

Merton Park Ward Residents' Association

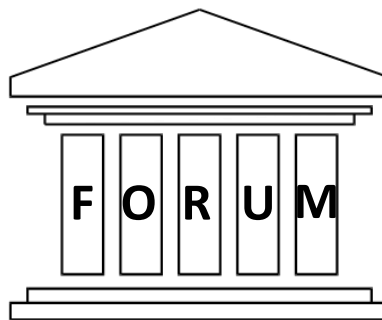
for the residents of: Morden | Merton Park | Wimbledon Chase

Autumn 2025

Issue 75

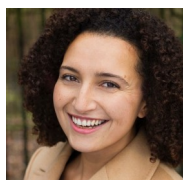


New sign for Green Walk near
Merton Park Tram stop



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Letter from the Chair:

As the days shorten there's reassurance in the rhythm of the seasons in Merton Park. Whether it's a golden afternoon stroll through John Innes Park or the gentle rustle of trees on our streets, our neighbourhood offers the kind of quiet beauty that's easy to take for granted, but never should be.

Thanks go to your councillors, Edward Foley and Stephen Mercer, who, as ever, have been working hard on your behalf, whether pressing for proper tree maintenance, defending against inappropriate planning applications, or supporting residents through the maze of school street rules and parking policies. Thanks are also due to the many members who quietly work behind the scenes to support our association. There are too many to name them individually but these are the people who make Merton Park not just a place to live, but a place to belong.

Planning and development remains high on our radar. The proposal to turn the Crown Lane Post Office into a flat sparked enormous community opposition. With over 2,000 petition signatures, letters from residents, MPs and our own MPWRA submission, the application was rejected. A real community effort - but we remain watchful of what may come next.

It's been a busy year for the Residents Association and a hopeful one too. Membership is up, monthly meetings remain well-attended and we've welcomed new and returning voices into the conversation about what makes our area thrive. And speaking of welcome... if you've been thinking about getting more involved, now is a great time. Whether it's delivering a few newsletters, writing a piece for Forum, or simply turning up to a monthly meeting, every bit helps and all voices matter.

Wishing you all a peaceful, colourful autumn,

Mariam Ali-Putnergill — Chair: tel/text: 07563 913587 / email: m.aliputnergill@gmail.com

Contact your local *Independent Ward Councillors* (pictured left - right)

Cllr. Edward Foley edward.foley@merton.gov.uk / 020 8542 5824

Cllr. Stephen Mercer stephen.mercer@merton.gov.uk / 020 8543 2143



Striving for improvement in our locality; Toilets, School Streets and Trees - Stephen Mercer

As I reported in the last Forum, TFL will soon re-open the toilets at Morden Station. They are building gender neutral and accessible toilets and access is from the ticket office, paid side. It is clear that all parties will aim to take responsibility for this step forward – the reality is that the main drive is from TFL and the Mayor but I think MPWRA and local residents can justifiably claim some credit for making this one of the first new toilets on the network.

However, elsewhere in Merton toilet provision continues to be poor and the Labour administration

have previously acknowledged this weakness. Ed Foley and I shall continue to call for improvements; I shall certainly be active again on World Toilet Day on 19th November.

During the long dry summer I was repeatedly calling for more watering of the new trees by the council, many of which looked very sad in the south of the ward. Thank you to those local residents who made their own efforts to keep these trees alive. The council reassured me that they did water the trees; it remains to be seen whether enough was done.



Councillor Mercer with one of the newly painted School Streets signs

We are now used to seeing the vibrant yellow of the daffodils on the verges and we have again supported the supply of bulbs to volunteers who will be active this October. However, did you notice the vibrant yellow street signs? Three years ago the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel identified that many people were unhappy with the signage for the new School Streets and a recommendation was made that such streets be made more obvious. Of course, with time, local residents have become familiar with the controls, but visitors to the area – friends, service providers, carers – are less aware and can easily receive tickets inadvertently. With support from residents at MPWRA meetings, Ed and I agreed to make the entrances to these controlled streets more obvious and have asked for a clear record of the 'before' and 'after' effect of the new coloured posts. If the evidence shows that the more obvious signage changes behaviour, the cabinet member for transport is planning to seriously consider a roll-out across the borough.

Two last points: firstly, thanks to Dominic Teuma, a local resident, who has been campaigning for greater democracy by calling for the right to a debate in full Council if any petition achieves a trigger threshold (similar to the right in Sutton Council and in Parliament). I have supported his efforts. Secondly, thanks to the efforts of Neaz Ahmed for her ongoing work in Mostyn Garden with her team of volunteers – it is great to see the old Gardeners Yard transformed!

Police Front Counters and Step Free Access to London Road Tramlink - Edward Foley

Police Front Counters: At the September MPWRA meeting I reported on the proposed closure of the front counters at Wimbledon and Mitcham police stations. This concern has since escalated, and on 17th September, the council held an Extraordinary Meeting to debate the matter. I spoke for residents of Merton Park, who are deeply concerned about the impact of these closures. These counters are a vital points of contact for those in need of help, guidance, or reassurance. Wimbledon, in particular, is not just a local centre—it's an international destination.

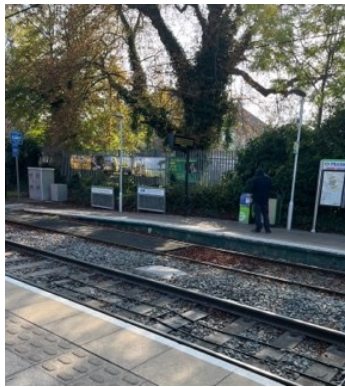


Keep our Police Counters Open!

Each summer, it hosts the world's premier grass court tennis championships, drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors from across the globe. Tourists, many unfamiliar with the area or the language, rely on the ability to walk into a police station and speak to someone face-to-face. Removing that option risks leaving them vulnerable and unsupported. But it's also about our residents. For many - the elderly, those without internet access, or those in distress- being able to walk into a local station and speak to a real person is essential. It's about accessibility, dignity, and trust.

Closing these counters sends the wrong message. It suggests a retreat from the community and a weakening of our local policing presence. While the stations will remain operational, without a public-facing front desk, they become invisible to the people they're meant to serve. Where will people go when they need help? Sutton? That's not local for many in Merton. And what happens when someone needs urgent support but doesn't feel safe calling from home or navigating online systems? This is not just about buildings—it's about presence, prevention, and public confidence. Keep these counters open, keep our communities connected to their police and keep the door open to those who need help the most.

While the decision ultimately rests with the Metropolitan Police and the Mayor of London, the council made its position clear. After a lengthy and passionate debate, it was agreed that the Cabinet would formally appeal the decision. We hope this appeal leads to a reversal of the closures.



The ongoing fight for step free access to the tram stop

London Road Tramlink:

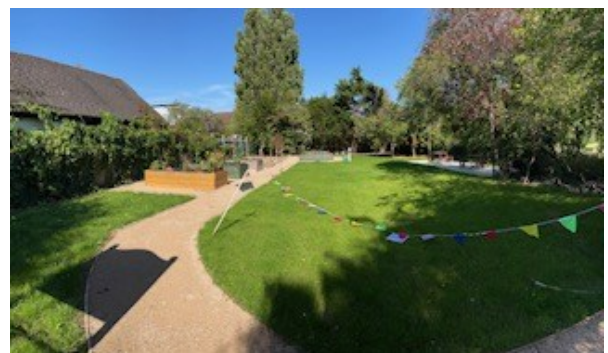
For several years, I've been providing regular updates on efforts to secure step-free access to the London Road Tramlink station from Dorset Road. This initiative has been a priority for many residents, particularly those with mobility challenges, parents with prams, and anyone for whom accessibility is essential. Thanks to constructive and productive meetings with TfL and MOD Estates, we had made significant progress. A key breakthrough came when discussions led to the potential acquisition of a small strip of land—an essential step in making the access route viable. All parties had been working collaboratively, and the project appeared to be moving in the right direction.

However, at the end of last year, communications unexpectedly stalled due to internal promotions and changes within MOD Estates. Despite this pause, we remained hopeful that momentum would resume. Earlier this year it did and we seemed to be back on track. Unfortunately, we have recently been informed that TfL no longer considers step-free access at this station a priority. This has come as a shock and a deep disappointment after years of effort and engagement. We have voiced our strong displeasure at this decision. The need for accessible transport is not a luxury—it's a necessity. It's about ensuring that all residents, regardless of age or ability, can move around our borough with dignity and ease. I've already arranged meetings with several key stakeholders in an effort to persuade TfL to reconsider. The fight for step-free access is not over, and I remain committed to advocating for a solution that works for everyone.

News in Brief

The Muslim Women of Morden held their 2nd 'Party in the Park' at the Tranquil Corner in Mostyn Gardens on Saturday 6th September. We thank them for their continued hard work to transform this previously neglected area into a welcoming and attractive space.

Recent speakers included: **Bashir Hassan**, Arcadic Environmental planning, who spoke about local flood risk and surface water management; **Azra Mukadam** – Morden Town Centre Manager, who outlined plans for public realm improvements; and **Alexandra Thomas and Rachel Pereira** – from the Community Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services (CDARS), who spoke about the work of the Sunshine Recovery Café, a local charity, based in Wimbledon Chase.



A sunny day in the Tranquil Corner of Mostyn Gardens



News in Brief contd.

Old Rutlishians Association (ORA) - Recently FORUM mentioned how our residents can enjoy local public green spaces. Another green space is the ORA ground located in Poplar Road in the heart of Merton Park. Thanks to the efforts of local resident, Mr Sandy Pfeifer, the ORA now has charity status and runs a busy schedule of rugby matches throughout the season while the grounds are also used for football and cricket and local schools' sporting events. An annual highlight is the Rutsfest, generally held in May. Tickets for this are open to all and it is a delight to see so many families joining in the fun ranging from face painting to donkey rides and sometimes even bungee jumping. A variety of live music is played in the afternoon and evening. Different bands cover music of various eras and one of the 2025 highlights was the Oasis tribute band whose performance was well timed in the light of the original band's reunion tour. This year's Rutsfest was sponsored by RyGroup, a local business,

whose founder and owner, Ryan O'Sullivan, spoke for a few minutes at the event. You do not need to have attended Rutlish School to join the association and the bar welcomes visitors. MPWRA thanks the Old Ruts for hosting two of our monthly meetings this year.

Merton Council's "Meanwhile Action Plan" - the shutters of some shops in Abbotsbury Road have been painted in bold and colourful Art Deco type designs to reflect the history of the area. Two metal cable boxes located at the Morden end of Grasmere and Windermere Avenues have also been painted and stencilled with carefully chosen, appropriate designs.

Remembrance Service in our ward – Sunday 9th November 8:30am at the front of the Nelson Health Centre. Services at other locations in Merton can be found on the council's website, including Tuesday 11th November 10:50am Merton Civic Centre, Morden.



Cable box in Grasmere Avenue (left)



Cable box in Windermere Avenue (right)

Join us at Our Future Meetings - All Welcome

Tuesday 4th November 8.00 pm

Meeting via Zoom, speaker to be confirmed, Councillors' Reports and Q&A.

Tuesday 2nd December 8.00 pm

Merton Park Primary School (Erridge Road) questions followed by seasonal refreshments.

No meeting in January 2026

Tuesday 3rd February 2026 8.00 pm

Merton Park Primary School (Erridge Road)

Speaker to be confirmed followed by Councillors' Reports and Q&A and tea and coffee.

Please see posters and our website for more information, including the minutes of our recent meetings.

MPWRA Officers

Chairman: Mariam Ali-Putergill 07563 913587
Vice Chairman: David Merriman
Secretary: Christine Stutt 020 8543 6843
Treasurer: Fred Rayner

MPWRA Committee

Neaz Ahmed
Bryan Anderson
Greg Bryant
Hubert Child

Ian Garbett
Ingrid Holtz
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