



# Merton's Annual Monitoring Report

**2008/2009**



## Region

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## 1 Introduction

**1.1** This is the fifth Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) produced for The London Borough of Merton.

**1.2** The Annual Monitoring Report monitors the financial year 2008-09 - **1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009**. Events that take place outside this time period may be referred to but will be monitored in previous or subsequent reports.

**1.3** The Town and Country Planning Regulation 48 and section 48 and 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act outlines the requirements for an Annual Monitoring Report which must be submitted to the Secretary of State, within nine months of the end of the financial year (i.e by 31st December 2009).

**1.4** The primary purpose of the AMR is to inform the Secretary of State of the Council's progress towards the LDF, which replaces the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The AMR monitors yearly progress review of LDF documents, including whether milestones are being achieved and the reason behind notable successes or difficulties.

**1.5** The AMR must contain a review of the developments that have been permitted or undertaken by the Council during the year to establish how effective the development plan policies have been achieving their objectives and targets.

- **Core Output Indicators** set by the Department for Communities and Local Government in the published Annual Monitoring Report guidance;
- **Contextual Indicators** drawn from a range of sources and strategies;
- **Policy Indicators** designed to measure the council's performance against development plans key policies.

**1.6** Evidence for Contextual Indicators may come from special (independent) studies undertaken at national, regional, and borough levels. These tend to be updated over a longer period.

**1.7** Evidence for policy indicators will be collected and compiled as far as possible on an annual basis.

**1.8** The source of any evidence is highlighted in the AMR.

**1.9** Merton's AMR also provides an annual up to date assessment of the five year future supply of deliverable housing sites in the borough as required by PPS3: Housing, including the revised list of specific deliverable sites.



### 2 Profile

**2.1** The London Borough of Merton is located in the south west of London. Its neighbouring boroughs are Wandsworth, Sutton, Lambeth, Croydon and Kingston. The area covers 37 square kilometres, making it one of the smallest in London. Merton remains one of the greenest boroughs with 677 hectares of green space, the two largest areas being Wimbledon and Mitcham commons. There is 4 hectares of public open space per 1000 population in Merton which is well above the standard of 2.43 hectares set by the National Playing Field Association.

#### National Indicator

NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with local area: 82% of Merton's residents were satisfied or very satisfied

NI 2: % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood: 75% of Merton residents feel they belong to their local neighbourhood.

NI 4: % of people who feel they can influence decision in their locality: 53% of Merton residents feel they can influence decision in their local area.

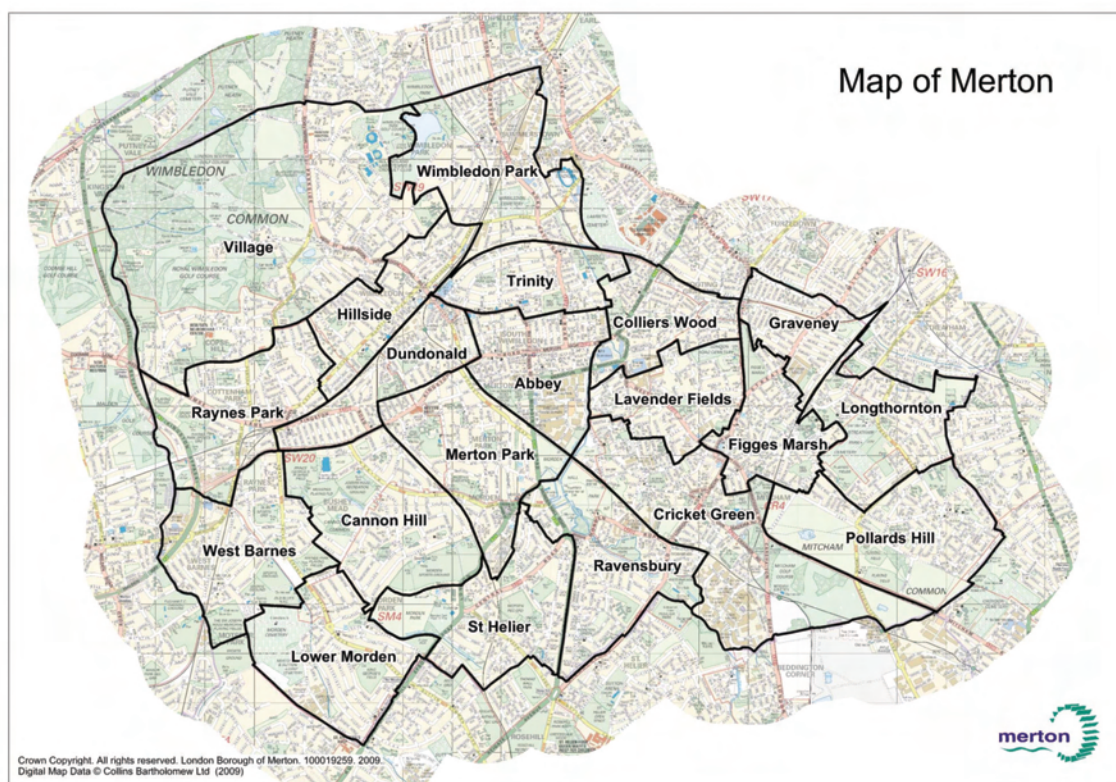
**2.2** Though Merton is located in one of the most economically dynamic and richest regions in Europe, there is a great diversity and significant differences in the composition of communities throughout the borough. Wimbledon, which is situated in the west of the borough, attracts a significant number of visitors and commercial interest, in part due to the global recognition of the Wimbledon 'brand' through the All England Lawn Tennis Championships held annually at the grounds near Wimbledon Park. This contrasts with the eastern part of the borough which has multiple problems related to poor economic prospects, low education attainment, poor health and generally lower incomes.

**2.3** These socio-economic problems are compounded by environmental and infrastructure differences; there is limited access to public transport and open spaces in eastern parts of Merton and the quality of shopping and leisure facilities are also relatively poor compared with western wards. These deprived areas extend into parts of neighbouring boroughs at Croydon, Lambeth and Sutton.

**2.4** While parts of east Merton suffer from pockets of deprivation and poor public realm, a higher proportion of people in western wards attain tertiary education, are employed, and working in higher skilled (and therefore higher earning) professions.

More of the public realm in western parts of Merton is protected by conservation areas due to its historic significance. However, Cricket Green, Mitcham is of significant historic importance.

**2.5** Merton is already working with its partners in government, the private sector and the voluntary sector to address these inequalities, including via initiatives through Merton's Community Plan, and Merton's Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans. Regional actions, such as the opening of the new train station at Mitcham Eastfields and the creation of the Wandle Valley Regional Park, are also signs of progress towards regeneration of the area.



**Map 2.1 Wards in Merton**

## Population

**2.6** The GLA 2008 Mid Year estimate showed Merton's total population as 195,253. By 2031 Merton's population is projected to be 199,066 by 2031. These projections are based on the ONS Mid-Year estimates for 2001 and incorporate annual births and deaths as used in the estimates between mid 2001 and mid 2007. Incorporate in these projections is data from the 2001 Census on migration flow structures. The borough level projections are linked to housing capacity based upon data provided

## 2 Profile

by the boroughs and the 2004 London Housing Capacity Study (LHCS). The projections reflect the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) 2004-based household projections in that the borough trends in marital status and household representative rates have been used to link population change with the planned growth in homes.

**2.7** However, over the past five years birth rates in Merton, and London-wide, have jumped, putting unexpected pressure on early years services. If this spike continues, it may create the need for more school places and eventually more homes and other supporting services to cope with a larger population.

**2.8** Merton's population is fairly youthful with around half in the 15-45 year age group. There is a similar ethnic mix when compared with the rest of outer London: about three quarters of the population are from the White ethnic group, 11% from the Asian ethnic group and 8% from the Black ethnic group.

### Diverse Population

**2.9** Merton is the 23rd most diverse local authority in the UK. Merton's ethnic population is 62% White British and 38% of an ethnic group (including White Irish and White other).

#### National Indicator

NI 1: % people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

85% of Merton residents believed people from different background get on well together. An increase of 4% on the previous year.

Source: Residents Survey 2008/09

**2.10** The table 2.1 shows the distribution of the sixteen groups in Merton and London (Inner and Outer). The figures below are the updated results for London and makes comparison with the estimate for mid 2001. These estimates are still described by ONS (Office of National Statistics) as 'experimental statistics' meaning that they do not meet rigorous quality criteria to be labelled as 'national statistics'. However, they are constant with the ONS Mid-Year population estimates by age and gender and have now been issued for each year back to mid 2001. It should be noted that in May 2010 ONSD will be revising all estimates between mid 2002 and mid 2008. The ethnic group estimates will be revised later in 2010.

**2.11** London is estimated to see reduction of White Irish (42,000), Black or Black British: Caribbean (27,000) and White British (2,000) based on changes 2001 to 2007. Both the White Irish and White British have been declining in England and London since 2001. White British decline is down 1.9% while the White Irish decline is more rapid in London (0.7% compared to 0.2%).

**2.12** Merton's ethnic group population estimate based on changes between 2001 and 2007 shows the largest decrease in the White British group (2,300). This is the current overall trend in outer boroughs, while the overall trend for inner London boroughs show an increase for this group. Also following the London trend is the White Irish ethnic group with a small decrease (900) this pattern can be more notably seen in Brent, Ealing and Islington boroughs.

**2.13** The next ethnic decrease is in the Asian or Asian British: Other group and the Black or Black British: Caribbean Group with a decrease of 100. When these two groups are compared to the rest of London it shows that Merton is bucking the Outer London wide trend of small gains or notable increases.

**2.14** The fastest growing ethnic group since 2001 is the White Other which includes the EU accession countries in Eastern Europe, collectively known as A8 and A2. The growth in this group is similar in both London and England, 0.5% in London compared to 0.8% in England.

**2.15** The largest ethnic group increase appears in Merton is the White: Other group with 5,000. This ethnic growth is identical to the London wide population growth of widespread increases of 57,000 compared to 434,000 in England. Merton Southwark and Tower Hamlet have the most notably growth for this group.

Ethnic Group	Merton	Inner London	Outer London	London
White British	119.8	1563.5	2798.3	4361.8
White Irish	4.6	75.3	106.0	181.3
White other	20.6	357.4	316.6	674.3
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	1.8	35.4	41.0	76.3
Mixed: White and Black African	0.9	19.5	21.6	41.1
Mixed: White and Asian	2.3	30.8	44.5	75.3
Mixed Other	1.7	34.4	39.2	73.5
Asian or Asian British:Indian	9.6	119.6	382.0	501.6
Asian or Asian British:Pakistani	5.4	57.2	121.9	179.1
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	2.0	134.1	40.8	174.1
Asian or Asian British: Other	6.6	43.3	109.3	152.5

Ethnic Group	Merton	Inner London	Outer London	London
Black or Black British: Caribbean	6.9	165.1	156.2	321.3
Black or Black British; African	8.0	205.9	211.8	417.7
Black or Black British: Other Black	1.3	34.5	28.9	63.3
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group Chinese	3.0	59.6	55.1	114.8
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Other	4.7	64.5	83.5	148.0

**Table 2.1 Ethnic Group Population Estimates for Merton and London: 2007**

Source: GLA and ONS Mid Year 2007 Ethnic Group Population Estimates



## 2 Profile

### Poverty

**2.16** Whilst Merton is perceived as an affluent London borough there is number of pockets of deprivation within the borough. These pockets are mainly in the eastern wards (Cricket Green, Lavender, Graveney and Ravensbury) and some smaller pockets in the western wards (Trinity, Abbey, Hillside). These wards have multiple deprivation having high scores on income deprivation, unemployment and lack of education attainment.

**2.17** According to the Indices of Deprivation 2007, Merton is ranked 222nd most deprived local authority in the country (out of 354) local authorities, 6th least deprived authority in London (out of 33). In terms of income deprivation, it is the 11th most income deprived outer London borough (out of 20). However, this masks the widespread disadvantages and pockets of deprivation within the borough, and polarisation between the most deprived wards in the east of the borough (Mitcham areas) and the more affluent west wards in the borough (Wimbledon area).

#### National Indicator

NI 116: Proportion of children in poverty: Target PSA9: 09/10 17.5%

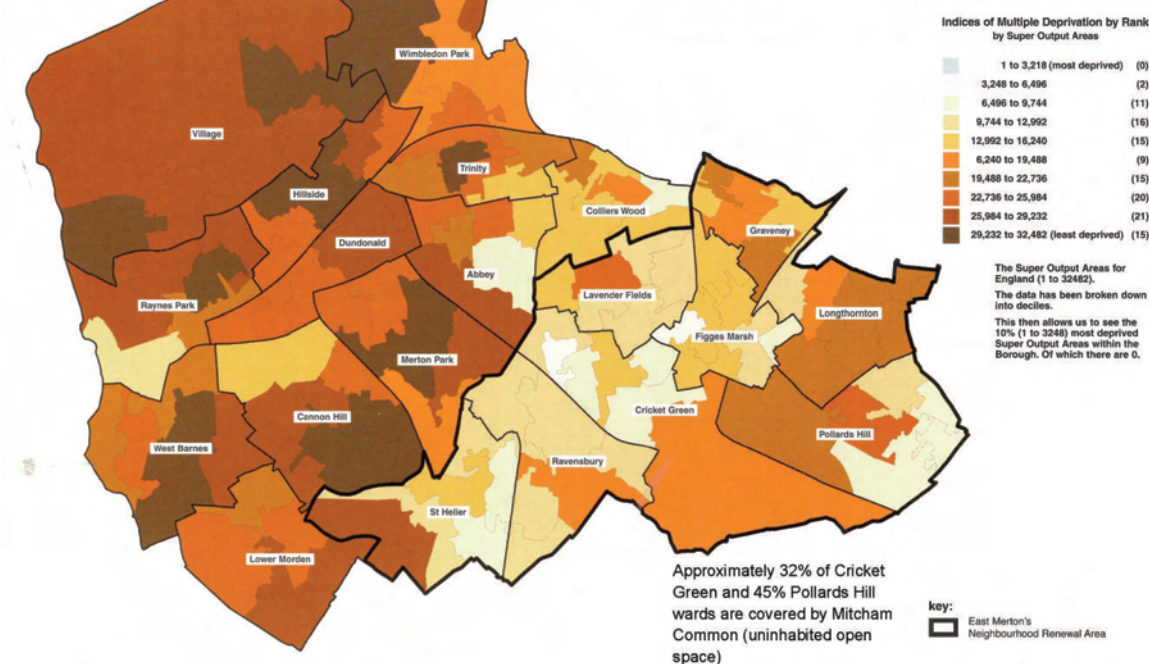
South West London Borough	Change in IMD ranking	Overall IMD 2007 (Where 1 is the most deprived and 345 is the least deprived)
Croydon	-15	125
Kingston Upon Thames	-21	245
<b>Merton</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>222</b>
Richmond Upon Thames	+8	309
Sutton	-2	234
Wandsworth	+16	144

**Table 2.2 IMD 2007 Ranks**

Source: CLG (Community and Local Government) 2007

Approximately 40% of the Village ward is covered Wimbledon Common (uninhabited open space)

### The East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area Showing the relative Multiple Deprivation of Super Output Areas for the London Borough of Merton (Indices of Deprivation 2004)



Reproduced from an Ordnance Survey map with permission of the controller of HMSO. © Crown Copyright London Borough of Merton 100019259

**Map 2.2 The East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area**

Source: Merton's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2005-10

**2.18** Within Merton there are large disparities in the distribution of income within the borough. In general the west of the borough is more affluent especially Wimbledon Park, Village, and Hillside wards. These wards have a median income range of £42k - £47k. The wards on the east of the borough contain higher levels of deprivation: Figges Marsh, Pollards Hill, St. Helier, and Cricket Green all have median income ranges between £24k- £27k (Paycheck,2007).

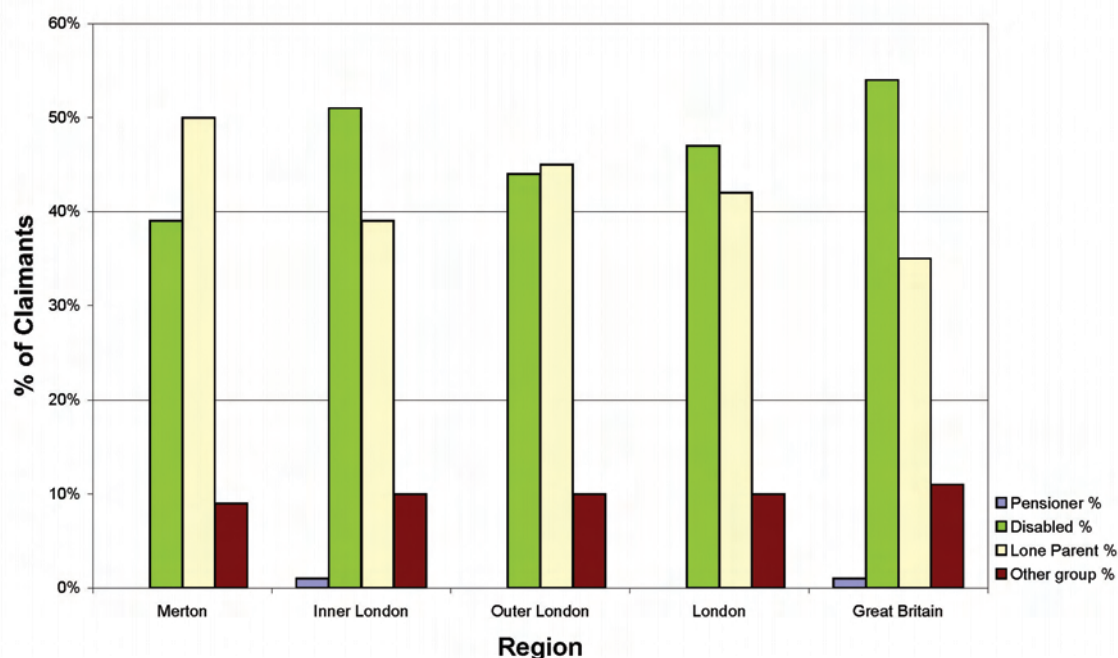
## 2 Profile

Borough	Claimants	Claimants Rate (%) <sup>1</sup>	Rank of rate out of English LA's
Merton	5500	4.3%	197
Inner London	181,280	8.6%	N/A
Outer London	183,930	6.4%	N/A
London	365,210	7.3%	N/A
Great Britain <sup>2</sup>	2,114,900	6.0%	N/A

**Table 2.3 Income Support Claimants rates and borough rankings August 2008**

- <sup>1</sup> Rates are calculated as a percentage of 2006 based GLA projections for 2008
- <sup>2</sup> Rates are calculated as a percentage of ONS 2008 population projection based on 2006 Mid year estimates

Source: DWP information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study



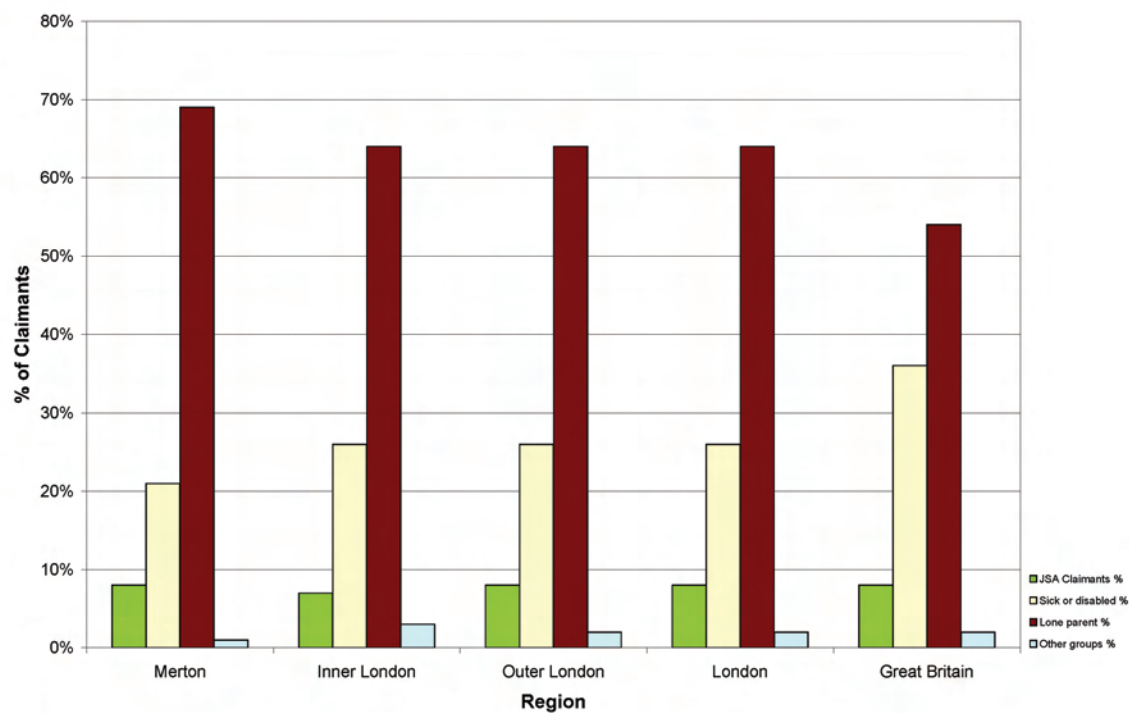
**Figure 2.1 Income Support Claimants by Type**

Source: Focus on London, 2009 Edition

**2.19** Child poverty is one of the key indicators of overall poverty as low income in childhood increases the likelihood of poor educational attainment, poor health care and low pay. The risk of poverty in adulthood therefore is greater for those who were poor in childhood being twice as high as those who were not.

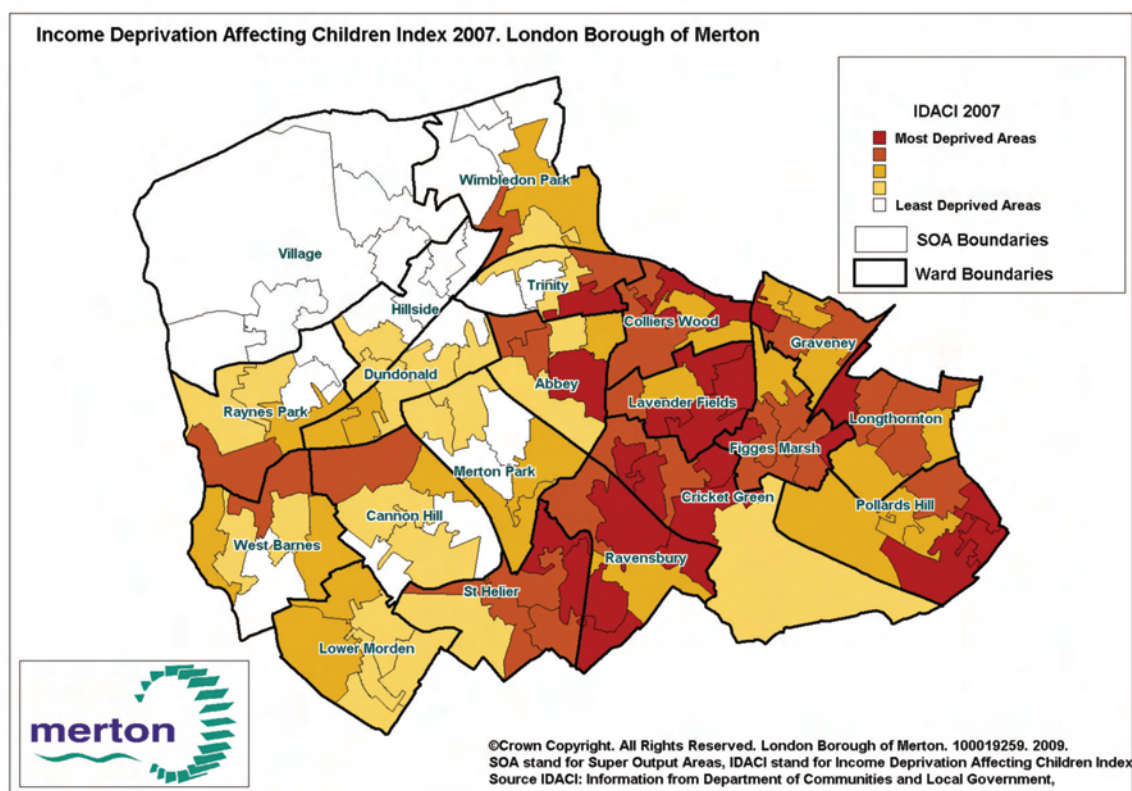
**2.20** Merton has a high percentage of lone parent with income support in the borough, above the London and national average during 2007.

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**Figure 2.2 Children in families dependent on benefits**

Source: Focus on London, 2009 Edition

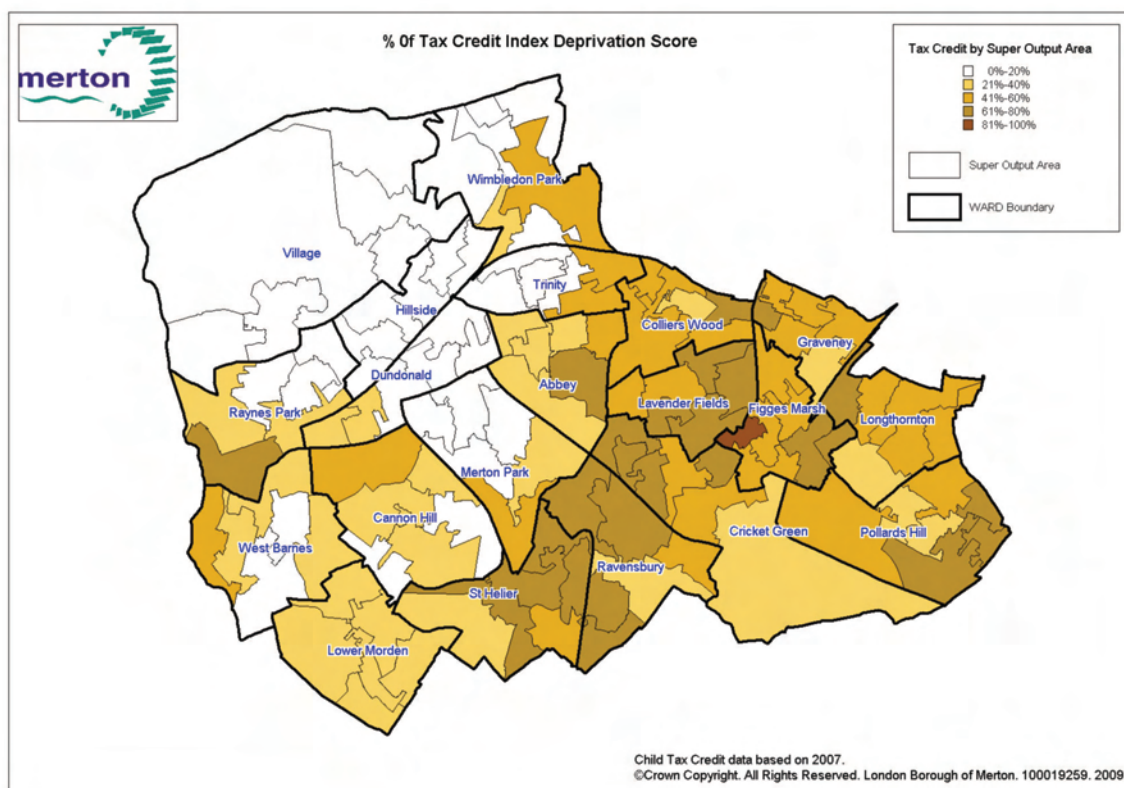


**Map 2.3 Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index 2007 in Merton**

Source: IDACI, Department of Communities and Local Government



## 2 Profile



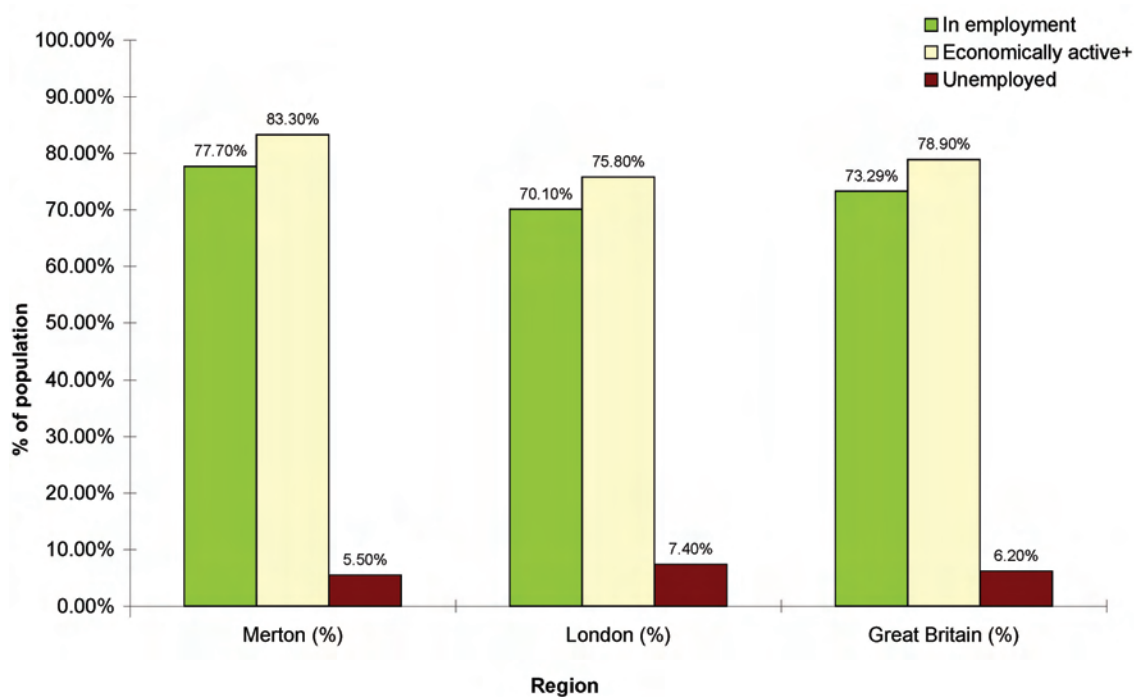
**Map 2.4 % Of Tax Credit Index Deprivation Score**

Source: IDACI, Department of Communities and Local Government

### Labour Force

**2.21** Commuting patterns suggest a net outflow of 28,000 commuters from Merton, however almost half of all people working in the borough also live there. There are comparatively low levels of self-employment in Merton (Merton Employment Land Study 2005).

**2.22** When comparing employment by sector, wards in Wimbledon (constituency boundary) contain a higher proportion of people employed in managerial, professional and associate roles, compared to wards in the Mitcham and Morden constituency which have a higher proportion of the population employed in skilled trades, customer service and plant and machinery jobs (Source: Annual Population Survey via Nomis 2006).



**Figure 2.3 Employment and Unemployment**

Source: ONS annual population survey

	Merton (Numbers)	Merton (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
<b>All people</b>				
Economically active <sup>+</sup>	117,900	83.3%	75.8%	78.9%
In employment <sup>+</sup>	110,200	77.7%	70.1%	73.29%
Employees <sup>+</sup>	90,700	64.3%	59.1%	64.4%
Self employed <sup>+</sup>	18,700	13.0%	10.6%	9.1%
Unemployed*	6,400	5.5%	7.4%	6.2%
<b>Males</b>				
Economically active <sup>+</sup>	66,200	91.0%	83.0%	83.4%

## 2 Profile

	Merton (Numbers)	Merton (%)	London (%)	Great Britain (%)
<b>All people</b>				
In employment <sup>+</sup>	63,100	86.8%	76.9%	77.7%
Employees <sup>+</sup>	49,100	67.6%	61.8%	64.5%
Self employed <sup>+</sup>	13,500	18.3%	14.7%	12.7%
Unemployed*	3,100	4.6%	7.2%	6.7%
<b>Females</b>				
Economically active <sup>+</sup>	51,700	75.0%	68.1%	74.1%
In employment <sup>+</sup>	47,000	67.9%	62.8%	69.8%
Employees <sup>+</sup>	41,600	60.6%	56.2%	64.2%
Self employed <sup>+</sup>	5,200	7.3%	6.1%	5.2%
Unemployed*	4,700	9.0%	7.5%	5.6%

**Table 2.4 Employment and unemployment (Apr 2008- March 2009 )**

- # Sample size too small for reliable estimate
- + numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % for those of working age (16-59/64)
- \* number and % are those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically active

Source: ONS annual population survey

Type	Merton	London	Great Britain
Unfilled job centre vacancies (numbers)	275	19,054	205,457
Unfilled job centre vacancies per 10,000 working age population	20	38	56

Type	Merton	London	Great Britain
JSA claimants per unfilled job centre vacancy	14.3	11.5	7.4

**Table 2.5 Jobcentre Plus vacancies (July 2009).**

Source Jobcentre Plus vacancies, summary analysis

## Health

**2.23** Merton is ranked 5th of 32 boroughs in London on all age all cause mortality which is significantly lower than the national average and is well below the London average. It is important to note, however, that within the borough there are variations in standards of health linked to the way people live their lives and the opportunities available to choose healthier lifestyles in their communities. In Merton 13.77% of the population has a long term limiting illness, the sixth lowest percentage in London.

**2.24** Male life expectancy is 79 years, while female life expectancy is 83.1 years (2006), the sixth highest in London. These figures drop significantly in some wards in the east of the borough, for example Figge's Marsh, where male life expectancy is only 72.7 years (2005).

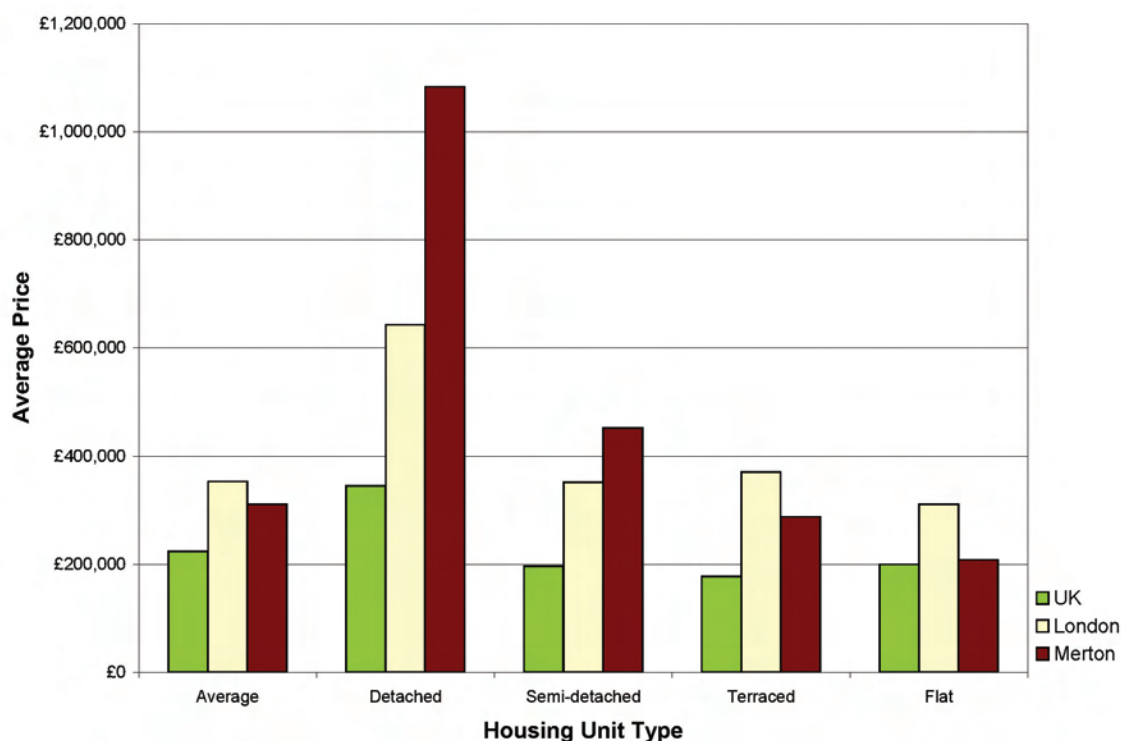
**2.25** The infant mortality rate is 5.3 per 1,000 live births (2006), the twelfth highest in London. The Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) for the borough is 88.2 (2002-2006), indicating that the borough has lower than average mortality, compared to the rest of England. However, seven of the borough's wards have higher than average SMRs of over 100 (Cricket Green, Colliers Wood, Figge's Marsh, Lavender Fields, Longthornton, Ravensbury and St Helier), and all seven are located in the east of the borough (2002-2006).

**2.26** All work carried out in Merton needs to be directed towards reducing health inequalities and wards of deprivation. Merton is making inroads in this regard with the Sustainable Community Strategy (Community Plan) 2009-2019 and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (Creating Sustainable Communities in East of Merton). Partnerships with health providers like the Primary Care Trust aim to reduce health inequalities and place more emphasis on prevention, patient choice and offering personal service in Merton.

## 2 Profile

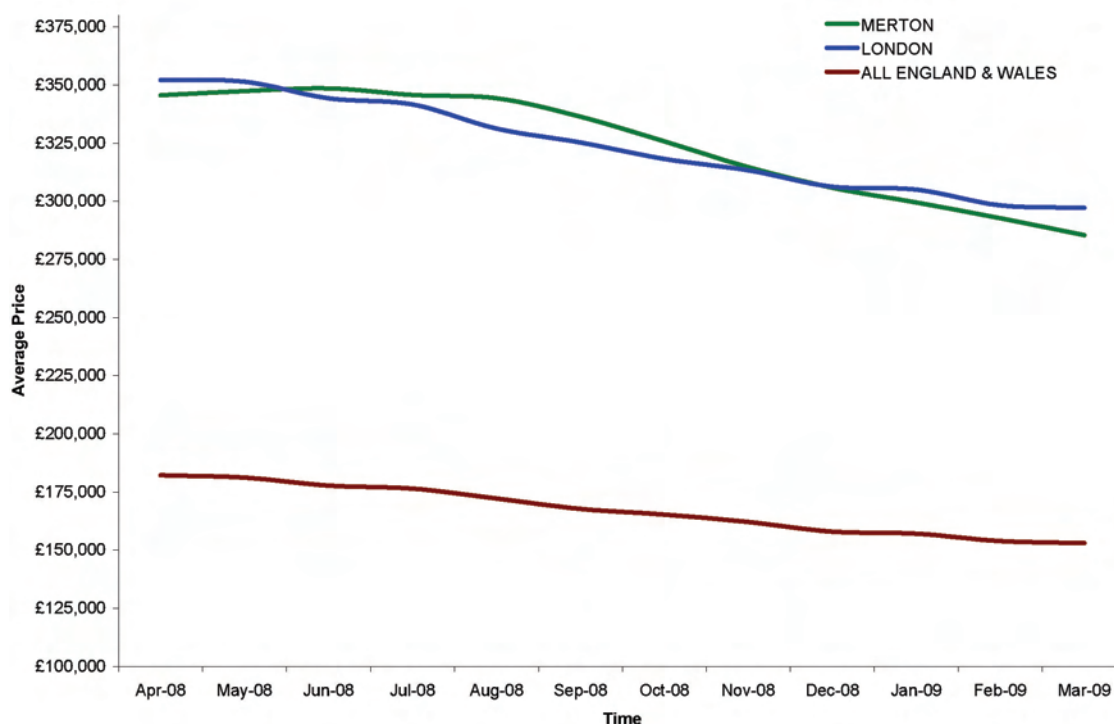
### Housing

**2.27** The average house price in Merton during 2008/09 was £311,082 which represents a decrease of 19.3% on the previous year. Despite the current economic climate detached and semi detached homes still remain above the UK and London average. However, these borough wide figures hide a large contrast between house price in most western wards and eastern wards where prices are significantly lower.



**Figure 2.4 House Price by Type**

Source: Land Registry of England and Wales Crown Copyright 2009



**Figure 2.5 Average House Price 2008/09**

Source: CYMRAEG Land Registry – House Price Index Custom Report (Accessed 25 November 2009)

	Average	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat
UK	£224,064	£344,989	£196,506	£177,633	£199,699
London	£353,355	£642,300	£351,599	£370,871	£311,080
Merton	£311,082	£1,083,000	£452,153	£287,918	£208,208

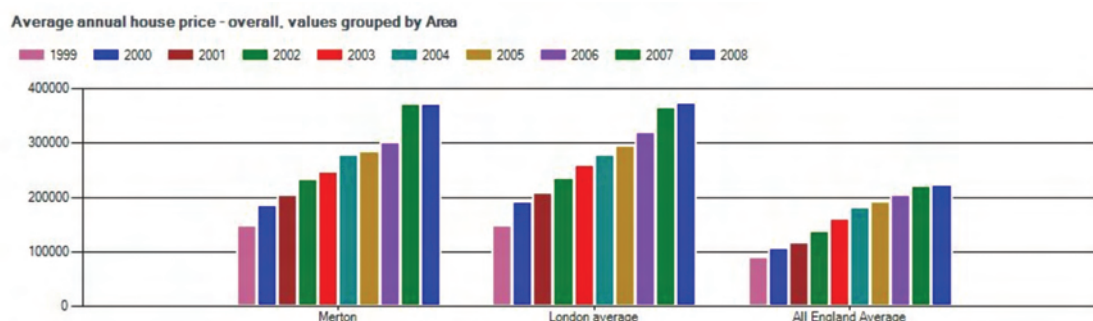
**Table 2.6 Average House Prices by Type**

Source: Land Registry of England and Wales Crown Copyright 2009

The figure 2.6 below shows the average annual grouped house price Merton from 1999 to 2008 compared to the London and national average. House prices in Merton tend to be above the London and national average. However, these borough wide figures hide a large contrast between house price in most western wards and eastern wards where prices are significantly lower.



## 2 Profile



**Figure 2.6 Average annual house price - overall, value grouped by area**

Source: Land Registry of England and Wales Crown Copyright 2009

### Education and Skills

**2.28** Merton has 43 primary schools with a nursery attached to each, 8 secondary schools including 2 academies, and 3 special needs schools. The growth in demand for primary schools in the borough has reduced the previous surplus in the east and has required expansion to the west. These expansions are expected throughout the borough in the future years with total primary numbers forecast to increase from 12,808 in January 2008 to 14,469 by January 2013.

Phase of school	2006	2007	2008	2009
Primary	14972	15078	15315	15663
Secondary	8624	7183	6968	6877
Special	243	240	229	243
PRU	64	55	59	49
<b>Merton Total</b>	<b>23903</b>	<b>22556</b>	<b>22571</b>	<b>22832</b>

**Table 2.7 Pupils Rolls in Merton 2006 - 2009**

Source: LB Merton School Census 2008/09

**2.29** The establishment of 2 Academies in Merton in September 2007, replacing Mitcham Vale and Tamworth Manor high Schools reduced the number of maintained secondary schools; this can be seen in the large reduction of secondary roll number in 2007. In 2009, to meet the increased demand for school places, additional reception classes have been created in schools across the borough thus increasing the primary roll numbers. Therefore more school places will be needed in 2010-2012.

## Crime

**2.30** Merton is a borough where not only has crime fallen and the perception of personal safety increased, but also as a place, where all citizens share a greater sense of belonging. Merton is fourth safest borough in London which is a tribute to the excellent partnerships between the council, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), Safer Merton Partnership and the community. The recent introduction of neighbourhood policing teams, working closely with partner agencies under the direction of local communities is already helping to make people feel safer.

**2.31** However, the latest figures from the MPS shows that crime rate in Merton increased by 1.45% period up to July 2009. Findings of the Annual Residents survey 2008 found that 59% of Merton's residents were very or fairly worried about crime overall. There is still a perception by residents that the crime rate in Merton is very high.

Offences	12 months to July 2008		12 months to July 2009	
	Merton	Met London Total	Merton	Met London Total
Total crime	14,930	855,907	15,151	842,484
Homicide	5	165	1	128
Violence against the person (total)	3,672	174,739	3,675	173,775
Rape	53	2,088	39	2,242
Other sexual	165	6,884	154	6,595
Robbery total	532	34,528	543	32,868
Robbery (person)	431	31,264	479	29,571
Robbery (business)	101	3,264	64	3,297
Burglary (total)	1,597	92,774	2,004	95,969
Burglary Residential	941	59,514	1,175	61,038
Burglary non residential	656	33,260	869	34,931
Gun enabled crime	58	2,825	71	3,160

## 2 Profile

	12 months to July 2008		12 months to July 2009	
Offences	Merton	Met London Total	Merton	Met London Total
Motor vehicle	1,661	116,148	1,688	105,531
Domestic crime	1,207	51,558	1,285	53,477
Racist crime	235	9,158	168	9,059
Homophobic crime	12	1,019	11	1,118

**Table 2.8 Crime figures for Merton 2008 - 2009**

Source: Metropolitan Police Service 2009

### Fire Service

**2.32** The London Fire Brigade Borough Manager is responsible for the delivery of all fire service activities to the people of Merton. In setting the strategy for the borough the Borough Manager takes into account local needs as well as organisational and national requirements. The Manager's aim is to reduce the number of fires and fire service related calls, such as road traffic accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials, in the borough. In order to achieve this the Manager ensures the fire service works in partnership both with colleagues in the Safer Merton group and with volunteer organisations, the public and private sector. They are also ensuring that appropriate fire service resources are targeted where they are most needed.

**2.33** There are three fire stations in Merton; Mitcham, New Malden and Wimbledon. However, station grounds are not consistent with borough boundaries as they may include parts of a neighbouring borough and appliances from that station would be mobilised to adjoining borough.

**2.34** During 2008/09 in Merton there were 1,968 Emergency incidents attended by the Fire Service. Of those, 240 were primary fires, 255 Secondary, 137 Deliberate fires and 90 Non-domestic.

### The London Ambulance service

**2.35** Of the 70 ambulance stations operating in London, Merton is served by one in Nursery Road, whilst Wimbledon houses a vehicle workshop and administration facilities. Other local stations are located on the boarder of Kingston -Upon-Thames (New Malden) and Sutton (St. Helier).

## Transport and travel

**2.36** According the Traffic Monitoring Report 2008, the car still remains the dominant mode of transport accounting for 56% of all trips (drivers and passengers) up 3% in previous year. The proportion of bus journeys has decreased from 2007 (to 35% from 39%) while the percentage by motorcycle and bicycle has remained the same at 1%.

**2.37** Due to the borough's location between inner and outer London, the borough's roads often have to deal with a large amount of through traffic, as well as local access demands. A key priority for Merton, therefore, is to enhance the management of available road space, to address conflicting demands upon it.

**2.38** During 2008 45% of travel in Merton was conducted by a sustainable modes which represents a decrease of 4% on 2007.

Mode	2006		2007		2008	
	Actual	%	Actual	%	Actual	%
Sustainable mode	47109	39%	65528	49%	53156	45%

**Table 2.9 Transport by Mode in Merton**

Source: Traffic Monitoring Report 2008

# 3 Business Development and Employment

## 3 Business Development and Employment

**3.1** In Merton, 85% of businesses are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs - employing 10 people or less) with more than 95% employing fewer than 50 people. A lack of suitable affordable space for SMEs and start-ups is a problem in Merton especially in the eastern part of the borough.

**3.2** Employment in Merton is not confined to the traditional areas of retail, offices, factories and warehouses. About half of Merton residents commute out of the borough to work in central London and surrounding boroughs of Croydon, Kingston, Sutton and Wandsworth. The public sector, including health care and education is a major employer in Merton, for example St George's and St. Helier Hospitals.

**3.3** The relationship between a number of jobs and employment floorspace is not straightforward and is becoming harder to quantify with changing work practises and technology. A decline in manufacturing in London is leading to a permanent reduction in demand for industrial premises, as growth such as waste management, recycling, construction, printing and publishing and logistics are utilising such sites.

**3.4** The London Plan and its associated supplementary planning guidance on industrial capacity (2008) emphasises the importance of identifying and protecting employment sites in appropriate areas to meet the needs of business, industry and warehousing.

**3.5** Merton is identified as having low levels of industrial land relative to demand and should adopt a more restrictive approach to the transfer of industrial site to other uses. This restrictive approach is supported by Merton's Employment Land Study.

**3.6** Promoting a strong and competitive local economy is one of Merton council's core ambitions and is especially relevant in the current economic climate. Merton and its partners are taking forward a number of initiatives in order to achieve this aim.

**3.7** Merton is part of the Wandle Valley corridor identified as a growth area of national importance connecting Wandsworth-Croydon- Gatwick - Brighton. Within the south west London part of this economic corridor, the London Plan sees the most significant economic growth taking place in major town centres (in the case of Merton that is Wimbledon), Area of Opportunity (none in Merton), Areas of Intensification (South Wimbledon/Colliers Wood), and Strategic Industrial Locations (Willow Lane, Beddington and Hallowfield Way; Morden Road Factory Estate and Prince George's Road; North Wimbledon; Beverly Way Industrial area).

## Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objective)

#### *Draft Core Strategy Objectives*

To make Merton more prosperous with strong, and diverse long term economic growth

## Strategic Objective Target (draft)

### Economic Development:

Number net loss employment land for which there is demand.

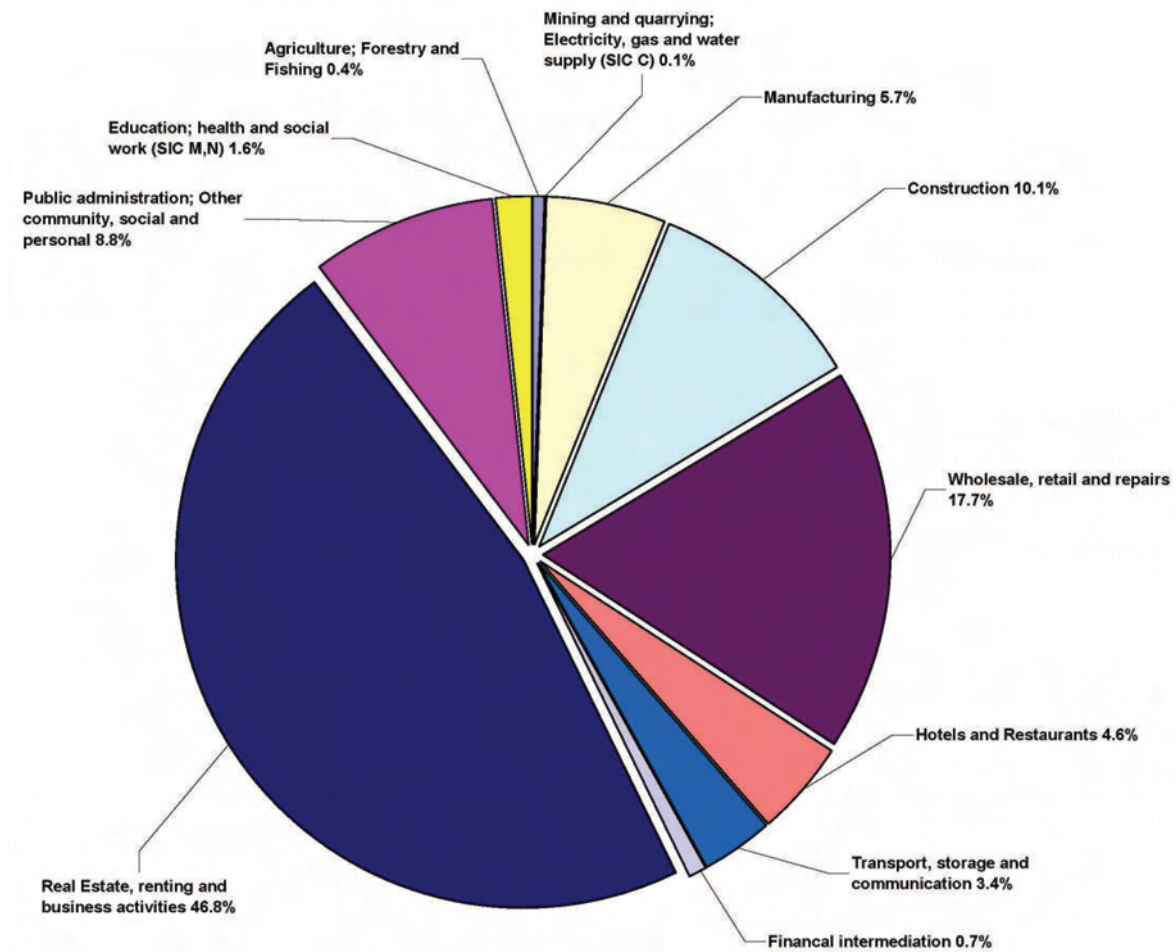
## Employment Rates

**3.8** There are different forecast for future job creation and business growth in Merton. Recent research carried out by the GLA predicted 0% employment growth in the short term and an increase of 0.05% in the long term. The borough wide forecast disguises employment patterns across different employment sectors, and changes in employment rates within different parts of the borough.

**3.9** In order to ascertain if Merton is maintaining a diverse employment base, the figure below shows that the five largest business sectors in Merton (real estate and business, wholesale / retail, construction and public administration) make up 83% of Merton's economic base.



### 3 Business Development and Employment



**Figure 3.1 Number of VAT registered enterprises in Merton,2007**

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved (from Nomis on 30 September 2009)

In comparison to the vat registration/ de-registrations by industry recorded from 2007 in last years annual monitoring report, there is a 1% increase in the real estate and business sector, 2% decrease in the wholesale/retail sector and a 2% in the construction sector.

However it should be noted, that these most up-to-date figures were recorded at the time that we now know to be the peak of the market, therefore this information should be treated with caution as it is not an accurate reflection of the total number of jobs or employment opportunities currently available in the borough.

## Core Output Indicator

### BD1: Total amount of additional employment floor space by type

To show the amount and type of completed employment floor space (gross and net)

	Use Class	Completed - gross (m <sup>2</sup> )	Completed - net (m <sup>2</sup> )
Core Output Indicator BD1	B1a	842	-526
	B1b	622	622
	B1c	623	-521
	B2	0	-23,518
	B8	1,246	-1,084

**Table 3.1 Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type**

Source: London Development Database 2009

**3.10** Last year's annual monitoring showed that 16,902m<sup>2</sup> gross employment floorspace was completed in the borough, although the actual net employment floorspace completed resulted in a loss of 19,056m<sup>2</sup>. In Merton during 2008/09, 3,333m<sup>2</sup> gross employment floorspace was completed ( granted planning permission), However when considering all development in the borough, this resulted in a loss of 25,027m<sup>2</sup> employment floorspace during 2008/09.

**3.11** In comparison to the annual monitoring year 2007/08, there is a significant decrease in both the amount of gross and net employment floorspace completed. This could be accredited to the onset of the recession.

Table 3.2 below provides further detail on applications completed for change of use on former/existing employment sites in the annual monitoring year 2008/09. This table lists the planning applications and the corresponding loss of employment floorspace in Merton. Table 3.2 includes premises that were formerly operating in B1 use.

### 3 Business Development and Employment

Year Completed	Application Number	Floorspace lost (m2) (Use Class Lost)	Use Class to
2008/09	03/P1075	19,135 (B2)	B1/C3
2008/09	03/P2124	2,197 (B8)	C3
2008/09	04/P0230	50 (B1)	B1/C3
2008/09	04/P1208	48 (B1a)	C3
2008/09	04/P2767	1,320 (B1a)	C3
2008/09	05/P0580	1,144 (B1c)	B1/C3
2008/09	05/P1579	73 (B8)	C3
2008/09	05/P1602	1,890 (B2)	B1/C3
2008/09	06/P0241	70 (B1)	C3
2008/09	06/P0323	60 (B8)	C3
2008/09	06/P0507	74 (B1)	C3
2008/09	06/P2204	138 (B1)	B1/C3
2008/09	06/P2787	2,491 (B2)	B1/B2/B8
2008/09	07/P2668	120 (B1)	A1/C3
<b>Total Floorspace Lost to Non Employment Uses in 2008/09</b>			<b>2.881 ha</b>

**Table 3.2 Completed applications on former/ existing employment sites for change of use 2008/09**

Source: London Development Database 2009

**3.12** In 2007/08 most of the employment sites lost to other uses included residential and community uses. In 2008/09 we see a continuation of the loss of the majority of sites for residential uses and mixed use schemes.

**3.13** There has been a slight increase in the total amount of floorspace lost, from 2.47ha in 2007/08 to 2.83ha in 2008/09 (excluding those premises operating in B1 use).

### Core Output Indicator

#### BD2: Total amount of employment floor space on previously developed land - by type

To show the amount and type of completed employment floor space (gross) coming forward on previously developed land (PDL)

	Use Class	Completed-gross(m <sup>2</sup> )	Site coming forwarded on PDL
Core Output Indicator BD2	B1a	842m <sup>2</sup>	100%
	B1b	622m <sup>2</sup>	100%
	B1c	623 <sup>2</sup>	100%
	B2	0m <sup>2</sup>	N/A
	B8	1,246m <sup>2</sup>	100%

**Table 3.3 Total amount of employment floor space on previously developed land by type**

Source: London Development Database 2009

**3.14** In Merton during the annual monitoring period, all of the 3,333m<sup>2</sup> gross employment floorspace was built on previously developed sites.

**3.15** Table 3.5 below provides further detail on the gross employment floorspace gain that came forward on previously developed sites in 2008/09. This table also includes the completed floorspace operating in B1 use.

Year Completed	Application Number	Amount Gained (m <sup>2</sup> ) (Use Class Gained)	Use Class
2008/09	03/P2846	163	B1/C3
2008/09	04/P0230	95	B1/C3

### 3 Business Development and Employment

Year Completed	Application Number	Amount Gained (m2) (Use Class Gained)	Use Class
2008/09	04/P2349	50	B1/C3
2008/09	05/P0007	87	B1
2008/09	05/P0462	73	B1/A1/A2/D1/D2
2008/09	05/P1579	150	B1/A1/C3
2008/09	05/P1602	612	B1/A3/C3
2008/09	05/P2442	154	A1/A2/A3/A4/A5/B1/C3
2008/09	06/P0453	709	B1a/C3
2008/09	06/P2204	133	B1a/C3
2008/09	06/P2787	1,245 (2,491)	B1b/ B1c/ B2

**Table 3.4 Completed applications for the amount of employment land gained in 2008/09**

Source: London Development Database 2009

**3.16** In 2008/09 the majority, at least 81%, of gross employment floorspace was gained on mixed use schemes (employment floorspace was provided as part of the development). Significantly 64% of schemes came forward as mixed use residential and employment schemes and only one scheme came forward as an employment site.

**3.17** Table 3.4 shows that there is continuous gain in terms of employment land developed for B1a/ B1b and C uses and decline of B2 and B8 use, which confirms a shift in terms of employment sectors in Merton and the types of uses that are required.

#### Core Output Indicator

##### BD3: Employment land available by type

To show the amount and type of employment land available

	Use Class	Total Identified	Major Scattered Site (Ha)	Other: Completions 2008/09 (Ha)
<b>Core Output Indicator BD3</b>	B1, B2 & B8	158.38	13.55	0.1152

**Table 3.5 Employment land available by type**

Source: Merton Employment Land Study 2005, London Development Database 2009, and the Merton Commercial/Business Monitoring Database

**3.18** Table 3.5 demonstrates that Merton has 158.38 hectares of designated employment land, which means identified and protected by development plan documents. In addition, Merton has 24 major scattered employment sites which consist primarily of office premises or light industrial uses.

**3.19** During the 2008-2009 monitoring period, 0.1152 hectares of land was completed for employment use which was situated outside of known scattered and identified sites. It is important to note, however, that there was a total loss of employment land during that same period of 1.34 hectares. The majority of employment land lost was attributed to class B1(a) - Office and situated outside of identified and scattered sites.

### 4 Town Centres

**4.1** Centres in Merton play a vital role in supporting sustainable neighbourhoods providing retail goods and services to the local community as well as attracting visitors from outside the borough wide catchment area. The London Borough of Merton's retail centre hierarchy comprises of Wimbledon (Major Town Centre), Mitcham and Morden (both are District Town Centres), Colliers Wood (Urban Centre) and a range of local centres and neighbourhood parades located throughout the borough.

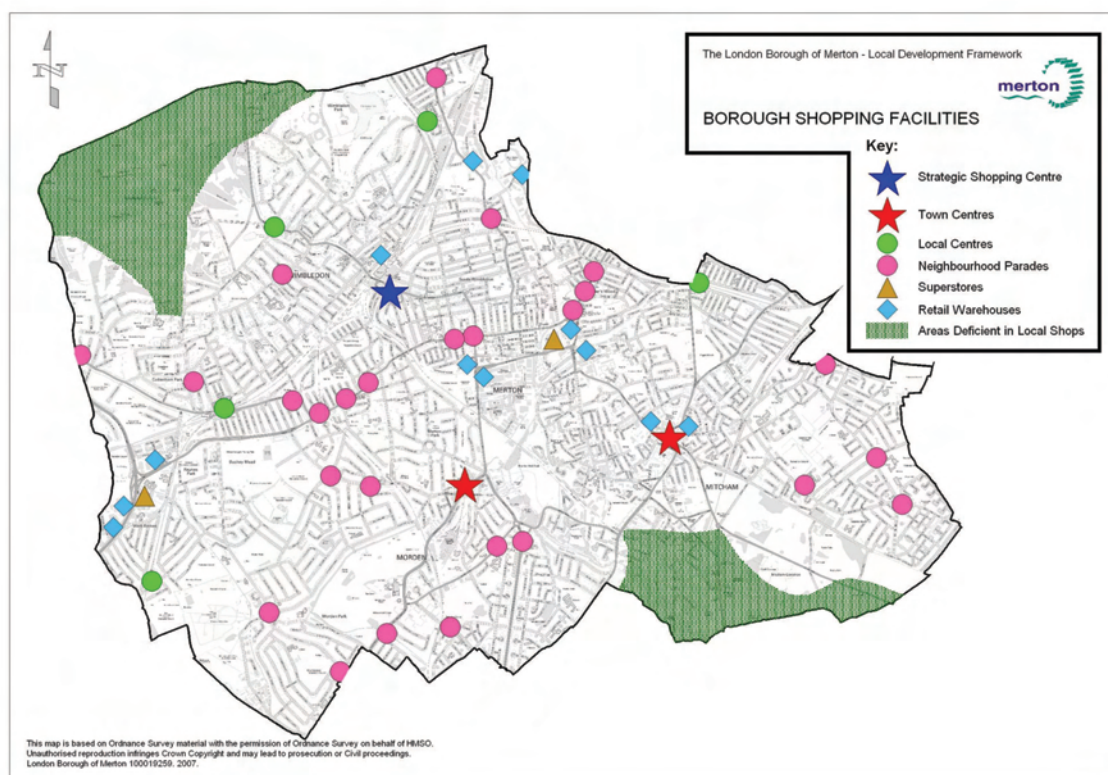
**4.2** Nathaniel, Litchfield and Partners (NLP) completed the Town Centre Study 2005 and the 2008 update for the LB Merton. These studies showed that there was considerable demand for new facilities in all Merton town centres, including both convenience and comparison retail.

**4.3** The research informing the Town Centre Study 2008 update was carried out at what we now know to be the peak of the market, and the forecasts for future comparison and convenience retail were based on the continuation of existing shopping patterns. The Mayor of London commissioned Experian to carry out a report into consumer expenditure and comparison goods floorspace need in London, which was first published in 2008.

**4.4** The GLA Consumer Expenditure and Comparison Goods Floorspace Need in London (March 2009), which took into consideration demographic change, clarified that spending on convenience retail goods in Merton would increase by approximately 19% over the 20 year period between 2006 and 2026, whereas spending on comparison goods is expected almost to double during the same period.

**4.5** Merton's economy is in a state of uncertain transition due the current global recession therefore, it is difficult to predict the extent of the changes on the structure of the local economy. The LDF will contain a range of policies that will aim to strengthen and support the local economy in-corporation with partners in order to improve the skills and abilities of Merton's residents. In addition, the Merton Economic Development Strategy will identify core sectors and strategies for supporting and improving the operational and environment quality of the borough stock of business premises.





**Map 4.1 Town centres in Merton**

New LDF Designation	Town Centre
Major Centre: Providing a range of facilities serving a wide catchment area	Wimbledon
District; Providing shopping and services for local neighbourhoods	Mitcham Morden Collier Wood ( <i>seeking designation</i> )
Local Centre: Shops and service for day to day needs	Arthur Road Motspur Park North Mitcham Raynes Park

## 4 Town Centres

New LDF Designation	Town Centre
	Wimbledon Village
Neighbourhood Parades: Convenience shopping and other services	Various

**Table 4.1 LDF Centres Designation**

### 4.6

#### Strategic Objective Target (draft)

Centres: More than 50% of A1 and A2 uses to be sited in Major or District Town Centre of Wimbledon, Mitcham or Morden. Remaining developments (to make a total of 100%) should be located in Local Centres or Neighbourhood Parades.

**4.7** Merton is currently meeting the Draft Strategic Objective Target that more than 50% of A1 and A2 uses to be sited in Major or District Town Centre of Wimbledon, Mitcham or Morden.

Uses	Number of Units in the Major/ District Town Centres	Total Number of Units in the Major/ District Town Centres	% of Units in the Major/ District Town Centres	% Strategic Objective
A1	322	993	32.4%	50%
A2	99	267	31.8%	

**Table 4.2 Number of A1/A2 Units in the Major or District of Wimbledon, Mitcham or Morden**

**Source:** London Development Database 2009

**4.8** Table 4.2 shows that at least 64.2% of retail units operating in A1 and A2 Uses are situated in the main town centres, thus achieving and exceeding the Strategic Objective (Draft).

## Core Output Indicator

### BD4 total amount of floor space for town centre uses

To show the amount of completed floor space (gross and net) for town centre uses within (i) town centre and (ii) the local authority

	Use Class	Gross floorspace completed (m <sup>2</sup> )	Net floorspace completed (m <sup>2</sup> )	Gross Floorspace Completed in Town Centre	Net Floorspace Completed in Town Centre
Core Output Indicator BD4	Retail (A1)	2,267	446	455	-145
	Financial and Professional (A2)	73	73	0	0
	Office (B1a)	842	-526	0	0
	Assembly and Leisure (D2)	73	-636	0	0

**Table 4.3 Floorspace that has been completed in the borough overall and in the respective town centres for 2008/09**

Source: GLA, London Development Database 2009

**4.9** The Core Output Indicator BD4 shows that although there has been an increase in the gross floorspace completed for Retail (A1), Financial and Professional (A2), Office (B1a) and Assembly and Leisure, there is an actual overall net loss of net floorspace for Office (B1a) and Assembly and Leisure (D2) throughout the borough and for Retail (A1) in the main town centres. The main reason for this 'net loss' is due to the number of mixed-use developments completed in the annual monitoring year 2008/09. In some circumstances the original use of the site was maintained, for instance, Retail (A1) however in order to accommodate a mixed use development the actual overall amount of floorspace for that use was significantly reduced.

## 4 Town Centres

### GLA Town Centre Health Check Findings 2009

**4.10** In 2009, the GLA requested all London boroughs to submit Town Centre Health Checks (TCHC) for the main town centres. In Merton, Wimbledon Town Centre is designated as a Major Town Centre and both Mitcham and Morden Town Centres are designated as District Centres.

**4.11** It is intended for those TCHCs submitted to the GLA to show formed part of the evidence base to support policies in the forthcoming London Plan.

**4.12** The TCHC highlights that Wimbledon Town Centre, due to the mix, range and capacity of convenience and comparison goods, retail services and leisure and entertainment functions, is the major retail centre in Merton and thus reinforces Wimbledon's position as a Major Centre as set out in the London Plan's retail hierarchy. The TCHC also supports Morden and Mitcham Town Centres position as District Centres; having the convenience, comparison and retail service floorspace capacity to serve the needs of the local community.

**4.13** Although not required, Colliers Wood Urban Centre was included in the GLA TCHC. Merton council would like Colliers Wood, due to comparison and convenience retail and entertainment and community facilities it offers, to be designated as a District Centre in the forthcoming London Plan.

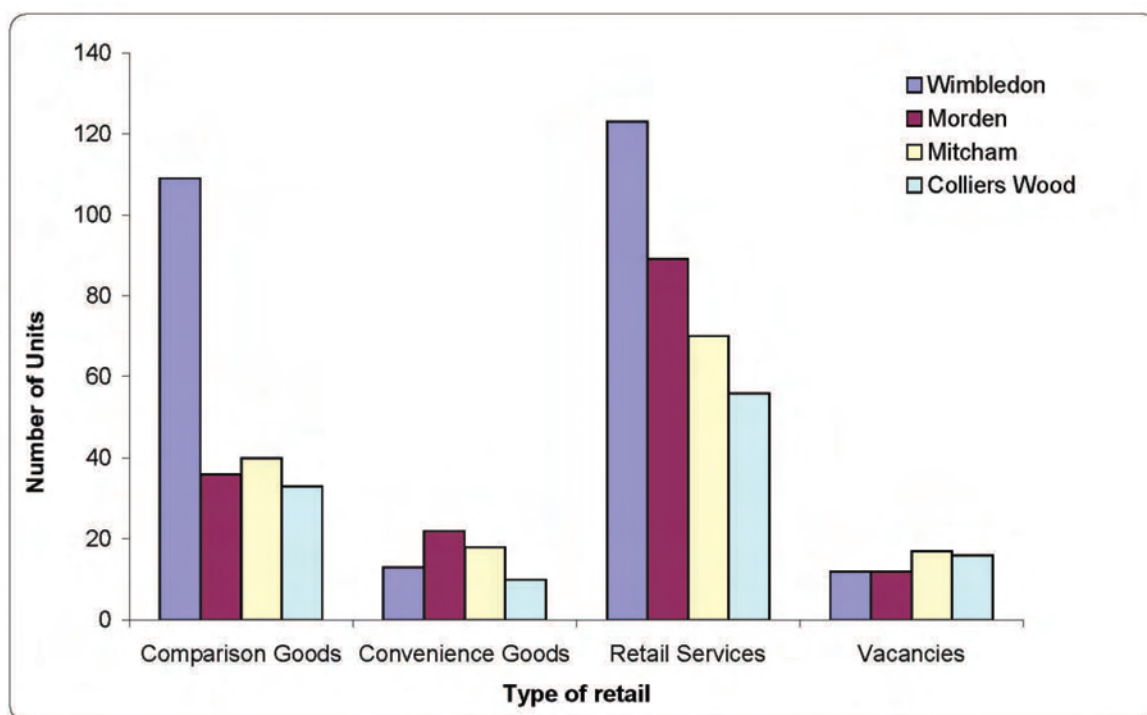


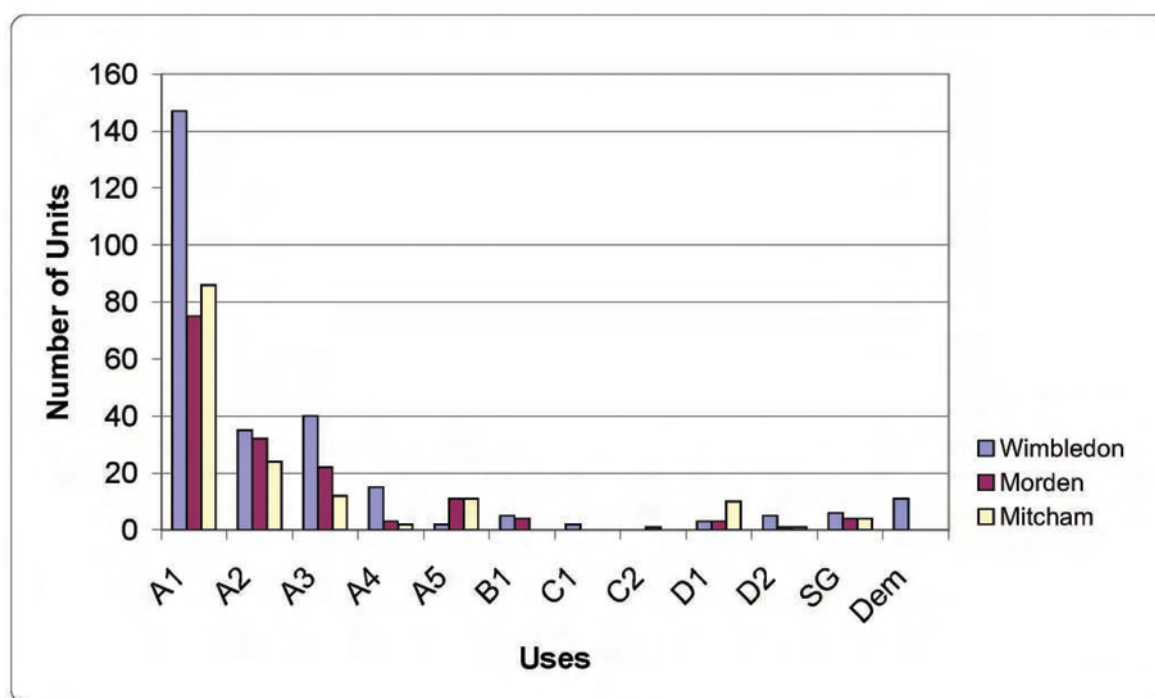
Figure 4.1 Retail capacity by Type of Retail

Source: LB Merton Annual Shopping Survey 2009

## Wimbledon

**4.14** As the only Major Centre in Merton and therefore the focus of town centre use, Wimbledon provides a wide range of facilities, attracts visitors from outside the borough and is probably one of the best known parts of south London due to the annual All England Tennis Championships and international recognition of the Wimbledon 'brand'.

**4.15** The Annual Shopping Survey 2009 shows that there are 262 retail units in Wimbledon Town Centre and at least 69% of these retail units are operating in A1 (56%) and A2 (13%) Use Class. As demonstrated in figure 4.2, Wimbledon Town Centre has a greater presence of shops (A1), financial and professional services (A2), restaurants and cafés (A3), and drinking establishments (A4) than any other town centre in the borough. Also with the presence of two theatres and a multiplex cinema, Wimbledon Town Centre is a major night time destination.



**Figure 4.2 Uses in Main Town Centres**

Source: LB Merton Annual Shopping Survey 2009

**4.16** Wimbledon has the largest number, at least 73%, of retail units operating in multiple ownership in the borough, attracting retailers such as Marks and Spencers; Gap; H. Samuel; H&M; Early Learning; Mothercare; Next; Monsoon; Oliver Bonas

## 4 Town Centres

and Phase Eight. Wimbledon also comprises of Centre Court (an enclosed shopping centre) and a Debenhams and Elys Department Stores, thus reinforcing the Wimbledon Town Centre position as a Major Centre in the London Plan (2008) retail hierarchy.

**4.17** Despite Wimbledon's status as being the main town centre in Merton, the GLA's 2009 study into Consumer Expenditure and the Wimbledon Competitiveness Study 2007 shows that Wimbledon retained 18% of trade within SW19 postal sector, with significant leakage to the West End (10%) and Kingston (9%). These studies also highlight the far-reaching effect that major retail centres have, even though they may be some distance away.

**4.18** Concerns in Wimbledon remain on the high level of comparison goods shopping which is lost to nearby centres such as Kingston and Croydon. However, one of Wimbledon's main attractions is the evening economy, which is helping to retain late custom in the area.

**4.19** For Wimbledon, the priority of the Draft Core Strategy is to maintain its current vitality and viability as one of London's major town centres, with quality shops, balanced with community, leisure and arts, culture and associated facilities.

### District Town Centres

**4.20** The priority for Morden and Mitcham District Town Centres, as detailed in the Draft Core Strategy, is to strengthen the range and quality of the retail offer to serve a wider catchment area especially for comparison goods and to provide a mix of retail unit sizes, particularly smaller retail units.

### Morden

**4.21** Morden's role as a district centre has declined since approximately the 1970's as other nearby centres have expanded. Although Morden has a reasonable number of shops for a District Centre, the range and depth of the retail offer, as well as the quality of the premises and the goods sold, is not as good as it has the potential to be.

**4.22** Findings from the Annual Shopping Survey 2009 show that there are 155 retail units operating in Morden Town Centre, at least 74% of these are retail units operating within the A1(52%) and A2 (22%) Use Classes. Therefore the majority of retail units situated in the town centre are operating in town centre uses; thus providing retail goods and services to the local community.

**4.23** Out of the total number of retail units operating in A1 use, 46% of units comprise of comparison retail units and 24% of units comprise of convenience retail units. Despite the large presence of comparison retail units in Morden, the town



centre is characterised by charity shops and smaller independent retailers. However, Morden does attract a number of multiple retailers including Gregg's, Londis, Iceland, Sainsbury's, Boots and Holland and Barrett.

**4.24** The main objective of the forthcoming 'More Morden' Area Action Plan is to provide guidance on the opportunities for growth, regeneration and development of Morden Town Centre. It is hoped that that the More Morden Area Action Plan will be started in 2011/2012.

### **Mitcham**

**4.25** Mitcham District Centre has a small number of multiple retailers and primarily serves the retail needs of residents within the east of the borough. Mitcham Town Centre has been in gradual decline for many years. During this time the number of vacant shops has increased and the quality and quantity of the retail offer has reduced. There is a sense that Mitcham town centre has received much less private investment than other areas of the borough over the past three decades. There will be significant retail changes for Mitcham Town Centre during summer of 2009 with the opening of Lidl and Morrisons supermarkets.

**4.26** The Annual Shopping Survey 2009 shows 152 retail units operating in Mitcham Town Centre and the majority of retail units, (more than 73 per cent) are in A1 (57%) and A2 (16%) uses. Out of the total number of units operating in the A1 Use, 45% of retail units comprise of comparison retail whereas 34% of retail units comprise of convenience retail.

**4.27** Although more independent retailers are more prevalent in Mitcham, there are a number of multiple retailers operating in the town centre including Lidl, Hallmark, Iceland, Farmfoods, Boots and Gregg's.

**4.28** There is a high presence of hot food takeaways (A5) in Mitcham and Morden and interestingly only Mitcham have a significant percentage of units in community use (D Use Class). In Mitcham, the community uses include advice centres, dentists and a veterinary clinic.

**4.29** Despite the number of retail properties in Mitcham, there is a limited number of the comparison and convenience goods as well as retail services available. Thus it is clear that more needs to be done in Mitcham town centre to encourage more of a range of retail goods and services to revitalise the town centre and to make it a destination in its own right.



## 4 Town Centres

### Colliers Wood

**4.30** It is Merton's desire to have Colliers Wood, which is currently designated in the London Plan 2008 as an Urban Centre for regeneration, to be recognised as a District Centre in the forthcoming revisions of the London Plan. The council's intention to designate Colliers Wood as a Town Centre is highlighted in the Draft Core Strategy 6 week consultation (7th September to October 2009).

**4.31** Over the past 20 years, Colliers Wood has expanded considerably. The GLA Town Centre Health Checks 2009 completed for Colliers Wood, and the Retail Town Centre Studies completed by Nathaniel, Litchfield and Partners in 2005 and the update in 2008 demonstrate that the existing retail capacity of Colliers Wood meets District Centre Status.

**4.32** Colliers Wood was earmarked in the London Plan 2008 (adopted with alterations since 2004) as part of South London's only Area for Intensification. Although due to environmental factors, particularly the risk of flooding as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2009, the potential capacity for development in Colliers Wood is restricted.

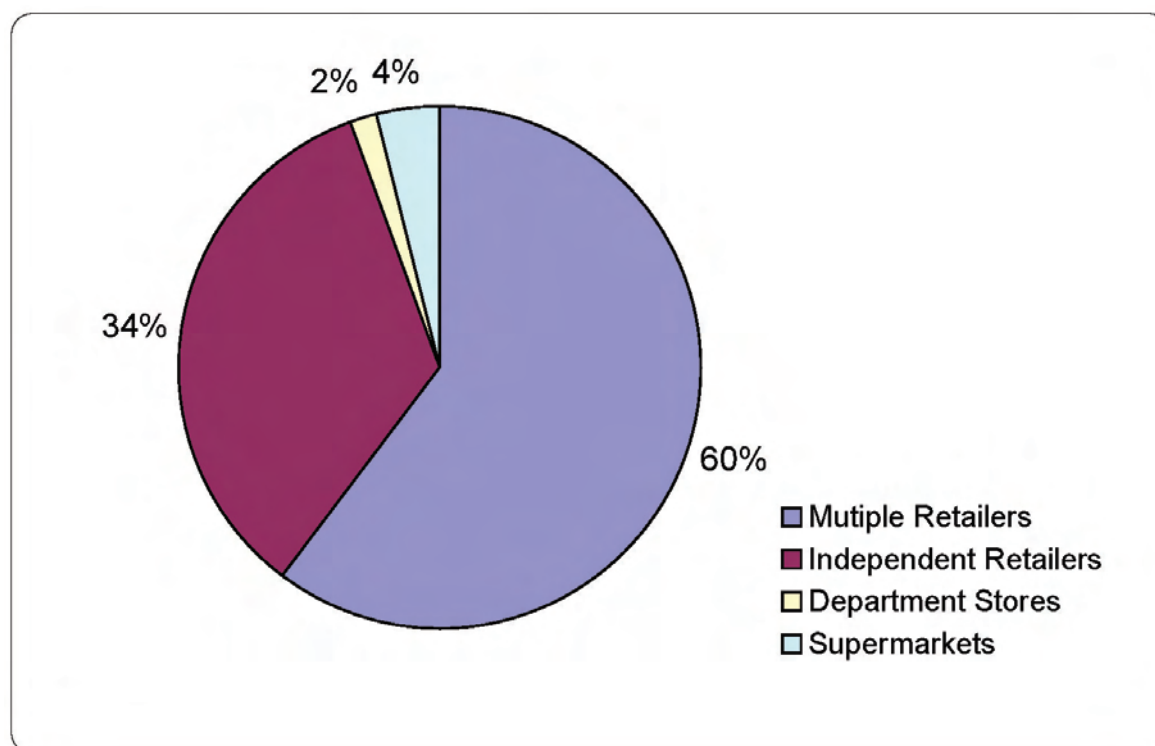
**4.33** Merton's Annual Shopping Survey for 2009, as demonstrated in the table below, shows that there are over 127 retail units providing retail goods and services in Colliers Wood town centre. As detailed in the NLP 2008 the minimum gross floorspace for both comparison and convenience retail units only is approximately 38,774m<sup>2</sup>.

Types of retail	Total gross floorspace (m2)	Total number of units
Comparison goods	30,364	44
Convenience goods	8410	9
Service retail	Unknown	51
Vacant stores	Unknown	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,774</b>	<b>127</b>

**Table 4.4 Colliers Wood Retail Capacity by Type of Retail**

**Source:** Internal Shopping Use Survey (2009), Nathaniel, Litchfield and Partners Town Centre Study Update (2008) and adopted Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map 2003

**4.34** In qualitative terms, Colliers Wood is the destination for several multiple retailers to locate such as Sainsbury's; Marks and Spencers; Argos Extra, Next, Boots, T.K Maxx, New Look, Currys and PC World. More specialist independent stores are situated along Colliers Wood High Street.



**Figure 4.3 Colliers Wood Retail Capacity by Type of Outlet**

Source: GLA, London Development Database 2009

**4.35** Although retail uses dominate the town centre, there is a range of other facilities including two hotels, a health and fitness centre, a community centre and a vibrant craft and retail market located at Merton Abbey Mills.

**4.36** The designation of Colliers Wood as a District Centre would assist with the council's intention to develop a coordinated approach for Colliers Wood to guide major sites and development opportunities and to provide a more coherent centre with focal points. If Colliers Wood becomes designated as a District Centre in the review of the London Plan, it will then allow for an improved diversity of uses, appropriate to its scale and function in the retail hierarchy and thus would make Colliers Wood Town Centre an attractive town centre for people to live, work and visit.

## 4 Town Centres

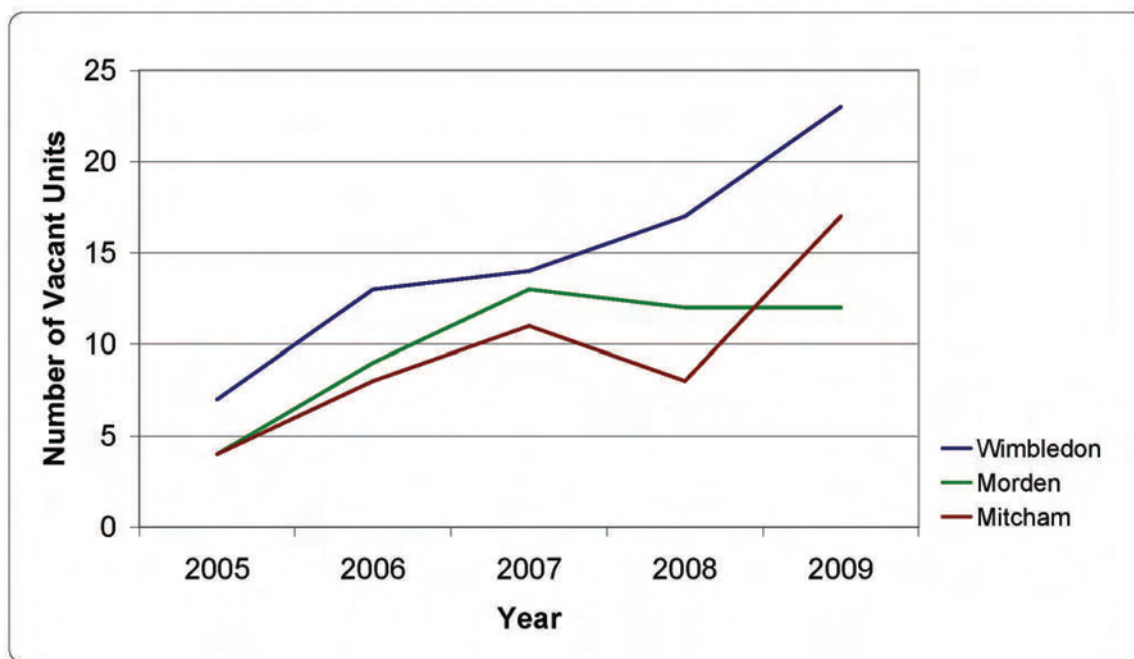
**4.37** Merton will continue to work with the GLA for the re-designation of Colliers Wood as a District Centre.

### Vacancies

**4.38** Findings from Merton's Annual Shopping Survey 2009 shows that there are 52 vacant properties in Merton, which is an increase of 71% on the total number of vacant retail units in Merton since the previous annual monitoring year 2007/08 (37 vacant retail units). This significant increase in the numbers of vacancy rates this year could be accredited to the recession.

**4.39** The current vacancy rates in Merton's main Town Centres are:

- Wimbledon: 22%
- Mitcham: 46%
- Morden: 22%

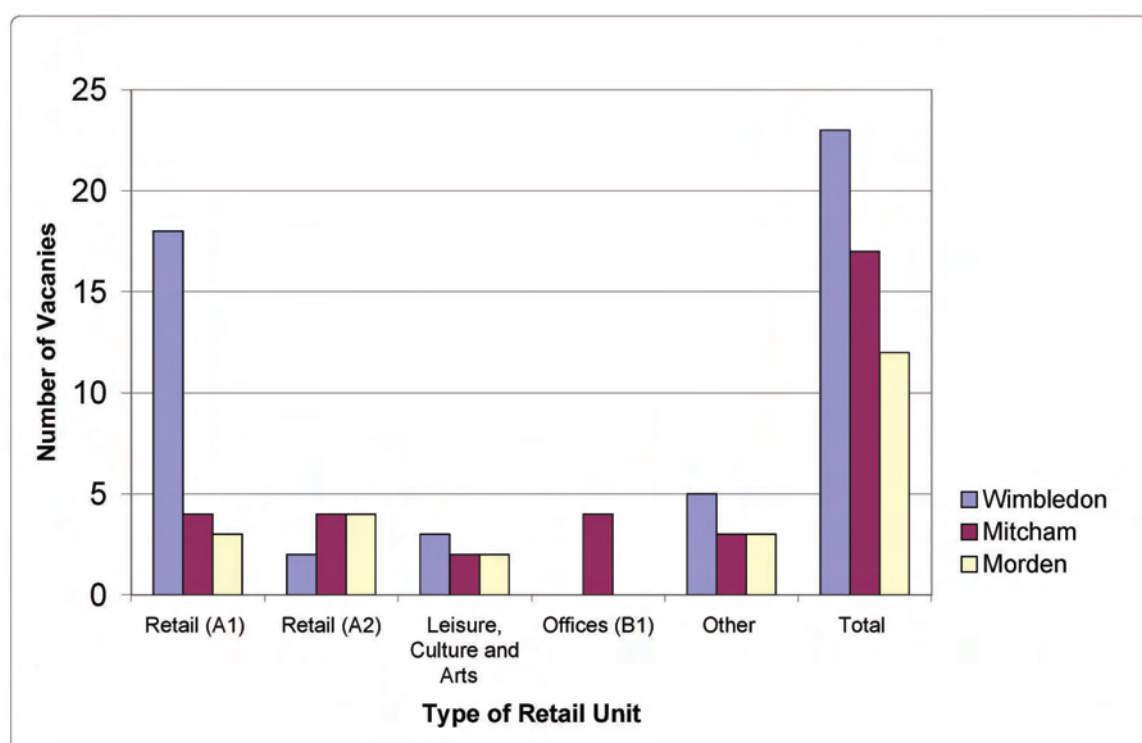


**Figure 4.4 Number of Vacancies in merton Town Centres**

Source: GLA, London Development Database 2009

**4.40** The table 4.5 shows that a large proportion, at least 78%, of vacant units in Wimbledon previously operated in retail use (A1). However only 24% of vacant units in Mitcham and 25% of vacant units in Morden operated in retail use (A1). This shows that the recession had a significant impact on the retail sector in Wimbledon, more than in any of the other town centres in Merton.

**4.41** In Morden, the largest proportion of vacancies, at least 33%, of vacant units operated in retail use (financial and professional services) in comparison to the other two main centres. In contrast, the highest percentage of vacancies, at least 24%, of vacant units operated in Office Use (B1).



**Figure 4.5 Vacant properties by Use Class**

Source: LB Merton Annual Shopping Survey 2009

**4.42** Despite the significant high level of vacancies in town centre uses in the three main town centres recorded in the annual shopping survey this year, all of the main town centres are trading healthy (Table 4.5). The health of the trading levels in the town centre can be ascertained by dividing the number of vacant properties over the total number of properties operating in the town centre, and setting this figure against the UK average.

## 4 Town Centres

Types of Retail	Total number of units	Total number of vacancies	% of vacancies	% UK National Vacancy Average
Wimbledon	262	23	8.8%	11.5%
Mitcham	152	17	11.2%	
Morden	155	12	7.7%	

**Table 4.5 Town Centre Vacancy Rates 2009**

Source: LB Merton Annual Shopping Survey and GB Vacancy Rate from GOAD (2009)

**4.43** Vacancy rate levels in Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham have increased significantly in comparison to the findings of the 2007/08 Annual Monitoring Report. However, the increase in the number of vacant units is likely to be a byproduct of the recession.

## 5 Housing

**5.1** Merton Council seeks to reduce inequalities and encourage mixed communities with greater choice in size, type and location of housing to represent the needs of the whole borough. The LDF will assist in supporting Merton's Housing Strategy aim.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

To make Merton a healthier and better place for people to live and work in or visit

### Strategic Objective Target (draft)

**Housing Choice:** To ensure a range of housing sizes, tenure and types in new developments meet local need

**Housing Provision:** Meeting Housing provision

## Merton Housing Growth

**5.2** The Mayor's London Plan 2008 sets an annual strategic housing target for London of 30,500 new homes of which Merton's annual target is 370 additional homes. The London Plan target covers a 10 year period from 2007/8 to 2016/17. The London Plan Target is underpinned and informed by a robust 2004 GLA Housing Capacity Study which includes identification of additional homes from a variety of supply sources including large sites, small sites and windfalls.

**5.3** The Government Office for London (GoL), GLA and London Councils produced a statement in March 2008 setting out the approach that boroughs are to adopt in addressing PPS3 requirements for a 15 year housing land supply in advance of the 2009 GLA Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). Boroughs are advised to roll forward the 2007/8-2016/17 target to cover the required 15 year period rather than undertaking individual SHLAA.

**5.4** Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) requires Local Planning Authorities to set policies and strategies within their Development Plans to enable continuous delivery of the allocated housing targets for at least 15 years from the date of plan adoption.

## 5 Housing

**5.5** In Merton's case, the LDF is anticipated for adoption in 2011, and as such the housing delivery period is from 2011-2026. While the London Plan projects targets to the year 2016/17, boroughs have been advised to roll forward the existing annual target for those years beyond 2016/17 to meet the 15 year PPS3 requirements.

### Merton Housing Target

**5.6** Core Indicator H1 requires boroughs to identify the required housing targets and the planned housing period for delivery. The London Plan 2008 set out new housing provision targets for London boroughs from 2007/08 to 2016/17, effective from 1st April 2007. The 10 year target for Merton is 3,700 additional dwellings, with an annual monitoring target of 370 additional dwellings.

#### Core Output Indicator

##### H1: Plan period and housing targets

Core Output Indicator	Start of Plan Period	End of Plan Period	Total housing Required	Source of Plan Target
H1	1st April 2007	31st March 2017	3,700 (370 per year)	London Plan (2008)

**5.7** In the first two years of the 10 year London Plan period, 1,209 net additional dwellings (or 33% of the overall allocated target) have been built. In accordance with Core Indicators H2(a), H2(b) and H2(c), Table 5.1 provides details of net additional dwellings within the borough for previous, current and future years. To meet PPS3: Housing's requirement that sites in the housing trajectory are available, suitable and achievable, Merton Council has engaged with a variety of housing delivery stakeholders, including site owners, developers, architects and property agents on individual site issues, likelihood of delivery and to establish a broad picture of the current economic climate. This research was augmented by an analysis of past trends on planning permissions and site development in Merton over the 10-year period from March 2000 to April 2009, and recent inspections of projected residential sites. This research informs the phasing of known potential residential sites within the borough.



**5.8** An additional 510 net dwellings are expected to be completed in the current year, 2009/10, resulting in a cumulative total of 46% of the ten year target in the first 3 years. Appendix 1 contains the list of sites that make up the five year supply of housing.

		H2 (a)	H2 (b)	H2 (c)			H2 (d)
		Net additional new homes – in previous years	Net additional homes for the reporting year	a) Net additional new homes	b) Hectares	c) Target	Managed delivery target taking account of past/ projected completions
Year							
03-04		292				420	
04-05		987				420	
05-06		791				420	
06-07		427				420	
07-08		435			4.57ha	370	370
08-09	Monitoring Year		774		7.98ha	370	363
09-10	Current Year			510	8.07ha	370	311
10-11	1			371	1.85ha	370	283
11-12	2			370	2.22ha	370	268
12-13	3			372	4.35ha	370	248
13-14	4			376	4.41ha	370	217
14-15	5			374	4.02ha	370	164
15-16				382		370	59
16-17				348		370	0
17-18				246		370	370

## 5 Housing

18-19			370*		370	494
19-20			370*		370	494
20-21			370*		370	494
21-22			370*		370	494
22-23			370*		370	494
23-24			370*		370	494
24-25			370*		370	494
25-26			370*		370	494

**Table 5.2 Net addition core indicators**

\*unidentified sites

### **Core Output Indicator**

H2 (a) Net additional dwelling in previous years - to show recent levels of housing delivery

H2(b) Net additional dwellings for the reporting year - to show levels of housing delivery for this year

H2(c) Net additional dwellings in future years to show likely future levels of housing delivery

H2(d) Managed delivery targets - to show how many homes are likely to be built in the future, taking into account previous performance.

## 5 Housing

**5.9** A comparison of completions in previous years (Table 5.1) demonstrates that there is a wide variance in the actual number of housing units delivered each year in Merton. This is in part due to the delivery of several recent larger schemes and in part attributed to the large number of windfall sites which occur in the borough.

**5.10** Merton is in the process of preparing strategic plans for redevelopment of key areas bringing forward housing capacity through regeneration. In particular, this applies to the Morden Town Centre which is likely to deliver an additional 1000-2000 dwellings as a result of the moreMorden regeneration plan. The plan is expected to be in effect during 2019 onward. Whilst the trajectory does not specifically identify sites for years beyond 2018/19, Merton is confident that the target will be met for these years.

**5.11** However, in Merton the housing target has traditionally been met in large part via windfall sites (approx 60%). As there are few opportunities for large scale development with the exception of Morden, the draft London Plan proposes a lower annual housing target for Merton. For latter years in the trajectory, i.e. 2019 onward, it is predicted that Merton can still meet its proportion of London's target.

**5.12** In accordance with National Guidance and best practice, Merton has developed a housing trajectory to illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery over the next 15 years. The trajectory has utilised information derived from the *GLA London Development Database*, Merton's *Unitary Development Plan* and the *2004 Housing Capacity Study*. The trajectory covers the remainder of the UDP and the 10 year London Plan period (2007/08 to 2016/17).

**5.13** Merton's housing trajectory is based on a grading of identified sites, with phasing of sites reflected by grade - Grade A being delivered soonest through to Grade F delivered later to the year 2017/18. A detailed schedule of identified sites is provided at **Appendix 1** with forward phasing from 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2018.

**5.14** In summary, the breakdown of sites within each grade is as follows:

Grade A: Planning Permission in place and commenced as at March 31, 2009

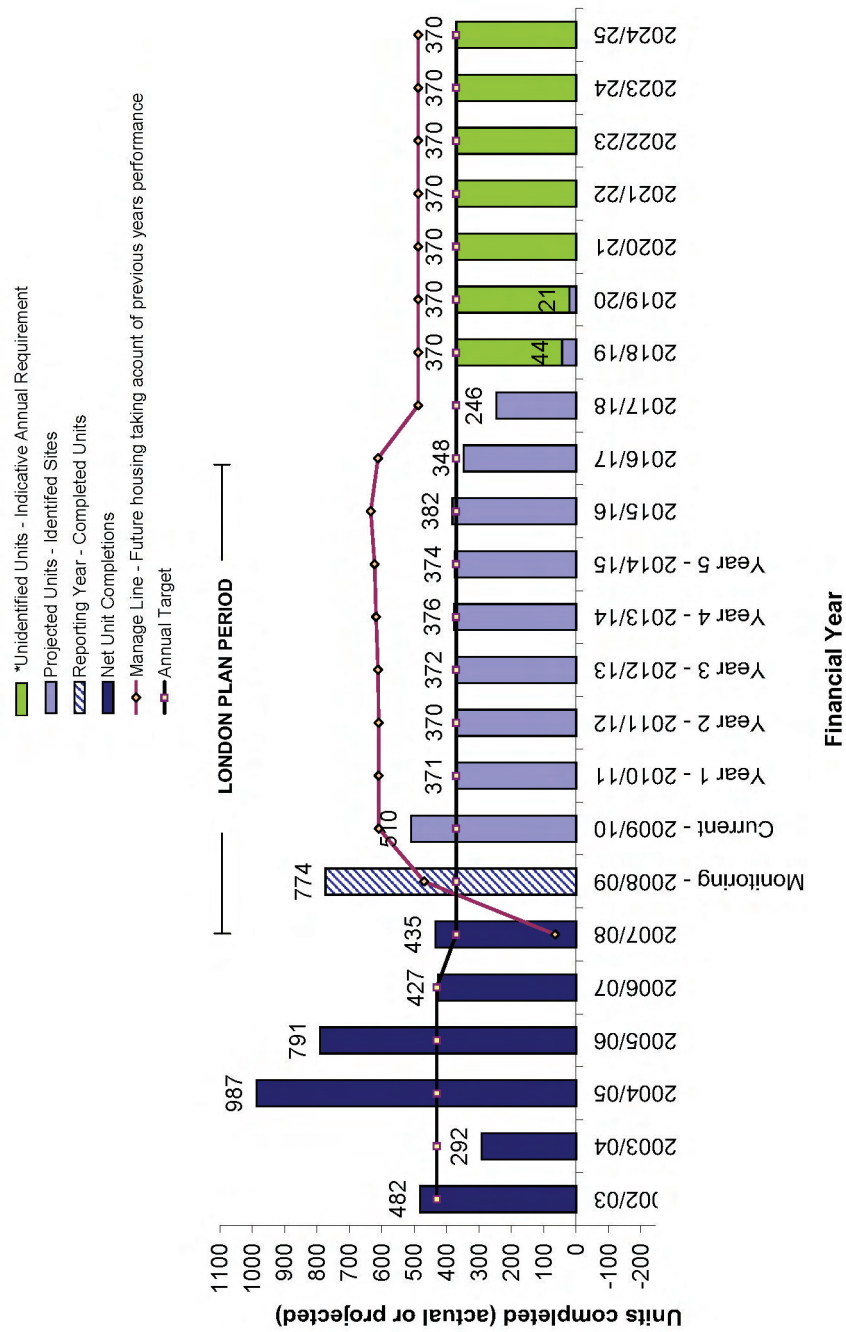
Grade B: Planning permission in place and not commenced as at March 31, 2009

Grade C: Permission in place, however awaiting s.106 signing as at March 31, 2009

Grade D: Outline permission only as at March 31, 2009

Grade E: UDP proposal sites without planning permission as at March 31, 2009

Grade F: 2004 Housing capacity Sites without planning permission as at March 31, 2009



Picture 5.1 London Borough of Merton Housing Trajectory

Source: GLA:

\*The trajectory does not specifically identify sites for years beyond 2018/19

## 5 Housing

Year	Housing Trajectory Projected Completion Figure	Housing Target	Number of net additional dwellings required to meet completion target	Number of units projected completion figure expect to exceed housing target by
2008/09	*774	370	0	404
2009/10	510	370	0	140
2010/11	371	370	0	1
2011/12	370	370	0	0
2012/13	372	370	0	2
2013/14	376	370	0	6
2014/15	374	370	0	4
2015/16	382	370	0	12
2016/17	348	370	22	0
2017/18	246	370	124	0
2018/19	370	370	0	0
2019/20	370	370	0	0
2020/21	370	370	0	0
2021/22	370	370	0	0
2022/23	370	370	0	0
2023/24	370	370	0	0
2024/25	370	370	0	0

**Table 5.3 Dwellings required to meet completion target**

\*Completion figure is actual number of completions for this year (2008/09). Please note this does not include vacancies brought back into use which also count towards Merton housing target.

## Core Output Indicator

### H3: New and converted dwellings on previously developed land

Number of new homes (gross) completed in 2008/09: 774

Percentage of new homes completed on previously developed land: 100%

## Housing Density

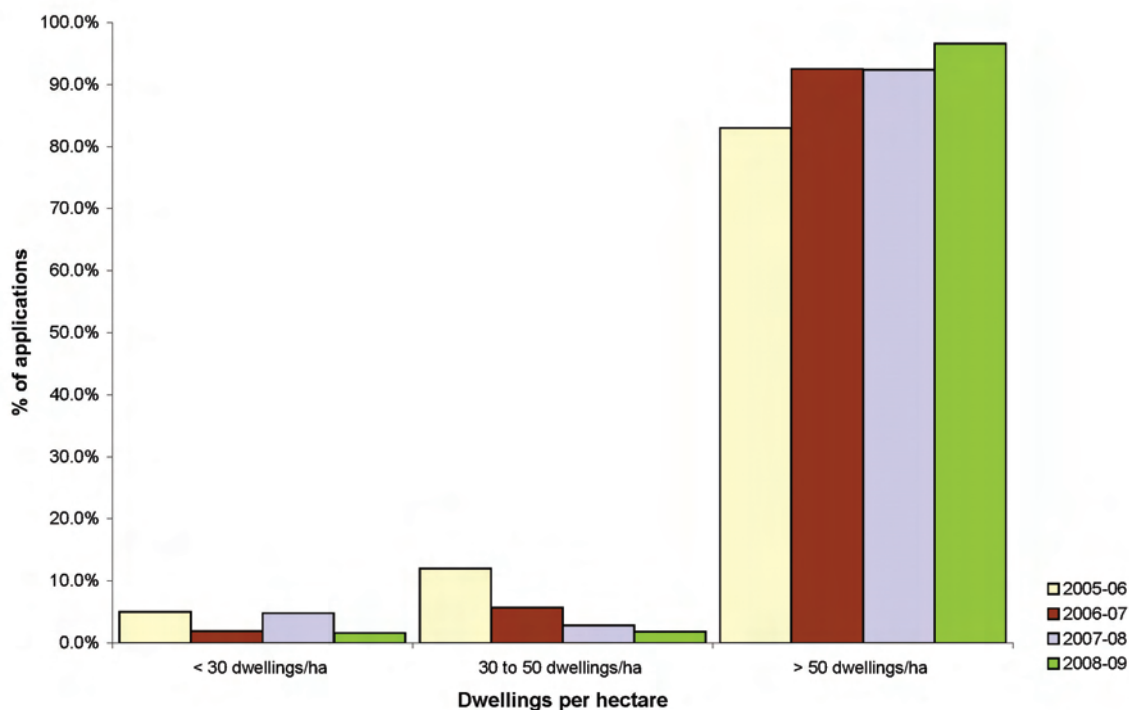
**5.15** During 2008/2009, there were 748 net unit completions with a density in excess of 50 dwellings per hectare. This is an important measure of the increasing scarcity of developable land within the borough. Existing sites become increasingly attractive for redevelopment, which in turn generally leads to a higher density and demand for local resources. As demonstrated at Table 5.3, the 2008/09 provides a continuing trend toward increased density within the borough, with the majority of net dwelling completions being constructed at a density above 50 dwellings per hectare.

	2008/09 No. Of homes completed	2008/09 as % of total number of homes completed	2007/08 as % of total number of homes completed	2006/07 as % of total number of homes completed	2005/06as % of total number of homes completed
Less than 30 dwellings per Ha.	30	3.5	4.8	1.5	5
30-50 dwellings per Ha.	28	3.3	2.6	5.6	13
Over 50 dwellings per Ha.	792	93.1%	92.4%	92.5%	83%

**Table 5.4**



## 5 Housing



**Figure 5.1 Housing Density in Merton 2005/06 - 2008/09**

### Affordable Housing Completions

**5.16** The provision of affordable housing is an important element in equitable access to housing for all residents within the borough. The Core Indicator H5 aims to provide a snapshot of the gross number of affordable unit completions for the borough.

**5.17** In 2008/09 Merton's planning department records that a total of 265 affordable homes were completed. This figure represents 34% of the total housing completions for the monitoring year. It is important to note that this figure is largely attributed to the completion of a large development scheme at the former Wimbledon Football Ground at Plough Lane, where 170 affordable homes were provided.

**5.18** There are differences between the definitions of 'completed' affordable homes. Merton's planning section and the GLA (through the London Development Database) consider that an affordable home is complete when the building control records have been signed off and the dwelling is habitable.

**5.19** Merton's Housing Department consider that an affordable home is complete once the legal agreement has been signed to transfer its ownership to the necessary affordable housing provider (e.g. RSL) who will find occupants.

**5.20** The variance between the figures is a result of differing definitions of what constitutes a ‘completed’ affordable dwelling.

**5.21** As a result of these different definitions, sometimes an affordable dwelling can be counted as completed by the planning section (because the building is finished and the property is habitable) but not included in the figures for the housing section (because it has not yet been occupied).

**5.22** This is further complicated in instances where development initially scheduled for market housing development is later built as an affordable development. This is usually a result of market pressure or economic conditions.

**5.23** Merton’s Housing Department records 352 affordable homes as being completed in 2008/09. Of these, 153 units were social rented and 199 were for intermediate housing.

**5.24** Merton’s planning department records 265 affordable homes as being completed in 2008/09.

**5.25** With reference to affordable homes, all data in this chapter is based on planning department data unless the source indicates otherwise.

### Core Output Indicator

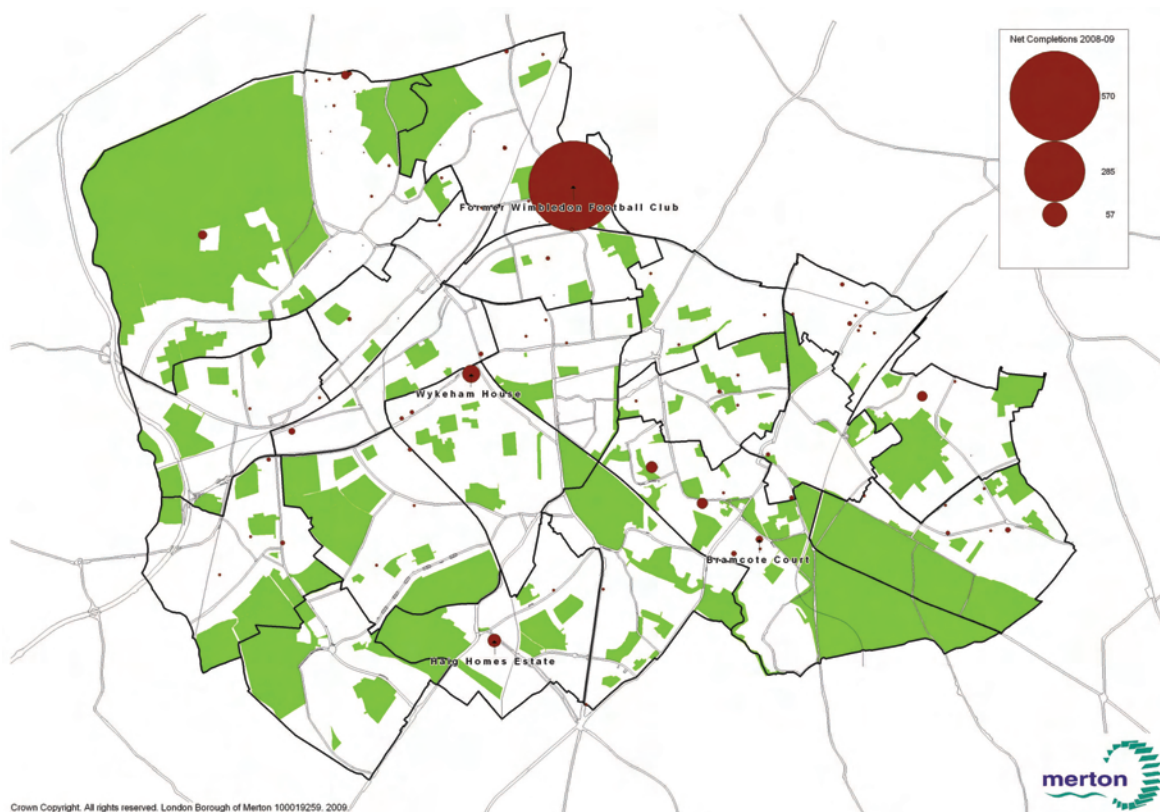
H5: Gross affordable housing completions

Core Output Indicator	2008/09 Social rent home provided	2008/09 Intermediate	2008/09 Affordable home total
H5	200	65	265

**5.26** During 2008/09 the majority of both planning approvals and completions within the borough occurred in areas outside of the East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area

**5.27** The East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area occupies approximately 40% of the borough, yet monitoring data demonstrates that fewer than 14% of total net housing units completed in 2008/09 were situated in the area. There may be several reasons behind this trend such as greater affluence and higher probable return on investment within western wards in the borough.

## 5 Housing



Picture 5.2 Net Completions in Merton 2008/09

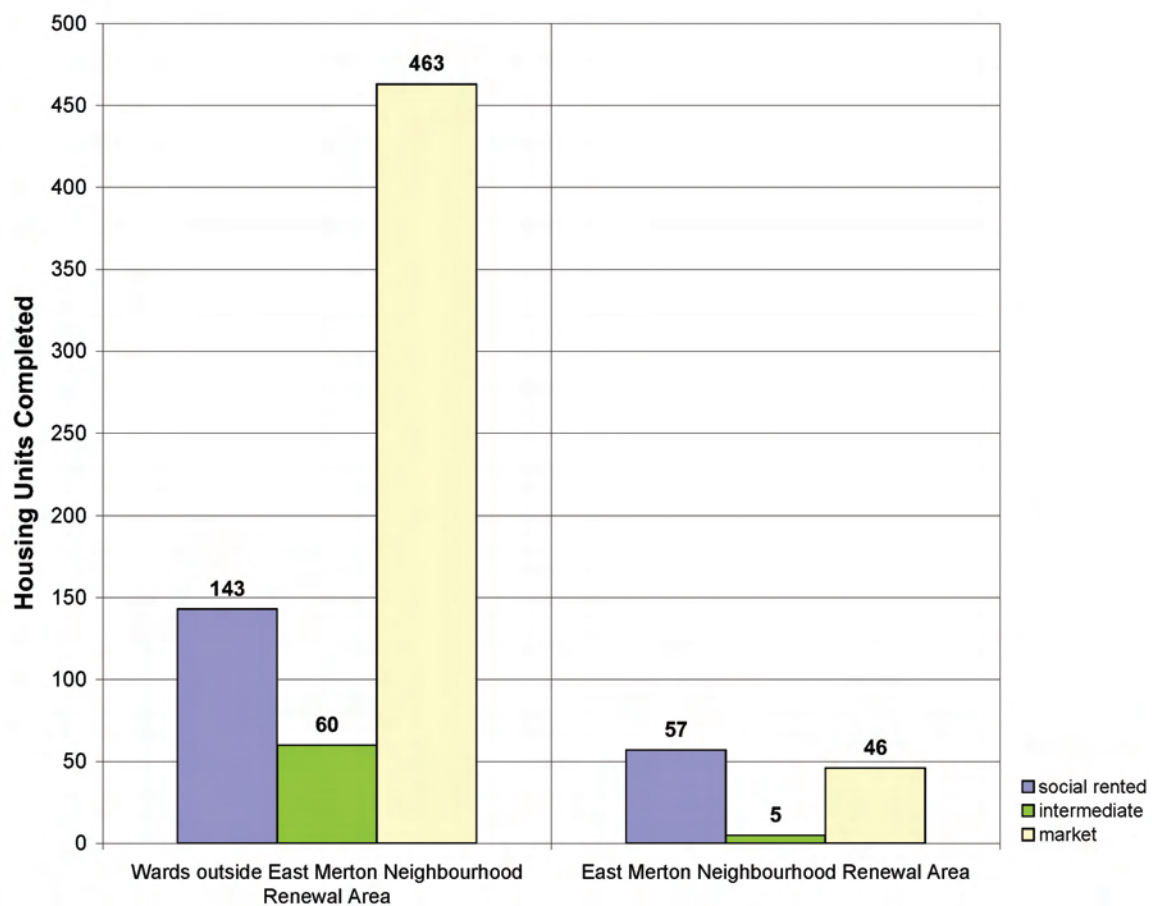
Wards outside East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA)	Social Rented	Intermediate	Market
Ward			
Abbey	0	0	3
Cannon Hill	0	0	4
Colliers Wood	0	0	3
Dundonald	0	0	8
Hillside	0	0	3
Lower Morden	0	0	0
Merton Park	23	10	4
Raynes Park	0	0	2

Wards outside East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA)	Social Rented	Intermediate	Market
Trinity	0	0	3
Village	0	0	21
Wimbledon Park	120	50	407
West Barnes	0	0	7
Total completion outside NRA	<b>143</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>465</b>
East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area	Social Rented	Intermediate	Market
Ward			
Cricket green	23	5	12
Figges Marsh	0	0	5
Graveney	0	0	11
Lavender Fields	0	0	3
Longthornton	12	0	-2
Pollards Hill	0	00	12
Ravensbury	0	0	2
St Helier	20	0	1
<b>Total in NRA</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Total of housing completion in Merton</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>509</b>

**Table 5.6 Net Housing Units Completions by ward in Merton 2008/09**

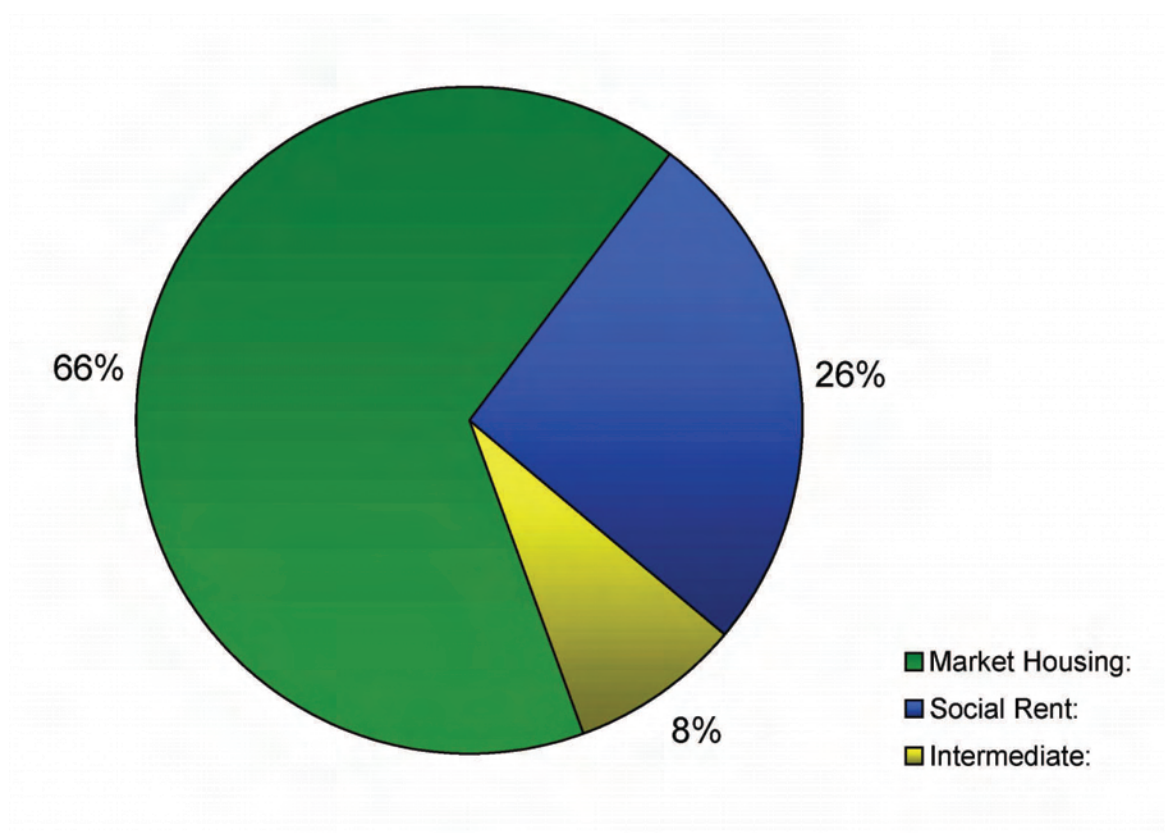
Source: GLA: London Development Database (LDD)

## 5 Housing



**Figure 5.2 Net Housing units Completions 2008/09**

**5.28** In 2008/09 a total of 265 affordable homes were delivered. This represented 34% of the total home completed during 2008/09.



**Figure 5.3 Housing Tenure Completions 2008/09**

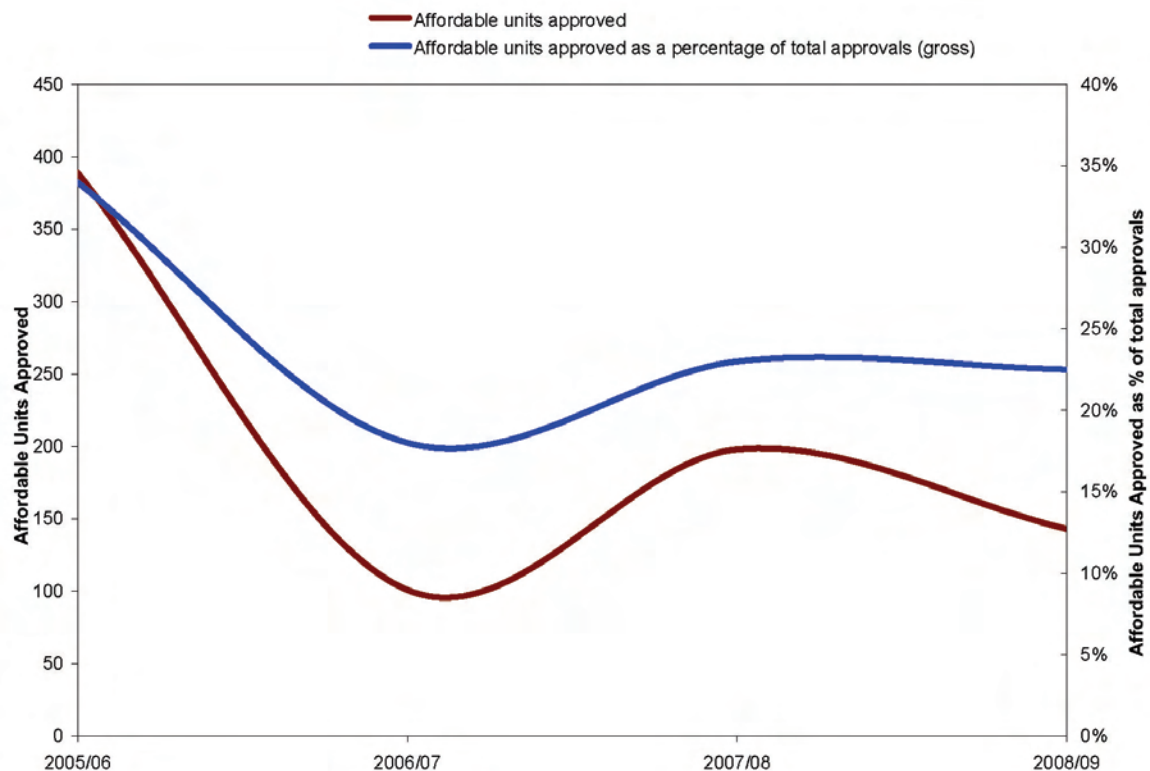
**5.29** As can be seen in Figure 5.5, the bulk of completions (66%) within 2008/09 were for market housing, followed closely by social rented units.

### **Affordable Housing Approvals**

**5.30** From September 2007 following a directive from GOL (Government Office of London) this figure has been replaced by a London borough wide requirement of 50% affordable housing provision in all schemes of 10 units or more.

**5.31** Over the 2008/09 monitoring period a total of 143 affordable housing units were approved by Merton, which represents 22.5% of all gross unit approvals for the year.

## 5 Housing



**Figure 5.4 Affordable Housing units in Merton 2008/09**

Affordable units approvals	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
Affordable unit approved	143	198	101	389
As % of total approvals (gross)	22.5%	23%	18%	34%



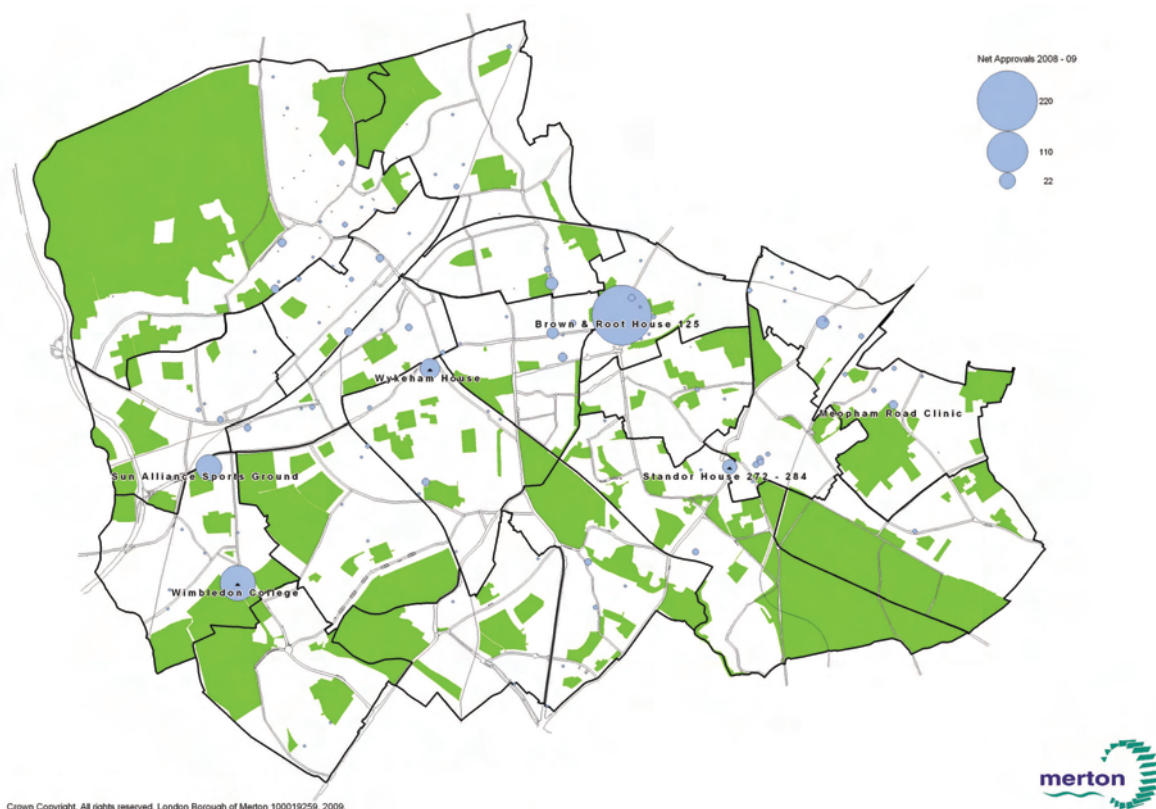
Affordable units approvals	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07	2005/06
As % of total approved 10 units+	32%	N/a	N/a	N/a

**Table 5.7 Affordable Housing Approvals since 2005**

**5.32** During 2008/09 Merton Council issued 136 planning approvals which relate to a net change in dwelling units. Of these, eight planning approvals involved a net gain over 10 units each, leaving the remaining 128 planning approvals with a net gain of less than 10 units.

**5.33** The planning permissions with a net gain over 10 units accounted for 446 additional units during the 2008/09 monitoring period. As a relative percentage, (affordable units to overall qualifying unit permissions), Merton provided 32% (143/446). Whilst this figure is well below the London target of 50%, it is typical of previous years within the borough. Merton has consistently approved an average of 20% of all gross housing units as affordable housing, and is evidenced in table 5.5 The exception is the year 2005/06, in which an exceptionally large development for the redevelopment of the Wimbledon Football Stadium at Plough Lane came forward.

## 5 Housing



**Picture 5.3 Net Housing Unit Approvals in Merton 2008/09**

**5.34** As can be seen in table 5.6 it is evident that there is an established pattern of development concentrating within western wards in the borough. This observation is further augmented in Table 5.5 which demonstrates that only 10% of all additional housing units approved in 2008/2009 were situated within the East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

**5.35** As planning approvals generally trail behind planning completions by a number of years, it is a significant concern that the proportion of approvals within the borough mirrors the imbalance of the 2008/09 housing completions. This indicates that the imbalance is unlikely to improve in the short term and it is likely that further investment and/or review of key factors affecting redevelopment within the area.

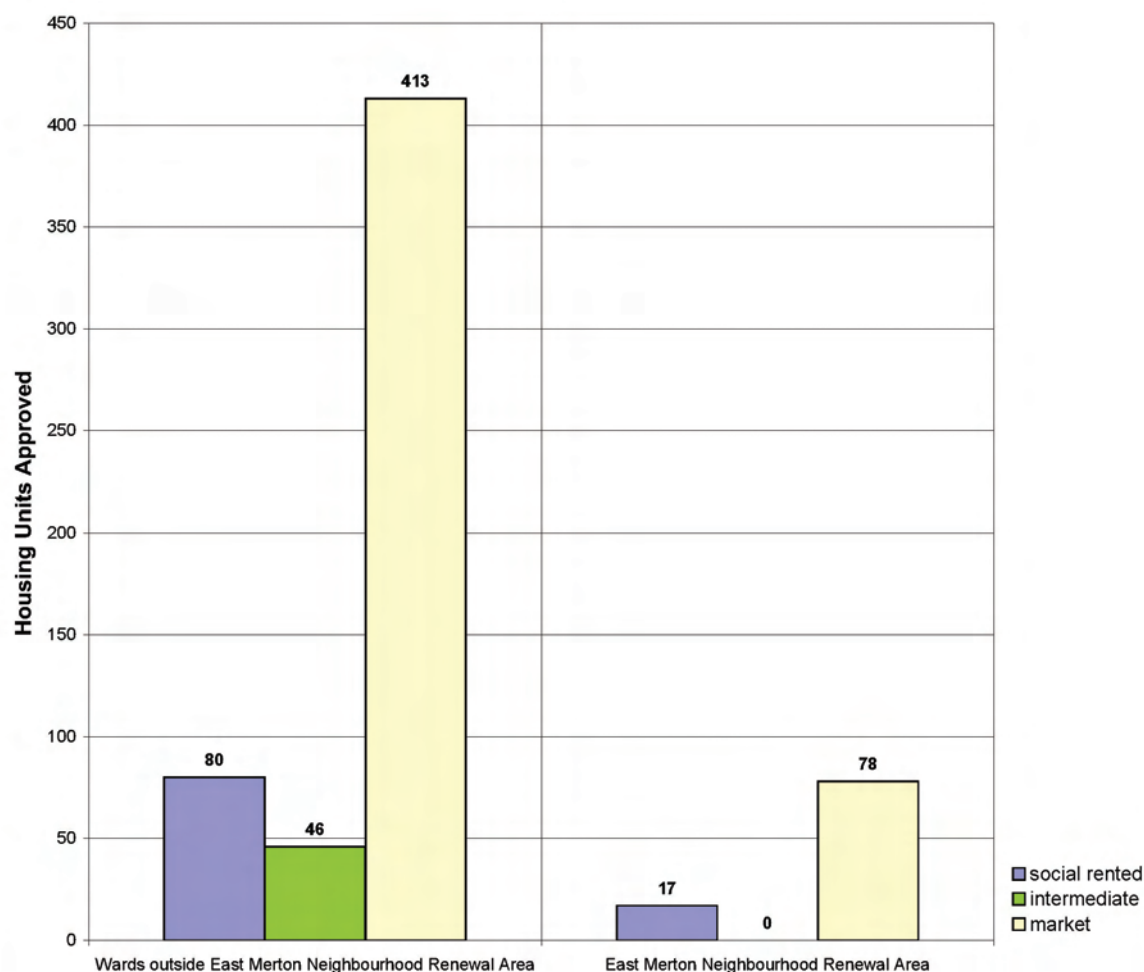
<b>Wards outside East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA)</b>			
Ward	Social Rented	Intermediate	Market
Abbey	0	0	27
Cannon Hill	0	0	5
Colliers Wood	30	20	181
Dundonald	0	0	17
Hillside	0	0	15
Lower Morden	0	0	2
Merton Park	23	10	12
Raynes Park	0	0	2
Trinity	0	0	19
Village	0	0	23
Wimbledon Park	0	0	6
West Barnes	27	16	99
Total approvals outside NRA	80	46	413
<b>East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area</b>			
Ward	Social Rented	Intermediate	Market
Cricket green	9	0	15
Figges Marsh	0	0	16
Graveney	0	0	27
Lavender Fields	0	0	1
Longthornton	8	0	4
Pollards Hill	0	0	2

## 5 Housing

Wards outside East Merton Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA)			
Ravensbury	0	0	10
St Helier	0	0	3
<b>Total in NRA</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Total of housing approvals in Merton</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>491</b>

**Table 5.8 Net Housing Units Approvals by ward in Merton 2008/09**

Source: GLA: London Development Database



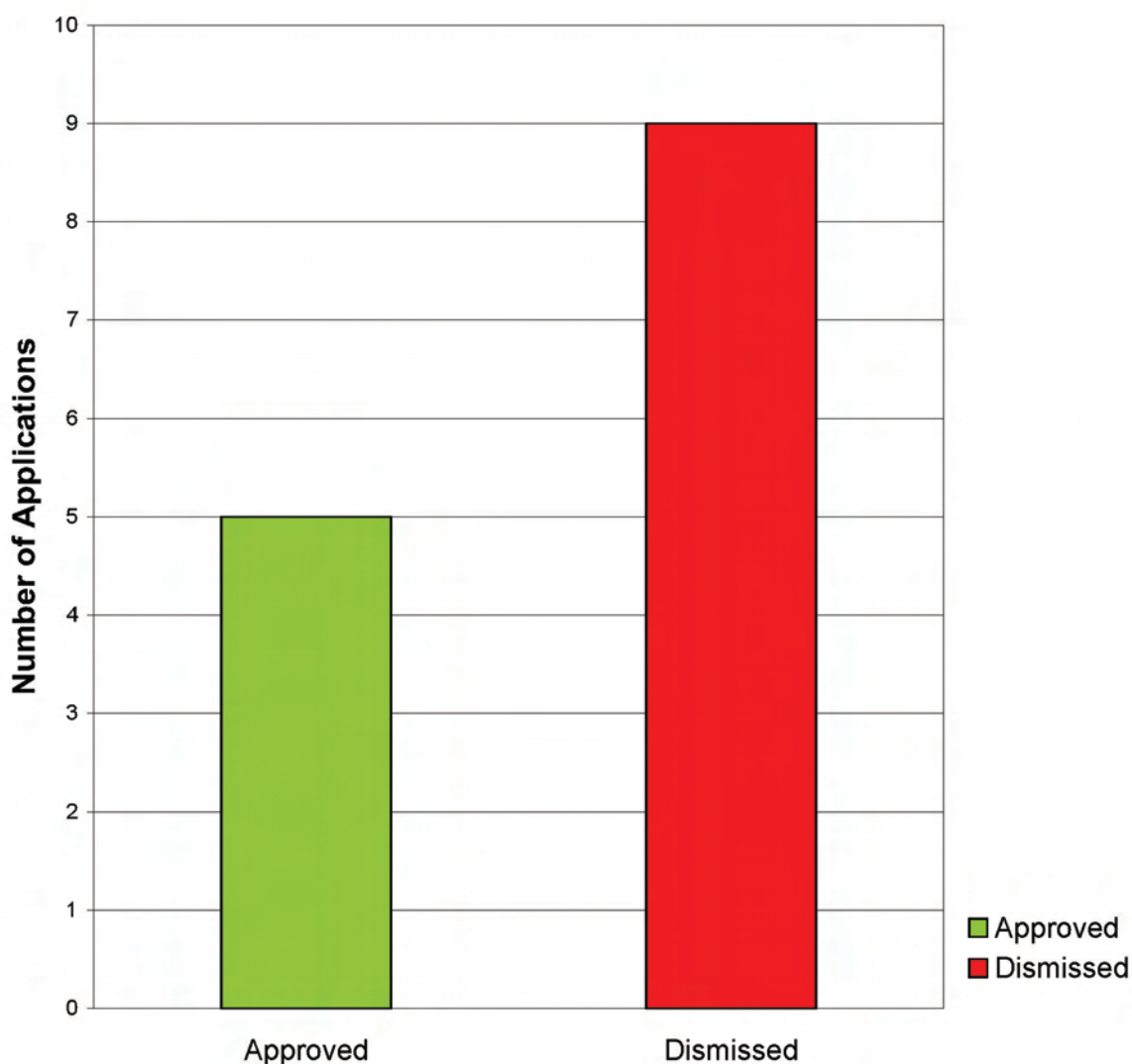
**Figure 5.5 Net Housing Unit Approvals 2008/09**

## Conversions

**5.36** In the 2008/09 monitoring year, 71 planning applications were determined involving housing conversions. The majority (92%) of these applications were for conversion from a single dwelling to multiple dwellings. There were 6 applications determined seeking a reduction from flats to a single dwelling. Four of these planning applications were approved, whilst two were refused.

**5.37** The majority of planning determinations involving housing unit conversions (43) were refused, 41 of which related to applications seeking a change from a single housing unit to two or more housing units. Of these refusals 14 decisions were appealed.

## 5 Housing



**Figure 5.6 Conversion application appeal outcomes in Merton 2008/09**

**5.38** With regard for council housing conversion policy, the council has minimum requirements in place to increase the quality and living space of smaller residential units within the borough. These requirements are contained within the *Residential Extension, Alterations and Conversions SPG 2001*, a main consideration being whether the existing usable floorspace exceeds 120sqm, and is examined.

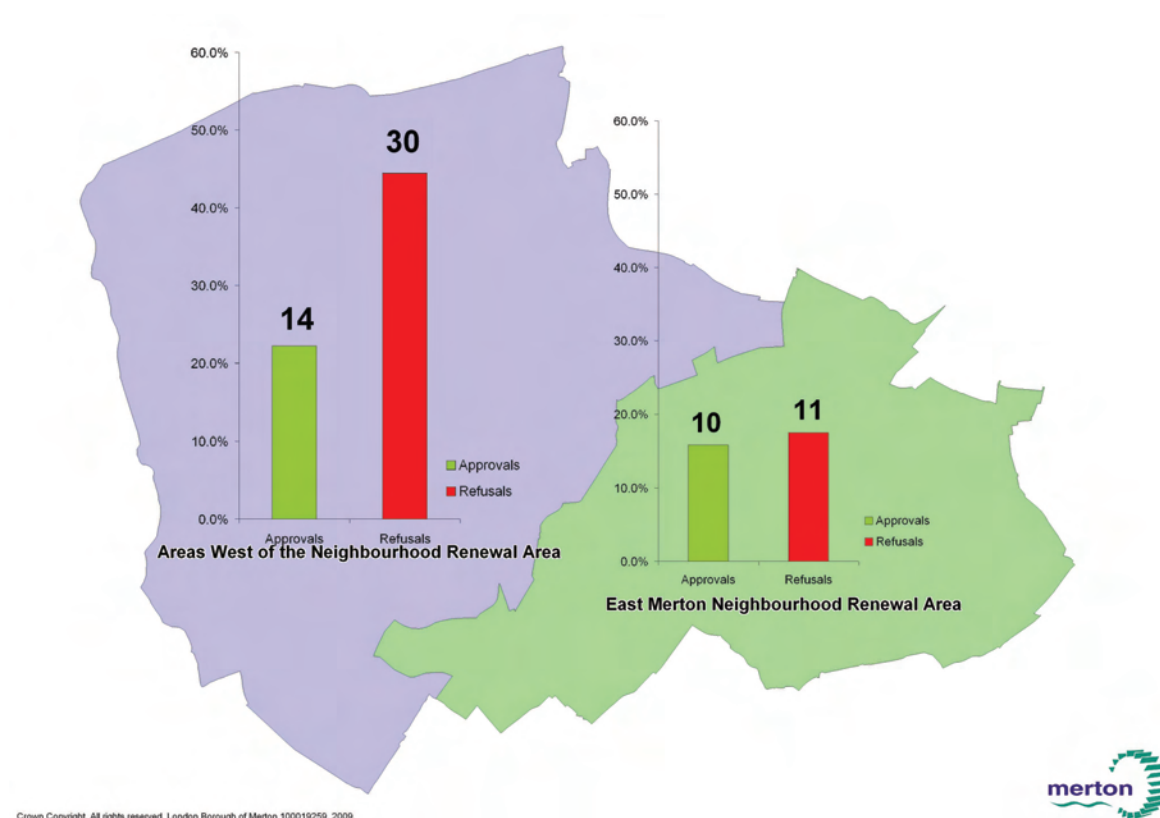
	Under 120sqm	Over 120sqm	Unknown Floorspace	Total
Approval	7	11	10	28
Refusal	11	20	12	43

	Under 120sqm	Over 120sqm	Unknown Floorspace	Total
Total	18	31	22	71

**Table 5.9 Conversion Applications in Merton 2008/09**

**5.39** It can be seen that the majority of conversion applications exceeded the 120sqm requirement however a large majority of those applications were refused. It is clear that compliance with the 120sqm requirement, whilst an important indicator, was not the single determining factor for conversion applications. It is likely that issues such as access to private open space, room size and plan layout provide for remaining determining factors.

**5.40** Map 5.1 shows, the greater number of single to multiple unit conversion applications are situated in the west of the borough. There are several plausible explanations for this trend, primarily the disparity in size between the two study areas, however this also follows a general trend of increased approvals and completions occurring toward the western part of the borough.



**Map 5.1 Conversion Applications (single to multiple) in Merton 2008/09**



## 5 Housing

### National Indicator

NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation

At the end of March 2009, Merton's Housing Department reports that the number of households in temporary accommodation has fallen to 70 cases, which is ahead of the 2010 target of 87 cases.

**5.41** Local authorities are required to monitor their progress toward a 50% reduction in the cases of households living in temporary accommodation provided under homelessness legislation in 2004 by 2010.

**5.42** In the 2008/2009 period, Merton's Housing department received 167 homelessness applications, with 67 of those applications accepted (Source: LB Merton Housing Department).

**5.43** Regardless of meeting the target, Merton will continue to monitor future cases, and is committed to reducing the number of cases of households living in temporary accommodation.

### Gypsy and Travellers

**5.44** Merton Council has a long established site at Brickfield Road, Wimbledon to meet the needs of gypsies and travellers. The latest caravan count figures published by CLG (Jan 2009) indicate that there are 15 permanent families currently occupying the site. There were no additional pitches created in 2008/09.

### Core Output Indicator

#### H4: Net additional pitches (Gypsy and Travellers)

Core Output Indicator	Permanent	Transit	Total
H4	0	0	0

## 6 Built Environment and Design

**6.1** The character, distinctiveness and viability of a successful area often lies in the quality of its built environment and public realm. High quality design of buildings, places and spaces can create a high quality and attractive environment which sets a positive context for the development of successful places and sustainable communities.

**6.2** Whilst Merton is designated as an outer London borough in the London Plan, in terms of its overall character, it plays a transitional role from urban to suburban character, neither bordering Surrey county or central London. This is one of the key defining aspects of the borough's character, resulting in a diverse built form and population.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

To make Merton a well designed borough with an attractive urban and suburban environment.

### Built Environment

**6.3** During 2008/09 a total of 3110 planning applications were submitted to the council, of which 51% were related to minor dwellings and household developments. Only 1% of all applications were major applications. 13% of the applications received related to Merton's historic environment.

**6.4** This reflects the predominant suburban built form character of the borough. Areas outside the town centres have kept their suburban character and high quality environment by respecting their heritage, but also encouraging improvements in areas of lower quality design.

**6.5** Table 6.1 below identifies all of the application types that were processed during the monitoring period.

Application type	Application description	No. of applications	Total no. of applications
<b>Pre-application advice</b>		61	61 (2%)
<b>Major</b>	Dwellings	12	44 (1%)
	Other	25	

## 6 Built Environment and Design

Application type	Application description	No. of applications	Total no. of applications
	Retail, offices, light and heavy industry	6	
	Telecom - prior notification	1	
<b>Change of use</b>		80	80 (3%)
<b>Advertisements</b>		85	85 (3%)
<b>Historic Environment</b>	Listed Buildings	37	409 (13%)
	Conservation Areas	71	
	Tree work in Conservation Areas	301	
<b>Householder developments</b>		1056	1056 (34%)
<b>Minor</b>	Dwellings	245	524 (17%)
	Other	256	
	Retail, offices, light and heavy industry	23	
<b>Tree work outside of Conservation Areas</b>		244	244 (8%)
<b>Certificate of Lawfulness</b>		426	426 (14%)
<b>Unknown/other</b>		242	181 (5%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>3110</b>

**Table 6.1 Application for planning permission 2008/09**

**6.6** In the 2007/08 AMR the analysis of total planning applications only included reference to full planning permissions, conservation area consents and outline planning permissions. Table 6.1 above has been expanded this monitoring year to include all application types received.

**6.7** Comparing the two years, there have been fewer planning applications received by the council from 2097 applications in 2007/08, to 1765 applications in 2008/09. There has also been a slight reduction in the number of these applications refused by the council from 23.8% in 2007/08 to 22% in 2008/09. The reduction in application numbers reflects a wider decline in property development which is said to be related to the recent economic downturn.

## The Built Heritage

**6.8** There are a total of 222 Grade II Listed buildings, 9 Grade II\*, and only 3 Grade I Listed Buildings within the borough covering 315 buildings and structures. (Some list entries cover more than 1 building and some entries are not buildings but are gravestones, monuments, horse troughs etc).

**6.9** Additionally over 850 local (Non Statutory) listed buildings of historical or architectural interest have been identified within the borough. There are:

- 20 Archaeological Priority Zones identified by English Heritage.
- Three scheduled ancient monuments
- Four historic parks and gardens

### Strategic Objective Target (draft)

The number of Listed Buildings at Risk in Merton.

**6.10** The number of Buildings at Risk in Merton has continued to fall from 10 in 2004/05 to 6 in 2008/09. Merton is meeting its target to reduce the number of listed Buildings at Risk, but not Buildings at Risk as a percentage of the total number of listed buildings in London, which has increased since 2006/07. This highlights that there is a need to continue to reduce the number of listed buildings at risk in the borough, and further promote Merton's historic built environment.

Year	Buildings at risk	
Year	London	Merton
2004/05	692	10
2005/06	678	8
2006/07	662	7
2007/08	572	7

## 6 Built Environment and Design

Year	Buildings at risk	
Year	London	Merton
2008/09	492	6

**Table 6.2 Listed Building at Risk**

**6.11** Conservation Areas are designated by the council as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which should be preserved or enhanced. These areas are of high environmental quality, and are a significant factor in defining local identity and distinctiveness. There are 28 Conservation Areas within the borough covering an area of just under 602 square kilometres (617 Hectares), a little over 16% of the borough.

**6.12** The purpose of Conservation Area Character Assessments is to justify the conservation area designation and to define the features of interest that give each area a special character. The assessments also make a number of proposals which are aimed at either protecting the special character of the area, where it is seen to be under some threat, or enhancing the character of the area where there are opportunities to do so.

Year	Character Appraisals Underway	Adopted Character Appraisals	Adopted Design Guides
2004/05	1	1	0
2005/06	10	10	8
2006/07	7	2	8
2007/08	6	5	1
2008/09	3	2	0
<b>Total</b>		20	17

**6.13** During 2008/09, Mitcham Cricket Green, Drax Avenue and Dennis Park Crescent Character Appraisals were all underway. The Vineyard Hill Road and Wimbledon North Character Appraisals were adopted within this period. A total of 20 Character Appraisals have now been adopted, up from 18 in 2007/08.

## Design Quality

**6.14** Good design is not a consideration limited to conservation areas or to other sensitive areas in Merton, it is an important aspect of development across the borough, and is central to the whole concept of good planning. Merton uses urban design principles and tools such as CABE Building for Life criteria in assessing new built form to ensure that it enhance the overall design quality of the borough.

**6.15** The CABE Building for Life criteria is a government endorsed assessment benchmark developed by CABE. The assessment has been designed to ensure that it meets the criteria described for housing quality in PPS3

### Core Output Indicator

#### H6: Housing Quality

To show the level of quality in new housing development

The Building for Life ratings for the relevant housing completions during the 2008/09 monitoring year were not monitored, however this will be undertaken for relevant housing completions in 2009/10.

## 6 Built Environment and Design

### Strategic Objective Target (draft)

Number of council planning decisions upheld at appeal where design (built environment) policies are cited.

Year	Number of appeal decisions	Number of appeal decisions citing built environment policies	Number of council planning decisions upheld where design (built environment) policies are cited.
2008/09	112	94	53 (56%)

**Table 6.4 : Appeals: Built Environment and Design policies 2008/09**

**6.16** In 2008/09 the success of Merton's design policies at appeal was 56%, based on the number of council planning decisions that were upheld, where the Planning Inspector cited design (built environment) policies. This figure, although greater than 50% still does not represent a high success rate of built environment policies at appeal. This is the first monitoring year for this indicator, and it is anticipated that the forthcoming LDF will introduce stronger design controls that reflect Merton's current built environment, and that are informed by sound evidence.

**6.17** The Design Review Panel (DRP) held six panel meetings during the 08/09 monitoring year, commenting on a total of 24 development proposals, 19 of which were pre-applications, and five planning applications. The purpose of the panel is to access additional expert design advice in order to assist it in the task of improving the quality of design of new buildings and spaces in the borough.

**6.18** The panel adopt a 'traffic light' system of assessments, where a collective view of the panel is given on the design of schemes according to a red, amber or green verdict in accordance with CABE guidance. The results of the panel during the 2008/09 monitoring year include:

- Red verdict: 11 schemes
- Amber verdict: 6 schemes
- Green verdict: 7 schemes

**6.19** From the 24 schemes, amendments were made to nine schemes following the recommendations of the Panel. These amendments ranged from major changes to the proposal to minor improvements. Three proposed schemes were reviewed



twice by the DRP during the 2008/09 monitoring period, following red verdicts at their first review. Two of the three schemes that were reviewed twice increased their rating at the second review, both from red to amber.

**6.20** The Background Papers on Tall Buildings and Dwelling Conversions started during 2008/09, both of which will form part of the Local Development Framework Evidence Base in support of the Design policy. The Tall Buildings Background Paper will identify locations in the borough where tall buildings may be suitable, and the Dwelling Conversions Background Paper will identify the detrimental impacts that dwelling conversions can have on the suburban characteristics of the streetscape in some areas of the borough.

## Public Realm

**6.21** Merton priorities Public Realm improvements to help support town and local centres and improve a residential environment. Merton has adopted a new Public Realm Strategy which seeks to unify the palette of materials used in streetscaping across the borough. It also provides a standardised suite of high quality street furniture to improve the borough's town and local centres. Phase two of the strategy will be prepared in mid 2009 and will provide conceptual designs for public spaces in Wimbledon, Morden and Mitcham town centres.

**6.22** The following specific public realm projects and street scene improvements were undertaken in throughout the 2008/09 monitoring year:

### Raynes Park

**6.23** Raynes Park Local Centre Enhancement Plan was adopted in February 2009. This sets out a strategy, co-ordinating a series of streetscene improvement projects which will revitalise the centre, maintaining its position in the borough's hierarchy of centres as a successful place to shop, work and to continue meeting the needs of local businesses, residents and commuters.

**6.24** Improvements include new pedestrian way finding signage, de-cluttering of the streets and footways, rationalisation of car parking provision and new paving and street furniture.

### Wimbledon Chase

**6.25** Detailed plans for streetscene improvement works are to be drawn up based on Civic Forum proposals and related discussions, with works likely to commence in 2009/10.

## 6 Built Environment and Design

### Morden Town Centre

**6.26** Project planning got underway in 2008/09 for improvements to Morden town centre which include issues listed below. It is expected that most of the works will be carried out by mid 2010:

- Enhancement to civic centre piazza including new street furniture, (bins and lamp columns) and pedestrian way-finding information
- Re-paving of Morden Court Parade (London Rd) funded by TfL.
- Living Streets survey completed and is informing the development of complementary initiatives.
- Freight loading initiative – leaflet distributed to local businesses locating waiting restrictions in the town centre to assist them with deliveries to shops, funded by TfL.
- Pedestrian signage to Morden Road Tram Stop now installed funded by TfL.
- Cycle parking – additional stands being provided to replace the guardrails funded by TfL.
- Loading scheme being developed for the alleyway in the Aberconway and Abbotsbury Roads area funded by TfL.
- Draft proposals to relocate stands for 1 – 2 bus services from Morden station being considered in discussion with TfL and London Buses.

**6.27** Further improvements funded from Capital stemming from the second phase of Merton's Public Realm Strategy will provide conceptual streetscape designs for the borough's town centres.

**6.28** Planning has commenced on street furniture enhancements in Morden (co-ordinated bins, lighting, pedestrian signage and maps in line with Merton's Public Realm Strategy)

### Wandle Trail

**6.29** Improvements are being made along the Wandle Trail. Project planning was started in 2008/09, again it is expected that work will continue into 2010/11

- Resurfacing the footpath from Trewint Street to Plough Lane (Wandle Valley Local Nature Reserve)
- Resurfacing the footpath along Mead Path. (opposite Havelock Allotments)
- Dredging one of the ponds in Wandle Meadow Local Nature Reserve
- Removal of Pennywort from the lake at Ravensbury Park
- Bridge improvement work on one of the bridges in Ravensbury Park following an annual inspection survey.
- Bridge resurfacing at Garfield Recreation ground leading into Wandle Valley Local Nature Reserve

- New signage along the River Wandle and the new bridge adjacent to Ravensbury Park (Bishopsford Road)
- Planning for three new seats in Ravensbury Park which will be installed during 2009/10.

## **Mitcham Town Centre**

**6.30** Projects started in 2008/09 to improve Mitcham town centre include:

- Five Mitcham Gateways: provision of signage at five key locations and associated improvements to the public realm following consultation on the detailed design with the Mitcham Society, funded from Investing in Deprived Areas Capital
- Street Furniture: Four bins and three seats were supplied. The clock tower has been refurbished. One electronic and two standard notice boards erected, funded from London Development Agency Mitcham Means Business project
- Six lavender planters were refurbished and Fair Green grass resurfaced and worn grass replaced in other areas of the town centre, funded from London Development Agency Mitcham Means Business project
- Provision of the new market square in Fair Green
- 'Legible London' style pedestrian wayfinding signage on Fair Green
- Pedestrian improvements on St Mark's Road at the junction with the open air car park and the school funded from Capital.

**6.31** The Council has developed a strategic walking route from the new Mitcham Eastfields Station to and from the town centre, co-funded by Transport for London and Merton Council. Works include:

- The Laburnum Road Home Zone where the tender process has been completed and the contract awarded to go on site in 2009. Two of the footpaths have been completed as has the perimeter fencing and the CCTV along with the play area.
- The St Marks Road proposal was put out to public consultation in early 2009, and is expected to be delivered later that year, subject to the outcome of the public consultation. This proposal also includes a resurfacing element.

## **General**

**6.32** The following general public realm projects were undertaken throughout the borough; some of this work will continue into 2010:

- Footway paving and forecourt renewal outside local shopping parades
- Enhanced programme of refurbishment/replacement of lamp columns and sign posts
- Commenced program of replacing existing seating in town centres with better durable seating



## 6 Built Environment and Design

- Planning for renewal of Wimbledon Town Centre paving,
- Morden Park Access Road lighting renewal
- Installation of seat and litter bins, dog bins and cycle racks in parks
- Improved direction and access signage to and within parks
- Recycling bins and composting bays installed in parks

## 7 Social and Community Infrastructure

**7.1** Physical and social infrastructure is required to facilitate and support emerging development in the borough. We will work with our partners on the delivery of support services to match projected population growth and proposed development.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

*All Strategic Objectives*

### Health Care

**7.2** The primary care provider for Merton residents is Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust (SMPCT). Sutton and Merton PCT covers two outer London boroughs that are quite different in terms of their demography. It serves a total registered population of around 403,000 (Source: Europa 2007) and a resident population of 382,162 (184,435 in Sutton and 199,300 in Merton *Source: ONS Resident Population Estimates, mid 2008*). It is one of the largest PCT's in the UK and the only PCT covering two Local Authorities.

**7.3** The aims of the Sutton and Merton PCT are to improve local health services, the health of the population and to address health inequalities. Local Area Agreements (LAAs) help to achieve these aims, by promoting partnership working. The LAAs developed for Merton have been agreed with the Government Office for London (GOL). This work aims to address the inequalities within London boroughs by focusing on those most disadvantaged.

### National Indicator

NI 119: Self-reported measure of peoples overall health and well-being:

84.4% of residents said they felt their health was fair to very good, compared to the London wide 79% and national average of 76%.

### National Indicator

NI 55: Obesity in primary school age children in reception:

## 7 Social and Community Infrastructure

### ***Merton Healthier Communities Strategy***

**7.4** The Healthier Communities strategy 2008 - 2012 provides a unique opportunity for partners to make Merton healthier. It aims to help individuals and communities take a long term responsibility for their health. The priorities include:

- Reducing smoking
- Reducing obesity
- Improving mental health and well being
- Increasing choice and control for user and carers
- Addressing the wider determinants of health

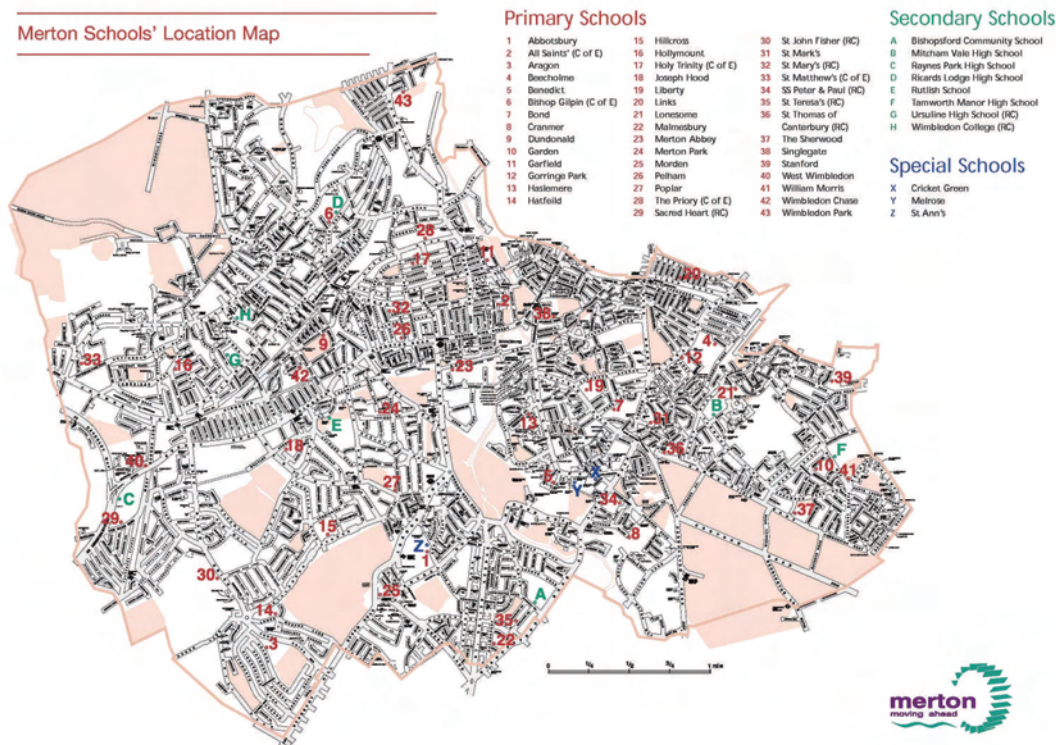
**7.5** Action plans have been developed for smoking, obesity and mental health and well-being. The strategic plan set out to improve the health and quality of life of its residents through focusing on prevention of ill health and the commissioning of quality services that are clinically effective and provide value for money. People will be supported in managing their own health.

### ***Education***

**7.6** Merton has 43 primary schools with a nursery attached to each, 8 secondary schools including 2 academies, and 3 special needs schools.

**7.7** The growth in demand for primary schools in the borough has depleted the previous surplus in the east and has required expansion in the west. These expansions are expected throughout the borough in future years with total primary numbers forecast to increase from 12,808 in January 2008 to 14,469 by January 2013.

Merton Schools' Location Map



Map 7.1 Schools in Merton

## National Indicator

NI 73: Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2:

- 2008/2009 (academic year 2007/2008) - 73%
- 2009/2010 (academic year 2008/2009) - 73% (provisional)

## National Indicator

NI 75: Achievement of 5\* or more A\*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3:

- 2008/2009 (academic year 2007/2008) - 46.2%
- 2009/2010 (academic year 2008/2009) - 48.7% (provisional)



## 7 Social and Community Infrastructure

**7.8** Please note that the 2009 academic year figures are provisional and subject to change prior to publication later in the year.

### Community facilities

**7.9** The Sure Start Children's Centres in Merton provide services for Children aged 0-5.

**7.10** Merton's Early Years, Childcare and Children's Centres Service has joined up with schools, local organisations and groups, NHS services and local service providers to create an invaluable service for families with young children in Merton. Services available at the Children's Centres include:

- Child and family health services including access to health promotion, antenatal support and breast-feeding
- Access to good quality childcare integrated with early education
- Family support services including helping with the challenges of being a parent
- Help and support to access training and employment
- Advice to help families to maximise their income

**7.11** These services will be found at different locations in the local area, such as health and family centres, parent and toddler drop in services and children's centres themselves. Some centres are attached to schools, and others are in community buildings.

### National Indicator

NI 109: Delivery of Sure Start Children's Centres:

### Culture and Heritage

**7.12** Merton is home to a variety of culture and heritage which includes:

- 8 libraries
- 4 museums
- 1 heritage centre
- 4 theatres of which 3 are youth theatres
- 4 artist studio blocks

**7.13** A lot of the local heritage and cultural activity in the borough is free. The libraries offer a range of study and reading activity with access to information via books, online, talking books, DVD's and CD's. There are free study services such



as use of computers and an open Learning Centre at Pollards Hill library. Additional activities such as adult reading groups, an annual summer reading challenge and children's story time are also provided.

**7.14** Merton Arts Development runs a number of community projects throughout the year in partnership with local artists/art organisations. The studio blocks provide over 40 studio spaces for local artists to use.

**7.15** The Heritage Centre is home to artefacts and exhibitions relating to Merton and its history and the local study centres have historical records with old newspapers, photographs and maps of the borough.

### **National Indicator**

NI 9: Use of public libraries; 48.8% of residents use the borough public libraries

Source: Annual Residents Survey 2008

### **National Indicator**

NI 10: Visits to museums and libraries: 61.8% of residents visit the museums and public libraries

Source: Annual Residents Survey 2008

### **National Indicator**

NI 11: Engagement in the arts: 50.2% of Merton residents engage in the arts

Source: Annual Residents Survey 2008

## 8 Planning Obligations

### 8 Planning Obligations

**8.1** Government guidance requires that a planning obligation must be:

- Relevant to planning;
- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the proposed development;
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development;
- Reasonable in all other respects.

### Planning obligation monitoring information 2008/09

**8.2** During the year under review, 38 planning permissions were granted which required a S.106 Agreement and financial contributions to the value of £2,819,804. During this period the Council received £907,545 in planning agreement contributions of which £328,947 was spent. Whilst more was collected in the year than was spent, infrastructure projects are usually not delivered within the same financial year. It is plausible that some years will have a higher spend than collection, particularly when larger infrastructure schemes are delivered. The tables below provide more detail regarding S.106 agreements during the financial year.

Head of Term	07/08	08/09
Education	£169,226	£1,522,004
Open space/leisure	£777,399	£349,534
Transport and highways	£285,290	£398,266
Regeneration and economy	£46,000	£490,000
Security	nil	£60,000
Total	£1,277,915	£2,819,804

**Table 8.1 Monetary S106 agreed by category 2007/08 and 2008/09**

### 8.3

Address	Description
<p>Arrow works, 6-7 Elm Grove, Wimbledon, SW19</p> <p>Date: 20/02/2009</p>	<p>17 one and two bedroom flats (13 units on tenancy agreements, 2 x 1 bedroom and 2 x 2 bedroom as shared ownership) to be constructed on the land with (not less than 40% of the number of dwellings) to be affordable housing.</p>
<p>Land at Standor House, 272-286 London Rd and 25 Raleigh Gardens, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3NB</p> <p>Date: 03/11/2008</p>	<p>Ensure the affordable housing units (9 flats comprising 5 x 2 bedroom and 4 x 1 bedroom shared ownership units forming part of the development to be constructed on the property) are available for sale and/or letting by a RSL to persons meeting affordable housing criteria under a lease or leases and/or tenancy or tenancies. To be built to Housings Corporation Standards (2003).</p>
<p>Brown and Root Tower, High Street, Colliers Wood</p> <p>Date: 09/04/2008</p>	<p>50 residential units within the development of which 30 shall be RSL Rented Units comprising 20 x 2 bedroom flats and 10 x 1 bedroom flats and 10 shall be RSL Shared Equity Units comprising 1 bedroom flats and 10 shall be low cost home ownership flats, subject to Schedule 4 of this agreement.</p>
<p>Total social/RSL rented</p>	<p>43</p>
<p>Total RSL shared Equity</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>Total Shared ownership</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>Total Low Cost Home Ownership</p>	<p>10</p>

## 8 Planning Obligations

Address	Description	
Total Affordable Housing commitments 2008/09		76

**Table 8.2 Affordable housing commitments through planning obligations (non-financial)**

NB. The figures above in Affordable housing commitments through planning obligations (non-financial) refer to planning permissions granted with a signed S106 rather than completions

Address	Category	Description
Former Brown and Root Tower, 125 High St, Colliers Wood Date: 09/04/2008	Car Free	Occupiers of the flats are not entitled to park a vehicle within the curtilage of the site and will not be entitled to residential parking permits within the CPZ zone.
Former Brown and Root Tower, 125 High St, Colliers Wood Date: 09/04/2008	Car Club	12 car parking places reserved for a car club scheme.
Land at Former Sleeppezee site, 61 Morden Road, SW19 Date: 24/07/2008	Sustainable Transport	Provision of land for a bus stop if requested by the council within four years of the agreement date. The owners shall secure the council's approval of a travel plan to ensure occupants of the site undertake various sustainable travel initiatives.
Land at 52 Wimbledon Road, SW19 Date: 11/08/2008	Parking Permit Free	Occupiers of the flats will not be entitled to a resident parking bay in the locality or on-street parking within the CPZ zone W1

## 8 Planning Obligations

Address	Category	Description
Land at the rear of the conservative club, Raynes Park Date: 21/08/2008	Car/Parking Permit Free	Occupiers of the flats will not be entitled to a resident parking permit for a resident parking bay in the locality or on-street parking within the Raynes Park CPZ. On-site parking restricted to occupants of flats 2 and 3 and delivery vehicles associated with the conservative club only.
Land at 20 North Gardens, Colliers Wood Date: 27/08/2008	Parking Permit Free	Occupiers of the flats will not be entitled to a resident parking permit for a resident parking bay in the Colliers Wood CPZ or a contract to park a motor vehicle in any council owned, controlled or licensed car park.
Land at 100-106 Haydon's Road, South Wimbledon, SW19 1AW Date: 23/10/2008	Open Space	Refurbishment and extension of the park attendants mess hall in strict accordance with the drawing and Schedule (drawing no. 1220/05) attached to the S.106 agreement, to the reasonable satisfaction of the council.
Land at 2 Cavendish Road, Colliers Wood, London SW19 Date: 01/10/2008	Parking Permit Free	Site not to be occupied by a permit holder. No parking permits to be granted to future occupants of the development.

Address	Category	Description
Land at 128-134 Merton High Street, Colliers Wood SW19 1BA Date: 20/10/2008	Parking Permit Free	Any occupant whilst residing using and/or occupying a dwelling shall not purchase or procure the purchase of a parking permit for a residential parking bay in the CPZ.
Land at rear of 42 Wimbledon Hill Road, Wimbledon SW19 7PA Date: 20/10/2008	Parking Permit Free	No occupant entitled to park a motor vehicle on-site or to a resident parking permit for a resident parking bay in the Wimbledon CPZ (as amended) or a contract to park a motor vehicle in any council owned, controlled or licensed car park.
173 Kingston Road, SW19 Date: 14/12/2008	Car Free	Occupiers of the flats to be constructed on the site will not be entitled to park a motor vehicle within the site boundary and will not be entitled to a residential parking permit within the CPZ W4 or any controlled parking zone amending or replacing it.
28-30 Goat Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 4HH Date: 15/01/2009	Traffic/Access	To construct the access road adjacent to the western boundary of the site shown on the S.106 attached plan.

## 8 Planning Obligations

Address	Category	Description
Arrow Works, 6-7 Elm Grove, Wimbledon, SW19 Date: 20/02/2009	Highways	Area of land hatched red on the plan to be dedicated and adopted by the council to widen the public footway.
Arrow Works, 6-7 Elm Grove, Wimbledon, SW19 Date: 20/02/2009	Sustainable Transport	Travel plan measures to be taken by the developer to promote the use of public transport and achieve a reduction in the use of motor vehicles.
Arrow Works, 6-7 Elm Grove, Wimbledon, SW19 Date: 20/02/2009	Parking Permit Free	Occupants of the residential units are not entitled to a residential parking permit within the CPZ.

**Table 8.3 Planning obligations signed - benefits in kind 2008/09**

Component	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Affordable Housing		76.4%	33.4%					
Economic Development / Regeneration / Security	64%			35.4%	16%	26%	43%	24%



Component	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Education					13%		30%	8%
Transport related	14.8%		31.7%	19.2%		37%		14%
Open Space/Leisure		4.5%		19%	44%	13%	13%	54%
<b>Total received per year</b>	<b>£472,300</b>	<b>£5,000,000</b>	<b>£747,742</b>	<b>£594,046</b>	<b>£3,467,286</b>	<b>£570,519</b>	<b>£878,129</b>	<b>£907,546</b>

**Table 8.4 Planning obligations (monetary) received per financial year 2001/2- 2008/09**

## 8 Planning Obligations

Component	Total Spend 2008/09	%
CCTV	£65,943	18%
Leisure	£101,493	28%
Regeneration / Economic Development	£119,924	33%
Transport, Traffic and Highways	£117,545	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£363,617</b>	

**Table 8.5 Monetary Planning Obligations Spent 2008/09**

**8.4** Planning obligations sought and achieved will vary from year to year depending on the sites that are granted planning permission subject to an agreement within that financial year. Not all planning agreements signed will ultimately be received by the council. For example the landowner / developer may choose not to progress development or where another application and agreement may supersede that already signed.

**8.5** In addition, planning obligations received within a financial year may date from previous years. Depending on the agreement, planning obligations can be required to be completed before the development is started, during its course or before completion, occupation or during the lifetime of the development. As such there is little correlation between agreements signed and monies received during each financial year.

### **The Community Infrastructure Levy**

**8.6** The Planning Bill (November 2007) builds on the proposals set out in the Planning White Paper and introduces a new system for nationally significant infrastructure planning, alongside further reforms to the town and country planning system and introduced a new statutory planning charge to be called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

**8.7** CIL policies will be based on a costed assessment of the infrastructure requirements arising out of development. The Government has indicated that new powers are not likely to come into effect until spring 2010 at the earliest.

## 9 Transport Infrastructure

**9.1** Merton and its neighbouring boroughs in south west London, have the highest rate of traffic generation in London and it is expected to increase. This is as a result of the region's relative prosperity, spatial characteristics and the transport network.

**9.2** Most of south London and Merton falls within a 45 minute journey time to central London; in Merton there are differences between the east and the west of the borough.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

To make Merton a well connected place where walking, cycling and public transport are the modes of choice when planning journeys.

### Strategic Objective Target (draft)

- Production of a new Sustainable Transport Strategy for Merton
- Improvements to walk and cycle network
- Increase in external funding
- Estimated annual carbon savings

### National Indicator

NI 175: Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

## Transport, deprivation and development

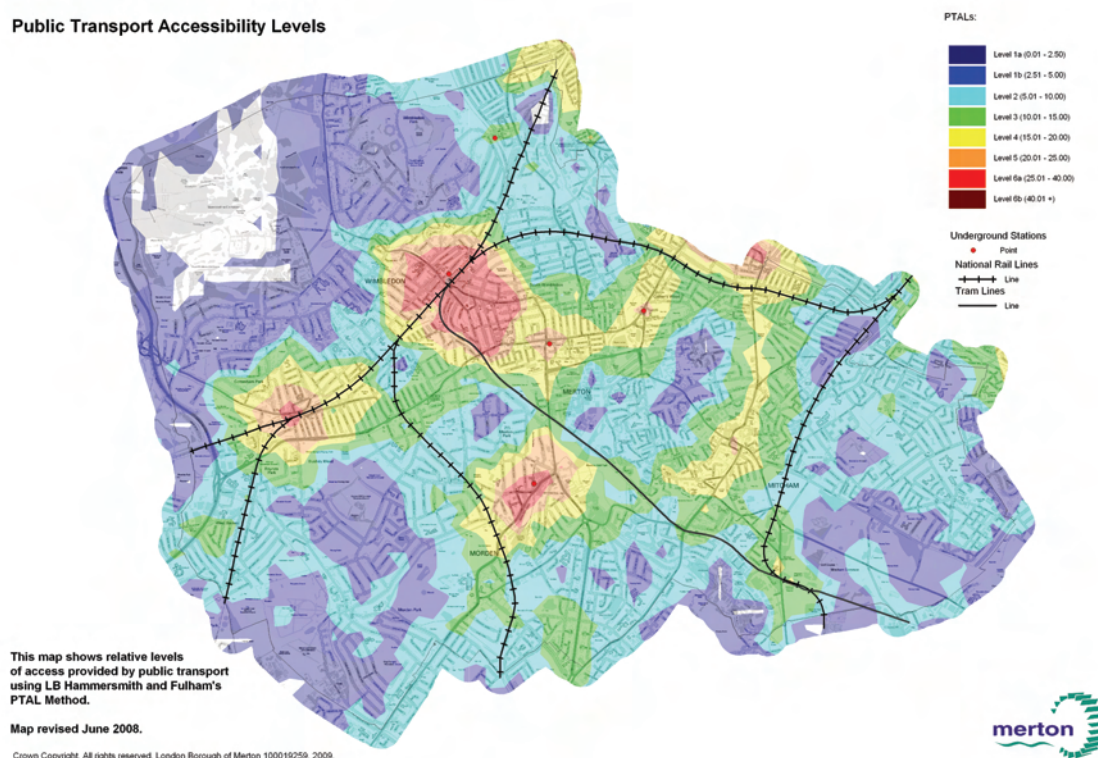
**9.3** In Merton, 30% of households do not own a car (Merton Census, 2001). In comparison to London as a whole this figure was quite low (the figure for Greater London was 37%). Although the number of households without cars was lower in Merton borough than in London generally, and inner London in particular, 30% is still a significant proportion of households without immediate access to a car, which relates to issues of social exclusion, and access to goods and services.

## 9 Transport Infrastructure

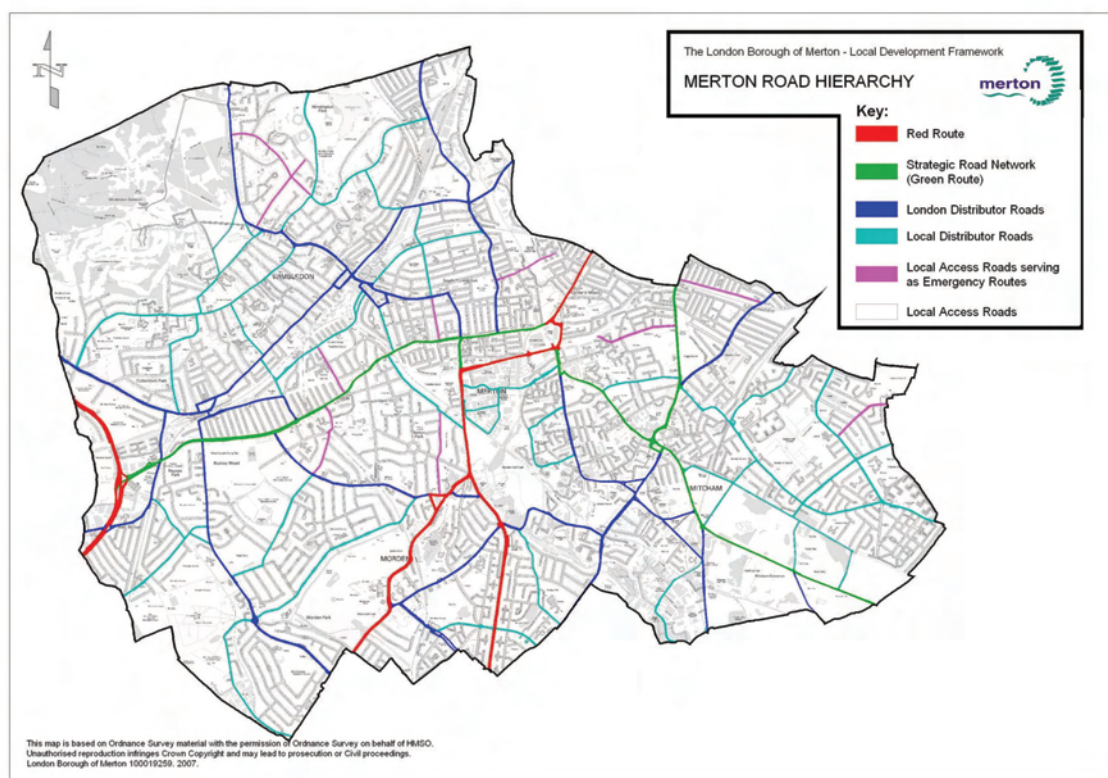
**9.4** Car availability is not evenly spread throughout the borough, with households in wards such as Colliers Wood, Abbey, and Cricket Green having the largest numbers of households without access to a car. To safeguard against social exclusion the council will endeavour to improve access to other modes of transport throughout the borough, and in particular to areas where low car ownership occurs.

**9.5** There are long-standing issues of multiple deprivation and socio-economic exclusion in Merton's eastern wards, especially in the Mitcham area. Reaching east Merton has been attributed to Mitcham's poor accessibility by a range of modes of transport.

**9.6** The new station at Eastfields Mitcham, opened in 2008, is the start of addressing the needs of public transport need to this area and has been welcomed by the local residents. The west of the borough generally has good public transport, particularly in the Wimbledon area, with its comprehensive network of bus and more frequent rail services.



**Map 9.1 Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL)**



**Map 9.2 Merton Road Hierarchy**

**9.7** Train services passing through Merton almost exclusively cater for the commute into central London and have poor intra-regional and non-radial directions. There are gaps within the network particularly where there are poor connections between rail services. The Underground service provides a more frequent and reliable service but does not directly serve the east of the borough.

**9.8** Accessibility to the rail network in the borough is good, with few residential neighbourhoods being more than 1km (0.6 mile) from a railway station.

**9.9** Tramlink, which provides some radial movement across the borough, has proven to be a success with passengers journey reaching over 22,000,00 in 2004-2005. Tramlink routes runs from Wimbledon Town Centre through the borough in Mitcham on to neighbouring borough of Croydon. The Tramlink has significantly improved public transport for Mitcham, and is a xx as Mitcham Eastfields to regenerate the area.

## 9 Transport Infrastructure

**9.10** In recent years Merton has provided significant priority measures in conjunction with the London Bus Priority Network (LBPN). This has included bus lanes, bus stop clear ways, and bus priority within traffic signal operations and enforcement of existing waiting and loading restrictions.

**9.11** Merton has jointly developed a Bus Quality Commitment with Transport for London's London Buses Services Limited and is working with partners in TfL to implement a rolling programme of joint actions to improve public transport in Merton. With our partners we will audit and address accessibility requirements for those with mobility needs such as providing highway adaptations for low floor buses and improving the environment around bus stops.

**9.12** Car Clubs were introduced in Merton in September 2003, with the launch of two vehicles and two bays on Avebury Road in Wimbledon, operated by City Car Club. Since July 2007 Merton have two operators in Merton; Streetcar and City Car Club with a total of 15 vehicles based in 12 locations (15 bays) throughout the borough and a total of 625 registered members.

	December 08	January 09	February 09	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09
<b>borough members</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>1216</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>1359</b>
<b>Total number of locations</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Number of on street locations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Number of off-street locations</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>

**Table 9.1 Club Cars usage in Merton**

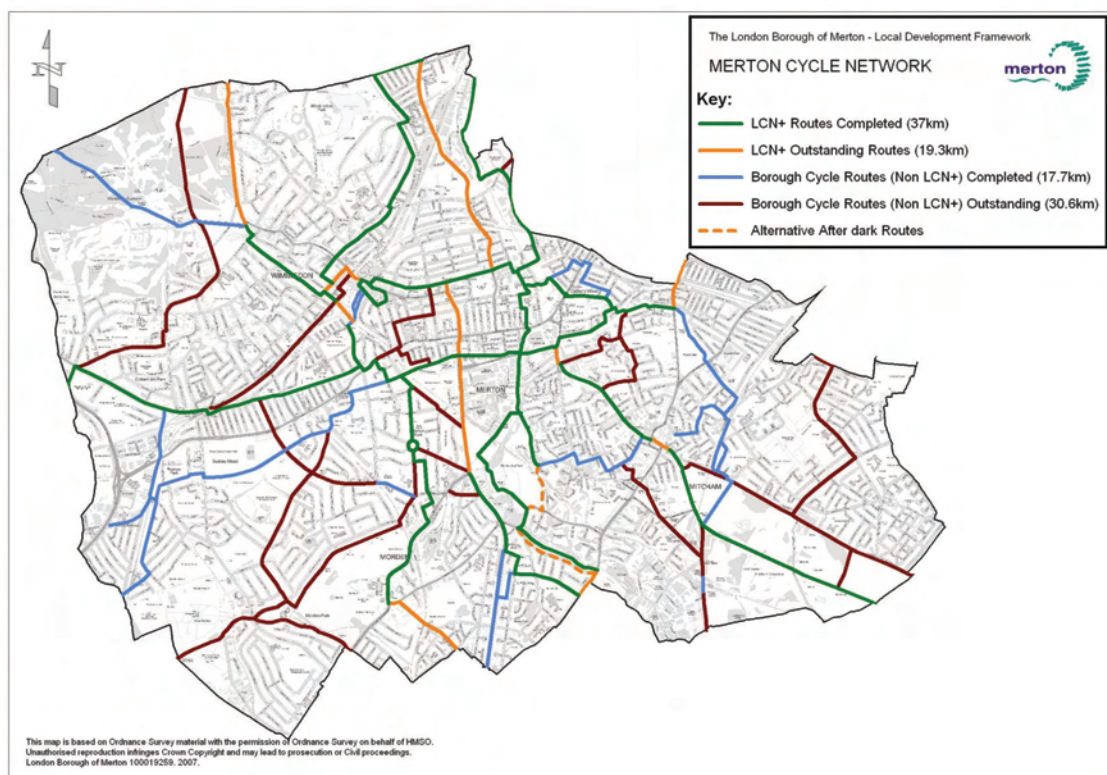
Source: LB Merton Transport Planning

**9.13** The environment benefits of electric cars are significant emissions from these vehicles are 70% lower than equivalent petrol cars. The Mayor of London recently announced plans to reduce dioxide emissions by increasing the number of electric cars in London through the introduction of another 100 charging location across the city.



**9.14** Merton encourages new development to incorporate cycling facilities in accordance with standards recommended by the London Cycling Campaign and the London Cycle Network Design Manual. Merton continues to develop the LCN+ network and seeks to address gaps in the local cycle network through the introduction of local links.

**9.15** There is real potential for increasing cycling in London. Half of all trips made in London are less than two miles and are easily within cycling distance. The level of cycling in London is relatively low compared with many other European cities. There are many reasons why people do not cycle including hostile traffic conditions, fear of traffic accidents and pollution, unsuitable road design and a lack of secure parking.



**Map 9.3 Merton Cycle Network**

**9.16** Walking has been under valued as a means of transport, despite it's importance and the benefit it offers in terms of the environment, health and social and economic matters. In the past walking has been under recorded in travel surveys because of data collection methods employed. However, about 50% of car trips are 3 kilometres or less and almost 20% are less than half a kilometre, indicating that

## 9 Transport Infrastructure

there is significant scope for increasing walking significantly throughout the borough. In the LDF consultation on Key Issues, residents voiced their concerns on the matter of the condition of footpaths in the borough.

**9.17** A series of key walking routes has been identified and implemented through the TfL (Transport for London) Local Implementation Programme. These key walking routes support the regeneration of local town centres by tackling walking barriers, which complements the public realm improvements already outlined in Chapter 6: Design.

**9.18** In recent years, a key feature of traffic growth in the borough has been the increase in car use for journeys to school. This has contributed to localised congestion problems, accident potential, and acute parking problems. To address this Transport for London wants all schools in London to have School Travel Plans. In Merton 61 out of 68 schools as at 2008/09 have travel plans in place.



Phase	Car/ Taxi		Car Share		Public Transport		Cycling		Walking		Others		Not provided	
	Number	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Primary	3290	21.0%	475	3.0%	599	3.8%	115	0.7%	10663	68.1%	77	0.5%	444	2.8%
Secondary	594	8.6%	74	1.1%	488	70.8%	63	0.9%	979	14.2%	299	4.3%	0	0.0%
Special	57	23.5%	6	2.5%	11	4.5%	4	1.6%	49	20.2%	116	47.7%	0	0.0%
Merton Total	3941	17.3%	555	2.4%	5478	24.0%	182	0.8%	11691	51.3%	492	2.2%	444	1.9%

**Table 9.2 Pupil Mode of travel 2008**

Source: LB Merton, Children, Schools and Families and Transport Planning



## 9 Transport Infrastructure

**9.19** The Olympic Route Network is a network of roads linking together all competition venues and key non-competition venues to be used by athletes and Games officials during 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

**9.20** The council is looking at proposed designation of roads, upgrades of CCTV, and a smaller number of permanent changes such as upgrading Wimbledon station forecourt and providing new pedestrian crossings. Programming has started in 2009 with works to be completed by early 2012. In the majority of cases amendments to the road network will be temporary after which time the network will return to normal road usage.

## 10 Green Infrastructure

**10.1** 18% of Merton is open space, compared to a London average of 10%, making it one of the greenest boroughs in London. Open space and tree lined streets in an urban environment provides relief from buildings and helps define the townscape. They provide for a wide range of activities, from nature conservation to recreation, leisure, flood mitigation, food production and play areas.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

To make Merton an exemplary borough in mitigating and adapting to climate change and to make it a more attractive and green place.

## Biodiversity

**10.2** Of the land in Merton, 7% is a European Protected Special Area for Conservation, namely Wimbledon Common, however there are also a number of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

**10.3** The borough supports a good range of habitats from grassland and heathland to woodland and wetland areas that include ponds and the river Wandle. Together with the cumulative effect of private gardens, these green spaces support biodiversity, which is improved further by the green chains and corridors allowing fauna and flora movement across the subregion.

Designation	Number of sites designated	Change in number of designations	Total area (Ha)
SSSI and SAC	1	0	360
Site of Metropolitan Importance	4	0	717
Borough Grade 1	11	0	196
Borough Grade 2	18	0	85
Local Nature Reserve	19	0	22

**Table 10.1 Areas in Merton for their environment value in 2007**

# 10 Green Infrastructure

Source: GLA Open Space Survey and Habitat Survey 2007, GLA 2007 Review of Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation in London.

## Core Output Indicator

### E2: Change in areas of Biodiversity importance

During 2008/09 there was no loss of spaces for biodiversity importance in Merton.

## 10.4

## National Indicator

NI 197: Improved local biodiversity: proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented.

Of the 57 SINC's in the borough 50% are in active management. Aim to achieve 60% by 2009/10 by adding an additional 5-6 sites per year. (please see table 1 and 2)

During 2008/09 there was a total of 3.1ha biodiversity areas improved and of 200 linear meter addition.

Habitat Activity	Extent (ha)	Improvement or decline	Level of importance
Mitcham Common – pond restoration	1.0	Improvement	Regional
Mitcham Common – acid grassland restoration	0.25	Improvement	National
River Wandle - restoration (removal of invasive species)	0.75	Improvement	Regional
Morden Hall Park/Watermeads – river bank enhancements	100 linear metres	Improvement	Regional
Various sites - Woodland creation	0.5	Improvement	Local
Fishpond Woods/Beverley Meads - hedgerow restoration	100 linear metres	Improvement	Local

Habitat Activity	Extent (ha)	Improvement or decline	Level of importance
Fishpond Woods/Beverley Meads - neutral grassland restoration	0.5	Improvement	Local
Wimbledon Common - Farm Bog - mire restoration	0.1	Improvement	Regional

**Table 10.2 Changes in priority in habitats 2008/09**

Species	Size	Improvement or decline	Level of importance
Wimbledon Common - slow worms	Small	Improvement	Regional
Wimbledon Common - Soprano Pipistrelles bat roost	Large	Improvement	Regional
Wimbledon Common - several other species of bat recorded, but no roosts found	N/A	Improvement	Regional
Mitcham Common - invertebrate survey recorded several regionally significant species	N/A	Improvement	National

**Table 10.3 Changes in Priority Habitats in Merton and actions**

### Core Output Indicator

#### M1: Production of primary land won aggregates by mineral planning authority

London Borough of Merton is not a mineral planning authority.

# 10 Green Infrastructure

## Open Space

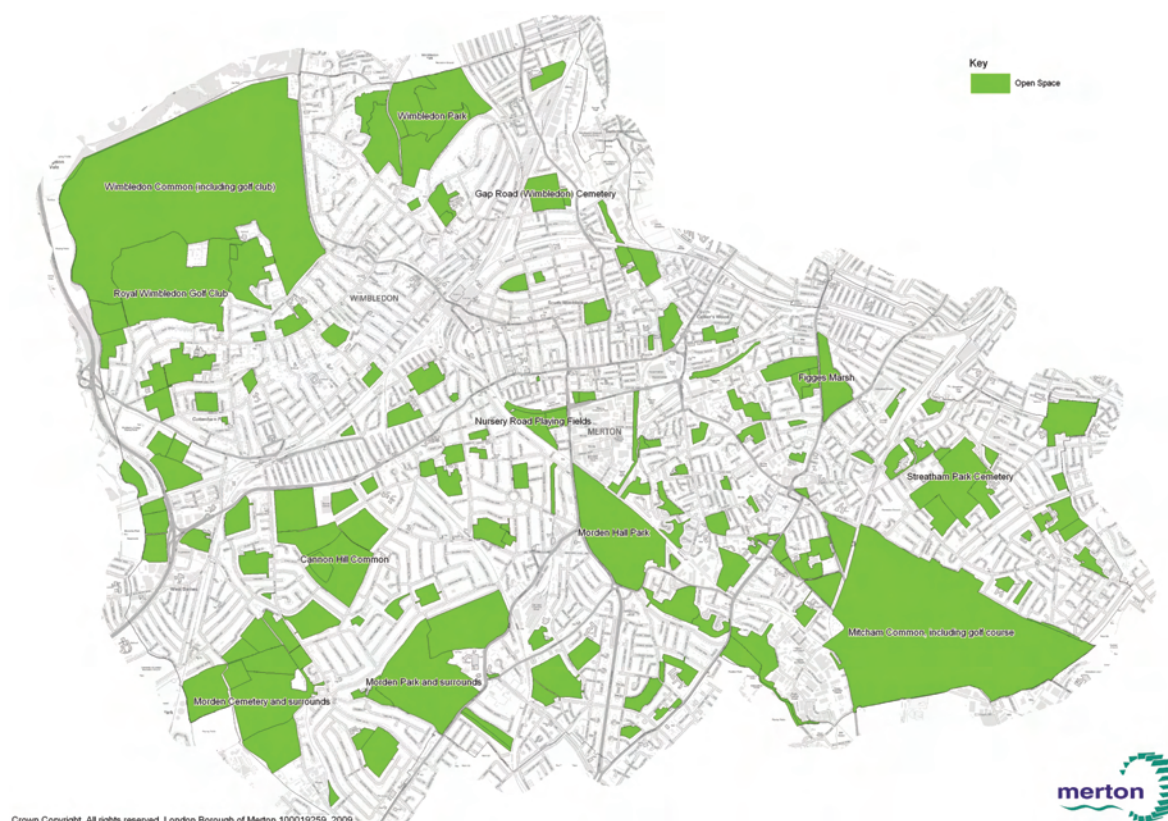
**10.5** Merton's rich architectural heritage and diverse built environment includes historic parks, gardens, cemeteries, churchyards and green spaces and important areas of common land. During 2008/09 there was no loss of designated open space due to development.

**10.6** In Merton there are 67 public parks, 4 parks are on the Register of Historical Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The register is compiled and maintained by English Heritage. These are parks and gardens which by reason of their historical layout, feature and architectural ornaments are of special interest and an essential part of the national heritage. Entries are graded I, II\* (II star), or II. The four parks in Merton are:

Historical Parks and Gardens of Special Historic	Grade
Wimbledon Park	II*
Cannizzario Park	II
Morden Hall Park	II
South Park Gardens	II

**Table 10.4 Historical Parks and Gardens of Special Historic**

**10.7** A further 46 parks, gardens, cemeteries and other green spaces within Merton are included in the London Inventory of Historical Green Spaces compiled by the London Parks and Gardens Trust



**Map 10.1 Open Space in Merton**

## **Sport, Health and Physical Activity**

**10.8** Merton's Sport, Health and Physical Activity Strategy supports the Council's Business Plan 2006-2009, which in turn contributes to the Community Plan produced by Merton's Local Strategic Partnership. This strategy has been produced by the Leisure Development Team with assistance from representatives of local strategic partners, the community and public, private, and voluntary sector sports providers.

**10.9** In 2005 London was awarded the honour of hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games. The Olympic tennis event will take place at The All England Lawn Tennis Club in Wimbledon Park. Unlike the main Olympic site in the Lea Valley, the tennis venue is a pre-existing site and developments associated with the Olympics are expected to be associated mainly with transport and the public realm.

**10.10** Merton wishes to share the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to all residents and to recognise the potential and the ideas of the games through comprehensive programmes of art, culture and sporting events in the years leading up to the games.

## 10 Green Infrastructure

**10.11** Merton is already involved in the Cultured Olympiad, a four-year celebration that started at the hand over ceremonies at Beijing, China in 2008 and end at the closing ceremonies in London 2012.

**10.12** The aim of the Cultured Olympiad is to encourage audiences to take part and use culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing in our public spaces, through street theatre, public art, circus skills, live big screen sites.

### National Indicator

NI 8: Adults participation in sport and active recreation:

2008/09 participation in Merton was 22.7%. Merton's target for 2009/10 is for 23% adults participation in sport and active recreation

### Leisure, sport and playing facilities

**10.13** Merton residents are generally satisfied with parks and open space in the borough, with 49% fairly satisfied and a further 30% of residents very satisfied (net 71% satisfied).

Year	Merton	London
2008	39%	44%
2007	37%	39%
2006	39%	41%
2005	35%	42%

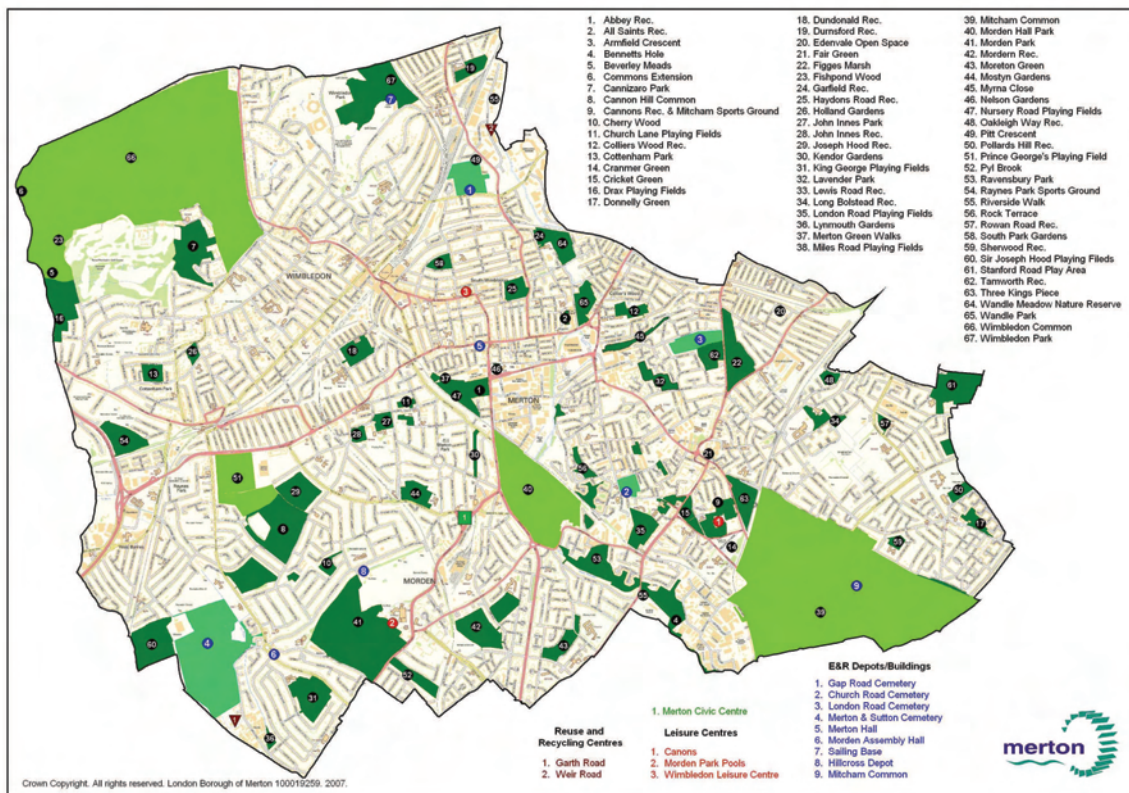


Year	Merton	London
2004	41%	37%
2003	36%	34%
2002	33%	37%

**Table 10.5 The percentage of residents satisfied with sports and leisure facilities in Merton**

Source: Annual Residents Survey 2008

# 10 Green Infrastructure



Picture 10.1

## 11 Climate Change

**11.1** Climate change, resulting from increasing levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, is a cross cutting issue that is likely to affect the lives of residents.

**11.2** Sustainable development and climate change initiatives are guided internationally and nationally by the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and the Stern report. The Climate Change Act 2008 set a legally binding CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction target of 80% by 2050. The London Plan 2008 set a higher target of 60% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> by 2050 with a presumption that developments will achieve a 20% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from on-site renewable energy generation.

**11.3** Merton is recognised as a leader in policy formation related to CO<sub>2</sub> minimisation having developed the first UK prescriptive planning policy requiring 10% on site renewable energy generation, commonly known as the Merton Rule.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

To make Merton an exemplary borough in mitigating and adapting to climate change and to make it a more attractive and green place.

### Core Output Indicator

#### E3: Renewable energy generation

To show the amount of renewable energy generation by installed capacity

### National Indicator

NI 186: CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from local authority operations

**11.4** At present, Merton has the second lowest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per head in London and the fourth lowest in the UK. Nonetheless nearly five tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted for each Merton resident every year. Most of this CO<sub>2</sub> comes from buildings: 45% from homes with another 28% from offices and industry. The remaining 27% comes from transport.

# 11 Climate Change

**11.5** In Merton there is most potential to reduce emissions from the existing buildings that make up the vast majority of Merton's built environment; and we are investigating the options to do this via the Wandle Valley Low Carbon Zone initiatives.

**11.6** In the next 10 years Merton wants to increase the proportion of its energy needs generated from low and zero carbon sources. The available resources in the borough will dictate the make up of this generating capacity and the potential for District Heat and Power (DHP) networks linking major energy users.

## National Indicator

NI 188: Planning to Adapt to Climate Change

**11.7** The council is developing a strategy in conjunction with the GLA to prepare Merton for the likely challenges resulting from the changing climate. These challenges may include: flooding, drought, heatwaves, extreme weather events, diseases, energy and food security.

**11.8** Preparing Merton to cope will involve both seeking ways to alleviate the issues while at the same time developing a set of contingency plans to ensure that council and local businesses can continue to function during a climate change related emergency.

## National Indicator

NI 185:CO2 emissions from council operation:

Merton has submitted its first annual set of CO2 emissions figures for NI 185. A system has been put in place to streamline the data gathering process and improve data quality.

## 12 Flood Management

**12.1** Merton suffers from fluvial flooding from the river Wandle, Beverly Brook and their tributaries. The flood risk requires management so that development is directed towards the most appropriate locations in the borough, and to mitigate against future impact of climate change. There are also incidents of groundwater and wastewater flooding in more specific locations across the borough.

**12.2** The two largest rivers in Merton are the river Wandle that runs from Sutton through Merton Abbey then on to the mouth of the Thames at Wandsworth, and Beverly Brook that flows from Sutton through Lower Morden to Beverley Park in New Malden.

### Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)

To make Merton an exemplary borough in mitigating and adapting to climate change and to make it a more attractive and green place.

**12.3** During 2008/09 the number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on either flood defence grounds or water quality was zero.

### Core Output Indicator

E1: Number of planning permission granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds

	Flooding	Quality	Total
<b>Core Output Indicator E1</b>	0	0	0

### National Indicator

NI 189: Flooding and coastal erosion risk management

Merton is expected to develop and adopt a Flood Risk Action plan in partnership with the Environment Agency in early 2010.

## 12 Flood Management

**12.4** During 2008/2009 Merton worked with Wandsworth, Sutton and Croydon to compile a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the borough in accordance with PPS25. The SFRA provides an overview of the flood risk issues across all four boroughs, which can be used to guide developers about the need to investigate flood risk or mitigate against potential flooding.

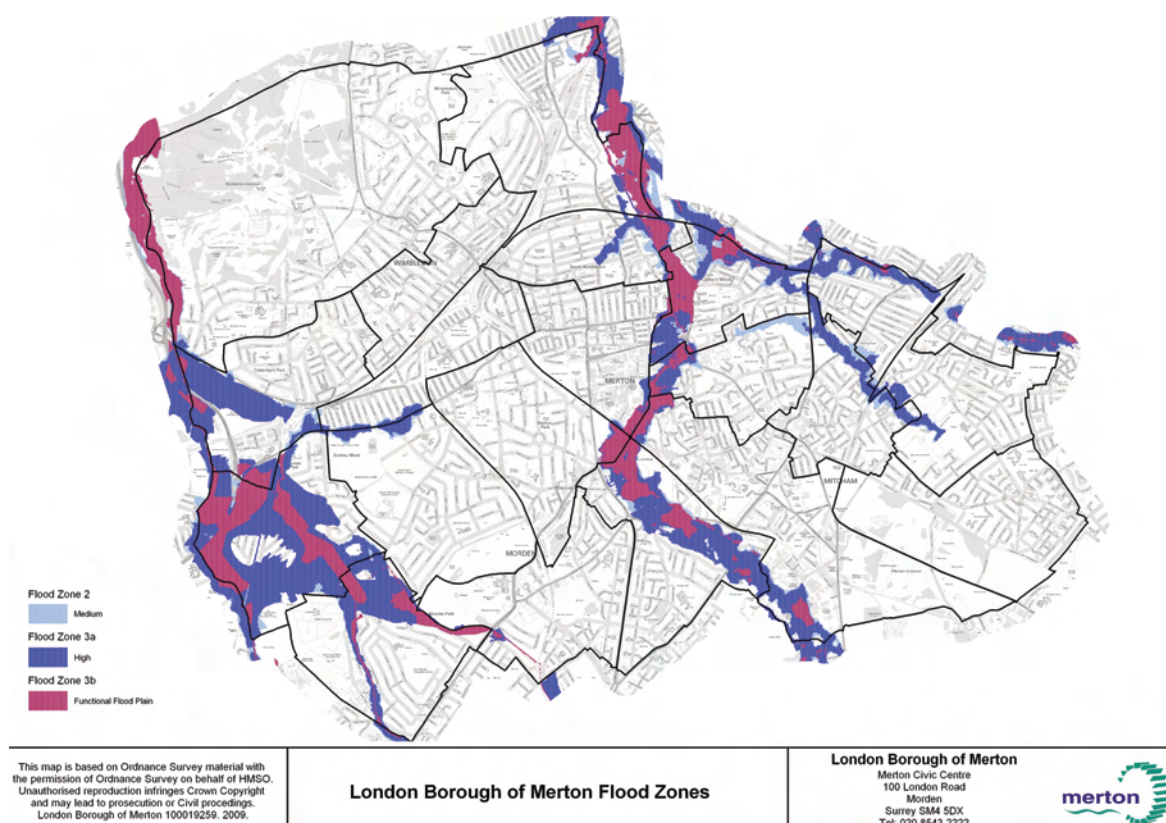
**12.5** Whilst the majority of Merton land is located in Flood Zone 1 (area least likely to flood), there are significant area of Flood Zones 2, 3a, and 3b (the functional floodplain) associated with the River Wandle in the north east of the borough and Flood Zones associated with Pyl brook (the main tributary of the Beverly Brook).

**12.6** Merton is also at risk of flooding directly from the river Thames. The Environment Agency is working with the councils that directly border the length of the Thames to minimise the risks associated with a major flooding event. Merton Council is also involved in the Catchment Flood Management Plans of the river Thames, and its tributaries (such as the Wandle). The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is the first stage of this in identifying the likely depth, velocity and direction of flow for potential flooding incidents.

**12.7** Following from the widespread flooding in 2007, the Pitt Review identified a new role for local government in conjunction with the Environment Agency to minimise the risks associated with all types of flooding. To this end, Merton Council is working closely with the Environment Agency on short term flooding issues (such as emergency planning and asset management) and longer term initiatives (such as preserving open spaces, requiring sustainable urban drainage systems and implementing PPS25).

**12.8** While Merton Council welcomes new partnership arrangements with the Environment Agency to help tackle flooding, no extra resources have been provided to local authorities to help implement the Pitt Review.





**Map 12.1 Areas at risk from flooding in Merton**

## Biological river quality

**12.9** Water quality is assessed using the biological General Quality Assessment (GQA), which uses macro-invertebrate populations to give a long-term indication of water quality. This is because macro-invertebrates can be affected by pollutants that occur at low concentrations or infrequently, and are often missed by chemical sampling.

**12.10** There are a number of watercourses in Merton, designated under the biological GQA scheme including Beverley Brook and the River Wandle.

**12.11** Beverley Brook, from Pyl Brook to the tideway, has improved from poor quality (grade E) in 1990 to fair quality (grade D) in 2007.

**12.12** The River Wandle, from Beddington effluent ditch to the tideway, showed improvements from poor quality (grade E) in 1990 and 1995 to fair quality (grade D), from 2000 to 2006, and then to fairly good (grade C) quality in 2007.

# 12 Flood Management

## Water consumption

**12.13** There is no specific target for water consumption contained in government policy beyond reducing the amount lost to leakage and reducing the amount used in domestic, commercial and government premises.

**12.14** The proposed Code for Sustainable Homes contains a minimum standard for average per capita consumption is not to exceed 125 litres per person per day (46m<sup>3</sup>/bedspace/year).

**12.15** Merton borough public water supply is provided by two companies Thames Water Utilities Ltd (London Water Resource Zone) and Sutton and East Surrey Water.

**12.16** The 5 year average (2004/05-2008/09) water use in the London supply zone is 158.4 litres per person per day, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 148 litres per person per day. Average water use in London is 160.9 litres per person per day. The 5-year average (2004/05-2008/09) water use in the Sutton and East Surrey supply zone is 159.8 litres per person per day 4.

**12.17** Thames Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan outlines supply for demand for the zone for the next 25 years. The London Zone has a deficit at peak demand, which in the short term will be met by a desalination plant in the Thames Estuary, and in the long term by a new reservoir in the Upper Thames catchment. Sutton & East Surrey supply zone enters a deficit in 2016.

**12.18** The south east is an area of serious water stress and water efficiency measures will be essential to support new growth in the borough.



## 13 Waste Management

**13.1** Merton is moving towards more environmentally friendly waste management methods, in line with national and European policy. Measures being pursued include encouraging more residents to recycle and to expand the number of items the council collects for recycling, and longer-term initiatives such as providing more scope for non-landfill local waste management.

### **Local Development Framework (Draft Core Strategy Objectives)**

To make Merton an exemplary borough in mitigating and adapting to climate change and to make it a more attractive and green place.

**13.2** Merton's Municipal Waste Management Waste Strategy 2006-2021 has been developed in order to meet the challenges of dealing with and disposing of waste in the future. This Strategy recognises that, whilst alternative waste collection and disposal methods can be developed in order to meet the challenges set, this must be carried out alongside steps to reduce the overall amount of waste produced.

### **Core Output Indicator**

#### **W1: Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority**

To show the capacity and operational throughput of new waste management facilities as applicable.

### Core Output Indicator

W2: Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type by waste planning authority

Landfill	Incineration without EfW	Recycling/Composted	Other	Total
64,588 tons	36 tons	22,700 tons	2,217 tons	89,568 tons

**13.3** Merton Council is producing the South London Waste Plan in partnership with three neighbouring boroughs: Croydon, Kingston upon Thames, and Sutton. The plan will ensure that adequate land is set-aside to enable the development of modern waste management facilities.

**13.4** During 2008/09 residents and other interested groups were consulted on the issues and options for planning for waste management in the south London area. There was support for focusing potential waste management sites within existing waste sites and designated industrial areas. During 2009/10 the plan will be taken forward and consider potential sites and policies.

# 14 Progress towards the Local Development Scheme

## 14 Progress towards the Local Development Scheme

**14.1** This chapter sets out Merton Council's progress towards meeting its LDF timetables and milestones as set out in the Local Development Scheme and the reasons for any differences between milestones and actual events.

Date	Action
January 2008	Secretary of State approve LDS v5
February 2008	Merton Council resolved that the LDS v5 shall come into effect
June 2009	Revised LDS v6 submitted to Secretary of State
2010	Secretary of State approve LDS v6
2010	Merton Council to resolve that the LDS v6 shall come into effect

**Table 14.1 LDS Timetable**

**14.2** Merton's LDS has been revised to ensure that it will continue accurately and realistically to represent Merton Councils progress on the LDF and will keep Merton's communities informed of the next stages, including when community consultation will take place.

**14.3** Reasons for the revisions between LDS Version 1 and Version 4 are set out in Merton's earlier AMR's. AMR 2005/06 Chapter 7 (section on "DPD programme review") specifically identified the need for a review of LDS v4.

**14.4** The reason for revising LDS v4 were mainly connected to the Planning Inspectorate seeking a break between the examination of the Core Strategy and other DPD's. To this effect (the following) changes were made between LDS v4 and LDS v5:

**14.5** Reasons for the revision LDS Version 5 are set out in Merton's earlier AMR's. AMR 2006/07 Chapter 7 (section on "DPD programme review") specifically identified the need for a review of LDS v4.

**14.6** To this effect the following changes were made

- A delay in the submission of the Core Strategy, to enable evidence to be produced to ensure a sound plan for submission.
- Instead of preparing the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD in parallel, the Development Control Policies DPD will be produced after the

Core Strategy. This follows GOL's concern that producing DPDs in parallel could lead to problems at the examination stage.

- The Proposals Map will be revised each time a DPD is produced.
- Timetables for the production of the South London Waste Plan (also known as the Joint Waste DPD) was included

In 2009 GOL made recommendations and comments to Merton Council to have extra consultation before submitting Merton's Core Strategy. Therefore, in June 2009 Merton Council has submitted a revised LDS v6 timetable to the Secretary of State.

## LDF progress to Milestones

### Development Plan documents (DPD's)

**14.7** Development Plan Documents are subject to a statutory adoption process. In the period to 2011, the Council will produce the following DPD's which will replace policies in the existing UDP.

- Core Strategy
- Development Management Policies
- Proposal Maps
- moreMorden Area Action Plan
- South London Waste Plan (the Joint Waste DPD)

**14.8** The Planning Inspectorate has requested a break between the examination of the Core Strategy and other DPDs. The length of the break has not been specified but is likely to be short and should not affect the overall programme significantly. Once the preparation of the Core Strategy has progressed to Examination, consultation and subsequent milestones will take place for the Development Control and Site Allocations DPD's.

**14.9** For the purpose of this AMR, which monitors the period 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009 the timetable will be monitored against those set out in Merton's LDS v5. The table below show that, while Merton Council was not able to meet all milestones set out in v5 during the AMR period, the LDS was revised (after this AMR period) and is on course to meet all the future draft v6 milestones.

DPD	stage	Milestone (v5)	Progress to March 2009	Comment
Core Strategy	Consultation on Preferred Options and SA report (Reg 26)	June 2009	N/A	Target met

# 14 Progress towards the Local Development Scheme

DPD	stage	Milestone (v5)	Progress to March 2009	Comment
	Submit DPD and SA report to Sec of State  (Reg 28)	April 2008	N/A	Target moved during AMR period
Proposal Map	Consultation on Preferred Options and SA report (Reg 26)	January 2009	June/July 2007	Need to be revised as each DPD with a spatial expression is progressed, including the Development Control and Joint Waste DPD.
	Submit DPD and SA report to Sec of State (Reg 28)	June 2009	N/A	Target moved during AMR period
Development Control Policies	Consult on preferred options and SA report (Reg 28)	February 2010	N/A	Target met. Production thereafter delayed and may need to be revisited.
	Submit DPD and SA report to Sec of State (Reg 28)	September 2010	N/A	Target moved during AMR period

**Table 14.2 DPD Timetable**

## Statement of Community Involvement

**14.10** The SCI was adopted in 2006, it should be reviewed every 5 years. It maybe be reviewed at anytime subject to comments and feed back from consultations.

## DPD Programme review

**14.11** At present nationally around 18% of local authorities have adopted a Core Strategy against Government expectations of around 80% by September 2007. In London only three boroughs out of 32 have successfully passed the examination of their Core Strategy.

**14.12** Following on from the revised regulation and guidance published in June 2008, these changes set out a revised approach to the preparation of development plan documents, designed to be similar and more flexible

**14.13** Merton's LDS will be revised if a new timetable is necessary and agreed. Risk areas, which may result in revision include:

- Ensuring that lessons are learnt from the experiences of other councils who have been through the Independent Examination
- Any further evidence gathering needed is identified from the responses to consultation on the Core Strategy DPD.
- Availability of resources: both financial and officer time and experience
- Ensuring that the requirements of newly published government guidance, such as the publication of PPS4, are considered and incorporated into the evidence base for policy development prior to submission.
- Changes resulting from the Planning Bill or the Mayor's powers
- Any changes arising from the new Mayor's proposed review of the London Plan.