



General Election 2017 – questions for Mitcham & Morden candidates

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage – the local civic society for the Cricket Green Conservation Area and its environs – asked all the candidates standing for election to Parliament for Mitcham & Morden a series of questions. These were the responses.

	Des Coke Christian People's Alliance	Alicia Kearns Conservatives	Laura Collins Greens	Siobhain McDonagh Labour	Claire Mathys Liberal Democrats	Richard Hilton UK Independence Party
Q1 What is your most important priority for improving the quality of life in Cricket Green?	<p>To maintain the beautiful green spaces for community use. Maintain Heritage buildings of National interest and to ensure that the beauty of the green spaces remains as an essential feature for the environment and to enhance the longevity of life. NHS reports that UK experiences 40,000 deaths as a result of poor air pollution.</p> <p>I would ensure that help is provided for the poor and elderly, improve services, support and encourage business. Ensure benefits is</p>	<p>My priority is the preservation and enhancement of the character of this beautiful area. It is unique and worthy of the highest levels of protection. If elected, I will do my utmost to ensure new developments are sympathetic to the heritage of the surrounding area.</p> <p>In particular, I'd like to start my business scheme to attract new retail and start-up businesses to draw in additional footfall and make the shopping area</p>	<p>I would like to improve the outdoor environment. I think people thrive when they can enjoy being outdoors. To that end, I am a member of Clean Air Merton, which aims to address the serious problem of air pollution in our area, and I also volunteer when I can with Friends of the Canons and other conservation groups. I founded the nearby Friends of Figge's Marsh to help improve the enjoyment of that park.</p>	<p>My most important priority for improving the quality of life in Mitcham Cricket Green is the redevelopment of the beautiful but empty and dilapidated buildings – Burn Bullock, White Hart and the former Cricketers site which is currently being developed.</p>	<p>My priority is preserving the attractive open spaces in the area and making the area an increasingly pleasant and welcoming environment to enjoy. I would like this part of Mitcham not just to be a desirable place to live, but increasingly a destination point for those from the surrounding area, who want to enjoy the outdoors and visit an attractive listed pub. To achieve this we need to ensure the area is kept clean, litter-free and appropriately lit and furnished, and I will fully support efforts to re-</p>	<p>Preserving the history and unique heritage of the area is important to me. However the issue I'm contacted most about in Mitcham is the litter problem that has got so much worse recently. I've been horrified by the amount of litter around Merton and it seems to have got worse since I stood here in 2015.</p> <p>Of course, Labour-run Merton Council is letting us down by not sweeping after bin collections but it would be too easy to blame them or to say simply that Wheelie bins</p>

	<p>available and maintained for the disabled and mentally ill and it is not removed.</p> <p>Ensure emergency benefits is available whilst claimants are being assessed.</p> <p>Supporting traditional marriage enabling families to grow together with fewer breakdowns saving the UK £48 bn per year.</p>	<p>more vibrant. The regeneration scheme is an improvement, but it is taking far too long and impairing retail sales and viability.</p>			<p>open the pubs.</p>	<p>are the answer. A report by MPs last week, recognised that dramatic increases in fly-tipping and the number of fast food outlets combined with a lack of action by the government have contributed to littering becoming "endemic" in England.</p> <p>I'm proud of this area. The Council and Tory government must take action, but we must all play our own part in not contributing to the problem and challenging the attitudes of those that think it's ok to litter.</p>
<p>Q2 Do you support the Cricket Green Charter and how will you use it in your work as a Member of Parliament?</p>	<p>Absolutely, The Cricket Green Charter is an essential document for residents living in and around the Cricket Green areas. I would work tirelessly to implement the details of the policy. I made this clear in an interview with Mitcham and Morden Guardian on 13th April 2015. As a Member of Parliament I would use every opportunity to fly the banner of Cricket Green Charter in order to promote the good works being done in this Constituency.</p>	<p>I will work closely with the local community to be proactive in delivering the action plan outlined in the Charter.</p> <p>I believe strongly that local communities should be at the heart of determining development and planning priorities in their area. The Conservative Government has empowered local communities to protect sites and if elected, I would look to work closely with the local community and the Council to make sure that the most is being made of these powers.</p> <p>Future decisions over planning and development must be sympathetic to the views of the local community, and if elected I will make</p>	<p>The Charter seems sensible and I would support it.</p>	<p>I absolutely support the Cricket Green Charter and think it is particularly important to retain all of the best aspects of our wonderful community. The open spaces that we enjoy, the character of our buildings and community, and the history of Cricket Green must all be preserved and appreciated. If re-elected, I will continue to use these principles to guide decisions made on the policies and decisions affecting Cricket Green and our residents.</p>	<p>I do support the Charter and it would form a useful basis for shaping my work as a Member of Parliament, ensuring that the will of local residents is met wherever possible. The Charter makes it clear that Canons House, Park Place and their grounds should be restored in order to develop the area as a thriving centre of cultural and leisure activity. I fully support this aim and believe the restoration would play a key role in bringing the community together and attracting visitors. I would do whatever I can to make this happen.</p>	<p>The points about quality and affordability in housing and developments are particularly important. Housing is one of the biggest issues facing the whole constituency at the moment. Only UKIP has policies to address this need without damaging our green spaces. Including proposals for affordable factory built modular housing so that an extra 100,000 on the average wage can get on the housing ladder annually.</p>

		strong representations on your behalf. I will also involve national campaign groups like CPRE who will help celebrate our village atmosphere.				
Q3 Are you committed to protecting Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area (designated by London Borough of Merton in 1969) and will you make representations on planning applications for development that fails to enhance its special qualities?	I am totally committed to protecting Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Areas and I am willing to make representations where necessary. However, I would value open and fair consultation on planning with residents so that informed choices can be made.	<p>I am absolutely committed to protecting our Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area. Mitcham Cricket Green is one of the oldest in the world, and I consider it a sustainable heritage feature of the London Borough of Merton.</p> <p>Therefore, I would seek to ensure all planning is in sympathy with the area. I will make representations to defend the conservation area from inappropriate development, and if elected would also be proactive in looking at ways to improve and enhance the conservation area.</p> <p>Housing should match the quality of that we have inherited from previous generations to build beautiful spaces for our communities' futures.</p>	I would be happy to play a role in upholding the charter in the planning process.	Ultimately, my views about planning applications have always been and will continue to be dependent on how it benefits both our local area and local community. Fundamentally, I will continue to ensure that the voices of our residents are heard.	Yes, I am committed to protecting the Conservation Area and believe that development must be in fitting with the quality and feel of the area. Affordable housing remains a pressing need, here and across Merton, and this needs to be addressed to ensure that the area continues to be an affordable place for local people to live and enjoy, as the Charter states. But the Conservation Area is designated as that for a reason, and it is vital that any new development enhances rather than detracts from the character of the area. I would encourage the development of a neighbourhood plan, to allow the community to have more of a say over future development and add extra protection.	<p>Yes 100%. The local Labour Council has not always protected beautiful areas like the Conservation Area or indeed historic buildings.</p> <p>I pledge to resist any development that does not complement the area and to ensure any development that does happen has been properly consulted on.</p>
Q4 What will you do to help provide legal security for Mitcham Cricket Club and its pavilion (registered as Merton's first asset of community value) to continue the 333 year old	Where the Council puts money into an industry, we would expect it to be done alongside private sector by giving Capitol Grants and taking a share in the industry in proportion to the investment made. We don't want Government to take over industries	<p>I welcome the registration as an asset of community value. Protections for assets of community value were introduced by the Conservatives.</p> <p>If elected, I will work closely with the community to secure the</p>	I would be open to your input in how best to support the club.	In my time as Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden, I have worked with Mitcham Cricket Club in making representations to the current owners of the site and I will always give priority to ensure that any future development of the site	It's clear that the long tradition of playing cricket on the Green must be continued. It's a wonderful distinctive feature of the area, as well as the source of great enjoyment for all who play and watch. I will fight for this to continue and am happy	There is a long and proud history and it is absolutely worth defending. Ideally this would be achieved with the Cricket Club's having management of the grounds that would secure a long term future for Cricket on the green and the use of the

tradition of cricket being played on the Green?	but to support them and to enable them to grow. We would also want to conduct a review of all PFI contract to ensure that they are providing value for money.	<p>legal security you are rightly seeking, and make enquiries and representations to enable this to happen.</p> <p>In particular, I will raise the issue with Government Ministers at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Communities and Local Government. Having worked in the Ministries of Justice, Defence and at the Foreign Office, I have a detailed knowledge of how to get results from government departments.</p>		includes an affordable and secure home for the Cricket Club.	to discuss what can be done in terms of securing the Club's future.	pavilion. Innovative ideas such as those near Hampton Court where they have opened a thriving community cafe in the pavilion when it's not being used for matches have helped generate significant sums to keep the cricket club going.
Q5 What will you do to ensure the listed Burn Bullock is removed from the national Heritage at Risk register and other listed buildings (such as the White Hart) don't join it?	I would ensure that risks identified by contractors who are going to do works have the relevant qualifications, documentations, Insurance etc there is a scheme of work drafted and contractors have the ability to work to specified regulatory compliance.. Ensure that risks identified as high have appropriate management solutions to minimise them. Once this has been determined to make application for Burn Bullock to be removed from The National Heritage at Risk Register, prior to restoration.	<p>The Burn Bullock has a heritage of its own, not just that of the famous cricketer, and this should be protected.</p> <p>I will work with our local community and particularly Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage, to make representations to look at funding and development opportunities to improve buildings and sites on the at-risk register. Listed buildings need protecting and enhancing.</p> <p>If elected, I would work with the local community and the Council to put in place a clear strategy and plan to safeguard, protect and maintain listed buildings.</p> <p>I will also be working to secure other buildings</p>	I think the best way to avoid having these buildings become at risk is to revitalise the area commercially so that more people are drawn to the area and businesses thrive.	I will encourage Merton Council to use all of its power to require that the Burn Bullock is returned to its proper listed condition and I will seek the early action of Merton Council to prevent any other listed buildings from being degraded in the same way.	The listed buildings within the Conservation Area are a great asset for our community and should be protected. I will work with the owner of Burn Bullock and other listed buildings to maintain and improve these assets for the benefit of all our community, including by involving the many residents who wish to see these buildings restored and thrive.	No response provided

		like Ravensbury Mill which has been empty for far too long. Empty heritage buildings deteriorate very fast and useful applications should be identified and supported.				
Q6 How do you think the redevelopment of the Wilson Hospital and its grounds can best respect the historic site and provide for the needs of the local community?	I can't understand what the issue was with not being able to gain access to assess the building in March 2016. I was a frequent attendee to Wilson Clinic with members of my family and we never seemed to have an issue. The building was extremely valuable to our community. The shut down was terribly annoying as on the day we arrived we saw a note on the window stating it was closed. Here again seems to be lack of consultation with the community. Even when we left there were still other families arriving at the building two weeks after the closure. Nevertheless the trees and open spaces really are an asset and ought to remain one. However, there is a need to restore the building ASAP for the next generation.	<p>I am aware that this site has been under discussion for many years and that there is a shortage of GP services locally. Medical advances are making smaller and smaller buildings practical for many ailments that used to necessitate stays in hospital. We all want care as close to home as possible, particularly for regular support. I will look closely at the Nelson Hospital and the Tolworth Hospital, and make approaches to the local CCG and NHS South West London.</p> <p>If elected, I will be committed to working with local community and CCG over the future of the site. The features and character of the facility must be preserved for future generations to enjoy, and we must do our utmost to respect the legacy of Sir Isaac Wilson.</p>	I would welcome your input on the Wilson Hospital. I have used the walk in clinic several times and thought it was a beneficial service, but perhaps it could be in a nicer/more permanent building.	If re-elected as the MP for Mitcham and Morden, I would seek to encourage the local NHS to retain the historic frontage of the building, accepting that there will need to be major alterations to some of the rest of the site in order to provide the health services currently denied to Mitcham residents.	I fought against the closure of the surgery and the walk-in centre and am very disappointed that the decision was made to close it completely, rather than maintain some services on the site while the redevelopment takes place. I wrote to the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group about the closure and raised a number of issues including the impact of the loss of services on particularly vulnerable patients. I was disappointed with the responses I got back. Now that it is closed, it is vital that the redevelopment takes place as quickly as possible to limit the disruption for local residents. The buildings should be in fitting with the character of the area and the site should provide the services that the local community wants and needs. These must be determined through local consultations, with a Citizens Advice Bureau and a Job Centre being options.	No response provided
Q7 What is your favourite place in or memory of	My favourite place of leisure is canons recreational grounds.	Heritage is often the heart of a community. It adds the pride we all feel	Volunteering with the Friends of the Canons - especially when I have	The sight of a young Tony Blair and Alastair Campbell running up	I love the Mary Tate Almshouses opposite the Green, they are so	No response provided

Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area?	The equipment in children's playground is very sturdy. My children love to visit and give me a run around on a sunny day.	so strongly about. Merton Abbey drafted large parts of Magna Carta and for me that makes it a very special place. I want to enhance the knowledge of our local history with our communities, and attract visitors from further afield. This will generate even more pride locally, as well as money for the enhancement of these valuable assets.	had my children with me, as I think it's important for kids to grow up thinking that volunteering and helping out in the community is a normal thing to do.	Cranmer Road to meet voters in the Burn Bullock in 1996!	attractive and full of character. The pond is also a favourite of mine, especially on a sunny day!	
--	---	---	---	--	--	--

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage c/o MVSC, Vestry Hall, 336/338 London Road, Mitcham Surrey, CR4 3UD

General enquiries: info@mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk

Web site: www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk

Twitter: [@MitchamCrktGrn](https://twitter.com/MitchamCrktGrn)

Company registration no. 04659164

Charity registration no. 1106859