Expanding Merton’s schools

Win tickets to a New Wimbledon Theatre show on page 14

Exam results are in
Nominate your community champion
Mitcham clock tower returns
The Leader of Merton Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, writes for *My Merton*.

We’ll soon be preparing for Small Business Saturday, when you’ll find me helping out behind the counter at some of our local small businesses. Apologies in advance if I make you fish and chips or a curry that’s not up to scratch!

Many of you will know that I have a background in business. That’s why I support our local small businesses. But it’s also why I’ve made sure the council is run in a business-like way. I’ve made sure we’ve kept your council tax low and we’ve made council services more efficient than ever.

However, the reduction in our funding from central government has made this more and more difficult. Councils up and down the country are seeing 40% of their government funding cut. And the new government has said it wants further cuts.

On top of this, the number of older people who need expensive social care has increased and there has been a big increase in the birth-rate. So there are more people in need of services but less money than ever before to provide these services.

Faced with this challenge, it would be easy to give up. But I know you elected us to do the very best we can to continue to provide the services people need while making the best use of the reduced funding we have to work with.

This will mean changes to what the council can provide and not everyone will be happy. But we will continue to make these changes in a business-like way. We’ll continue to look for better deals from our suppliers and to find new ways of providing services. We’ll invest in new libraries that are less expensive to run.

So on Small Business Saturday I might serve you fish and chips or a curry. But I want to serve you up a business-like council.

PS Congratulations to all our young people on their A level and GCSE results. I’m proud we’ve been named the fastest improving borough in London when it comes to GCSEs – well done everyone!
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Whenever you see this logo that means there’s a volunteering opportunity to get involved in

My Merton is published by the London Borough of Merton and is distributed free to households in the borough four times a year.

The editorial content of My Merton is produced by the London Borough of Merton’s Communications Team
Editor of this issue: Bronwen Pickering. Feature contributions from Elizabeth Thompson

My Merton is designed by Domino 01932 988677
Email andrew@domino4.co.uk
www.domino4.co.uk

Printed by Cliffe Enterprise
Print Partnership
Contact 0845 601 9478
Email ben@cliffe-enterprise.com
www.cliffe-enterprise.com

My Merton is distributed by London Letterbox.
Contact 020 8940 0666 or log on to www.londonletterbox.co.uk

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contact us

My Merton, Communications,
8th Floor, Merton Civic Centre,
London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX
Tel 020 8545 3327
Email mymerton@merton.gov.uk
merton.gov.uk/mymerton

What’s on listings: 020 8545 3327
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My Merton costs only 12p a copy to produce

When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

My Merton is printed on fully recyclable paper, which is accredited by the PEFC Council (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes). This edition of My Merton is distributed from 11 September 2015.
Civil enforcement officers wear body cameras

Merton Council’s civil enforcement officers (CEOs) are now wearing body cameras in a bid to deter abusive and aggressive behaviour many of them have to face from motorists who break parking rules.

The council’s parking team will be able to use footage of threatening behaviour as evidence to prosecute the perpetrators and give CEOs confidence to carry out their duties without fear of abuse. The cameras are only to be used in the event of a confrontation.

find out more
merton.gov.uk/parking
Merton celebrates exam success

Merton’s schools and sixth forms celebrated the success of students across the borough this summer after eagerly awaiting A-Level and GCSE results.

Sixth form pupils across Merton saw their best ever A-Level results in August. A greater number of pupils achieved top grades this year and there was also an improvement in every grade band.

Overall, 25% of students across Merton achieved A*-A grades, up 5% on last year. Half of students were awarded A*-B grades, up 7% on last year. The borough performed better than the national average for both A*-E grades, achieving 99% against 95% and A*-C grades, 79% against 77%.

Following the report earlier this year that Merton achieved the fastest improving GCSE results in London over the last five years, at the time of going to press, provisional GCSE results this summer suggested that, in spite of national changes to the marking system and significant numbers of pupils appealing their grades, Merton’s results are on course to being second best ever, just below last year’s record performance.

Mayor celebrates Silver Sunday

Mayor of Merton Councillor David Chung will be hosting a free special event for 200 residents to celebrate the contribution made by older people to Merton on Silver Sunday, 4 October 3pm at Tooting and Mitcham Community Sports Club.

The council is calling on residents to nominate an older relative, friend, neighbour or someone living near them to come to the event, where there will be afternoon tea, entertainment and people on hand to talk about services available to those living on their own. Silver Sunday is led by the Simon Milton Foundation.

Four Merton parks have retained their nationally recognised Green Flag status for being among the best public and community parks and green spaces in the country.

Colliers Wood Rec, Dundonald Rec, John Innes Park and South Park Gardens are all proudly flying their green flags.

Merton success at London Youth Games

A huge well done goes to all Merton’s young people who took part in the London Youth Games this year.

The beginning of July saw Merton’s teams enter the finals at Crystal Palace. Among the medal successes were golds in judo, BMX and mixed football. Merton also took silver in girls’ waterpolo, kayaking, slalom, athletics, swimming and diving. Bronze success went to the boys’ waterpolo, BMX and basketball teams.

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Merton is looking for young people to represent the borough in next year’s competition and team managers to coach them.
Celebrating local heroes

The Wimbledon Guardian hosted a spectacular evening this summer to celebrate Merton’s local heroes. Supported by the council, the event shone a light on the extraordinary people nominated for a Merton Civic Award in recognition of the work they do for others in the community. This year’s Mayor of Merton award went to Gordon Samuel for work on raising awareness about the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning following the tragic death of his daughter, Katie. He and his wife, Avril, have set up the Katie Haines Memorial Trust.

Gordon and Avril Samuel with a photo of their daughter

Apply for Freedom Pass online

Changes to the application process for a council-funded Freedom Pass announced by London Councils mean that they are no longer available at the Post Office. The quickest way to apply for a new pass is online. Anyone unable to apply online can visit their nearest Merton library to pick up a paper application form. Proof of identity, address and a letter of eligibility are required.

Apply for Arts funding

There’s £1,500 per project up for grabs from the council’s Arts Development Fund. All applications for the funding should be submitted by 30 October 2015. One inspirational, winning project called My Mind is Free is being performed by the Rah Rah Theatre Company at this year’s Wimbledon Bookfest.

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**Temporary library in Colliers Wood now open**

In a new chapter for the much-loved Donald Hope Library, Merton’s cabinet has agreed to replace the aging 1970s building with a brand new value for money library. The old building is currently being redeveloped and a temporary library is available at Merton Vision, Guardian Centre, Clarendon Road. Opening times are the same as usual and library users are able to enjoy all the usual facilities, but on a slightly smaller scale until the new library is open for business.

The council has negotiated a good deal with the developer to ensure that the new building will provide excellent facilities to library users and good value to Merton’s tax payers. Built from Portland stone to reflect the stone used for the historically significant Charles Holden tube station, the library will open in two years’ time and will be spread over three levels.

Visitors will benefit from more space given over to books and DVDs. There will be a coffee shop, community meeting rooms, special activity zones and a larger children’s area.

[find out more](http://merton.gov.uk/libraries)

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**Nominate your community champion**

The council is inviting residents to nominate their community champion for an excellence award. The deadline for nominations is 23 September. The awards recognise members of the community who work for or with public organisations that go the extra mile to make Merton a great place. The champion could be a police officer, fire fighter, NHS worker or volunteer who supports the council in their spare time.

[find out more](http://merton.gov.uk/communitychampion)

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**Bookfest is back**

Headliners at this year’s Bookfest include comedian Seann Walsh, former tennis ace Boris Becker, authors Sebastian Faulks, Louis de Bernieres and Alison Weir as well as TV adventurer Ben Fogle. For younger festival-goers, wildlife expert and TV presenter, Steve Backshall and authors Steve Cole and Josh Lacey will be there. The Hip Hop Shakespeare Company and Brit Award Critics’ Choice George the Poet will be performing too. This year, Wimbledon Common is the destination for the ninth Bookfest, a 10-day celebration of live music, talks and film screenings.

[find out more](http://www.wimbledonbookfest.org)

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**Tackling illegal encampments**

Last issue, we reported on the council’s legal obligations when it comes to dealing with illegal encampments in the borough and why, sometimes, it can take a while to remove the encampments.

Tackling the issue head-on, the council is proactively discouraging people from setting up illegal camps by installing height restriction barriers on council-owned car parks, placing barriers around Canon Hill Common, part of Cricket Green and Cranmer Green. The council has expanded its remit to include the removal of encampments from the public highway. Our good working relationship with the police also means that, when there are encampments, we work together, taking action to remove them as quickly as the law allows.

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**Book fireworks tickets online**

Tickets for this year’s firework displays are available online later in the autumn. Dates for the shows are Thursday 5 November in Wimbledon Park and Saturday 7 November in Morden Park. Watch this space: merton.gov.uk/fireworks

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© Milcebrrr | Dreamstime.com
**Mitcham clock tower returns**

A special event to mark the return of Mitcham’s iconic clock tower will take place at the Fair Green on Tuesday 6 October. The event will feature performances from local school children and community groups and will mark the completion of the first phase of the Mitcham regeneration project.  

[find out more](merton.gov.uk/rediscovermitcham)

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**Merton young faces**

Wimbledon Bookfest is celebrating Merton’s 50 years with an exhibition this September called Future Face of the Borough. It tells the stories of Merton’s talented 15 to 19 year-olds through photographic portraiture taken at various locations across the borough. The project has been funded by the Wimbledon Foundation. The exhibition at the All England Lawn Tennis Club features the borough’s young musicians, sportspeople, charity workers, carers and many more.  

[find out more](www.wimbledonbookfest.org)

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**Circle Housing repairs**

Merton Council is standing up for residents to ensure Circle Housing Merton Priory (CHMP) provides a good service for tenants. The housing association has assured the council that measures are being introduced to make things better. These include, making it easier to report a repair and book an appointment. They now have more surveyors and have also pledged to improve contact with residents.  

[find out more](www.circle.org.uk/merton-priory)  
[‘report it’](‘report it’); 0300 500 3000

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**We want to stay together**

Siblings who enter into foster care are often separated because we do not have enough foster families to care for them together.

**Foster for Merton and we can offer:**

- Comprehensive, on-going professional training
- 24/7 support and mentors
- An allowance of up to £502 per week per child

Come along to one of our information events at Morden Baptist Church on:

- 22 September at 10:30am • 8 October at 6:30pm
- 20 October at 6:30pm • 4 November at 10:30am
- 17 November at 6:30pm • 2 December at 10:30am
- 15 December at 6:30pm

**Foster**

Call us today 0800 073 0874  
merton.gov.uk/fostering
Working for a healthy Merton

Merton’s Health Champions help people make simple lifestyle changes for better health. Launched last year by the council, the scheme trains local residents to pass on advice and encouragement to other residents. My Merton finds out more.

Caroline Lewis John became a health champion last September. Since then she has worked with more than 20 Merton residents. She’s based at South Mitcham Community Centre, where she also runs her own exercise classes. She told My Merton why she wanted to become a health champion and what she gets out of it.

“I’m a fitness instructor and I like talking to people, so it suits me down to the ground. Some of the people I’ve worked with come to my classes so I find out what happens to them next. It’s fulfilling, it’s a professional service and a free service and something people need to help them be healthy. You need to be interested in health to be a health champion, but not necessarily to have a background in health, as you’re supported all along the way.”

The champions talk with their clients using a health booklet full of practical routes to wellbeing, for example stopping smoking, making simple food swaps or having a couple of alcohol-free days a week. They can then refer the client to an expert health trainer who can help them achieve their goals.

Take the challenge and walk to the moon

Back in June the council launched Merton’s first space mission – a virtual one, anyway. Our Merton on the Move campaign challenges residents to collectively travel the same distance as from here to the moon, whether walking, jogging or cycling. If you haven’t signed up yet, there’s still time by downloading the free Yomp smartphone app. Take part with your family, work colleagues or sports team. It will help you measure how far you travel and how many calories you burn with every journey. Even small journeys count and you’ll be helping us complete our mission and boosting your health and fitness into the bargain.

For Merton on the Move search Yomp at the App Store or Google Play or visit merton.yomp.co

For health champions visit www.live-well.org.uk/merton or call 020 8251 0606

Sport’s a blast in Merton

Merton Council is running free sessions in a variety of sports for young people aged 14 to 25 as part of Sports Blast. The classes, run by fully qualified coaches, are being held in the east of the borough and give youngsters of all sporting abilities a chance to take part in netball, tennis, BMXing, fitness classes and football.

Follow @SportsBlastLBM or like us on Facebook SportsBlastMerton

**find out more**
merton.gov.uk/sportsblast
Providing education for generations to come

Over the past decade Merton has faced unprecedented demand for its primary schools. In response, the council delivered an £80m expansion programme that has provided 4,500 new primary school places across the borough. With more than 90% of children receiving a place at one of their preferred primaries, the council is now turning its attention to secondary schools. My Merton takes a closer look...

Merton Council’s cabinet member for education Councillor Martin Whelton explains: “Our priority and duty is to provide a secondary school place for every child who wants to go to school in Merton. But compared with 2014, there will be more than 500 extra children in Merton entering secondary school by 2018. Our primary school expansion has been very successful and expanding our secondary schools is one of our biggest challenges.”

The council is meeting this challenge by expanding up to three schools to the east of the borough before 2016 and supporting a brand new school in the Wimbledon area, which could be welcoming its first students in two years’ time.

Harris Academy Morden in Lilleshall Road, St Mark’s Academy and Harris Academy Merton, both in Mitcham, are all being considered for expansion with detailed planning underway. A decision will be made later this autumn on which of these schools to expand. However, even if all three schools expand, we will still be short of 1,000 places in Wimbledon.

Providing education for all the borough’s young people

The big growth in the birth-rate started to hit primary schools in the late 2000s and there was an extraordinary rise in September 2011. Children who started reception that year will reach secondary school age in 2018, when many of the new places will be needed. While expansion of schools to the east of the borough is planned, there is a need for a new school to the west.

In May the government approved the Harris Federation as the provider for a new secondary school in Wimbledon. The project is backed by Merton Council. Harris already runs two successful academies in the borough: Harris Academy Morden and Merton, which are Ofsted-rated good and outstanding respectively.

Finding the money and a site

The next step is to find a suitable and affordable location for the new school. The government’s Education Funding Agency (EFA) is responsible for finding a site for the new school and we are working with them and with Harris.

The council’s preferred location for a new secondary school is in the South Wimbledon area, as the greatest demand is here. However, it will depend on how much the new school costs as the government has now cut the funding previously available for new schools. We will have to balance the need to spend money on older people in social care, for example, with the need for a new school. We’ll be sure to update you on developments over the coming months.

What the school would look like

In terms of what the school might be like, it would provide education to 900 girls and boys aged 11 to 16 plus a 250 place sixth form. It would be non-selective, however it is possible that priority would be given to pupils at certain primary schools in the Wimbledon area whose locations mean their pupils would struggle to find places at existing schools.

Meanwhile the council’s major primary school expansion programme is coming to an end with the final phases of building work at Hillcross, Merton Abbey and Pelham schools nearing completion and Dundonald Primary School and the final phase of Singlegate Primary School to follow.

The expansion of St Mary’s in Wimbledon was completed just before the summer holidays. The work has doubled the number of places to 420, while improving access around the school.

We have been working to ensure that as many young people as possible can now go to a primary school near to where they live and we are committed to making sure they can go to a secondary school near to where they live too.
Applications for school places open now

Following the successful primary expansion programme, more than 80% of children gained a place at their first choice of school this September and more than 90% received a place at one of their top three preferences.

However, parents are still being urged to think hard about applications to primary and secondary schools. If your child is due to start reception in September 2016, you need to apply by 15 January 2016. The online admissions system is now open. Access to the system and further information on the application process can be found on the Merton website – merton.gov.uk/admissions.

Make sure you complete your online application by the closing date. Use all of your six preferences and be realistic. Check the criteria for your preferred schools and visit Merton’s website to find out how places were awarded this year.

And with pressure on secondary schools growing, the message for older children is much the same. The secondary school application process closes 31 October 2015.

“Our priority and duty is to provide a secondary school place for every child who wants to go to school in Merton”

For more information on the new school and school expansions visit merton.gov.uk/schools
To apply for a school place visit merton.gov.uk/admissions

Pupils from St Mary’s RC Primary School on the day of the blessing of their new schools building by Bishop of Southwark Paul Hendricks, this summer
Let's all get recycling

We can all do our bit when it comes to recycling. The council is working on making recycling as easy and hassle-free as possible. It is also encouraging as many residents as possible to join in the recycling and be in with a chance of winning cash prizes as part of its Mega Recycle campaign. My Merton gets the latest on being green in Merton...

Boost your recycling in every room
Most of us are doing a brilliant job recycling our kitchen waste, but it’s easy to miss piles of potential recycling in other rooms too.

Bathrooms are a treasure trove of items you can recycle: from cardboard toilet roll tubes and toothpaste boxes to plastic shampoo and bleach bottles. Remember to remove any trigger sprays or pump dispensers from soap and cleaning bottles.

In the bedroom look out for tissue boxes, magazines and deodorant sprays and don’t forget packaging from online orders.

Recycling from flats
Our recycling roadshow was out and about this summer, dropping in on blocks of flats with communal bins. While most people who live in flats are recycling their waste well, recycling rates are lower than from other properties. So we wanted to find out what we can do to get you recycling more.

In some blocks recycling is getting mixed up with general rubbish.
To make things clearer we’ve put 700 posters up in bin stores around the borough. We have also replaced and increased the number of communal recycling bins in larger blocks of flats.

There are three key things you can do to help us recycle more:
- Recycle your rubbish in the communal bins for your building or estate – put all your cans, bottles, plastic and paper in together, there’s no need to separate it out any more.
- Don’t put plastic bags in the recycling – tip out the contents. We’ve handed out 14,000 hessian bags for residents living in flats to use for recycling.
- If you haven’t tried recycling your food waste yet, give it a go. Contact the council for a free kitchen caddy which you can empty into the communal bins. These are emptied every week and deep-cleaned regularly.

Wheelie bin trial
Our pilot scheme to provide residents of Lavender Fields ward with wheelie bins is coming to an end and we’ll soon be evaluating the results. A total of 1,200 properties were given wheeled bins for waste and recycling back in April, funded by a £67,000 government grant. We’ll be reporting back on whether they have reduced street litter and increased the volume of recycling as well as on residents' views. The council’s scrutiny committee will also look at the results to see if wheelie bins offer value for money.
Recycling food waste from schools
Merton Council has been collecting food waste from schools, picking up three to five tonnes per week from 32 schools this summer term. Poplar Primary School is definitely worth a mention as one of the best at recycling their food waste. If you’re at a Merton school, get your school to sign up to the council’s food waste scheme and boost your eco-credentials! The council delivers food waste bins and liners for free.

Getting creative with the stuff we throw away
The young designers who entered this year’s Style Junkies competition rose to the challenge of making fashion out of rubbish. From a showgirl outfit crafted from melted plastic, to Lego wellies and a cloak fashioned out of cat food pouches, judges were impressed by the wit, beauty and sheer inventiveness of the designs.

The competition was part of Merton’s Mega Recycle campaign which aims to find new and interesting ways to boost the borough’s recycling rate.

Schoolchildren help by recycling leftovers

If you haven’t done so already, visit the Mega Recycle web pages to sign up to the recycling challenge and be in with a chance of winning cash in a monthly draw.

find out more
What to recycle: merton.gov.uk/recycling
Request a food waste bin: merton.gov.uk/recyclefromhome
Recycling from schools: 020 8545 3168, email wilhelmina.lutterodtschandorf@merton.gov.uk
Mega Recycle and Style Junkies: merton.gov.uk/megarecycle
Win a family ticket* to see Santa Claus and the Night Before Christmas at New Wimbledon Studio

The magical Christmas experience returns with a brand new adventure!

From the producers of last year’s record-breaking production, the enchanting Christmas experience returns with a brand new adventure! A truly unforgettable experience which includes bubbles and the magical moment when snowflakes fall over the audience, this interactive show is a must-see over the festive season! With songs, stories, a meet and greet with Santa and a free gift, it’s never too early to book for this perfect Christmas treat.

Santa Claus and the Night Before Christmas will be at New Wimbledon Studio from Tuesday 1 to Thursday 24 December. To book tickets, visit www.atgtickets.com/wimbledon or call 0844 871 7646 (Calls cost 7p per minute plus your phone company’s access charge). For your chance to win a family ticket for four, simply answer the following question:

Who is the special guest you will be able to meet at this Christmas production?

A) Robin Hood
B) Santa Claus
C) Little Red Riding Hood

In your answer you must include the following: name, email address, phone number and postal address. You can email your answer to communications@merton.gov.uk or write to us at My Merton, 7th floor, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX. The closing date for entries is 9 October 2015.

Terms and conditions: *A family ticket is for four people, and must include at least one child. The tickets are non-transferable. There are no cash alternatives, accommodation or travel included in this prize. The competition is one VIP family ticket to see Santa Claus and the Night Before Christmas at New Wimbledon Studio, valid on Tuesday 1 December.

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**Train4Life**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drive4life</th>
<th>Pre-learner driving skills course</th>
<th>Children's cycle training</th>
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<tr>
<td>If you find today’s busy roads a challenge, our free session can return you to confident driving. Designed for drivers 55 years and over. For more information visit: merton.gov.uk/drive4life</td>
<td>For 17-24 year olds with a provisional car driving license. Free 3 hour theory session followed by 3 free driving lessons. Application form available on: merton.gov.uk/roadsafety</td>
<td>Merton provides free ‘on road’ cycle training for children age 10+ at Merton schools during school term, and Easter and summer holidays. Further details and application form available on: cycleconfident.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic cycle maintenance training for adults</td>
<td>Motor bike and moped courses</td>
<td>Adult cycle training</td>
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<tr>
<td>A half day session held once a month at local venues. For more information please contact: cycleconfident.com Please type cycle maintenance in the subject heading.</td>
<td>Be a brighter biker, for learner riders Free classroom session and CBT Bike Safe, for experienced riders. A free training day for experienced riders provided by the police. Further details and application form available on: merton.gov.uk/roadsafety</td>
<td>Free adult cycle training for beginners, refreshers and commuters on Saturday mornings in Morden. We can even provide a bicycle for you to use if you haven’t got your own. Further details and application form available on: cycleconfident.com</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All events and training are funded in conjunction with Transport for London and are available to those who live, work or study in the London Borough of Merton.

Alternatively, please contact us for more information:

**Contact:** Future Merton, London Borough of Merton, 12th Floor, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX
**Telephone:** 020 8545 3205 / 06
**Email:** road.safety@merton.gov.uk
**Web:** merton.gov.uk/roadsafety

merton.gov.uk/roadsafety
Merton’s role in WW1

One hundred years ago, the world was one year into what would become one of the bloodiest conflicts in human history. Many brave people in Merton played a vital part in the war effort. My Merton finds out about the council’s Carved in Stone project, which tells the life stories of those commemorated on war memorials across the borough.

Merton’s servicemen played an important role in the major battles of World War One. Nine men with Merton links received the Victoria Cross for their bravery, amongst them the sons of railway workers and market gardeners, as well as members of the officer class.

On the home front suffragettes ran soup kitchens for those in need, firms in Mitcham and Colliers Wood produced the varnish for aircraft and artillery shells and a local market garden supplied cress to combat scurvy amongst troops in the Middle East.

These are some of the historical details that have come to light as part of the Carved in Stone project, which seeks out the human stories behind the names recorded on the borough’s war graves and memorials.

Launched last December, the project has seen 24 volunteers put in more than 2,000 hours of work, researching stories, digitising records and filming interviews with the descendants of combatants, in an effort to raise awareness about this hugely significant period of our history.

There have been three discovery days, where residents found out about life a century ago and contributed stories and artefacts from their own families.

As part of the project, September sees the publication of three Merton at War mini-maps covering Wimbledon, Mitcham and Merton. These maps will be a taster for the full-scale, borough-wide Merton at War heritage trail which will be launched in November. The map will lead you around our significant war sites; from recruitment venues to military hospitals and army camps.

Members of the Merton and Morden Volunteers. The Battalion was attached to the East Surrey Regiment. The photo was taken around 1916. From Merton Memories online library

Tank Week, Wimbledon Broadway. From Merton Memories online library

Get involved
The council’s heritage service is seeking more young volunteers to help with the project. This type of work experience should prove particularly beneficial for teenagers, helping to boost their CVs or university applications. Also, if your relatives fought in World War One and you have stories or memorabilia that you would like to record for posterity, the project team would love to hear from you.

Find out more
merton.gov.uk/carvedinstone, 020 8545 3239, or email local.studies@merton.gov.uk. For information about forthcoming heritage events, activities and open days, visit merton.gov.uk/heritage
Delve deeper into Colliers Wood and you'll find it’s an area of hidden gems. With the River Wandle trail and tranquil Wandle Park, the town has its share of natural spaces. *My Merton* gets the latest on what’s happening in the town centre...

Colliers Wood has a rich heritage – the 12th century Merton Priory, which stood on the site now occupied by Sainsbury’s, played host to kings’ coronations and was a forerunner of the English parliament. There are links to Lord Nelson and the first commercial rail service ran through the area. Plus, Colliers Wood was significant in the 19th century as the birthplace of the Arts and Crafts movement, with both William Morris and Arthur Liberty’s printing and fabric dyeing works at Merton Abbey Mills.

However, developments over the past few decades, from the tower to the retail parks has meant that there is little physical evidence of a great historic past.

But Colliers Wood is changing fast thanks to a series of projects set to transform the area, adding more greenery, better urban spaces and making it easier to move around the town centre by bike and on foot.

**Making connections**
The first element of the regeneration has been a series of transport and public space improvements, known as Connecting Colliers Wood, which is scheduled to be completed this winter. With £3m funding from Merton Council and the Mayor of London, we are working on creating better links between Colliers Wood tube station, Wandle Park and historic Merton Abbey Mills.

Traffic improvements along the A24 and Christchurch Road should reduce congestion and removing street clutter should also make cycling safer, especially at junctions. We’ve also simplified many of the pedestrian crossings to make walking more convenient. The money has also funded some physical changes to make places that are pleasant to spend time in and enjoy.

Trees have been planted, there’s new seating and, instead of being hidden away, Wandle Park is being opened out to attract visitors with new boundary features. The Baltic Close makeover will soon be complete with a shared space and specially designed wooden benches, designed to reinterpret William Morris’s printing blocks from Abbey Mills. There’s new lighting and paving and better landscaping along the Wandle Promenade.

Also look out for the new Wandle Valley Regional Park signs which celebrate Colliers Wood’s industrial and natural heritage.
Transforming the tower

In January 2015 work began to transform the Colliers Wood tower from derelict eyesore into an attractive glass-clad building that will house 150 new apartments. There’ll be three new shops on the ground floor and a new public plaza outside. Standing empty for more than a decade, the building has been a major bugbear for residents, but Merton Council, after lengthy negotiations, has successfully secured the redevelopment of the tower, which is already proving to be a catalyst for further growth and regeneration. The tower should be complete mid 2016. A second phase, to the south of the site, is being discussed and the council expects plans to be submitted early 2016 for consultation.

A new library for Colliers Wood

Further up the high street, work to build a brand new library is now underway. The old, 1970s library closed in July, to make way for a fantastic new library building, clad in Portland Stone to reflect the iconic design of Charles Holden’s nearby Colliers Wood tube station.

The new library will open in two years’ time and will be spread over three levels with more space for books and DVDs as well as a coffee shop, community meeting rooms, special activity zones and a large children’s area.

The building will also contain new apartments. Through negotiations with the developer the council was able to secure the new library for Colliers Wood at a reduced cost to council tax payers, providing a valuable community facility for generations to come.
If, like the residents of Fieldgate Lane in Mitcham, you’d rather have an orchard in your backyard than a fly-tip, and frankly who wouldn’t, then join the council’s Love Your Street campaign and help make your neighbourhood somewhere you’re proud of.

Love Your Street is about working with the council to improve your area, whether by helping with a litter pick, pledging to be tidy or something more ambitious.

In Fieldgate Lane, residents were concerned with the blight on their area from a piece of wasteland that was frequently fly-tipped. The council helped them mount a clean-up operation, then got Barratt Homes, who are building locally, to prepare the site. Together they planted fruit trees and plants including plums, gooseberries, strawberries and a local variety of Merton apple.

Residents of Myrna Close, Colliers Wood also led a clean-up operation around their rubbish bins, which were becoming an eyesore. The bins have been fenced off and the area cleared by a committed group of locals who have also got to work on the nearby nature trail and pond.

Get involved by visiting our website and pledging to pick up litter and report any problem areas and you’ll be in with a chance of winning a £100 voucher in a prize draw. You can also sign up for our newsletter and find out where clean ups are planned or get council help to organise one of your own.

Residents honoured for loving their streets

Merton Council celebrated the hard work and efforts of volunteers who have helped make the Love Your Street campaign so successful since its launch in January.

An awards ceremony was held in the council chamber in the summer. Mayor of Merton Councillor David Chung presented the volunteers with a certificate as a thank you for their contribution to keeping Merton clean. Volunteers play a vital role in the scheme, organising and taking part in clean-up events as well as in promoting the initiative which increased the number of sign ups to the Love Your Street campaign.

Beware the man with a van...

The council’s litter enforcement team is also reminding residents how important it is to dispose of bulky waste properly. If someone offers to dispose of your building waste or other rubbish, make sure they have a waste carrier’s licence which should be displayed in their vehicle. Householders are responsible for their waste. If your rubbish ends up in a fly-tip you could be fined £5,000 and landed with a criminal record.

Although we won’t dispose of builders’ rubble, the council will take up to five items or bags of bulky waste from your home up to four times a year if you call us and book it in.

find out more
Love your Street: merton.gov.uk/loveyourstreet
Bulky waste collections: merton.gov.uk/bulky
020 8274 4902
Many of us have been through particularly tough economic times of late so the council is working hard to get the best deal for residents in the services we buy and the contracts we agree.

**Investing in technology**
A major investment the council is making is in technology. We’ve provided our social workers with either a tablet or laptop, freeing them up to spend more time doing their important face-to-face work with vulnerable children and adults, rather than spending valuable time writing up their notes in the office. Portable technology allows them to type up their case notes as they go.

Many of you may have noticed new street lights which we’re investing in. If they haven’t made it to your street yet, they will over the coming months. The new LED lights are brighter and more energy efficient, and don’t cost as much to run. So, while some places are dimming their lights to save money, we’re ensuring our streets continue to be well lit at a lower cost to Merton’s tax payers.

**Being prudent with public funds**
The council is able to invest in projects to the benefit of residents by being prudent in its use of reserves, money we put aside each year to ensure we have enough in the bank to spend on projects that will save money in the long-term, provide enhanced services to residents as well as the best deal for our taxpayers.

A new library for Colliers Wood, new school buildings and the new family leisure centre for Morden, plus the investment in Mitcham and Colliers Wood town centres are just a few examples where the council has worked with developers to ensure the borough is able to benefit from quality buildings fit for the 21st century, at the best possible value. Modern construction techniques are also making buildings easier and cheaper to maintain. And, where suitable, we consider including housing within developments like West Barnes Library to help fund the building.

**Sharing services**
Sharing services with neighbouring councils or commissioning specialist organisations to provide them are ways Merton is working to get a better deal for tax payers while maintaining quality services. Through the South London Waste Partnership (Merton, Sutton, Kingston and Croydon) we are set to save £1.7 million per year by agreeing a joint contract with environmental specialists in household waste collection and parks maintenance. Sharing legal services across Richmond, Sutton, Merton and Kingston councils and sharing services including trading standards and environmental health with Richmond Council, are all helping us cut down on costs while making better use of a wider pool of expertise. These are just some of the ways we are saving money and providing more efficient services for our residents.

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**Refreshing our website**
Our research shows that many of you would like to contact us in the same way you contact your bank and buy goods and services – online. So we’ll be revamping the current website to make it easier to pay for things and raise issues that are important to you.

By doing things online you will be able to get them done more easily, and by cutting down on phone calls we can also save money. We will be working with residents and community groups to make sure that the website is easy to understand and delivers the services that people want. So watch this space.

**Your personal account**
You’ll also have your own personal account with the council so you won’t have to repeat yourself when you call us. We will make sure that the website and your personal account are easy to use on a mobile phone as so many of us now want to do business on the move.

*Local Authority Customer Contact Survey (July 2012), Red Quadrant*
New courses available now at Merton Adult Education
Pick up our prospectus from your local library or MAE venue.
Open Day: Tuesday 8 September, 2 - 8pm
Book your place online, in person or by calling 020 8274 5222
Whatley Ave, Wimbledon Chase, SW20 9NS
@MertonAdultEd
www.maec.ac.uk
Seasonal safety

Many of us are looking forward to enjoying Halloween and Bonfire night. Both events are full of fun and games, but there are a few safety issues we all need to be aware of too.

Last Halloween, the serious burns suffered by the eight-year-old daughter of Strictly Come Dancing presenter Claudia Winkleman really brought home the dangers of flammable party outfits around candles. According to the London Fire Brigade there were 82 fire-related injuries in London between Halloween and Bonfire Night, with many of these incidents blamed on candles.

The advice is to keep candles well away from items that could catch fire, especially fancy dress costumes, and to always place them on a heat resistant surface well away from children. LED tea lights make a safe alternative for your pumpkin.

Fireworks can be a big danger too, so the safe option is to head for an organised display. Merton Council will host four fireworks shows – two at Morden Park on Saturday 7 November and two at Wimbledon Park on the 5 November. You can book tickets online.

Remember – never throw fireworks, never put them in your pocket and don’t return to a firework once lit. If you’re under 18, you will be breaking the law if you try to buy fireworks.

Don’t let your children go trick or treating without an adult and never knock on doors if there’s a No Trick or Treat sign – stick to houses with a pumpkin outside.

World Cup fever

Rugby World Cup fever is hotting up with nearby Twickenham staging wins and defeats that fans across the world will be tuned into. If you’re going to a match or plan to join in the celebrations, stay safe, look after yourself and make sure your friends are OK too. Our trading standards, licensing and food hygiene officers will be working around the stadium when matches are at Twickenham, playing a vital role in making sure the events run smoothly.

One stop help

The One Stop Shop drop-in service for people experiencing or worried about domestic violence and abuse marks its five year anniversary this autumn. There will be a special event at Morden Baptist Church with the council and partners.

You can get advice from a range of organisations on issues including housing, safety and the law. You’ll find it at Morden Baptist Church, Crown Lane each Monday between 9.30am and 12.30pm (not bank holidays).

find out more

For Halloween and bonfire safety advice visit the London Fire Brigade website www.london-fire.gov.uk
For No Trick or Treat posters go to the Metropolitan Police website and search No trick or treat posters: http://content.met.police.uk/Home
For firework displays go to merton.gov.uk/fireworks
For domestic violence help call Merton Victim Support on 020 7801 1777.
In an emergency call 999.
Parents are advised to apply online at www.merton.gov.uk/admissions. Closing date for applications is 31 October 2015

www.merton.gov.uk
My Merton talks to borough’s electoral services head

Andrew Robertson is Merton’s Head of Electoral Services. It’s a busy role and a crucial part of the democratic process, as Andrew manages everything connected with elections and registering to vote. My Merton gets the lowdown on what his job entails.

There are two key parts to Andrew’s job: “An election or referendum happens most years. So half of my year is spent organising elections – booking polling stations, appointing and training staff, printing poll cards and postal votes and running the count.” His team increases in size from five to 700 during an election period. “It’s a lot of work but I very much enjoy the project-management side to it. I find it very rewarding when it all works well.”

The other half of Andrew’s role is producing and maintaining the register of electors. Crucial to this is the annual canvass, currently in full swing. As a result of the government introducing individual electoral registration last year, the way the canvass is conducted has changed.

Andrew explains: “The canvass form used to be filled in by the head of household, but the responsibility to register is now on the individual. In August this year we sent a household enquiry form to every property, asking who is eligible to vote. This form is no longer a registration form, but residents do need to complete it and return it to us, if they haven’t already done so. It is also possible to complete the form online. We will send anyone new to the borough an invitation to register form which will ask for information such as their national insurance number and date of birth. This form can also be completed online.

“If residents don’t return either of these forms, one of the council’s electoral registration canvassers will call round and ask them to complete the forms there and then. They’ll help the person complete the form, if that’s what they need.”

Andrew continues: “By the time the canvass is complete, the vast majority of Merton residents will be on the register. It’s a legal requirement to be registered and can affect your credit rating if you’re not. The people most likely to fall through the net are younger people and students who tend to move around a lot. So the message is that if you do move house, go online to make sure you’re registered at your new address.”

A closer look at local democracy

Young people in Merton will get a taste of how local politics helps shape the borough we live in this Local Democracy Week (12–16 October). Pupils in the borough will be given a tour of the civic centre which will take place in the council chamber. Children in the Mitcham and Morden constituency will be visiting the Houses of Parliament with Siobhain McDonagh MP. She will also be giving talks at schools in the borough. Stephen Hammond MP will visit students at Wimbledon schools and speak about his role as a member of parliament.

Children will also have the opportunity to meet Mayor of Merton, Councillor David Chung in the Mayor’s Parlour and local councillors will attend Merton’s youth parliament. For the grown-ups, details on the community forums are on page 2 in What’s On.

Diane Perez has been a canvasser in Colliers Wood for several years and told us why she takes part: “The area I canvass is local to me and in walking distance from where I live. While I do get paid as a canvasser, I also think it is a person’s civic duty to vote, if eligible, so I do take pride in doing my bit by canvassing my area as thoroughly as possible. In 2016 Londoners will be voting for the next Mayor of London and they may be voting in a referendum on the European Union – so it’s important to make sure you’re registered.”

find out more or register to vote at: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote
Businesses, schools and organisations that have pledged to love their street

**Businesses**
- ABC Grocery and Butchers, Morden
- Café D’Oro, Morden
- Easy Tan, Morden
- eddisonwhite, Colliers Wood
- eddisonwhite, Wimbledon
- Ganley’s Irish Bar, Morden
- Jose’s Café, Morden
- Kebaby, Morden
- KFC, Morden
- Morden Dry Cleaners
- Paddy Power, Morden
- P J Harvey & Co Ltd Locksmiths, Morden
- Robert Dyas, Wimbledon
- The Generator Business Centre, Mitcham
- The Old Frizzle, Wimbledon
- Timmy All In One, Morden
- Village Café, Morden

**Schools**
- Beecholme Primary School
- Dundonald Primary School
- Haslemere Primary School
- Hatfield Primary School
- Hillcross Primary School
- Holy Trinity CE Primary School
- Malmesbury Primary School
- Poplar Primary School
- St Mary’s Catholic Primary School
- The Priory C of E Primary School
- Wimbledon Chase Primary School

**Organisations**
- Merton Chamber of Commerce
- Sustainable Merton

Thanks to all the residents who have signed up so far. Show your support by signing the pledge at: [merton.gov.uk/LoveYourStreet](http://merton.gov.uk/LoveYourStreet)

Residents who sign up are in with a chance to win a £100 One4all voucher.
New Wimbledon Theatre

93 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 1QG

Book online www.atgtickets.com/wimbledon
Telephone booking 0844 871 7646
Group bookings 0844 871 7696 Access bookings 0844 871 7677

Services of Remembrance

Sunday 2 November

● Nelson Health Centre Kingston Road, SW20 8DA. Starts 9am. Attended by the Mayor of Merton, Cllr David Chung.

● Wimbledon War Memorial Wimbledon Village. Starts 10.40am. Attended by the Mayor of Merton, Cllr David Chung.

● Mitcham War Memorial Lower Green West. Starts 10.40am. Attended by the Deputy Mayor of Merton, Cllr Paulline Cowper.

Wednesday 11 November

● Civic Centre London Road, Morden. Starts at 10.50am. Attended by the Deputy Mayor and civic representatives.

● Mitcham Clock Tower Starts at 10.50am. Attended by the Mayor of Merton, Cllr David Chung, and civic representatives.

Arts and entertainment

West Barnes Singers

● West Barnes Singers
Saturday 7 November, 7.30pm
St Saviour’s Church, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, SW20 9DG. Vivaldi Gloria and John Rutter Gloria. Tickets: £10, children: Free. find out more 020 8648 3987 www.westbarnessingers.co.uk

● Morden Park Choral Society
Saturday 24 October, 7.30pm
St John the Divine, High Path, SW19, Merton. Concert featuring beautiful music for all seasons. Adults £10, concession £5. Includes glass of wine. find out more 020 8648 6445

Jesus Christ Superstar

21-26 September, 2.30pm, 7.30pm
Tickets: £23.65–£49.15. Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber’s rock opera tells the story of the last seven days in the life of Jesus through an extraordinary score. As compelling today as it was at its inception over forty years ago, Jesus Christ Superstar has some of musical theatre’s most legendary songs from I Don’t Know How to Love Him, Everything’s Alright, and Gethsemane through to Superstar. Produced by Bill Kenwright and the creative team behind numerous blockbuster musicals, Jesus Christ Superstar tells the world’s oldest story with the superb theatricality they have brought to Evita, Joseph, Blood Brothers and Whistle Down the Wind to mention only a few.

Circus of Horrors

Monday
26 October, 7.30pm
Tickets: £19.90–£28.90. The story twists and turns with grisly murders and sensational shocks – all interwoven with some of the greatest and most bizarre circus acts on earth, performed by an almighty cast with a forked tongue firmly in each cheek and the devil-driven rock n’ roll of Dr Haze & The Interceptors from Hell.

Priscilla Queen of the Desert – Tour

5-10 October, 2.30pm, 7.30pm
Tickets £14–£42.50. The feel-good international hit sensation Priscilla is the heart-warming, uplifting adventure of three friends who hop aboard a battered old bus searching for love and friendship and end up finding more than they could have ever dreamed of. With a dazzling array of outrageous costumes and a hit parade of dancefloor classics including It’s Raining Men, I Will Survive, Hot Stuff, Boogie Wonderland, Girls Just Wanna Have Fun and I Love The Nightlife, rush to get your tickets today for this wildly fresh and funny musical that will take you on a journey to the heart of fabulous!

Priscilla Queen of the Desert – Tour
MY MERTON’S BOOK CHOICE

Purity
by Jonathan Franzen
Jonathan Franzen's Purity is a story of youthful idealism, extreme fidelity, and murder. The author of The Corrections and Freedom has imagined a world of vividly original characters – Californians and East Germans, good parents and bad parents, journalists and leakers – and he follows their intertwining paths through landscapes as contemporary as the omnipresent Internet and as ancient as the war between the sexes. Purity is the most daring and penetrating book yet by one of the major writers of our time.

Other books:
• The Woman Who Walked In Sunshine – Alexander McCall Smith
• The Mystery of the Skeleton Key – Bernard Capes
• The Moth Catcher – Ann Cleaves

NEW DVDS: MY MERTON RECOMMENDS

Wild Card
Jason Statham (Furious 7, The Expendables trilogy) reunites with Expendables 2 director, Simon West, as the titular Nick Wild, a Las Vegas bodyguard with lethal professional skills and a dangerous gambling problem. When a friend is attacked by a sadistic thug, Nick strikes back, only to find out the attacker is the son of a powerful mob boss. Suddenly Nick is plunged into the criminal underworld, chased by enforcers and wanted by the mob. Having raised the stakes, Nick has one last play to change his fortunes...and this time, it’s all or nothing.

Other DVDs:
• The Face of an angel
• The Gunman
• While we’re young

For more information on books, borrowing eBooks and DVDs, visit merton.gov.uk/libraries

The Colour House Children’s Theatre
Merton Abbey Mills, Watermill Way, SW19 2RD

● The Wizard of Oz
Saturday 5 September–Sunday 8 November, 2pm, 4pm
Our 21st Birthday Celebratory Performance stars Basil Brush! Join us over the rainbow in Oz, as we travel with Dorothy along the Yellow Brick Road all the way to the Emerald City. With the Wicked Witch of the West hot on her trail, Dorothy will need all the help she can get from her new found friends! Will the Scarecrow get a brain? Will the Tin Man get a heart? Will the Lion find his courage? And will Dorothy ever get her wish to travel home? Find out as the iconic foursome meets the great and powerful Wizard of Oz, played by the Basil Brush in this new musical adaptation of everyone’s favourite classic tale! Tickets: £12 adults, £8 child.

● Attic Theatre Company
Going for a Song
Wednesdays from 16 September; 1-2pm
Vestry Hall Mitcham, CR4 3UD. The ‘Going for a Song’ singing group meet regularly on Wednesdays to sing together. We learn new songs, sing old favourites and perform to local community groups. The sessions are an excellent way to boost your health and happiness. Come and join us, enjoy yourself, feel good and meet people. Tickets (if applicable): £3.50 (first session free).

● Mum2mum market
Saturday 17 October, 2-4pm
Ricards Lodge High School. Buy top quality second-hand children’s clothes, toys, books and equipment at our award winning pop up market. We are just a short walk from Wimbledon town centre public transport and there is loads of free parking on site. Forty sellers under one roof offering a huge choice of the best bargains. All goods for sale are great quality brands in top condition and sold at a fraction of the high street price. Plus we have refreshments and free entertainments for the kids. Need to declutter? Why not sell at a mum2mum market and keep 100% of the proceeds. Admission: £2 (kids free).

For more information on books, borrowing eBooks and DVDs, visit merton.gov.uk/libraries
**Polka Theatre**

240, The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 1SB
Box office: 020 8543 4888
www.polkatheatre.com

- **What to do When You Find a Dinosaur**
  24 September–4 October
  In 1824 eccentric scientist William Buckland discovered a bone from a creature no one had ever heard of before. He named it the Megalosaurus, and he was desperate to tell the world. Join him on a pre-historic dinosaur journey with humour, music and plenty of audience participation. Tickets £13.50, concessions £10.

- **Thumbelina**
  3–4 October
  There was once a girl so small she could float on a lily pad and ride on the back of a dragonfly. Follow Hans Christian Andersen’s extraordinary tale of a girl no bigger than a thumb and her adventures with a frog, mouse, mole and swallow who help her on her journey. Tickets £12, concessions £9.

- **Hurricane Boy**
  7–11 October
  A blustery boy lives by himself, constantly rebuilding his house from the rubbish whipped up by the winds. One day a girl appears and brings him through the gales and the rain. Together they share a summer of blue skies and warm sun, but when the hurricane takes her away, how will the boy find his own way? An imaginative tale of chaos and calm. Hurricane Boy is a charming show combining physical storytelling and live music. Tickets £13.50, concessions £10.

- **The Bear**
  23 October–8 November
  One night when Tilly is fast asleep, an enormous white bear climbs into her bedroom. It has a big black tongue and a yawn as big as your head. Join Tilly and her furry friend for an adventure as Raymond Briggs’s beloved book comes to life with dazzling puppetry, delicious music and dreamy storytelling. Tickets £13.50, concessions £10.

**Cranleigh Live**

1 Cranleigh Road, Merton Park, SW19 3LX

- **Shindig Saturdays**
  Saturday 26 September, 2–11pm
  From Centre Court to Centre Stage – live music, fun and games and on-court tennis for all the family! Pimms, strawberries and cream will be served from 2pm followed by a barbecue from 4pm. At 7pm we open the Shindig stage as 4-Stroke hosts an open mic session. Donations on the door.
**Health and fitness**

- **Wimbledon Park Bowls Club**
  Third in Bowls England’s 2014 ‘Club of the Year’ competition. Taster sessions each Saturday in September from 11am–12.30pm.
  [find out more]
  020 8265 5475
  barrywillingham@ntlworld.com
  www.wimbledonparkbowls.co.uk

- **Scottish Country Dancing; St Andrew Society (London)**
  Dancing in central Wimbledon every Tuesday 8-10.30pm.
  New season starts 15 September to June 2016
  Holy Trinity Church Hall, 234 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 1SB
  Friendly and sociable class open to new members ranging from teens to seniors. Kilts are not mandatory but soft shoes are recommended. Have fun and give it a try, some instruction available.
  £4.50 for non-members, refreshments included.
  New members warmly welcomed, age range late teens to seniors.
  [find out more]
  Alison Raffan (secretary)
  020 8540 1755
  www.standrewsoclondon.nete.net

- **Family tennis competition and evening entertainment at Cranleigh Lawn Tennis and Social Club**
  Saturday 26 September, 2pm onwards
  For adults and children of all ages. Contact Grant to book in and have fun playing Touch Tennis against other tennis enthusiasts. We have a barbecue from 2pm, variety of stalls, raffle, arts and crafts and an open mic event from 6pm. Come and watch the entertainment or perform by singing, playing an instrument or recite some poetry.
  [find out more]
  07740 194200
  www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/OpenDays
  grant@limitlesstennis.co.uk

- **Merton Active Plus**
  Keep your kids busy during the October half term by booking them on a Merton Active Plus course. There is plenty of fun for young people aged 8 to 16.
  [find out more]
  merton.gov.uk/activeplus
Senior citizens

**Celebrating Age**

Until 26 September, 9am-6pm

The Celebrating Age Festival is an annual extravaganza of activities, events, talks and information taking place over three weeks in September, in Merton. We work with dozens of local charities and businesses to put on an exciting Festival, showcasing the array of opportunities available year round for the over 50s in Merton.

Walks and talks

- **Talks on behalf of Wimbledon National Trust Association**
  2.15pm: Christ Church Hall, Cottenham Park Road, Wimbledon, SW20 or in the church next door if hall not available.

- **Celebrating fifty years of the National Trust’s Neptune Coastline Campaign and its plans for the next fifty years in London and the South East**
  Saturday 21 November
  By Crispin Scott. Tickets: £3 per WNTA member and £3.50 per non-member. [find out more](07981 902771)

- **Melanie’s Autumn Walks**
  **Wandle Trail Walk**
  Saturday 19 September, 2.30pm
  Meet at Mitcham Tram stop. Walk from Mitcham to Carshalton Ponds. To include a visit to the Watermeads and Beddington Park (stop at Pavilion Café for refreshments), part of Merton’s Celebrating Age 2015. 3–4 miles, easy, linear.

**Merton’s Celebrating Age Festival** is an annual extravaganza of activities, events, talks and information taking place over three weeks in September, in Merton. We work with dozens of local charities and businesses to put on an exciting Festival, showcasing the array of opportunities available year round for the over 50s in Merton.

Family events

**The Green Scene in Merton**

- **Green Coffee**
  First Tuesday of the month (usually), 9.30-11am
  Upstairs café at the YMCA, Wimbledon Broadway, SW19 1RY. Get together to discuss local environmental and community news. Everyone is welcome. [find out more](www.projectdirt.com; joycepfountain@virginmedia.com)

- **Phips Bridge Community Garden**
  Every Wednesday morning (weather dependent), 10am-2pm (well-deserved tea and cake break at 12.30pm)
  Are you keen to get involved in community food growing in Merton? Join the Dig Merton team to enjoy the benefits of working on local land. [find out more](07956 170141)

- **Merton Green Parents**
  Every Wednesday, 10.30am
  The Charles Holden, 198 High Street, Colliers Wood, SW19 2BH. Great social event for those interested in sustainability issues and wanting to meet other like-minded people. [find out more](www.projectdirt.com; joycepfountain@virginmedia.com)

- **Merton Green Drinks**
  Second Tuesday of the month, 8pm
  The Charles Holden, 198 High Street, Colliers Wood, SW19 2BH. Great social event for those interested in sustainability issues and wanting to meet other like-minded people. [find out more](www.projectdirt.com; joycepfountain@virginmedia.com)

**Merton’s Celebrating Age Festival** is an annual extravaganza of activities, events, talks and information taking place over three weeks in September, in Merton. We work with dozens of local charities and businesses to put on an exciting Festival, showcasing the array of opportunities available year round for the over 50s in Merton.
**Mayor of Merton events**

Fundraising for charities supported by the Mayor of Merton

- **Charity dinner: Peace, Love and Unity Guyana Evening**
  Friday 18 September
  Tooting and Mitcham Community Sports Club, SM4 6BF. Come along and experience a taste of Guyana’s hospitality at its best, an evening of good food and traditional entertainment. Please contact the Mayor’s office if you are interested in attending: 020 8545 3517.

- **Quiz Night**
  Friday 9 October, 7-10pm
  Tickets £50 per person, includes supper. There will be a bar. Teams of six people. Prizes for the winners. Come along and pitch your knowledge against the quiz master. A night of good fun, food and drink in aid of the Mayor’s charities.

- **Mediterranean Evening**
  Wednesday 28 October
  Experience an evening full of Mediterranean flavour. In aid of Merton Dementia Hub and One Life. Event supported by Councillor Stephen Alambritis. Istanbul Mezze Mangal Restaurant, 22 High Street, Colliers Wood, SW19 2BH.

**Family events continued**

- **Harvest Supper and Race Night**
  Saturday 3 October, 6.30pm
  St Saviour’s Church Hall, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, SW20 9DG. Book no later than 27 September. Bring your own drinks. Tickets: £7 and £5.

- **Mitcham Horticultural Society’s Autumn Show**
  Saturday 3 October
  St Marks Church Hall, St Marks Road, Mitcham. Doors open 2pm, free admission with refreshments available. The last Wednesday of every month – meeting at Age UK, London Road, Mitcham and everybody is welcome.

**Abundance Wimbledon**

Do you have a fruit tree and can’t use all the fruit? Get in touch with Abundance. Our volunteers may be able to help you pick the fruit.

Join us on Abundance Fruit Day
19 September 11am–2pm
St Mark’s Church garden (behind Wimbledon Library)

- Fruit press in action
- Jams • chutneys • cakes
- Local honey • pie-making demo
- Games for children and adults
- The International Ukulele Orchestra and lots more

abundancewimbledon@gmail.com
www.abundancewimbledon.com

**Want your business to soar?**

Give your business a boost with our business planning and growth programme.

- 1 to 1 advice
- Peer Learning
- Networking

Contact our business advisers to see how we can help

0208 619 0700
mertonbusinesssupport.co.uk
helpdesk@mertonbusinesssupport.co.uk

The Merton Business Support Service is financially supported by The London Borough of Merton.
Remember remember…

Musical Fireworks Displays

Wimbledon Park
Thu 5 November

Morden Park
Sat 7 November

Gates open at 5.15pm
Bonfires lit at 6.30pm and 8.15pm
First show starts at 6.45pm
More suitable for young children
Second show starts at 8.30pm

merton.gov.uk/fireworks
Why did you decide to become a firefighter?
I am part of a family of volunteer firefighters. I would like to say that instilled a sense of public service in me. Actually I joined the London Fire Brigade because I thought (very naively) that it would pay for flying lessons, as I wanted to be a pilot. Twenty plus years later and guess what, I’ve never taken a flying lesson!

What’s the best part of your job? And the most challenging?
I’ve worked with some fantastic people in some challenging situations and it’s been a real privilege to be appointed as the Fire Borough Commander for Merton. One day I can be working in the community to reduce fires. The next I can be on an operational incident that requires fast, time-critical decisions. While that variety is the best part, it’s also the most challenging as I have to keep a number of plates spinning to do my job effectively.

Any words on Halloween and bonfire night?
Please, please take the time to look at the London Fire Brigade website for advice on how to celebrate these events safely. Most of the incidents I attend around those celebrations could have been prevented.