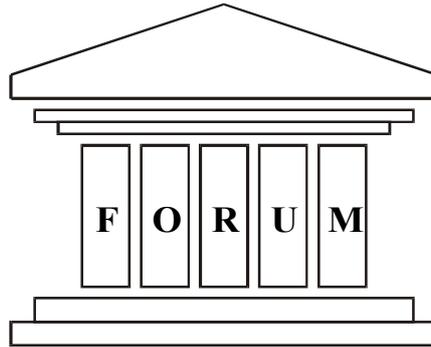


# MERTON PARK WARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



Autumn 2015

Issue No 54

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## How is the Nelson Health Centre doing?

The new Nelson has been open for six months and we are interested in your experience of how it's working. Email us your feedback [mpwra@mertonpark.org.uk](mailto:mpwra@mertonpark.org.uk)

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

After some 5 years "sabbatical", I once again find myself writing to you as Chairman of MPWRA. Peter Southgate's call for volunteers in our Spring FORUM has produced a gratifying response but there is still room for more. As well as volunteers for the committee, we have a new working group on the plans for Morden with members both keen and with relevant experience – a feature Merton Park often produces. Many are more youthful than the current committee which bodes well for the future.

Besides volunteers we also need your subscriptions to keep us financed to run our meetings and indeed FORUM. We receive no financial support from Merton Council and £5 a year to keep Merton Park Independent is surely excellent value. When you join you can also sign up for email alerts. If you come to meetings, you will find them informative and a wonderful chance to meet neighbours. A form is enclosed. If you are already a member, do please renew.

**Hubert Child**

## Merton Park Ward Residents' Association (MPWRA) sponsors three Independent councillors who form Merton Park Ward Independent Residents (MPWIR) on Merton Council



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## MORDEN REGENERATION – TELL THE PLANNERS WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE

Plans are progressing for a major transformation of Morden Town Centre. **The boundary for the redevelopment now extends from the Peugeot garage on Morden Road, through the town centre including the “Abbotsbury Triangle” and down London Road to the Ahmadiyya Mosque near Morden South Station.** This **does not** mean that the entire area will be covered in dense buildings but it **does enable the entire site to be planned as a whole.** The plans include over 1,000 new homes, 40% affordable, as well as new retail and business premises and new public spaces.

In October Merton Council secured Housing Zone status and funding from the Greater London Authority to kick-start the regeneration. The council has also agreed to form a Joint Venture with TfL to redesign the area. This JV will appoint a single developer who will be responsible for the building programme.

**The council is running a consultation on what residents want to see in Morden.** It’s an easy opportunity to say what you think, especially if you have concerns about the way development might affect you.

**We would urge everyone to take part in the consultation which closes on November 11.** It can be accessed via our website [www.mertonpark.org.uk](http://www.mertonpark.org.uk) or

the council’s website [www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk). Paper copies are available in the Civic Centre. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create the Morden we want. If we allow the developers to get it wrong, it could be wrong for a long time.

In the summer a group of MPWRA members came together to keep a close eye on the plans. They met council officers in October to probe more deeply into the proposals. They will be leading a discussion on the regeneration at our **monthly residents’ meeting on November 3** and will be submitting their comments to the consultation as a group by the November 11 deadline.

Morden presents an exciting prospect but it has to be right for local people. There is potential to build on Morden’s variety of independent retail shops with areas and facilities for community and leisure activities. With so many additional housing units we could see extra dwellings catering for different types of household, including people wanting to downsize but stay in the area, which our previous surveys have identified as a currently unfulfilled need. Construction is unlikely to begin before late 2018 but the developer will be selected next year with specific plans drawn up for consultation perhaps by late 2016.

**Cllr John Sargeant**

### EDUCATION UPDATE

Two of Merton Park’s primary schools were visited by Ofsted towards the end of the summer term. Despite the timing being less than ideal, **Merton Park Primary** improved its Ofsted rating from “Good” to “Outstanding” while **Poplar Primary** retained its “Good” rating, even though it has expanded by 50% in the last two years. Our congratulations go to their respective heads, Kirsty Gooderick and Katharine Davies, and their staff on their achievements on behalf of our youngest citizens.

**Park Community School** moved from its temporary premises in Crown Lane to its new permanent home at the end of Dorset Road (formerly the Trinitarian Bible Society) at the beginning of September. Hoardings around the school show that construction work is still ongoing. We hope to secure a footpath from Dorset Road to the Morden Road tram stop as part of the planning process.

**Cllr Edward Foley**

### MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED

For years we have been campaigning for the **20mph limits in Merton Park** to be taken seriously. Motorists routinely speed through the ward – simply displaying signs seems to have little effect. Most notoriously, we have been demanding proper speed controls to be introduced in **Mostyn Road**.

At our request, the council checked speeds there for a whole week in 2014 and the evidence showed a majority of vehicles exceed the limit with a significant number travelling at over 30 and sometimes 40 mph. Southbound traffic is noticeably more dangerous than Northbound. As result of our demands, measures to combat Mostyn speeding have been promised priority this financial year.

As we go to press, we have been told that proposals will be ready for discussion in the next few days. Our Independent councillors will be discussing the proposals with council officers. If the proposals are acceptable we understand they could be completed this financial year.

**Cllr John Sargeant**

## CONTROLLING OUR ROADS – WHAT CAN WE DO WITH THE CARS?

**Traffic congestion and parking pressures** in the southern part of our ward will be all too familiar to the residents of those roads still outside the **Controlled Parking Zone** – namely **Kenley Road** (between Mostyn Road and Circle Gardens), **Keswick Avenue, Tybenham Road, Cranleigh Road, Poplar Road South** and **Mostyn Road** (south of the junction with Kenley Road).

We seem to have been discussing the problems of indiscriminate commuter parking for a very long time. Residents of **Cranleigh Road** took the initiative in organising their own survey to demonstrate support for parking controls two years ago. A test run by the fire brigade also confirmed that the road was impassable on bends when cars were parked on both sides. Similarly residents in **Keswick Avenue** were worried about access for emergency vehicles, particularly ambulances and lobbied for parking restrictions to guarantee emergency access. Surveys in both roads have confirmed that joining the Merton Park CPZ (zone MP1) is the preferred solution to the alternatives of double yellow lines on one side (Keswick Avenue) or parking on alternate sides on weekdays (Cranleigh Road).

Recognising that parking controls in these two roads would increase parking pressure on the roads in between, I carried out a short survey in June to find out if residents wanted their roads to be included in the consultation to join the CPZ. A total of 163 households responded, more than half those surveyed. The results were a resounding endorsement for joining the consultation to come into the CPZ, with an overall majority of 84% in favour.

	For		Total
		%	
<b>Kenley Road</b>	36	<b>88</b>	41
<b>Mostyn Road</b>	40	<b>83</b>	48
<b>Poplar Road South</b>	20	<b>80</b>	25
<b>Tybenham Road</b>	33	<b>89</b>	37
<b>Leafield Road*</b>	8	<b>67</b>	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>163</b>

The strength of support overall justifies going straight to a statutory consultation without a further round of informal consultation. Merton Council officers have agreed this should take place in November, which would allow the report to be submitted for approval in January next year and the extension to the CPZ to be implemented in March.

*\*Leafield Road in particular is bedevilled by rat running during peak hours which a CPZ will not solve and it will not be included in the consultation, although at the request of some residents, I included it in my survey.*

**Cllr Peter Southgate**

**Meanwhile some residents in the Cannon Hill Lane** area are raising a petition calling for a consultation into a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in the vicinity of the **Nelson Health Centre**. Even though several out-patient services have yet to open, parking in the area has gone from difficult to near-impossible. Motorists park in nearby roads to commute, access the Nelson or simply as a long-stay location outside neighbouring CPZ's. Residents are drawing attention to the dangers for road users and pedestrians, as well as the inconvenience caused.

Several years ago we recognised the parking problems that the Nelson would bring and fought for adequate on-site parking provision as the Centre sought planning permission in 2012. In the event, nearly two-thirds of the 68 spaces were ear-marked for staff. But some vehicles are not overflowing from the Nelson; they don't attempt to use the car park in the first place! Why pay money when you can squeeze into a nearby street for free? The Nelson is operating well below capacity and we fear that the parking situation will become even worse as more clinics start up.

The petition is entirely organised by residents; our councillors will ensure it is properly considered by the council when it is presented in November. A CPZ would reduce the number of spaces but would restrict parking to vehicles belonging to local residents and their visitors.

**Whether a consultation leads to a CPZ will be up to local residents in the roads concerned.**

**Cllr John Sargeant**

After several exchanges with the council we managed to have hoardings securing the latest building site in **Hartfield Road** moved back from the outside edge of the pavement. A small triumph, perhaps, but we were left wondering how anyone could have granted a licence for such an arrangement lasting through next summer.

**Cllr John Sargeant**

## MERTON WELCOMES REFUGEES

Harrowing reports of the plight of refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria aroused our sympathies when they appeared on our TV screens. Local residents Jackie Schneider and John Merriman decided to see if our sympathy could be translated into practical help. About 80 people attended, including former refugees who testified to the help they received when they first arrived in the UK.

LB Merton currently supports 30 families who are destitute whilst awaiting asylum; as they do not qualify for government funding until their claim to asylum has been proven, LBM picks up the cost. In addition there are 20 unaccompanied minors (mostly Albanian boys aged 13-17) in foster care, and a further 50 young adults aged 18+ in supported lodgings. During the current crisis, LBM has been accepting 4 or 5 unaccompanied minors every 6 weeks (previously 3 a year) from Kent on a rota basis administered by London Councils.

MPWIR signed a cross party statement issued at the Council meeting on 9 September, in which Merton agreed to take its fair share of refugees working in conjunction with London Councils. Merton Voluntary Services Council (MVSC) is coordinating offers of volunteer help ([sarah@mvsc.co.uk](mailto:sarah@mvsc.co.uk)) and the two Morden mosques will act as collection points for donations of clothing etc.

So what can Merton Park residents do to help? Contact [Mertonwelcomesrefugees@gmail.com](mailto:Mertonwelcomesrefugees@gmail.com) to register your interest and keep informed as plans develop. We will update residents through our website and email alerts. Meanwhile here are two of the practical steps we can take following the meeting:

1. **Buy an Oyster card and put some money on it.** This enables asylum seekers and refugees to attend medical appointments and meetings with officials. Anil and Rashpal Patel, at Londis, 34 Crown Lane will collect the cards for distribution by the South London Refugee Association
2. **Volunteer for a football project for young refugees** Wednesdays during term time, 5.30 to 6.30pm at Canons Leisure Centre to help with training. Contact Doug Fraser at [doug@asylumwelcome.org.uk](mailto:doug@asylumwelcome.org.uk).

**Refugees long settled in Merton tell me that the need is as much for a warm welcome and befriending as shelter and money.**

**Cllr Peter Southgate**

## MPWRA MEETINGS - ALL WELCOME

Meetings are at **8pm** at **MERTON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Entrance from Erridge Road Playground Gate  
Each meeting includes time for questions to your Ward Councillors

- 3 November**
- *Merton's Dementia Hub*
  - *Morden Regeneration Plans*

**1 December** *Councillors' Question Time.....plus seasonal treats*

### MPWRA Officers

Chairman: Hubert Child 020 8540 3087  
Vice Chairman: Bryan Anderson  
Secretary: Christine Stutt 020 8543 6843  
Treasurer: Fred Rayner

[www.mertonpark.org.uk](http://www.mertonpark.org.uk)

### MPWRA Committee

Graham Boyes Ian Garbett Judy Sargeant  
Desé Child Stephen Mercer David Slocombe  
Graham Clark Jolanta Nowak Pauline Southgate  
Philippa Foscett