

# the meriden

Regeneration update and neighbourhood news



Meet Don and Karen,  
owners of the  
Meriden Fish Bar

# Welcome to The Meriden

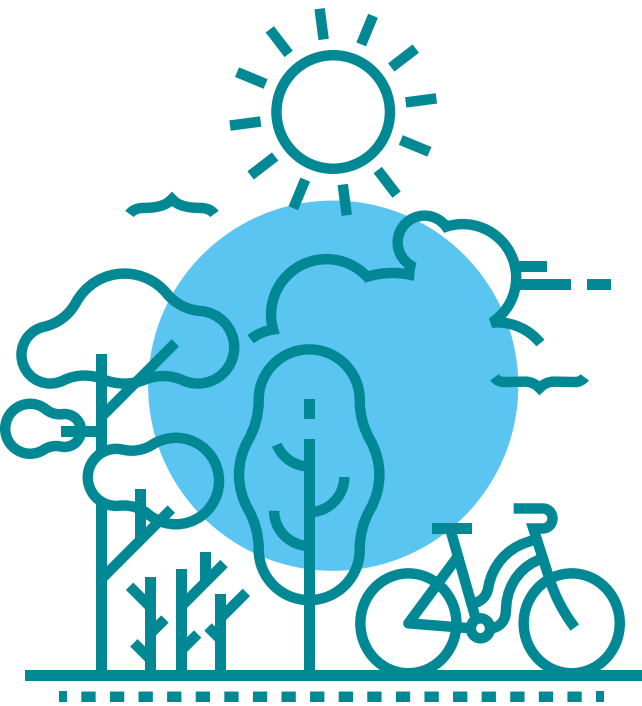
Welcome to the first issue of our new-look newsletter, The Meriden.

This will be published and distributed every couple of months and will contain information about the plans and progression of the regeneration, any key dates that you need to know and announcements of upcoming disruptive works that may temporarily affect your daily lives.

We'll also provide you with updates on exciting events happening in and around the community.

In this issue we provide an overview of the regeneration project and set out the key milestones leading up to the completion of the development in 2022.

On page 10 we meet Don and Karen from the Meriden Fish Bar, who are looking forward to moving into their new premises, and in the Neighbourhood news section we feature the winners of the Easter bonnet competition and find out more about the successful litter pick in the spring.



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*“We’re working hard to deliver the best results possible for the local community and creating a place that enhances all of your lives and where you all feel proud to live”*

Dominick Lavin, Senior Project Manager at Mulalley

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## Meet the team

Mulalley is the construction company appointed for the Meriden regeneration and they are undertaking all the necessary demolition and construction work.

They will be on site for the next few years and aim to make the process as streamlined and efficient as possible, and to keep disruption to a minimum.

If you have any questions relating to the construction works or the regeneration you can contact Dominick and Danny, who will be happy to respond.



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**Ruchell Peng**  
Senior Project Manager at Watford Community Housing  
  
+ Ruche has recently joined as Senior Project Manager and oversees the Meriden Estate development.



# The Meriden regeneration at a glance

The regeneration of the Meriden estate, which covers the central area of the Meriden, will enhance the area for the whole community by delivering 133 newly built or refurbished homes, an expanded community hub, a brand new shopping parade and new green spaces.

The project represents a £36 million investment in the neighbourhood, of which £4.4 million was funded directly from government grants. The works are split into two phases. Phase one, which is estimated to complete in spring 2020, will see the development of the retail space and the first of the new residences, including bungalows and houses. Phase two focuses on the Flexicare Housing provision including a large hairdressing salon, which will serve the whole community. Phase 2 is expected to complete by the end of September 2022.

The featured computer generated images (CGIs) provide a detailed overview of how the development will look when complete. The new location for the shops and retail space will be called Market Square. It will overlook one of the new green spaces providing an attractive, safe and open place for residents and the local community to gather together, as well as shopping facilities that are easy to access on foot and by car.



CGI shows Market Square and Village Green

## Introducing Market Square – your new retail space

Market Square will be the new shopping area at the Meriden, which will replace the existing parade of shops on York Way. We are delighted that so many of the existing businesses and shops have agreed to move to new premises in the retail space being built.

The popular Meriden Fish Bar that features on the cover and in this issue’s Spotlight feature is one of the businesses that is moving to Market Square and the owners, Don and Karen, are busy ordering new equipment for their shop.

To create this exciting new retail offering we sadly have to demolish the existing parade of shops on York Way. The shop premises are no longer fit for purpose and the building design can, at times, invite anti-social behaviour with its set back position from the street, lack of light and enclosed areas.

At the end of May, Watford Borough Council published a Compulsory Purchase Order for a small number of properties needed for when work starts to redevelop the existing parade.

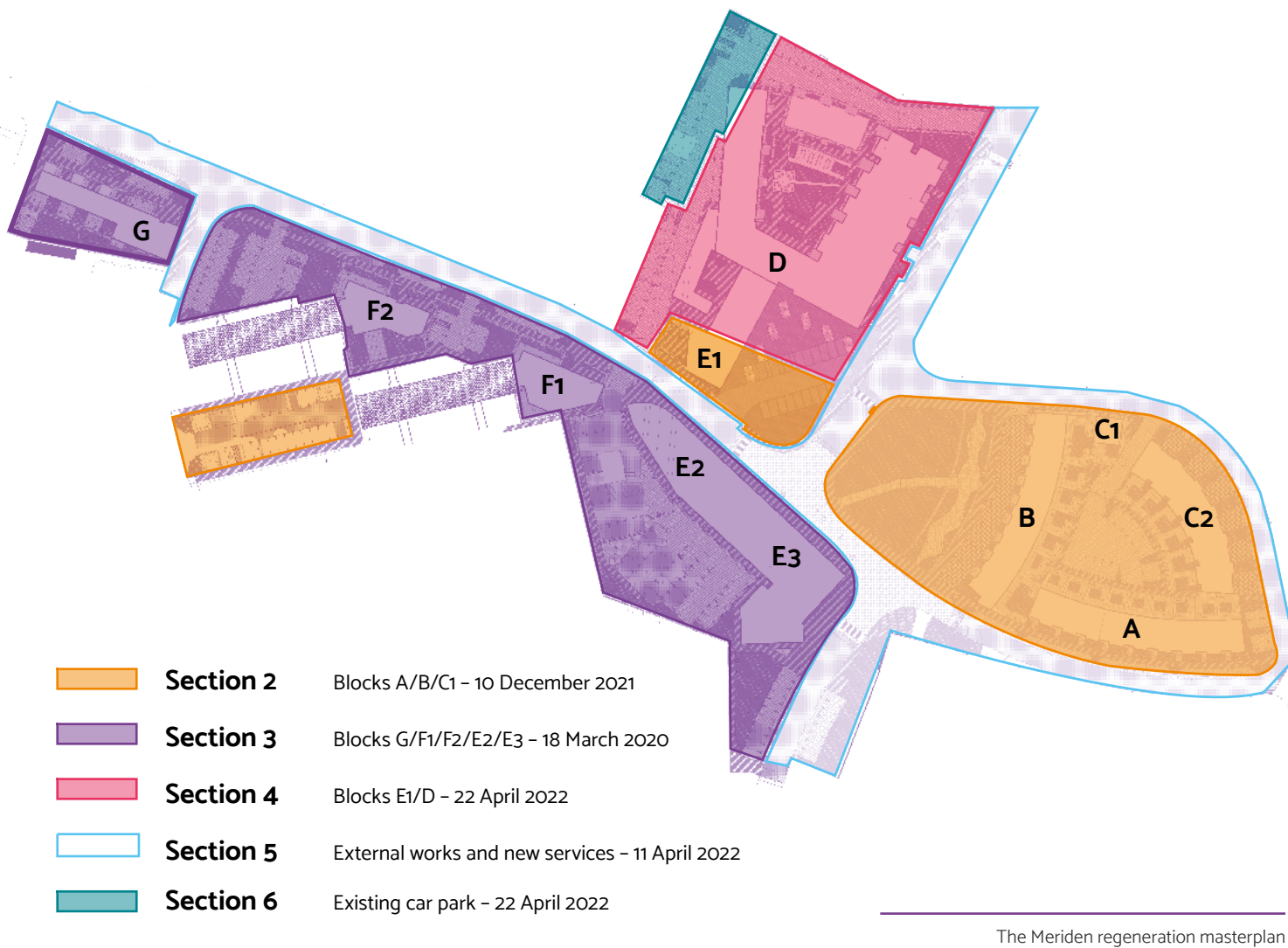
The council is working with us to make sure that all the land needed for the new development is available at the right time. We are talking to the residents whose property is named in the Compulsory Purchase Order and hope to reach agreement with them well before the properties are needed, and the focus is very much on seeing existing shop tenants relocate to the new Meriden parade.



CGIs showing indicative site overview



# Project milestones



# New Flexicare Housing provision

Providing vital services for the community is at the heart of everything we do and we are pleased to be offering Flexicare Housing as part of the Meriden regeneration.

## What is Flexicare Housing?

Flexicare Housing is a positive lifestyle choice for older people that combines accommodation with care and support services.

There are many different types of Flexicare accommodation available from small communities of apartments and bungalows to retirement villages.

The extra care facilities that we are constructing as part of the Meriden regeneration will include:

- + Self-contained adapted apartments and bungalows
- + Provision of personal care and support services on a needs-assessed basis
- + Reception and office accommodation
- + Emergency alarms throughout the scheme, with 24-hour help available
- + Communal facilities and services, such as lounge, dining area and garden

## Who is it eligible for?

The eligibility criteria is yet to be finalised, but residents are usually:

- + Above a certain age: 55+
- + Able to live safely on their own with some support

## What are the advantages?

There are many advantages to moving into Flexicare Housing, including:

- + Staying independent for longer
- + Having your own living space
- + Help available in an emergency
- + Flexible care and support
- + Opportunities to socialise with other residents
- + Flexicare Housing can sometimes prevent or delay the need for a care home





# Temporary road changes at York Way

We always endeavour to limit the amount of disruption to pedestrians and road users but at certain stages of development it is often necessary to make some temporary changes to parking and the flow of traffic.

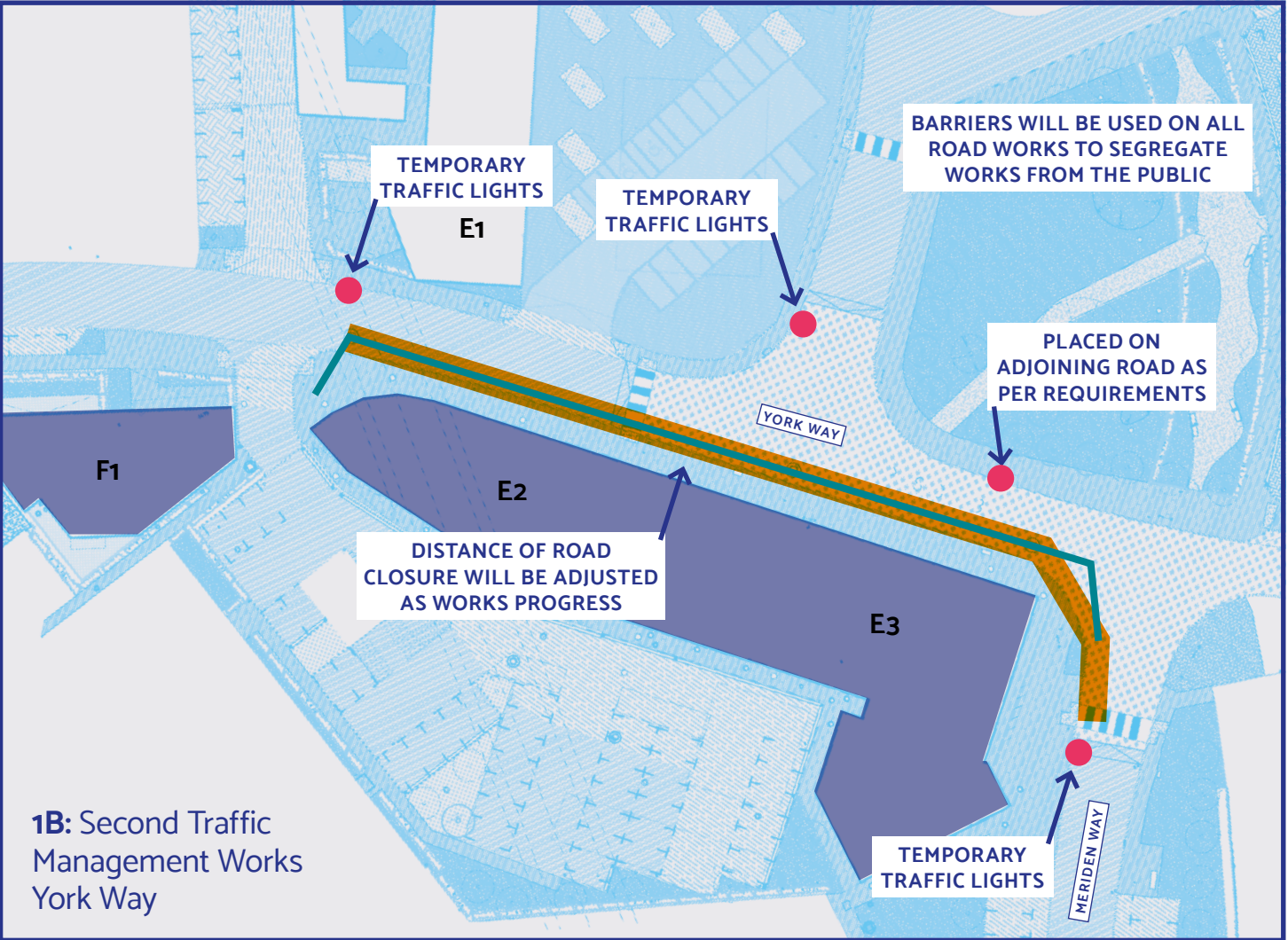
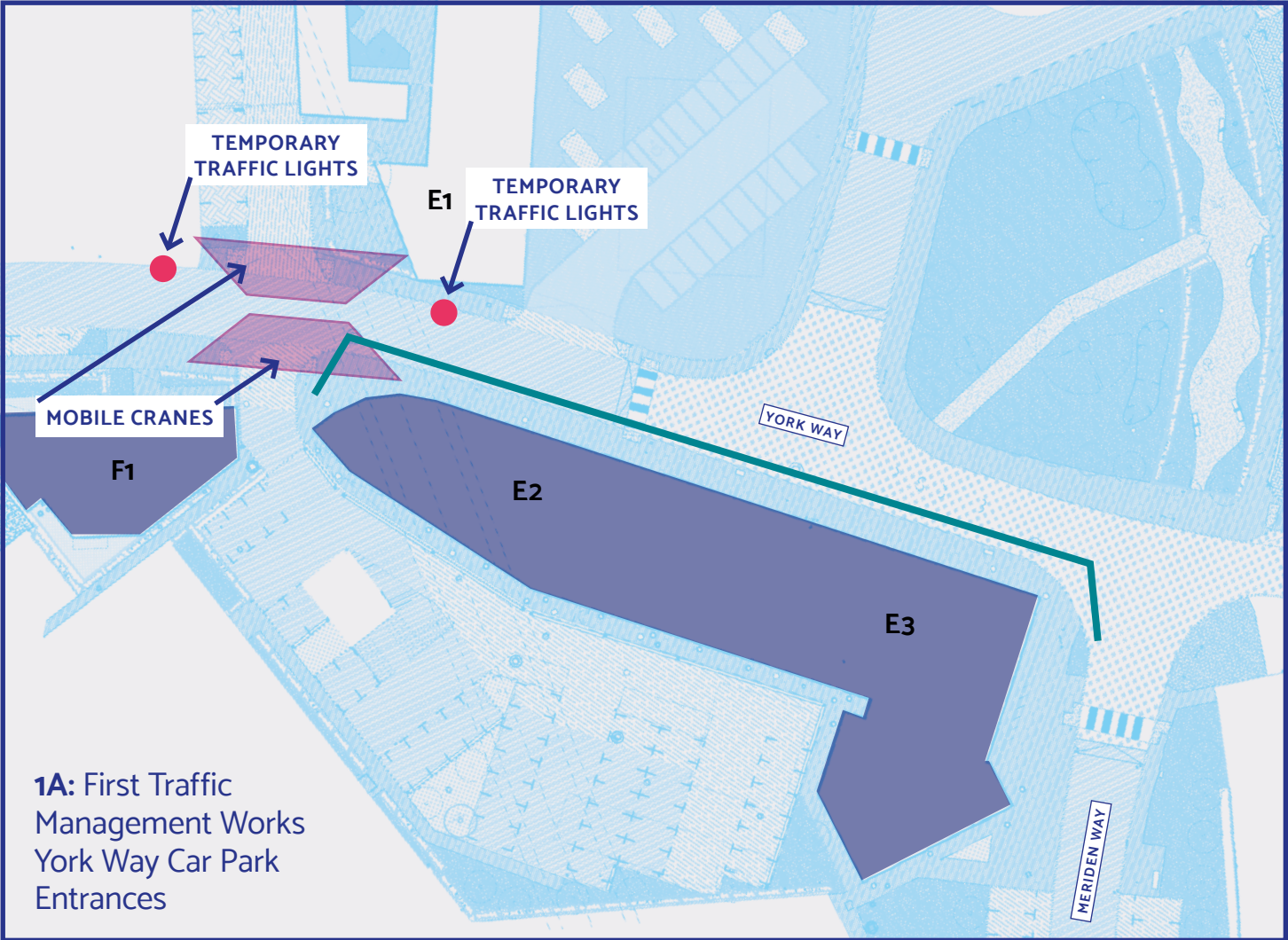
We aim to keep you informed and provide advance notice of any stages of the construction process that will pose a significant impact to road users.

During the summer months there will be some changes to parking and access on York Way while we complete necessary works.

Parking will be suspended on the following date:

Monday  
5 August








Throughout the summer months, floors and stairs at G, F1 and F2 blocks are being installed. As part of the works we need to position two mobile cranes on the road so that materials can be lifted onto the site and these will cause some obstruction to road users. Temporary traffic lights will be in place to manage traffic flow. Drawing 1A shows the position of the cranes and the temporary traffic lights.

The installation of a storm drain along York Way began in June and the works are expected to take between 8 to 10 weeks. Pedestrians and road users will experience a short period of disruption.

Drawing 1B shows where the storm drain is being installed and shows the location of temporary traffic lights and pedestrian crossing points.

- Key
-  Temporary traffic lights (Traffic will be reduced to single file)
  -  Distance of road closure
  -  Diversion surface water pipe



# First moves



The building works on the first three new bungalows is nearing completion and we anticipate that they will be ready for occupation in August.

We are consulting with the residents who will be moving into these bungalows to discuss the decoration options they can choose for their new homes and to assist them with their moves.

# New hoarding around site

Over the last couple of weeks, you may have noticed that new hoarding has been erected around the construction sites. This was in response to some concerns from the community about site presentation.

The hoarding covers a large area and features information about the development taking place. Mulalley, the building contractor, will ensure that the hoarding is kept looking its best for the duration of the build.



# Let there be light

Recently there were increasing concerns about the alleyway behind E3 block that many people use as a shortcut to the shops.

Overhanging branches and shrubs were obstructing the path and poor lighting had become a safety issue at night. In response, we arranged for trees to be cut back and we installed environmentally friendly solar lights along the entire length of the path to improve visibility.

*"I didn't expect the solar lights to be so good but having now seen them they are brilliant. They brighten as you approach them and cast sufficient light onto the pathway".*

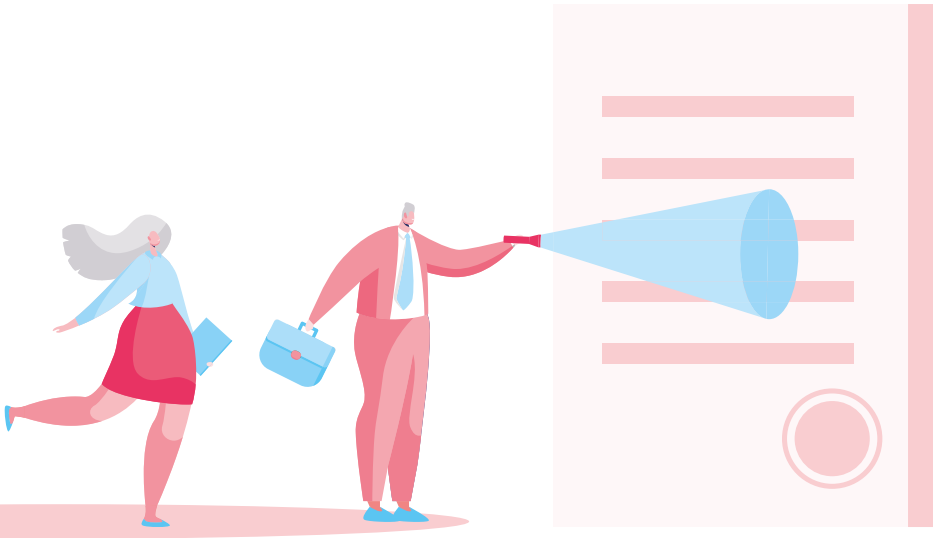
Michael Shrimpton, resident



# Take notice

Look out for new noticeboards that we will install over the next few months at key points around the development site.

These will display monthly updates about the regeneration and construction process and any other information that we need to communicate to residents on a regular basis.





*“The new shop will provide better facilities for our customers... In the new premises we will be able to incorporate a ramp, which will benefit a lot of people in the community.”*

## Spotlight on Don and Karen

**The Meriden Fish Bar has long been at the heart of community life with Don and Karen serving up fish and chips to the locals for over 25 years.**

Their passion and dedication drives the success of their business but they have increasingly been let down by premises that have deteriorated over time. They are looking forward to moving into a new shop at Market Square that will help them improve the business for themselves and customers alike, and they are busy ordering new equipment ready for the move.

“We’re really excited about our new shop, one that doesn’t have any leaks,” Don says. “We were told by the food inspector recently that we would have been awarded a five-star rating but the poor state of the premises and the constant leaks have kept us at four stars. We are looking forward to finally receiving the rating we deserve when we move to our new shop.”

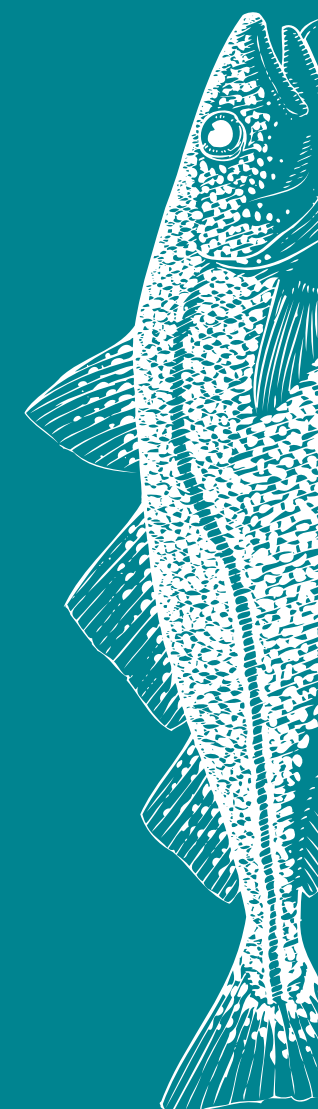
Karen adds: “The new shop will provide better facilities for our customers. For example, at the moment wheelchair access into our shop is difficult but in the new premises we will be able to incorporate a ramp, which will benefit a lot of people in the community.”

Don and Karen have seen a lot of change over the years and are aware that the recent building works and disruption may be causing some concerns in the community.

“Some of the locals are a little worried about the changes happening but we think it will all be worth it in the end. There is so much vacant space at the moment so to put it to positive use and upgrade the shopping parade for the community is a really good thing.”

Once Don and Karen move into their new easier-to-manage premises, it will help free up their time to pursue the other passions in their life – spending more time with their foster child and supporting their son Kyle with his career. As the 800m silver medal winner at the last Commonwealth Games, Kyle is often competing at track events around the world and Don and Karen try to attend as many of the events as they can.

[meridenfishbar.co.uk](http://meridenfishbar.co.uk)





# Litter pick is a success

The Meriden Residents' Association (MRA) organised a litter pick at the Meriden Park on Saturday 13 April using equipment donated by Veolia.

This activity was part of the 'Great British Spring Clean' campaign led by Keep Britain Tidy and, as part of this nationwide initiative, the MRA wanted to do their bit on a local level by tidying up the estate. About 27 residents, young and old, came to help, which was more than double the number that attended last year and fun was had by all.

One youngster, Kon, enjoyed it so much he asked if he could do it again next week! The litter pick was a great success and lots of rubbish was collected for recycling and also general waste. The litter pick team even made the Watford Observer's online news! Details of the next litter pick will be in a future issue of The Meriden.



Photos by new committee member, Piyush

# Easter fun at the Random Café

Creative juices were flowing at the Meriden Residents' Association (MRA) Easter bonnet competition held at the Random Café on Saturday 13 April.

During this fun-filled event children created colourful hats and four winners each received a cuddly bunny or lamb and an Easter egg. Everyone who attended was invited to take home an Easter egg as a gift from the MRA.

Thanks to Sara and John at the sweet shop, Martins, for kindly donating the prize eggs and to the Co-op and Asda for donating some of the giveaway eggs.



# Staying healthy this summer

The Meriden Community Centre (MCC) hosts a number of activities to help keep residents healthy:

## MCC Gym

The gym is fully kitted out with the latest fitness equipment including running, cycling and rowing machines as well as free weights and cross fit trainers.

- + Membership is £39 per year plus £2 per visit
- + £1.50 per visit for Watford Community Housing residents
- + Monthly charge of £12 which entitles users to 12 visits within a one-month period
- + Facilities are available to all residents over the age of 16

Opening hours:  
9am – 10pm Monday to Friday (last entry 9.30pm)  
9am – 4pm Saturdays (last entry 3.30pm)

To book an induction call 01923 894 862

## Summer football courses

The popular summer holiday football courses for boys and girls aged 5 to 12 years old return to the MCC this summer. The sessions are run by FA-qualified Watford FC CSE Trust coaches.

- + 5 August–9 August session
- + 12 August–16 August session
- + 19 August–23 August session
- + 27 August–30 August session (Tuesday–Friday 9am–4pm £55.00/10am–3pm £50.00)

9am–4pm: Full Week- £65.00  
Online daily price – £17.50  
Walk-on price – £20.00.

10am–3pm: Full Week- £55.00  
Online daily price – £15.00  
Walk-on price – £17.50





# Future events



## Community Coffee Morning

Meriden Community Centre,  
every Wednesday.

9.30am - 12pm



## MRA Coffee Morning

Meriden Hub on York Way, every Friday.

9.30am - 12pm



## The Random Café

The Random Café meets at the Meriden Community Centre on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month between 1pm and 3pm. Delicious lunches and homemade cakes are available, as well as donated cakes and food that you can take away in return for a donation in the pot.



## Meriden Community Centre Gym

9am - 10pm Monday to Friday  
(last entry is 9.30pm)

9am - 4pm Saturdays  
(last entry is 3.30pm)



## Meriden Community Centre Summer Holiday Football Course

August, see article on page 13.

## Get in contact

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