

iN MERTON



INSIDE

**Support
your small
businesses
this festive
season**

ISSUE 04 • Special winter edition
News and information from your council

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IN MERTON

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Building a better Merton together



Councillor Ross Garrod
Leader, London
Borough of Merton

The festive season always reminds me what a special place Merton is to live, work, and learn. I feel especially proud to be part of, and from, this community at this time of year, when our spirit and pride shines throughout our streets and our neighbourhoods. Every year, the season of goodwill brings out the best in Merton, showcasing the warmth and kindness that make our borough so unique.

Merton is a place that more people want to call home and I'm delighted that building work will soon be starting on the first council homes built in the borough in a generation. The first site is in Morden, a prime location at the start of the Northern Line.

We are also developing ambitious long-term plans to regenerate Morden town centre, informed by feedback from residents and businesses gathered at workshops and pop-up events during the summer. In the meantime, we are investing in improvements to revitalise all of our borough's town centres during the current financial year and attract more traders to set up shop on the high street.

Businesses remain a central part of our thriving local economy. So, as we approach Small Business Saturday, I'd like to encourage you to visit local traders, shops, cafes and restaurants, many of which are family-run firms who would really value your custom.

I am proud this council has supported many residents who have faced financial hardship

this year, and I know the winter months can be especially challenging for some residents. That's why we have ensured our libraries are among the venues welcoming people into Warm Spaces, and the council continue to work in active partnership with Wimbledon Guild and Age UK Merton, to keep our most vulnerable residents safe and well during the winter months.

Throughout the coming weeks and months, the council's Cost of Living Fund will continue to support people who are struggling to make ends meet by funding projects including food banks, employment support and free advice on money, benefits and debt.

The cost of living was one of the topics we discussed during our very first *Conversations with the Leader* event, held in November in Vestry Hall in Mitcham. I'd like to thank everyone who came along and asked me questions about what we are doing to make our borough an even better place to live.

I'd like to wish you all a peaceful and restful Christmas and New Year. To stay to up to date with our plans for 2025, sign up for our weekly iN Merton e-newsletter at merton.gov.uk/newsletter

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross Garrod". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Councillor Ross Garrod
Leader, London Borough of Merton

Accounts for Merton's Young Savers are back

Year 7 pupils living in Merton can access a free £20 deposit to open a savings account with our partner Croydon Plus – the credit union for Croydon, Merton and Sutton.

The Merton Young Saver accounts aim to support young people to start saving regularly and understand the importance of building a savings pot for the future. The return of the accounts follows the scheme's pilot year, in which 135 pupils applied to become a Merton Young Saver. The account deposits are being funded through the council's £3m Cost of Living Fund, helping the next generation of savers to create financial resilience.

Twins Alice and Murilo applied for Merton Young Saver accounts. Murilo said: "I receive money every week – £5 goes to my pocket money and £5 goes to my savings. When I need it in the future, I know there is money to support me. I would like to save for a car and a house." Alice added: "If you ever need money for something urgent, you would already have it."

Their mum, Karina, said: "Merton Young Saver accounts are a great opportunity for them to learn



Young Savers Alice and Murilo with mum Karina

about savings and money from a young age, so hopefully they will build up good financial habits, make smarter financial decisions later in life."

croydonplus.co.uk/mertonyoungsavers

500 more trees

We're planting over 500 new trees across Merton this winter, doubling last year's efforts.

Some will replace diseased or decayed trees which have previously had to be removed.

Plans for a new day centre

A new state-of-the-art day centre is being designed to meet the needs of a community of people with complex learning disabilities.



The centre will be part of a larger development in Mitcham, which is also set to include supported living units, as well as much-needed affordable

housing, delivered in partnership with Wandle Housing Association. If planning permission is approved, the development will be built on the site of the current Jan Malinowski Centre in Riverside Drive. This proposal is in line with Merton's newly released Local Plan – a document that will guide all residential and commercial planning applications and decisions in the borough, ensuring high design standards and energy efficiency.

Crackdown on anti-social behaviour

Council Leader, Councillor Ross Garrod has announced a shake-up of his top team, including a new cabinet post focused on tackling anti-social behaviour and maintaining the borough's position as one of the safest in London.

Councillor Edith Macauley MBE, who has almost three decades of experience as a magistrate, has been appointed as the new Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety to crackdown on anti-social behaviour, including fly-tipping and noise nuisance.



Councillor Ross Garrod with Councillor Edith Macauley in the council's CCTV control room

Free holiday clubs extended



Merton is the only London borough running Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) clubs during half terms this school year.

Children receiving benefits-related free school meals in Merton will continue to enjoy the free holiday club places during half terms, funded by the council's £3m Cost of Living Fund. The main school holidays – Christmas, Easter and Summer – are paid for by the Government.

Lest we forget

Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day services were held last month at two restored war memorials. Wimbledon and Mitcham war memorials both had a deep clean, with lots of dirt and grime steamed off.

The original swords from Mitcham War Memorial, which were sadly stolen, have now been replaced with exact replicas, using the last remaining original sword to cast copies.

The memorial, which dates from 1920, has also had its lettering restored, so the names of the men who fought for their country can be clearly read again.



MORE WAYS TO MOVE IN MERTON

Join the movement for a healthier Merton. From social workouts to stress-free swims, you'll find your groove at your local Better Leisure Centre.

better.org.uk/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: XR43398

The first new council homes in a generation



Farm Road Church, Morden

A total of 93 homes are being built across four sites.

We are building 93 new homes in four locations, all for social rent. The first phase of development will start soon at Farm Road Church, Morden.

We have an ambitious goal to build 400 safe, secure and energy-efficient homes overall, so that residents will benefit from warmer homes and lower energy costs.

Merton Council has received a multimillion pound investment to help build these properties, as part of the Mayor of London's Affordable Homes programme.

The Morden location is the first of the council-owned sites to be developed and will be followed by Elm Nursery car park in Mitcham, Raleigh Gardens car park in Mitcham, and land at Canons in Madeira Road, Mitcham.



Raleigh Gardens, Mitcham



We are aiming to build the new homes in line with Passivhaus principles, which set out world-class environmental criteria for design, ensuring energy efficiency, lower maintenance costs and better health for residents.

Canons Place Courtyard, Mitcham

Ice Skating at the Quarter

Until 5th
January 2025

This winter Christmas at the Quarter
returns bigger and better than before!

Scan here to buy tickets



Set inside Wimbledon Quarter's winter wonderland, our ice rink has **doubled in size** providing weather-proof festive fun for all. So lace up your skates and join us at the Quarter where the magic of the season awaits.



Visit wimbledonquarter.com for further information
and details of our offers and packages.

Wimbledon Quarter

@WIMBLEDONQUARTER

SW19

WIMBLEDONQUARTER.COM

Remaking Morden



We are investing more than £300,000 to revitalise Morden town centre ahead of the longer-term regeneration of the area.

You may have spotted some of the new planters and seating areas which are brightening up the civic heart of our borough, with more improvements to come by the spring.

Hundreds of people who live and work in this busy hub at the start of the Northern Line took part in workshops and pop-up events to gather

ideas about how to refresh and improve the area's public and green spaces.

A final workshop took place in September at a street festival celebration for World Car Free Day on Abbotsbury Road in Morden. The road was closed to traffic, and there were a range of family-friendly stalls and entertainment.

Our team is now looking at all the engagement feedback in detail and will take forward a series of activities in the town centre over the coming months.



500
people got
involved in
seven
workshops and
and pop-up
events.

For more
information, visit
[merton.gov.uk/
RemakingMorden](http://merton.gov.uk/RemakingMorden)

Shop local this winter

As the holiday season approaches, shop locally and find great deals and unique gifts on your doorstep. We're celebrating Small Business Saturday on 7 December, one of the biggest shopping days of the year, by encouraging residents to visit local businesses and help the borough's independent shops continue to thrive.

Commonside Cafe

Open Monday–Thursday,
8am–4pm,

1 Commonside East,
Mitcham, CR4 2QA

Commonside Cafe opened its doors this summer next to Mitcham's scenic duck pond. Treat yourself to their speciality coffee, delicious pastries or freshly baked bread. Whether you're catching up with loved ones or grabbing a hot drink on the go, the cafe offers a warm welcome. For more information, visit [@commonsidecafe](#) on Instagram.



A friendly welcome awaits at Commonside Cafe in Mitcham



L–R: Enjoying a pint at The White Lion of Mortimer; A choice of treats at 40 Cakes



Doorium Jewels

**159 London Road,
Mitcham, CR4 2JB**

Doorium Jewels presents a stunning collection of bespoke desi jewellery, perfect for party wear and bridal events. From stunning bangles to intricately crafted necklaces, their range offers elegant options perfect for holiday gifts or treating yourself to something unique. Visit [@dooriumjewels](#) on Instagram.

Froth

**3 Approach Road,
Raynes Park, SW20 8BA**

Enjoy a cosy coffee break at Froth, a new jazz café and wine bar offering coffee, pastries, tapas, and more. Catch up with loved ones over hot drinks or unwind at their lively jazz evenings every Saturday. This inviting local gem is perfect for any occasion. Visit [@froth_coffee_wine_bar](#) on Instagram.

40 Cakes

**Open Monday–Sunday,
25B Abbotsbury Road,
Morden, SM4 5LJ**

Founded in 2019 by two dessert-loving maestros, 40 Cakes is an artisan cake shop offering a delicious array of treats inspired by popular recipes from across the UK and Europe. Indulge in something sweet this holiday season or pick up a special dessert to share with loved ones at Christmas. Visit [40cakes.co.uk](#)



Find that special gift at Doorium Jewels

Gardenia of London

**Open Monday–Sunday,
10 High Street, Wimbledon
Village, SW19 5DX**

Nestled in the heart of Wimbledon Village, Gardenia is a family-founded florist bringing joy, one bouquet at a time. Their stunning arrangements are perfect for every occasion, including as thoughtful holiday gifts. Committed to sustainability, they are proudly working towards becoming 100% plastic-free. Visit [gardeniashop.co.uk](#)

Ting 'n' Ting

**Open Thursday–Sunday, 12–9pm,
Unit 2, The Pavilions, Merton
Abbey Mills, SW19 2RD**

Escape the winter chill and enjoy authentic Caribbean cuisines at Ting 'n' Ting, run by award-winning chef Garfield Davidson and his family. Pay them a visit for delicious food and to enjoy their vinyl and dominoes nights. Advance booking is recommended. Visit [www.tingting.com](#)

Ganley's Irish Pub

**Open Monday–Sunday, 43–47
London Road, Morden, SM4 5HP**

Ganley's is a great, cosy spot to catch live sports, music, and hearty meals with a Guinness. With 13 screens showing daily coverage of football, rugby, golf, horse racing, and more, there's something for all sports fans. Don't miss their famous carvery 'monster' Sunday roast, perfect for a feast this festive season. Visit: [ganleysirishbar.co.uk](#)

The White Lion of Mortimer

**Open Monday–Sunday,
223 London Road,
Mitcham, CR4 2JD**

This traditional pub is a great place to spend your time during the colder days, offering a selection of food and drinks. It is also a lively community hub, hosting entertaining events, including karaoke nights, live band performances, and a popular Sunday meat raffle, making it a welcoming spot for all. Visit [@The White Lion of Mortimer](#) on Facebook.

What's on in Merton

A roundup of events to look forward to over the festive season.



Various dates Santa visits

Santa will be visiting all of our libraries in December. Come and meet him for some festive songs and stories. Perfect for children aged three to seven.

Wimbledon: 4 December, 4pm

West Barnes: 10 December, 4.30pm

Morden: 11 December, 4pm

Colliers Wood: 12 December, 4pm

Raynes Park: 17 December, 4.30pm

Mitcham: 18 December, 4.30pm

Pollards Hill: 19 December, 4pm

Find out more at

merton.gov.uk/libraries

Until 26 January 2025 The Nutcracker

Watch a magical and musical quest inspired by the story of *The Nutcracker*; full of familiar festive singalongs that'll have you dancing in your seat. There are also accessible performances, such as audio described, captioned and British Sign Language interpreted options. Perfect for the whole family and kids aged five to 12.

Polka Theatre, Wimbledon.

Varied start times. Tickets from £10, plus £2.50 booking fee.

Visit: polkatheatre.com/event/the-nutcracker

6 December– 2 February 2025 The Snowy Day

One winter morning, Peter woke up and looked out the window. Snow had fallen during the night. It covered everything as far as he could see. Discover a world blanketed in wonder in this brand-new dance adaptation of *The Snowy Day*, inspired by the award-winning picture book by Ezra Jack Keats.

Various times. Polka Theatre, Wimbledon. Tickets from £11. polkatheatre.com/event/the-snowy-day

7 December Morden Library Christmas fair

Buy some Christmas gifts and support local traders at the Christmas fair in Morden Library. **12–4pm**

7 December– 5 January 2025 Jack and the Beanstalk

It's pantomime time at the New Wimbledon Theatre. Enjoy this family favourite fairytale starring Alexandra Burke and Joe Pasquale with plenty of audience participation.

Tickets from £13. atgtickets.com/new-wimbledon-theatre

13, 19, 21 December Bach to Baby Christmas Family Concert

An acclaimed concert series for the whole family. Featuring outstanding musicians, festive music and exciting performances in multiple venues right on your doorstep.

Various locations in Wimbledon and Raynes Park. Tickets £15 per adult and up to two kids go free per adult. Visit: bachtobaby.com



Local markets

Craft and food markets offer the perfect way to support a variety of local businesses and independent artists.

1 Mitcham craft and food market, run by Merton Council, brings together traders from the local and surrounding area every second Saturday of the month, with a Christmas market special this December.
Saturday 14 December, 11am–4pm, at Mitcham Market Square CR4 2PF.
Visit: merton.gov.uk/events/calendar

2 Wimbledon Christmas Market, run by Love Wimbledon, offers ten days of shopping from local artisans.
Every Saturday and Sunday until 22 December on Wimbledon Piazza.
Visit: lovewimbledon.org/wimbledon-christmas-market

3 Colliers Wood Farmers Market, run by Forty Acre Coffee, offers locally produced items from a mix of local businesses, including local bakers and cheese mongers.
Last Saturday of each month, 9am–3pm, at Singlegate Primary School, SW19 2NT.
Visit @collierswoodmarket on Instagram.



14–24 December Meet Father Christmas at Deen City Farm

Santa will be visiting the animals at Deen City Farm.
10am–6pm. Tickets £8 per child.
www.deencityfarm.co.uk

14 December St John Fisher Parish Christmas Fair

Lots of Christmas-themed gifts, plus mulled wine and mince pies for adults and games and activities for children.
11am–3pm, St John Fisher Parish Hall, Cannon Hill Lane, SW20 9DB.
stjohnfishermerton.co.uk

21 December A Very Morden Christmas

A Christmas festival held by the Merton and Morden Guild and Morden Rotary Club.
11am–5pm, Abbotsbury Road.
mertoncharityevents.org.uk

22 December Wimbledon Christmas Run

On your marks, get set, run a 5km or 10km route to fundraise for the charity Breast Cancer Now. **9.30am, Wimbledon Common.** Entry fee £25. Register at runthrough.co.uk

Various dates Colour House Theatre

Enjoy a festive evening at the Colour House Theatre, a lively local venue with a line up of original plays, live music, and comedy – perfect for the whole family this holiday season. Don't miss their monthly Blues Club, offering a fun evening activity for winter's shorter days.

Merton Abbey Mills, Watermill Way, SW19 2RD.
colourhousetheatre.co.uk

25 December Churches Together in Mitcham Christmas Day Dinner

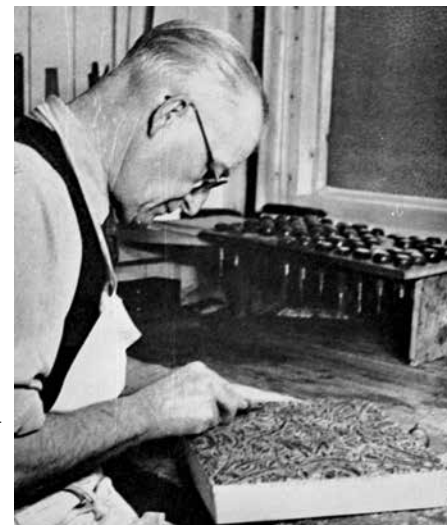
If you are alone this Christmas Day and would like some fun, good food, and company, you can go to Vestry Hall in London Road, Mitcham, to enjoy a traditional two-course Christmas dinner. There will be no charge, but you must book in advance. A vegetarian option is available. Free minibus transport can be provided if booked in advance – on a first come first served basis only.
Doors open 11am–4pm. Dinner at 1pm. To book a place for yourself or someone else or to volunteer to help on the day, email: vestryhall@merton.gov.uk.

Add your events to our free online events calendar.
merton.gov.uk/events

The iconic Liberty building, on Regent Street in London and, far right, the original Liberty Print Works in Merton. Horace Clarke making a print block



© iStock.com | Amanda Lewis



The last word in luxury

Thomas Becket, Horatio Nelson, William Morris, Joseph Bazalgette, Andy Murray – through the ages many illustrious names have been part of Merton’s history. The name Liberty is right up there too.

The fabulous silks sold in the London landmark department store Liberty were once printed here in Merton, in a humble works on the banks of the River Wandle.

Arthur Liberty wasn’t, like that other Merton-based giant of the Victorian Arts and Crafts Movement William Morris, a designer himself, but a man with an eye for colour, a nose for business, a taste for art, and an instinct for spotting the very best talent. He was just 32 when he opened his first London shop in 1875 selling Japanese silks, dresses and furnishings, and was soon using Littler’s, a Merton firm of highly skilled traditional block printers, next door to Morris’s works, to print his silks.

By 1890, he was their sole customer, and in 1904 he bought the premises, where Liberty continued for nearly 70 years, producing a wide variety of different patterns by many artists, constantly leading fashionable taste.

Liberty inevitably moved from costly block printing to the much more practical and economic screen process, ceasing production at the Merton site in the 1970s.

But as one story ended, another began – the derelict Liberty works were to have been demolished in the 1980s as part of the Sainsbury’s development, but were saved because the Wheelhouse and the ancient Colour House were listed as of historic importance. So, the attractive Arts and Crafts buildings, grouped picturesquely on the riverside, were reborn in 1989 as Merton Abbey Mills.

Visit our online heritage archive at merton.gov.uk/memories

Written by John Hawks, Vice Chair and Curator Merton Priory Trust, Vice Chair and Trustee Wandle Industrial Museum, formerly Founding Manager Merton Abbey Mills.

You can see exhibits of Liberty and Morris designs at:

- The Chapter House Museum, under Merantun Way between Sainsbury’s and Merton Abbey Mills in Colliers Wood (open Sunday 11am–4pm between April and October)
- The Wandle Industrial Museum, Vestry Hall Annexe, London Road in Mitcham (open 1–4pm on Wednesdays and 2–5pm on Sundays, closed 16 December–15 January)

RECYCLING NEWS

Don't forget the batteries

More than 50 residents had to be evacuated from their homes in the middle of the night after a fire broke out in a recycling centre in Morden.

Firefighters reported that the blaze at the Suez Recycling Centre, next to the council's Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in Garth Road, Morden, in July was thought to have been caused by a lithium battery.

Unsafe disposal of batteries and electrical items poses a serious fire risk. Veolia and Merton Council are urging residents to dispose of them safely. This is particularly important over Christmas, when more electrical items and batteries are bought than at any other time of the year.



Do you know how to dispose of them safely?

- **Electrical appliances** – items with batteries, plugs, cables, or hidden batteries, such as those found in children's toys and electrical toothbrushes, can be recycled, but they must be handled safely at dedicated facilities.
- **Batteries** can be recycled at home by placing them in one untied plastic bag, next to or on top of your bins or boxes. Many supermarkets have collection points for small batteries.

All of these can be brought to the Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in Garth Road, Morden, or you can find local recycling points at [recyclenow.com/recycling-locator](https://www.recyclenow.com/recycling-locator).

Used vapes should be taken back to retailers and never placed in household recycling or rubbish bins or in on-street litter bins.

Kerbside collection service

FOOD WASTE

Collected every week



Yes please



All cooked and uncooked food



Dairy products: cheese and eggs



Fruit and vegetable peelings

Line your indoor kitchen caddy with compostable liners or old newspaper (no plastic bags).

PAPER & CARD

Collected alternate weeks



Yes please



Newspapers and magazines



Card and cardboard



Toilet and kitchen roll tubes

Flatten down large cardboard boxes before putting them in the bin.

PLASTICS, GLASS, CANS & CARTONS

Collected alternate weeks



Yes please



Plastic bottles



Plastic pots, tubs, trays etc.



Glass jars and bottles

Empty and rinse all containers. Squash plastic bottles. Remove film lids from plastic pots, tubs

RUBBISH

Collected every two weeks



Yes please



Non-recyclable rubbish



Dirty cardboard



Plastic bags and film

Only rubbish placed in this wheelie bin (with the lid closed) will be collected.

TEXTILES & SHOES

Collected every week



Yes please



Clothes and linen.
Shoes (tied together)

BATTERIES

Collected every week



Yes please



Household batteries

Place in a tied plastic carrier bag next to or on top of your bins.

Place in an untied plastic carrier bag.

at a glance



✗ No thanks

- Plastic bags
- Packaging
- Oil or liquids
- Nappies



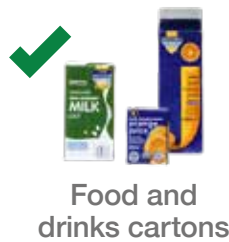
Your personalised 2025 calendar

Visit the council website to view and download your personalised 2025 collection calendar, using the postcode search tool. You can also report a missed collection and find detailed information about your collection service, including a full list of what you can and can't recycle. Visit merton.gov.uk/recycling



✗ No thanks

- Dirty cardboard (e.g. pizza boxes)
- Shredded paper (unless placed in a paper bag or envelope)
- Tissues and paper towels
- Food and drink cartons (place in your recycling box)
- Wrapping paper which doesn't pass scrunch test or is glittery



✗ No thanks

- Plastic bags
- Plastic film
- Crisp packets
- Hard plastics (toys, etc)
- Polystyrene

and trays.



✗ No thanks

- Anything recyclable
- Electrical items
- Hazardous waste
- DIY waste
- Gas bottles
- Batteries

A helping hand

The council's website is full of useful information. So, if you're not sure how to book a visit to our Household Reuse and Recycling Centre in Garth Road, Morden, report a missed bin collection, let us know about dumped rubbish or an overflowing bin, visit merton.gov.uk/recycling

✗ No thanks

- Duvets
- Pillows and cushions
- Curtains
- Car batteries

COMMUNAL FLATS

Collected every week



FOOD WASTE

RECYCLING

RUBBISH

We wish you a greener Christmas

Christmas can be costly for the environment, as well as your budget. But there are some simple ways that you can reduce the amount which goes to waste over this festive season.

#plasticsolution

- Keeping plastic out of your rubbish bin is a really simple and effective way to cut your carbon footprint over the holidays.
- Take reusable bags with you when you're out Christmas shopping.
- Buy all the vegetables for Christmas lunch loose, rather than in plastic wrapping.
- Give an experience rather than a present. Days out, tickets for the cinema or a few hours of babysitting all make great gifts.
- Make your own Christmas decorations from foliage like holly and mistletoe.
- Use wrapping paper that can be recycled.
- Make it your New Year's resolution for 2025 to reduce, reuse and recycle more.



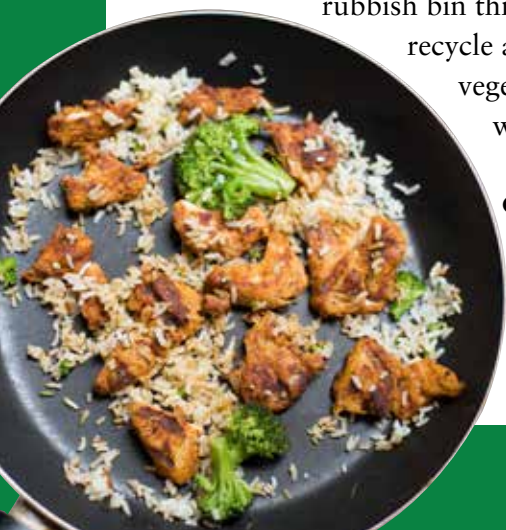
Find out more about the link between plastic waste and your bin's carbon footprint at: www.slwp.org.uk/plastic-solution



Images courtesy of Pixabay

Festive food tips

- It's easy to buy too much over the festive season, but with a bit of planning, you can avoid anything going to waste.
- Use your freezer to store food and take out what you need gradually.
- Keep an eye on use by and best before by dates, so you can use up food in plenty of time before it goes off.
- Go cold turkey on putting food waste in your rubbish bin this Christmas. You can recycle all of your turkey bones and vegetable peelings using your weekly food waste collection service.
- Cook up some tasty new recipes with your leftovers. Visit lovefoodhatewaste.com for festive inspiration.



Tree collections

Real Christmas trees will be collected free of charge if they are put out by **6am on Monday 6 January**.

After you have removed all the decorations, place your tree close to the front boundary of your property, or next to the bin store, if you live in a flat, without blocking the pavement. Alternatively, you can take your tree to be composted at the HRRC or put it in your garden waste bin, if you are a subscriber.

Visit merton.gov.uk/recycling





Courses for Work, Life and Wellbeing

Learn something new with one of our exciting Adult Education Courses starting in the New Year. Whether you want to get back into education, enhance your skills for work, start your own business or improve your wellbeing, we have a range of subject areas on offer, including:

- Art & Craft
- Baking & Cake Decorating
- Business
- Calligraphy
- Childcare and Teaching Assistant
- Computing & IT
- English, ESOL & Maths
- Essential Digital Skills
- Fashion
- Floristry
- Gardening
- Graphic Design
- Green Skills
- Guitar
- Health & Social Care
- Languages
- Leisure & Wellbeing
- Money Management
- Musical Instrument Making & Repair
- Photography
- Pilates
- Singing
- Training for Work

The quickest way to enrol is online. You will need to show proof of your identity to complete your enrolment. Suitable ID includes a passport, birth certificate, driving licence or Freedom Pass.

DISTANCE LEARNING

We offer a variety of FREE short courses that you can complete at your own pace. These distance learning programmes, accredited by NCFE, typically take 4-8 weeks to finish. They are fully funded, so there is no cost to you. Upon completion, you will achieve a nationally recognised Level 2 qualification.



See website for a full list of courses

Eligibility

You need to have lived in the EU for three years and be aged 19+. You will need to be confident with written English in order to meet the required standards.



FOR THE LATEST COURSE INFORMATION AND TO ENROL: STCG.AC.UK/ADULT-EDUCATION

Merton College, London Road, Morden, SM4 5QX • mae@stcg.ac.uk • 020 8918 7777

[educationmerton](https://www.facebook.com/educationmerton) [@AdultEdMerton](https://twitter.com/AdultEdMerton) [/adulteducationmerton](https://www.instagram.com/adulteducationmerton)

Working on behalf of:



You may be eligible for a loan funded by Merton Council

Works funded

Solar Panels

Heat Pumps

Battery Storage

Windows

Insulation

Home energy efficiency loan

Exclusively for homeowners and private landlords

www.lendology.org.uk/merton-loans



Find out more >>>



We recommend that you conduct an independent retrofit assessment to establish whether any works to your home are likely to be suitable for your property.

Lendology CIC is a community interest company limited by guarantee, registered in England, company number 4512225. Registered address: Heatherton Park Studios, Bradford on Tone, Taunton TA4 1EU. Lendology CIC is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (675263) for credit regulated activities.

Attracting people into our town centres

We're listening to your views on how to have a better day or night out here in Merton.

© Suzanne Mitchell Photography



Footfall up in town centre

New research has found that Wimbledon town centre has bounced back faster than other UK high streets post-pandemic, with spending levels in the past 12 months being 25% higher than 2019 pre-pandemic levels. Merton Council, Wimbledon Quarter and Love Wimbledon

Business Improvement District recently carried out research on Wimbledon town centre's economy. The study found that people are spending more time and money in the town centre compared to 2019, which has created new community and business opportunities.

Have your say at
[merton.gov.uk/
nighttime](https://merton.gov.uk/nighttime)



Planning for a better night out

As the evenings get shorter, we want to hear about your experiences of going out in our town centres and what we can do to help attract more people to visit businesses and to enjoy entertainment and socialising here in Merton.

We would also like to hear perspectives from

people who work shifts, are employed in leisure and hospitality or commute through our town centres and transport hubs outside the main morning and evening rush hours.

All the feedback we receive will be used to develop a night time strategy for the hours between 6pm and 6am.

Starting new conversations with the community

Residents quizzed our council leader about the issues that matter to them the most at a free community event.



Council Leader,
Councillor
Ross Garrod

Dozens of people attended **Conversations with the Leader**, a public forum which was hosted by Council Leader, Councillor Ross Garrod and Deputy Leader, Councillor Eleanor Stringer, at Vestry Hall, Mitcham, in November.

Many more joined the conversation online, via a livestreamed webinar, to discuss a range of topics, including school places, green spaces and the regeneration of Morden town centre.

The event, the first of its kind in the borough, was hosted by an independent chair – local businessman John Merriman, who ensured that as many as possible of the pre-submitted questions were answered.

John said: “As a resident, I was pleased to see an event like this organised as a way to help bridge the gap between the council and the community. Chairing the event meant I got to hear first hand what matters to residents, and

help push the conversation along to get the answers they needed from their council leaders. Next time, I might even submit a question myself!”

The event is the first in a series of **Conversations with the Leader** that will take place in locations across the borough. Councillor Garrod will also be hosting pop-up **Meet the Leader** events throughout the year.



Local businessman John Merriman



Pixabay

Counting the cost of living

Throughout the season of goodwill, there is lots of support available to ensure that our most vulnerable residents stay warm and well.

If you are struggling to afford essentials and facing tough choices as energy bills increase and inflation rises this winter, there is support available. Our £3m Cost of Living Fund is going towards practical help for the most vulnerable people in our community. Together with a range of partner organisations, the council is also providing advice and links to specialist services for anyone facing hardship. Find out more merton.gov.uk/costofliving

Anna, Community Fridge visitor and volunteer

“I started coming because I was in arrears with my rent. I didn’t have any money whatsoever. The Job Centre told me there’s a place you can get food for free, and for five weeks, I was living entirely on what I could get here. I was desperate, but everybody was very helpful. It was such a relief and I put my money towards my rent to balance myself out a bit. I’ve done nearly 25 years of volunteering, I said, I can give a little back to help out at the Community Fridge. I love it. It gets me out of the house, and I can get support from Siobhan if I need it. It’s a simple place, people can come in and get something to eat, and make sure things don’t go to waste. It gives so much to people.”

If you or someone you know would benefit from using the Community Fridge, visit sustainablemerton.org/communityfridge



Siobhan Hurley

Community Fridge Manager, Sustainable Merton

“This time of year can leave people facing tough choices between eating and heating, while others can find themselves with too many festive treats.

“Merton’s Community Fridge aims to redistribute surplus food from local businesses and food growers, ultimately stopping tonnes of good quality food from going to waste.

“All food is free and everyone is welcome to visit to collect food and donate good quality, unopened food when the Fridge is open. It’s all about giving and sharing!”

Merton’s Community Fridge has launched a fundraising campaign to #FeedFamiliesFightWaste.

Find out more sustainablemerton.org/communityfridge



Sarah Azhar

**Mitcham Library
Manager**

“When it’s cold outside, a warm welcome awaits you in all of our seven libraries, which are among Merton’s designated Warm Spaces – heated community buildings, which are free to enter.

“You can curl up with a good book or get involved in the many activities and events that we run every week. There’s something for everyone, from family-friendly film screenings and musical jam sessions to fitness classes, history talks and book clubs.

“There are also computers available to use in the libraries, and assistance with getting online if you’re not a computer whiz.”

Find out more
merton.gov.uk/libraries



Aileen Buckton

**Independent Chair of
the Merton Safeguarding
Adults Board**

“This time of year can be a difficult time for many people, but especially those who are vulnerable, isolated and in need of care and support.

“Keep an eye on those around you and be alert to signs that an adult family member, friend, neighbour or someone in your wider community might be experiencing abuse or neglect or is struggling to cope or look after themselves.

“You can learn more about what to look out for and what to do if you are worried about someone on our website.”

[mertonsab.org.uk/
concerned-about-an-adult](http://mertonsab.org.uk/concerned-about-an-adult)



Jon Green

**Warm and Well in
Merton Programme
Manager**

“Warm and Well is a partnership between the Wimbledon Guild, Age UK Merton and Thinking Works – an energy efficiency specialist.

“We are here to support anyone in the borough who is concerned about their energy costs, and keeping warm and well this winter.

“If you are wondering what benefits you are entitled to and how you can reduce your bills, get in touch and find out how we can help.”

[wimbledonguild.co.uk/
warm-well](http://wimbledonguild.co.uk/warm-well)



Karen Brunger

**Head of Advice Services
Citizens Advice
Merton & Lambeth**

“Winter can an expensive time of year with higher energy bills and many people are left counting the cost of the festive season. If you’re struggling to make ends meet, we can provide free, expert advice on money and benefits.

“We’ll look at your finances to help put together a manageable monthly budget with a realistic plan to reduce any debts. We can also see if you are entitled to claim any benefits or if there are ways that you could maximise your income.

“You can find us in Merton libraries and in Wide Way Medical Centre in Pollards Hill.”

[caml.org.uk/
merton-cost-of-living](http://caml.org.uk/merton-cost-of-living)



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Join us and let's create an unforgettable Wimbledon experience together

**GUEST SERVICES | RETAIL | COURT SERVICES
TRANSPORT | PLAYER SERVICES | MEDIA**

Various contract lengths available from May to July 2025

Apply on jobs.wimbledon.com

Mural paints picture of athletic success

The families of international medal-winning athletes celebrated the opening of a revamped Cold Blows Pavilion and a new colourful mural. The artwork sits next to the restored historic running track and features striking portraits of Olympic athletes who trained there as members of Mitcham Athletics Club.

Olympic hurdler and Commonwealth Games gold medalist turned coach, Lorna Boothe MBE

said: “I joined Mitcham Athletics club here at Canons when I was 11, and I still use the track as part of my coaching.”

The mural design, inspired by community workshops, was created by Ninety-Five Prints. The artwork was funded as part of the £4.4m National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery Community Fund regeneration project at Canons House and Grounds.



The mural features Lorna Boothe MBE; middle distance runner and silver Commonwealth Games medallist Brian Hewson; world record setting long jumper Muriel Cornell and high jumper Dorothy Tyler, who won Olympic silver medals before and after the Second World War.





Anyone for tennis?

Former British number one tennis player Tim Henman is serving up new tennis opportunities for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), as Merton works to become London's Borough of Sport.

© Rebecca Cresta Photography



Choose a new way to move using our Borough of Sport Activity Finder

The council's new partnership with the Tim Henman Foundation will see weekly inclusive sports sessions in three special schools across Merton, alongside a community club.

Tim Henman said: "We are thrilled to be working in partnership with Merton on their mission to become London's Borough of Sport. We have worked in the area for many years and now we will be able to support even more children into regular activity."

In October, Tim visited Perseid School in Morden to oversee a session delivered by Disability Sports Coaching. The Inclusive Activity Programme is designed to create free, accessible and inclusive adapted tennis and

multi-skills sessions for students with special educational needs or disabilities.

Assistant Headteacher at Perseid Upper School, Becky Sanderson said: "Having access to opportunities to be active is so important to our students, who have already gained so much from these first few sessions."

The event also saw Perseid students trying our Blazepods, interactive technology to encourage activity and coordination. The state-of-the-art equipment was brought to Merton thanks to a successful grant application to the World Olympic Fund, led by ex-Olympian and Mitcham local Lorna Booth MBE. The pods will be used in schools and at the community club.



Children aged eight and over, who have SEND, plus their siblings, are welcome to come and play tennis and a range of other sports every Saturday 1.30–3pm at Melbury College's Whatley Avenue Campus in Morden.



Find out more: www.disabilitysportscoach.org.uk, call 020 7928 4267 or email dsc@disabilitysportscoach.org.uk

Ending violence against women

We are marking the United Nations 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which started on 25 November and runs until 10 December, by raising awareness of violence against women and girls and the support available for those experiencing domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is not just physical violence. It can also be psychological, economic, honour-based, stalking or coercive control.

Find out more about the different types of domestic abuse and the support available for people who are experiencing it, perpetrating it or who have survived it.

merton.gov.uk/16days



Take the White Ribbon promise

The council is a White Ribbon accredited organisation, underlining our commitment to ending violence against women and girls by boys and men. Anyone can become a White Ribbon Champion (women) or Ambassador (men) by making a promise to not commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

www.whiteribbon.org.uk

Building confidence

The Inner Strength Network is an award-winning accredited coaching and training service for women and children, offering a free confidential space to build back your confidence and self-esteem and helping you not to go back to an abusive situation.

Chief executive Maureen Bailey's message to women who are experiencing domestic abuse

and wondering whether to leave is: "You are not alone, and it is not your fault. If you can, have a safety plan to escape and at the right time, take the opportunity to be free from abuse. We at the Inner Strength Network will try to help you be free."

Find out more: www.innerstrengthnetwork.com or email maureen@innerstrengthnetwork.com

A survivor's story

iN Merton spoke to a woman who has rebuilt her life after experiencing domestic abuse.

“I now know that I was in a trauma bond with a narcissist. I was young when we first met and he was a lot older than me. We moved in together too soon.

At the start, he was overly nice. He'd say “I'll take your bank card, so that you don't need to worry about paying for anything.” He'd do everything for me, get me something to eat and tuck me up on the sofa. I felt nurtured. He saw that I was vulnerable.

The first time he was violent, he hit me on the head so hard that I blacked out. When I came round, I didn't feel well and told him I needed to go to hospital. He came too and when the medical staff asked me what happened, he gave me a look which said “Don't you dare say anything.” I told them I fell over.

When we got home, he cried, crocodile tears I know now, and said it was the alcohol. Then he love bombed me. I was so naive and a bit blind to it. He wanted to make me dependent on him – it was a form of control.

When I told him I was going to meet my friend, he said “I don't like that girl.” He didn't want me to do a job I enjoyed because it involved serving male customers, so I stopped working. He wouldn't let me walk to the shop on my own – he would get things and lock me in our home when he was away.

When I fell pregnant, he pressured me to have an abortion, but I wanted to keep the baby. I had a black eye when I gave birth to our child. He told me that there had been violence in his childhood, but that is no excuse for being violent towards another person.

It's difficult to understand why I stayed, unless you've been in that situation. I did try and leave once and spent the night in a refuge, but he contacted me and asked “Where are you? Please come back.” So, I did, because things could be

wonderful, as well as terrible. I decided to leave for good after he threatened to kill me and our young child with a knife. He had not harmed our child up until then, so that was a turning point.

I left everything behind and just took my child and a few clothes. When I arrived at the refuge, I was unsure at first and very worried. I heard a bang on the window on the first night and thought it was him, but then I remembered that I'm not there anymore. After a week I felt a sense of relief and was able to sleep at night.

Being able to walk down the road to the shop with my child felt like freedom, knowing that he's not following me.

The Inner Strength Network has been so supportive to me and my child. I couldn't be more grateful to Maureen, who has given me advice and helped to boost my confidence. I feel safe here. Marie has arranged lots of children's activities and is always there to talk to.

I was supported to get a court order, which prevents him from contacting me. It's not easy to cut all ties – you've got to get strong – but it's game over for them when the trauma bond is severed, because they no longer have any control.”

One Stop Shop

Merton has a confidential drop-in service for people experiencing domestic abuse. It is held every Monday between 9.30am–12 noon (except on bank holidays) at Morden Baptist Church, Crown Lane, Morden, SM4 5BL. For further details, call 020 7801 1777.

**Ever considered studying a T Level?
Here's what Ursuline Sixth Form has to offer!**

**What are T Levels?
The Essentials**

T Levels are an alternative to A Levels, apprenticeships, and other 16-19 courses.

T Levels are technical qualifications covering core theory and skills for an industry area.

T Levels are equivalent to 3 A-Levels and hold the same number of UCAS points.

T Levels offer an invaluable 45-day industry placement in addition to classroom based learning.

T Levels enable progression on to related apprenticeships, degree courses, and skilled employment.

For further information on our course offer please visit www.ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk/sixth-form



T-LEVELS
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION



**HEALTH
(Adult Nursing)**

- T-Level Health is aimed at students who wish to pursue a career in adult nursing.
- Enables students to utilise specialist equipment in bespoke classrooms where they will learn about a wide range of important factors to prepare them for transition to industry.



BUSINESS

- T Level Business is aimed at students who are interested in entering a career in management and administration.
- Designed by key employers and stakeholders to prepare you to enter this career either through further training or study. Students learn about the intricacies of businesses, leading teams and benefits of networking.



SCIENCE

- T Level Laboratory Sciences provides fundamental theory, safe behaviours, and practical skills required to excel in the science field.
- Students will develop an advanced knowledge/skillset of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, while learning about the fundamental practices in place in Science industry.



DIGITAL

- T Level in Digital Production, Design & Development is designed with employers to give young people the skills required in industry.
- Digital T Level learners will be able to develop core skills such as communication, team working, reflective practice, research methods and presentation skills.

HM Government

Childcare support is expanding

More before and after-school childcare places are here to help parents in Merton.

You can use tax-free childcare or universal credit childcare to pay for wraparound childcare.

Speak to your child's school to find out more, or visit ChildcareChoices.gov.uk



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Directory



Adult learning

merton.gov.uk/adultlearning

Adult social care

merton.gov.uk/adult-social-care
020 8545 4388 (9.30am–1.30pm)

Benefits advice and local welfare

merton.gov.uk/benefitsadvice
welfarebenefitsteam@merton.gov.uk
lwss@merton.gov.uk
020 8274 4908 (11am–3pm)

Blue Badge parking permits and Freedom Passes for disabled people

merton.gov.uk/bluebadge
merton.gov.uk/freedompasses
concessionarytravel@merton.gov.uk
020 8274 4990 (11am–3pm)

Children's social care

merton.gov.uk/social-care
CandFhub@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 4226/7
Out of hours 020 8770 5000

Comments, compliments and complaints

merton.gov.uk/complaints
complaints@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3060 (10am–2pm)

Council tax

merton.gov.uk/counciltax
local.taxation@merton.gov.uk
020 8274 4904 (9am–1pm)

Council tax support and housing benefit

merton.gov.uk/cts
housing.benefits@merton.gov.uk
020 8274 4903 (9am–1pm)

Councillors

merton.gov.uk/councillors
Conservative 020 8545 3396
Labour 020 8545 3424
Liberal Democrats 020 8545 4770 (Tuesday–Thursday 8.30am–2.30pm)
Merton Park Ward Independent Residents 020 8545 4026

Fly-tipping

Report fly-tipping on public roads.
merton.gov.uk/flytipping
020 8274 4902

Freedom Passes for older people

londoncouncils.gov.uk/freedom-pass
0300 330 1433 (Monday to Sunday 8am–8pm). Calls charged at local rate

Garden waste collection service

merton.gov.uk/gardenwaste
020 8274 4902

Housing benefit

merton.gov.uk/housingbenefit
housing.benefits@merton.gov.uk
020 8274 4903 (9am–1pm)

Housing register

merton.gov.uk/allocations
registration@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3305

Leisure

Hall hire, school holiday activities, sports pitches and courts.
merton.gov.uk/leisure
leisure@merton.gov.uk

Licensing

licensing@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3969

MASCOT Telecare

Helps people to live safely and independently in their own homes. Available 24/7 using technology linked to our response centre.
merton.gov.uk/mascot
020 8274 5940

Parking

Penalty Charge Notices, parking permits and car parks.
merton.gov.uk/parking
parking@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 4661 (11am–4pm)

Planning

merton.gov.uk/planning
planning@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3777 (1–3pm)

Register office

For weddings, civil ceremonies or partnerships, to register a birth or death, name a baby or citizenship ceremonies.
merton.gov.uk/register
register.office@merton.gov.uk
020 8274 5777
Morden Park House, Morden Park, London Road, Morden SM4 5QU
Opening hours 9am–4.30pm

Roads and highways

merton.gov.uk/roads-highways-pavements
trafficanhighways@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3700 (10am–4pm)

Rubbish and recycling

merton.gov.uk/recycling
020 8274 4902

Schools admissions

merton.gov.uk/schools
020 8274 4906

Snow and ice

When snow or ice are forecast, we grit priority roads and pavements and clear ice and snow.
merton.gov.uk/wintermaintenance
trafficanhighways@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3700 (10am–4pm)

Street cleaning

merton.gov.uk/street-care-cleaning
020 8274 4902

Street lighting

merton.gov.uk/streetlighting
trafficanhighways@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3700 (10am–4pm)

Trading standards

merton.gov.uk/tradingstandards
tradingstandards@merton.gov.uk
020 8545 3025 (9am–5pm)

Your Christmas recycling and rubbish collections

Your usual collection day	Your revised collection day	Change
Wednesday 25 December 2024	Friday 27 December 2024	2 days later
Thursday 26 December 2024	Saturday 28 December 2024	2 days later
Friday 27 December 2024	Monday 30 December 2024	3 days later
Monday 30 December 2024	Tuesday 31 December 2024	1 day later
Tuesday 31 December 2024	Thursday 2 January 2025	2 days later
Wednesday 1 January 2025	Friday 3 January 2025	2 days later
Thursday 2 January 2025	Saturday 4 January 2025	2 days later
Friday 3 January 2025	Monday 6 January 2025	3 days later
Monday 6 January 2025	Tuesday 7 January 2025	1 day later
Tuesday 7 January 2025	Wednesday 8 January 2025	1 day later
Wednesday 8 January 2025	Thursday 9 January 2025	1 day later
Thursday 9 January 2025	Friday 10 January 2025	1 day later
Friday 10 January 2025	Saturday 11 January 2025	1 day later

Please put your bins out by 6am on your collection day

Collections return to normal from Monday 13 January 2025.

Christmas collections for flats above shop properties will follow a different schedule. All residents in flats above a shop will receive written confirmation of their revised collection schedule.

Household Reuse and Recycling Centre (HRRC) in Morden

The HRRC will be open 8am–4pm, Monday–Sunday over the festive period with the following exceptions: Christmas Eve – 8am–midday.

Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day – Closed.

Advance booking is essential via our website: merton.gov.uk/amenity

Christmas tree collection information can be found in your Recycling News on page 18.