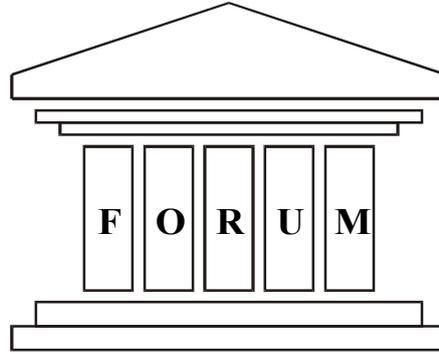


# MERTON PARK WARD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



Autumn 2007

Issue No 36

## Merton Park Ward Residents Association sponsors your three Independent Residents Ward Councillors on Merton Council

**Karin Forbes** (karin.forbes@merton.gov.uk) – 58 Mostyn Road SW19 3LN – 8540 3314  
**Peter Southgate** (peter.southgate@merton.gov.uk) – 22 Dorset Road SW19 3HA – 8542 2053  
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[www.mpwra.co.uk](http://www.mpwra.co.uk)

It is pleasing to see more and more of you at MPWRA Monthly Meetings. Your Independent Resident Councillors greatly appreciate the wide range of views expressed by the audience during and after their reports. Other Merton Councillors representing the political parties know that our Independents come to Council meetings with views that have been subjected to public opinion.

Merton Park's Independents have always been fully aware of their responsibilities across the Borough and not just in our Ward. In the present Council structure, where they hold the balance of power, they take that obligation very seriously, as decisions are seldom easy and clear-cut. As well as holding the balance of power, we have Peter Southgate as Chair of the main Scrutiny Panel, which reviews Cabinet decisions.

Inevitably, having the balance of power in the hands of our three Independents was viewed by other Councillors with a certain amount of suspicion at first. Our three Councillors tell me that things have settled down now and their views have earned them friendly respect. I think this is a great compliment to our Councillors and to Merton Park Ward's policy of the last seventeen years of viewing every subject on its merits and not opposing for opposition's sake.

**Hubert Child, Chairman**

### INVITATION TO A PARTY

We'd like to organise a social event in Merton Park Ward and want to make sure it's something you'd enjoy and support. Do you have any ideas – Cheese and Wine? Quiz Night? Barn Dance? We'd welcome your ideas and if you'd like to be involved in the organisation let us know that too.

**Email:** [mpwra@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mpwra@yahoo.co.uk) or contact  
**Chris Stutt 10 Church Path, SW19 3HJ**  
**Tel: 020 8543 6843**

### JOIN US

Please support us by becoming a member of MPWRA – a form is enclosed. And if you're able to help us in any other way – for example by delivering FORUM or helping with administration or IT support, then please get in touch.

**Email:** [mpwra@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mpwra@yahoo.co.uk) or contact  
**Hubert Child 5a Sheridan Road, SW19 3HW**  
**Tel: 020 8540 3087**

**EMAIL ALERTS** We are setting up an email alert list so that we can send out reminders for meetings and other useful information between the twice-yearly editions of FORUM. If you'd like your email address to be added to this list then email us at [mpwra@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mpwra@yahoo.co.uk).

## **RUTLISH SUCCESSES**

Two teachers at Rutlish School have been awarded "Chartered London Teacher Status". This is a new award to recognise the teachers who do most to raise their pupils' marks. Only three teachers in the whole Borough of Merton achieved it, so we are very proud that two of them should be from our local secondary school. Congratulations to Jolande Botha and David Grant!

Rutlish has also seen a big improvement in its results at both key stage 3 (14 year olds) and key stage 4 (GCSE). My two sons are pupils at the

## **WARD SURGERIES**

Since our last newsletter we have held two ward surgeries. The first was in July in St Mary's Church Hall, where we were pleased to see both new and familiar faces coming to us with a wide variety of interesting issues. We have also been experimenting with other ways to make sure everyone in the ward has access to us.

We tried a new idea: a street surgery. We leafleted all the homes in both Chatsworth and Sandringham

## **BLACK SACKS AND FOXES**

Many of you have expressed concerns about putting black sacks out for early morning collection, only to find that the foxes have got to them before they have been collected! The Council have agreed with us that it is possible to leave your sacks in dustbins for the collection.

## **NELSON HOSPITAL DEVELOPMENT**

At a recent meeting of the Nelson Hospital Reference Group, the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust (PCT) gave an update on plans for the Nelson Hospital.

As part of the Better Healthcare Closer to Home Initiative, the PCT are preparing a Business Case for a Local Care Centre at the Nelson. It is currently envisaged that the site would provide a base for two GP Practices, a Diagnostics centre, outpatient facilities, therapy rehabilitation to support the outpatient clinics, Mental Health Services, Dental Care and a Pharmacy. Other

## **CANNABIS FACTORIES UPDATE**

As you are probably aware, three cannabis factories have been found in houses in the ward over the past year and we wanted to update you on the progress the police have made on all of them. A suspect has been arrested for the Kenley Road location and enquiries are continuing for the

school and I am Vice-Chair of governors. Through my personal involvement I am aware that standards have been consistently rising and it is fantastic to see this confirmed in the figures. The Governors will work hard to ensure this good work continues and are also working with the Council and the Headteacher to re-establish a sixth form at the school, hopefully within the next two years.

The new Head of Rutlish, Alex Williamson, will be speaking at our meeting on 4 March.

**Cllr Karin Forbes**

Avenues saying we would be in their roads the following Saturday morning. This gave the residents a chance to prepare any issues they wished to discuss with us. We called on every house and were very heartened by the response. Even when people did not have any burning issues (and most didn't) everyone seemed pleased to see us. This is something we will definitely do again and if you would like us to visit your road, please contact me.

**Cllr Karin Forbes**

Please ensure that the sacks are tied up and not so full that they tear as they are taken out of the bin. If you decide to adopt this practice (as I have), I would be grateful for any feed-back on whether this move works for you.

**Cllr Krysia Williams**

clinics, such as podiatry, could be provided by other service providers.

The Nelson Hospital Reference Group is currently seeking more representatives from the southern end of our Ward and, in particular, users of the Cannon Hill Lane Surgery. If you would be interested in becoming a member of this informal consultation group then please contact me for more information, or get in touch with the Chairman, Robert Welchman on 020 8540 3265.

**Cllr Krysia Williams**

other two. The Safer Neighbourhood Team organised a "thermal image fly-over" for our ward in case there were any more locations being used to grow cannabis but thankfully none was found.

**Cllr Karin Forbes**

## PLANNING ROUNDUP

Recent decisions have shown a welcome sensitivity to residents' concerns, especially affecting development in back gardens.

**30 Dorset Road** – an application to demolish the bungalow and replace it with a four storey, flat roofed block of flats was **refused** unanimously by the Planning Committee as being unduly prominent and out of keeping with the adjoining John Innes (Merton Park) Conservation Area. The Committee took the view that “not enough weight has been given to the pattern of neighbouring houses” making it unlikely that any future application for a modern flat roofed design would succeed.

As a near neighbour I was disbarred from taking part in the Planning Committee's decision but joined with others who submitted no fewer than 57 individual letters of objection. My place on the Committee was ably taken by Cllr Karin Forbes as substitute, and Cllr Krysia Williams spoke forcefully against the application, together with other community representatives. **Harmful planning applications can be rejected when we work together to oppose them.**

**Rear of 85 Sandbourne Avenue** – a proposal for a single storey house overlooking rear gardens in Charnwood Avenue and Erridge Road was **refused** as visually intrusive and detracting from the open aspect of the area.

**Rear of 27 Leafield Road** – a similar proposal for a three bedroom house in the rear garden was

**refused** as unduly dominant and damaging to neighbour amenity.

**363 – 365 Kingston Road** – an application to replace some of the single storey retail units in Wimbledon Chase (just east of the station) with a retail and residential development up to five storeys in height was **refused** by the Planning Committee because of its high density and lack of amenity space for residents and modern design unsympathetic to the 1930's buildings in the area.

**168 London Road, Morden** (former Express Dairy site) – permission has been **granted** to use the site for parking a maximum of 40 cars, Monday to Friday between 7am and 7pm. This is a temporary permission for a period of two years, presumably while the site owner works on redevelopment plans.

**Northolt Works, London Road, Morden** (behind car wash) – an application to demolish the car repair workshop and MOT testing centre and build 14 flats has been submitted. A final decision is still pending, but consent may be refused because of lack of amenity space and loss of employment.

Between them, your current and former Independent councillors share **51 years of experience** in dealing with planning issues in your ward. If you feel you could benefit from our collective experience, contact Cllr Krysia Williams or Desé Child (020 8540 3087).

**Cllr Peter Southgate**

## NEW TOWN CENTRE MANAGER FOR MORDEN

Colin Tanner has recently been appointed as the Town Centre Manager for Morden and Colliers Wood. His brief includes working on the regeneration of Morden Town Centre. He will be coming to speak at the Residents Association Meeting in May 2008 and you can contact him on

020 8545 3067. I am a member of the working party set up by the Council to consider options, both short and long term, for invigorating the centre of Morden. I would be very happy to hear your ideas.

**Cllr Krysia Williams**

## 'RAT RUNNING' – IS IT A PROBLEM FOR YOU?

A resident of Grasmere Avenue took advantage of the 'Soapbox' slot at our October meeting to spell out his concerns about rat running traffic through his part of the ward. To avoid Morden town centre, cars travelling east along Martin Way in the morning rush hour divert via Mostyn Road, Cranleigh Road, Grasmere Avenue (north section) and Kenley Road on their way to London. This gives rise to two problems – the **volume** of traffic using our residential road network and its **speed**

as drivers fail to take proper care at junctions and cut corners in their hurry to get to work. As your ward councillors, we have lived with this issue for long enough to know there are no easy or uncontentious solutions. After all, we as residents want to use the same roads as the rat running traffic, so any restrictions would affect us equally.

**How would you tackle rat running traffic? E-mail or write to us, and we will report back in a future edition of FORUM.**

**Cllr Peter Southgate**

## WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR RECYCLABLE WASTE?

At present Merton collects three streams of recyclable waste: newspapers and magazines; a 'co-mingled' selection of plastic bottles, card and cans; and glass. The collection vehicle is known as a "toploader" which consists of three separate compartments into which separated recyclables can be deposited. The vehicle deposits the collected recyclables into three bulking bays at the Garth Road depot and from there they are transported to the various reprocessors.

The newspapers and magazines are transported directly to the Aylesford Newsprint mill in Kent where they are recycled into newsprint.

The mix of plastic bottles, card and cans is delivered to a materials recycling facility (MRF) in Crayford, Kent, where it is further sorted and sent on for reprocessing.

The glass is collected from Garth Road by Midland Glass who reprocess it further and determine what can be recycled again into glass containers and what is best suited to be used as a road aggregate.

Merton is currently running trials in two areas of the borough using standard dustcarts and collecting all the recyclables, including paper and glass together. This mix of materials is bulked in a separate bay at the Garth Road depot and is taken

to the MRF in Crayford for further sorting. Separation technology is advancing rapidly, making it possible to separate out all of these materials.

You will know that it is now possible to recycle tetra paks. These had been difficult to recycle in the past due to the many layers of packaging (card, aluminium and plastic film). Again, as technology advances and markets open up, it has become possible to find reprocessors who can ensure the cartons are recycled. Currently Merton is recycling 21% of its household waste. It is hoped that these initiatives will enable Merton to achieve its annual target of 23%.

Full details of what can be recycled through the collection scheme and where these materials are taken can be found on the Merton's website. You will also find links there to partners in the supply chain, so that you can see exactly what happens to the materials once we have passed them on for further reprocessing. The link below takes you to the web page that outlines the list of acceptable and non-acceptable items.

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/living/environment/recyclingwastemanagement/recycling/recyclefromhome/acceptable.htm>

**Cllr Krysia Williams**

### FREE STOP SMOKING SERVICE

**Give up 4 good** increases, by four times, your chances of successfully stopping smoking for good.

#### The programme offers

- FREE local advice and support - either in a group or on a one-to-one basis
- A confidential and friendly service
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy on prescription

#### You can contact the service by

- Calling the local FREEPHONE number on **0800 652 8019**
- Visiting the website at [www.giveup4good.nhs.uk](http://www.giveup4good.nhs.uk)
- Asking your GP, practice nurse or local pharmacist for more information

### NHS ORGAN DONOR REGISTER

Advances in organ transplant procedures mean that, more than ever, organ donors are needed. At the moment over 9,000 people are waiting for a suitable organ to become available. Organs can be used from the elderly as well as from younger people.

Leaflets were distributed to every home but in Merton Park they were inserted in the free

newspapers and in many cases they may have been discarded.

Register on-line at [www.mylifemygift.org](http://www.mylifemygift.org) or phone the Organ Donor Line on 0845 60 60 400.

When you have registered, tell your family and Executors, so that your wishes do not get overlooked.

**Desé Child**

## NEIGHBOURHOOD POWER

### Having your say - will it make a difference?

The cleanliness of your street, the attractions of your local park, the standards of the schools your children attend, the quality of new buildings in your area – all these things are determined by the Council's decisions and your councillors are accountable for them. But few people make that connection and still fewer attempt to shape and improve their neighbourhood through the democratic process.

**Neighbourhood Governance** aims to reconnect residents with their responsibility for their neighbourhood and to give them the power to change things for the better. As Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission, I chaired a cross party task group to review ways in which we can get residents more involved in the decisions that affect their neighbourhood.

Our report recognises that we have to revitalise the area forums in Merton to encourage residents' participation. In future they will be based on town centres that are familiar to everyone (Wimbledon, Morden, Mitcham, Colliers Wood and Raynes Park). They will be better publicised and (more importantly) they will establish a line of accountability to ensure promises made turn into actions delivered – we have to get away from the

perception that area forums are just "talking shops". In time area forums could evolve into area committees with decision making powers on local issues and their own budgets for local expenditure – other authorities are already doing this.

Under a separate initiative, new legislation entitled **Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)**, ward councillors will be given additional powers to champion the interests of their residents. This will place a statutory duty on partner organisations (the police, fire service, NHS, transport authorities etc.) to respond to requests from ward councillors (though not necessarily to do what is requested), and councillors can escalate their requests through the council's scrutiny system if they feel they are being fobbed off.

What difference will all this make in practice? Although we welcome the new powers to enlist co-operation from partner agencies, as active ward councillors we find we are able to resolve most ward issues through our existing relationships – even if the outcomes don't always please everyone. **Our loyalty is to you, our residents, and not to a national political party. So keep telling us what's on your mind and we'll keep working on your behalf.**

**Cllr Peter Southgate**

## NOTES FROM OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held at 8pm on the first Tuesday of the month at Merton Park Primary School. At each meeting, as well as hearing from our Councillors, we usually have a guest speaker on an issue of local interest.

**June** Ged Lawrenson, London Borough of Merton's Projects & Plans Manager talked about Merton's new **Local Development Framework**. These plans cover housing, transport, climate change initiatives, regeneration of Morden Town Centre, extending Tramlink and providing extra cycling facilities.

**July** Norman Plastow, retired Architect, spoke at the AGM about **planning issues** and gave us his interesting and perceptive views on developments in Merton.

**September** Phil Hewitt and Victoria Jones from Transport for London discussed **Tramlink** and planned improvements to the service. These include capacity expansion by introducing some

double track and longer trams and improvements in platform capacity, signalling, off peak services and park and ride facilities. The tram may be extended to Sutton.

**October** Councillor Peter Southgate led an informal discussion on "Mission for Merton", a consultation exercise designed to inform a review of **Merton's Community Plan**. Opinions are being sought. From this the Council wants to find out what binds us together as a community and whether this provides the basis to generate a clear identity for Merton.

**November** Andy Roberts, Borough Fire Commander, talked about the organisation of the **Fire Service** with three stations in the Borough, in Wimbledon, Mitcham and New Malden. The new Regional Control Centre will also be located in Merton. **He reminded us that the Fire Service will do a free Home Fire Safety check - phone 0800 028 44 28 to arrange a visit.**

**Chris Stutt**

## **PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN GRASMERE AND WINDERMERE AVENUES**

Are they working well or would you like to see any changes? Whether you think there is a problem or not we would still like to hear from you to get a clear picture of how residents feel.

Please contact Karin Forbes: [karin.forbes@merton.gov.uk](mailto:karin.forbes@merton.gov.uk) 020 8540 3314

## **MPWRA MEETINGS - ALL WELCOME**

Monthly Meetings take place on the first **Tuesday** of each month at **8pm** at

### **MERTON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Entrance from Erridge Road Playground Gate**

Each meeting includes time for questions to your Ward Councillors

**Tuesday 4 December  
at 8pm**

**Councillors' Question Time  
....and mince pies**

**Tuesday 2 January**

**NO MEETING**

**Tuesday 5 February  
at 8pm**

**Strategy for Older People**  
Ingrid Lackajis

**Tuesday 4 March  
at 8pm**

**Rutlish School**  
Headteacher, Alex Williamson

**Tuesday 1 April  
at 8pm**

**Councillors' Question Time**

**Tuesday 6 May  
at 8pm**

**Morden Town Centre**  
Colin Tanner, Town Centre Manager

**Tuesday 3 June  
at 8pm**

**Sustainable Merton**

**Tuesday 1 July  
At 8pm**

**AGM**  
**Sutton and Merton PCT Plans**  
Dr Martyn Wake, Sutton and Merton PCT

### **Officers of Your Association**

Chairman: Hubert Child 020 8540 3087  
Vice Chairman: Graham Clark 020 8542 9101  
Secretary: Vacant  
Treasurer: Andrew Ashton 020 8543 6905

[www.mpwra.co.uk](http://www.mpwra.co.uk)

### **Your Committee**

Jillian Ashton John Sargeant  
Desé Child Judy Sargeant  
Philippa Foskett David Slocombe  
Ian Garbett Bridget Smith  
John Nelson-Jones Pauline Southgate  
Jolanta Nowak Chris Stutt  
Fred Rayner Paul Wood  
Edward Foley