

the
meriden

Regeneration update and neighbourhood news



Enjoy a flavour of the great food and service on offer at your new neighbourhood café and learn about other important developments in your local community.

A great summer at the Meriden

While the summer weather was a little mixed, it didn't stop great progress being made with the regeneration of the Meriden.

Many more people have moved into their new homes, further blocks have been completed, and the shops and eateries on York Way are in full swing. Everyone's enjoying the lively buzz the retailers and eateries are adding to the community, and they've got plans to create even more!

On page 8 of this issue of The Meriden, you can hear from Battal Üstek, the owner of Meriden Kitchen who's been welcoming customers to this neighbourhood café since it opened in May. Battal reveals how his team and other shop owners are focused on making the York Way parade a real hub of the community and a success for everyone.

Important updates on the completion of new homes can be found on pages 4-5, and why not take a peek inside at the interiors? We've got some pictures for you on pages 6-7, alongside some tips for taking care of your new home. Phasing updates and parking news are provided on pages 2-3 and we kick off your newsletter with some exciting news on the natural landscaping of your community.

Many of you will have known Marion Strawhorne who sadly passed away in July. We remember Marion and her contribution to the community on page 13.

On page 14 you can find out what's going on in and around the Meriden and discover some fun dates for the diary.

We hope you enjoy reading!

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Your Community Garden

An important aspect of the regeneration of the Meriden is the introduction of new natural features to the neighbourhood and the protection of established greenery. With York Way (Block A), Kingfisher Way (Block B) and The Turnstones (Blocks C1 and C2) now complete, the community garden is open once again, with professional landscaping giving it a fresh burst of life. A section of the original garden space is being used for the temporary car park. The gated garden area running along Kingfisher Way will open soon, which will feature children's play equipment and extensive planting.



Green focal point

It's always exciting when hoarding is taken down and the full impact of a new development is revealed. On Kingfisher Way, as hoarding was removed, fantastic new houses came into full view (see more on pages 4-5), as did the large retained Cappadocian Maple tree in the Community Garden. The Cappadocian Maple tree is an excellent focal point and with new landscaping enriching this green space, it's a meeting place everyone can truly enjoy.

Enhancing biodiversity

The landscaping plan for the Community Garden included a strategy for enhancing biodiversity. Through new, diverse planting, the aim is to encourage more insects and birds to make their home here, at the same time as creating a relaxing environment for residents. Enhancements to biodiversity are already in evidence, with the wild flower bank on Meriden Way coming into bloom. Make sure you take some time to visit the garden and experience the beautiful new scents and sounds.

Sustainable initiatives

Another recent addition to the landscaping in the new gardens is a swale, which was a key requirement of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy (SUDS) as part of the planning approval. A swale is a shallow drainage channel with gentle sloping slides, which channels excess rainwater from the surrounding roads and car park etc and collects into a pool before soaking away. As well as a means of managing water run-off, swales are also effective at removing pollutants and by introducing them as part of the landscaping and planting wild grass and flowers they also provide a wildlife habitat.

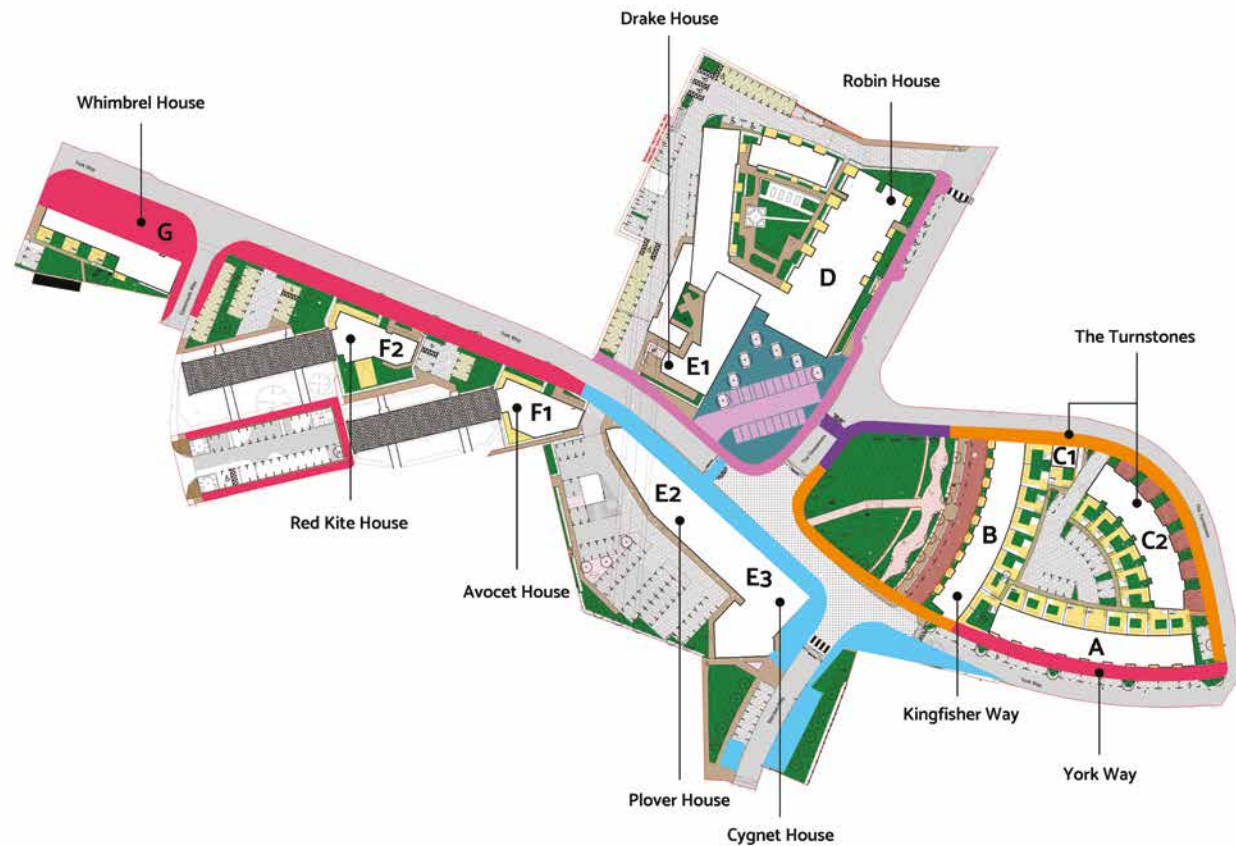


Last post!

Another essential community feature that's open again is the Post Box on York Way. It's now installed and in use, just outside the Post Office.



Major Highways improvements



More than half of the improvements works to major highways have been completed. These are being funded by Watford Community Housing to create effective infrastructure for the community, in addition to the much-needed new homes.

The table below provides an update on the different phases of the works. We're pleased to report phases 1, 1a and 2 are complete. On phase 3, discoveries were made once work was underway that required an amended design and fresh approval from Thames Water.

The amended design has been submitted and phase 3 works should progress soon, with phase 4 works following on afterwards, at the same time as final external detailing work is completed.

Resource issues are challenges the industry as a whole has been experiencing, with brick manufacture in particular being affected by the war in Ukraine, and skills shortages also creating some delays. All such challenges are being managed very carefully to minimise delays as much as possible.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing patience as all these works are carried out.

Highway Works Phasing

■ Phase 1	Complete	■ Phase 3	Phase 3 amended design submitted to Thames Water for approval. Works expected to complete in November, subject to relevant approvals.
■ Phase 1a	Complete	■ Phase 4	Phase 4 works expected to be completed in January 2024 as part of final stage of external detailing.
■ Phase 2	Complete		

Parking news

Managing parking effectively is central to everyone enjoying the Meriden community and to making sure local businesses thrive.

Here's a round-up of the parking news, so you can park safely and legally in your neighbourhood, and make use of the shops and eateries on York Way.

Temporary car park

Drivers can now park for one hour for free in the car park on The Turnstones. This gives you easy access to the parade of shops on York Way. We encourage everyone to use this parking option so you can support local retailers and park your vehicle legally. Feedback from local residents, shopkeepers and visitors to the estate has been very positive and the council is aware of the car park becoming operational.

The Turnstones parking

Residents of blocks B and C1 have access to new parking to the rear of their homes. All houses in C2 have driveways to the front of their properties.

Additional parking now open

To ease parking pressures further, additional parking spaces have been created on the street, both on The Turnstones and Kingfisher Way. These are in addition to the parking spaces created on Meriden Way, which have been open for a few months now. In total, over the last few months, 29 new car parking spaces have been created for general use. This is a substantial response to the demand for parking, particularly when considered in combination with the new private parking provided to houses on The Turnstones.

Pavement barriers get the green light

Since the last newsletter we're pleased to announce a positive outcome to our continued lobbying for bollards along the shopping parade. HCC Highways has agreed to the inclusion of a physical barrier outside the shops to provide extra safety for pedestrians. Rather than bollards, the solution is likely to be the installation of street furniture such as benches, planters and cycle racks etc, which will not only improve safety but will also enhance the local environment for the community. Discussions are taking place between all the stakeholders including Mulalley, the architects, HCC Highways and Councillors at Watford Borough Council to agree the scope of work and we hope to provide an update in the next newsletter.



Vital new housing is here

With the completion of further blocks of houses and flats, much needed new housing is now available across the Meriden. We look forward to more people moving in and enjoying everything their home and community offers.



York Way

(Block A)

This block is complete, with the final bungalow being finished in early July. All bungalows are now occupied.



Kingfisher Way

(Block B)

Four new houses on Kingfisher Way have been occupied for over a year. The final five were completed in October and are all now fully occupied.



The Turnstones

(Blocks C1 and C2)

The standalone house at C1 and the six houses at C2 are fully complete, with rear parking areas and off-street parking also completed.



Robin House and Drake House

(Blocks D and E1)

Works continue, with plumbing and electric services now being installed within individual flats. The first layer of paint is also being applied in some of the flats, enabling the internal fit-outs to commence soon afterwards.

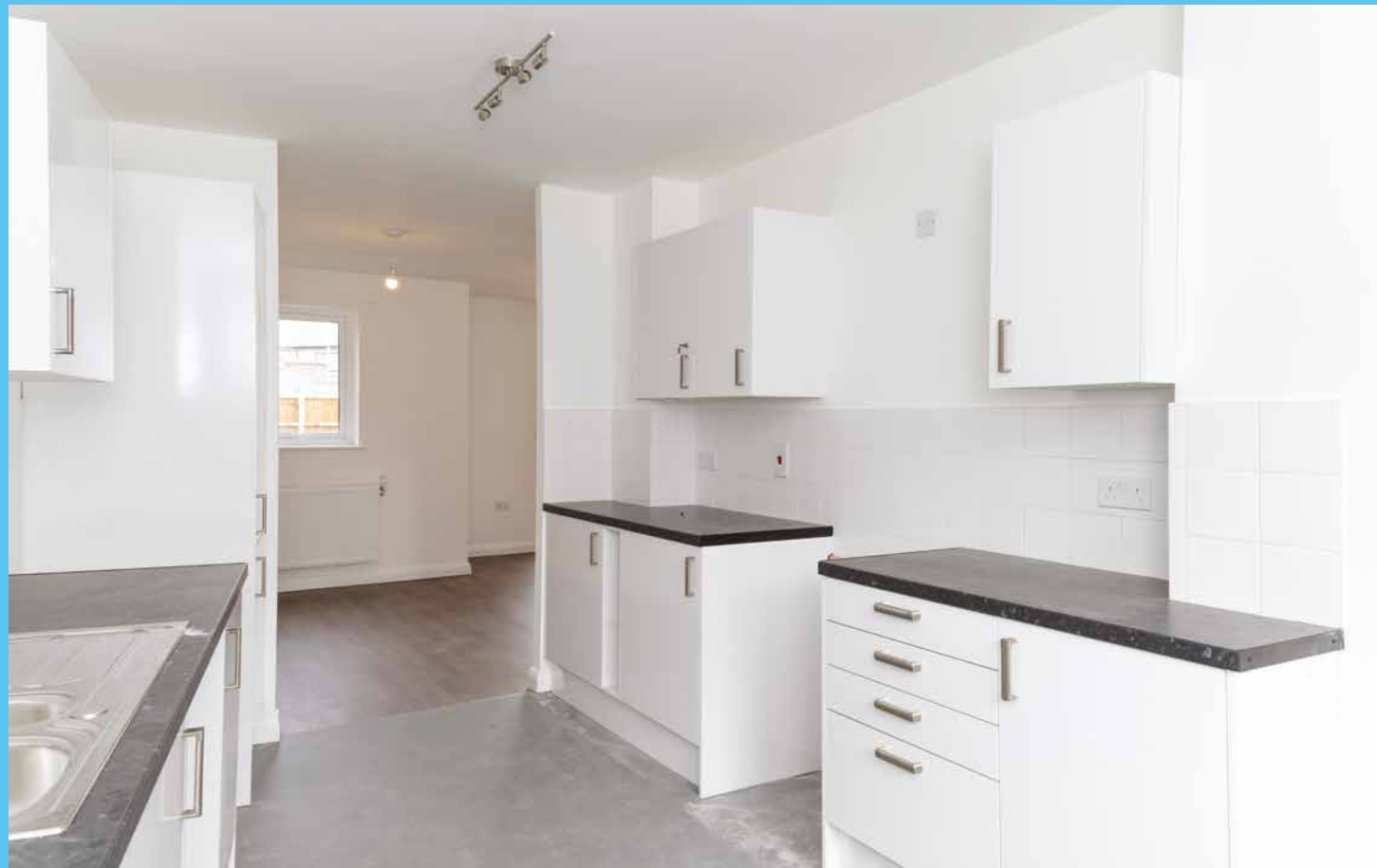


Spotlight on home interiors

If you've been wondering what the inside of the new houses and flats in the Meriden look like, you'll enjoy these recently taken images.










Every home has a brand new, well-equipped kitchen, and full height, highly insulated windows that make sure light streams in and warmth is retained.

Neutral colours have been used across the flooring and walls, offering a blank canvas for every resident to express their own interior style.



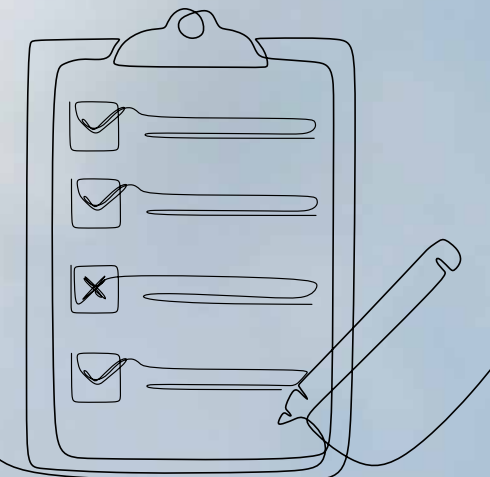
Taking care of your new home - advice for new residents

To keep your new home in tip-top condition, it's important to follow these instructions on ventilation. These are recommended actions for any new home, as newly built properties need to fully dry and settle, though regular ventilation of all homes is good practice. A telephone number is provided if you have any questions.

-  Keep the trickle vents at the top of the windows in every room open at all times. This will bring dry air into your home which will replace the wet air inside your home.
-  Ensure you keep your extractor fans on. Please do not switch them off.
-  Open your windows daily. We recommend every morning, but not for very long. Leave them for just enough time to let dry air in as you don't want to let heat out. If you get cold while the windows are open throughout your home, they have been open for too long.
-  Keep the blinds open during the day to allow the air through the trickle vents.
-  Keep your home heated at 19 degrees during the day and at 16 degrees at night. If you need assistance with setting your programmer let us know.
-  Do not dry clothes in the bedrooms.
-  Do not place furniture or personal possessions against the walls of your home as the walls need to "breathe", with air allowed to circulate around them.
-  Wipe away any visible condensation from window sills.
-  Please contact us should any mould or damp patches appear in your home at any time, or if you have any concerns around this:

You can email or call
repairs@wcht.org.uk or 0800 218 2247

Or report problems through your online account at wcht.org.uk.





Spotlight on Battal Üstek

Meriden Kitchen opened its doors to the local community in May 2023, filling the final space on the York Way shopping parade with a bright new interior, a delicious selection of food, and excellent customer service. The owner, Battal Üstek, shares how local residents have responded to their new café and to the tasty range of home-cooked breakfasts, lunches and dinners available.

"We had a very successful launch in May this year and the first few months since we opened have been nice and busy. Customers have given us lots of positive feedback, including saying this is exactly what Meriden needed, and that we're a friendly community café serving tasty, delicious meals all day. I'm very happy they love the food and the service we provide.

Meriden Café was here before us, so the space was perfect for what we needed, and the location alongside the other shops is ideal. Now the temporary car park is open it's really easy for people to visit us.

I heard about the developments going on and the buildings going up at the Meriden and knew the community would want to have a café still. When I saw the location I knew it was just right - a great spot for us and the community too.

I've worked in cafés in Watford and Bushey for almost 20 years and felt good about opening a café here because the local community is so great and very welcoming. The bright interior really attracted me too. My vision was to make Meriden Kitchen an ideal spot for lots of customers to come and enjoy beautiful food, where we can make many memories for years to come.

The refurbishment took around three months and we've added touches along the way, responding to what residents told us and focusing on creating an authentic feel, with a modern touch.

I've been talking to the other shop owners and we have lots of plans to bring events and offers to our customers, to make this a very successful parade for everyone. I'm really focused on bringing people together and providing a happy, comfortable eatery for families and friends."

Telephone Orders:
01923 388 428

Love shopping local

Our new shopping parade is now fully occupied with the Meriden Kitchen the latest to open its doors to the community. Here is a reminder of all the great shops and services available to cater for your everyday needs.



Jetmaid
(Unit 1)

156 York Way
jetmaidcleaning.co.uk



**Jenkins Hair
Beauty
Aesthetics**
(Unit 2)

158 York Way
020 8950 3111

Chiqizza
(Unit 3)

160 York Way
01923 674 444



**Meriden
Kitchen**
(Unit 4)

162 York Way
01923 388 428

**Meriden
Fish Bar**
(Unit 5)

164 York Way
meridenfishbarwatford.co.uk



**You Matter
Charity Shop**
(Unit 6)

168 York Way
01923 517 071
youmatterwatford.org.uk

**Meriden
Post Office**
(Unit 7)

170 York Way



The Co-op
(Unit 8)

174 York Way

Meet the people



Babafemi Osinlaru, Housing Officer

Meet Babafemi Osinlaru, our housing officer for the South Meriden area.

Babafemi is dedicated to providing help in the area, including support with more complicated queries, so you might see him out and about at the Meriden.

If you're a Watford Community Housing tenant, Babafemi is available to offer advice and support on many matters from your rent account and tenancy to neighbourhood issues and anti-social behaviour. He can also support local residents who aren't Watford Community Housing tenants with general neighbourhood queries.

You can contact Babafemi on:
0800 218 2247 or babafemi.osinlaru@wcht.org.uk



Rob Jones, Senior Project Manager

Rob Jones, Senior Project Manager

As Senior Project Manager, Rob is responsible for planning and coordinating all aspects of the construction process to make sure the project is running smoothly and delivered as planned.

You can contact Rob on:
07827 884 403 or robert.jones@mulalley.co.uk

Watford Workshop – No ordinary workplace

If you are reading this, you have obviously received our latest Newsletter that was delivered to you by local charity, Watford Workshop. As a community organisation, we are delighted in having a truly community-based partnership with them. You may be wondering, who are Watford Workshop? Gill Nightingale, Partnership Manager at Watford Workshop, explains.

Watford Workshop is a local charity that has been providing employment, work experience, independent living skills and functional education to adults with disabilities for almost 60 years. We currently have over 100 people coming through our doors each week aged between 18 to 73. The individuals we support have a wide range of disabilities that include learning difficulties, physical disabilities, those on the autism spectrum and others with mental health challenges.

To enable us to gain income to provide the employment and work experience we offer, Watford Workshop undertakes a hand

packing outsource service to businesses throughout the UK. The social impact a business achieves from giving their work to Watford Workshop is immeasurable. Their work helps us to change lives.

We need to raise over £300k this year to maintain the placements we provide to our service users. These funds cover the productivity challenges we face and includes our amazing team of support workers who help our people achieve their goals and our in-house tutors who deliver around 2,000 hours of independent living skills and functional education training every year.

If you know of anyone who can provide Watford Workshop with work, know of anyone who may wish to access our service or would like to donate, visit the website – watfordworkshop.co.uk for more information.



Remembering Marion



We were saddened to hear of the passing of Marion Strawhorne in July. Marion was well-known locally for her kindness and compassion.

As a committee member for the Meriden Residents' Association, she was passionate about providing help and support to local people, and also helped to organise events for the community.

Marion is remembered fondly by many of us at Watford Community Housing and in 2018 we presented her with a Local Hero award for her amazing work (pictured). We know Marion will be hugely missed by many of the Meriden's residents, and our thoughts and best wishes are with all her family and friends.

Future events



Random Café

Meriden Gardens

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday:
10am – 2pm

Regular events at Random Café

Book Group – Second Saturday of every month

Crafternoon Tea – Every Thursday

LGBTQ+ Café – Third Friday of every month

Premier League Kicks

Meriden Community Centre

Includes youth football and dance sessions on Mondays and Tuesdays

All sessions are FREE to attend.

For more information contact

Tate Macpherson via email

tate.macpherson@watfordfc.com

or call 07707 289 043.



MRA Coffee Mornings

Meriden Community Centre

Every Wednesday: 10am – 12pm
Everyone is welcome

Feel Good Fitness Sessions (for those identifying as female)

Meriden Community Centre

Mondays: 10am – 11am (gym based session)
Thursday: 7pm – 8pm (toning/aerobics)

Construction enquiries:

Rob Jones

Senior Project Manager at Mulalley

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E: robert.jones@mulalley.co.uk

If you know anyone who would like to receive a copy of this newsletter please contact Edel Maher:

Edel.Maher@wcht.org.uk