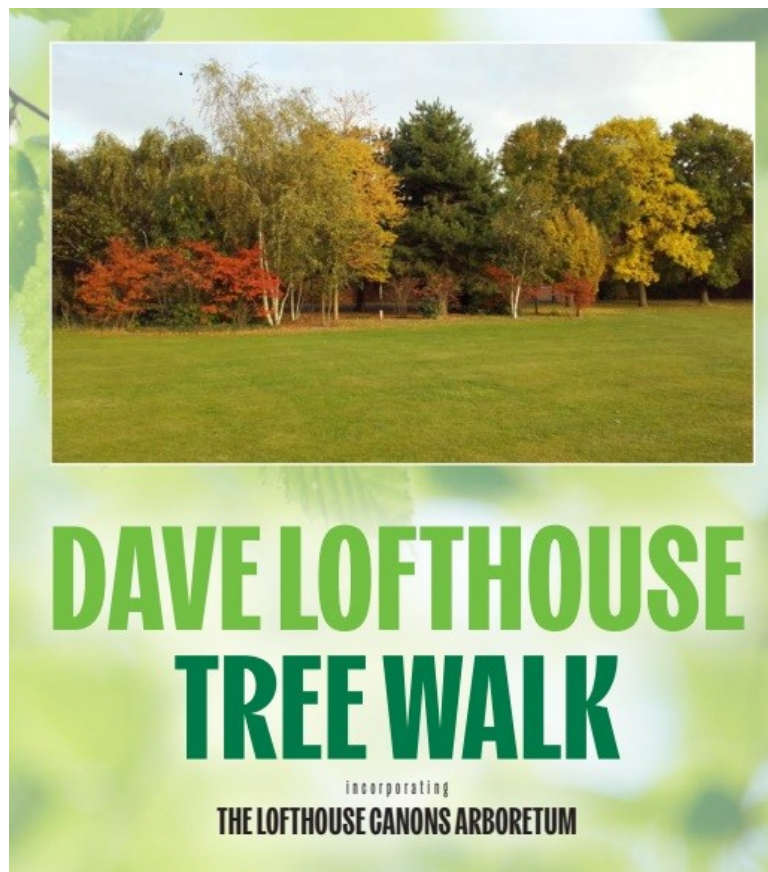


# Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

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

## Annual Review 2025



**We published the Dave Lofthouse Tree Walk, which celebrates the remarkable arboretum created by Dave during his time as Tree Officer and Arboricultural Manager at Merton Council**

---

## Our 2025 Annual Review

---

MCGC&H

A year on from our previous Chair's sudden death that gave a foretaste of a testing year, 2025 proved less traumatic for Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage.

The increasing pressures to turn Mitcham into a mini-Croydon took up much of our time and effort. Although out of the immediate Conservation Area, many of these issues inevitably impact on our green oasis if unchecked. The Mitcham Gasworks developer withdrew its promise to provide more than a third of the 600+ flats as "affordable homes" for approval, and amazingly attained Council officer recommendation. The latest deal from Merton Council was to buy 146 of the new flats and offer them as affordable homes. Full details of this partial bail-out are sketchy at the time of writing, but the developer decision remained highly suspect having stated that no scheme to build on this site stacked up financially, irrespective of providing affordable homes.

So, it appeared inevitable that this overdevelopment that blights so many residential properties would go ahead. Yet it was matched in blight potential with the projected rebuild of Majestic Way. Our objections have been well documented, detailing why an eleven-storey mass breaks so many rules. 2026 will determine how much damage Clarion's plans will cause.

Within our area the Burnt (Burn) Bullock saga dragged on. It came as some surprise that emergency services could not find a cause of the inferno. The owner continued to ignore enforcement notices leading to a rapid deterioration of the remaining fabric. The chances of having this building returned to its Grade II Listed status look slim, leaving a blot on our landscape for the foreseeable future. The Burnt Bullock fiasco continued to impact on Mitcham Cricket Club as the freeholder still holds ownership of the pavilion site, although on-field matters looked brighter, especially the young divisions.

We held two successful events. Community on the Green drew a record crowd in July, and our quiz night in September was very well attended and great fun.

At our last 2025 Trustee meeting, Joyce Bellamy advised that she would not stand for re-election in 2026 due to health issues. However, she had accepted our offer to continue reporting on Townscape & Landscape.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our work throughout the year.

John Davis  
Chair  
Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage



*Seven entries submitted to London in Bloom won awards this year*

Our ongoing participation in London in Bloom generated more successes this year, further boosting Mitcham's environmental standing.

Seven entries submitted and received awards:

- Mitcham Garden Village
- Cricket Green Conservation Area greens
- Mitcham Community Orchard
- Mitcham Village Fair Green
- Three Kings Piece
- The Canons
- The Small Quarter Community Garden (a new entry for this year)

Increased interest from Merton Council's Greenspaces team acting in cooperation with Mitcham Society on our London in Bloom judge's comments means we are hopeful that Mitcham Village's 2026 entry will show improved effort.

The newly appointed arboricultural manager, John Igglesden, had a major impact on Merton Borough's trees including some within our Conservation Area. His team surveyed most trees to identify problems. This was the first such check since the death of the previous manager, Dave Lofthouse. Cricket Green Ward was granted a number of new street trees planted in spring although the year's abnormal weather brought watering problems.

Following protracted road works with gas and water mains replacements, a new rain garden at "Bank Corner" on Lower Green West was created and welcomed. More to come around Mitcham in 2026?

There was increased council awareness of "No Mow May" to protect habitat for invertebrates in the Parish Churchyard, and along verges and in meadows.

John Davis  
Chair, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage



*Remembering Jane Plant, Tree Warden and Friend, at the dedication of a memorial copse of trees*

We were pleased to be able to plant nine semi-mature trees on Three Kings Piece and dedicate these to Jane Plant, long-time tree warden and Friend, who was hit by a car in November 2024 whilst on a pedestrian crossing and died from her injuries.

A memorial event was held in the summer followed by a walk around The Canons arboretum.

After years of planning, we published the Dave Lofthouse Tree Walk, a tribute to the remarkable work of this former Merton Arboricultural Manager

and Tree Officer who over many years created an arboretum at The Canons.

This is available in hard copy and as a download from our web site. We ask for a £2 donation to help us do further work celebrating our area. Details of how to donate are at our web site.

We experienced abnormal weather throughout the year. Extended efforts were made to water newly planted trees within The Canons, and on Three Kings Piece. Thanks to all Friends, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage members and all the local people who put in monumental efforts to join in with this task.

Pupils from Cricket Green School helped at The Canons Community Garden and at The Canons Nature Trail. We installed a large tree planter in the Community Garden with help from *idverde*, with the intention of discouraging ball games that had trashed the fruit bushes in the Garden.

We queried why the holly hedge around the bowling green had been flailed instead of carefully cut, and flagged poor management of the beech hedge along Cricket Green Road. Unfortunately for the holly hedge, the damage had been done, and it will take many years to return to its former visual glory.

Among our monthly workdays was a survey of the Dave Lofthouse Woodland which had been Cranmer Green in 2023. Since its inception we had asked for a breakdown on trees – by number, species and failures.



*Begonias lifted from formal beds found a new home in the walled garden till winter frosts hit*

Despite promises nothing was received from LBM so we carried out our own count. Unsurprisingly we noted a considerable shortfall in the quantity of whips planted. On a positive note, the survival rate looked promising.

Two benches had been positioned within the wood following consultation with FroC.

Our begonia lift from the formal beds opposite Mitcham Cricket Club's Pavilion was a rewarding exercise with many blooms given to local groups and some used to add a splash of colour to the planter in the Walled Garden.

The begonias lasted well beyond their lifting day in early October, providing a red explosion of colour until the winter frost hit.

John Davis  
Chair, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage  
Chair, Friends of the Canons

---

## **Landscape & townscape**

---



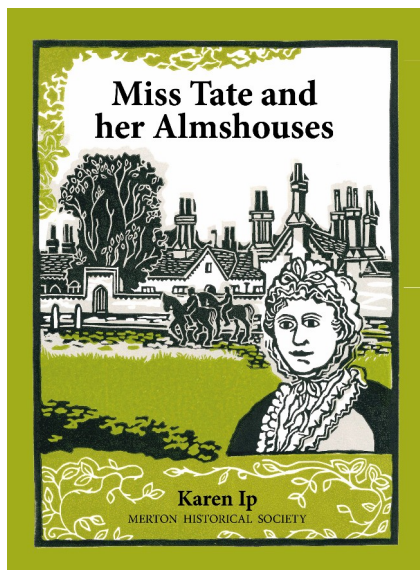
The Vestry Hall housed the headquarters of Mitcham's local government in the last century. Now renovated throughout, the wall-board plaque listing past civic leaders has been reinstalled. Rooms are now available for a variety of local meetings for organisations such as Mitcham Horticultural Society and Mitcham Cricket Club.

The latter now has a thriving membership especially youngsters, and holds prize-givings at the Vestry Hall. Historic photographs have also been well displayed, all of which has helped raise Mitcham's profile and identity, somewhat lost following integration into Greater London under the London Borough of Merton.

The demise of Mitcham's two historic Grade II coaching inns, in modern times called The Burn Bullock and The White Hart, has continued, even accelerated.

The Burn Bullock remains a burned-out shell giving rise to locals now referring to it as The Burnt Bullock. It is now surrounded by high safety panels prone to graffiti. Meanwhile, the White Hart is shut tight. Planning permission for the extension and conversion into residential use, and new flats in the car park, has not been implemented. At least the resumption of regular refuse disposal collections by the current council contractor has done much to alleviate accumulation of rubbish and prevent littering.

Rival gang "tags" continue to be scrawled on fences, vacant buildings and other hard surfaces. These represent an attempt to secure areas of influence and domination over rivals. It is little consolation to residents that two of the main protagonists are "known" to Merton Council.



*"Miss Tate and her Almshouses" – a new book about the faith, feminism and philanthropy of Mary Tate*

On a happy note, the publication by Merton Historical Society of a new book, "Miss Tate and her Almshouses" was launched at Mitcham Parish Church.

This book tells a story of faith, feminism and philanthropy in late Georgian and early Victorian England, as embodied in Mary Tate, who provided sheltered housing for elderly and vulnerable women in Mitcham.

The homes created looked onto an area of land visible to passing pedestrians and today they are a much valued part of the Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area.

Our landscape has benefitted from better uptake of "No Mow May" and an

appreciation of wild areas, which has led to a noted increase in bees and butterflies, plus wildlife we can not see so easily. Alongside the conservation of trees and hedgerows these measures are reviving the ecological and visual benefits of the area. It is hoped this will give younger generations encouragement towards a better understanding of nature.

Joyce Bellamy

Trustee, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

We worked hard throughout the year to protect and celebrate the special character of Cricket Green in the face of a range of development proposals and other challenges.

The first anniversary of the horrific fire at the Burn Bullock passed with the condition of the historic building declining. Despite enforcement action no cover had been provided by the owners and the scaffolding that appeared all too quickly disappeared. We asked Merton Council and Historic England to step in directly to undertake the work needed to protect the building and then to compulsorily purchase the site.

We helped protect The Windmill pub when it briefly went up for and was then withdrawn from auction to pay off the same owner's debts by activating the Asset of Community Value status we secured in 2024.

We invested considerable effort working to protect Mitcham's village character in the face of major building plans which will shape its future for generations to come.



*Clarion's monstrous plans for flats rising to 11 storeys on the old Morrisons site and Majestic Way provoked a strong negative response*

Clarion's monstrous plans for flats rising to 11 storeys on the old Morrisons site and Majestic Way provoked a strong negative response. They are far from the "community driven redevelopment" promised and are set to blight the area for years as Boots, Lloyds and other shops closed.

We are pressing Clarion for a major rethink so its plans fit with the Local Plan that was signed off in 2024 after years of public debate.

The huge redevelopment of Mitcham Gasworks saw revised plans for both more affordable homes than zero affordable homes given planning permission. This was despite none of the options being financially viable according to the developer's own figures. It appears the only way to secure affordable homes is for Merton Council to directly buy up flats for millions of pounds and then provide them for people in housing need.

We welcomed Merton Council's investment in more community events, planting and the return of the Mitcham bandstand as a performance space to help boost the pride we have in Mitcham Village.

Our work on other development proposals secured some important results.



*The magnificent Pagoda Tree whose fate lies in the balance despite Merton Council's paused plans to build on the historic Canons nursery*

Merton Council pushed ahead with its own controversial building plans for Raleigh Gardens car park but has paused the redevelopment of the historic Canons nursery.

This was helped by an official report confirming the threat of "significant unavoidable impacts" to the magnificent Pagoda Tree we have long warned about. Despite the pause, intrusive hoardings were put around the nursery site in the heart of this historic landscape.

The demolition of Church Road parade, extension of the Old Bank House and extra storeys on Drive House were rejected. We secured a requirement for shops on the ground floor of the flats to be built on the car wash site and successfully reduced its height from five to four storeys.

Merton Council maintained a strong stance against intrusive telecom masts, including rejecting proposals for Raleigh Gardens. The growing care home in Baron Grove will need to reinstate the front gardens of the former houses it has taken over as part of future plans following our intervention. We also helped ensure the requirement to provide shops on the ground floor of the flats on the former KwikFit site is met when the owner's efforts to wriggle out of the planning condition were turned down on appeal.

Planning permission was given for the largest ever development in Cricket Green with the go ahead for a 28,000 sq. m distribution warehouse showing what we can expect to be the future of Willow Lane Industrial Estate. Our efforts secured £65,000 funding to invest in Tramway Path which runs along the edge of the site.

We joined up with SS Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School to get action on the crumbling listed walls around Mary Tate Cottages. A Dangerous Structure Notice was issued and the new owners are drawing up restoration plans. Intrusive hoardings around the old fire station were also removed just in time for the

Remembrance Day ceremonies at the adjacent war memorial as a result of our action. Other planning breaches are still outstanding, including the unauthorised breeze block building in The Canons and the intrusive black metal entrance to the 500 year old dovecote.

Regular meetings with SUEZ about its waste site on Benedict Wharf kept problems of heavy lorries and pungent smells high on the agenda. We are working hard to secure commitments from SUEZ and Merton Council for planters on the barren Hallowfield Way and are pressing Merton Council to back action to remove the narrow part of Church Road as an official lorry route.



*Yet more delays and an official policy statement of "fudge in terms of the opening date" for the Wilson, originally planned to open in 2020*

There was next to no progress on the long promised plans for investment at The Wilson. We did unearth details that suggest any future investment will focus on refurbishing existing buildings rather than a full scale redevelopment.

In response to our questioning the health service told us it was "going to fudge in terms of the opening date, because what I don't want to do is I don't want to set a date and then fail against that date. I think that has

happened too many times in the Wilson." The original opening date was 2020 and health inequalities between the east and west of Merton continue to grow.

We welcomed efforts by Merton Council to protect some of our local green spaces from traveller incursions. This included new bunds protecting The Canons along Commonsides West. Cranmer Green still lacks protections and we continue to press Merton Council to reinstate the tree-lined King George VI Avenue and ban its use by cars.

Tony Burton  
Trustee and Secretary, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

---

## Communications & events

---

Our annual celebration of community and heritage, Community on the Green, got its largest ever attendance, as several hundred local people took advantage of the opportunity to meet up for an informal social evening on a very clement July evening.

We welcomed the Mayor of Merton, Mitcham Community Choir and the Wandle Industrial Museum, and launched our Dave Lofthouse Tree Walk with an inaugural guided walk.

Our September quiz night has now become an annual fixture, and it draws teams from Cricket Green and beyond. With a raffle and wine tasting alongside several rounds of quiz questions with a prize for the winning team, and a fish and chip supper this event provides an evening of fun for all.



*Community on the Green was enjoyed by several hundred local people*

We were asked at the end of the evening for the date of the 2026 quiz – surely proof that this event is now part of the Cricket Green calendar!

We were pleased to be able to organise a group tour of the Suez facility at Benedict Wharf. Despite this taking place on a particularly wet evening, the event was well attended, and the group, complete with high-vis jackets, hard hats and protective boots, was given a real insight into the work that goes on day in, day out at the facility. The

tour was a welcome relief from what can feel at times like a rather thankless and difficult relationship with Suez on the Community Liaison Group.

We also organised a tour of Vestry Hall, and our guide was building manager Julie Noel, who introduced people to the refurbished and reinvigorated building that takes a central place in the heart of Cricket Green.

Our communications and events machine is constantly active. Our dual aims of bringing people together to celebrate all that is good about our area, while also working to care for and enhance Cricket Green and its environs, means there is

always plenty for us to be getting on with, and we communicate with people in many different ways.

Our in-person events include eleven open meetings every year – one a month except for December. These meetings are informal and everyone is welcome – you don't have to be a member to come along. The meetings are an opportunity for us to share information and for people to participate in discussions that inform decision we make.

We are grateful to the venues that have generously provided a place for us to hold these meetings this year: Commonsides Cafe, SS Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Mitcham Parish Church, Mitcham Cricket Club and Mitcham Bowling Club.

Timed to coincide with these meetings in order to give our wider audience a briefing on the latest news, our Cricket Green Update goes out to many hundreds of people. Anyone can join the mailing list to receive Cricket Green Update, and the current and all past Cricket Green Updates are available at our web site ([mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk](http://mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk)).

In addition we regularly share information on various social platforms including X (@mitchamcrktgrn), Facebook (mitchamcricketgreen) and Instagram (@mitchamcricketgreen). In using all these different methods and platforms, we do our best to ensure that it is easy for those who are interested in our work – wherever they happen to be - to keep in touch.

Sandra Vogel  
Trustee, Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

---

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

MCGC&H

	Year ended 31.12.25	Year ended 31.12.24
	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Memberships – New	30	40
Subscriptions – Life	0	0
Subscriptions – Ordinary	660	600
Donations & one-off grants	575	183
Burn Bullock fighting fund	0	913
Bank deposit interest received gross	733	528
Sales	490	0
Events	954	2,306
Social fund receipts	0	136
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>£3,442</u></b>	<b><u>£4,706</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Sundry expenses, meetings and secretarial	469	532
Linked organisations subscriptions	196	160
Group Insurance	56	157
Bank charges	0	0
Events	722	2,493
Design and print Dave Lofthouse Tree Walk	2,289	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>£3,732</u></b>	<b><u>£3,342</u></b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(£290)</b>	<b>£1,364</b>
<b>Retained surplus brought forward</b>	<b>£15,721</b>	<b>£14,357</b>
<b>RETAINED SURPLUS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b><u>£15,431</u></b>	<b><u>£15,721</u></b>
Grants brought forward	<b>4,593</b>	5,215
Grants received	<b>0</b>	913
Less grants expended	<b>490</b>	1,535
<b>Restricted funds carried forward</b>	<b><u>£4,103</u></b>	<b><u>£4,593</u></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 Merton Connected, Vestry Hall, 336/338 London Road,  
 Mitcham Surrey, CR4 3UD  
 Company registration no. 04659164 Charity registration no. 1106859

Member of

