



AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

A response by Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage, Mitcham Society and Friends of Mitcham Common to London Borough of Merton

October 2017

1. As three leading community organisations in Mitcham we welcome Merton's Air Quality Action Plan and the opportunity to propose further measures to improve air quality in the area. Air pollution is an issue which respects no boundaries and requires an area wide approach. We have come together to provide this broad perspective for Mitcham.
2. Both Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage and Mitcham Society have undertaken air quality monitoring in the area in collaboration with Friends of the Earth and Sustainable Merton. The results confirm that Mitcham's air quality is regularly in breach of World Health Organisation limits. The results for Cricket Green are summarised in our air quality [blog](#) and the Mitcham Society surveyed the previously pedestrianised stretch of London Road through Fair Green in June/July 2016 to get readings of 32.51 µg/m³, 31.03 µg/m³ and 31.23 µg/m³ at these points. These and other results have been collated on the Merton hotspots [map](#). Mitcham Common, the grounds of The Canons and Park Place and many of Mitcham's Town Greens act as air quality reservoirs providing both areas of relatively low air pollution and trees and other natural methods for reducing particulates.
3. We welcome the intention to address air quality in Merton and the proposals to extend the Ultra Low Emission Zone to Merton. Nevertheless, we believe the draft Air Quality Action Plan lacks the ambition and measures necessary to address the scale of the problem facing the area.
4. We believe further measures are needed and these should include:
 - Targets for improving air quality year on year to 2022
 - A network of air quality monitoring stations – particulates and NO_x – throughout the Mitcham area, including on Mitcham Common as well as along the roads that pass through it, with data made publicly available in a timely manner
 - Zero emission or hydrogen buses on all routes through Mitcham Town Centre and its designation as a Low Emission Bus Zone
 - A ban on heavy lorries running on Church Road between Lower Green West and Benedict Wharf as part of the measures to address "hot spots"

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- Changed traffic flow at Lower Green West to remove the existing “roundabout” configuration and reconnect it to Lower Green East
- Improved pedestrian permeability in Mitcham Town Centre and Cricket Green – including enhanced pedestrian crossings and reduced crossing times
- A requirement in all travel plans for schools and new development to demonstrate how they will contribute to improvements in air quality, and a commitment from Merton Council to monitor and enforce these travel plans
- Investment in a behavioural change programme to raise awareness of individual actions to improve air quality
- Enforcement against idling cars and lorries which extends beyond any plans to act on idling outside schools
- Community consultation over the location of a network of well-designed electric vehicle charging points in Mitcham as an alternative to the current process whereby Merton Council submits planning applications to itself ahead of any community engagement
- Active programme of succession planting of trees and hedges throughout Mitcham to conserve and enhance tree cover, especially along major routes
- Stronger connections between Mitcham and the Wandle Trail and open spaces, including Willow Lane Industrial Estate
- Active promotion of Mitcham Common as a source of health and well being with relatively better air quality including:
 - Promotion of healthy walks
 - Opening up the Ecology Centre as an affordable location for hosting community-led activity promoting health and well being
 - Management and planting along the fringes to filter particulates.

5. We look forward to contributing to monitoring, delivery and review of the Action Plan.