Your NEW recycling and rubbish collection service

Win a pair of tickets for Blood Brothers at New Wimbledon Theatre

Morden Leisure Centre opens this autumn

Merton awarded Dementia Friendly Community
We asked

Following the London-wide Great Weight Debate, Merton Public Health team commissioned a local consultation specifically for Merton residents. This aimed to work closely with all residents, particularly parents, young people, those from minority communities and those facing deprivation, to discuss the challenging issue of childhood obesity.

Over 2,100 people engaged with the consultation over six months, through questionnaires, focus groups, a hackathon and social media. These explored the causes of obesity locally and worked with residents to develop solutions and raise awareness.

“You said”

Nearly 75% of respondents believed that tackling childhood obesity should be a top or high priority for Merton.

Key issues highlighted by residents included:

- Residents felt that the high levels of fast food restaurants and the cheap prices of unhealthy food were the top cause of childhood obesity locally.
- Merton’s green spaces and parks were seen as the greatest asset locally, but parents had safety concerns about letting their children play outside.
- Young people felt that healthy food was too expensive in schools, and that there should be a greater emphasis placed on teaching healthy cooking and eating skills.

We did:

Working with residents, a broad range of recommendations have been produced for tackling childhood obesity locally as a result of the Great Weight Debate. These recommendations will be used to update Merton’s Child Healthy Weight Action Plan for 2019.

- In response to the consultation, a series of four-week family education courses focused on meal planning, weekly budgeting and healthy nutrition were held in schools during June 2018.
- The Merton Mile initiative is being implemented to encourage physical activity and the use of Merton’s green spaces. This will be a marked out mile route in parks to encourage both children and adults to be physically active and will launch in October 2018.
- Merton is taking part in the London-wide School Superzones pilot from November 2018 that will explore how to tackle the factors contributing to unhealthy environments around our schools.

Find out more about local work to tackle childhood obesity through Merton’s Child Healthy Weight Action Plan: www2.merton.gov.uk/childhood_healthy_weight_action_plan_summary_for_web.pdf

The Leader of Merton Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, writes for My Merton.

Autumn is a season of change, and that’s certainly true here in Merton. Our new school, Wimbledon Harris, has opened its doors to its first intake, an amazing new leisure centre in Morden will reach completion, and across every street in the borough a new recycling and rubbish service begins, with sparkling new wheelie bins that will bring the borough in line with most of London.

Great news for us, bad news for the foxes! But the new wheelie bins are not just about improving the cleanliness of our streets by preventing split black bags. They’re also one of the best ways of getting our recycling rates up and becoming a more environmentally sustainable borough. And because they’re a more efficient and cleaner way of collecting household waste, they will save the council £1.6m a year that will help protect our vital services from austerity cuts from the government.

Here in the council we have to make business-like decisions every day that bring change to the borough and its people, helping us provide the best possible quality of life for everyone. But making this kind of change, with really long-term environmental benefits, is about Merton’s future. Along with making improvements to air quality, introducing a new recycling and rubbish service that will improve the rate of recycling in the borough shows we are thinking about the environment of Merton residents for generations to come.

Stephen Alambritis
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5 minutes with
Chief Superintendent, Sally Benatar

Morden Leisure Centre opens soon

Inclusivity across Merton

Don’t forget to visit our website!
merton.gov.uk/mymerton
You can also follow us on:

www.facebook.com/mertoncouncil
@Merton_Council
www.flickr.com/mertoncouncil
www.youtube.com/mertoncouncil

Whenever you see this logo that means there’s a volunteering opportunity to get involved in
Air Quality Awareness Day at Links School

Links School held an Air Quality Awareness Day for their pupils and parents to raise awareness of the health problems that pollution causes and how we can improve air quality. Using fun activities, teams from across the council, including Bluecity electric cars and Cycling Instructor (the council’s cycling training provider), showed children and parents different things they can do to help improve the air quality.

Air quality is becoming a concern as pollution levels rise and emission rates from vehicles reach dangerous levels. Air pollution is especially high near busy main roads and research studies show that poor quality air impacts on people’s health, particularly children and their developing lungs. The Mayor of London has produced an Air Quality Plan and is working with local authorities to reduce emission levels, especially near schools. (find out more www.londonair.org.uk)

New cadet centre opens

In July, Major General Ben Bathurst CBE formally opened the new Army Cadet Centre on Dorset Road, Merton with Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin, both pictured above. The Cadet Centre is home to 134 (Royal Regiment of Fusiliers) Cadet Detachment, Army Cadet Force.

The opening was an opportunity for the cadets’ families, local members of the community and representatives of the armed services to come together to recognise the hard work of the cadets, who are members of one of the country’s largest voluntary youth organisations. This is made possible due to the hard work and dedication of the adult volunteers who give up their spare time to support the cadets’ (aged between 12 and 18) training and activities. No particular experience is needed to become an adult volunteer and all necessary training is provided. (find out more armycadets.com/volunteer-with-us)

Don’t lose your voice

Residents in Merton urged to look out for their voter registration details in the post

Don’t lose your voice on matters that affect you. Complete your household enquiry form and return it to Merton Council as soon as possible.

The form ensures that Merton can keep the electoral register up to date and identify any residents who are not registered, so that they can be encouraged to do so. This will mean that residents will be able take part in any future elections.

People who have moved address recently are particularly encouraged to keep an eye out for the form and check their details. Research indicates that recent home movers are far less likely to be registered than those that have lived at the same address for a long time. Canvassers will be out knocking on doors this autumn, making sure residents have returned their household enquiry form. (find out more merton.gov.uk/voting)

Book your tickets for the fireworks

Tickets are available now for the big bonfire weekend in Merton this November. Booking early means huge savings on family tickets. Dates for the shows are Saturday 3 November in Morden Park and Monday 5 November in Wimbledon Park. (find out more merton.gov.uk/fireworks)
Merton success at Youth Games

Merton is a great place for families and encourages its young people to lead active lifestyles, so it was great to see the borough have a successful London Youth Games campaign this year, with medals in the Archery and Tri-Golf events. Overall, Merton finished with 367 points, and some huge improvements across a range of sports. The Archery saw the biggest improvement for Merton, which finished 16th overall last year but this year shot through the standings to claim the bronze position.

Amongst the other overall climbers that helped Merton rake up the points were: Weightlifting, Swimming (F), Cricket (M), BMX Cycling, Cross Country and Sailing.

At the finals weekend, hosted at Crystal Palace, Merton capped an impressive Games with Tri-Golf gold. Team Manager, Billy Edwards, said: “The Merton team have worked really hard this year, I am so proud of them.”

New look Mitcham Town Centre

Merton Council and Transport for London officially launched the new look Mitcham Fair Green on 24 July. The transformation is thanks to funding from the Mayor Of London, TfL, Heritage Lottery Fund and Merton Council. The historic London Road has been re-opened for buses and cyclists, making it easier for local residents to access the area and driving footfall to the centre to support local businesses.

The historic clock tower, which was built in 1898 to mark Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, has been restored and relocated within a new garden. This restoration of Mitcham’s much loved clock tower was one of the most iconic aspects of the project. The overall design and streetscaping around Fair Green is a step-change for the area, and will spur new investment in the town centre for years to come, making it a place the people of Mitcham can be proud of.

Are you a landlord or agent?

The Government has introduced new legislation relating to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) which comes into force on 1 October 2018. This extends mandatory licensing to include all HMOs where there are five or more people making up two or more households where there is sharing of basic amenities. These changes are intended to improve living standards and safety in people’s homes.

Regardless of the number of storeys, HMOs anywhere in the borough with five or more people need to be licensed. HMOs with fewer than five people do not need a licence.

Any person who manages an HMO which is required to be licensed, must apply by 1 October 2018. Failure to apply for a license is an offence and may result in a fine of up to £20,000.

Local Democracy Week

Schoolchildren from across the borough will be learning about how the council works during Local Democracy Week. From 15–19 October, we will be running tours of the civic centre for local primary schools, which will include a viewing of the Council Chamber and a visit to the Mayor’s Parlour for a talk and refreshments.

The borough’s MPs are getting involved too. Mitcham and Morden MP Siobhain McDonagh will be hosting a visit to the Houses of Parliament for a group of schoolchildren. Wimbledon MP Stephen Hammond will visit schools in the area to talk about politics and democracy.
Six Merton parks awarded prestigious Green Flag

For the first time ever, six of Merton’s parks have been awarded the highly sought-after Green Flag. Abbey Recreation Ground has gained its very first Green Flag, whilst South Park Gardens, John Innes Park, Dundonald Recreation Ground, Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Field and Colliers Wood Recreation Ground have all retained their status as being amongst the country’s finest parks. New award winner Abbey Recreation Ground stood out to the judges for the impressive commitment and involvement of the community in its development and management. The international award, now in its third decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities. Merton’s award-winning parks are among a record-breaking 1,883 UK parks and green spaces presented with prestigious Green Flags since the scheme started 22 years ago.
Merton celebrates exam success

Merton’s schools and sixth forms are amongst the best in the country, and this summer they celebrated the success of students across the borough after eagerly awaiting GCSE and A-Level results.

71% of Merton GCSE students have gained grades 9–4 in both English and maths: this is well above the national average for 2017 of 59%. In Merton sixth forms, 78% of A-Level students achieved A* to C grades moving ahead of the national average of 77%.

Merton’s award-winning libraries are eagerly awaiting one of the biggest events in the library calendar. If you haven’t visited a library in a while, it’s the perfect time to reintroduce yourself. National Libraries Week (NLW) celebrations will run from Monday 8 October to Saturday 13 October. During NLW there will be a host of events across all libraries, from special story times, employment workshops, Tai Chi sessions, IT support, health advice and much more.

On Saturday 13 October, Wimbledon Library will be hosting a special ‘lates’ evening, unwind in the library after hours with a series of mini motivational talks, networking and the ultimate film screening.

National Libraries Week is an annual event that takes place across the UK to recognise the importance of libraries in igniting a love for books, reading and giving communities around the UK access to a wealth of information.

Merton libraries celebrate National Libraries Week

Faith in action this November

Interfaith Week is held in the third week of November to highlight the good work of local faith and belief groups and celebrate diversity in Merton.

This year to mark Interfaith Week, the council, in partnership with the borough’s Faith and Belief Forum, has a programme of free events including an evening of Scriptural Reasoning, followed by a meal at the Salvation Army Hall in Morden and a Ladies’ Coffee Morning at the Morden Islamic Community Centre.

BookFest is back

All roads lead to Wimbledon BookFest for the 10-day celebration of comedy, food, history, sport and talks from 4 to 14 October. Headliners at this year’s festival include TV presenter Graham Norton, authors Andrew O’Hagan, Lionel Shriver, Pat Barker and Francesca Simon, as well as comedians Alan Davies, Ed Byrne and Mark Watson. Chef and cookery writer Yotam Ottolenghi celebrates the publication of his new book Simple, whilst legendary musician Billy Bragg is in conversation with Radio X DJ John Kennedy. Sports fans won’t want to miss rugby legends Brian Moore and Rob Andrew. For younger festival-goers, Radio 1 presenters Greg James and Chris Smith talk about their book Kid Normal while Francesca Simon, bestselling author of the Horrid Henry books, will launch a new picture book. Two bestselling adult authors Sophie Kinsella and Jessie Burton introduce us to their new children’s books.

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RideLondon returned for another exhilarating year on Sunday 29 July, taking place along the streets of London, including roads in Raynes Park and Wimbledon. Mayor of Merton’s rider, senior cycle engineer Paul Miles took on this year’s challenge and cycled the 100 mile course in a respectable five hours and 18 minutes in very wet and windy conditions! Paul has raised over £1,000 for the Mayor’s charities, The Colour House Theatre and the Friends in St Helier, known as FISH. The impressive 100 mile route went from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford to Buckingham Palace via Surrey Hills and through Merton, Wandsworth and Kensington and Chelsea. The council once again worked with organisers and Merton Police to minimise disruption to residents and ensure the success of the world-class event. The 2019 RideLondon event will take place on Sunday 4 August 2019, so pop it in your diary!

Returning disability equipment

Have you got disability equipment you don’t use any more? Maybe you have a shower chair lying forgotten in the attic or a wheelchair you haven’t got around to returning?

Last year, the NHS and the council helped hundreds of residents live at home safely by lending them equipment including beds, chairs and mattresses. Nearly 90% of returned equipment is re-used, having been deep cleaned and safety checked first, which is far cheaper than buying new. NHS Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the council are now encouraging residents who have equipment they no longer use to get in touch to arrange for it to be collected free from their homes.

Common examples of NHS equipment that often gets forgotten and left unreturned include: manual wheelchairs, walking frames or sticks, supportive seating and specialist mattresses or cushions. Collection is FREE to Merton residents, so if you or members of your family have any disability equipment that is not being used, please get in touch. To arrange collection, call 020 8664 8860 (press option 1) or email: admin@croydon-equipment-solutions.com

Do you have room in your home?

Merton Council has seen an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children coming into care and urgently needs more foster carers to look after them.

Children who come to the UK with no parents or carers are placed in the care of their nearest local authority. There are many reasons why they might not feel safe in their home countries, such as civil war and persecution for their beliefs.

We ensure that foster carers are supported every step of the way, from their initial enquiry to their first placement. You will receive ongoing training and have round the clock support 365 days of the year. Foster carers receive specialist training to deal with the particular challenges to meet the demands of unaccompanied children, mainly teenagers.

If you are over 18 years old and have a spare room, you can apply to foster. We are fully inclusive of sexuality, religions and ethnicities, if you are employed or unemployed, on benefits, rent your own home, married, or single – so find out more today!

To arrange collection, call 020 8545 4070 or 0800 073 0874; fostering@merton.gov.uk; merton.gov.uk/fostering
As part of its First World War centenary programme, Merton is staging two special events. The first honours a local hero, the second marks the end of the conflict which had a profound effect on life in Merton and beyond.

On 18 September, a carved stone was laid in memory of William Allison White (pictured left) who, at the age of 24, was awarded the Victoria Cross (VC) following an act of valour described in his medal citation as “most conspicuous bravery and initiative in attack”.

As part of a nationwide commemoration, a series of stones are being laid across the UK to remember those who were awarded the VC during World War 1. Each stone is being laid close to the birthplace of an individual combatant. William White was born in Lavender Walk, Mitcham and his stone will be placed close to Mitcham War Memorial, Lower Green.

Nine men who lived or worked in Merton were awarded the VC during the course of the war. Last year a commemorative stone was unveiled at Wimbledon War Memorial, Parkside, to George Edward Cates VC, who died in battle at Bouchavesnes, France in March 1917, aged 24.

On 11 November 2018, 100 years after the signing of the Armistice, a major event will mark the end of hostilities. The Battle’s Over ceremony will take place at Merton civic centre in a tribute to those who gave their lives during four years of bloody conflict. This event will feature a local choir, schools, military and community representatives.

The programme will include wartime marching songs, readings, prayers and the projection of photographs featuring Merton combatants killed during the war.

Across the country, hundreds of special beacons will be lit and churches, including those across Merton, will ring their bells in the name of peace. Community and faith groups will also bring various bells to ring at the civic centre in an act of unity and remembrance.

Events and activities have been taking place across the borough to mark the four year conflict. Many were part of Carved in Stone, a Heritage Lottery-funded project to record Merton’s wartime history and the life stories of combatants commemorated on local memorials.

Find out more
merton.gov.uk/carvedinestone
Moving on to secondary school is always a new adventure, but this September sees one group of new starters right at the heart of a brand new school.

The borough’s existing secondary schools are more popular than ever – hardly surprising given they are now all rated by OFSTED as Outstanding or Good, and officially the best in the country for progress between entering secondary school and sitting GCSEs.

Harris Academy Wimbledon opened its doors to its first pupils this month, in its temporary building in Whatley Avenue, SW20. Children will spend two years at the site while their brand new school is constructed at High Path, South Wimbledon. From next year, the school will take 180 pupils per year in an area of the borough where pressure on places is high.

Speaking before the start of term, Joanne Larizadeh, Headteacher at Harris Academy Wimbledon said: “It is incredibly rewarding to be a part of a new school from the very outset. We are oversubscribed for this year and such strong support from local families gets us off to a brilliant start. I know that we are all excited for the start of the new term and making Harris Academy Wimbledon an outstanding school where children thrive.”

A rise in the birth-rate in the early 2000s led to the council’s successful primary expansion programme. With these children reaching secondary school age, demand for places is rising – Merton saw an extra 274 secondary applications from residents this year.

A planning application for Harris Wimbledon’s permanent building is expected to be considered by the Planning Applications Committee this month, with a view to works starting in spring 2019 and completion for autumn 2020.

To make way for the school, the High Path Resource Centre for adults with learning disabilities, and other community services, are relocating to a more suitable home at nearby Leyton Road. Works are progressing well to enable the newly refurbished facility to open this autumn.

Elim Church, which runs the vital Wimbledon foodbank service, will move into Merton Hall, Kingston Road, which is currently being renovated for this purpose and due for completion in spring 2019.

South Wimbledon Community Centre, the former tenant of Merton Hall, now has premises at 3 Pincott Road as one of the three facilities in the borough available for community hire – visit southwimbledoncommunity.com for information.

find out more
merton.gov.uk/harriswimbledon
Supporting families with child care costs

Merton is a great place for young families with a range of provision of early years’ educational services. Following the 2017 increase in the number of free childcare hours made available to working families, My Merton shines a light on how this is benefitting families in Merton.

One year on, a scheme to double the hours of free childcare for three and four-year-old children of working parents has been taken up by more than 900 Merton families.

Among them is local mum, Mindy Lee, whose son attends Kingswood Daycare Nursery and who signed up to the scheme last October. Mindy said: “My son loves nursery. He’s developing his social skills and learning phonics. He enjoys teaching me the phonics songs on our way home.

“The 30 hours care provides flexibility for my part-time job and self-employment, without overwhelming our finances. This helps make our home a happier place to be!”

All children are eligible for up to 15 hours of free childcare a week from the age of three, regardless of their parents’ circumstances.

To qualify for up to 30 hours, both parents must be working (one if a single parent family) and earning less than £100,000 each a year. Taking advantage of the offer could save you £5,000 per child, per year.

Merton’s cabinet member for education, Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, said: “The 30 hours offer is a big boost to reducing childcare costs for working families. In Merton, interest in the scheme has been high and take-up has been brisk.

“We encourage providers to offer the free hours flexibly to help accommodate parents’ differing requirements and we engage with all types of provider so that there are a range of options.”

The 30 free hours are available for 38 weeks of the year, however the scheme is flexible and can be used with one or more providers and stretched over 52 weeks. Many parents choose to take up their 30 hours in the 23 Merton schools which offer the places. Some families, whose children attend a school nursery, choose to use their additional hours with a childminder who can pick up or drop off.

Plenty of private nurseries are signed up to the scheme too. They tend to be open for longer hours, which works well for some families who can use the free hours for a reduction in their childcare bill.

To join the scheme and to be able to take up a place when you need it, check your eligibility at childcarechoices.gov.uk a few months before your child turns three.

There are more than 1,300 of the 30 hours free places available in Merton. To find them visit merton.gov.uk/fsd

St John Fisher RC Primary School opens new nursery garden

In June, Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin launched the new natural nursery garden at St John Fisher RC Primary School. The outdoor learning space, which cost approximately £18,000 was funded by the schools active Parent Teacher Friend Association (PTFA).

The garden is not only a colourful outdoor classroom for the children to explore art and storytelling, but also a space for them to develop their maths skills, such as counting and weighing, in an engaging way.

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Fly-tippers and those who pay fly-tippers

The residents of Merton and Merton Council are always on the lookout and regularly report offenders. You may have already been seen and reported and could receive an unlimited fine and/or imprisonment.

If you see fly-tipping report the offence online at: merton.gov.uk/flytipping
Ready to make a splash

Morden Leisure Centre gets ready to open its doors this autumn.

As this issue of My Merton lands on your doormat, the finishing touches are being made to the borough’s brand new leisure facility. Morden Leisure Centre will open to the public soon.

The council invested in the new centre as a replacement for ageing Morden Park Pool, which was energy-inefficient and expensive to maintain. The project was launched with two principles in mind; maximum benefit from a limited budget and making sure that every stage was informed by the needs of users and residents.

The centre has a 25m x 13m main pool and a smaller secondary pool, whose movable floor accommodates everything from shallow toddler sessions to diving. There’s a studio, a fitness suite and a much-requested café with outside seating to welcome Morden Park dog walkers.

For disabled users the centre has a Changing Places facility with accessible toilet, shower, changing bed and hoist. There are plenty of additional accessible toilets and showers and a pool pod for access in and out of the water.

Construction was carefully project managed by contractor Pellikaan. Operating on a very small site meant sticking to tight deadlines and receiving deliveries only when required, but everything went to plan – even when a colony of rare Great Crested Newts was found in the park. Expert ecologists ensured everything possible was done to protect the newts, which have bred successfully during the project.

The new centre will be managed by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), the company which currently successfully runs Morden Park Pools, Canons Leisure Centre in Mitcham and Wimbledon Leisure Centre.

The plan has been to keep Morden Park Pool open throughout so users would never be without a local sports facility. When construction completed in September GLL moved in and staff underwent training on the state-of-the-art equipment and also fitted out the centre to complete the development ready to welcome the community.

As soon as the new centre opens, Morden Park Pools will close for demolition and ultimately the land will be restored to open space. Work to landscape the area and plant trees will begin once demolition is complete.

For Merton Council’s cabinet member for community and culture, Councillor Nick Draper, giving residents their first look at the new centre will be a big moment. “Every step of creating the centre has been driven by the needs of residents. We now have a fabulous building with wonderful views across London – I can’t wait to see it being used by the community that shaped its design.”

find out more
merton.gov.uk/leisureformorden
Let’s make Merton dementia-friendly

It is estimated that by 2020 there will be 2,000 people living with dementia in Merton. In this issue of *My Merton* we explore the steps being taken to support people living with dementia and their families.

A study by the Alzheimer’s Society has revealed that fewer than half of people with dementia feel part of their community, with many feeling trapped in their own homes. Yet, according to the charity, simple steps to create dementia-friendly communities could support people’s independence for longer, saving £11,000 per person per year, while improving quality of life immeasurably.

Statistics like these are some of the drivers behind making Merton a dementia-friendly community – a place where our 1,850 residents living with dementia feel understood, supported and a valuable part of society.

In July, Merton was officially named a Dementia Friendly Community by the Alzheimer’s Society. But with the number of people with the condition set to rise to 2,000 by 2020, it’s just the start of the borough’s journey.

Merton’s cabinet member for adult social care and health, Councillor Tobin Byers explained: “We’ve set up Merton Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) – a group of organisations committed to improving the lives of people with dementia, their carers and their families. We’ve achieved a lot so far; our membership has been the fastest growing in the UK, but there’s so much more to do – and we need your help.

“We want to encourage shops and businesses, residents’ associations, faith and sporting groups to join Merton DAA and take some simple actions, such as encouraging staff or members to attend a Dementia Friends awareness session.”

One big asset in the borough is the Merton Dementia Hub. Launched four years ago, it provides advice, support and health services from one friendly location. Merton resident Ann Guy is one user. She said: “The Merton Dementia Hub is a wonderful place to come, it really is – I look forward to my visits. I come twice a week and like to catch up with people, have a chat, and I love singing and dancing.”

In addition, recent initiatives across the borough have been both innovative and varied. We have dementia-inclusive swimming sessions at all three of the borough’s leisure centres and our council tax team has been working with the Alzheimer’s Society to make it easier for people with dementia and their carers to claim discounts.

There’ve also been arts projects, including a participatory dance event for people with early onset dementia led by renowned choreographer Beatrice Allegranti.
Health news

New term – check their vaccinations

Unfortunately we are seeing outbreaks of measles in London, particularly in young adults and adolescents. It is extremely infectious and can be serious. Please check your children have had two doses of MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and their pre-school booster. It is also worth checking if you have had MMR yourself and getting vaccinated with your GP, if needed.

You can check your children’s vaccination status in their Red Book, contact your GP or health visitor or visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations

Autumn is flu jab time

Merton primary schoolchildren in reception class and years one to five and pre-school children aged two and three are now eligible for free flu vaccinations, offered as a nasal spray. Parents of pre-school children should contact their GP practice, while the older group will be offered the vaccine at school.

People aged 65 or over, pregnant women, carers and people with long-term health conditions also receive the vaccine free from their GP or pharmacy, and are urged to book an appointment. Find out more at nhs.uk/staywell

Doing The Daily Mile

According to recent figures, an estimated 4,500 Merton children aged between four and 11 are overweight or obese. Action is being taken to reduce this figure through some innovative projects including The Daily Mile, which is being rolled out to primary schools across the borough with great results. Pupils are improving their health and fitness by taking a short break from lessons to walk or run a mile in the fresh air each day. Find out more at thedailymile.co.uk

What’s new at the Wilson

The old Wilson Hospital site in Mitcham is being redeveloped into a new community health and wellbeing space. Work has now started on the process of designing the new facility. The vision is to create somewhere that deals with far more than just medical health needs – offering things like community gardening, employment skills services, GP appointments, x-ray, physiotherapy, mental health services and a community café. To find out more and get involved visit mvsc.co.uk/wilsonhealthandwellbeing

In another scheme young actors listened to the stories of people with dementia for a play, which they performed at the New Wimbledon Theatre.

The alliance has worked with shops and businesses too. There’s been dementia awareness training for staff at Wimbledon’s Centre Court shopping centre and Motspur Park was also the focus of a high street blitz, where members of the alliance visited local businesses. Cafes, shops and facilities were encouraged to improve signage, train staff and spread the dementia-friendly message.

Ann said: “More people are talking about dementia out in the community and that’s good. My grandmother was [called] ‘mad’ – she would get incarcerated regularly and we were never told where. Nobody talked about it. That was how it was back then, nobody talked about ‘this thing’.

“I’m so grateful I live in Merton, I just hope services like these carry on and things continue to get better for us all.”

For more about the Merton DAA and dementia initiatives in the borough visit merton.gov.uk/dementia

For the Dementia Hub call 020 8687 0922

To become a Dementia Friend visit www.dementiafriends.org.uk

To join Merton’s Dementia Action Alliance please email MertonDAA@alzheimers.org.uk or call 020 8687 0922

find out more

For more about the Merton DAA and dementia initiatives in the borough visit merton.gov.uk/dementia

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Your **NEW** recycling and rubbish collection service

October will see the start of the new borough-wide recycling and rubbish collection service. *My Merton* finds out more about the new collection service, why the changes are important and recycling our food waste.

As you read this you will have received, or will shortly be receiving, your new wheelie bins and information pack. Your pack includes confirmation of your new collection day, a collection day calendar, information about your new containers and a recycling and food waste guide. If you did not receive your pack with your new bins, please call 020 8274 4902 to request a new one.

Not all households will be affected by the changes. Residents living in larger blocks of flats that use communal bins or homes that use the purple and blue bag service will not experience any changes to their service.

**WHAT’S CHANGING?**

**Your collection day:** Around three-quarters of households will have a new collection day. To check your day, read your information pack.

**More materials will be recycled:** From October, you will also be able to recycle textiles and household batteries, which will be collected weekly.

**The frequency of collections:** Recycling will be collected on an alternate weekly basis: You can find out your collection dates by checking the handy calendar in your information pack.

We appreciate that when your service changes it will take a few weeks for you (and us) to get used to things. Once the new service is underway, we will start to only collect rubbish that is stored inside the new wheelie bin with the lid closed.

**Assisted collections:** If you are already receiving an assisted collection, this will continue. If you don’t currently have an assisted collection but are worried about moving the new bins, please let us know: merton.gov.uk/recycling or 020 8274 4902.
my environment
Change is coming

RECycling more of your food waste

Food waste will continue to be collected every week for recycling. You should already have a kitchen caddy and an outside food waste bin (with lockable lid). If either are missing or damaged, order a replacement as soon as possible: merton.gov.uk/recycling

Recycling food waste in three easy steps:

1. Line your kitchen caddy with old newspaper or a compostable liner, which are available to buy at supermarkets.

2. When your kitchen caddy is almost full, tie the top of the liner (or fold the newspaper) and put it in your outside food bin, remembering to lock the lid.

3. Place your food bin out for collection every week by 6am on your collection day.

Why recycle food waste?

Any food waste you place out for recycling is taken to a special processing plant in Chertsey, Surrey, where it is used to generate electricity to power homes. It also produces a fertiliser that can be used by farmers.

Recycling just six tea bags can produce enough electricity to boil a kettle for another cuppa!

One truck-load of food waste can generate enough electricity to power 20,000 TVs for one hour!

Benefits of the new service

✓ To boost Merton’s recycling rate from 37% to over 45% within 12 months – making us one of the best recycling boroughs in London.

✓ To keep our streets clean. New wheelie bins will reduce spillages on collection day and store your recycling and rubbish more securely between collections, reducing litter.

✓ To save money. The new service will save £1.6 million per year; money that will be used to protect our vital services.

✓ To increase efficiency and help the environment. Around three-quarters of households in Merton will see their collection day change. This will help us make the collection rounds more efficient and reduce the amount of time collection vehicles are out on the road, which will benefit the environment.

Find out more: merton.gov.uk/recycling
Merton secondary schools

2018 open evenings

Harris Academy Merton
Wide Way, Mitcham CR4 1BP
020 8623 1000
www.harrismerton.org.uk
Open evening: 19 September, 5pm–7.30pm
Open morning: none

Harris Academy Wimbledon
Whatley Avenue, Raynes Park SW20 9NS
020 8253 7777
www.harriswimbledon.org.uk
Open evening: 25 September, 5pm–8pm
Open mornings: 2, 4 and 9 October
by appointment only

Ricards Lodge High School
Lake Road, Wimbledon SW19 7HB
020 8946 6627
www.ricardslodge.merton.sch.uk
Open evening: 18 September, 5.30pm–8pm
Open mornings: 25 and 26 September,
starting at 9.15am

St Mark’s Academy
Acacia Road, Mitcham CR4 1SF
020 8648 6627
www.stmarksacademy.com
Open evening: 4 October, 5pm–7.30pm
Open mornings: 10, 17 and 31 October,
starting at 9am

Wimbledon College
Edge Hill, London SW19 4NS
020 8879 9355
www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk
Open evening: 27 September, 5.30pm–8.30pm
Open mornings: 1 and 2 October,
9am, by appointment only

Raynes Park High School
Bushey Road, London SW20 0JL
020 8946 4112
www.raynespark.merton.sch.uk
Open evening: 27 September, 4.30pm–7.30pm
Open mornings: 8 to 12 October from 9.15am

Rutlish School
Watery Lane, Merton SW20 9AD
020 8254 2688
www.rutlish.merton.sch.uk
Open evening: 18 September, 6pm–8.30pm
Open mornings: 20, 21, 27 and 28 September,
4, 5, 11, 12 and 18 October, by appointment only

Ursuline High School Wimbledon
Crescent Road, Wimbledon SW20 8HA
020 8255 2688
www.ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk
Open evening: 19 September, 6pm–8.30pm
Open mornings: 24 to 28 September,
9am and 11am, by appointment only

Parents are advised to apply online at merton.gov.uk/admissions
Closing date for applications is 31 October 2018

merton.gov.uk
All inclusive

Merton Council is committed to tackling inequality, with services that are accessible to all, regardless of ability and disability. *My Merton* has been finding out about some of the ways the council is bridging the gap – so adults and children with all types of disabilities and special needs can make the most of the opportunities our borough has to offer.

Sensory support
Merton’s Sensory Support Service works with children who have a hearing, visual or multi-sensory impairment through supporting schools by offering training and advice on access issues, new technology or the teaching of Braille.

Behaviour support
Some children have challenging behaviour from time to time. The Virtual Behaviour Service (VBS) has teachers and teaching assistants who can support very unsettled children in school, as well as increase the skills of the schools’ own staff.

The staff at The Willows, part of Jan Malinowski Centre, provide support to adults with learning disabilities and behaviours of concern. The team works to adapt its approach to meet the diverse needs of all the different people using the service. The team are planning to use innovative approach of video reflection to support their service users.

Merton Information Advice and Support Service (MIASS)
Based in Joseph Hood School is MIASS. This is an independent advice service for parents and young people with special education needs and disabilities. They can help parents to navigate the SEN system and be sure that their child's needs are being met effectively. MIASS can be contacted on 020 8543 8854.

Morden's new sensory library
July saw the launch of an amazing new sensory library, which creates a magical forest wonderland for children to explore. Based in Morden library, it has an artificial grass carpet, forest seating and plenty of woodland scents and sounds.

The library helps young children to explore all their five senses, improve their communication skills and enjoy learning in a fun environment. It's especially great for children with sensory impairments or disabilities.

At your leisure
Improving access to sport and leisure is a key priority for us – in the improvements we make to our leisure facilities and activity programmes.

Our three leisure centres are fully accessible for disabled people and all our swimming pools have pool pods for easy access to the water. Our new Morden Leisure Centre, opening this autumn, will have a Changing Places facility as well as several accessible toilets and showers.

Canons Leisure Centre, Mitcham, offers exclusive swimming sessions for disabled people, their carers and families. In our gyms we have Fitness Initiative accredited equipment – the industry benchmark for accessible fitness equipment.

Wimbledon Park Watersports Centre has boats suitable for wheelchair users, a hoist to help people onto the water and runs regular sessions for groups and special schools in the borough and beyond.

Sensory area in Morden Library

New art therapy space at Cricket Green School

feature
A borough for everyone
Final phase of 2 & 3 bedroom Shared Ownership apartments 1 minute from Colliers Wood station

Prices from £132,500 for a 25% share*

020 3535 2555
mhosales@metropolitan.org.uk
www.cavendishhouse.london

*For the lowest priced home at this development. Terms and conditions apply. Subject to availability and eligibility. Price correct at time of publication.
Merton Council has successfully prosecuted 22 people for fly-tipping offences in the Mitcham area with 49 fines handed out.

The prosecutions were the result of a covert operation following complaints by local residents. By installing hidden cameras, council officers were able to identify those responsible for dumping rubbish, furniture and large quantities of wood.

In addition, the council has handed out 13 fixed penalty notices of £400 each since April this year. The fines were for small-scale fly-tips such as bags of rubbish left beside litter bins.

We know that keeping the borough tidy is a big priority for you, which is why we spend £5 million a year on street cleaning, however, we’re determined to tackle the root causes of dirty streets too – and with your help we can!

We plan to step up our covert operations in the future, but we need you to help us by reporting any fly-tipping in your area; giving us all the information you can.

Or go one better by becoming a Street Champion. You’ll be the eyes and ears of your community telling us about a range of local issues. We also work with Street Champions to organise regular litter picking events.

While not personally responsible for fly-tipping, many people have been conned into having building waste or other rubbish collected by opportunist criminals. If someone is offering to take your waste away at a bargain price, the chances are it will end up tipped on council or private land. Should this happen, you could be held responsible and face prosecution, resulting in a hefty fine and a criminal record. Always use registered waste carriers to remove any rubbish – ask where your rubbish is going and for the operator’s licence number and a waste transfer note.

To report fly-tipping visit merton.gov.uk/litter and for Street Champions visit merton.gov.uk/streetchampions or call us on 020 8274 4901.

**Find out more**

*My Merton* explores what enforcement measures the council takes to tackle fly-tipping and litter.
Things that go bump in the night

For many families Halloween is a bit of scary fun. But while you’re celebrating, spare a thought for those who find it a bit intimidating – especially older and vulnerable people living alone.

If your children are going trick or treating, please follow these simple rules:

- Don’t knock on doors if there’s a No Trick or Treat poster – stick to houses with pumpkins or decorations to show you’re welcome.
- Look carefully before crossing the road; you may not be visible in costume.
- No tricks please! Throwing eggs or flour is anti-social and could land you in trouble.

If Halloween is a worrying time for you, get hold of our No Trick or Treat poster and display it prominently. Visit the Merton Neighbourhood Watch site to download a free one and find out more about Neighbourhood Watch and how to join mertonnhw.co.uk.

With fireworks night coming up too, stay safe by visiting one of the borough’s stunning displays – at Morden Park on 3 November or Wimbledon Park on 5 November – visit merton.gov.uk/fireworks to book.

If you are holding your own display, remember to never throw fireworks or put them in your pocket and don’t return to a firework once lit. For more safety advice visit london-fire.gov.uk

One Stop help if you’re suffering domestic abuse

If you or someone you know is affected by domestic abuse, contact Merton’s One Stop Shop, Morden Baptist Church, open Mondays 9.30am to 12 noon. The One Stop Shop is closed on bank holidays but you can call Victim Support on 020 7801 1777, 9am to 9pm, Monday to Friday. Always call 999 if you are in danger. For more advice visit merton.gov.uk/domesticviolence

We won’t tolerate Hate Crime

National Hate Crime Awareness Week takes place from 13 to 20 October and Merton residents are reminded to report any incidents of harassment driven by prejudice – whether because of your race, religion, sexuality, gender identity or disability. The police and community safety partners will not tolerate hate crime and have pledged to ensure victims are fully supported and crimes investigated.

The week will see events to raise awareness of hate crime, how to report it and the services to help victims. Visit merton.gov.uk/events or call Safer Merton on 020 8274 4901 for more.

Join the Fire Cadets

Join Merton’s Fire Cadets and you’ll gain some amazing skills, grow in confidence and have a lot of fun.

Open to young people aged 14 to 17, the scheme is about working as a team, learning first aid, fire safety and supporting the Fire Brigade at events. It’s free to join and you could gain a BTEC Level 2 Award. Merton’s cadets meet at Mitcham fire station on Wednesday evenings. For more information, search ‘joining London fire cadets’ on the internet.

For more on any of these stories call Safer Merton on 020 8274 4901
Applying for a school place

With a record number of Merton families applying to the borough’s high-performing schools, *My Merton* caught up with Paul Stemp, school admissions co-ordinator, to get some top tips on what parents need to know when applying for a school place.

School admissions co-ordinator Paul Stemp manages the day-to-day running of the team processing all applications for school places. “We’re part of the pan-London admissions scheme,” says Paul, “so we’re working with all the boroughs to make sure that applications are processed correctly and that all parents receive a place at the highest possible preference that can be offered.”

September saw the launch of reception and secondary applications for 2019, but this isn’t what’s occupying Paul’s time at the moment. “September is our busiest time for in-year applications – people changing schools, coming into the area, or the country. Once the schools open after the summer break, we’re trying to push as many applications through as possible to help get children started at school as quickly as we can.”

The team has an important safeguarding role and liaises closely with the education welfare service to identify children who aren’t in school and work with their families to ensure they are enrolled and getting an education.

School applications can be stressful, so what are Paul’s insider tips for parents? “Whether at reception or secondary level my answer is the same: maximise your chances by using all of your six preferences.

“There are many common myths still out there. ‘If I only name one preference they’ll have to give me it.’ Or ‘I’ve already got a sibling at the school, I don’t need to apply’. Don’t listen to them! You need to name as many schools as possible. Use your preferences as a wish list but make sure that some are realistic. Be aware of how places have been offered in the past – if you live 700m from a school and it’s never been offered beyond 400m the chances are you won’t get in.

“If you don’t get one of your higher preferences, you automatically go on the waiting list until at least the end of the year – you can always talk to us about waiting list positions.”

All of Merton’s secondary schools are now rated as ‘Outstanding’ and ‘Good’, but don’t just take Ofsted’s word for it. Paul strongly advises to go and visit them yourself. “You get a much better view of the school when you meet the teachers and pupils.” Turn to page 18 for a list of open days.

**find out more** merton.gov.uk/admissions
COMPETITION

Win a pair of tickets to see **Blood Brothers** at New Wimbledon Theatre

Written by Willy Russell, the legendary **Blood Brothers** tells the captivating and moving tale of twins who, separated at birth, grow up on opposite sides of the tracks, only to meet again with fateful consequences.

Few musicals have received quite such acclaim as the multi-award winning **Blood Brothers**. Bill Kenwright’s production surpassed 10,000 performances in London’s West End, one of only three musicals ever to achieve that milestone. It has been affectionately christened the ‘Standing Ovation Musical’, as inevitably it “brings the audience cheering to its feet and roaring its approval” (*The Daily Mail*). The superb score includes *Bright New Day*, *Marilyn Monroe* and the emotionally-charged hit *Tell Me It’s Not True*.

Visit [merton.gov.uk/mymerton](http://merton.gov.uk/mymerton) to enter and answer the following question. The closing date for entries is 11 October 2018.

**Willy Russell received an Oscar nomination for which film?**

- a) Bad Education
- b) Educating Rita
- c) An Education

**Terms and conditions:**
The tickets are non-transferable. There are no cash alternatives, accommodation or travel included in the prize. The competition is for two tickets to see *Blood Brothers* at New Wimbledon Theatre, valid on any performance between 29 October and 3 November 2018.

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**Merton Council**

**Musical Fireworks Displays**

- **Morden Park**
  - Sat 3 November
- **Wimbledon Park**
  - Mon 5 November

**Gates Open 5:15PM | First Show 6:30PM**

**Second Show 8:15PM | Funfair, Stalls & Refreshments Open Till 10:00PM**

Big savings when you buy in advance online at: [merton.gov.uk/fireworks](http://merton.gov.uk/fireworks)

*More suitable for young children*  

Please note: The public are not permitted to bring any fireworks, alcohol or dogs to these events.
**The Wizard of Oz**

**Every Saturday and Sunday, 8 September–11 November, 2pm and 4pm**

Colour House Theatre, Merton Abbey Mills SW19 2RD. Join us over the rainbow in this new musical adaptation of everyone's favourite legendary tale, as we travel with Dorothy along the Yellow Brick Road. 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 Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion. Will the iconic foursome make it to the Emerald City so she can find her way home? Booking fees apply. Adults £12/children £10. [Find out more](www.colourhousetheatre.co.uk)

**Dreamboys**

**Friday 28 September**

Tickets from £22. Featuring Jake Quickenden from hit TV shows *X Factor* and *I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here*, Dreamboys is back, hotter than ever. Without a doubt the UK's most famous and successful show of its kind, Dreamboys' breathtaking new spectacular has been perfectly created for hen nights, birthday parties and girls' nights out.

**Blood Brothers**

**Monday 29 October–Saturday 3 November**

Tickets from £17.90. Written by Willy Russell, the legendary *Blood Brothers* tells the captivating and moving tale of twins who, separated at birth, grow up on opposite sides of the tracks, only to meet again with fateful consequences. The superb score includes *Bright New Day*, *Marilyn Monroe* and emotionally charged hit *Tell Me It's Not True*.

**Jazz in a Broadway**

**Sunday 16 September, 21 October and 25 November**

Tickets from £15. Presented by Verona Chard. Relax in our Studio Theatre and Bar where the mood is 'smokey' and mesmerising tunes delight your soul. Live music from award-winning guests every month.

**New Wimbledon Theatre**

93 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 1QG

Book online [www.atgtickets.com/wimbledon](http://www.atgtickets.com/wimbledon)

Telephone booking 0844 871 7646

Group bookings 0844 871 7696

Access bookings 0844 871 7677 (no booking fees apply)

**JASON MANFORD – MUGGLE CLASS**

**Saturday 13 October**

Tickets from £28.75. It’s been a busy few years for Jason Manford since his last stand up show but fans of his Absolute Radio show will know this nationally-acclaimed comedian hasn’t changed a bit. *Muggle Class* promises to feature a wealth of new material about Jason growing up ‘working class’ then finding, over the years, that part of him has become ‘middle class’ – causing much confusion! Delivered with Jason’s amiable charm and captivating wit.

**HARRY HILL’S KIDZ SHOW: HOW TO BE FUNNY – FOR KIDS**

**Saturday 10 November**

Tickets from £15.60. The show will offer hints, tips and anecdotes for children who fancy themselves as a bit of a joker, with the self-styled floppy-collared loon Harry Hill on hand to run through his dos and don’ts.

**ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT • YOUTH • SENIOR CITIZENS • FAMILY • HEALTH & FITNESS • WALKS & TALKS • FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS**
staying in? Here’s a selection of what’s new in Merton’s libraries:

**MY MERTON’S FICTION BOOK CHOICE**

*The Anniversary* by Hilary Boyd

Stella’s marriage ended decades ago, after the event that not only shattered her life with her husband, Jack, but shaped her relationship with her daughter, Eve, too. Now, despite the tensions that linger between mother and daughter, Stella is called upon to look after Eve in her time of need. She just hadn’t bargained on being thrown together with her handsome, stubborn ex-husband too...

**Other fiction titles:**
- *Shadow Tyrants* – Clive Cussler
- *Crisis* – Felix Francis
- *A Keeper* – Graham Norton
- *Don’t You Cry* – Cass Green

**MY MERTON’S NON-FICTION CHOICE**

*Going on the Turn: Being the Extraordinary Stories of my Life and Dodging Death’s Door* by Danny Baker

Danny Baker’s third volume of memoirs barrels along at the same cracking pace as its predecessors, the bestselling *Going to Sea in a Sieve* (the inspiration for the major TV series *Cradle to Grave* and subsequent nationwide tour) and *Going off Alarming*. With his trademark exuberance, he offers a rollicking read that fizzes with wit, warmth and enviable joie de vivre!

**Other non-fiction titles:**
- *Not That Kind of Love* – Clare and Greg Wise
- *Feed Me Vegan: For All Occasions* – Lucy Watson
- *Queen Victoria: Daughter, Wife, Mother, Widow* – Lucy Worsley

**eBooks**

Join the ‘Big Library Read’ global eBook club between 1 and 15 October. During this time OverDrive/Libby will be offering a surprise eBook for the whole world to be able to read together. All you need to get started reading is your Merton library card and a suitable device. Find out more about the ‘Big Library Read’ at biglibraryread.com

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**Arts and entertainment continued**

**Going for a song**

We run two groups of friendly singing sessions for older people to enjoy and get active. There is no skill required other than a love of singing and making friends.

*Mitcham:*

*Every Wednesday, 1-2pm*

Vestry Hall, London Road CR4 3UD. Entrance £4.

(Wimbledon:)*

*Wednesdays, 3-4pm*

St Marks Church Hall, St Marks Place, SW19 7ND. Entrance £5.

Find out more:
020 8640 6800; victoria@attictheatrecompany.com

**Wimbledon Diwali Mela**

*Saturday 13 October, 12-3pm*

Join us in your favourite ethnic wear to celebrate the Festival of Lights in its full fanfare. Everyone is welcome to join in this afternoon of festival, fun and food. Tickets: £10 adult, children £7 and under three years free.

Find out more:
Neha 07508 400413
londonramleela@gmail.com

**Merton fireworks**

- **Morden Park**
  *Saturday 3 November*

- **Wimbledon Park**
  *Monday 5 November*

The annual spectacular fireworks display returns to Merton. Gates open at 5.15pm. Funfair, stalls and refreshments open until 10pm. Advance tickets available.

Find out more:
merton.gov.uk/fireworks

**Fairs and exhibitions**

- **The early early Christmas fair in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support**
  *Saturday 24 October, 10am-3pm*

Sacred Heart Hall, Edge Hill, Wimbledon SW19 4LU. Entrance £3 (includes coffee/tea). Get ahead of the crowd with new seasonal ideas from stalls offering unique, quality products and home-made refreshments including the famous cake stall. Macmillan Merton’s Christmas cards will also be on sale. All profits will be donated to Macmillan Cancer Support Acute Oncology Day Unit at St. George’s Hospital, Tooting.

Find out more:
www.macmillanmerton.com
Community forums
Anyone with an interest in the local area is invited to attend these free community meetings. Discussions about a range of local topics will be held, with issues being followed up by the relevant organisations.

- **Colliers Wood**
  Thursday 4 October, 7.15pm start
  Colliers Wood Library, 105-109 High Street
  Colliers Wood, London SW19 2HR.

- **Mitcham**
  Wednesday 17 October, 7.15pm start
  Age UK Hall, Elmwood Centre, 277 London Rd,
  Mitcham CR4 3NT.

- **Morden**
  Thursday 11 October, 7.15pm start
  Council Chamber, Merton Civic Centre, London Road,
  Morden SM4 5DX.

- **Wimbledon**
  Thursday 27 September, 7.15pm start
  Wimbledon Arts Space, Compton Rd, Wimbledon,
  London SW19 7QA.

**Hatfield Christmas fair**
Saturday 1 December, 12 noon–3pm
Hatfield Primary School,
Lower Morden Lane
SM4 5LP. Entrance £1.50.
Everyone is welcome to the annual fair with tombolas, raffle, Santa’s Grotto, refreshments, stalls, arts and crafts.

**St Saviour’s Church Christmas fair**
Saturday 24 November, 11.30am-2pm
St Saviour’s Church,
Grand Drive SW19 9DG.
Free entry. Fun for all the family with games, raffle and tombolas plus lots of stalls to get Christmas presents, and seasonal refreshments served.

**Three Sat Under the Banyan Tree**
Friday 28 September–Sunday 21 October.
Relaxed performance:
Saturday 6 October
Near the foothills of the Himalayas, three orphans open a magical book under a Banyan tree. They discover stories of headstrong crows, old lions and devious jackals come vibrantly to life, with masks, movement and music. Polka is delighted to be co-producing with Tara Arts the first-ever stage adaptation of *The Panchatantra* in the UK. Ages seven plus.

**Under the Rainbow**
Wednesday 24 October–Saturday 3 November
One woman embarks upon a courageous journey. As she crosses land and sea, she befriends a turtle and a colourful bird of paradise, discovering a plentiful island. In Polka’s intimate Adventure Theatre, children will feel part of the journey, with opportunities to interact with the performer, evocative music, puppetry and a beautiful transformative set.

“From Verity Quinn’s ingenious set and vibrant puppets, to Julian Butler’s gorgeous music, to Marleen Vermeulen’s commanding performance, it all comes together to create what is, undeniably, an exquisite production.”
– *Children’s Theatre Reviews*

**The Wind in the Willows**
Friday 9 November–Sunday 17 February 2019
Mole had no idea of the adventures that lie ahead. With Toad’s obsession for all things fast and causing chaos, it falls upon his friends Ratty, Mole and wise old Badger to save him, coming face to face with animals of the Wild Wood in this delightful adaptation of Kenneth Grahame’s classic story of friendship and bravery, brought to life with music, songs and the usual Polka magic!

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

**Hatfield**
Christmas fair
Saturday 1 December, 12 noon–3pm
Hatfield Primary School,
Lower Morden Lane
SM4 5LP. Entrance £1.50.
Everyone is welcome to the annual fair with tombolas, raffle, Santa’s Grotto, refreshments, stalls, arts and crafts.

**find out more**
kallina.jelfs@gmail.com

**St Saviour’s Church**
Christmas fair
Saturday 24 November, 11.30am-2pm
St Saviour’s Church,
Grand Drive SW19 9DG.
Free entry. Fun for all the family with games, raffle and tombolas plus lots of stalls to get Christmas presents, and seasonal refreshments served.

**find out more**
sue 020 8395 6095

**find out more**
merton.gov.uk/communityforums
**Merton heritage events**

**Fearless: William Allison White VC**
Monday 17 September–Saturday 20 October
Merton Heritage Centre, Morden Library, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX. Admission free. This small display celebrates the life and heroism of Mitcham-born William White, one century on from the act of valour for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

**Freedom, Votes, Equality**
Monday 1 October–Thursday 1 November
Merton Heritage Centre, Morden Library, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX. Admission free. Featuring historic material from local museums, societies and private collections, this exhibition will cover the history of women’s suffrage in Merton.

**Women’s Suffrage in Merton**
Tuesday 16 October, 10.30am–12 noon
West Barnes Library, Station Road, New Malden KT3 6JF. Free admission. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries Merton played a key part in the battle to secure votes for women. This illustrated talk by Heritage Officer, Sarah Gould, will reveal more about the local people, places and events linked to the suffrage campaign.

**Keep the Home Fires Burning**
Monday 29 October–Friday 30 November
Merton Heritage Centre, Morden Library, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX. Free admission. To coincide with the centenary of the end of World War One, this exhibition will look at the important role of Merton women on the Home Front.

**The Suffragette Project: A new touring play about Rose Lamartine Yates**
Monday 8–Sunday 14 October
Merton Arts Space, Wimbledon Library. Merton’s Attic Theatre Company presents a new drama inspired by Merton’s most famous suffragette.

**Family**

**Morden Hall Park**
Morden Hall Road, London SM4 5JD

*Apple Fest*
Saturday 29–Sunday 30 September, 11am–4pm
Taste pressed apple juice, Merton apples, toffee apple cake and harvest goodies. Donations welcome.

*Park Fun Palace*
Sunday 7 October, 12 noon–4pm
Do you have a secret skill? Share yours and learn one from your neighbours at this vibrant community celebration.

**Tremendous tree trail**
Every Friday–Sunday in October and November, 10am–3pm
£2 per trail (craft included). Discover the hidden and secret stories of trees. Make your own wooden medallion to take their powers with you.

**Wimbledon Guild**

*Chess, Checkers and games*
Every Friday, 1.30–3pm
Wimbledon Guild, Guild House Lounge, 30–32 Worple Road, Wimbledon SW19 4EH. £2 per person. Following the success of their ‘All Things Italian’ classes, Wimbledon Guild will be running informal sessions that are a fun way to discover France. Talking about the various regions of the country; the cultures, traditions, the food and wine. Hosted by two French volunteers, you will learn a bit of the language along the way.

**Silver Sunday**
Sunday 7 October, 3pm
The Hub, Tooting & Mitcham Football Club, Bishopsford Road, Morden SM4 6BF

To apply for an application form and tickets contact the mayor’s office: mayor@merton.gov.uk or 020 8545 3517

**Remembrance Day**
Sunday 11 and Monday 12 November

**Mayor of Merton events**

**Silver Sunday**
Sunday 7 October, 3pm
The Hub, Tooting & Mitcham Football Club, Bishopsford Road, Morden SM4 6BF

To apply for an application form and tickets contact the mayor’s office: mayor@merton.gov.uk or 020 8545 3517

**Remembrance Day**
Sunday 11 and Monday 12 November
Wimbledon Guild
Waggy Walk
Saturday 6 October, 9am–2.30pm
Check in: the Hand in Hand pub, 6 Crooked Billet, Wimbledon Common SW19 4RQ.
Tickets £10 per adult, £5 per child (four to 16 years), family ticket £25 (two adults plus two children). Book in advance and avoid paying on the day for your dog. Booking fees and terms and conditions apply. Wimbledon Guild, the local charity that supports people across Merton, has launched a brand-new fundraising event called the Wimbledon Guild Waggy Walk. Open to people with and without dogs to take part in either a 4km or 7km walk that will start and finish at the dog-friendly Hand in Hand pub on Wimbledon Common – where they will be supplying pre-event snacks and drinks.
🔗 find out more
www.wimbledonguild.co.uk/waggywalk;
Mel/Olivia: 020 8739 2920

● Wimbledon National Trust Association
Lecture: Bushy Park and the restorations of the Water Gardens and Diana Fountain
Saturday 27 October, 2.15–4pm
Christchurch Hall, Cottenham Park Road, SW20 0RZ. Cost: £3 for WNTA members, £3.50 for non-members. This illustrated talk, by Pieter Morpurgo, includes the history of the park, and then moves on to explain two major restorations which have been done in the last years.
🔗 find out more
maureen.patel@wimbledonnta.org.uk

● CoderDojo
Saturday 20 October, 2.30–4.30pm
Merton Arts Space, Wimbledon Library. Free entry but booking required. For children aged seven to 15 years. All children to be accompanied by a parent or guardian. CoderDojo is an open source, volunteer-led global movement running free coding clubs for youngsters. Members share their coolest projects with ‘show and tell’ sessions. The aim is to make development and learning to code a fun and sociable experience. Please bring a laptop with power cord or sufficient battery power for the event.
🔗 find out more
merton.gov.uk/libraries; 020 8274 5757

Social and fitness

● Free tennis coaching for children and adults
Mitcham every Saturday, 1pm and 3pm
Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground, London Road CR4 3LA.
🔗 find out more
www.windmilers.org.uk

● Wimbledon Library, Compton Road, Wimbledon

● The Sounds of Motherhood
Saturday 13 October, 11.30am–12.30pm
(National Libraries Week)
Ideal for children aged three to seven years old.
Free with limited places. Visit the website for tickets and sign up the number of children attending. A collaborative music-making workshop for mums and kids. Join local mother and musician Delea Shand, as she shares her experience of making music with her kids from the pictures they made, and shows you how you can spend time together doing it too! This workshop is part of a commission from Mothers Who Make, with support from Arts Council England.
🔗 find out more
Book here: merton.gov.uk/libraries

Health and fitness

● Social run with Wimbledon Windmilers
Sundays, 10am
Windmill car park, Windmill Road, Wimbledon SW19 5NQ. Annual membership £34 – try up to four sessions for free. Choose from three, five or seven miles with stops. If you run on your own or with a beginners’ group, this is a great way to build up your distance and meet other runners.
🔗 find out more
Claire 07903 973222; www.windmilers.org.uk

● Free tennis coaching for children and adults
Mitcham every Saturday, 1pm and 3pm
Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground, London Road CR4 3LA.
🔗 find out more
www.tennisforfree.co.uk

Morden every Saturday, 10am–midday
Joseph Hood Recreation Ground, Martin Way, Morden SM4 4AR.
🔗 find out more
www.tennisforfree.co.uk

Merton – proud to be a Fairtrade borough
People from all walks of life can foster

Merton Council urgently needs foster carers for teenagers, siblings and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Do you have room in your heart and your home?

Foster for Merton and we can offer you:

- Comprehensive, on-going professional training
- 24/7 support and mentors
- An allowance of up to £514 per week, per child

Come along to one of our Information Events at Morden Baptist Church on:
4 October at 10.30am, 24 October at 6.30pm, 7 November at 10.30am or 21 November at 6.30pm

Call us today on 0800 073 0874 / 020 8545 4070 or visit merton.gov.uk/fostering or email fostering@merton.gov.uk for more details
Chief Superintendent Sally Benatar leads the Metropolitan Police South West Basic Command Unit (BCU). The BCU launched this May in a move towards policing across the four boroughs of Merton, Kingston, Richmond and Wandsworth.

Tell us more about the change
It means more response officers working across borough boundaries. These officers will work on a crime from start to finish. They’ll be the first person the victim meets and the person who investigates that crime, unless it’s a serious and complex case.

And your policing priorities...
The local priorities for Merton are burglary and theft of motor vehicles. Alongside these, our dedicated ward officers work with the council to address anti-social behaviour challenges affecting communities.

We hear a lot about knife crime in London – how safe is Merton?
Merton is a very safe borough – one of the five safest in London, based on the level of reported crime. There has been an increase in knife crime across London but in very small numbers in Merton. On knife crime we are doing a lot of work with schools and youth organisations to educate young people.

It is almost 100 years since London’s first female police officers, is this a good career for a woman?
It’s a wonderful choice with many varied career paths. We’re recruiting constables at the moment – visit our website www.metpolicecareers.co.uk I have been a police officer for 29 years and have had fantastic opportunities. I was the first female officer to be permanently posted to the Prime Minister’s protection team. It’s possible to do anything in the Met and our female Commissioner is a great role model.

Anything else we should know?
I’d like to acknowledge the special constables and volunteers who are a really important part of the BCU. Due to the cuts, we have fewer police officers in total across London, so we rely on that support.

find out more www.met.police.uk
Most recycling and rubbish collection days ARE CHANGING

FROM 1 OCTOBER

To check if your collection day is changing, visit merton.gov.uk/recycling or see the leaflet in your information pack delivered with your new wheelie bins.