

Merton Park Ward Residents Association

Minutes of the meeting Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at Old Ruts at 8pm

Present David Merriman, Councillor Edward Foley, Councillor Stephen Mercer, Fred Rayner, Hubert Child, Bryan Anderson, Chris Stutt, Greg Bryant

Apologies Stephen Johnson, Pauline Lightfoot, John Sargeant, Dese Child, Pauline Southgate, Peter Southgate

1.0 Welcome from Chairman

The results of the April feedback form will be available at the AGM. DM noted that the Old Ruts allowed us to hold our meetings for free and encourage people to use their bar in return. A round of applause for Councillors Edward Foley and Stephen Mercer for winning the elections by a landslide on the 7th of May. DM noted that at the Count in Mitcham the results for the Merton Park Ward were the first results announced at 3.03am. Initially a lot of the votes seemed to be split, one vote for us and one vote for another party. However it soon became obvious that we would get a landslide victory.

An army of volunteers who went to door knocking and delivering et cetera ensured this landslide victory.

DM said that on Sunday, the **7th of June** there will be tea and cakes at Morden Baptist Church's Community Garden which is a farewell party by Anil and Rashpal, the owners of the Londis Shop in Morden who are retiring after 21 years.

2.0 Safer Neighbourhood Team Police Report

The Crime figures are very low for Merton Park Ward.

Q A lady was walking in Watery Lane when someone on a bike ran into the back of her. A 999 call was made and a man was arrested but we understand he has fled to Sri Lanka. What are the follow up actions? Are the local Police Involved?

A Suspect has fled. Victim can be given a crime reference number.

Q There have been no Police in the Parks in the last 12 weeks?

A Yes Police have been patrolling the Parks.

Q There is a marijuana farm in a quiet cup de sac - could you put drones up to monitor please? The people running it seem to come & go freely

A Drones are only for incidents, Police cannot use them for monitoring purposes. Please give the Police more information and they will check on these people.

Q What are the safe spaces in the Ward?

A There are no safe spaces in the Ward or Morden, where women can go for shelter & help. There is one in Wimbledon town centre where volunteers help people.

Q How is the Met Engage system working?

A Need more people to sign up please. This system replaces all the social media platforms previously used by the Police.

Q Is there a new camera on Kingston Road near the Leather Bottle pub? There was a theft in Watery Lane last week and the camera may have useful images?

A Not sure

Q Does Met Engage replace Neighbourhood Watch?

A There is still a NHW scheme but the Police give out information via Met Engage.

Q Electric bikes are whizzing all over the Borough. Children <16years old are riding around the parks and are a danger to themselves & others.

A This is a low priority and they are difficult to catch because Police are on foot or in a car. If they can be identified the Police will speak to them.

Q What can we do now that Wimbledon police station is closed? It takes 2 buses to get to Mitcham Police station to report a crime.

A Sutton and Kingston Police stations are open 9am to 10pm. You can use Met Engage or we have 'Coffee with a Copper' - face to face meetings

The Police are in discussion with the Council about using space in Council block

Q There was a drug deal outside my house - what should I do ?

A Give details to the Police and we will investigate. Dealers are usually careful not to be seen doing deals because they do not want to be caught.

Q Has shoplifting decreased ?

A It has decreased this year, due to a operation by Police, which put 2 offender in prison. Another operation is planned on 18th June in Morden, Merton & Mitcham.

Q Are you using facial recognition equipment?

one month ago in Morden High Street. If shops have CCTV of an offence they can send

A Yes. There was a trial it in and get it analysed and the Police can search/arrest them.

3.0 Houses of multiple occupation HMOs

DM gave a slide show about HMOs and the extension of **the** Article 4 Direction. Originally this covered wards to the east of the borough but has now been extended to the western side to cover all wards. This removes the permitted development rights under which ,otherwise, building owners could change use of a property from ordinary single family occupation, to multiple occupation without needing planning permission. HMOs can generate problems with antisocial behaviour and excessive rubbish etc. Consultation is on till 19th June to see if this should be made permanent. See slides.

Please let DM know if there are any concerns about existing HMOs. They should be licensed and have planning permission.

Q Where does the Conservation Area come in ?

A This is already covered by a different Article 4 Directive, so the new one is in addition, covering just HMOs.

Q This does not go far enough - there are lots of outbuildings with washrooms ?

A Yes there are 'sheds for beds'

Q What is a large HMO & a small HMO ?

A Large HMO 6 or more people living together who are not a family

Small HMO up to 3 people living together or 2 families

Q Are there any rules on number of bathrooms?

A This is controlled by the licencing process

Q If there is antisocial behaviour by HMOs who to report this to ?

A The Police - they can speak to the Landlord, put restrictions on them or shut them down. Most HMOs cause no problems

DM concluded by saying that next month is our AGM so please come along and consider joining the Committee.

4.0 Councillor Edward Foley's Report

Tara Butler a Planning Officer at Merton Council has offered to do an online meeting about HMOs 15-19 June if there is enough interest?

EF has been busy on the Overview and Scrutiny committee and there is a new reporting system within the Council.

There is an increase in workload and AI has not helped. As soon as a reply is sent to a resident they can come back with a 6 page AI response in 5 minutes.

K5 bus timetable is not working properly - see TfL website for current timetable.

EF warned that there are scam QR codes everywhere- like car parks & pubs where you pay by QR code & cards.

Q Traffic congestion & noise in Cannon Hill Lane. In rush hour there are incidents of road rage.

A Traffic calming required. People 'rat run' because the main routes are congested. If the main roads were 30mph they would take more traffic and get people there faster.

Q Can we engage with the Planning department ? People use Sat navs to avoid jams and humps

5.0 Councillor Stephen Mercer's Report

SM noted that we need to have a curtain at venue to improve the sound quality at the meeting. Pie charts of votes. We had 60% of the votes last time & this election 59%. Lab & Lib Dems got 11% of the votes so we get 5 times the vote of other parties.

The Conservatives who used to run the Council now have 4 Councillors. Labour remains in power with an increased majority - despite losing many seats in other areas.

SM spent time canvassing and received lots of compliments, plus comments on the hotel development in Morden, & Morden regeneration & safer places to park electric bikes.

Road crossing requested but not easy to do on roads controlled by TfL - like opposite the Mosque and train station, Park school and entrance to Morden Hall Park. SM has asked the London Assembly Member to help.

Dorset Road tram stop access - still on-going campaign

SM thanked everyone for the landslide election result & also thanked all the predecessors who made this all possible. SM busy with lots of training courses which are compulsory for Councillors - Social & Media, Finance, Planning, Licencing, Security, Development & Planning

Hotel development in Morden - financed by pension funds etc who employ a Developer (who gets a bonus if project is on time & on budget). The Developer employs a building company who build the hotel.

The pilings have gone in. Two types of piling - screw or hammers. Screws were used here, 26m deep. There will be a steel frame and concrete on top. A low reach crane will be used so it will not swing over houses.

Queries about whether the hotel will be used by asylum seekers or homeless people ? Developer said the rooms are above average size so it will be a medium status hotel and not used for asylum seekers or the homeless. Due to be completed June/July 2027.

A question was raised about the deep foundations of the hotel increasing the risk of "sink holes" . However, it was noted that these generally only occur on chalk or similar subsoil.

6.0 AOB

Help was requested to deliver letters to new voters - new to area or just turned 18 years old.

7.0 Date of next meeting

AGM Tuesday 7th July 8pm at Old Ruts