



General Election 2024 – 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 are the responses.

	Des Coke Christian People's Alliance	Ellie Cox Conservatives	Jenifer Gould Liberal Democrats	Mehmood Jamshed Workers Party of Britain	Pippa Maslin Greens	Siobhain McDonagh Labour	Ruth Price Reform UK
Q1 Why is Cricket Green special to you?	Mitcham Cricket Green is a special part of my community. I love the ideas, plans, consultations and involvement of the community.	No response provided	I have always appreciated Mitcham Cricket Green for its historic importance in Merton and along with its characterful architecture. As a conservation area it offers great importance to Merton with its abundance of mature trees.	I love Mitcham Cricket green as it has the world's oldest cricket club and ground. Not only that it is beautiful, and environmentally sound, people are so friendly who are so much passionate and involved in protecting conservative areas. I love playing cricket and played cricket all my life, so this is another reason of my affiliation with the area.	The Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation for which I work is based in Vestry Hall, meaning that I pass the historic cricket green on my way to and from work, and often during my lunch hour, too, as I like to walk around the grounds of Canons House and sit in the walled garden or by the old carp pond. I particularly like the variety of trees in the area – especially the more mature specimens.	Cricket Green ward is the heart of the constituency. It represents all that is best about Mitcham's diverse community, with the oldest Cricket Pitch in operation in the world providing a brilliant sporting facility for adults and young people alike. Across the road at Cricket Green there is the magnificent Vestry Hall and the beautiful Mary Tate cottages.	No response provided
Q2 Do you support the Cricket Green Charter and, if so, what will be your first	I am in total support of the Cricket Green Charter. As a Member of Parliament my first	No response provided	I very much value the work that Mitcham Cricket Green undertake as a	I believe due to the rich history of Cricket Green; only local residents can play a	Yes. It encourages residents, visitors, businesses and developers to act	No response provided	No response provided

three actions as a Member of Parliament to help deliver the Cricket Green Charter?	<p>three actions to deliver the Cricket Green Charter would be:-</p> <p>(a) Attend some of the cricket matches played on the green and ensure that the land continues to remain in community ownership.</p> <p>(b) To work with the design code as a blue print towards community guide and development.</p> <p>(c) To support the cricket green charter, ensuring that the Community Infrastructure Levy on new development is spent on priorities agreed by the local community.</p>		<p>charity to uphold the character of the area and am disappointed that Merton Council fail to adhere to the excellent Charter you have produced.</p>	<p>vital role and consultation of local residents must be considered as they are the important stakeholders who decide of how the area should evolve including any new development and proposed plans.</p> <p>1. Any new development should ask for investment from local residents rather than profit making companies using public private partnership which will ensure the continuous interest and support from local residents as they are the ones who know better about the kind and level of change required for the benefit of cricket green.</p> <p>2. Attract new green investment where local residents will be given chance to invest through public private partnership rather than profit making companies. This will ensure people taking responsibility for any new development and protect the interest of local area and residents. This will also ensure that affordable housing provided to the local residents.</p> <p>3. Any development plans should involve local resident consultation to</p>	<p>responsibly, and I love the fact that dialogue with local people was integral to its composition and is central to its aims.</p> <p>I believe strongly that an MP should be guided by their constituents as far as is humanly possible.</p> <p>Hence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My first action would be to invite all residents and business owners in the community to tell me what of the Charter they would like to see prioritised. - My second action would be to use this feedback to inform my priorities for helping the community. - My third action would be to work as closely as possible with the community to address those priorities. 		
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				<p>ensure, rights for pedestrians, cyclist are protected by ensuring easier walking and cyclist lanes provisions without making any material changes to the dynamics of the historical area. It should also provide the spaces for community such as providing venues for cultural and social events, coffee shops, activities for the community.</p> <p>4. An appropriate planning to protect the environment and hedge planting trees to reduce air pollution and contribute to tackling the climate emergency.</p> <p>5. A campaign for awareness to protect the nature and area including advertising using sign boards where penalties are imposed for fly tipping, fly posting and illegal parking and illegal advertising.</p>			
Q3 Following the recent devastating fire what action will you take to restore the listed Burn Bullock and place the cricket pavilion for the world's oldest cricket ground in community hands?	I would do what is necessary to be on the relevant committees overseeing the timescales and complexities of a compulsive purchase order on this listed building and follow the processes of approval from Council in consultation with Historic England for	No response provided	I have been appalled by the number of heritage buildings in disrepair in Micham Cricket Green and only recently in November last year had asked Merton Council to update me on the Burn Bullock on what steps were being taken to bring the building back into community use	We need to learn from this incident and start taking following actions to avoid further loss to our conservative areas. a. Clear guidelines for the monitoring of the listed buildings in the area moving forward and set rules in place, responsibilities (change of use class, compulsory purchase	Because the landowner of the site of the Burn Bullock and the cricket pavilion has neglected the former for over a decade, it feels as if there is a very real threat to not only the preservation of these historically important landmarks, but also the tradition of	I will continue to press the council to require the owner of the Burn Bullock to restore it to its full listed building status. I am not naïve at how difficult this will be as it will be very costly.	No response provided

	the permanent restoration of the building.			<p>order if all rules are not met) to ensure property is repaired and kept in its original state.</p> <p>b. There should be emergency funding in place from council or government to protect or repair the listed buildings.</p> <p>c. Necessary changes in statute (reducing the red tapism) which gives powers to take swift action for protection of listed buildings before it is too late.</p>	<p>cricket being played on the oldest cricket green in the world. It is clear that the landowner cannot be trusted to do right by the community. Hence, I was pleased to see cross-party calls, in 2018, for 'the transfer of Mitcham cricket pavilion and all its operational land and buildings into community ownership and management through transfer of the freehold or provision of a 999-year lease at a peppercorn rent'¹.</p> <p>If elected, I would use my position to advocate for a swift move to community ownership and management, exploring whether the Community Land Trust (CLT) model might be of use. The Green Party has long argued for an increase in CLTs because we believe that they are an important challenge to a dominant system of landownership which perpetuates selfish and wasteful practices, as they distribute wealth, power, and agency more widely, with the aim of improving social, economic, and environmental wellbeing.</p>		
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Q4 Do you support the current planning application to redevelop Mitcham Gasworks and if not then why not?	I support the current planning application to redevelop Mitcham Gasworks. I believe that the planners who have a reputation of doing things well, as seen by their works by the Battersea power station, will prove just as effective in Mitcham.	No response provided	<p>One of the major concerns with the proposed Gasworks site was the current fire strategy and the inadequacy of the buildings fire escape routes</p> <p>Liberal Democrats are committed to tackling these housing failures head-on through new garden cities and community-led development of cities and towns. We need to ensure that when housing development takes place the community infrastructure is provided, the schools, GP surgeries, greenspaces and playground all in keeping with the character of the area.</p>	<p>I will only support the redevelopment gasworks as long as they are meeting the following requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. health and safety of residents b. consultation from all the stakeholders such as local residents and LFB c. a robust plan for redevelopment d. appropriate strategy in place including fire exit in case of any accidents. e. minimum impact on the environment 	<p>No. Over the past two years, I have taken time to engage with a number of residents living in the streets surrounding the old gasworks site, listening to their views and encouraging them to share these views with the Council. It is obvious that the current planning application is as problematic as the previous version. For more detail, please see the following links on Merton Green Party's website:</p> <p>Mitcham Gasworks – Merton Green Party</p> <p>Update on Planning Application for Old Mitcham Gasworks Site – Merton Green Party</p>	I believe that Mitcham Gas works would provide an excellent site for housing, which is badly needed by large numbers of my constituent. I am concerned that the current planning application does not include enough parking, is too intensely high rise and has unresolved difficulties in terms of traffic flow from the site onto Western Road.	No response provided
Q5 Do you agree that new development should respect the village character of Mitcham?	I agree that the development should respect the village character of Mitcham. Especially if people who actually live in Mitcham are on the planning committee.	No response provided	No response provided	<p>It's very important to preserve and respect village character of Mitcham despite any new developments. Any new developments must involve local community and must take consultation from public during planning process. We should not be allowed to set 1 rule for a particular class and other set of rules for general public. New developments must include affordable homes and take into consideration of local planning regulations</p>	Yes	I would like to see more low rise flats and a higher level of house with gardens on the gas works site.	No response provided

				about building heights and number of homes on site. Any developments should be designed in a way it should look natural rather than alien tower blocks with no local precedent. New developments should have appropriate space for residents, pedestrians, cyclists, and car parks while preserving its historic significance.			
Q6 What action will you take to reduce the impact of the Benedict Wharf waste site on the local community, including from lorries, smells and misuse of Hallowfield Way?	My actions would be to follow up on the plans submitted by Mitcham Cricket Green on the Suez outline Application 2019. Where the proposal is to move it to Sutton.	No response provided	No response provided	No response provided	<p>I am amazed that Suez and Veolia are allowed to get away with the misuse and neglect of Hallowfield Way. If elected, I would endeavour to find ways to compel them to do better for the local community and for their own employees.</p> <p>A few years ago, I tweeted about how fed up I was with the constant presence of litter there as I made my way to and from work. To my surprise, Suez offered to talk to me and, shortly after, sent two representatives to meet with me. They informed me that daily litter picks were conducted around the perimeter of the site and, following that meeting, I saw an improved level of cleanliness.</p> <p>Sadly, this did not last, Hence, I now try to avoid using that route because it is</p>	I am hopeful that the waste station on Hallowfield Way will transfer from Benedict Wharf site allowing it to be redeveloped for housing. My absolute dream would be development of the Phipps Bridge and Cherry Tree estates.	No response provided

					filthier than ever. The fly-tipping is out of control. Idling Veolia trucks pollute the air. And I feel particularly sorry for the nearby residents and primary school.		
Q7 What is your vision for the future of the Wilson?	<p>My vision on the future of the Wilson. I would visit The Wilson Centre. It was a brilliant drop in health centre. Many parent did not understand the closure. Even months after closing residents were still visiting it as a drop in.</p> <p>The proposal in Mitcham Charter to revitalise it to meet the areas health needs, community facilities and a new drop off to Cramer school is actually a good one. I am fully in support of it.</p>	No response provided	It is with regret we have seen the Wilson Hospital site fall out of community use for too many years. After a recent refurbishment by Jigsaw4u mental health charity I am pleased to see The Wilson back in community use. This I understand will continue with further discussions with local representatives to hopefully see the building used as a community health hub, which I have been calling for in my capacity as Councillor and Lead on health for our Lib Dem Group.	Labour and conservative governments prioritised spending money on wars therefore less funds available for NHS hence delay in any new development and Wilson is the live example of this. Spending budget of NHS on wars was not a wise move by the labour and Tories. Our community demands to start the work on Wilson hospital ASAP. It is very sad to see the priorities of the government. We need to have development plan where we include input from community about the facilities we needed such as dealing with diabetes and heart diseases, clinical services, and increasing the number of practitioners so that the facilities can be run at optimum level and waiting lists can be reduced and public can get appropriate and timely treatment in their locality.	I was shocked by the closure of the GP practice and walk-in service in 2017. In light of the well-documented health inequalities between the east and west of the borough, the withdrawal of such services is arguably unethical. I would like to see the Wilson turned into a comprehensive health and wellbeing campus for the community and, in terms of appearance, retain its original character in accordance with the Cricket Green Charter. This is what was promised by the NHS a few years ago. It is shocking that the community is still waiting for such provision. If, for practical reasons, it makes sense to locate a hub of this nature elsewhere in the neighbourhood, I am open to hearing a proposal.	Over 40 years ago, I campaigned to prevent closure of the Wilson Hospital as a centre for orthopaedic excellence. I would like to see it re-opened as a community hospital where outpatient services can be provided and where there would be step down beds to allow older people leaving hospital to convalesce.	No response provided

Q8 Will you make representations to Merton Council as a Member of Parliament on planning applications for development in Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area that fail to enhance its special qualities? (Please answer Yes or No)	Yes. I would not hesitate to make representations to Merton Council as a Member of Parliament on planning applications for the development in Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area.	No response provided	No response provided	YES	Yes	I am always happy to represent constituent in planning matters.	No response provided
Q9 How will you help to protect trees in the area and grow the tree canopy?	Trees and their functions are essential to the environment. It combats climate change by absorbing Co2 Gasses and releases oxygen. I would look at what currently exists around the strategy and vision to increase Tree canopies in Merton. Also, to have in place where necessary, tree protection orders.	No response provided	I would like to see TPO's on all the trees in Mitcham Cricket Green to ensure their longevity with a tree planting plan to replace any diseased or dieing trees.	We need to have tree protection orders specially for the ones in conservative areas. For tree canopy it depends but you can cut the lower branches or pruning as traditional way of doing this. We really need to look into the tree by the professional before growing any canopy on it.	Although Merton Council has recently introduced a long-awaited Tree Strategy, its impact, thus far, appears to be limited. If elected, I would work with the Council, idverde, and the local community to ensure that the Strategy is fit for purpose.	Happy to protect trees in the area but it is at times important that the right tress are planted that do not undermine the foundations of residents homes.	No response provided
Q10 What are your priorities for addressing the climate emergency and reducing air pollution in Mitcham Cricket Green?	No response provided	No response provided	No response provided	If elected as MP for Mitcham and Morden, I commit to the following measures to address the climate issue and reduce pollution: 1. Improving Cycling and Walking Infrastructure: We will invest in developing safe and extensive cycleways and footpaths, ensuring they are built using sustainable materials. This includes enhancing existing routes and creating new ones to connect key areas across	What are your priorities for addressing the climate emergency and reducing air pollution in Mitcham Cricket Green? - I will push for energy inefficient buildings to be retrofitted, and for new builds to be exemplary in terms of sustainable materials and energy sources. Please see the Green Party manifesto for more context – Providing Fairer, Greener Homes for All - Green Party	No response provided	No response provided

				<p>Merton.</p> <p>2. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs): We support the implementation of low-traffic neighbourhoods to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality where residents call for them, and alternate traffic routes can be planned. These measures can help create safer, more pleasant environments for walking and cycling, particularly in residential areas.</p> <p>3. Addressing Dangerous Junctions: We will conduct a comprehensive review of dangerous junctions and crossings in conjunction with the local and highway authorities, prioritising their redesign to ensure the safety of all road users, particularly cyclists and pedestrians. This includes implementing advanced stop lines for cyclists and pedestrian safety measures.</p> <p>4. School Streets: We advocate for expanding the School Streets initiative, which restricts motor vehicle access during drop-off and pick-up times. This initiative</p>	<p>- I will facilitate collaboration between local schools, the Council, and Transport for London, to address the high volume of traffic created by families using the car to take their child/children to and from school. My experience of working in the area tells me that school traffic is a significant contributor to poor air quality because the congestion is so much worse during term time. A public health approach should be adopted, with an emphasis on improving the infrastructure for active travel. It is worth noting that the current situation is undermining the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and carbon reduction plans for the borough. Please see the Green Party manifesto for more context – Fairer, Greener Transport - Green Party</p> <p>- I will work with the Council, idverde, and the local community to protect trees in the area and grow canopy cover, as per my answer to the previous question. It is a well-established fact that trees play an important role in keeping global warming and air</p>		
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				<p>will improve safety and encourage more families to walk or cycle to school.</p> <p>5. Reducing Motor Vehicle Volume: To tackle the high volume of motor vehicles, including HGVs, we will promote policies that incentivise public transport. This includes new exploring measures that could help with congestion.</p> <p>6. Environmental and Health Benefits: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution while promoting physical and mental health will enhance our residents' overall quality of life.</p> <p>The Workers Party of Britain is dedicated to creating a sustainable and inclusive future as part of our legacy. We advocate for a referendum to allow the British people to decide on the pace and terms of achieving Net Zero targets. This will ensure that policies reflect the people's will and not just the interests of businesses. Our policies aim to make local areas attractive, and safer for everyone in Merton and beyond.</p>	<p>pollution in check.</p> <p>- I will advocate for the compulsory introduction and funding of more urban greening measures e.g. rain gardens, SuDS planters, green walls, green roofs, and permeable paving.</p>		
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