

# Prevention Newsletter

## Issue 5: 2021

### Focus on Edgbaston



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our fifth newsletter! This month we are focusing on Edgbaston Constituency. The Prevention and Communities (P&C) Commissioning Team are promoting the fantastic, and wide ranging, work happening all over Birmingham. This month it is Edgbaston's turn to showcase some of what has been achieved with our voluntary and community sector partners.

This newsletter will share Edgbaston stories from the different services this team manages and supports including:

- The Neighbourhood Network Scheme
- The Prevention and Communities Grants Programme
- Vulnerable Adults Grants

What do we mean by Prevention? Adult Social Care's Prevention First Vision is about supporting people to lead, "happy, independent lives in their own homes and communities." Adult Social Care has been changing how we work, taking more time to listen and understand what a good life looks like for people. We are connecting them to the support they need in their community before looking at traditional forms of care. This is known as the Three Conversations approach. To ensure there is community-based support people need and want, our commissioning team have been investing in organisations that can deliver or develop this. Our focus is on support that can improve wellbeing and independence by: reducing isolation, increasing opportunities to be active, maximising income, helping to maintain homes and supporting carers.

#### **Please tell us what you think of the newsletter**

We would love feedback on the newsletter to help us make these really beneficial for social work teams and others who would find these updates useful. If you complete our very short survey you may win a £20 One4All E-gift card, redeemable in a wide variety of high street shops from this link or scan the QR code on the pack page: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Edgbaston>

# Table of Contents

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<b>03</b>	Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme
<b>04</b>	Edgbaston NNS Supports Social Workers
<b>05</b>	NNS Listening to Local Residents
<b>06</b>	Have You Met Sharon & Shaju?
<b>07</b>	Food, Friends and Funding
<b>08</b>	Tools, Art & Food
<b>09</b>	Beyond Befriending
<b>10</b>	Supporting Bereaved Citizens & Carers in Birmingham
<b>11</b>	Tackling Social Isolation
<b>12</b>	Contact Details

# Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme

## What Are Neighbourhood Network Schemes?

Neighbourhood Network Schemes (NNSs) are designed to support older people in Birmingham through working with local community, voluntary and faith organisations in each constituency. A key task of NNS teams is to identify all the community activity and services which can support people who are 50+. This information can be found on the Connect To Support directory: <https://birmingham.connecttosupport.org/>

NNS teams also manage a grants fund for new activities and help build the capacity of local organisations. Very importantly, they also ensure that social workers know about all community-based activity locally.



## About the Edgbaston NNS Team

The Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme (NNS) is delivered in a partnership between Age UK Birmingham and Sandwell and Gateway Family Services. Edgbaston NNS covers all of the Bartley Green, Edgbaston, Harborne and Quinton wards, as well as parts of North Edgbaston and Weoley Castle & Selly Oak wards. Alongside colleagues from the Northfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme they make up the South Localities NNS team.

The goal of the Edgbaston NNS team is to ensure that over 50s in the constituency are better connected to opportunities and support on their doorstep. The team do this by supporting community-led groups in the constituency to establish activities and services that bring older adults together, and to make sure that groups already doing great work are able to continue and, where they wish to, grow.

The support that Edgbaston NNS provide to groups and organisations in the locality includes: providing funding opportunities through the Edgbaston NNS Small and Microgrants fund, supporting capacity building of organisations, staff and volunteers through training and information webinars, and connecting people through facilitating networking opportunities.

## Contact Details

Do get in contact if you would like to be on the mailing list (contact details are on p 12).

Edgbaston NNS also share information and news on Facebook and their website. Please follow them on:



**Twitter**  
**@Edgbaston\_NNS**



**Facebook**  
**@EdgbastonNNS**

During the Covid-19 pandemic much of the team's work focused on providing emergency support to those hardest hit by the virus. During this time, the team was supporting citizens directly, such as linking people to the Age UK Birmingham and Sandwell hot meals delivery service across Edgbaston and Northfield.

With the government roadmap in place the Edgbaston NNS team are ready to support any groups in the locality as they return to the new normal, with geographical priorities in Bartley Green and Quinton wards, as well as Weoley Castle.



Natalie Tichavera NNS  
Community Worker



Deborah Ufton NNS  
Community Connector

# Edgbaston NNS Supports Social Workers

## Social Worker Perspective

The Edgbaston NNS equips social workers with the latest information about groups and activities in the area, and social workers tell the network where they believe there to be gaps in provision – in other words, which services might need to be created, developed, or invested in. In just the last three months, ENNS has dealt with more than 20 such requests from the social workers team.

Shanice is a Social Worker in Edgbaston and has been working with Edgbaston NNS since 2020, when she was invited to a steering group meeting by her manager. She says

“ Since I joined forces with the NNS it's been really good. They keep us informed of things we wouldn't otherwise know about. ”

When she wanted to find out more about debt management services in the area, for example, she contacted ENNS Community Development Worker Natalie, who put her in touch with debt charity 'StepChange'. Someone from StepChange could then support the person Shanice was working with.



“ The relationship works both ways explains Shanice:

Although the NNS is in the community, we are on the front line, so we can feed back and say, 'look, we are having issues with this and this'. Not only do they know existing services, but they can help create links if we don't have them. ”

When Social Workers realised they didn't have many connections with housing, for example, Shanice brought it up in an Edgbaston NNS meeting. Since then, the Edgbaston NNS team has developed links with the Birmingham Social Housing Partnership, a group of social housing providers who work together to address issues facing tenants.

Natalie and colleague Deb attend social workers' team meetings and hope that more social workers will start coming to Edgbaston NNS Steering Group meetings, like Shanice does. Natalie says

“ In the past year we've managed to build a strong working relationship with our colleagues from the social work team, and Shanice is a great example of that. Going forward, we hope there will be more opportunities for social workers to get involved with Edgbaston NNS. ”

Shanice has also made some useful suggestions, like asking the NNS team to send one-to-one emails to social workers to update them.

Shanice is looking forward to meeting with Natalie and Deborah more in person. She says:

“ They are really supportive. If I call them or email them, they are really good at responding. As everywhere starts gradually opening, and we can go out and actually see what is out there, I think [the relationship] will be more effective. Knowing what's taking place in the community, and knowing Edgbaston NNS are up to date with what gaps are there – impacts our citizens a lot. ”



# Have You Met Sharon and Shaju?



Photo L to R: Sharon Staples, Edgbaston CNSO with Deborah Ufton & Natalie Tichareva from Edgbaston NNS

Edgbaston has two special people working alongside the social work teams and the Neighbourhood Network Scheme. One works with families and citizens & one with social workers and community partners. They are Sharon Staples and Shaju Bibi.

## Yet Another Acronym: CNSOs!

Adult Social Care has recently appointed Community Network Support Officers (CNSOs) in each constituency. In Edgbaston the CNSO is Sharon Staples. The CNSOs work on a one to one basis with an individual proactively undertaking “preventative” work to stop or delay people needing to enter the care and support system.

Therefore, Sharon works with people prior to them having care and support needs. She also works with those individuals who often fall through the cracks of Adult Social Care as they do not quite meet the threshold, but without support, will likely end up coming back to the system in crisis.

Sharon says

“ I am currently engaging with community groups, mapping our local assets and looking for venues suitable to hold surgeries. I would like to have a regular local presence, so citizens know where they are able to locate me, when they feel the need to connect with me ”



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## Community Partnership Worker Role

Edgbaston NNS is part of the South Localities team, a partnership between Edgbaston and Northfield NNS constituencies, Heart of England Community Foundation and Birmingham City Council. Unique to the South Localities team is the role of the Community Partnership Worker, Shaju Bibi.

Shaju sits within the Council's social work team helping to improve partnership working and engagement with the NNS teams. She has been very successful at encouraging social work staff to engage in the work of the NNS. Over time she aims to help improve engagement from GPs and other community health services,too.

## Social Workers Visit Perrott's Folly

Re:future Collective run Form of Clouds, an arts-based social prescription program for adults experiencing isolation and loneliness, from Perrotts Folly.

Lizzie from Re:Future, Deborah Ufton from NNS and Shaju Bibi all agreed that more referrals would be made if frontline professionals had experienced the activity. Shaju subsequently arranged for some social workers to visit and learn a new skill, making purses, outside in the sunshine. Two of the team tell us how it went:



Pearline: 'I really enjoyed the activity. It was fun, well organised and the support to achieve the outcome was really amazing. Thanks for an enjoyable and creative afternoon.'



Ahamed: 'This was a really good experience to practically try doing a craft. I would recommend others to definitely try; it's therapeutic.'

# NNS Listening to Local Residents

## NNS Connecting Groups & People

At the same time as one active Quinton resident was looking to fund more resources for the local planters she had adopted in her community, as a way of coping throughout Covid-19; Suze and Tina, the creators of Woolly Mammoth Stitch Works, were listening to feedback from residents and community workers, who were voicing concerns about people being socially isolated.

Through the Active Residents Group and Edgbaston NNS, these groups of people were connected to each other and all involved got together to support the first volunteer day of Blooming Quinton. They were joined by the MP Preet Gill, Cllr Kate Booth, Co-op's Member Pioneer Debbie Kerlake. This was the perfect opportunity to introduce Quinton's new Community Network Support Officer Sharon Staples.



**BLOOMING QUINTON**

We are Blooming Quinton, a local community project committed to taking pride in our area.

**JOIN US** Can you help us maintain the flower tubs close to your home?

If you have some time to water or occasionally weed or plant in the tubs, please get in touch.

Call or text **07716329900**

Visit the B32 Community Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/b32community>  
Or the Quinton Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thequintonpage>

Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme **ENNS** Birmingham City Council

### The Patchwork Meadow

Email: [thepatchworkmeadow@gmail.com](mailto:thepatchworkmeadow@gmail.com)

Twitter: @MeadowPatchwork

### Blooming Quinton

Tel: 07716 329900

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/b32community>



Following the day, Alison Thompson, who donated wildflower seeds through her project The Patchwork Meadow said:

“It was a really nice get-together and I thought the planters looked terrific. Debbie and I had a really good meeting with Suze and Tina yesterday and we've now got a clear plan for how we would like to take forward a joint project so lots of things potentially happening in Quinton!

Many thanks for all your help. Your introduction to Suze led to an introduction to various individuals in the Jewellery Quarter which resulted in pocket meadows being planted last week in Warstone Cemetery and the Jewellery Quarter station, all with the help of youngsters from JQ Academy. All really exciting!”

## Citizen Forum Call Out

The Edgbaston NNS Forum is open to people who live in Edgbaston constituency, Weoley Castle or Shenley who are aged 50 and over, or people who care for someone who matches that description who are passionate about services and activities for over 50s.

The ENNS Forum offers residents of Edgbaston Constituency, Weoley Castle and Shenley a unique opportunity to shape the way that their communities work for them. Participants will use their local knowledge of their area to help the Edgbaston NNS team identify where the gaps are for activities and support and to help the team to determine the local priorities.

Meetings will take place through a combination of online and community engagement. To find out more speak to Natalie on the contacts below.

Email: [natalie.tichareva@ageukbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:natalie.tichareva@ageukbirmingham.org.uk)

Mobile: 07809 336283

# Food, Friends and Funding

## Local Funding Supports Local Residents

Every NNS constituency has a small grants scheme to enable the voluntary and community sector to run activities that support older adults. In each constituency, a steering group, along with the social work team determine what the local priorities are. On this page and the next, examples of these grants in Edgbaston are described. The grant making process is administered by the Heart of England Community Foundation. For information on NNS grants visit <https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/nns/>

It is important that you read the fund factsheet carefully. As part of the application process we want to know if you are already connected to the NNS work or their lead facilitators, your plans for sustainability and how this will contribute to the legacy of the NNS work. If you have any questions relating to the eligibility, criteria or process please contact [info@heartofenglandcf.co.uk](mailto:info@heartofenglandcf.co.uk)

### Court Oak Road Allotments in Quinton



To enable and encourage people to feel the benefit of allotment gardening and to help combat social isolation, Court Oak Road Allotments (CORA) successfully applied for a small grant to build wheelchair accessible raised beds. They already had one set, funded by The National Lottery (pictured) and they have been so sought after they wanted to provide more.

Geoff Garrish from CORA said

“Often in the past, older or less able members have given up their plots because it became too much. These beds allow them to stay active and included.”

Work is progressing on the beds and everyone is looking forward to seeing them completed and full of produce and plants!

Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/courtoakroadallotments](https://www.facebook.com/courtoakroadallotments)

### Birmingham Central Synagogue Digital Project



With all that is going on in the world, Birmingham Central Synagogue (BCS) wanted to support their community to stay in touch and combat social isolation - so they set up a digital literacy project.

To do this, they applied for an NNS small grant from the Heart of England Community Foundation.

Geoffrey Clements, Chair of BCS, said

“The project has gone really well – we have been giving members of the community without internet access the ability to join online programmes via Zoom, with a data sim card. We are also providing Sabbath meals to those unwell, in need or just not able to provide for themselves.”

Email: [info@centralshul.com](mailto:info@centralshul.com)  
Telephone: 0121 440 4044

# Tools, Art & Food

## A Little Goes A Long Way



Photo credit: Friends of Senneleys Park

Alongside the NNS Edgbaston Small Grant organisations and groups in Edgbaston, Weoley Castle and Shenley can apply for an Edgbaston NNS Microgrant for up to £500. Microgrants can be used on a variety of things; from PPE to marketing materials, sport equipment for activities or Zoom subscriptions. Below are some examples of what the Edgbaston NNS Microgrant has been used for.

### Friends of Senneleys Park

The Friends of Senneleys Park group received a microgrant of £300 to fund the cost of gardening tools. This group meets, chats and works on making Senneleys park, in Bartley Green, a presentable and welcoming place for all its visitors. The microgrant has enabled them to purchase new tools so that they can carry on this important work.

### Milebrook Hall Art Group

The Milebrook Hall Art Group have also received a £500 micro-grant, which they've used to fund the costs of arts materials like easels, paint and clay. Lynne, who runs the Art Group, described the grant as “fantastic” and is excited about using the new art materials now that activities have resumed at Milebrook Hall.



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## The Haven, Your Local Pantry

The Edgbaston NNS Emergency Food and Essential Supplies Grant launched in late December and one of the assets to benefit from the funding is The Haven Community Centre and B32 Community CIC. Together, they have been working hard behind the scenes to launch a food pantry in Quinton, which they have called 'Your Local Pantry'.

Unlike a food bank, the 'pantry' model enables people to access help by becoming members and paying a very small amount for food: for £4.50, members receive shopping worth between £20 and £30. The idea is to make sure no-one feels any sense of shame in accessing the essentials they need. When ENNS visited, they said:

“Going forward, the plan is for B32 COMMUNITY CIC to expand on the food pantry and open a second base in central Quinton.”



Left to Right:  
Rachel, Simon, Caroline, Jade, Becky and Kerry

The Haven Community Centre:  
Facebook: Haven Centre  
Website: <http://havencommunityproject.com/>  
Phone: 0121 681 0388

Contact Becky and Kerry via Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/b32community/>

To set up a food pantry in your neighbourhood  
Email: [shabir@yourlocalpantry.co.uk](mailto:shabir@yourlocalpantry.co.uk)  
Mobile: 07443762478  
Website: [www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk](http://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk)



# Beyond Befriending

## What are these grants?

In summer 2019 there was an open application process for organisations able to support the City Council's Prevention First agenda. Forty-six organisations were successful.

Details can be seen in the Prospectus (<https://bit.ly/2JfWH8K>). Due to Covid-19 these have had to adapt, but almost all are still delivering activities and support. Please contact them directly to check what they can offer at the moment.



## Adapting to Support Isolated Older Citizens During the Pandemic!




Age UK Birmingham's Community Programme is a citywide service for older people providing activities promoting mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. Originally, delivery was from community hubs in Edgbaston and Perry Barr, with plans to develop new activities across the City.

When the Covid-19 pandemic started all face-to-face activities were shut down and resources redirected into a telephone befriending focused on the most vulnerable. The third lockdown in January meant another pause in plans to restart outdoor activities.

In the first three months of 2021, the service supported 129 clients over 925 engagements. The service reaches clients from all over Birmingham. There has been a notable increase in the number of citizens reporting low mood with many feeling at a 'tipping point' in terms of their mental wellbeing.

A 10-week service is offered, supported by a volunteer buddy to work with older people on a one to one basis. They have short term and long term befriending and also help enable greater social engagement for older people.






Face to face activities currently are:

-  Walking group, Kings Heath Park, Thursday mornings
-  Walking group, Lightwoods Park (Bearwood), Tuesday afternoons
-  Walking Football, Beechcroft Sports Centre Hall Green, Wednesday mornings

The social engagement via teleconferencing consists of a two-hour chat, centred around a theme, such as food from childhood or holidays.

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Other teleconference groups include:

-  Singalong - A group singalong led by a trained classical singer.
-  Twice Weekly Quizzes – Quizzes or themes for quizzes set by participants.
-  Gardening Club - Volunteer led discussion on gardening tips.
-  Book Club - Volunteer led discussion and book reading.
-  Sports Club - Discussion around sports and sports news, which currently has only male members.

## How Gavin has Benefitted

Gavin came to Age UK feeling very low and enquiring about befriending. He started off with a volunteer befriender and was persuaded to move into the group chats, to try to raise his spirits. Gavin has been an active member of the chats since.

He recently said how important Age UK has been to him. He is not sure he would be where he is today had it not been for the help provided. It has made him feel more hopeful about the future and that it is going somewhere. He feels the chat group have helped pull him through difficult times during the pandemic. He wants to give something back when the pandemic is over as a way of saying thank you and is now looking into volunteering for Age UK.

### Activities:

Tel: 0121 437 0033 (Ext - 1403)

Email: [davinder.khaira@ageukbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:davinder.khaira@ageukbirmingham.org.uk)

### Befriending:

Tel: 0121 437 0033 (Ext - 1401)

Email: [siobhan.halloran@ageukbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:siobhan.halloran@ageukbirmingham.org.uk)

# Supporting Bereaved Citizens & Carers in Birmingham

## Caring For Carers Bereavement Service

Communities In Sync (CIS) is a consortium of frontline health and social care providers, all of which are local charities. CIS currently delivers the 'Caring For Carers Bereavement Service' in Birmingham, which is aimed at supporting carers who have lost or anticipate they will soon lose their loved one.

Some of this support can be very practical:

“It is so lovely talking to you, I didn't know there were people to help me with this, I was just left all the money, I didn't want to look at it. It's all in the bank and I just didn't want to face dealing with it. It seemed like a massive task and now I am so relieved that someone is going to help me, thank you.”

Most people will become a carer at some point in their lifetime, even though they often do not recognise themselves as being one. The caring responsibilities will, in many cases, take up a huge amount of time and energy and when the cared-for person dies, carers may become isolated and lonely. This can cause a number of physical and mental health issues which can become debilitating.

CIS aims to deliver a person-centred bereavement support service including:

- One to One Support (in person and online)
- A Healing Garden Project
- Integration into the Community
- Access to a bereaved carers' WhatsApp Group
- Living Memory Project

The list is not exhaustive and when one of their team contacts the carer they will identify their individual needs, which may include:

- Funeral planning
- Financial planning
- Identifying other support services
- Training &/or Employment opportunities

Email: [caringforcarers@communitiesinsync.info](mailto:caringforcarers@communitiesinsync.info)  
Website (including referral form)  
<https://www.sandwellcrossroads.org/bereavement-and-wellbeing-service>  
Phone: 0121-809-5902

## Bereavement Support from St Mary's Hospice



Losing someone dear can be one of the hardest things you'll experience in life, but it isn't something that anyone has to go through alone. Birmingham St Mary's specialist bereavement service provides support to those who are struggling with the loss of a loved one.

Support can be accessed by anybody who has been bereaved no matter how long ago this loss was. The service is open to family and friends of both people who were previously cared for by Birmingham St Mary's Hospice and those who were not.

Their free bereavement service is provided by trained counsellors and experienced volunteers. It:

- Offers a safe and supportive way for people to explore and express feelings of grief
- Helps people make sense of their bereavement, work through difficult feelings and adjust to a 'new kind of normal'
- Provides valuable space for people to reflect on the past, present and future without their loved one
- Allows people to explore and find helpful coping strategies.

Support is currently being provided by telephone and face to face and group sessions will reconvene when pandemic restrictions allow. To refer yourself or a client, please use the details below.

Phone: 07966 165 287  
Online referral form:  
[www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/bereavement-referral/](http://www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/bereavement-referral/)

# Tackling Social Isolation

## What are the Vulnerable Adults Grants?

At the beginning of the pandemic the City Council put out a call to the voluntary and community sector. This was to provide additional support to adults who might be vulnerable to Covid-19 and also isolated and in poor health due to lockdown. Sixteen organisations were grant funded. Below is one example that operates city-wide.

## Loudeemy

LouDeemY were awarded a small grant to address the possible effects of social isolation resulting from Covid-19. LouDeemY provided much needed contact with people experiencing mental and emotional distress during the Covid-19 period. LouDeemY started to receive referrals, immediately.



LouDeemY provided counselling and one off contact to support those experiencing emotional and mental distress. Support was via zoom, WhatsApp, Group sessions, creative writing, therapeutic storytelling and telephone calls.

As well as mental/emotional health, LouDeemY also supported people with a wide range of other issues and disabilities, including sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, physical disabilities and neurodiversity.

Over nine months LouDeemY supported over 500 people with short interventions and over 70 people with longer term issues and those in crisis. LouDeemY also aided people who had experienced bereavement, which was especially important as the restrictions increased the sense of loss and isolation for many.

The professionalism and support offered by LouDeemY was invaluable to the citizens of Birmingham and Louise and Nadeem provided a flawless service in very difficult circumstances that without a doubt made a huge difference to those accessing support.

LouDeemY's Let Create project, also funded by the City Council, is currently running. Places can be booked via email.



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## Case Study

One participant initially began frequently calling the emergency psychiatric services early on in lockdown, and on a couple of occasions called ambulances to take her to A&E. LouDeemY's regular input, which at times was several times a day over the phone and WhatsApp, including WhatsApp videos, as well as visits in person, led to a huge reduction in the number of calls she made and requests for a variety of different health professionals' involvement with her.

Once they were able to run face to face small groups, she also started attending these, alongside their Zoom sessions and she became less anxious and more interested in a variety of activities which were good for her mental and overall well being. In the New Year, after having in-put from them throughout the project, she enrolled on an Open University Degree, inspired, she said by LouDeemY and their work.

Over the course of the life of the project she has become calmer, more confident and hopeful and the frequency of LouDeemY's input has naturally declined as she has needed less constant support and reassurance, and less crisis intervention.



**LET'S CREATE**

**FEELING CREATIVE  
WANT TO TAKE PART IN  
FREE CREATIVE ARTS ACTIVITIES?**

Email: [info@loudeemy.co.uk](mailto:info@loudeemy.co.uk)  
Website: [www.loudeemy.co.uk](http://www.loudeemy.co.uk)

# Contact Details

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## Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme Contacts

Age UK Birmingham  
Natalie Tichareva  
NNS Community Worker  
Email:  
natalie.tichareva@ageukbirmingham.org.uk  
Tel: 07809 336283

Gateway Family Service  
Deborah Ufton  
Community Connector Edgbaston NNS  
Email: d.ufton@gatewayfs.org  
Mobile: 07513 481688

## NNS Grants for Edgbaston

Information on the grants from Heart of England Foundation  
<https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/nns/>



## CNSO for Edgbaston

Sharon Staples  
Email: Sharon.Staples@birmingham.gov.uk  
Phone: 07592 586192



Please scan this QR code to go to a very short survey about this newsletter to give us feedback on it.

## Community Partnership Worker for Edgbaston

Shaju Bibi  
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Mobile: 07516 031680

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## Birmingham City Council Commissioning Team Contacts

The Prevention & Communities Commissioning Team consists of:

- Emil Prysak – Team Manager Emil.Prysak@birmingham.gov.uk
- Matthew Bick – Contract Manager for Edgbaston NNS  
Matthew.Bick@birmingham.gov.uk

Plus:

- Rukia Siddique
- Lise Smith
- Susan Coke
- Quaced Hussain
- Claire Starmer
- Rita Adams

We are supported by BVSC

- Rosie Barret - RosieB@bvsc.org
- Benita Wishart – BenitaW@bvsc.org

