

# The Bulletin - No. 21 - January 2006



Wimbledon Civic Forum - working for a better Wimbledon

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- \* Transport always open to improvement
- \* The Wimbledon station precinct will come to life
- \* Safeways Car park will be developed
- \* Nelson Hospital Development will finally happen

## Kitsch or Ultra Kitsch?

Renovation at Merton Hall Road. Recently a suburban house in Merton Hall Road was overclad in chipboard onto which was painted to look like oversized bricks.



Photos Rosie Potter

"Its demure brick facade, sober rendering and half timbered gable was reborn into a visually stunning, Pop Art recreation of itself."

Commissioned by Arts Works in Wimbledon and supported by Arts Council England, The Elephant Trust and special donations.

## Street Clutter

Every street sign we introduce is another piece of metal needing to be maintained and eventually taken away. Why not paint the parking notices on the kerb stone? Why not clear up the public domain and make our streets less of an obstacle course?

A Street Clutter Forum, with speakers Brian Hodge, of Merton's Regeneration Dept and Desmond Bazley of the 'Living Streets' organisation.

The meeting was introduced by a brief slide show of photographs around Wimbledon Town Centre, showing particular examples of street clutter and corralling of pedestrians.

Brian Hodge explained that different central and local government departments have historically added clutter to our streets and cited Transport for London as a worst offender. Merton now has a street design guide providing standards for street furniture and attempting to standardise. He explained that there are several projects that Merton would like to achieve in Wimbledon such as bicycle storage.

Desmond Bazley of the Living Streets organisation said that Living Streets campaigns to make local streets useable and liveable. Removal of clutter makes streets more comfortable to walk in - for example a consultation scheme in Wilton Crescent.

Melvyn Simonson said street lights were set historically to cant away from the street at a few degrees - you will never get the streetlights plumb. In lighting streets we should consider mounting on the buildings - this is easiest but legally difficult, different situations call for different solutions. He gave examples of attaching signs to buildings and to existing posts. He explained that much of the

technology is now smaller and also that lampposts need to be of a certain strength but cannot have too many signs attached to them or they will act like a sail.

The meeting provoked much discussion and all felt strongly that the streets of Wimbledon should be cleared both of visual clutter and of excessive railings. The workshop was held on 21st Sept 2005

The matter was raised with the London Borough of Merton in November 2005: Street Clutter. There is concern that Highways and Planning are pulling in different directions and too much clutter is being introduced. A note from London Borough of Merton states that all parking bays will require a post - a cheaper and less obtrusive approach might be to paint notices on the pavement kerb - more hardware should be a solution of last resort.

The London Borough of Merton Highways Design Guide is nearing completion and planning and transport will be meeting and co-ordinating within London Borough of Merton, with Ged Lawrenson as Design Champion taking a close interest. If the principles of the design guide are actually implemented we should see a reduction in clutter and confusion in future. Watch this space...

## Making Slough Happy - could it happen here?

Following on from the successful TV programme 'Making Slough Happy', this is the happiness manifesto from the BBC website. Do these for two months and see the difference they make! Let's start the new year with a happier Wimbledon!

### 1. Get physical

Exercise for half an hour three times a week. Regular exercise improves your sense of well-being and reduces stress.

### 2. Count your blessings

At the end of each day, reflect on at least five things you're grateful for.

### 3. Talk time

Have an hour-long uninterrupted conversation with your partner or closest friend each week.

### 4. Plant something

Even if it's a window-box or pot plant. Keep it alive!

### 5. Cut your TV viewing by half

Too much TV is linked to unhappiness

### 6. Smile at and/or say hello to a stranger at least once a day.

Smiling has a real positive effect, not only on making you feel better, but also on other people around you. It's hard for other people not to respond positively to you if you're smiling.

### 7. Phone a friend

Make contact with at least one friend or relation you've not been in contact with for a while and arrange to meet up.

### 8. Have a good laugh at least once a day

It's often said that laughter is the best medicine.

### 9. Every day make sure you give yourself a treat

And take time to really enjoy it!

### 10. Daily kindness

Do an extra good turn for someone each day.

For full details and hints and tips on how to achieve some of these aims, see the BBC website:

[bbc.co.uk/lifestyle/tv\\_and\\_radio/making\\_slough\\_happy](http://bbc.co.uk/lifestyle/tv_and_radio/making_slough_happy)

## Big sky: Merton's Parks and Gardens

A report by Andrew Judge, Leader of Merton Council.



In Merton we are blessed with 67 parks in addition to beautiful and characteristic spaces like Wimbledon Common. Natural places, whether wild or cultivated, contribute to physical and mental well-being. They provide space for recreation and sport as well as an environment for contemplation and conversation. Yet for decades past, like nearly all UK local authorities, we have not been in a position to invest in our parks. We have been short of money, not least because of the burden of having to service debt accumulated from the decades after 1965. In the last four years we have consciously sought to remove the burden and achieved a debt reduction of £54m. We have also achieved year on year efficiency savings significantly higher than most other authorities.

This has had two results: the first is low council tax increases (no higher than inflation for this year and the next two years); the second is a new capacity to invest in quality of life issues.

We have begun the process of renewing our parks, with many improvements across the Borough planned and implemented with local Friends groups: like the reopened paddling pool in the Lewes Road recreation ground, or the new athletics track in Wimbledon Park, or the impending restoration of 'Edwardian style' railings around South Park Gardens after a gap of 65 years.

We are also beginning the process of working with local Friends groups to engage in a continuing dialogue around local needs and aspirations. The outcome will be individual management plans for each park that encompass both regular maintenance and long-term goals. Merton is a Labour Council, but whether people are engaged by Party politics or not, we should all be stewards for future generations and eschew short term measures in favour of long term solutions. Merton Council is endeavouring to lead the principle of a sustainable society. We ask for your support.

## Teach Urdu as a second language

Bilingualism is not a problem, it is an asset. So many pupils in the UK have English as a second language or alternative language. We should be celebrating the fact that we have such a diverse language culture in our schools. Indeed, we should try to encourage some of our monolingual native pupils to join in the learning of a community language. Five of the languages that are gaining in popularity are Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, Russian and Urdu. The future for languages in the United Kingdom is very bright, if we abandon the notion that we have to stick rigidly to French and German.

Welcome to a brave new world in which pupils learn Urdu in all schools right from Nursery level. Bilingual Muslim teachers should be appointed in all schools who are well versed in the Urdu Language. It is spoken and understood by nearly four million British Asian. It is a common language from Kabul to Burma. Lord Hasting was appointed the first Governor General of Bengal because he was well versed in Farsi and Urdu. It is a lingua franca in all inner cities where Asians are in the majority. The British education system has never taken a keen interest in the teaching and learning of Urdu and the majority of British born Muslim children will not learn to read and write it. Credit goes to the Imams from the subcontinent who use Urdu in their Masajid and keep the Urdu language alive. But the British establishments, with the help of the so-called leaders, are forcing Masajid to use English instead of Urdu. And yet Indian and Pakistani films are being shown everywhere. There are nearly a dozen TV Channels and radio stations broadcasting in Urdu/Hindi 24 hours, entertaining Asians throughout Western Europe. The BBC has been requested to set up a TV Channel in Urdu/Hindi. Musical concerts are being arranged all over the country and top singers from the subcontinent sing songs for the entertainment of the public.

It is crucial for Muslim children from the subcontinent to learn Urdu to keep in touch with their cultural roots. Most of Islamic literature and poetry is in Urdu and not in any other Indian Languages. Therefore, in my opinion, both Muslim parents and schools should teach Urdu so that the children can enjoy the beauty of Urdu literature and poetry. I would like to see even native children learning Urdu and not French so that they can learn to respect and understand the British Muslim community through Urdu literature and poetry. The Independent newspaper also asks for the teaching of Urdu instead of French in British schools for better race relations through a language. **Iftikhar Ahmad**

## Booze city? Licensing Update

The Next Forum meeting to review the impact of the new Licensing regulations will be held at 6.30pm on Thursday 16th February 2006 in Drake House. Mike Pollard gives his view on the current situation:

At the Civic Forum meeting last year to discuss the new licensing legislation, there was an air of confidence amongst all those present that the impact in Wimbledon would be small, thanks in no small part to the establishment of two Cumulative Impact Zones in the town and village. The onus would be on the applicants to prove that extended hours for the sale of alcohol would not have an adverse impact on the community and environment. I left the meeting, with other Wimbledon residents, feeling very reassured.

Six months later, in Wimbledon alone, there have been dozens of applications from pubs and clubs to extend opening hours. However, in considering these applications, the Licensing Committee is unable to utilise objections which do not specifically relate to the individual premises or incidents involving these premises and alcohol consumption. And we cannot gather evidence on something that has not happened yet, ie the later closing times.

Amongst those who have serious reservations about the legislation are the Institute for Alcohol Studies and the Royal College of Physicians. There is well researched evidence that extended hours are likely to result in more alcohol being consumed, leading to more alcohol-related crime, disorder and disturbance for residents. And all at a much later hour. A relevant study in London's west end, stated that *'crime in, and in the direct vicinity of, licensed premises is occurring at later hours due to extended licensing hours.'*

Our licensing committee has restricted the lateness of the closing times in some instances, and attached a few conditions, such as premises having to display "quiet as you leave" notices. However, the overall result is that many venues will be open and selling alcohol at midnight and into the early hours.

As residents, we can gather evidence about individual premises or incidents involving these premises and alcohol consumption. Police advice is keep a diary, a record of events times places. This can be used as evidence.

Wimbledon Village seems to have been far more successful than Wimbledon Town in blocking or limiting licensing applications. Perhaps this is because more residents write to object (sometimes around 50 letters). But exactly the same principles apply in each case – the later closing times and increased alcohol consumption will result in more problems for residents, regardless of where they live. **Michael Pollard**

## Regeneration and Demolition

An urban design theme to the 2006 Civic Forum Bulletin, with eyesore campaigns in the Wimbledon Guardian linked to TV programmes advocating demolition of ugly and useless buildings. How will Wimbledon Cope in 2015 and 2055?

# How to use the planning system to your advantage.

From Steve Clark, Head of Planning

Steve Clark, Head of Planning recently responded to a Residents Association giving advice on how to represent your views on Planning Applications. This is good advice and we suggest people who wish to comment on or oppose an application should follow these guidelines. Residents' views on applications are a material consideration, but have less weight than compliance with UDP policies, which is the main determinant. Thus if residents want to have a major influence on how their area looks, they will need to get involved in the development plan process. Our UDP is eventually to be replaced by something called an LDF (see other article). However, it will take some time before it replaces the UDP, and the final decision will be taken by a Government Inspector, rather than the Council (as it was for the UDP). Hence it remains to be seen whether local communities can have a major influence on their built environment. Whilst residents' views have only limited influence on decisions on applications, there are ways of maximising that influence, viz.:

- (i) concentrate on issues where you think the UDP is not being complied with.
- (ii) avoid objecting to everything (you will have no influence with the Committee if you oppose all applications).
- (iii) avoid raising non-planning issues, such as property values, personal circumstances etc.
- (iv) if possible suggest how concerns could be overcome, such as by the imposition of a condition.

As you will have noticed if you have attended a Planning Committee, virtually everything is opposed these days, yet Members know they've got to approve most applications, so even the way objections are presented can help.

## Local Development Framework. a spatial plan takes over from the old Unitary Development Plan.

The Local Development Framework is a new spatial development plan which will lay down the planning policies for the next decade. Community participation is in stages, with the first stage - identifying the issues - out to consultation until 30 January (responses received within a few days of this date will still be considered). In March there will be a public workshop in Wimbledon to discuss the issues in detail before moving on to the next stage of the plan, developing policies. Further information about the plan and the timetable is on the councils website at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/living/planning/ldf/ldfissues.htm> see also the what's on page at [wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk](http://wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk).

## Planning, a Quarterly Update

WCF met with Merton's head of planning Steve Clark, Richard Rawes, Director of Merton's Environment and Regeneration Department and Stephen Hammond MP. We outline the key points from the meeting:

**Wimbledon Town Centre - Hartfield Road - the P3 site.** A developer for the site has been chosen - Foinavon [[www.foinavon.com](http://www.foinavon.com)]. Foinavon's proposal includes mixed use retail/commercial/residential development and also a hotel, with a car park beneath the development. A planning application is expected early this year. There will be pre-application consultations, and Steve Clark suggested that the Civic Forum Urban Design Task Force facilitate community involvement in this. WCF suggested workshops involving members of the public at an early stage, along the lines of the Nelson hospital workshops. [See below]. WCF noted that there are potential conflicts of interest when the Council is selling land and also acting as Planning Authority. The Council is aware of this and will manage this, balancing and separating Property and Planning interests.

**All England Club - new roof.** This will be installed in 2006, and the steelwork delivery will involve road closures in Wimbledon. There will be formal notification and publication of this nearer the time.

**6-10 St. George's Road.** This development is well underway, filling a gap between the Nat West Building and Elys. A simple curtain wall facade introducing green infill panels. WCF commented that the materials bear no relationship to their surroundings, which are already compromised by the quality of Argos, Natwest, and HSBC buildings at the junction adjacent.

**Wimbledon Village 'Tesco' site.** Stephen Hammond commented that the quality of the ground floor shop front must be appropriate to Wimbledon Village and not a standard illuminated shop front. WCF commented that the building is gateway to the village, and whilst not as glorious and finely detailed as the bank diagonally opposite is better for being more assertive and more expressive than the original design.

**Broadway House.** A new development has been granted detailed permission for a mixed use scheme including retail at ground floor, office and residential. The scheme will probably be sold on and no doubt modified proposals will come through in due course.

**Wimbledon Park Hall.** The council is seeking an alternative developer, because the originally selected developer is offering a poorer deal and has reduced the extent of community space. London Borough of Merton will be re-approaching previous tenderers. Wimbledon Park Residents Association are being kept informed.

**Wimbledon Station Precinct - the P1 site.** There is renewed interest in this site. A major building-over-the-tracks development would allow rethinking of traffic flows through Wimbledon, including the possibility of a new road bridge from Queen's Road to Alexandra Road.

**Plough Lane Site.** Planning agreement has now been signed for: 570 dwellings (170 of which are affordable), office and light industrial use, GP surgery and community room with computers/copiers. The development has unusual transport features - each resident is given a bicycle and an

Oyster card with £100 credit. There is a city car club for car sharing. This is one of the biggest housing developments we will see in this area, and is at an important stretch in the Wandle, where it becomes more urban as it runs north. South London Partnership is developing the vision of the Wandle being more canalised as it goes north, and connecting areas of parkland to the south. New landscaping in this development will adjoin the river, with parking underground.

*Atkinson Morley Hospital site.* The Council has approved a scheme in principle, subject to signing the section 106 agreement, for a scheme which reuses the hospital buildings, provides 94 dwellings, and creates a new 20 acre public park, to be managed by the Morley Park Trust. There are possible synergies with the Wimbledon and Putney Common, for expertise in landscape and wildlife management. The Primary Care Trust is expected to sell the development on to a developer.

*B&Q development on the Homebase site by the A3.* This site incorporates some residential, smaller shops, and a wind turbine. WCF feel that these elements are treated as wallpaper around a shed. Mixed use development might have been more integrated.

*Mitcham Town Centre.* In the south of the Borough, this scheme continues to evolve.

*The Brown and Root Tower.* The scheme is to be sold on. A developer is in the wings.

*Wimbledon Civic Hall/Auditorium/Arts Centre.* The London Borough of Merton is revising the brief and will be updating the business plan to take account of Wimbledon Community Centre's decision to stay separate. Envisaged is retail on the ground floor, 600 seater auditorium above, community rooms, offices and some residential on top. Merton is weighing up the merits of different procurement mechanisms, given that the council wishes to retain the freehold, in order to ensure best design quality and balance the risks. WCF recommended speaking to Sir Jack Zunz re selection of architect/developers and procurement plans - JZ has been WCF representative on the steering group. WCF also keeps recommending a Public Subscription, to promote genuine local ownership as well as to raise funds. It is important not to squeeze the community/arts space since this can be seen as having no value in commercial models, when in fact it is the whole reason for the building.

*Morden Park.* London Playing Fields Association are not renewing their lease which expires on 31 December 2005. The Council is seeking expressions of interest and AFC Wimbledon are amongst those. The decision who to proceed with will not be purely financial but will take account of community matters. Stephen Hammond would like to see youth facilities on the site. There is not envisaged to be any development, just sports facilities.

Find the full notes from this meeting at [www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk/urban](http://www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk/urban)

## The New Nelson Hospital: an arm and a leg?

A workshop in the new Lecture Theatre at Wimbledon School of Art was attended by over 80 members of the local community, facilitated by the Wimbledon Civic Forum Urban Design Task force.

Plans for the hospital buildings are at an early stage, and the clinical brief has yet to be finalised. It is expected that the current position will be maintained, with no overnight beds, and that there will be a continuation and expansion of the diagnostic and day care provisions currently provided. The document 'Better Healthcare Closer To Home' was tabled for those who had not already seen it. The purpose of the meeting was to find out the wishes of local residents so that these could be incorporated into the brief for the designers of the hospital.

The workshop split into groups, considering:

- Best uses of the site
- Integration into Local Community
- Transport and Access
- Other Issues.

Additionally a paper of 'Beacon issues' was submitted by one of the groups.

In this summary we have grouped the views expressed into themes. A diversity of views expressed for some issues is reflected in the comments.

### Character of the new Hospital buildings.

Most were in favour of rebuilding entirely and not keeping the facade. However, there were mixed feelings about retention versus demolition of the buildings: benefits of new facilities, but reluctance to lose the fine brick buildings. There was overwhelming support for maintaining the height of the new building at the current 2-storey level, and preference for good modern design sympathetic to the Conservation Area in terms of scale and design, rather than retention of frontage buildings.

### Relationship to Kingston Road.

It was felt important to consider the relationship with Kingston Road. Should present a continuous frontage to Kingston Road, and the development should act as a buffer to Manor Gardens. There was support for the idea of a noise barrier on Kingston Road, but balanced against patients needs for a quiet environment. The pavement is currently narrow - perhaps widen it.□□

### The Rush.

It was felt important to retain and improve The Rush, and the green triangle. This area could provide an entrance to the site. Many people did not want it replaced with hard surfaces and wished to retain its identity. Others suggested a piazza with planting, although there were concerns over pedestrianisation of The Rush, which might be abused by people from the pub and boys from Rutlish school. Similarly, a cafe was not felt to be a good idea. The Rush should be integrated sympathetically into the scheme and conservation area. There was strong feeling about car parking in the area, that parking restrictions should be enforced to stop illegal parking, especially from the garages. Perhaps do not allow any parking on the Rush whatsoever.

If trying to upgrade The Rush would not produce enough benefit, then reuse it to allow better/easier access to the Hospital e.g. drop offs, entrance, could it be a pull up with

buses, return the Rush to pedestrians, perhaps enough room in for arrival and departure of buses, use as main entrance for people arriving by vehicle, with a turning circle around the entrance. Keep as low as possible without sacrificing services. No new retail use jeopardising local shops, e.g. florist, pharmacy, bakers, newsagents.

#### Access points:

Do not like multiple separate entrances, suggest only two entrances: one for patients and staff and the other for servicing. Would prefer not to have an entrance from Watery Lane or Cleveland Avenue, which are both narrow. There is the existing public right of way across the hospital site to consider.

Access whilst the work is being done should be considered and residents inconvenienced to the minimum. Site generators, deliveries, etc. (i.e. noisy stuff) should be positioned away from houses. Make access into site from either side i.e. The Rush & Co-Op sides.

#### Transport Links:

Integrate a bus service with the site. The 152 bus does not currently go all the way to St. George's - it should do, providing a link between the 2 hospitals. Good direct transport is needed direct to other hospitals. A good frequent reliable bus service between them is essential. Watery Lane residents want residents only parking. Parking is currently a problem. How is the car parking going to be handled? Consider underground car parking? - but note the high water table in the area. Perhaps there should be less parking rather than more, to encourage patients and staff to come by public transport or on foot. This is consistent with local and national policy on congestion and pollution. Moreover, walking is itself therapeutic.

#### The hospital brand and vision:

There should be an emphasis on prevention rather than cure. It should be called 'Nelson Health' rather than 'Nelson Hospital'. Other non medical or preventive facilities should be included, e.g.:

- hydrotherapy pool
  - healthy living centre
  - facilities for school children
  - drop in care for the elderly and facilities for disability groups.
  - Dieticians, fitness experts and ancillary health professionals on the site, in addition to curative professional services.
- The Existing Geriatric Day hospital has a nice family atmosphere - keep it that way e.g. by incorporating landscaped courtyard, access for disabled, not too far away from blood clinic.
- Accent on healthy living and expertise to prevent illness. Suggestions included an organic food shop/cafe/farmers market, detox clinic, anti-smoking clinic, gymnasium, swimming pool (shared by Rutlish and Wimbledon Chase). Perhaps tie in with Wimbledon School of Art - therapeutic effects of paintings and sculpture within the premises.

The whole should be architecturally compatible with the local area incorporating gardens trees landscape, maybe fountains. Nelson Health should be a place where residents can come to have their ailments diagnosed and treated, also to get and stay fit, to learn about diet and exercise in delightful surroundings. It should be a hospital for the future, a model for hospitals everywhere, a beacon.

Following the meeting, WCF Urban Design Task Force chair Marcus Beale visited architects Murphy Phillips to present

the community's comments. At this stage, the architects are simply preparing the brief for the PFI bid, in which developer teams bid for the design, construction and maintenance of the operation. WCF made the point that the community's requirements should be written in to the brief.

In January 2006 the decision to centralise primary hospital services at Sutton and not St. Helier has been reversed - subject to planning. This has implications for the detailed clinical and logistical planning so far. Will this affect the Nelson Hospital? Will there be further delay? Significant cost decisions are associated with this potential change of plans. It is to be hoped that the development of the Nelson will not be compromised by this decision.

Shortly a new consultation workshop will be held in Mitcham to look at the Wilson Hospital redevelopment. For further information see [wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk](http://wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk)

If you have any comments e-mail the Forum or use the Forum Bulletin board at [www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk](http://www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk)

## Open or Closed Roads:

What's best for Wimbledon? A perennial problem: the more you make roads open to cars the more people will use cars on the roads, which will clog them up. We have heard calls to turn the railway networks into roads, to install a cable car from the village to the station, What next in the transport debate? Is the future control freakery or liberalisation?

We have been systemically reducing the capacity of the road network in Wimbledon for a decade, through road closures and creating obstacles on many roads, in particular, traffic lights on main roads and speed humps.

Local drivers have learned to avoid main roads and use Leopold Road, Ashcombe Road, Trinity Road to the north and The Downs, Lower Downs Road to the south. Residents of these roads are now complaining about the significant increase in traffic on their roads.

Local traffic takes longer routes avoiding main roads, yet the remaining through traffic (including all buses and their passengers) has significantly longer journeys through the town centre.

Do we have always to control the traffic flow more, to slow it down, to hinder and reduce it? In 2005 1,300 local residents signed a petition against further road closures in Wimbledon Village and a call to reopen roads which have been closed. And WURA (Wimbledon Union of Residents' Associations) states in its policy that road closures should not transfer traffic from one road to another.

With the building of the Centre Court shopping complex, northbound traffic flow was cut at the entrance of the Queen's Road car park, although Queen's Road is designated a main road: thereby severing the historic through route along Dundonald Road and Queen's Road. Closing Woodside (and Worcester Road) was the second severing of a designated through route.

Two years ago, some residents in the Belvedere Streets area petitioned the Council to have their roads closed to through traffic as well. This would have resulted in

Belvedere Drive and Grove being closed to northbound traffic: the third severing in the same direction. Are we in danger of turning the public highway into private estates?



(Photo courtesy of London Cycle Network)

The large number of schools in the area creates a lot of traffic twice a day which will never go away: the busiest time of the day is between 3:00pm and 4:00pm when the schools close. Traffic flows remain lower than they were six+ years ago due to the introduction of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in the borough and beyond, that have all but eliminated on-street commuter parking. In any event there is little traffic off the main roads outside commuter hours (all roads have some traffic and predominately non-commercial) and during the school holidays the flow of traffic is very light: there isn't a rush hour. North Wimbledon does not have a traffic problem.

On the table remains a contraflow cycle route around Wimbledon Town Centre (reducing two lanes to one at the Queen's Road junction), an additional pedestrian crossing 10m eastbound from the existing crossings between Centre Court and the Prince of Wales (adding a significant additional delay for no benefit), and as mentioned, a "One-Way system around Ely's", clockwise, with, for example, all westbound traffic being made to go down St. George's Road and back up Worple Road before heading up Wimbledon Hill Road.

Bus R493 to St. George's Hospital will be re-routed down Alexandra Road, Gap Road and Plough Lane rather than go via South Wimbledon. This will greatly speed up this part of the journey whilst R219 will still go along the current R493 from Wimbledon to Tooting with reasonable access to St. George's.

Trams: Despite there being many different extension possibilities for Tramlink, the funding situation is dire. The first to come about is likely to be a spur to Crystal Palace from beyond Croydon. Additional possibilities include a route from Sutton to Tooting via Mitcham Junction, and of limited use to Wimbledonians.

Tube: There are no upgrades planned for the District Line until 2016. The Chelsea - Hackney line (Crossrail 2) is now planned to start/stop at Clapham Junction. Extra capacity is however being planned for the Northern Line. The East London Line southern extension will end at

Clapham Junction and West Croydon; again the option to end at Wimbledon has been discarded.

Rail: Airlink is a new proposal being developed in conjunction with the development of Terminal 5 at Heathrow, and will form part of Orbirail, circular rail routes around London emulating the M25. However, despite one option being from Waterloo via Wimbledon and Kingston, the preferred route now goes via Putney and Richmond.

Likewise, Crossrail now has no planned presence in South London, for a while there was talk of one route ending at Kingston.

South London taxpayers would be contributing to some significant schemes yet will not benefit directly from them: TfL's main focus is on East London and the Thames Gateway. The meeting closed with a vote on whether to recommend an open roads or closed roads policy for London Borough of Merton. The result was all but unanimous with all bar one person voting to keep the roads open (and/or reopen).

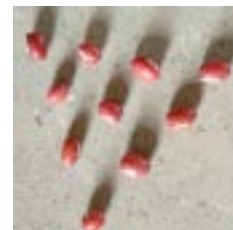
The next meeting of the Transport Forum meeting is at 6.30pm on Thursday 20th April at Drake House. Come and join the debate.

## Seen an 'ntrestin' film lately? Wimbledon Film Club at the Polka Theatre.

**The Wimbledon Film Club was formed in 2005 to give showings of interesting films of all types which would otherwise not be widely seen.**

The season runs from Autumn to June and membership is renewable each September. Below are the films scheduled up to the end of June. **Day Membership:** As a day member you can see each film for £6.

Angels and Insects cert 18. Thursday 26th January 2006  
Reconstruction cert 12A. Thursday 9th February 2006  
Nine Queens cert 15. Thursday 23rd February 2006  
3 Colours Blue cert 15. Thursday 9th March 2006  
Mullholland Drive cert 15. Thursday 23rd March 2006  
Weeping Camel cert U. Thursday 6th April 2006  
Holes cert U. Thursday 20th April 2006  
All about My Mother cert 15. Thursday 4th May 2006  
Key Largo cert 15. Thursday 18th May 2006  
Spirited Away cert PG. Thursday 1st June 2006  
Rabbit Proof Fence cert PG. Thursday 29th June 2006  
For more details see [www.wimbledonfilmclub.com](http://www.wimbledonfilmclub.com)



don't forget the **Bulletin Board** at  
[www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk](http://www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk)

## Forum Diary 2006

Forum meetings are usually held on the 3rd Thursday of each month. All meetings currently scheduled for 2006 are listed below. Check the website for the most up-to-date information.

Thursday 26th January 2006 7:15pm

### Wimbledon Area Forum

at the Wimbledon Community Centre, St George's Road SW19. The key discussion topic for this meeting will be the Local Development Framework - an opportunity for the public to be involved in the council's planning criteria. Chaired by Council Leader Andrew Judge.

Thursday 2nd February 2006, 6.30 - 8.30 pm

### Annual General Meeting, Governing Council meeting, and Keynote Speech

by Stephen Hammond MP.  
Venue Tuition House, St George's Road, SW19 4EU

Thursday 16th February 2006 6.30pm

### Urban Design Forum - Licensing Update

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19. New licensing laws took effect 24th November and many pubs and bars increased their opening hours. A meeting to review the impact of the changes.

Thursday 16th March 2006 6.30pm

### Education - Independent Schools within the State Sector

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 23rd March 2006 7:15pm

**Wimbledon Area Forum** at the Wimbledon Community Centre, St George's Road SW19. Area Forums are organised by Merton Council.

Thursday 20th April 2006 6.30pm

### Transport Forum - What's Happening to the Underground?

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 18th May 2006 6.30pm

### Urban Design Forum - Climate Change

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 15th June 2006 6.30pm

### Health Forum - Hospital Update

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 13th July 2006 6.30pm

### Transport Forum - Open forum

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 21st September 2006 6.30pm

### Urban Design Forum

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 12th October 2006 6.30pm

### Crime Forum

at Tuition House, St George's Road SW19.

Thursday 16th November 2006 6.30pm

### Transport Forum

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Tuesday 12th December 2006 8pm

### Annual General Meeting

at Drake House, St George's Road SW19.

Discussion topics for forum meetings being held from April onwards will be chosen nearer the time to reflect topical issues. See website for the most up to date information.

## Give Blood - Save a Life!

If you have ever considered giving blood there is a blood donor session being held at the Wimbledon Community Centre in St George's Road on Monday 6th February, 9:30am-12noon. To book an appointment call 020 8258 8429. For further information about the National Blood Service logo on to [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk), where you can find out all about blood groups, see a virtual donating session (no blood visible!) and read some stories about people whose lives have been saved with donated blood.

Monday 6th February 2006 9:30am-12noon

### Save a Life Give Blood

at the Wimbledon Community Centre, St George's Road SW19 Call 020 8258 8429 to book an appointment. See [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk) or BBC2 Ceefax page 465



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Wimbledon Civic Forum  
working for a better Wimbledon

### Think piece

Is there an issue that matters to you? Make your own forum by contacting us.

[www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk](http://www.wimbledoncivicforum.org.uk)