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Birmingham Roots

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Birmingham TreePeople's Monthly Newsletter

Planting, protecting, and promoting trees and the urban forest

Good Morning TreePeople,

Here is the 21st edition of our monthly newsletter, Birmingham Roots - three days late because it's jam-packed with events!

Sparkbrook Tree Planting

Wednesday 19th March, a keen group of Sparkbrook residents, helped by Councillor [Izzy Knowles](#), planted 5 trees supplied by Birmingham TreePeople to improve their local environment. A Magnolia Galaxy went in next to the bus-stop, and a Dawn Redwood (Metasequoia glypto 'Goldeush') was given a more generous planting location in which to flourish and grow. Thursday morning a bench was also installed in commemoration.

We were very lucky with the glorious sunny weather, but local resident Pav made it his first duty to give all the trees a deeply refreshing drink of water! The other trees planted were two pears, Doyen du Comice, and a Gleditsia triacanthos 'Skyline'. Pav kindly

said, "You gave us five beautiful trees for the green space on Woodstock Road and Yardley Wood Road in Moseley, so wanted to say a huge thank you. The trees are helping the community to come together as one."

Thank you to Katy for sorting out the trees, [Birmingham City Council](#) Woodland Team's Leon and Pete for delivering them, Nick at the Bromford Depot for care-taking the trees, Steve Pool for essential support, and Izzy for making it happen.



Street Tree Survey Project

We dropped off some used tree stakes to [Birmingham Settlement Nature & Wellbeing Centre](#) this month! They'll reuse them in their project to create hedges at their Edgbaston site. The tree stakes were removed from trees that no longer need them, as part of our long-term street tree citizen science and community tree stewardship project - now in its fifth year!



Norton Hall Tree Planting

We planted four beautiful trees at [Norton Hall Children & Family Centre](#) on 21st March 2025. This initiative goes beyond just adding greenery; it's about enhancing the community space for everyone to enjoy. The three trees planted in the field will provide essential shade for children enjoying games and our Forest School programmes.

A huge thank you to Katy for coordinating this wonderful project, and

The Zephaniah Forest Black History Month UK Article

Black History Month UK have kindly written an article about the upcoming Zephaniah Forest Poetree Trail launch event! *The Zephaniah Forest – a living tribute to poetry, activism & nature – is now blooming in Birmingham.*

Celebrating the legacy of the late Benjamin Zephaniah, this green space fuses culture, community & sustainability in his hometown. A

we were fortunate to have Leon, the head of the Woodland Team at Birmingham City Council, and Trustee Lawrence helping with the event. Together, we are not only beautifying our community but also making a positive contribution to the environment and creating a welcoming space for everyone.

beautiful, lasting memorial. Read the full article here:

<https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/latest-events/zephaniah-forest-a-living-legacy-of-poetry-and-trees-blooms-in-birmingham/>

Kier Transportation Conference

[Tonia Clark](#) recently attended Kier Transportation Department's Conference in Birmingham as an external speaker, celebrating best practice in environmental and social sustainability, as well as learning more about the power of trees from the knowledgeable speakers.

Tonia 'highlighted the different kinds of trees and how to maximise their placement, the small actions we can all take to have a larger environmental impact, and how we can get more involved with the local community. [Tonia] also shared how the TreePlotter tool, which [Kier] part-funded, is working to map valuable street tree data!'

The other speaker was Kenton Rogers from [Treeconomics](#), discussing the incredible opportunities trees provide, correctly approaching sustainable treescapes, and detailed their journey with Kier: including developing the Natural Capital and Biodiversity Design

Alum Rock Planting with Go-Woman Alliance

A beautiful day was had on 27th March supporting [Go-Woman! Alliance](#) and [Count Me In Forum](#) in planting a Ginkgo Tree, Sweet Gum Tree, and Peanut Tree on Phillimore Road, Alum Rock. A huge thanks to Katy and Lawrence, as well as [Birmingham City Council's](#) Woodland Team, for their incredible support and putting this project together.

This project has been all about nurturing community spirit, promoting care for our environment, and bringing more greenery to Alum Rock. It was a wonderful hands-on experience, where participants from GOAL and CMI Women's Forum got involved in the planting process and connected with the community. Some locals have even said they will support the forum and adopted the trees to ensure they thrive!

Tool for National Highways. Read the full LinkedIn post [here](#).

Alum Rock Planting with Women of Worth

We had a beautiful tree planting celebration event on Thursday 27th March, the result of a partnership between Birmingham TreePeople and [St John's House](#) in Alum Rock, who we first met with over a year ago to explore establishing new trees in the area. Working with Women of Worth, who we've gotten to know over the last year hosting tree walks and talks and more, we planted 3 new trees on grounds of St Johns. The event was a beautiful mix of tree magic, science and planting!

Recitals of poems written by women in the group that celebrated trees as the teachers that they are, when we stop to listen and observe them; the sharing of tree stories that talked off all the many ways trees give, and point to how we might think to give back more.

We learned about the trees we were planting - Chinese Red Birch and Sophora japonica (which in Chinese translates to wood-demon, is one of the 50 fundamental herbs of traditional Chinese medicine, and is often planted around Buddhist temples in China, and whose flowers come in the eight moon - September, good for late pollinators!). And we learnt why trees are so vital in Birmingham.

As well as creating a collective painting, making decorations, enjoying birch tea (or taking some home); perhaps the loveliest part was a group sharing discussion about the ways in which trees and tree-human culture plays out in the many countries the women come from. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Hong Kong, Sudan - so many beautiful and fascinating stories shared from yearly tree planting event in India to celebrate independence, wishing trees in Hong Kong, cultures of hosting under trees in Sudan and the king of fruits and fruit tree in Pakistan - the mango.

Thank you to the Woodland Team from [Birmingham City Council](#) as always, and we are eternally grateful for the generosity of St Johns House, especially Mercy, who has been our long-term partner on this piece of work. She made the planting today special by bringing together all the contributions from the women. We are looking forward to a visit in the spring for another tree walk and maybe, if the Sophora can spare a leaf, to try a bit of tea made with them.



Alum Rock Planting with Washwood Heath Academy

As part of our community co-produced planting programme in Alum Rock, we were delighted to form a partnership with The [Washwood Heath Academy](#) Sixth Form working with them to plant up new street trees in Alum Rock and on their school grounds. We were initially connected to Miss Khan, head of sixth form, getting to learn about the litter picks and street care activity the sixth form pupils were involved in and how they were wanting to explore getting more street trees planted to improve the local climate and environment. A perfect partnership.

Wednesday morning, we met out to plant up a lovely sweetgum tree (which our research shows is the most successful at establishing on Birmingham streets). The pupils were brilliant, being involved in all aspects of the planting including the fixing of the cage onto the tree. Travelling over to the school, we then planted together a ginkgo, paulownia and tulip, after collective discussions around the importance of trees in cities, and especially one as urbanised as Birmingham, and the power of being able to make positive environmental change in our places.

We learned together too about the rich histories of the trees we were planting, native to North America and China and the historic uses of them and folklore attached: tulip trees, native to north America, were often used to make canoes from due to their long straight bodies, earning the name canoe tree, their height connected to symbolisms around them, seen as intermediaries between the earth and the sky.

It was a complete pleasure to work with the pupils, with all their care and commitment, and we look forward to continuing to connect with Washwood Heath Academy to support ongoing care for the trees planted.



Cheshire Tree Alliance Conference

Deanne (Dee) Brettle, Chair, and Charlotte (Charley) McDermott, Communications, represented Birmingham TreePeople as [Cheshire Tree Alliance's](#) 2025 Conference Keynote Speakers last weekend.

Sunday 6th April, BTP were invited to give a presentation at Sandbach Town Hall, hosted by Cheshire Tree Alliance and [Sandbach Town Council](#), Birmingham TreePeople: Zero to Hero, telling the story of how our charity came to be, the wonderful community-based tree work we do in Birmingham, and how we can inspire others to do the same for their towns and cities.

The incredible, sunny day consisted of:

- Introduction with Tim Wheatcroft from Sandbach Town Council
- Birmingham TreePeople: Zero to Hero with Deanne and Charley

- Small Scale Tree Planting with Councillor Sam Corcoran from [Cheshire East Council](#), Champion for Climate Change
- [Transition Wilmslow](#) and Mersey Forest Tree Planting Pilot with Councillor Elaine Evans
- Panel Discussion with the first half of presenters, on How to Plant in Urban Spaces, as well as burning questions from the presentations
- Working with Communities to Plant Trees with Ben Greenaway from [Mersey Forest](#)
- Networking lunch before more presentations
- More With Trees: The Mersey Forest Plan 2025 with Susannah Gill from Mersey Forest
- Tree Propagation with Dan Nash from [Cheshire Wildlife Trust](#)
- Open Mic: Cheshire Tree Groups included talks with Patti Pinto from [Trees for Congleton](#), Tree Warden Scheme with Charlie Knowles from [The Tree Council](#), Emma from [Sandbach Woodland & Wildlife Group](#), and Paul from [Goostrees](#)

We would like to thank Sandbach Town Council and Cheshire Tree Alliance for their invite, warm welcome, and beautiful town filled with inspired people – people who love trees. If you're interested in BTP telling our story at your conference or event, please email us.



Name That Tree!

Join us on a free, two-hour, tree identification walk around Handsworth Park. We'll lead you through the park's trees both old and new and give tips and advice on identifying the different species. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the trees in our city and to gain new skills in species identification.

Meet at 10am - Saturday 17th May 2025 - at the Sons of Rest building, Handsworth Park, behind the leisure centre, W3W: wrong.green.metro

Car parking is available at the leisure centre for anyone driving. Most of the route is on paths but some may be on grass, please wear appropriate footwear and plan for all weathers. It's about a 1.5 mile route and we'll finish by 12pm. There's no need to sign up, just arrive on the day. We are working on a new programme of free activity due to launch later this year!

Green Regards,

Birmingham TreePeople

Planting, protecting, and promoting trees and the urban forest since 2016



THE ZEPHANIAH FOREST

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