

1. OPEN SPACES

The protection of all open spaces and green areas in the Borough was supported by **Conservatives**, who oppose back garden development, and also want to expand green space by adopting non-Council owned land, increase investment in parks, and gain finance for the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

Labour feels that most back gardens in the Borough are not amenable to back garden developments due to size limits, and would introduce planning policies to stop inappropriate developments. Selling off parks to commercial interests would be resisted.

Liberal Democrats would protect and improve open spaces and restrict developments close to them, and also create new open spaces in deprived areas; they feel that changing the law to control development in back gardens is desirable.

Greens would protect all open spaces, green areas and back gardens, expanding allotment provision, and encourage food production and biodiversity.

2. CONSERVATION AREAS

Labour would control inappropriate development in conservation areas by enhancing the Council's Conservation and Design Advisory Panel, and having management plans for all conservation areas. Introducing Article 4 areas would be considered, and all the Council's own works would have to reflect the conservation area character. Priority would be given to the two conservation areas classed as being at risk by English Heritage, Leopold Road and Merton Hall Road.

Liberal Democrats wish to see the management and improvement of conservation areas as a key issue if the Council budget allows, and can see the benefits of Article 4 areas.

Greens would protect conservation areas from inappropriate development.

Conservatives wish to see high standards of design in conservation areas, good enforcement, good standards of design, and protection from inappropriate development. Management plans and proposals should be produced, and Article 4 directions would be rolled out for some more conservation areas.

3. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Liberal Democrats want to see the public fully engaged during pre-application discussions with developers on major schemes. Community Forums would be improved to allow better community participation, & a discussion of proposed new developments. Ward Councillors should be enabled to help residents make representations on planning applications.

Greens would involve local groups at an early stage to allow them to shape the design of new developments.

On major applications, **Conservatives** want to see Ward Councillors having a role in community forums and public meetings on major planning applications, and section 106 agreements.

Labour wants to see residents engaged in pre-application discussions with developers.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES

Greens would introduce free home insulation, and encourage feed-in tariffs and solar roofs, a green energy bond, and smart meters.

On natural resources, **Conservatives** wish to see recycling increase from 33% to 45% by 2014, improved energy efficiency of Council vehicles, expanding the "Merton Rule" for new development to 20% generated energy, a CHP scheme for the Civic Centre, and a loans scheme to help residents improve energy efficiency.

Labour wishes to see a Combined Heat and Power plant for Merton, and support the “Merton Rule”.

Liberal Democrats wish to extend the “Merton Rule”, reduce the carbon output by encouraging renewable energy and green transport, and reducing waste including energy and water.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Conservatives aim to make Wimbledon Town Centre more pedestrian friendly, support the “Wimbledon Way” route between the Station and the Tennis, provide better cycle parking, introduce more 20mph zones and street trees where residents want them; more street sweeping machines, 24 hour weekend cleaning in Wimbledon Town Centre, improving the Station forecourt, tighter restriction on road works, and improving the pedestrian/traffic balance in the Broadway; better enforcement of speed limits, street scene enhancements.

Labour would extend cycling facilities including contraflows in one-way systems and better parking, widen pavements beside new developments, aim to get Morden into zone 3 rather than zone 4, increase street sweeping, remove many guardrails in Wimbledon Town Centre, and aim to redirect some traffic away from the Town.

Liberal Democrats would want to see co-ordination of road works, good traffic flow, speeding up of bus journeys, phasing of traffic lights, increased cycle use, monitoring of air quality, protection and development of open spaces and green corridors, encouragement of public reporting of street litter, better street cleaning, de-cluttering of the Town Centre.

Greens would introduce 20mph speed restrictions in all built up areas, allocate 10% of transport spend to walking and cycling, and reduce the need for travel by favouring public transport, cycling and walking.

6. CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT

Labour want to see clearer planning policies, and concentrate resources on enforcement. The **Liberal Democrats** wish to see a clearer concept of what Merton should be like in the new plan, and better involvement of local residents and groups.

Greens would strengthen the development control system, and encourage the community to drive the development process.

Conservatives wish to strengthen development control policies and crack down on developers who break the rules.

7. COMMUNITY, CULTURAL AND LEISURE FACILITIES

Liberal Democrats wish to see the Council maintain the freehold of key sites, and believe that a Wimbledon Civic Hall would make a valuable contribution to the community, subject to local services not being cut.

Greens would support cultural events and new public spaces and buildings in Wimbledon Town Centre, including an iconic Civic Hall hosting a diversity of cultural events, and would revitalise local community groups.

Conservatives want to make Merton an arts and cultural hub in SW London, and currently envisage the Council-owned site beside the Theatre as a multi purpose community space for the visual and performing arts, when the economic climate allows. They wish to protect and improve community centres, financially support a tourist information centre via a Business Improvement District in Wimbledon Town Centre, and fund improvements to the Wimbledon Leisure Centre and the Theatre.

Labour supports the provision of a combined cultural and community space in a Civic Hall for Wimbledon, and would allow local groups to take control of community assets such as community centres.