

# MERTON'S PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

## An Environment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### What is it?

The London Borough of Merton has launched an exciting initiative to enhance the quality of its streets and spaces with the aim of developing and securing its role as a desirable and sustainable place for living and working in 21<sup>st</sup> Century London.

We want to ensure that our town centres, streets and public spaces (the public realm) continue to develop as safe, attractive and vibrant places, which have a strong local character. This will contribute to increasing the borough's economy.

In using our public streets and spaces, we want residents, businesses and visitors to experience Merton as a great place to live, work, visit, shop and play. This can be, for example, the shopping or working experience we have when we park our car or arrive by public transport (or on foot or cycle), negotiate traffic, use street signage as well as the attractiveness of Merton's streets as we progress to a destination.

### Merton's Public Realm Strategy has three key phases:

1. A framework that sets out the vision, policy and protocols to ensure a cohesive approach for the future improvement, maintenance and management of the borough's streets and public spaces;
2. A revised *Street Design Guide* that sets out the design standards for all street furniture, materials and other elements of public spaces to ensure that they are appropriate to the area;
3. Individual proposals for the development and enhancement of selected places and streets in the borough

### How will it be delivered?

One of UK's foremost urban design practices, Gillespies, will lead this five month study that will involve consultation with residents, stakeholders and businesses to establish the opportunities and priorities for improvement and investment in coming years. Gillespies have designed many award-winning projects including St George's Square in Luton and Buchanan Street in Glasgow. In undertaking their commission, Gillespies, in association with the council, will carry out a critical review of the quality of the environment, as it exists at present and the potential scope for improvements. The ideas generated will be shared through a series of workshops with a wide range of community and business groups, which will identify an overall strategy for public realm improvements as well as some early pilot projects that could demonstrate the potential for further improvements across the borough.



The study, which began in August, is expected to be completed by December 2008 and future advertisements and press releases will be used to inform interested people and groups of arrangements for participation. Updates on the progress of the project can be obtained through visiting [www.merton.gov.uk/publicrealm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/publicrealm)

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