



The Wilson Health and Wellbeing Campus: Community feedback on the design brief

14 / 11 / 2018

Wilson
Health & Wellbeing

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April – September 2018

Background

The Wilson Hospital site in Mitcham is being redeveloped into a new health and wellbeing facility for the local community in the east of the borough. We know from research that the communities of East Merton have higher health and social inequalities when compared with the rest of the borough, being more likely to experience lower life expectancy and higher levels of deprivation.

The development of the old hospital site into the new Wilson Health and Wellbeing Campus aims to help tackle the social and health inequalities in the east of the borough. This work is being undertaken by the Merton CCG in partnership with Merton Council, Community Health Partnerships, NHS Property Services, Merton CVS and with the help and involvement of the local community and stakeholders who have signed up to help deliver the vision for the site;

“Community led health and wellbeing – helping people to lead happier, healthier lives by bringing the community closer together”

A key part of the vision is involving local people in every aspect of the campus’ development and all partners in the project are committed to achieving this.

Community engagement is a key thread running through the development timeline of the site from the look and feel of the site when people arrive at the site, to the setting up of a wellbeing hub which could possibly provide social prescribing and self-management services to support and compliment future clinical services on the site.

Lessons and learning from previous engagement

In October 2016, Community Conversations kick started the process of engaging and involving the local community in the development of the new campus and to ensure there was meaningful community involvement from the outset.



This community engagement work identified local groups and communities from Mitcham who could help develop a plan for what could be developed and delivered on the site for the wider benefit of local people.

Some of this activity involved finding out what local people and community groups wanted from the site. A key aim of the activity was to get a good cross section of views from groups and local people across Mitcham.

A recurring theme heard was that, as Mitcham is an area of diversity with high health inequalities, the new health and wellbeing space should encourage people of different cultures to use it and not just see it as a centre to access healthcare. This feedback will support the wellbeing workstream that is being developed to support a more holistic, community based approach to tackling health inequalities which may include supporting projects such as social prescribing, the development of a community café and a location for youth facilities.

The summary of the key themes identified during the community conversations in 2016 are highlighted below:

- Clinical areas can be scary we need environments that have colour and soft furnishings
- Rooms where young people can access games and browse the internet so they feel safe and comfortable before their appointments
- The reception needs to be anonymous so young people are not stigmatised in terms of why they are visiting a health centre
- A building which they felt was owned by all the community and should feel like to represented the whole east Merton community and avoided gentrification
- A fun and vibrant place that creates a sense of belonging
- More emphasis on spaces than fixed structures
- A focal point for activity but also a place to be quiet
- Inclusive and culturally sensitive
- A calm relaxed environment
- A place where all generations feel welcome and can work together
- A building that should be colourful not clinical.

The full feedback report can be read here: [Community Conversations](#). This feedback supported the initial development of the design brief.

Community feedback on the design brief

At the beginning of April 2018, a review of the Community Conversations engagement work was undertaken. A gap analysis looked at the groups and communities that had been spoken to and engaged to date. To build on the work

undertaken in 2016, further testing of the design brief was undertaken between April and September 2018 – aiming to seek feedback as well as raise awareness and interest in the project.

This allowed us to consider targeting groups and communities that we had not been able to engage with and ensure our work was reflecting the diversity of Mitcham - in particular working more closely with BME communities, women, deprived communities and faith communities.

This phase of engagement activity focused on the asking people what would enhance their experience of using the site. For example: what do they want their first impressions of the site to be? How do they want to feel when they are in the new building? Are there things about the look, feel and design of the space that would make their life easier? This feedback will help to make the building more welcoming for all service users.

Those we engaged with were asked three questions:

1. What do you want your first impressions of the space to be?
2. How do you want to feel when you visit the space?
3. Are there things about the look, feel and design of the space that would make your life easier?

The table below summarises the groups visited.

Group	Date visited	Raising awareness/ gathering feedback	Numbers of people engaged/ spoken with	Which communities were represented? (linked to equalities)
Power Church Group Mitcham	15 th April	Raising Awareness	40	BME communities particularly from the West African communities of East Merton
Merton Councils Faith and Belief Forum	25 th April	Gathering feedback	25	The group was represented by faith and belief groups from across Merton
Merton Residents Healthcare Forum	25 th April	Raising Awareness	8	This group works with local residents in Merton raising awareness and highlighting issues around health

Children Centre staff from Mitcham	5 th May	Gathering feedback	20	Group mainly women many who work and live in Mitcham
Colliers Wood Residents Association	8 th May	Gathering feedback	15	Colliers wood is seen as area of deprivation
Mitcham Carnival	8 th June	Raising awareness	200	Mitcham a area of high deprivation and the local community are future service users
Merton Tenants and Residents Federation	18 th July	Raising awareness	12	The federation represents social housing tenants and leaseholders across Merton
Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage	25 th July	Raising awareness	30	The group works with local residents on preserving the historical aspects of Mitcham
Commonside Trust Fun Day	15 th August	Raising awareness	40	Pollards Hill an area of high deprivation in East Merton
Mitcham Churches Together	17/9/18	Raising Awareness	20	The churches groups works with the community across Mitcham

The following is a summary of the findings from the groups we met and spoke to as part of engagement to develop the design brief phase of the project.

Colliers Wood Residents Association

- Feedback suggested that the future site should be welcoming, bright and provide the relevant information to those who attend the site to use services.
- There were issues around sensory needs were highlighted by Merton Vision - there needs to be an entrance where people can get the relevant information they require and the building needed to provide services that would encourage people to use it.
- A number of people said that the building should be dementia friendly and we stated that we would work with the Dementia hub to ensure these considerations were taken into place.
- The group also felt we had taken walk in services away from the Wilson so whatever goes on the site encourages people to get involved
- There were concerns about transport, as the site is difficult to access.

Children Centre - staff in East Merton

- Make the space bright and light – natural light is important as it lifts the mood
- Consider a meet and greet option – this will need to be face to face for some and for others a self-service digital solution will be better suited. Both are needed to respond to the preferences of different people. Some people are not always confident using machines so the personal/human touch is also extremely valuable when welcoming people. Machines can be helpful for people who speak different community languages
- Lighting and signage is important – we must recognise the diversity of the local area and make sure signage responds to community needs/languages
- Open spaces for buggies is important – a transition area that is flat is needed for buggies and there needs to be space to easily manoeuvre buggies around main areas without mothers feeling that they are dominating the space available and having to apologise for taking over too much room
- The group referenced a subsidised refreshments area that used to run in a local children's centre by the Salvation Army. Everybody loved this service and it brought lots of people through the door because it was affordable. Any community spaces/cafes/activities must be affordable for people in Mitcham.
- The garden and open spaces are important at the Wilson and should be used for community benefit, one example, from another children's centre, is that a 'stay and play' session would be useful once the café opened. Parents could socialise and use the open space
- Themed days/evenings would work when the space is open – for example fish and chip Fridays for the community – a good way to bring the community together
- There should be a studio that can be booked by the community for things like dance classes and Zumba. Children could also use this for dance classes – it could be something for everyone as well as being used for medical rehab/physio
- A community co-op should be considered – where people bring goods/clothes/toiletries and then those who are struggling take from it and put something back when they are in a better situation
- A food bank is much needed in the area and should be based at the site
- The front of the building currently looks quite boring. It needs a play area or something to make it more appealing to young people and children/families
- Colour coding should be used for different areas in the building as a way of communicating with people and helping them to find their way. There should not be too much writing because this can be confusing for some people. Using colours is also more conducive to making the building easier to navigate for people who speak different community languages.

Faith and Belief Forum - Merton Council

- The Mitcham churches together group would be a good starting point to help engage local residents. There was a suggestion that the Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage group need to be part of any future engagement work
- The Muslim women of Merton representative suggested that the green space on the site should be used for community gardens to encourage local people to grow their own fruit and veg. Groups such as Sustainable Merton should be involved, most present felt that the building should be welcoming and accessible for the people and communities that use it, the building should encourage people to use it.

Wilson Wellbeing Group

This group is made up of local community and voluntary sector organisations, they have a specific task to help develop the wellbeing side of the project and to help the setting up of the Community Interest Company (CIC).

- We need an architect or a company that understands co-design and working with local people
- It would be good to have a building that you can navigate through without having to struggle with signs and noticeboards
- Staff that work at the Wilson should have an understanding of the local community and also be reflective of the local community
- The building should reflect the needs of local people which should include those who need accessible parking on the site
- The building should be welcoming and friendly from whatever culture you are from
- Before you get to the front of the building there needs to be more access to the green space
- People who use the Wilson site do not want to be judged using NHS services the building should be seen as non-judgemental
- We need to make sure the all elements of the building link up people using the building will need to know where to go without having to use signs it needs to be “patient friendly “and easily navigable
- Once you are in the building you should not feel trapped or vulnerable, if people want to explore the space they can, what else is in the Wilson that they could benefit from or use
- The building has to be accessible not just a separate entrance at the side of the building we have to show that we are being inclusive
- A recognisable meeting point should be considered – e.g. I’ll meet you by the.... statue/clock’ to make it easy for people to find each other. It is important that the site does not make people feel trapped or vulnerable. Some kind of Merton or Mitcham specific feel should be incorporated and there

should be as much artwork as possible of all sorts to appeal to different age groups

- The design must be inclusive and consider the needs of all people who will use the site. An example was given of seating at the Nelson - this is too low which makes a big difference as long corridors with nowhere to stop and rest is a big challenge for people with mobility issues. It can inadvertently tell people they are not welcome. People with mobility issues should not have to go to the back of the building so the flow of the space is an important consideration
- People who use the site need to see where they are going in the building
- Will the site have more than one entrance? Do we need more than one?
- We need to create a space for people so “they have an idea and a purpose why they are at the Wilson
- Signage is extremely important and that it must not label people’s conditions – for example labelling mental health services can make some people feel uncomfortable
- The group felt the community café should be the heart of the facility – somewhere that social prescribing can operate from and acts as a hub for people to meet and engage with the community.

Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage

- Enhance the classical frontage of the building so you have a sense of setting and arrival
- Ensure the new development relates positively to the classically designed building and surrounding area
- Significantly enhance the public realm and boundary features
- Provide subdued, LED lighting avoiding light pollution beyond the site boundaries
- Provide full public access to the grounds and make positive use of the open space for public health, wellbeing, informal play and wildlife
- Locate car parking where it does not disrupt the frontage and minimise the overall area of tarmac
- Provide off-road access and a drop off point to Cranmer School for the school run.

Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage

- Concern around impact on local green space and desire to keep old frontage and welcoming presence that already exists at the site
- Site needs to appeal to all generations – it’s a local landmark and everyone has stories of their family being treated there over the years, or knowing someone who has. Somehow we should harness that history and display it on site – could this be factored into internal artwork? Using information and history/photos of the site to make a community history piece as well and functioning hub for local people?

- Desire to know more about the surveys done on the land and what this will mean about how it is/isn't preserved in the future and how this will impact on any planning applications
- Desire to know how the CCG and architects will be held to account by the public to take on board the feedback shared as part of the design brief
- Clarity needed on purpose and proposed structure of community engagement going forward and that this should reflect co-design and not top-down directive from CCG.

Pollards Hill Community Fun Day

- Traditional frontage and character of the site should be kept although there is enthusiasm to blend old with new to appeal to a large cross section of the community
- Need to talk more about the successes of social prescribing and how that 'on the ground' model that is dealing with people at the point of need (whether that's at their GP practice, a home visit or a local community centre) can be supported by developing the campus as a focal point to bring services and the local community together
- The site to have an appeal for young people. If it feels more like a community venue – like the New Horizons Centre – it would work better as people feel less intimidated. She felt this could be achieved through clear messages that everyone was welcome and minimal signage and branding that the stuff on offer has links to the NHS or council. She also wanted there to be a visible area at the front of the site that draws attention of young people – a colourful playground or some exercise machines that people can use outdoors for all ages.

Mitcham Churches Together

- The group felt that the changes to the Wilson were a long time coming for the communities of Mitcham an area with high levels of deprivation and health inequalities
- There was concern about how we would engage with the local communities and those who would need the services of the Wilson in the future
- Some felt that they had heard about the changes to the Wilson over 10 years ago and nothing had changed what was going to be different this time?

Next steps and future engagement activity

This feedback report will be shared with all partners involved in the project and those we spoke to during this phase of engagement. It will be considered and used to shape the final design brief for the campus. We will update this report to include a *you said, we did* section, so that everyone can see what has changed as a result of the feedback gathered.

It is essential that local people can influence the development of all aspects of the Wilson Health and Wellbeing Campus. As part of the next phase of this project we will be:

- **Developing a Wilson Community Reference Group (WCRG)** – made up of local people, organisations and community groups - to test communications and engagement plans and directly feed into decision making processes within the project
- Developing a **communications and engagement plan** for all remaining phases of the project and testing this with our community reference group
- **Mapping upcoming engagement opportunities** within the local community so that we can extend our reach and establish links with the wider community across Mitcham, particularly those groups and communities that are unaware of the project
- **Continuing the programme of community outreach** especially targeting those groups we have not previously heard from.
- **Undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment** to gain a thorough understanding of the communities most impacted by the redevelopment of the site – to inform our engagement work
- Continuing to **attend and update project group meetings** on the progress, outcomes and achievements of our community engagement workstream.

List of groups and organisations that provided feedback for the Wilson Design Brief as part of the community conversations 2016 and Design Brief Phase 2018:

African Educational Cultural Health Organisation (AECHO)
Age UK Merton
Alzheimer's Dementia Hub- Tuesday Activity Club
Alzheimer's Society
Asian Diabetic Support and awareness group (ADSAG)
Association for Polish Communities
BAME Voice
Centre for Independent Living (CIL)
Chamber of Commerce
Community Leaders Group Phipps Bridge Estate
Cramner Farm Close- Circle Housing
Colliers Wood Residents Association
Doliffe Close Sheltered Scheme - Circle Housing
Healthhub, Pollard's Hill Sun Festival
Local Councillors
Carers Support Merton– managers
Merton Mental Health forum - users and providers
Merton Youth parliament
Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage
SHINE, Saturday club - school children
SHINE Saturday club - parents and families

Mitcham Town Community Trust
 Mitcham Children Centre Staff
 Merton Tenants and Residents Federation
 Merton Residents Healthcare Forum
 Merton Councils Faith and Belief Forum
 Pakistan Welfare Association
 Pollards Hill Library Residents Meeting
 Pollards Hill Lunch Club
 Pollards Hill Community Fun Day
 Pollard Hill Youth Centre
 Power Church Wood World Ministries
 Positive Network
 Sixth form students at St Mark's Academy
 South London Tamil Welfare Group – 2
 Conversations
 Unique Talent - young black men
 Wide Way Surgery - PPG
 Wood World Ministries
 East Merton Children Centres Staff
 Merton Council Faith and Belief Forum
 Colliers Wood Residents Association
 Mitcham Churches Together

