

# Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

For the benefit of Mitcham Cricket Green  
Conservation Area and its environs

## Annual Review 2017





*The Canons house and its surrounding open spaces will benefit from a £4.7m Lottery grant which we helped secure*

Our Conservation Area's most significant news for decades came in the summer of 2017 when the Lottery awarded a grant of £4.7m for The Canons. This grant will allow The Canons house to be brought back into use, primarily as offices but with some community use in the basement.

There will be a new café built onto Madeira Hall, facing into the back lawn of the house, the car park in front of the leisure centre will become a plaza, and will incorporate a new children's playground. There are many other changes planned, and the overall aim is to

retain the character of the open spaces, house and pond, and make the area more inviting.

The historic running track will be refurbished, there will be a new entrance created at the obelisk, and there will be many other developments, including a new community wall – which we anticipate will be built by the people of Mitcham. Work should begin in 2018, but will not be completed for some time.

We have been working on this project since 2012, along with Friends of the Canons (FroC), Mitcham Society, Merton Council and a range of consultants. We expect to continue this involvement as the hard work of bringing our vision into reality begins.

Meanwhile, of course, our other work continues. We were delighted to see so many local people at the Merton Heritage Discovery Day in Morden in May, Mitcham Carnival in June, our own Community on the Green event on the Cricket Green in July, and on Mitcham Heritage Day in September.

Our very own Mitcham Heritage Day could not happen without support from other local organisations and I thank all of them for joining in: Wandle Industrial Museum, Cricket Green School, SS Peter & Paul Roman Catholic Church, Mitcham Parish Church, Mitcham Methodist Church, Mitcham Cricket Club, Merton Heritage and Local Studies Centre and the fabulous Wessex Consort who topped the day off with a concert at Mitcham Parish Church.

Another highlight of the year was achieving Grade II listing for the War Memorial on Lower Green West. A special thank you to the volunteers who researched information for our submission to Historic England.



*Cold Blows is a remnant of a medieval path and one of the constant reminders of our heritage*

We spent many hours standing up for our Conservation Area and its Environs against the scourge of poor quality, over intensive development. We commented on many planning applications over the course of the year, and brought to the attention of Merton Council's enforcement team significant breaches of planning control and other regulations. There has been a rise in both fly tipping and unauthorised parking on grass verges, for example on Three Kings Piece, and we continue to keep a watching brief, and to press Merton Council to act on these and similar matters.

More about our work can be found in the rest of this Annual Review. It remains for me to thank everyone who supports us through membership – we are extremely grateful to you. It is always a delight to see so many of our members at our monthly open meetings and the high turnout is a sure sign that local people really care about our Conservation Area and its Environs.

John Stover  
Trustee & Chair, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

---

## **Trees & local natural environment**

---



Last year we reported our anxiety at the number of breaches in Merton's planning laws following damage to greenspace and unauthorised "removal" of front gardens. Regrettably these actions have not been penalised despite us providing enforcement officers with photographic proof.

2017 saw further problems surface with regard to degrading greenspace, and promises [given in 2016] to return damaged areas to proper state not kept. In most cases we backed our reports with photographic evidence.

It becomes disheartening when one sees such flagrant actions going unpunished, especially when the visual impact is so obvious. We shall continue to lobby on behalf of our local environment, and hope for improvement following the 2018 local elections.

Merton Council's lack of funds was again quoted as the reason behind a failure to replace lost street trees. We compiled a list of those trees that had disappeared, died or were vandalised. None of the trees on that list has been replaced, despite it being an obligation so to do.



*Wild flowers add a splash of colour to Three Kings Piece*

Throughout 2017 we saw an overall loss of mature broadleaf trees in our area. In our view it is not good enough to promise planting new trees to replace lost mature specimens. There should be better planned regeneration of broadleaf areas to create coordinated green corridors that provide shade and cover as well as food routes for wildlife. We hope to press this point during the design stage of The Canons remodelled car parks, as well as expecting porous materials to be used here for hard standing.

The first full year of working alongside Merton Council's preferred contractors for handling greenspace and rubbish has seen some benefits. Meetings hosted by the Independent Merton Green Spaces Forum have been attended by idverde, and a good dialogue has

been developed locally with them. However, FroC requests for a Canons green recycling area in the yard (by the bowling club) that idverde had taken over were thwarted on the grounds of security. The success of the Canons Lottery Stage 2 bid would push the need for greater recycling of green waste on site, so our argument will continue.

Workdays centred around both Bellamy Copse and the walled garden in The Canons, as well as at Three Kings Piece, Cranmer Green and Lower Green West. Regular litter-picking around The Canons continued to be necessary because of sporadic bin clearances.

As well as litter, one recurring problem surrounded "arisings" – the result of pruning and cutting shrubs, trees etc, - at workdays, and of grass-cuttings both at The Canons and the Cricket Green. We report where arisings are left after each session, but, as witnessed at Cold Blows, they are not always cleared.

Incidents of grass cuttings dumped inappropriately led to meetings on-site, and to an agreement on how best to handle Canons material. The Cricket Green “dumping”, however, continues, and has led to unsightly grass bogs being developed around the boundary edge.

Friends of the Canons meet once a month for a workday – on the 3rd Sunday of each month – at 10.00, usually by The Canons house. Check the monthly MCGC&H notes for updates. Join FroC for free and help safeguard this Mitcham treasure.

John Davis

Trustee & Vice Chair, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage  
Chair, Friends of the Canons

---

## Landscape & townscape

---



*We achieved Grade II listing for the  
Mitcham War Memorial at Lower  
Green West*

It is said that ‘imitation is the sincerest form of flattery’. So it is gratifying that our success in conserving three ‘local landmarks’ appears to have encouraged the Borough to promote the general care of local monuments by local amenity groups throughout the Borough through the Merton Heritage Forum’s ‘Adopt a Monument’ scheme.

Similarly, our care and concern for the conservation of local hedgerows, trees and shrubs reinforces the work of Clean Air Merton, insofar as that vegetation is acknowledged to combat air pollution.

In this respect, two of the extensions to the Conservation Area since its inception - Glebe Court and Mitcham Garden Village - have excellent vegetation in their garden spaces.

Sadly in some other parts of the Conservation Area, large private front gardens have lost vegetation through a need to create secure parking spaces.

Our concern to encourage sport on Mitcham's wider greens and grasslands reflects the message of Fields in Trust, and Sport England that finance allocated to the maintenance of sports areas is not an extravagance in times of financial hardship but is in fact an economy in preventing ill-health in the community caused by obesity and inactivity.

Compatibility between sports buildings and historic landscape conservation is illustrated in our Conservation Area by the work of FroC in assisting the establishment of extensions to Bellamy's Copse by the planting of saplings in six pens. These are now thriving, and will reinforce the tree-line when fully grown, the tree-line having been inaugurated by the local authority when The Canons Sports Centre was first established in order to screen the new buildings.

The closure and near-dereliction of our two historic former coaching inns, with the constant threat of squatting and fly-tipping hanging over the buildings and their extensive parking areas, remains to be resolved by the progression of any acceptable schemes for adaptation and conversion.

Vacant sites awaiting redevelopment, although boarded up, still attract gang tag graffiti, a problem now widespread across large areas of London. Fortunately work has now started on the redevelopment of the Cricketers site.

The planting of a tree at Three Kings Pond to commemorate the Queen's Sapphire jubilee forms an addition to Mitcham's celebratory planting legacy, although the new tree still awaits any form of plaque recognition.



*A wonderful show of crocuses  
outside Canons House*

The Neighbourhood judge for London in Bloom was much impressed by our efforts to keep standards afloat during this time of uncertainty and change. The Conservation Area was awarded an Outstanding mark for the second year running at a ceremony held at Mile End Park in Tower Hamlets on 22nd September.

Vigorous distribution and collection by hand of entry forms for Merton in Bloom resulted in many certificates being awarded to entries from our Conservation Area and neighbouring parts of Mitcham, despite the disappearance of some of the long-standing entries for the reasons outlined above. Many thanks to everyone who flew the flag for Mitcham.

In the Wandle Valley Regional Park context, our suggestion that the Living Wandle Landscape project should identify and publicise important vistas and

landmarks throughout the Wandle Basin as a whole was adopted and pursued with enthusiasm.

Joyce Bellamy  
Trustee, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

---

## Planning, policy & projects

---



The only constant in Cricket Green is change and 2017 was no exception. The year saw major announcements for contrasting sites at opposite ends of the neighbourhood – the historic grounds and house at The Canons and the waste site at Benedict Wharf – as well as continuing pressure for new flats and other development.

We were delighted by the success of the £4.7m Lottery funding for The Canons. This follows years of work and hundreds of volunteer hours invested by Friends of the Canons, Mitcham Society and ourselves. Delivered well it should transform not only the way The Canons grounds and house are used but also the strength of local community organisations like us to take things forward after the Lottery money has been spent.

The announcement that SUEZ will close the Benedict Wharf site in 2019 also comes after years of campaigning. The waste activities have outgrown the site and generated too many lorries and smells. To its credit SUEZ has recognised this and we have been pleased to collaborate over early plans to redevelop the site largely for housing and provide new green routes to Morden Hall Park and beyond.



*Redevelopment of the Cricketers Pub brings housing onto Lower Green West which has only been used for community buildings*

The spread of flats into the Conservation Area was confirmed with the final go ahead for the Cricketers redevelopment and the conversion and development of the Queen’s Head. We have had a major influence on the final design of both schemes. The former Sparrowhawk Yard was also the subject of plans for a large block of flats.

We were challenged by the lack of Merton Council action to enforce planning controls due

to staff cuts and a weak culture of enforcement. Fly parking, unauthorised development, large extensions erected without planning permission and widespread littering are systemic problems requiring stronger action to curb future abuse.

Air pollution is a growing issue, including for areas like Cricket Green. We worked with Friends of Mitcham Common and Mitcham Society to influence Merton Council's air quality plans and with support from Friends of the Earth we surveyed pollution levels for ourselves. The results are alarming – with two sites around Lower Green West exceeding permitted levels.



*One of our proposals accepted for the Merton Local List – Bramcote Court and Parade*

We secured new protections for the area through a successful application to have the locally listed Lower Green War memorial nationally listed at Grade II, responding to a national call for war memorial listing applications from English Heritage (now Historic England). Merton Council also accepted our proposals for additions to the Local List, including Bramcote Court & Parade.

We remain resolutely positive that good outcomes can be achieved at the Burn Bullock and also with the plans for repurposing the Wilson Hospital. Unfortunately, despite best efforts, no progress was made with either during the year.

Inadequate plans for developing the Burn Bullock site were strongly criticised and fortunately never progressed to a planning application. Merton Clinical Commissioning Group chose to lie low on its development plans and not to engage with local people.

We launched our new Community Map for Cricket Green during the summer – where you can post information and photos on the buildings, open spaces, views and other things you like about the area. Give it a go. With the 50th anniversary of our Conservation Area approaching we want to celebrate all that makes Cricket Green somewhere to be proud of.

Tony Burton  
Trustee, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage





*Our stand at the Merton Heritage  
Discovery Day*

2017 saw us run and take part in a number of events both in Mitcham and across the borough. In May we participated in the borough wide Heritage Discovery Day held at the Civic Centre in Morden. This popular event brings together heritage organisations across the borough, and we made a lot of new friends.

June saw us take a stall at the Mitcham Carnival, as well as celebrating Civic Day with our own guided walk, while in July our Community on the Green event, held on the

Cricket Ground, was a chance for local people to come together and meet in an informal setting, as well as for us to present funds raised during the year to Mitcham Cricket Club. We were pleased to be joined by the Mayor of Merton at this event.

In September we hosted Mitcham Heritage Day, which in the few years of its existence has become a much valued local event. We were delighted that funding from the Lottery's Celebrate England programme allowed us to produce a publicity leaflet and a visual identity for this event which we will now continue to use into the future.

We are grateful to all the organisations that took part this year - Mitcham Parish Church, Mitcham Cricket Club, Wandle Industrial Museum, SS Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, Cricket Green School and Mitcham Methodist Church. Thanks also to Sarah Gould of Merton Heritage & Local Studies Centre who contributed three photographic exhibitions, and to the superb Wessex Consort whose 'flash-singing' from the balcony of the cricket pavilion must have been a first in the club's long and revered history, and whose choral concert which rounded off the day at Mitcham Parish Church included music especially composed for Mitcham Heritage Day.

The already mentioned Lottery Celebrate England grant also allowed us to produce an online community map. Anyone can contribute to this – and we hope it will grow into a resource of information celebrating what people love about our area. Find it at our web site - <http://mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk/>.

It is through events and activities like these that we celebrate all that is positive and wonderful about our conservation area and its environs. Long may they continue!

Sandra Vogel  
Trustee, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

---

## Mitcham Cricket Club

---



2017 was a mixed year for Mitcham Cricket Club on the pitch.



*Mitcham Cricket Club accepts a donation at our Community on the Green event. L to R John Davis (MCGC&H Vice Chair), Marsie Skeete (Mayor of Merton), Ken Jones (MCC Welfare Officer)*

The 2nd XI again led the way. After their championship winning season in 2016, they repeated the feat in 2017 in dramatic style. A final day bonus point in a defeat to their nearest rivals was enough to secure the title by the narrowest margin and win promotion back to the prestigious Surrey Championship. A great effort from our exciting, young team.

The 1st XI struggled in a disappointing season. In spite of a reasonable bowling attack, a lack of quality batting led to their relegation to Division 2 of the County League. The 1st XI will hope to regroup under a new captain in 2018 and to push for promotion back to Division 1.

Our 3rd XI went about their business in their own quiet way and finished the season in a very creditable third place.

Mitcham continues to attract growing numbers of young players. All our adult teams regularly include players who have come through our junior ranks. This season's youngsters enjoyed eleven wins across the age groups, and our Under 16 side performed brilliantly and finished as runners up in their league.

We participated in the England & Wales Cricket Board's "All Stars" initiative which attracted 43 new 5-8 year olds – and their families - to the club. Our All Stars were chosen to provide the guard of honour for the England v West Indies game at the Oval. The growing numbers of juniors even allowed us to play a couple of Under 9 fixtures.

Off the field, the saga of the pavilion freehold goes on. The freeholders still refuse to engage with us and prevent us developing the site. The fundraising and support of local organisations led by MCGC&H is vital in helping us to move ahead with our goals in spite of the impasse with the landlords.

2017 saw a welcome and much-needed growth in the number of volunteers at the club. They organised important events, raised funds and deepened the community spirit at the club. One of the benefits of this growth is that in 2018, for the first time in our history, we will have a women's team.

The club said farewell to its most loyal servant in 2017. Pat Batty retired as club president ending a 67-year association with the club as player, captain, chairman, and for the past 28 years, president. While Pat is irreplaceable, we were pleased that one of our former juniors who went on to play for Surrey, Worcestershire, Sussex and England, David M. Smith, agreed to take on the role of president, and was appointed at the AGM.

Thank you to MCGC&H officers and members who have provided guidance over our leasehold issues, raised funds, supported our events and offered practical help to mend our dilapidated facilities. We would like to place on record our enduring thanks to John, Tony, John, Alan, Joyce, Sandra and the full membership for your invaluable support to help us to keep cricket alive in Mitcham.

David Bell  
MCGC&H Liaison, Mitcham Cricket Club

---

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage is the civic society for the Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area and its environs. We are part of the wider civic movement through membership of the national charity Civic Voice.

Membership costs £10 a year.

More information about us is at [www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk](http://www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk)

---

## Summary of accounts



	Year ended 31.12.17 £	Year ended 31.12.16 £
<b>INCOME</b>		
Memberships – New	85	285
Subscriptions – Life	100	200
Subscriptions – Ordinary	625	540
Donations & one-off grants	492	953
Bank deposit interest received gross	7	16
Sales	25	652
Social fund receipts	352	452
Golf tournament & lunch	1534	1395
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>£3,220</u></b>	<b><u>£4,493</u></b>
<b>LESS: EXPENDITURE</b>		
Sundry expenses + Meetings and secretarial expenses	702	748
Linked organisations subscriptions	133	149
Group Insurance	190	190
Bank charges	72	36
Community-on-the-Green & Mitcham Heritage Day	155	548
Donations	1326	1645
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>£2,578</u></b>	<b><u>£3,316</u></b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS</b>	<b>£642</b>	<b>£1,177</b>
Retained surplus brought forward	£5,832	£4,655
<b>RETAINED SURPLUS C/FWD</b>	<b><u>£6,474</u></b>	<b><u>£5,832</u></b>
Grants brought forward / received	£9,685	£19,293
Less grants expended	£5,944	£9,608
<b>Restricted funds available</b>	<b><u>£3,741</u></b>	<b><u>£9,685</u></b>
<b>Deposit Account</b>	<b>£2,919</b>	<b>£2,912</b>

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage  
 General enquiries: [info@mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk](mailto:info@mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk)  
 Web site: [www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk](http://www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk)  
 Twitter: [@MitchamCrktGrn](https://twitter.com/MitchamCrktGrn)

Registered Office c/o MVSC, Vestry Hall, 336/338 London Road, Mitcham Surrey, CR4 3UD

Company registration no. 04659164 Charity registration no. 1106859

