

RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM  
28 JULY 2020

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Stephen Crowe (in the Chair),

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held via Zoom, and chaired by Councillor Stephen Crowe with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association. 16 residents 6 councillors attended on Zoom with 77 additional views on [YouTube](#). The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would work.

2 MERTON COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (Agenda Item 2)

Councillor Stephen Alambritis, Leader of Merton Council gave an update on how Merton was dealing with COVID-19. Sadly 202 residents died from COVID-19, and the leader expressed his condolences to their friends and family. It is clear that COVID-19 is having a disproportionate impact on BAME residents. The Public Health team is working on how we can address these inequalities.

Residents may have seen in the news the iconic image of a Black Lives Matter protester, Patrick Hutchinson, carrying a counter-protester to safety. Patrick works with Hercules Wimbledon Working and we are looking at how to recognise his contribution.

The council has been supporting 7019 residents who have been shielding, with each of them directly contacted. Council staff were redeployed to support tackling pandemic, for example the Bailiffs Service has been distributing food and other essential supplies. Support from Foodbanks in Merton has also been essential.

PPE stock is in place in Merton and has been provided to care homes, we have worked across London boroughs to jointly procure 50million items. We have also accommodated 52 rough sleepers, 6 refused to be housed. We are currently working to retain the 52 in accommodation.

**Reopening services**

Schools have had to decide on how to meet government guidelines to accommodate some year groups and will need to develop plans for September.

Wimbledon, Colliers Wood and Mitcham libraries have reopened with a restricted service, the remaining libraries will open in August. Garth Road Recycling and Reuse centre has opened with a booking system. All Parks facilities now all reopened.

High streets are beginning to get back to business. Support has been made available including grants to small businesses, with Merton the 3<sup>rd</sup> quickest in London to distribute the funds. Additional discretionary grants are now being assessed along with the Chamber of Commerce and MVSC.

We have agreed an Emergency Transport Strategy to support social distancing and encourage active travel. This includes 28 new school streets funded by Government.

Local government has been urged to do what is required and Merton has done so, Government has provided some funding but Merton is still facing a £20m gap and there are similar issues in all councils.

Cllr Alambritis expressed thanks to Merton Mutual Aid, Wimbledon Guild for supporting residents, Wimbledon Foundation for providing funding and to Stephen Hammond MP, and Wimbledon Councillors for their support.

Getting the economy going will be a huge challenge, both nationally and locally. Encouraging development and employment opportunities in the borough will be important, for example AFC Wimbledon returning to Plough Lane, Francis Grove, and YMCA scheme should all generate jobs including apprentices.

Local government has been urged to do what is required and has done so, and whilst Government has provided some funding there is still a £20m gap for Merton Council and similar issues in all councils.

Cllr Alambritis expressed thanks to Merton Mutual Aid, Wimbledon Guild and other local groups for supporting residents. He also thanked the Wimbledon Foundation, AELTC, Love Wimbledon, and local residents associations for their contributions. Finally Cllr Alambritis thanked Stephen Hammond MP, and councillors for their work.

### **Non-COVID issues**

Cabinet has passed a Climate Emergency strategy, which will go to full Council in September. Delivering the plan will need additional support from Government to meet its targets. There is a £88m cost to make the Council carbon neutral by 2030 whilst for a borough as a whole the cost could be £3bn.

The annual council has been postponed until September and hopefully it will involve physical attendance for the benefit of the new Mayor, Cllr Sally Kenny, but it could be virtual. Cllr Alambritis paid tribute to Cllr Janice Howard for her work during a not

normal year. Subject to the council make-up from 2022 there could be an opportunity for both to perhaps serve again.

There has been an issue with unlicensed musical events taking place in Merton and we have been working with Met Police to stop these dangerous events. Sally Benatar from Met Police stepping down, with new borough commander joining soon. Wimbledon Police station staying open 24/7 to cover Merton and Wandsworth but the Met Police are still working on overall property strategy. Mitcham will remain a 9-5 operation.

Cllr Stephen Crowe thanked the Leader and other councillors for supporting residents.

A resident asked how the Council can support care homes, and in response Cllr Alambritis said sadly 38 have died in care home settings. Merton Council has good relations with care homes, we have made sure they have sufficient PPE and will continue to work closely with them. Adult Social Cares officers work closely with care homes.

A resident asked if the Council can use the emergency powers to lift parking restrictions in order to help small businesses. Cllr Alambritis said that as a landlord the Council has waived rents for 3 months but will need to start secure income for the council in the future. There are also business rate holiday and deferral schemes. There is a tension between the desire to walk/cycle and parking provision. We have removed some parking spaces to accommodate social distancing on the pavement. We will keep the current 20 minute free spaces but can always look at other options. We will continue to support shop local campaigns and look at what other support we can give.

### 3 LOCAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY (Agenda Item 3)

Diana Sterck, Merton Chamber of Commerce gave an update on the state of business in lockdown and the impact of COVID-19. Diana said that business mood was desperate, no one had ever experienced this before. In Merton there are more than 7000 VAT registered businesses, and more than 4,000 'home based' businesses (self-employed). There has been help for businesses including Small Business Rate Relief, Leisure/Retail Rate Relief and the Business Retention Scheme (Furlough). Additionally applications for a Discretionary Grants fund are being assessed by a panel involving Diana, Merton Voluntary Service Council and Merton Council. The applications have highlighted the huge variety of businesses and the difficulties they have faced. These grants will be critical for these businesses. Some sectors are still not able to trade, creative industry and events, and are desperate, including those in their supply chains. Other businesses have been able to continue to trade and are even thriving.

The Chamber response has included 'Reach out and Connect', 21 webinars on Zoom, with 535 attendees, helping to explain grant/relief schemes and government guidance. This has included advice on reopening requirements supported by Merton Council's Regulatory Services. The Chamber has also held Business leader forums, bringing together larger businesses like Close Brothers, and New Wimbledon Theatre. The Chamber is also supporting businesses to prepare for Brexit in 2021.

Quite a few businesses have fallen through the gaps in support because they are too big for the rate relief or not in targeted sectors. The Chamber has worked with MPs and London government to lobby Government. We have also worked closely with London Chamber of Commerce who are able to get information quickly from Government.

The Chamber has updated its [website](#) after each government briefing to keep businesses up to date and has also worked with businesses to adapt, for example producing food for NHS staff, or making masks and PPE supplies.

Merton Giving has adapted to respond to COVID-19, helping charitable organisations cope with the challenge. Merton Giving receives funds from Merton Council, Wimbledon Foundation, MOAT and Clarion Housing as well as local businesses who have helped fundraise.

In response to a question about the discretionary grants including a criteria for closing East/West gap Diana said we are still considering applications. Key criteria is fixed property costs but applicants have also set out how they are employing or supporting economy in East of the borough. Cllr Alambritis that this criteria is more relevant to charitable businesses.

A resident asked about the 'Eat out to help out' scheme and Diana said that Love Wimbledon is focusing on this in Wimbledon, whilst the Chamber will be promoting across the rest of the borough. The Chamber will continue to promote shop local messages.

#### 4 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MERTON (Agenda Item 4)

Barry Causer, Public Health, Merton Council gave a presentation on the impact of the COVID-19 on the health of residents in Merton. The presentation is attached to this report.

To date there have been 995 positive tests in Merton, 25<sup>th</sup> of the 32 boroughs in London per 100,000. There have been 204 deaths, with a significant number of additional deaths in March and April, many non-COVID. The additional non-COVID deaths may be due to some under reporting in care homes and other places and

indirect deaths due to not accessing healthcare when they needed it. Number of deaths is now in line with the same time period in 2019.

COVID-19 has not been evenly distributed with a higher death rate in East of borough than the west and higher incidence for BAME residents and those in high risk occupations.

### **Outbreak control**

There is now low infection rates in London but we need to prepare for new clusters. Local authorities are working with the NHS and the national contact tracing scheme to track patterns. Merton Council is also making contact with high risk settings and working with them. Testing is essential to this so very important residents understand where to [get a test](#) if they show symptoms or have in been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. We are also preparing for the autumn/winter as there will be additional risks associated with flu and cold season.

There are community actions that can help prevent the spread:

- Handwashing, face-coverings, social distancing, testing.
- Be aware of potential fraud
- Use GP and other services
- Get COVID-19 fit – stop smoking, lose weight, get fitter
- Manage long-term conditions
- Flu jabs
- Support for mental health

## **5 WIMBLEDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP (Agenda Item 5)**

Lynne Gordon and Suzanne Grocott gave a presentation on the work of the Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group (WNPG). The presentation is attached to the report.

Change in Wimbledon was fairly rapid, and it has been identified as an area of opportunity in London Plan. We also need to consider impact of climate emergency and impact of online retail on the High Street. Neighbourhood Planning is about empowering the local community and working out what local people want in their area. Neighbourhood Planning allows the community to set policies on building type, design, public safety, sustainability, green spaces, and heritage. By bringing together different interest groups we can support growth and make sure best of Wimbledon is retained.

The WNPG is now looking to be designated as a Neighbourhood Forum. This needs to define the boundary of the area, build a network of community and organisational representatives. The area proposed is a larger Wimbledon area from the Wandle to

the Common, from Merton Park to Wimbledon Park. We are having conversations with groups in this area, about if they want to be included. We need the community to become members which is free to do so and can be done [online](#).

Tony Edwards gave a Raynes Park perspective. He said initial discussions have been taken place to discuss options and if there is support for a Neighbourhood Plan in Raynes Park. A plan could help bring the community together and prepare for Crossrail Rail 2. We will need to be clear with the community what can be achieved. We hope to progress once lockdown has finished.

## 6 STATION, STREET MANAGEMENT & RP IMPROVEMENTS (Agenda Item 6)

Chris Larkman said that thanks to Stephen Hammond MP the RPA now has a helpful contact at Network Rail (NR). They did clear the overgrowth but we still chasing NR over embankment on the north side. On the Southside the portion of land being transferred to Merton Council to make more room for pedestrians is still not completed and we need update from Paul McGarry. The front of the station needs investment as well, including removing old scaffolding and the fence on platform 1.

On the Rainbow estate there have been improvements to the road leading to the estate including six parking spaces to pick up and drop off at the station, but there are currently no parking restrictions in place. Chris is trying to bring NR, Rainbow and Merton Council together to sort this out.

We are still trying to fix a location for the Farmers market as it may need permission from NR rather than Merton Council.

Tony Edwards said the RPA has submitted to CIL funding for some of the remaining elements of the RP Enhancement plan.

Cllr Alambritis said he was happy for Council to get involved to help push landowners.

## 7 PLANNING UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)

No update was available.

## 8 FLAT CONVERSIONS (Agenda Item 8)

Chris Larkman said that in the Apostles a number of flat conversions have been permitted. Apostles Residents Association has produced a report on development in the area and submitted to Merton Council for consideration in the new local plan.

## 9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Crowe thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Future meetings:

17 September 2020; 3 December 2020; 30 March 2021, all at 7.15pm in Raynes Park Library, subject to COVID-19 restrictions.

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# Covid-19 Impact in Merton

A Brief Overview of COVID Impact on the Community & Involving the Community - Raynes Park Community Forum

Barry Causer, Head of Strategic Commissioning (Public Health)

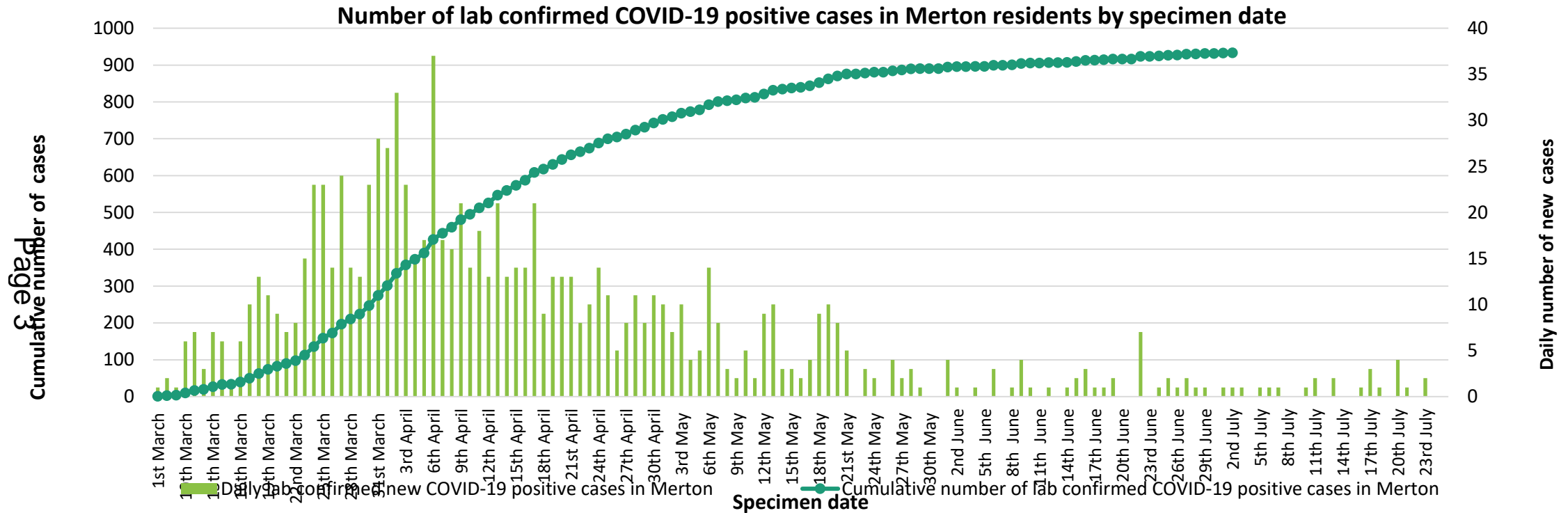
28<sup>th</sup> July 2020



# Aims and Purpose

- Brief overview of the COVID impact on Merton's communities so far
- Brief overview of outbreak control
- Important messages for community involvement/action
- Q&A

Reporting frequency: Daily (01.03.2020 – 25.07.2020)



<p><b>Cumulative number of lab-confirmed cases in Merton</b> Date: 25<sup>th</sup> July</p> <p><b>955</b></p>	<p><b>Rate of cumulative lab confirmed COVID-19 positive cases in Merton (per 100,000 population)</b> Date: 25<sup>th</sup> July</p> <p><b>463.2 per 100,000 population</b></p>	<p><b>Current Rank by rate (1 = lowest rate)</b></p> <p><b>25th out of 32 London boroughs</b></p>	<p><b>Cumulative number of lab-confirmed cases in London</b> Date: 25<sup>th</sup> July</p> <p><b>35,017</b></p>	<p>Note: number of lab confirmed COVID-19 positive cases are residents in Merton determined by home postcode provided by person being tested.</p>
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# Number of deaths registered among Merton residents

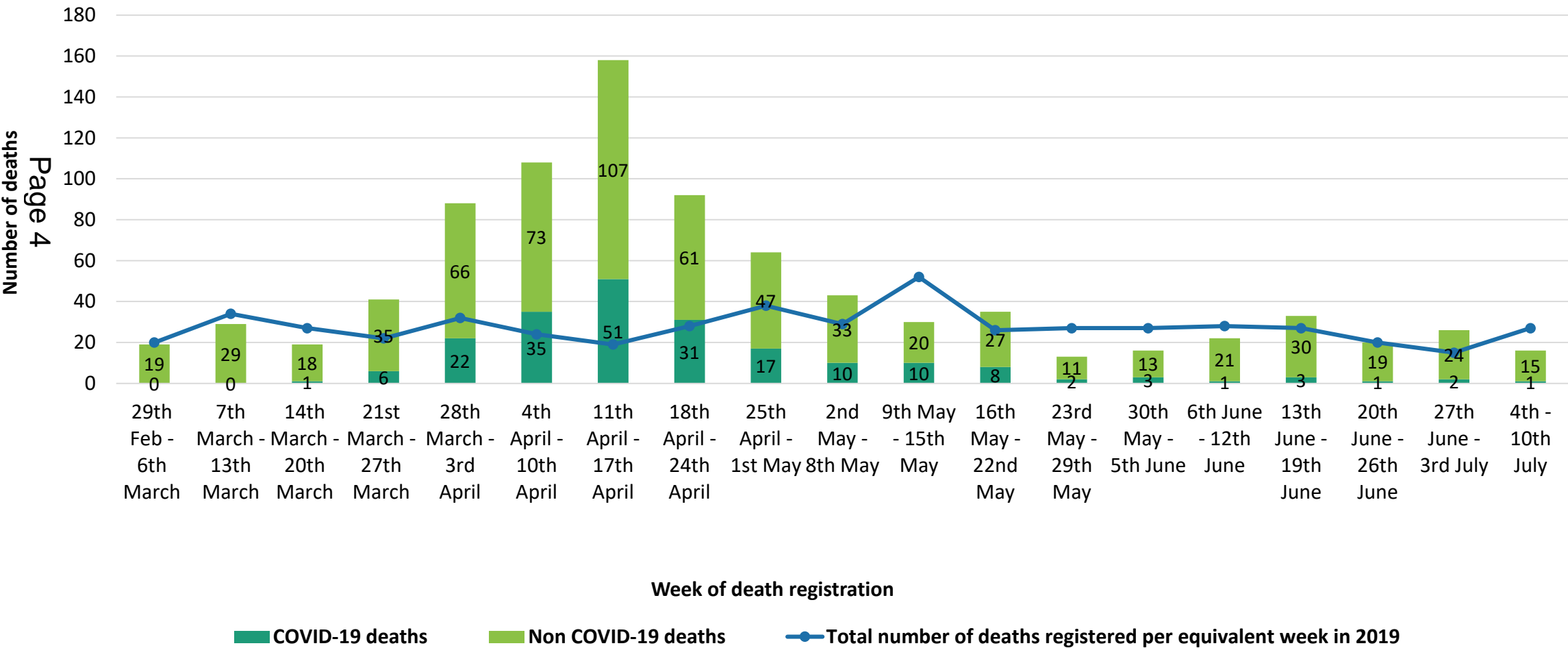
Source: ONS

Reporting frequency: Weekly (29.02.2020 – 10.07.2020)

Cumulative number of  
COVID related deaths  
registered in Merton  
(04.01.2020 – 10.07.2020)

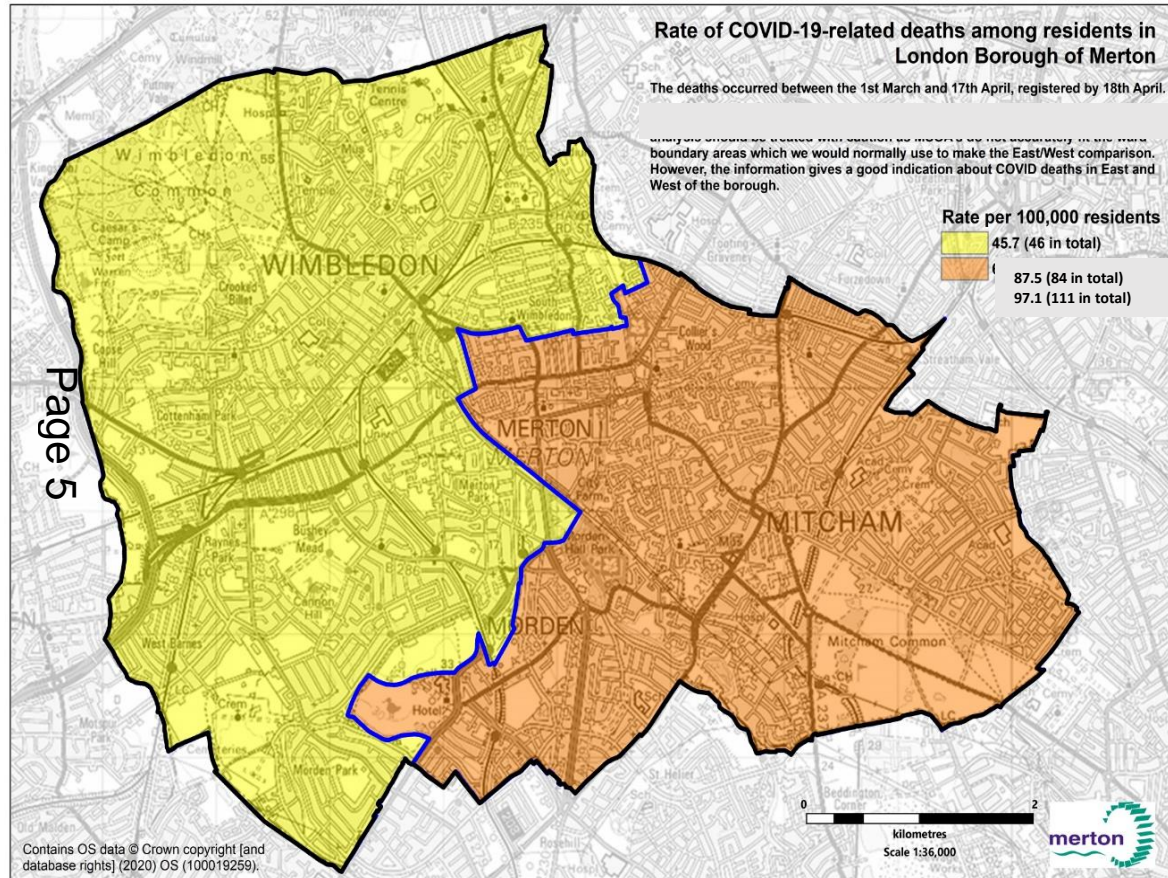
204

Number of deaths in Merton by week of registration



# Covid-19 impact on Merton

Rate of COVID 19 related deaths among residents in Merton between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> May



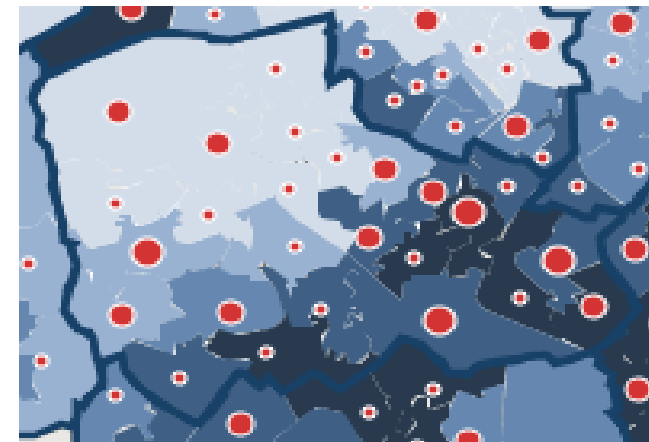
Previous data released by ONS calculated that between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 17<sup>th</sup> April, the difference in death rate per 100,000 residents between East and West Merton was 17.7 however the difference is now 9.6.

Relationship between COVID19 deaths and selected population characteristics

## % BAME (all ethnic minorities)



## % in high-risk occupations



Source: GLA. Covid-19 deaths mapping tool.

<https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/covid-19-deaths-mapping-tool>  
(accessed 12.6.2020)

# Disparities in COVID mortality

Risk Factor	Increased risk of death
Age	People > 80 years with positive tests have x70 risk of death compared to those < 40years. The majority of excess deaths observed in the period 20 March- 7 May compared to the same dates in previous years (75%) occurred in those aged 75 and over.
Sex	Working age males diagnosed with COVID-19 are twice as likely to die than females.
Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	People from BAME backgrounds are disproportionately affected by Covid-19. Not only deaths, but also rates of infection and hospital admission are increased compared to white people. The main underlying determinants are deprivation, high risk occupations, overcrowded housing, and increased prevalence of co-morbidities such as diabetes. Black males have x4.2 risk, and Bangladeshi/Pakistani males x3.5 risk of COVID-19-related death compared to White males. South Asian people are 20% more likely to die once admitted to hospital in the UK than white people. Other minority ethnic groups did not have a higher death rate in this study.
Deprivation	Age standardised death rates in the most deprived fifth of the England and Wales population were 2.3 times the rate in the least deprived fifth amongst males, and 2.4 times in females.
Co-morbidity	Diabetes, hypertensive diseases, chronic kidney disease, COPD and dementia are more associated with COVID deaths than deaths from all causes. Diabetes was mentioned on 21% of death certificates where COVID was also listed. This proportion was higher in BAME groups being 43% in the Asian group and 45% in the Black group.
Occupation	Men working as security guards, transport workers, chefs, sales assistants, lower skilled workers in construction, and men and women working in social care all have significantly higher rates of death from COVID than the general population. Individuals from BAME groups are more likely to be working in many of these occupations. In London, nearly 50% of NHS and CCG staff come from a BAME group.
Housing density	Every 5% increase in the rate of overcrowding by LA (2011 census) is associated with 30 additional COVID deaths/100,000 population , after adjusting for age and sex but not other factors. In London, 30% of Bangladeshi households, 16% of Black African households, and 18% of Pakistani households have more residents than rooms compared with only 2% of white British households.
Care homes	May contribute >50% deaths caused directly or indirectly by the COVID-19 crisis.

## References

PHE. Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/891116/disparities\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/891116/disparities_review.pdf) [accessed 11 June 2021]

ONS. Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by ethnic group [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirus](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirus)

Harrison EM. Ethnicity and Outcomes from COVID-19: The ISARIC CCP-UK Prospective Observational Cohort Study of Hospitalised Patients. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3618215>

PHE. Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups. <https://bit.ly/beyond-the-data>

Inside Housing. <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/insight/insight/the-housing-pandemic-four-graphs-showing-the-link-between-covid-19-deaths-and-the-housing-crisis-66562>

William Laing. [www.laingbuissonnews.com/care-markets-content/news/care-home-deaths-from-covid-19-could-reach-26000-in-england-by-end-of-may-says-laing/](http://www.laingbuissonnews.com/care-markets-content/news/care-home-deaths-from-covid-19-could-reach-26000-in-england-by-end-of-may-says-laing/)



# Overview of outbreak control

## Merton Local Outbreak Control Plan

Accessible at

[https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Outbreak%20Control%20LBM%20Outbreak%20Control%20Plan%20for%20publication%20with%20forward%20290620%20\(003\)%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Outbreak%20Control%20LBM%20Outbreak%20Control%20Plan%20for%20publication%20with%20forward%20290620%20(003)%20(002).pdf)

### Purpose

Complement NHS test and trace to minimise virus spread. Identify high risk settings and vulnerable communities; describes how LBM works with Public Health England and local partners e.g. NHS and Voluntary Sector

### Scope

Response readiness for managing C19 positive cases/outbreaks; not included: prevention/mitigation of wider C19 harm and recovery

### Themes (DHSC)

1- Care homes and schools; 2- Other high risk settings; 3- Local testing capacity (in addition to routine NHS Test & Trace); 4-Local contact tracing / case finding (for community clusters); 5 Data integration; 6 Vulnerable people; 7 Governance

### Timeline

Now – end of March 2021 (at least; covering high risk autumn/winter)

# Community action for outbreak control

- Regular hand washing, social-distancing and face coverings
- Symptoms to look for - high temperature, new continuous cough, loss or change of smell/taste
- Testing – if symptomatic get a test via 119 or [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)
- NHS Test & Trace
  - if +ve case you will be contacted by e-mail, text or phone and asked for contact details of any close contacts
  - if contacted by NHSTT, having been in close contact of someone who had +ve test, you will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days
- Be aware of potential NHSTT fraud e.g. someone asking for payment for a COVID19 test; testing is free. Text messages will come from NHStracing and calls will come from 0300 0135000



# Community action for reducing health impact

- The NHS is open. If you are worried, phone your GP or use NHS 111
- Get 'covid-fit' to reduce risk of complications
  - Lose weight
  - Stop Smoking
  - Increase your physical activity levels
- Manage any Long Term Conditions e.g. diabetes
- Access support for your Mental health and wellbeing
- Get your flu jab, many groups get this free but they are also available from some employers and from Community Pharmacy

**Any questions?**

# CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT

## How can I volunteer?

If you are able to volunteer, or know anyone that wants to volunteer, please contact the volunteertaskforce at [volunteer@mvsc.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@mvsc.co.uk)

## How do I get help?

If a person requires help, you can ask them to email [help@mvsc.co.uk](mailto:help@mvsc.co.uk) or call **020 8685 2272** between the hours of 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday



# Useful contacts

- Merton Community Hub
  - Support for isolation, food or medicines. 020 8685 2272 or [help@mvsc.co.uk](mailto:help@mvsc.co.uk)
- One You Merton
  - Smoking, drinking, eating, moving, sleeping and stress. [Oneyou.merton@nhs.net](mailto:Oneyou.merton@nhs.net), [www.oneyoumerton.org](http://www.oneyoumerton.org) or 020 8973 3545
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
  - Merton Uplift – [www.mertonuplift.nhs.uk](http://www.mertonuplift.nhs.uk) or 020 3513 5888
  - [www.good-thinking.uk](http://www.good-thinking.uk)
- NHS Services (GP, Pharmacy, Urgent Care, Sexual Health etc)
  - <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search>
- Merton Voluntary Service Council
  - <https://www.mvsc.co.uk/find-a-group>
- Better Health (NHS led programme)
  - <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>



# An Update from the Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Group

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Minute Item 5





# Context

Wimbledon is facing a period of unprecedented change:

- Wimbledon has been specifically designated as 'an area for development' in the Mayor's new London Plan
- High demand for new buildings and developments
- Relaxation of Planning Laws by Central Government
- High Streets under pressure
- Climate change
- A potential post-pandemic recession

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# The Way Forward: A Neighbourhood Plan

- A Neighbourhood Plan **empowers** the local community to determine policies that future developments and planning applications would need to meet in order to be approved in the designated area
- Neighbourhood plans were introduced in the Localism Act of 2011
- Since then, over 2,700 communities have prepared one

➤ *Let's make Wimbledon the next!*



# What We Can Do With A Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan can include general policies as well as practical projects and actions in terms of:

- Building type and location
- Design & aesthetics
- Materials
- Public safety
- Accessibility
- Sustainability
- Etc.

It also allows us to identify, protect & improve green spaces, views, historic buildings, etc.

*With a Neighbourhood Plan, we can make Wimbledon a better place to live, work and visit!*





# The Spirit of Our Neighbourhood Plan

- We love Wimbledon and are excited to see it grow and evolve
- We wish to bring the Local Authority, businesses, residents and local associations together to achieve our mission
- We support Wimbledon's growth. In doing so, we strive to
  - Preserve and protect the best of Wimbledon
  - Ensure new developments are of the highest quality and fit within their surroundings
  - Provide benefits for all communities and businesses within the area
  - Put sustainability at the heart of our ideas and actions



# Wimbledon NPG – Status

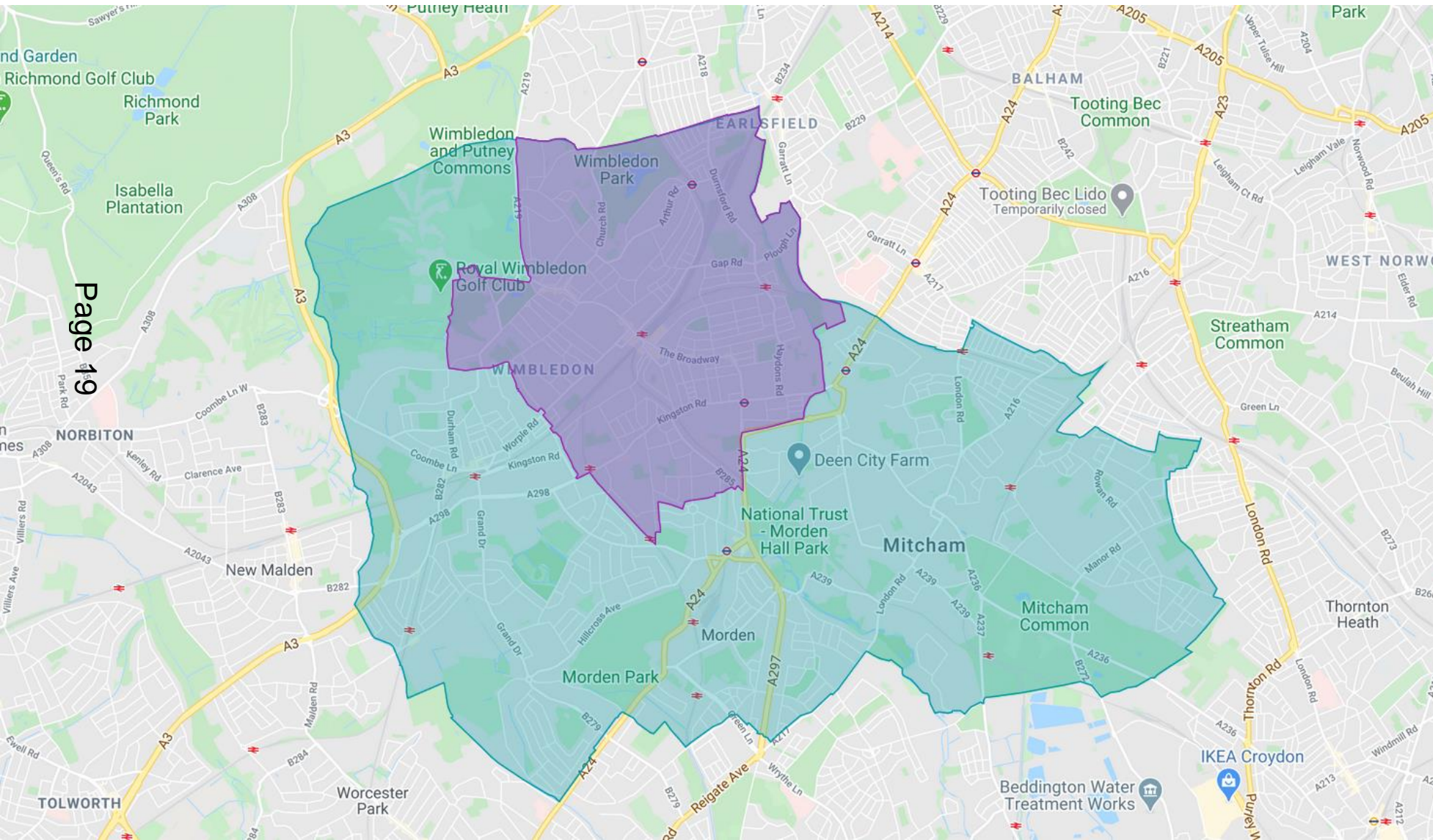
- The group was inaugurated on January 25th 2020
- We now need to gain designation by Merton Council as a **Neighbourhood Forum** for a **Neighbourhood Area**
- Our application needs to include a boundary, supported by residents, businesses and communities inside it
- Our immediate tasks:
  - Define the area to be designated
  - Continue to build a representative and diverse membership
- Once designated, we can get on with the real work of designing the plan

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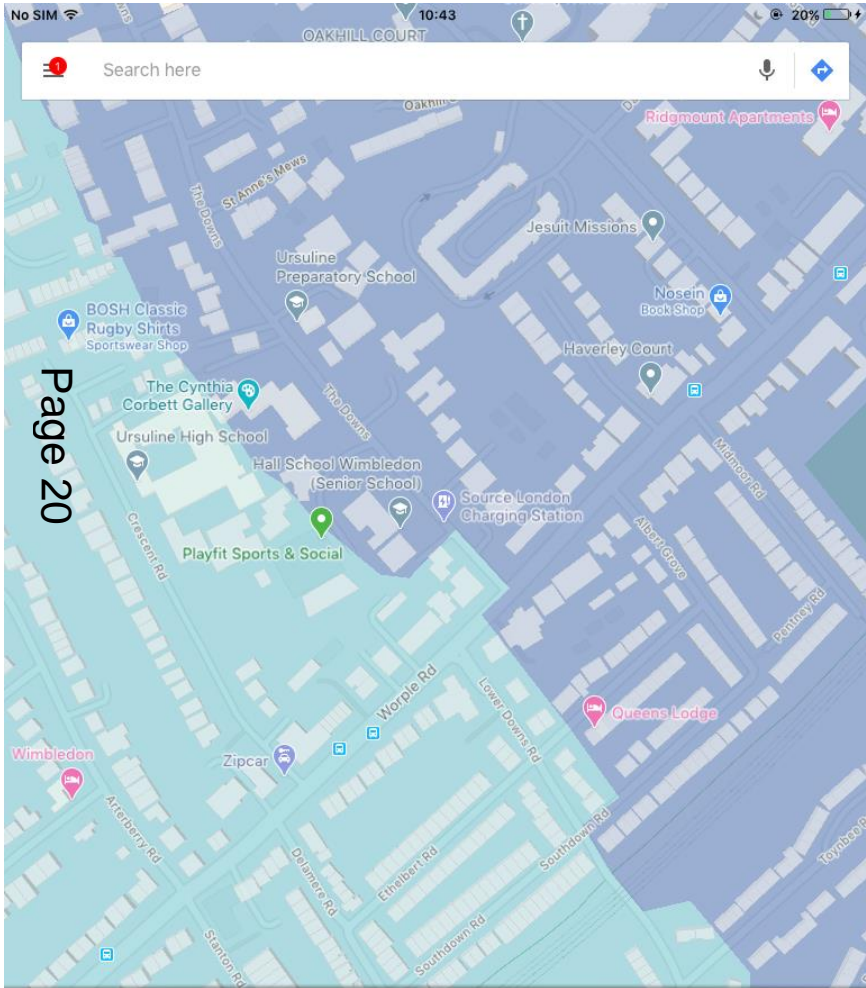


# The Current Map





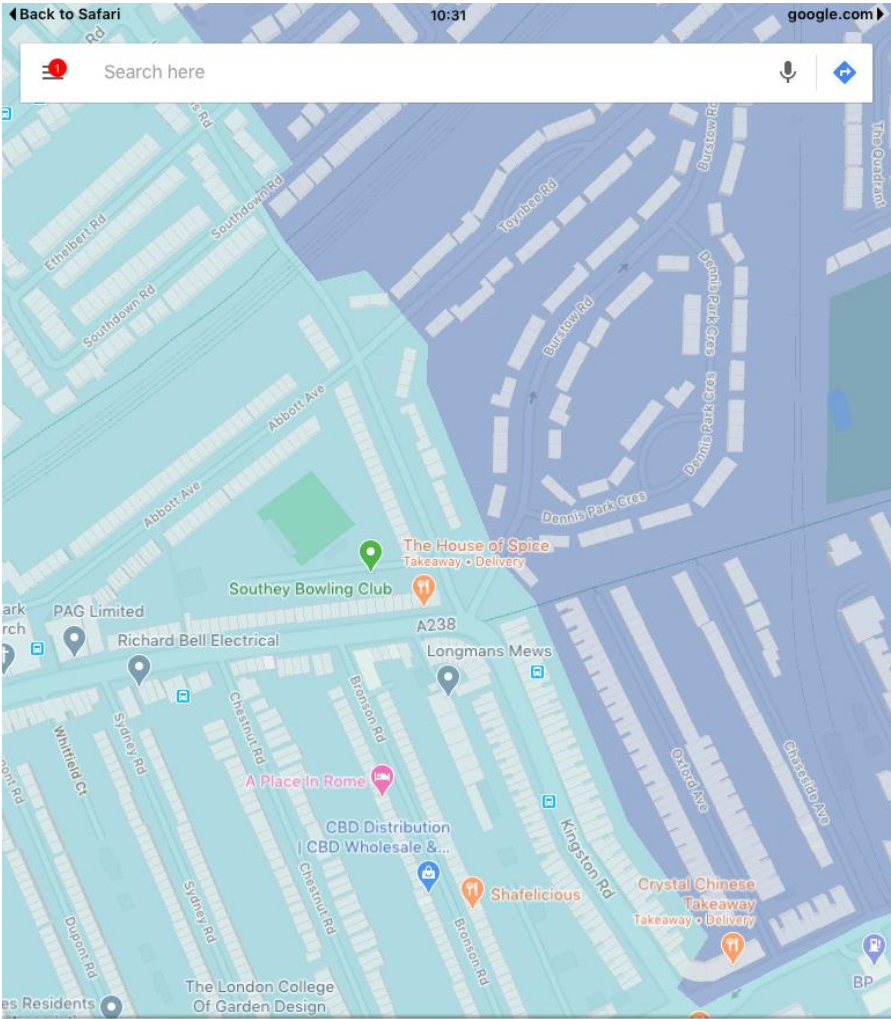
# Proposed Border with Raynes Park



**Proposed Neighbourhood Planning Area - Highlighted in Lavender**

The proposed Neighbourhood planning area is highlighted within boundaries of Merton Borough.

[VIEW MAP LEGEND](#)



**Proposed Neighbourhood Planning Area - Highlighted in Lavender**

The proposed Neighbourhood planning area is highlighted within boundaries of Merton Borough.

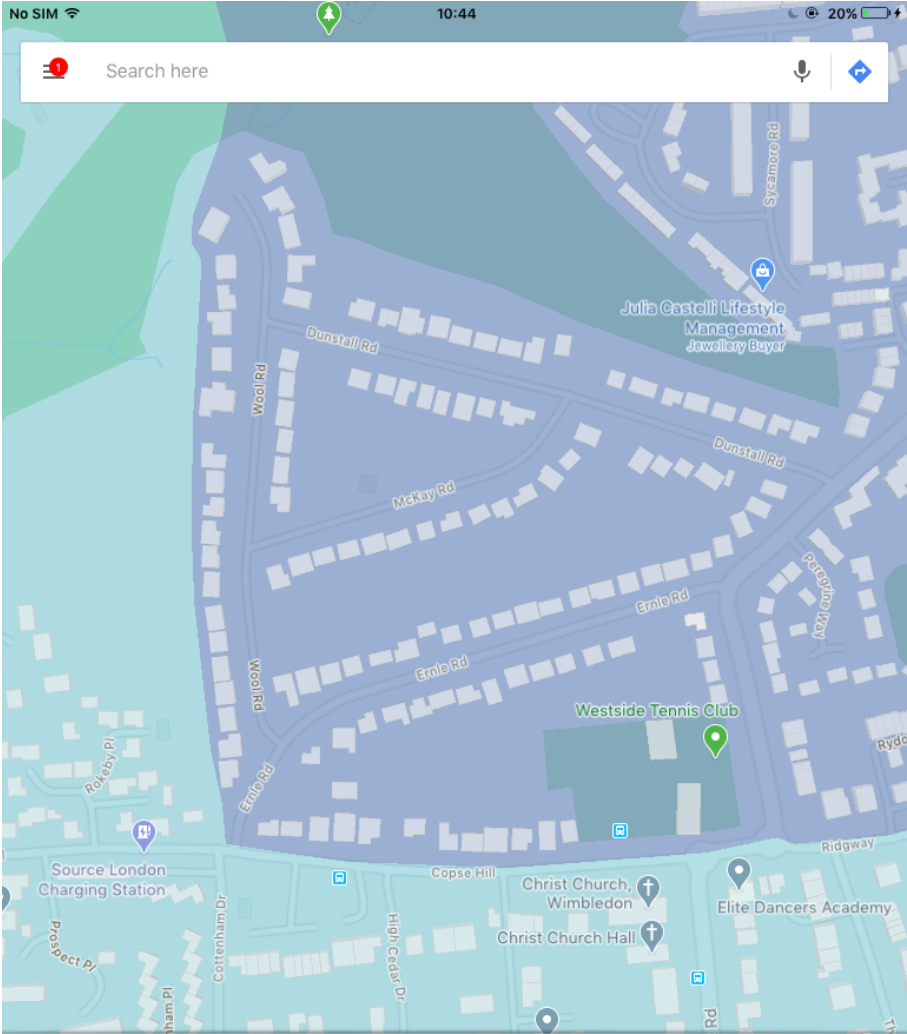
[VIEW MAP LEGEND](#)





# Proposed Border with Raynes Park

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**Proposed Neighbourhood Planning Area - Highlighted in Lavender**

The proposed Neighbourhood planning area is highlighted within boundaries of Merton Borough.



# Joining In

- This is a community project. We are local volunteers committed to delivering a better future for Wimbledon
- To be accredited by the Council, we need the whole community to support our work by becoming a member
- Membership is free & without any obligation. Joining means you can:
  - receive regular news on progress
  - have a voice in deciding the priorities for the future of Wimbledon
  - have a say in the crafting of the neighbourhood plan
    - please register at [www.wimbledon-npg.org](http://www.wimbledon-npg.org)
- If you want to take a more active role shaping Wimbledon's future and volunteer, please contact [secretary@wimbledon-npg.org](mailto:secretary@wimbledon-npg.org)

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# Thank you!

[www.Wimbledon-npg.org](http://www.Wimbledon-npg.org)



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