Win a family ticket for Aladdin at New Wimbledon Theatre

Making a splash at the new Morden Leisure Centre

See the back page for your Christmas waste collection days
Winter is the time of year when we need to really look out for each other. As the weather gets colder and days get shorter, loneliness can set in, particularly for older people. We all have a responsibility to look after our friends and neighbours. I come in to a busy office every day and there is always lots to be getting on with, but I know that too many of Merton’s residents don’t have daily contact with other people, which can leave them isolated. However, there are brilliant organisations in the borough, including Age UK Merton and Wimbledon Guild, that work tirelessly to ensure that everyone feels included in their communities.

The Council supports people too in a variety of ways, from our Telecare Mascot service, which enables people to remain independent, to our award-winning libraries, which offer a range of activities and classes which are available to everyone, as well as home visits for people who are not able to get out and about easily. Our fantastic new Morden Leisure Centre, which opened its doors on 6 November, is packed with great activities for everyone, offering residents of all ages opportunities to meet new people in their community while increasing their fitness. This opening came a month after the start of the new recycling and rubbish collection service in October. The new service makes it easier for residents to recycle more of their rubbish and this is particularly important during the festive season. If we all do our bit to reduce the amount thrown away, particularly over Christmas, together we can achieve one of our resolutions for 2019, to become one of London’s best recycling boroughs.

So please help to make this winter a bit brighter and greener by keeping an eye out for your neighbours, getting involved in a new activity group and considering the environment during the festivities. I wish every resident in Merton a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

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

Mayor of London launches London-wide scheme in Mitcham

In October, I proudly welcomed Mayor of London Sadiq Khan to Merton. He chose the Acacia Pre-School Children’s Centre in Mitcham to launch a new city-wide scheme called Healthy Early Years London. This scheme has been set up to help tackle health inequalities for the youngest children across the capital. My colleague, Councillor Kelly Braund, cabinet member for children’s services, and I told the Mayor all about the work we are doing in Merton to bridge health inequality gaps. We discussed the importance of healthy eating, exercise and social and emotional development for children and families. The Mayor also chatted with some of our youngest residents, in the Acacia sandpit!
### Community

**News**
The latest news from around the borough

**Features**

**Top tips for a greener festive season**

**Volunteering in Merton**

**Helping a family be part of the community**

### Regulars

**Working life**
Zoe Gallen on supporting victims of domestic violence

**What’s on**
Your guide to all that’s going on in Merton this winter

**5 minutes with**
Nick Coke from The Salvation Army’s community church

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**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 21 November 2018.**

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**Don’t forget to visit our website!**
merton.gov.uk/mymerton

You can also follow us on:

- [www.facebook.com/mertoncouncil](http://www.facebook.com/mertoncouncil)
- [www.twitter.com/Merton_Council](http://www.twitter.com/Merton_Council)
- [www.flickr.com/mertoncouncil](http://www.flickr.com/mertoncouncil)
- [www.youtube.com/mertoncouncil](http://www.youtube.com/mertoncouncil)
Merton Leisure Centre is now open! The new family centre opened its doors on Tuesday 6 November. Since then, visitors have been taking a refreshing swim in the 25m six-lane pool and enjoying aqua aerobics, diving and parent and toddler classes in the second pool, which boasts a moveable floor. Gym-goers have been working up a sweat in the studio and 100-station fitness suite and then taking a relaxing break in the café area with outside seating area, which is also perfect for Morden Park dog walkers.

The state-of-the-art building is fully accessible with a pool pod for easy access to both pools as well as a specialist Changing Places room, which includes toilet, shower, changing bed and a hoist for disabled people.

The council invested in the new centre as a replacement for ageing Morden Park Pool, which was energy-inefficient and expensive to maintain.

Now that the new centre is open, work will begin to demolish the old Morden Park Pool, and the land restored to open space. Work to landscape the area and plant trees will begin once demolition is complete.

You can find the new leisure centre on London Road, in the heart of Morden Park. [find out more](www.better.org.uk and search Morden).

Mayor of London recognises Merton schools

The remarkable performance of Ricards Lodge High School and Rutlish School were honoured by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, at the Schools for Success awards ceremony, held at City Hall on Friday 5 October.

The event celebrated their achievements in supporting pupils needing extra help to fulfil their potential. The Mayor’s Schools for Success programme aims to improve expectations and raise standards for London’s schoolchildren, regardless of their background.

The ceremony was hosted by Deputy Mayor for Education and Childcare, Joanne McCartney. Of the schools recognised this year, more than a third are taking part for the second year running. All participating schools are encouraged to share their expertise with others through seminars and visits so that their success can be replicated across London.

Merton cracks down on zigzag offenders

The council is stepping up enforcement on motorists who stop on zigzags outside the borough’s schools. Following safety concerns from parents and residents about the difficulty caused by cars stopping on zigzags outside schools, council enforcement officers will be using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, in addition to the mobile CCTV car that is already used. During the hours of operation, vehicles must not stop on, or adjacent to, the school zigzag keep clear lines to drop off or pick up passengers and any vehicle that does so is instantly liable for a £110 penalty charge notice, which if paid within 14 days, reduces to £55. The signage at each location states the hours that the school keep clear restrictions are in force.

It is hoped that by stepping up enforcement action, motorists will be reminded of the importance of children’s safety outside schools, and will be deterred from stopping on zigzag lines in future. [find out more](merton.gov.uk/parking)

Turn to page 24 to find out how the council are improving air quality in the borough.
New sexual health centre

Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) opened a new purpose-built sexual health clinic on 19 November near Clapham Junction station. The first floor centre at 160 Falcon Road, SW11, will offer high quality, confidential, fully integrated sexual health and contraception services, Monday to Saturday. It includes a gay men’s clinic, a young people’s clinic and IUD/IUS/implant fitting. Clapham will be the hub of Sexual Health South West London’s services for the boroughs of Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth – with satellite clinics in Mitcham, Twickenham and Wimbledon.

Busy high street becomes 20 miles per hour zone

Wimbledon Village High Street has been designated as a 20 miles per hour zone to improve safety for road users and pedestrians. Merton Council, after consultation with Wimbledon Village Business Association and a number of local groups and societies, including Wimbledon Village Stables, has reduced the speed limit in Wimbledon High Street from 30 miles per hour to 20 miles per hour.

Merton teacher wins top London award

A Merton teacher has been named one of London’s top practitioners at an awards ceremony. Tracey Lewis, a post-16 Advisory Teacher for Merton’s Virtual School received a ‘Commitment Award’ at the AimHigher London Practitioner Awards ceremony, hosted by St Mary’s University in Twickenham. Tracey was commended and praised for the support she gives individual students and how she overcomes barriers for Looked After Children and Care Leavers to access university.

New year, new you

As 2019 draws closer, we’re all thinking about New Year resolutions. If you want to get healthy next year, do it with Merton Libraries! During January, our libraries will celebrate all things healthy with a range of health and wellbeing sessions. There will be regular events such as Yoga, Tai Chi, Mantra Singing, meditation classes and free health checks. There will also be a selection of special one-off events, talks and workshops.

Merton – proud to be a Fairtrade borough

Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Poppy Graves on Onyx, Carol Andrews from Wimbledon Village Stables, Angela Stewart on Hudson and cabinet member for transport, Councillor Martin Whelton.
Park for free this Christmas

Christmas shoppers are being offered free parking in the council’s town centre car parks on six dates in December. This is the seventh year running that there will be free parking in council-managed car parks to encourage Christmas shoppers to spend their money with local businesses. Free parking will be offered in all the council’s car parks, except Coombe Lane Car Park in Raynes Park, on four Sundays – 2, 9, 16 and 23 December as well as on Saturday 22 December and Monday 24 December.

Have your say on the Sutton Link

Transport for London (TfL) are consulting on proposals for a new, direct and quicker transport link between Sutton and Merton, called the Sutton Link. The new link would create a high-capacity route for people travelling between Sutton town centre and Merton. It would connect with other major transport services into central London and across London, including National Rail, London Underground, existing tram and bus services and would make journeys by public transport quicker and more attractive. To find out more about the Sutton Link scheme and to take part in the consultation, visit tfl.gov.uk/Sutton-link.

WIN A FAMILY TICKET FOR THE WIMBLEDON LAWN TENNIS MUSEUM & TOUR

The Wimbledon Foundation is offering one lucky winner the chance to discover the traditions, triumphs, sights and sounds that make Wimbledon the most sought-after title in tennis. The Wimbledon Foundation, the charity of The All England Lawn Tennis Club makes a valuable contribution to meeting social needs and reducing inequalities in Merton and Wandsworth by awarding grants totalling over £400,000 a year to charities and community organisations.

For your chance to win, simply answer the following question:

Who won the 2018 Ladies’ Singles Final?

a) Garbine Muguruza
b) Angelique Kerber
c) Serena Williams

Visit merton.gov.uk/mymerton to enter.

The closing date for entries is 31 December 2018.

Terms and conditions: The competition is to win one family ticket (two adults and two children) to visit the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum and Tour, Church Road, Wimbledon SW19 5AE. The Museum is open daily except 24-26 December 2018, 1 January 2019 and 17-19 May 2019. Tours do not run between 17 June and 20 July 2019. For the tour schedule, visit wimbledon.com/museum. The prize cannot be exchanged or used in conjunction with any other offer. There are no cash alternatives, accommodation or travel included in this prize.
Get your free flu jab

It’s winter once again and time to make sure you have the flu vaccine. Everyone over 65, or pregnant, or has a long term health condition is eligible for a free flu vaccine. Children aged two and three and young people up to 17-years-old who are at risk of flu are also eligible. The NHS recommends all children in reception class and school years 1 to 5 should be vaccinated with a single dose of nasal spray, which is squirted up each nostril to help protect them from the virus. Your GP or participating pharmacy are on hand to help.

Providing new homes in Merton for war veterans

Haig Housing, the UK’s main provider of charitable housing for veterans and their families, is building 68 new homes in Morden. Permission has already been granted for one to be named Queen Elizabeth Court, while another will be known as Maxi Martin Court after the well-known and much loved late councillor. Developers, United Living, have been working with the local community and residents since the start of the project. This has included regular newsletters and coffee mornings with the latter held in their visitors’ viewing gallery, which was planted by children from Morden Primary School at the beginning of 2018. More recently, local Morden schoolchildren visited the site where they enjoyed laying bricks in the gallery. Haig Housing are currently looking for eligible veterans to become residents of the new housing. Visit their website for further information.

SPINE Festival comes to Merton libraries

A series of free creative workshops and events will take place in Merton libraries next spring, aimed at empowering young people to talk about their wellbeing. Workshops will use creativity to help young people cope with exam stress, talk about their emotions and express themselves. Events will take place throughout March 2019.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2019

The theme for next year’s Holocaust Memorial Day is Torn from Home. The council will commemorate the day with a civic event held in the council chamber on Tuesday 22 January 2019 at 7pm. The programme will include The Wimbledon Synagogue choir, along with contributions from a range of speakers including the Mayor of Merton.

Learning about democracy

Young people in Merton got a taste for local politics in October, during Local Democracy Week. They toured the civic centre and saw the council chamber where local decisions are made. They also visited the Mayor’s parlour where the Mayor, Councillor Mary Curtin, spoke to them about her role. Councillors from across Merton and the MP for Wimbledon, Stephen Hammond, offered visits to local schools, while the MP for Mitcham and Morden, Siobhain McDonagh, gave over 100 schoolchildren from her constituency a tour the Houses of Parliament. Finally, the first ever children’s scrutiny panel took place, which will become a regular meeting.
Merton libraries praised by Minister for service excellence

The Culture Minister Michael Ellis MP, who includes public libraries in his portfolio, praised Merton’s award-winning libraries during his visit on Thursday 11 October.

As part of National Libraries Week, Wimbledon Library hosted Mr Ellis. During the visit, he was shown how the library has been transformed into a hub that works in partnership with a range of providers to deliver on its priorities of bridging the gap in residents’ health, social and economic outcomes, whilst being an invaluable service for residents to engage with reading, cultural, digital, information and wellbeing services. This is a model that is being successfully delivered across all of Merton’s libraries.

All aboard the book bus!

Pupils at Hollymount Primary School told Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, cabinet member for education, (pictured) the story of their double decker library bus.

Born out of a need for a library, former headteacher, Philippa Jackson, found a creative solution to the problem of space and budget, by choosing to turn a bus, bought by parents, into a library. Local architect Peter Lindsay helped design the interior, stripping out most of the fixtures and replacing them with bookshelves.

The engine was removed, to allow for electricity and heating to be put in. Much to the fascination of the children, the driver’s seat, steering wheel, brake pedals, bell-push and used ticket bin, were kept.

The bus opened as a library in 2017 and, as in other libraries, the children and teachers borrow books. A team of children have been selected as library assistants, and they give up their lunchtimes to help return books and tidy the shelves.

Celebrating small businesses in Merton

Cllr Stephen Alambritis with Hannah White and Keiron Marshall at the Soundlounge in Wimbledon Broadway

Merton Council Leader, Councillor Stephen Alambritis will be visiting a number of the borough’s businesses on Small Business Saturday (1 December), celebrating the invaluable contribution Merton’s smaller businesses make to the community.

With the Christmas and sales season upon us, the council is encouraging shoppers to support Merton’s retailers and local firms.

Be part of the LGBT forum

Merton Council is calling on residents to be part of the borough’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) forum. Being a member of the LGBT Forum is an opportunity to make sure the needs of lesbians, gay, bisexual and transgender people are considered across services provided by the public sector and when decision-making bodies such as the council or the clinical commissioning group develop policies or commission new services.

find out more www.mertonlgbtforum.org.uk or email info@mertonlgbtforum.org.uk
Merton foster carers honoured

A Merton couple were given the praise and recognition they deserve at an awards ceremony in October. Kojo Ntow, a London bus driver and Hannah Ntow, a former nurse (pictured above) received the award for Outstanding Contribution by a Foster Carer at The Fostering Network awards in London. The couple, who have fostered in Merton for nine years, were recognised for the dedication and remarkable care that they have given to the many children placed with them over the years. The awards recognise people who make exceptional contributions to foster care, whether they are social workers, foster carers, or the children of fostering families. Do you have space in your lives to foster? If you have a spare bedroom, patience, resilience and the ability to communicate and inspire children, you could have what’s needed to be a foster carer.

Tel: 0800 073 0874 or 020 8545 4070 or email: fostering@merton.gov.uk

Have your say on town centre plans

Merton Council is encouraging residents, businesses, employees and visitors to take part in a consultation on the future of Wimbledon town centre by Sunday 6 January 2019. The draft Future Wimbledon Masterplan, sets out the long-term vision for the development of Wimbledon town centre and focuses on its commercial heart. The town centre generates 15,000 jobs and covers 40 hectares in size, that’s almost 1,500 tennis courts! The responses from the consultation will help shape design and investment in public spaces well into 2030. Priorities include integration of green areas into the town centre, along with public and cultural spaces, a better transport interchange and an improved retail offer. To have your say visit merton.gov.uk/futurewimbledon

Tennis ticket resale benefits charities

Think of Wimbledon tennis and the word ‘tradition’ comes to mind. For spectators, one of the best traditions – along with strawberries and cream and the Queue – is the Ticket Resale scheme, whereby tickets for the Show Courts, which are no longer required are re-sold for charity. At this year’s Championships, Ticket Resale raised £406,000 and donations have been made to several Merton charities including the Mayor of Merton’s Fund, St George’s Hospital Charity, Mitcham Town Community Trust and the Merton Winter Night Shelter. Supported by the Wimbledon Foundation for four years, the shelter is run in partnership by 14 local faith groups and a team of 300 volunteers. Guests are given a hot, nutritious meal, a warm dry place to sleep and support in getting back on their feet. Rob, 38, who spent 10 weeks at the shelter last winter, said: “The Merton Winter Night Shelter saved my life. If I had stayed on the streets, I would have had a relapse into drugs and alcohol. I can’t thank the team enough for all that they have done for me.”

Find out more
ymcastpaulsgroup.org/merton-winter-night-shelter
**Keeping Merton informed**

**Report hate crime**

We are here to support you, report hate crime. This is the message Merton Council and Merton Police are giving to residents. Hate crime can take many forms, big and small and can include: spitting, verbal abuse and harassment, attacks or violence, threats, intimidation and emotional violence. All hate crime is unacceptable and no incident should go unreported.

Many victims do not report their experience because they are scared, worried about not being believed, or think that there is nothing that can be done. By reporting incidents, you help the council and police to understand and respond to hate crime in the borough.

There are a number of ways to report hate crime, either directly to the police – in an emergency call 999 or if a non emergency call 111. Alternatively, visit [merton.gov.uk/hatecrime](http://merton.gov.uk/hatecrime) for a list of organisations that can provide help and support.

**Silver Sunday**

The Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin, hosted a special afternoon tea to celebrate Silver Sunday in October. Around 100 residents from care homes, day centres and lunch clubs across the borough joined her for sandwiches, cakes and entertainment.

**Dundonald Primary School receives prestigious Gold Award**

Dundonald Primary School has been awarded Gold by Unicef UK’s Rights Respecting School programme at a special assembly in October. Presented by the Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin, the Rights Respecting Schools Award is granted to schools that show commitment to promoting and realising children’s rights and encouraging adults, children and young people to respect the rights of others in school. Gold is the highest accolade given by Unicef UK and shows a deep and thorough commitment to children’s rights at all levels of school life. Dundonald School is one of 400 schools across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to receive Gold.

**Your chance to shape Merton’s future**

Merton Council are consulting with residents and businesses on the Draft Local Plan from 31 October 2018 to 6 January 2019. The Local Plan will help guide how the borough develops over time, creating a vision that enables the council to successfully and responsibly manage growth, while ensuring the best interests of the borough, its residents and businesses. To find out more and have your say, visit [merton.gov.uk/newlocalplan](http://merton.gov.uk/newlocalplan) and submit your feedback.

**Ready for the cold snap**

Plans have been made well in advance of this year’s cold snap to ensure the borough keeps moving during the winter. Merton Council has 2,500 tonnes of salt to grit roads across the borough. The council is planning ahead to ensure Merton has sufficient stocks to keep our streets clear of ice and safe for residents. [Find out more](http://merton.gov.uk/wintermaintenance) or follow #GritMerton on the Merton Council twitter account.
The people’s park

Morden Park, formerly part of the estate belonging to Morden Park House, has always been seen as an important green space in the heart of the community. Recreational facilities have also been a familiar sight, with residents now enjoying the brand new Morden Leisure Centre. *My Merton* finds out more about the park’s history and its changing landscape.

Once privately owned, Morden Park was sold to the local council during the 1930s by Gilliat Edward Hatfield, owner of Morden Hall. The land was safeguarded from development as part of the St Helier Estate at the insistence of politician, Herbert Morrison.

During World War II, Morden Park was used to grow vegetables and also held air raid shelters. As Britain rebuilt itself following the conflict, the park was seen as an important green space. Children were bussed in from the poorer areas of inner London to enjoy the fresh air and a popular bandstand was later installed.

A time of change
Built around 1780, Morden Park House was used as council offices from 1965 until staff moved to the civic centre in 1985. The vacant house was boarded-up and suffered a decade of vandalism and decay until proposals were made to convert it to the borough’s register office. The painstakingly restored building is now an attractive venue for weddings and other events.

Morden Park Pool opened in 1967 with a peak-time charge of two to three shillings per adult. This was twice the going rate for a 45 minute swim, but the pool still proved highly popular. Fast-forward to 2018 and the new Morden Leisure Centre opened its doors to the public on Tuesday 6 November, continuing the tradition of popular recreational facilities in Morden Park.

A timeline of the park’s history can be found in the reception area of the new facility. To find out more about the new Morden Leisure Centre, turn to page four.

A natural environment
Morden Park is also an important natural habitat, home to many species, including great crested newts, which were carefully monitored during construction of the new leisure centre.

In the 1970s grounds staff began returning areas of the park to meadowland. This forward-thinking approach led to the creation of a natural environment rich with plant species, from grasses and wildflowers to herbs.

A distinctive mound in the park is thought to be a Roman barrow, used for ancient burials or funerary rites. The local woodlands also have trees which are centuries old, including oaks that pre-date Morden Park House.
Merton says NO MORE

It is thought that one in four women and one in six men suffer domestic violence every year in the UK, with abuse occurring in any relationship. My Merton talks to Zoe Gallen in the council’s Safer Merton team to find out more about the One Stop Shop service and how victims can seek help and stay safe.

For a victim of domestic abuse, taking the first steps to finding help can be difficult – which is where the borough’s One Stop Shop comes in. Based at Morden Baptist Church, the service has helped more than 1,600 people since 2010; offering support, free legal advice and practical help on staying safe – as well as tea, tissues and a sympathetic ear.

The borough’s domestic violence coordinator, Zoe Gallen, works closely with Victim Support, which provides the service on the council’s behalf. She liaises with the police and fire brigade too, as they provide home and fire safety checks for victims.

Domestic abuse can involve physical violence but perpetrators often use other, more subtle means of control. Zoe said: “We see a lot of coercive control; where a victim feels someone is controlling the decisions they make; what they do; what they wear.

“We’ve seen economic abuse too; perpetrators taking control of the finances and holding onto benefit payments. We also help victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence.”

Zoe has an educational and campaigning role too. She is involved in supporting the innovative Ask Angela scheme which operates in licensed premises across the borough, go to page 25 to find out more.

She also promotes the annual 16 Days campaign, which runs from 25 November until 10 December. “It’s about raising awareness of domestic and sexual violence. We tweet daily, offer learning days for professionals and we fly the UK Says No More flag at the civic centre.”

It’s a job that can be challenging. Zoe said: “Hearing the details of cases and knowing what some people go through is difficult. And you have to be patient – sometimes you want to do something for a victim, but you have to let them seek help in their own time.”

But the rewards come from helping victims start again after often horrific experiences. Zoe said: “The best part is definitely knowing we’ve kept someone safe – seeing them come out the other side as a survivor with a happy future.”

Love shouldn’t hurt
If you are in an abusive relationship speak out we can help

While the majority of victims are women, a proportion of men are also affected: “Men often feel embarrassed and ashamed. There’s a stereotype that men should be strong, and they feel they will be judged – which really isn’t the case.”

The borough’s domestic violence campaign

Merton says NO MORE

The safest way to view information online would be at a library or in an internet cafe.
Fraud, identity theft and data breaches have become a sad part of modern life, with stories about scams rarely out of the news. *My Merton* investigates what residents can do to keep themselves safe and what to do if you get caught out.

**Cybercrime** is a growing worry, with email phishing scams costing UK consumers £3.5 billion each year. Many fraudsters, however, still take the traditional approach.

According to Merton’s Trading Standards Manager, John Hillarby, doorstep crime is an issue in the borough: “Vulnerable residents are frequently targeted by unscrupulous traders offering to do work on their properties. It's usually of a poor standard, if completed at all, prices escalate and traders may become aggressive and intimidating.”

John’s message is: “Say ‘no’ to unwanted callers and remember that ‘too good to be true’ offers probably are. Always research the credentials of a company before parting with any money.

“Be online savvy too and keep your personal details safe. If you do fall victim to a scam, know you are not alone. Report it – you’ll be helping us expose the scammers and making sure you receive support.”

**Protect yourself**

Action Fraud, the national police reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime, advises:

- Don’t give personal information (name, address, bank details, email or phone number) to anyone before verifying their credentials.
- Don’t trust emails asking you to click on a link and confirm your bank details – banks never send such emails.
- Destroy, preferably by shredding, receipts with your card details and post showing your name and address.
- Install up-to-date anti-virus software and a firewall on your computer and ensure your browser is set to the highest level of security.

**Help is at hand**

Merton’s Mascot Telecare service is a good option for older or vulnerable people living at home who need some extra reassurance. The service provides 24-hour assistance at the touch of a button, whether a client has had a fall or is feeling anxious – about an unwanted caller, for example.

The service is provided by the council for a monthly fee. An enhanced service includes visits from a mobile response team and free access to a handyperson.

If you, a friend or relative could benefit from the Mascot Telecare service, visit mascot-telecare.org.uk or call 020 8274 5940.

If you become a victim of a scam, contact:

Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 03454 04 05 06 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Action Fraud, day or night, using the online fraud reporting tool: www.actionfraud.police.uk

Action Fraud also provide advice about fraud or cybercrime on 0300 123 2040.
Your NEW recycling and rubbish collection service

Your new recycling and rubbish collection service began in October and we are aiming to boost Merton’s recycling rate from 37% to over 45% within 12 months – making us one of the best recycling boroughs in London. We are already seeing encouraging signs and the new service will also help to keep our streets cleaner and save over £1.5 million a year, which will be used to protect other vital services.

Plastic planet

Most plastic containers are only used once before they are thrown away. Plastic takes thousands of years to decompose and 79% of all plastic waste ever created across the world is still in the natural environment. We can all do our bit to reduce the amount of plastic which ends up in landfill by reducing the amount of water bottles and food containers we buy and recycling plastic from around our homes. Please wash and squash your plastic bottles, tubs, trays and pots and recycle them in your green and purple boxes, along with glass, cartons and cans.

After the plastic is collected from outside your home, it is taken to one of three special recycling facilities at Crayford in London; Rainham in Kent or Rochford in Essex. There, they are sorted by hand or machine to separate them from other types of recycling. Lasers are used to separate the different types and colours of plastic. Then, the plastic is shredded, melted and reformed into pellets to make a wide range of items – including new plastic bottles.

New lorries on the road

Our new fleet of waste collection lorries have split chambers, which enables different types of recycling to be collected at the same time. Many collection routes changed when the new recycling and rubbish collection service began in October to make them more efficient and reduce the amount of time that the waste collection lorries are out on the road, which benefits the environment.

Bulky waste

Do you have a piece of furniture, a large electrical appliance or another piece of bulky waste that you need to get rid of? Many charities will collect furniture which is in good condition for a small fee, or you can sell it or give the item away by posting details online. Some retailers will take away your old appliance when they deliver the new one. Alternatively, you can take your bulky waste to the Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in Garth Road, Morden SM4 4AX. In line with other London boroughs, fees are being introduced for all bulky waste collections booked for collection from 1 January 2019. It will cost £30 for up to three items and £50 for between four and six items. Bulky waste collections for 2019 can be booked from mid-December, either online at merton.gov.uk/recycling or by calling 020 8274 4902.
Simply having a GREENER Christmas time

This is the first festive season since the new collection service started. Paper and card, non-recyclable rubbish and food waste are collected one week; then plastics, cans, cartons and glass, plus food waste the next week. Planning what gifts and food you will need before heading out to the shops and buying things which come with less packaging can all help to reduce the amount of waste which is thrown away after Christmas. Please remember that we will only collect your paper and card recycling and rubbish which is stored inside your new wheelie bins with the lid closed. To check your collection day, visit merton.gov.uk/recycling

Top tips for a GREENER festive season

- Reduce your food waste by using up leftovers to make tasty new recipes. For ideas, see lovefoodhatewaste.com and smallchangebigdifference.london/page-tips-recipes
- Recycle the cardboard boxes containing your online Christmas shopping in your blue-lidded wheelie bin.
- Buy a Christmas tree with roots and plant it in your garden after the festive season.
- Don’t forget the batteries! These can now be recycled from your home every week. Put household batteries in one open plastic bag and place it on or next to your wheelie bins or recycling boxes on collection day.
- Stuck for a gift idea? How about a reusable coffee mug or a foldaway bag to take to the shops? Or give an experience like theatre tickets or a promise to babysit, rather than wrapping a present.
- Swap glossy or foil-type giftwrap for wrapping paper, which can be recycled in your blue-lidded wheelie bin, along with Christmas cards and envelopes.
- Planning to buy some new outfits in the January sales? Recycle your old clothes and other textiles every week by placing them in one tied plastic bag and putting it on or next to your wheelie bins or recycling boxes on collection day.

Christmas collections

There will be no recycling or rubbish collections on Christmas Day, Boxing Day or New Year’s Day. Please see the back cover for the revised collection schedule.

- Garden waste collections will continue throughout December and January. An annual subscription costs £70. Join at any time during the year at merton.gov.uk/gardenwaste
- Garth Road Reuse and Recycling Centre in Morden (SM4 4AX) will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day. It will be open on every other day from 8am to 4pm.

Christmas tree recycling

We will collect and compost your real Christmas tree free of charge. After you have removed all the decorations, place the tree at the front edge of your property so that it can be seen and easily reached by the collection crews from the pavement, but please don’t put it on the pavement. All trees must be out by Monday 7 January and will be collected by Thursday 17 January.
Feeling festive? Celebrating Christmas in Merton’s town centres is magical, when sparkling festive lights are switched on, carols are sung, mince pies eaten and mulled wine drunk. *My Merton* finds out more about what’s happening in Merton – and most of it is free.

**Light Up Morden 2018**

**Friday 7 December from 4–6.30pm**

Come and join in the Christmas fun this December! Morden will be hosting its own street party along Crown Lane and promises festive joy for all the family. Starting at 4pm, school and community choirs will kick off the festivities on the stage beside Morden Baptist Church. There will be something for everyone with competitions, games, hot drinks, giveaways, Santa, Christmas stalls and the famous Christmas tree lights switch-on at 6pm.

The festive atmosphere will continue in Morden Hall Park, hosted by the National Trust at 6.30pm.
Winter Wonderland 2018

Sunday 2 December, midday–7.30pm
Firework display at 5.30pm

The popular ‘Wimbledon Winter Wonderland’ is returning to Wimbledon Broadway. The annual day of festive family fun will see part of the road being pedestrianised to host this popular celebration. Thousands of visitors will be treated to Christmas market stalls, street entertainment, festive performances and children’s rides. Look out for live ice carving and the big Brass Band, which brings the magic of Christmas to Wimbledon. The ‘magical marquee’ will provide a covered area for families to sit, relax and enjoy the hot food on offer, plus children’s rides to keep them happily entertained. Don’t miss the magnificent firework display at 5.30pm, courtesy of Centre Court Shopping Centre and new this year a later finishing time of 7.30pm – see The Broadway twinkling with Christmas spirit as night falls.

Celebrate in Pollards Hill

Wednesday 5 December, 6pm

Irene and Paul Strank from the Paul Strank Charitable Foundation, will be switching on the Pollards Hill Christmas tree lights this year. Come along and join in the festive cheer at the New Horizon Centre, which will be hosting a market in their dinning room area.

Raynes Park Christmas festival

Friday 7 December, 3.30–7pm

The Salvation Army, along with The Raynes Park Association and Raynes Park Association of Independent Businesses, are all set to welcome residents and visitors to the Raynes Park Christmas celebrations. Local choirs and performers will take to the stage in the Waitrose car park, along with a live nativity with animals! Santa’s Grotto will be outside the Raynes Park Tavern and there will be plenty of Christmas stalls where you can buy gifts for the festive season.

Christmas in the Village

Sunday 9 December, 10am–5pm

Wimbledon Village Business Association (WVBA) has planned a family day to ensure everyone can join in the festive fun. There will be free family activities, including a reindeer treasure hunt, story time and gingerbread decorating. No festive day out would be complete without Father Christmas and families can watch Santa arrive through the high street on horseback. Young visitors and families will have the chance to meet Santa in his grotto, courtesy of the Wimbledon Foundation. Father Christmas is free to visit and there will be free gifts during the day. Christmas in the Village will be culminating in the switching on of the Christmas tree lights at 4.30pm. Funds raised will go to the Wimbledon Guild.

Find out more Wimbledon-Village.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/wimbledonvillage/
Twitter: @WimbledonVil Instagram: @Wimbledonvillage
Win a family ticket to **Aladdin** at New Wimbledon Theatre

Paul Merton leads the cast in this year’s high-flying pantomime as Widow Twankey, joined by Lee Ryan as Aladdin and magician Pete Firman who will be on hand to spread a little magic over SW19 and help Aladdin overcome the evil Abanazar. Packed with all the traditional pantomime ingredients audiences expect, *Aladdin* features laugh-out-loud comedy, stunning scenery, beautiful costumes and plenty of boos and hisses. This year’s panto is a treat your whole family will treasure!

Visit merton.gov.uk/mymerton to enter and answer the following question.

**What is the name of the evil uncle in Aladdin?**

a) Abanazar  
b) Abanasta  
c) Abanana

The closing date for entries is 4 December 2018.

**Terms and conditions:**
The tickets are non-transferable. There are no cash alternatives, accommodation or travel included in the prize. The competition is for a family ticket (four tickets) to see *Aladdin* at New Wimbledon Theatre, valid on 11 December 2018 at the pantomime press night.

Open your heart and home to change a child’s life

Merton Council urgently needs foster carers for teenagers, siblings and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Foster for Merton and we can offer you:

- On-going comprehensive training
- 24 hour support, 365 days per year
- An allowance of up to £514 per week, per child

Come along to one of our Information Events at Morden Baptist Church on:

- 9 Jan at 10.30am, 23 Jan at 6.00pm
- 6 Feb at 10.30am, 20 Feb at 6.00pm
- 6 Mar at 10.30am or 20 Mar at 6.00pm

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
Tackling loneliness

Loneliness is one of the big issues of our times with an ageing population, busy lives and less connection with communities all contributing to feelings of isolation.

As well as having an obvious impact on our emotional well-being, it can affect our physical health too. Feeling isolated puts us at greater risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and Alzheimer’s; the impact of loneliness has even been likened to that of smoking 15 cigarettes a day!

People often think of loneliness as a problem of old age, and to some extent this is true – as many as four out of five older Londoners report feeling lonely at least some of the time.

In fact, loneliness can affect anybody. The heroine of Gail Honeyman’s bestselling book *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* was inspired by the story of a young office worker who spent every weekend alone. So, whatever your age, issues such as mental ill-health and unemployment can have an impact too.

**Here to help**

The good news is that if you’re feeling lonely, there are organisations just waiting to help. Your local library could be a good place to start. Merton’s seven award-winning libraries have clubs and wellness classes with everything from Tai Chi to scrabble. There are one-off talks and events too and the chance to really be part of library life as a volunteer. To find out more about volunteering opportunities in the borough, turn to page 21. Plus, the home visits service brings books to you, if you can’t get out, providing a befriending service as well as a book!

Wimbledon Guild and Age UK Merton also offer befriending, putting isolated older people in touch with volunteers who’ll visit regularly. Both organisations provide a wealth of drop-in clubs and activities too. The charity *Contact The Elderly* uses volunteer drivers to take older people to Sunday tea parties and the Commonside Trust has lots going on – from tea dances to keep fit. There’s practical help too for people affected by mental-ill health. The Sunshine Café in Wimbledon Chase is open seven days a week providing emotional support to people in crisis, along with therapies and leisure activities in a welcoming, safe environment. The charity Imagine Independence also operates in Merton, offering peer support to help people manage stress, build networks and prepare for work. They run activities and courses that contribute to addressing issues of isolation and loneliness by building confidence and self-esteem, empowering and motivating people and bringing them together to enjoy shared interests and to develop new ones.

**find out more**

Wimbledon Guild wimbledonguild.co.uk
Age UK Merton 020 8648 5792
Libraries merton.gov.uk/libraries
Commonside Trust commonside.net or 020 8764 9582
Sunshine Café is at 296a Kingston Road, SW20 8LX
Imagine Independence
www.imagineindependence.org.uk/london/merton, 020 8685 6192
Thinkaction Merton (MIAPT) offer one-to-one and group therapy.
Register online at thinkaction.org
Ieso Digital Health www.iesohealth.com/merton or call 0800 074 5560
Big White Wall Talking
www.bigwhitewall.com/selfrefer/merton
MERTON COUNCIL

Would you like to play an important role for Merton Council?

We are looking to appoint an independent person to assist in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and to consider complaints against elected councilors.

- You are able to demonstrate experience of reviewing information to reach evidence based conclusions.
- You have strong communication skills and strong personal ethics.
- You have high standards of probity.

Experience of mediation or dispute resolution would be helpful as would knowledge of public sector ethical governance issues.

For further information please contact Democracy Services at democratic.services@merton.gov.uk or telephone 020 8545 3616

Apply online at: merton.gov.uk/independentperson

The closing date for applications is Friday 7 December

MERTON COUNCIL

Fly-tippers we are watching you

Fly-tippers and those who pay fly-tippers

The residents of Merton and Merton Council are always on the look out 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
Tatyana was drawn to her volunteering role by her deep love of reading: “I needed to break up my daily routine and I love being surrounded by books – and people,” she said.

“I try to devote at least four hours each week to volunteering, but I often stay longer as I really enjoy it and there is always so much to do. I love every bit of it. I feel part of a great team and the best thing is that I’m learning so much.”

Tatyana is one of thousands of Merton residents who regularly give back to their community by volunteering. There are plenty of opportunities out there – from mentoring young people to befriending older residents. There are sports coaching roles where you can get active outdoors, office-based options to develop financial or digital skills and planet-saving environmental projects too.

Volunteer and you’ll be helping organisations that otherwise may not be able to provide vital services to people in need. But there are positive effects for you too; from boosting your CV and helping you find paid work, to introducing you to new friends and improving your well-being.

Wimbledon Guild has a variety of opportunities, from befriending and gardening, to helping out in the HomeFood Café, where Catherine Holland volunteers. “Every week I have something to look forward to,” she says. “Volunteering has helped me to build my confidence and give me a sense of routine. I am over sixty and had been through some tough times, but I have made great friends. I always have someone to chat to, to have a giggle with, and I feel empowered to do more with life.”

Browse the MVSC website for local roles volunteermerton.org.uk or call 020 8685 1771
For library opportunities go to merton.gov.uk/libraries
For Wimbledon Guild visit wimbledonguild.co.uk or call 020 8946 0735

Do something amazing – volunteer!

Tatyana Chunchukova has been volunteering with Merton’s award winning libraries since April; meeting and greeting customers and working in Mitcham Library’s resource team, where she organises donations of books. My Merton caught up with her to find out more about volunteering in the borough.

Merton’s libraries alone are looking for ‘meeters and greeters’, IT support assistants and children’s activity coordinators, as well as many more roles.

Merton – proud to be a Fairtrade borough
Feeling anxious or low?

Free support is available in Merton
Get the help you need when you need it – in person or online

Ieso Digital Health offers one-to-one online therapy. Register at www.iesohealth.com/merton or call 0800 074 5560

Big White Wall offers online therapy sessions through typing, audio or via secure webcam. Register at www.bigwhitewall.com/selfrefer/merton.

Thinkaction Merton (MIAPT) offers one to one and group therapy (face to face, telephone or Skype). Register at www.thinkaction.org.uk/online-registration or call 0300 012 0012

For more information, visit www.mertonccg.nhs.uk/mental-health

MORDEN LEISURE CENTRE
OPEN NOW

Better, Morden Leisure Centre
Enjoy a variety of activities at the brand new state-of-the-art leisure centre.

• 25m Swimming Pool
• Secondary Pool
• 90 Station Gym
• Fitness Studio
• Café

Find out more at better.org.uk/morden

In partnership with Merton

Better is a registered trademark and trading name of GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited), a charitable social enterprise and registered society under the Co-operative & Community Benefit & Societies Act 2014 registration no. 27793R. Registered office: Middlegate House, The Royal Arsenal, London, SE18 6SX. Inland Revenue Charity no: XR44398
Welcoming a family into the community

In February 2017, a Syrian family flew into Gatwick from Lebanon, eagerly awaited by a group of local residents from The Salvation Army’s Raynes Park Community Church, who had been preparing for their arrival for months. My Merton caught up with The Salvation Army to find out why they chose to welcome this family into their community.

The family from Lebanon had been accepted for resettlement in the UK as part of the Government’s Community Sponsorship Programme, a pioneering scheme that sees local people undertake the background work needed to settle a refugee family in their area.

Having fled the conflict in Syria, where their home had been destroyed and family members killed, the family had been living in a Lebanese refugee camp. Life in the camp was extremely tough and medical care inadequate to meet the life-threatening health needs of their daughter.

Merton was the first London borough, and only the second in the UK, to welcome a family under the programme, which launched in July 2016. The idea came from members of the church who felt helpless in the face of the plight of refugees.

To prepare for the arrival, volunteers pooled their skills, expertise and connections. They set about finding and renovating a suitable home for the family and getting ready to help them learn English and access health, education and employment.

The council supported The Salvation Army’s application to the scheme and helped in practical ways; ensuring the accommodation was suitable and finding school places for the children.

The family settled into Merton life quickly. Within a week the children had started school – an exciting moment as they had been out of education for seven years. Almost two years on they are speaking English fluently, with mum and dad not far behind. The daughter’s health has improved and she is currently undergoing a major operation which, if successful, will be life-changing. Her father has two part-time jobs, while mum is busy setting up a catering business.

The Wimbledon Synagogue is soon to sponsor a family under the same scheme.

Do you have space in your lives to foster?

Following an increase in unaccompanied asylum seeking children coming into care, Merton Council urgently needs 20 more foster families to look after them. Children come to the UK with no parents or carers for many reasons including civil war and persecution. We ensure that foster carers are supported on every step of their journey, with round-the-clock support and specialist training on the needs of unaccompanied children. Anyone aged over 18 with a spare room can apply to foster. Call us for a chat on 020 8545 4070 or 0800 073 0874, email fostering@merton.gov.uk or visit merton.gov.uk/fostering
Helping you take a breath of fresh air

Air pollution is the fourth biggest threat to public health after cancer, obesity and heart disease. My Merton takes a closer look at air quality in Merton and how everyone can do their bit to improve the air we breathe.

As Londoners, we live in a city with some of the most polluted air in Europe. It is estimated that up to 9,000 people a year are dying prematurely in the capital – from conditions including respiratory and heart disease and cancer. Vulnerable groups including young children, older people and those with lung problems are the worst affected.

Living in Merton we’re lucky to be surrounded by an oases of green space in the form of more than 100 parks and gardens. However, like most London boroughs, there are still significant pollution black spots, where the quality of our air doesn’t meet European standards.

This year, the council published its latest Air Quality Action Plan, which sets out the work that is taking place to measure air quality, encourage change and tackle the problem of poor air quality.

We constantly measure the borough’s air quality using two methods – diffusion tubes, which hang on lamp columns and measure nitrogen dioxide levels at specific locations, and at air quality stations situated in Morden and South Wimbledon. We do this to check that air quality is at safe levels; to see how our improvement plans are working and to alert residents to instances of high pollution.

Improvements we are making

We’ve found that around 60% of dangerous nitrogen dioxide emissions come from transport. To encourage greener travel we’ve improved cycle routes, while boosting uptake of electric vehicles. We’ve established electric car club schemes and aim to have 125 charging points in the borough by 2021. There’s a reduced fee (£25 a year) for resident parking permits for an electric vehicles, too. We also took the difficult decision of introducing a residential parking permit levy for diesel vehicles, encouraging our residents to switch to less harmful fuels.

The air quality around our schools is a particular concern and it is a council priority to continue making any improvements we can – such as banning cars from idling close to schools, moving entrances away from congested areas and pedestrianising roads nearby.

We are also exploring the use of Clean Air Zones and tackling pollution around schools through better enforcement and projects like school streets.

On a bigger scale our regeneration projects seek to encourage better air quality by prioritising cycling and walking routes and supporting public transport improvements.

Read Merton’s Air Quality Management Plan at merton.gov.uk and search local air quality
Stay safe this Christmas
Follow the Safer Merton guide to protecting yourself and your belongings this Christmas.

Home fire safety visits
Did you know that the London Fire Brigade (LFB) offers free home fire safety visits to London residents? These visits provide fire safety advice, including information on prevention, detection and escape. Free smoke alarms and specialist alarms can also be fitted where needed.

In addition, London Fire Brigade have been trialling a new service called ‘Fire, Safe and Well’ in Merton, which is an enhanced home fire safety visit. As well as providing fire safety advice an LFB Community Safety Advisor is able to provide information about falls prevention, cold homes assistance, smoking cessation, social isolation and atrial fibrillation testing (a heart condition that causes an irregular/abnormally fast heartbeat, which can increase risk of having a stroke).

For more information and to book
Home fire safety visit: Freephone 0800 028 4428, email smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk
Fire, Safe and Well visit: Email FSWMerton@london-fire.gov.uk and provide your contact details.

At home
If you’ve bought valuable items as presents, don’t advertise the fact by placing the box outside and don’t leave curtains open to show off gifts around the tree.
While you’re out for the evening, make sure doors are locked securely and leave a light on, so it looks like someone is at home.

Protect your presents
Don’t tell the world you’ve gone away for Christmas – cancel any deliveries and ask a neighbour to remove post. If your children receive the latest phones as gifts, make sure they hang onto them!
Set up the devices’ tracking features and keep them hidden when out and about. Register new bikes, tech and other valuables with a service such as immobilise.com.

Keep safe when out and about
Crowded shops, bars and restaurants are a pickpocket’s dream, so keep your purse or wallet safe in an inside pocket of your coat or bag. Don’t take more money or cards than you need and be wary at cashpoints.
If you’re on a date or in a bar or club with someone and it doesn’t feel right, ask the staff for ‘Angela’. Ask Angela is a scheme aimed at tackling sexual violence in all the borough’s licensed premises. Bar staff have been specially-trained to help anyone who feels unsafe; ask for ‘Angela’ and you’ll get help finding a taxi and leaving discreetly.

Merton supports No More; a national campaign to get people talking about domestic and sexual violence. Turn to page 12 to find out more.
Win a family ticket to *The Wind in the Willows* at Polka Theatre

When Mole abandons spring cleaning for the delights of the riverbank, he has no idea of the adventures that lie ahead. With Toad’s obsession for all things fast causing chaos (poop, poop!), it falls upon his friends Ratty, Mole and wise old Badger to save him. But that means coming face to face with the ferrets and weasels of the Wild Wood… In Toby Hulse’s delightful adaptation of Kenneth Grahame’s classic story of friendship and bravery, this winter warmer will take you on a journey through the seasons. Playing at Polka Theatre 9 November 2018–17 February 2019.

Visit merton.gov.uk/mymerton to enter and answer the following question.

**Who wrote *The Wind in the Willows?***

a) Simon Grahame  
b) David Grahame  
c) Kenneth Grahame

The closing date for entries is 4 December 2018.

**Terms and conditions:**
Family ticket valid for up to four people, party must include one child. Tickets valid for performances between 2 January and 16 February 2019. Booking required by 21 December 2018. Subject to availability. Not valid in conjunction with any other offer. Travel and accommodation not included.
what's on
Your comprehensive guide to what’s happening in Merton. merton.gov.uk/events

COLLIERS WOOD  MITCHAM  MORDEN  RAYNES PARK  WIMBLEDON/MERTON

Arts and entertainment

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 (no booking fees apply)

● Aladdin
Saturday 8 December–Sunday 6 January 2019
Paul Merton leads the cast in this year’s high-flying pantomime as Widow Twankey, joined by Lee Ryan as Aladdin and Magician Pete Firman who will be on hand to spread a little magic over SW19 and help Aladdin overcome the evil Abanazar. Packed with all the traditional pantomime ingredients, Aladdin features laugh-out-loud comedy, stunning scenery, beautiful costumes and plenty of boos and hisses. A treat your whole family will treasure! Please note: Lee Ryan will not be appearing in Aladdin on Saturday 15 December, due to existing television commitments.

● Avenue Q
Tuesday 5–Saturday 9 February 2019
Fantasies come true – the hilarious and multi-award winning Avenue Q is back! Following a smash-hit run in 2014–2015, the fur-lariously laugh-out-loud musical is back by popular demand. Catch-up with all your favourite (and unforgettable) characters on a downtown New York street trying to make sense of life’s burning issues – like what do you do with a BA in English? How do you find your purpose? And is the internet really just for...never mind. Missed all the fuzz last time round? Don’t let your life suck – book now! Suitable for audiences 14+.

● Rock of Ages
Tuesday 26 February–Saturday 2 March 2019
Rock of Ages is an LA love story lavished with over 25 classic rock anthems. Lose yourself in a city and a time where the dreams are as big as the hair, and yes, they can come true! This hilarious musical comedy will have you singing and laughing with its epic songs, including We Built This City, The Final Countdown, Here I Go Again, Can’t Fight this Feeling and I Want To Know What Love Is played loud and proud by an awesome live band. Now a global smash with hit seasons on Broadway, London’s West End and Las Vegas and a star-studded Hollywood movie version, we promise you a night of outrageous rock ‘n’ roll debauchery at the biggest party in town!

● Attic Theatre
Company singing workshops
Every Wednesday in Mitcham and Wimbledon
Going For a Song singing workshop is for anyone over the age of 55. It is an excellent way to spend an enjoyable afternoon exercising the vocal chords and body. Singing can lift your spirits and make you feel much healthier and happier inside. Workshops run in Mitcham and Wimbledon, drop into either for a free first session!
Mitcham 1-2pm
Vestry Hall, 338 London Road, Mitcham CR4 3UD. £4 per session.
Wimbledon 3-4pm
St Marks Church Hall, St Marks Place SW19 7ND. £5 per session.
staying in? Here’s a selection of what’s new in Merton’s libraries:

MY MERTON’S BOOK CHOICE

Master of His Fate
by Barbara Taylor Bradford
London 1884: Queen Victoria is Empress of India and Britain is at its peak of worldwide power. James Falconer works as a barrow boy in a flourishing London market, but hungers for more.

Alexis Malvern is the only child of the market’s owner, Henry Malvern. Raised by her father and heir to his businesses, she has no interest in marriage. Turning away from family tradition, young James Falconer dreams of building an empire of stores like Fortnum and Mason’s. He believes that Henry Malvern could offer him a way to climb beyond his beginnings, part of the new middle class. But, tragedy and betrayal threaten the dreams of both James and Alexis – and jeopardise everything they hold dear.

Other books:
- Pandemic – Robin Cook
- Sea of Greed – Clive Cussler
- A Winter Beneath The Stars – Jo Thomas
- The Forgotten Daughter – Mary Wood
- If You’d Just Let Me Finish – Jeremy Clarkson

eMagazines and eAudiobooks
Merton Libraries have over 38,000 eBooks and eAudiobooks. Most of these are available through the Libby App but some eAudiobooks can also be listened to through the RBDigital App. All you need is your library card and a suitable device.

eBooks
- The Christmas Sisters – Sarah Morgan
- The Rebel’s Revenge – Scott Mariana
- Roar – Cecelia Ahern
- A Lawless Place – David Donachie
- Meghan, A Hollywood Princess – Andrew Morton

Arts and entertainment continued

- St Saviour’s Church Christmas Fair
  Saturday 24 November, 11.30am-2pm
  St Saviour’s Church, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, SW20 9DG. Admission by donation. Get into the Christmas spirit! Join us in an all-age event: stalls selling Christmas cards and gifts, books, cakes, jams and preserves, together with raffle, tombolas and games to play, plus seasonal refreshments.

- Winter Fair
  Saturday 1 December, 10am-4pm
  The Winter Fair at Wimbledon Library is the perfect opportunity to pick up some Christmas presents whilst supporting local artists/creatives.

- Hatfield Christmas Fair
  Saturday 1 December, 12noon-3pm
  Tombolas, raffle, Santa’s grotto, refreshments, stallholders, arts and crafts. All welcome.

- West Barnes Singers Christmas concert
  Saturday 1 December, 7.30pm
  St Saviour’s Church, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, SW20 9DG. Choruses from Messiah. Festive carols with choristers from St Mary’s Wimbledon. Tickets will be £10 each and children are free.

- Wimbledon Guild carol concert
  Thursday 13 December.
  St. Mark’s Church, Wimbledon. Get into the Christmas spirit at this annual carol service held in aid of Wimbledon Guild. This year, the carols will be performed by two Wimbledon schools:

  - The Study Wimbledon
  - Bishop Gilpin Church of England Primary School.

  Doors open 6.30pm; service starts 7pm. Tickets: £12 adult, under 16s £5, family ticket: £30 (two adults plus two under 16s).

- St Saviour’s Church Jumble Sale
  Saturday 5 January
  2019, 10.30am–12noon
  St Saviour’s Church, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, SW20 9DG.

- St Saviour’s Church Traditional Burns Supper
  Saturday 26 January, 7pm for 7.15pm start
  St Saviour’s Church, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, SW20 9DG.
**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.

- **Wimbledon** Tuesday 4 December, 7.15pm
  Merton Arts Space in Wimbledon Library.

- **Raynes Park** Thursday 6 December, 7.15pm
  Raynes Park Library.

- **Mitcham** Wednesday 27 February, 7.15pm
  Pollards Hill Library.

- **Morden** Thursday 28 February, 7.15pm
  Council Chamber, civic centre.

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**Merton Adult Learning courses**

Merton Adult Learning offers a wide range of courses for adults across Merton. Whether you’re looking to learn a new skill, boost your career prospects with a qualification, meet people or simply learn for fun, you’ll find a course that interests you.

- **In the Winter Wood**
  Thursday 29 November – Sunday 17 February 2019
  *In the Winter Wood* is a tale of friendship and working together with Pig and Goat meeting Goose, Hare and Cockerel on a journey after running away to avoid becoming a winter feast. The stories that these animals share along the way will explore cultural, winter traditions from around the world. This devised new story will be a cosy, immersive experience for our younger audiences with the Adventure Theatre being transformed into a winter woodland. Ages three to six.

- **Polka Youth Theatre**
  Every Thursday, 10 January – 7 February 2019, 4.30–6.30pm
  A unique opportunity to get expert drama training and develop new performance skills, for everyone aged nine to 14 who enjoys theatre and performance. Work with leading theatre professionals. Devise and create a piece of original theatre to perform each week. Perform on Polka’s Main Stage every year. Learn new performance skills. Explore drama techniques used by professional actors.
**Health and fitness**

- **Free Spectra health checks for National HIV Testing Week**
  Wimbledon Library
  Thursday 22 November, 11am–2pm

- **Spectra health checks for World Aids Day**
  Pollards Hill Library
  Saturday 1 December, 2–5pm

- **Befriending course**
  Saturday 2 March (morning and afternoon), and Wednesday 6 March (evening) at a venue in central Wimbledon Free. The mental health charity APCMH Merton and Sutton (Being Alongside) will be training new volunteers, who spend a couple of hours every few weeks, to befriend a person with mental health problems. [find out more](#)

- **Walks and talks**
  - **Introduction to art psychotherapy**
    Tuesday 27 November 10.45am–12noon
    Wimbledon Guild, Guild House, 30–32 Worple Road, London SW19 4EF.
    Community art therapist Aisling Fegan will be talking about the history, practice and how this fast-developing therapy is supporting patients. [find out more](#)
  - **Wimbledon National Trust Association lectures**
    Held at Christchurch Hall, Cottenham Park Road SW19 4RZ.
    £3 WNTA members, £3.50 non-members.

**Mayor of Merton events**

- **Christmas dinner**
  Saturday 1 December 2018
  A three-course dinner, which includes a pre-dinner drink, takes place at The Wimbledon Club, Church Road, Wimbledon SW19 5AG. £50 per ticket. Visit the Mayor of Merton's web page on the Merton website to book tickets.

- **Christmas Carol Service**
  Tuesday 18 December 2018, 7.30pm start
  Sacred Heart Church, Edge Hill, Wimbledon, London SW19 4LU.

- **Charity Ball 2019**
  Saturday 27 April 2019
  All England Lawn Tennis Club. Tickets: TBA.
  Civic dinner and fundraising evening in aid of the Mayor’s charities. Contact the Mayor’s Office to book a table or apply for a sponsorship package.

  020 8545 3517 or [www.merton.gov.uk/mayorofmerton](http://www.merton.gov.uk/mayorofmerton)

- **Petite Performers**
  Saturday 9.30–11am
  Dance classes for ages 14 months to four years, taught by qualified and experienced dance teacher Rowan George. Classes include ‘You and Me Dance’, ‘Baby Ballet’ and ‘Mini HipHop’. [find out more](#)

  - **V Vox Community Singing Group**
    Mondays from 26 November, 1-2pm
    A friendly group signing jazz, pop, classical, musical theatre, folk, rock and original music. All abilities welcome. [find out more](#)

  - **Wimbledon Speakers’ Club**
    First and third Wednesdays of each month, 7.30–9.30pm
    Membership is £95 per year or £6 per meeting. For anyone who would like to practice and develop skills for public speaking and effective communication. [find out more](#)

  - **The Aristocrat, the Able Seaman and the tragic sinking of RMS Titanic**
    Saturday 23 February 2019, 2.15–4pm
    Whilst researching her book The Dance of Love, Angela Young unearthed letters between her great-grandmother, the Countess of Rothes, and Able Seaman Jones, both survivors of the Titanic, which resulted in her exploring further. Her talk gives an insight into the story of these survivors. [find out more](#)

- **Exhibition Room 1, Wimbledon Library, 35 Wimbledon Hill Road, SW19 7NB**
  - **V Vox Community Singing Group**
    Mondays from 26 November, 1-2pm
    A friendly group signing jazz, pop, classical, musical theatre, folk, rock and original music. All abilities welcome. [find out more](#)

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Major Nick Coke is from The Salvation Army’s Raynes Park Community Church, a charitable organisation working in the heart of Merton.

With four churches in Merton, The Salvation Army has been an active part of the community for 130 years, offering services from prayer and worship, to befriending and food parcels as well as campaigning against modern slavery, domestic abuse and homelessness. It is also part of a Community Sponsorship Programme, which sees local people help settle refugee families into their community. Turn to page 23 to find out more about this pioneering programme.

Tell us why you became involved.
Joining The Salvation Army in my early 20s was the result of two great loves of my life. In my teenage years I came to realise that following Jesus involved putting belief into practical action. The other draw might have been that my now wife Kerry was already a member!

How relevant is The Salvation Army today?
Despite higher standards of living, better health and growing personal wealth, some people fall through the cracks, or struggle with life. In Merton, like elsewhere, we have challenges with economic inequality, lack of housing, loneliness and mental ill-health. We are committed to nurturing communities of hope where we learn how to grow together, overcome difficulties and live our lives to the full.

What’s the most rewarding part for you?
I know people who have overcome extraordinarily difficult circumstances and others who are fighting their way through it. To play even a tiny part easing their struggle is a privilege.
Your Christmas recycling, rubbish and garden waste* collections

Your collections will return to normal from

Monday 14 January 2019

Please put out your waste and recycling by 6am on the day of your collection.
If you live in a flat above a shop, please put your bags out at your normal collection times.
*Garden waste is a chargeable collection service. To sign up, visit merton.gov.uk/gardenwaste

MERTON COUNCIL

YOUR USUAL COLLECTION DAY | YOUR REVISED COLLECTION DAY
-----------------------------|-----------------------------
Tuesday 25 December 2018 | Thursday 27 December 2018 2 days later
Wednesday 26 December 2018 | Friday 28 December 2018 2 days later
Thursday 27 December 2018 | Saturday 29 December 2018 2 days later
Friday 28 December 2018 | Monday 31 December 2018 3 days later
Monday 31 December 2018 | Wednesday 2 January 2019 2 days later
Tuesday 1 January 2019 | Thursday 3 January 2019 2 days later
Wednesday 2 January 2019 | Friday 4 January 2019 2 days later
Thursday 3 January 2019 | Saturday 5 January 2019 2 days later
Friday 4 January 2019 | Monday 7 January 2019 3 days later
Monday 7 January 2019 | Tuesday 8 January 2019 1 day later
Tuesday 8 January 2019 | Wednesday 9 January 2019 1 day later
Wednesday 9 January 2019 | Thursday 10 January 2019 1 day later
Thursday 10 January 2019 | Friday 11 January 2019 1 day later
Friday 11 January 2019 | Saturday 12 January 2019 1 day later

Waste helpline: 020 8274 4902
merton.gov.uk/recycling