Caring for Curtin

Curtin Residents Association Inc.

Newsletter

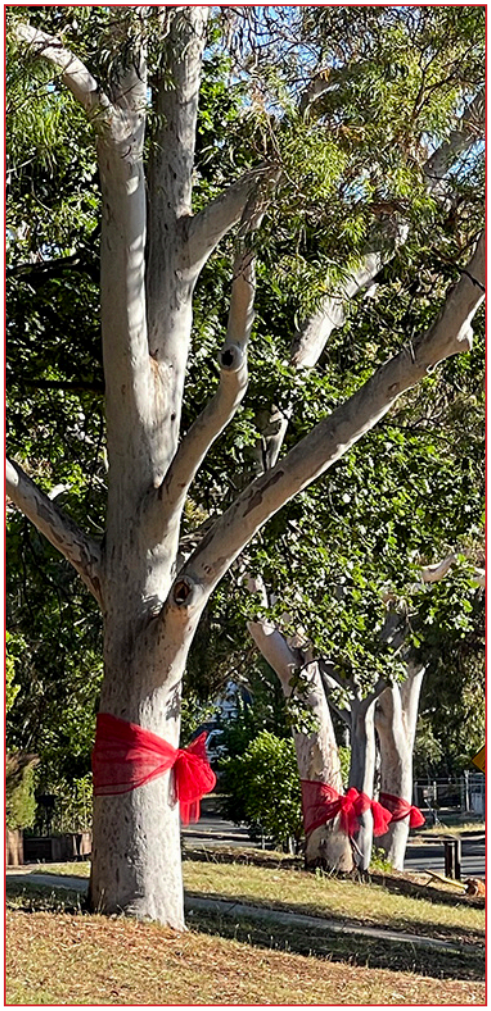
22 December 2025

Summer in Curtin

Celebrate with street trees sporting Christmas bows, especially the avenue along McCulloch Street. Thank you to everyone for this festive touch around our suburb!

Curtin Square

Curtin Square is lively with people. It's the place to come, any time of year! The deep eaves designed into the buildings around the square and the big trees make it cooler on the hottest days, and there are five coffee spots including a bakery and three cafés. Dentists if you need them after Christmas nutcracking, optometrist, pharmacy, hairdressers, nail salon and newsagent. Sometimes there are buskers, and sometimes impromptu pop-up stalls. (But be careful around the metal seats; a redback spider has been spotted there. It's been reported to FixMyStreet.)



Meeting new people with Parkrun and dog-walking

Parkrun Woden continues at 8 am every Saturday from the Callam offices carpark off Easty Street. It's for walking as well as all speeds of running, a great social event to get some fresh air at the start of each weekend.

The dog-walking group is also active every Saturday morning from the vet's clinic in Curtin Square.

Need a New Year resolution?

Volunteer for some outdoor activity! The Curtin Trees and Gardens group (operating since 2012) has several working bees during the year. They only take an hour or two of reasonably gentle gardening in good company. The group created and maintains the John Curtin Memorial Garden on Carruthers Street at the shops. Each year they plant and maintain the Floriade flower beds of irises, tulips, daffodils and annuals at the shops, and they plant, mulch and weed several of the plantings around our streets and pedestrian pathways using plants and preparation by Canberra City Services to make Curtin more pleasant. Contact Evan Mann, co-convenor, at ejm1397@gmail.com.

The Dawson Street Gardens have been created by another group that works on the wonderful garden in the Dawson Street loop off Theodore Street. They have a regular fortnightly Tuesday working mornings. Contact dawsonstgardens@gmail.com, or see them on Facebook at dawsonstgardens.

AGM

The annual general meeting of the Curtin Residents Association was held on 23 November. A good number of people came to the hall for the meeting (and also enjoyed the excellent refreshments, thanks to our providers!).

Committee

The committee members for 2025–26 are:

president: Ian Elsum vice-president: Julia Tresidder
secretary: Georgia Allen treasurer: Melissa Walton.

General committee members are Ashley Arthur (also public officer), Chris Johnson (also this newsletter editor) and Nelson Tang.

New committee members are welcome at any time. Why not come along and observe before committing? If you are interested email info@curtinresidents.asn.au.

You can see the AGM reports at www.curtinresidents.asn.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/AGM-2025-President-Report-v3.pdf.

Plans for 2026

Your committee is planning to keep informing our community about local issues. Submissions are the most effective way of making your voice heard, and everyone is encouraged to make submissions when the opportunity comes up.

Current issues of interest include:

- the development of the North Curtin Residential Area (see page 4)
- HammondCare: Curtin Dementia Care Village (see page 4)
- Southern Gateway Corridor: ACT Government planning is underway but not yet public
- Legislative Assembly Inquiry into the Missing Middle Housing Planning Reforms
- Mint Interchange: the Residents Association advocates for full connectivity both ways between Cotter Road and Yarra Glen. This would reduce the unwanted effects of traffic congestion and ‘rat running’ through Curtin
- public infrastructure (pathways, trees, streets), particularly around major developments
- public transport:
    - express bus services, at least during morning and afternoon peak hours
    - light rail to Woden, which is under consideration by the Commonwealth Environment Department (EPBC Act).

The public meeting after the AGM featured a presentation by Associate Professor Roslyn Prinsley, ANU, on natural ways to reduce flooding. You can see presentation slides on our website: www.curtinresidents.asn.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Curtin-Residents-2025-NbS-23-November-v3.pdf.

Road lane reductions from Curtin to Civic in 2026

Travel from Curtin to Civic will be affected by Commonwealth bridge lane closures from January throughout 2026, and Northbourne Avenue closures in January.

Commonwealth Avenue Bridge

The number of lanes across Commonwealth Avenue Bridge will be reduced because the northbound side of the bridge will be closed for reconstruction from Thursday 8 January 2026, for the whole year. General traffic going north towards Civic will be diverted on to one lane of the southbound side, and buses going north will use a second lane. All southbound traffic towards Woden will be reduced to one lane (starting from Tuesday 6 January). This will greatly reduce the capacity of the bridge to carry traffic for the whole year 2026. Then the two sides will flip in 2027: still only one lane of general traffic each way using the upgraded northbound side while the southbound side is worked on.

This work is for the National Capital Authority (the Federal Government body) to allow the bridge to carry heavier vehicles and widen the bicycle–pedestrian pathway. See: www.nca.gov.au/environment/projects/current-projects/commonwealth-avenue-bridge-renewal-project-updates for updated information.

The bridge upgrade work has nothing to do with light rail!

Northbourne Avenue in Civic

Work on the light rail project stage 2A from Civic around London Circuit West to Regatta Point – Commonwealth Park is extending through the London Circuit – Northbourne Avenue intersection in January. Northbourne Avenue will be closed between Vernon Circle and Cooyong Street (the whole of its passage through Civic) from 4 January to 2 February. The light rail tram service from Civic will be replaced by a bus service from 12–23 January between Alinga Street and Sandford Street in Mitchell. The city bus interchange will be affected by the roadworks at times.

Bus service changes

More significantly, bus services will also be affected by the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge works all year, with a 13-minute delay on buses from Civic to Woden in morning peak hours (the afternoon delay is not stated). Minister for City Services (buses) Tara Cheyne says about bus services: 'Bus users require a service that's reliable, predictable and punctual. Frequency, convenience and speed are also highly desirable—but they don't have the same impact on a user's day in the same way that a bus not turning up at its usual time does'. From 2 February the R4 Rapid bus service between Woden, Civic and Belconnen will run less often (every 15 minutes); the R5 Rapid will extend its services to Belconnen. The northern end of route 58 through Curtin will be extended to the stop on Marcus Clarke Street – Rimmer Street. The new timetables will be released in January.

As a comment: Minister Cheyne claims that reliability is more important than speed or frequency. The same principles apparently justify planning for the future light rail service: the 2030s tram to Woden is planned to be even slower than the current almost-rapid bus services, but 'more reliable'. It's hard to see how slower services would attract significant numbers of passengers to public transport.

‘Missing Middle’ planning reforms

The planning reforms that are intended to encourage multiple houses to be developed on ordinary residential blocks are being looked at by a Legislative Assembly Committee of Inquiry. Submissions were due last week. The Curtin Residents Association made a submission, repeating much of what we said to the Planning Directorate’s request for comments earlier in the year. See our website: www.curtinresidents.asn.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Missing-Middle-Housing-Reforms-CRA-submission.pdf and our July 2025 newsletter.

Upcoming major developments for Curtin

There is no recent new information on the upcoming developments for Curtin. Here’s a summary of what we know:

- HammondCare Dementia Village on the old Curtin North Primary school site: the sale of the lease has gone through and construction is expected to start in 2027. We await a development application.
- Wesley Mission affordable and supported housing units on the Block, Martin Street – Theodore Street – Carruthers Street: the development application has been accepted by the ACT planning authority, with some conditions.
- Marymead CatholicCare affordable housing units in Strangways Street next to the Holy Trinity Church: a development application is expected very soon.
- North Curtin residential area on the site of the horse paddocks: a development application is due mid-2026.

We’ll keep in touch and let you know when we hear more.

Best Wishes for the festive season and a Happy New Year to all our members and the Curtin community

Written by Chris Johnson and Ian Elsum, edited and designed by Ann Parkinson. Contributions welcome!