston Memories". Bob's connection with Edgbaston extends back to the 1960s when he first lived in the area at Whetstone Close. His affection for the area was clear as he talked of places where he had lived including Estria Road and Frederick Road. He described buildings and their histories, including his home on Harborne Road which had once been home to "recovering and recuperating" Polish Air Force Officers during the Second World War! Perhaps even more colourful than the photographs that he shared were his memories and stories of local people, including TV, sport and music stars Carl Wayne and Bob Willis; local businessmen Tommy Scraggs and Maurice Bulpit. Bob included Maurice's fascinating memories of Neville Chamberlain and mentioned his cleaner from Estria Road who had, as a young woman, attended the Nuremberg Rallies of the late thirties.

Bob's theme was that for him, Edgbaston was all about its "Buildings and Memories". It was easy to see why and even easier to see how the audience appreciated such an interesting and entertaining talk.

The evening afforded members the opportunity to socialise over a drink (or two) and we look forward to the next one, next year!

Social Events

After a rather vague promise to "help out a bit", I'm somewhat stunned to find myself on the CRS Committee, but I must say it's a lovely group of which to be a part. I'm sure you'll agree there was a warm community feel at the last AGM. As the lead for social events, I want to make sure that we provide what you, our members would like to attend. So, if you have any ideas at all, please do get in touch using the events email address at events@calthorperesidents.org address and I'll see if we can incorporate them.

In the meantime, here is our schedule so far for 2025. These are all on our new website Social Events page [here](#), which includes an online booking form:

1. *"Education in a Multilingual Society"* a talk by John Claughton at Harborne Academy, Harborne Road, B15 3JL to be held on **Tuesday April 29th, 2025 from 1830 to 2000**. Non-members will be welcome at this free event.
2. Guided tour of the Oratory and the Museum of Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman, **Tuesday 1st July 2025 at 10:30 – 12:00**. This is a free event, but donations to the Oratory would be appreciated.
3. Sunday breakfast at Martineau Gardens accompanied by information about Martineau and a "Gardener's Question Time" to be held on **Sunday August 10th, 2025 at 10.00-12.00**. There will be a **charge of £5 per person**.
4. Christmas Drinks at The Ruddock Centre, King Edward's School, Edgbaston to be held on **Monday December 15th at 18:00-20:00**. There will be a **charge of £10 per person**

Fatality on a local road

Sadly, in early March there was another road fatality on the Estate when a young motorcyclist was killed at the crossroads of Frederick and St James Road. This crossroads has a long history, with over 30 accidents occurring over the last ten years, almost all of which have seen at least two cars written off, roads being shut, and emergency services called out. All these accidents have been caused by vehicles travelling down Frederick Road from the city and failing to 'see and stop' at the crossroads. Following last month's fatality Calthorpe Residents Society are working with local residents and local councillors to try to get the Council to undertake changes to the crossroads to make it safer for both vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

Edgbaston Guinea Gardens - part of the Calthorpe Estate.

Nestled in the heart of Edgbaston, the Guinea Gardens are a hidden gem with a rich history dating back to the Victorian era. Originally known as The Malthouse Meadows, these gardens were established around 1848 and are among the last surviving examples of detached town gardens in the UK. Unlike traditional allotments, Guinea Gardens feature hedged plots with doors instead of gates, creating a unique and picturesque landscape.

Today, the Westbourne Road Leisure Gardens house 87 plots, offering a tranquil retreat for gardeners from all walks of life. Some cultivate vegetables, while others design serene spaces with lawns and ponds to attract wildlife. With a Grade II listing, these gardens stand as a testament to Birmingham's horticultural heritage. Despite modern pressures, they continue to thrive, providing a peaceful escape just a mile from the bustling city centre. You can find out more on the Facebook Page here [Facebook](#)

Trees we like

In Edgbaston we are proud of our greenery and in particular our trees, so we have decided to highlight in our Newsletter updates some of the special trees on the Calthorpe Estate, starting in this edition with the oldest tree in the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. This Copper Beech tree, which sits on the eastern edge of the Gardens just down from the café, is over 200 years old. It was there when the Gardens were established in 1829 and although suffering in recent years from disease caused by compaction it is still a wonder to look at throughout the year.

Local events

The Highfield are hosting a Bank Holiday Jazz BBQ on Sunday 25th May when their garden will fill with the sweet smells of sizzling BBQ and the smooth sound of jazz.

For those members interested in designing their own gardens Winterbourne House and Garden are offering a six-week introductory course starting on 7th May in Garden design, principles, planning, and graphics with expert guidance from tutor and garden designer Darren Rudge and acclaimed designer David Stevens. The costs and dates of the course can be found on Winterbourne's [website](#) along with details of other summer events happening there.

As the cricket season approaches, now appears to be a good time to remind our cricket loving members that Chapter will be hosting their usual test match related four-course dinner, with Mark Ramprakash MBE hosting, being held on Friday July 4th. For details of this event and the new spring menu at Chapter please see their website. [cricket dinner](#)

As most of you are aware, 2025 is the University of Birmingham's 125th anniversary and to celebrate they have planned a full year of events. One big event will be the Campus Community Festival which will be held on Saturday 21st June (11am-5pm). The day will involve captivating talks, campus tours, live performances and family friendly activities. Visit iconic spots like The Lapworth Museum of Geology and Winterbourne House and Garden or simply relax with a picnic in their beautiful green space. Further details of this event and the other 125th anniversary events are available on their [website](#).

The next few months will see The Birmingham Botanical Gardens host a wide range of exciting events. A full listing of these which include film, theatre, yoga, garden and family events is available on its [website](#). However, for music lovers the end of April and early May will feature six 'Candlelight Concerts' at the Gardens along with Jazz and Brass music sessions from its Bandstand and an afternoon performance from the CBSO.

Members who appreciate a good artisan market are spoilt for choice at the moment, as like buses, they have all turned up at once. Close on the heels of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens Market held at the start of April residents will be able to visit the popular Edgbaston Village Market on Saturday 10th May in Greenfield Crescent which will feature its normal excellent mix of food, drink and craft stalls. The University of Birmingham will then hold a new midweek market on its Green Heart starting on Tuesday 6th May from 10am to 4pm (first Tuesday of every month).

Contacting us

We love to hear from individuals and Resident's Groups across the Calthorpe Estate. This enables us to represent your views and ask your questions at regular meetings with Calthorpe Estates senior executives, the University of Birmingham and Birmingham City University, and when we attend Ward Forms and Police Community meetings.

The best way for you to contact us is through the [Contact form](#) on our website, or use the [email address](#) where contact form submissions are collated. All communications will be acknowledged, but it should be noted that detailed responses will only be provided to paid up members of CRS.