



Wimbledon Guild Impact Report 2024

What we do

Wimbledon Guild is a community charity in Merton offering practical help and support, so you'll never have to face life's challenges alone.

Whether someone is worried about money, they're feeling low or overwhelmed, or they're looking for new friends and activities locally, we're always here.

How we can help



When you want to try something new

Keen to try Pilates, have a go at tap dancing or get in touch with your inner artist? There's always a new experience to enjoy with our fun and friendly classes, clubs and talks.



When you want to meet new people

Like our activities, our busy HomeFood Café is a great place to build friendships. Or, if you can't get out, we'll connect you with someone local who'll happily pop round for a regular cuppa and a chat.



When you're feeling low

Talk to a therapist one-to-one or join one of our friendly groups to tackle difficult feelings and emotions.



When you're worried about money

From replacing broken appliances to support with bills, warm clothes or school uniforms, we can help make sure you've got the things you need right now.



When someone's been bereaved

If you need to talk, we're here. We'll help you explore your emotions and work out what life looks like going forwards.



When you want to stay independent

Whether it's arranging transport, adapting your home, or support to continue doing the things you love, we're here to help.

Welcome to our Impact Report 2024

It's been a landmark year for all of us here at Wimbledon Guild. Not only have we been able to help more people than ever before, but we've also made some big steps forward. One of the highlights was opening our new base in Morden. This is helping us to support more people in the east of the borough, who might have had difficulty accessing our services before.

We've also expanded our Talking Therapies services. We now offer free, short-term counselling to vulnerable and marginalised groups in our community. This means we can be there for more people who need someone to talk to and support them through tough times.

As we've grown, the demand for our services has reached an all-time high. It's clear that many in our community are struggling, whether it's due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis or the lingering effects of the pandemic.

But it's not just these challenges that bring people to us—many face issues like loneliness, challenges in staying independent, or feeling low. These are things that touch all of us at some point, and when they do, Wimbledon Guild is here to help.

Everyone who walks through the doors at our Wimbledon or Morden bases is met with respect, compassion, and care. Our mission is to make sure that no one in Merton faces life's challenges alone. We know that each person's situation is unique, and that's why we offer a range of services tailored to each individual.

While the numbers on the following pages show the impact we've had, what makes me most proud are the personal stories and feedback we receive from the people we support.

I want to express a heartfelt thank you to our incredible team, volunteers, and everyone who has supported us this year. We couldn't do it without you.

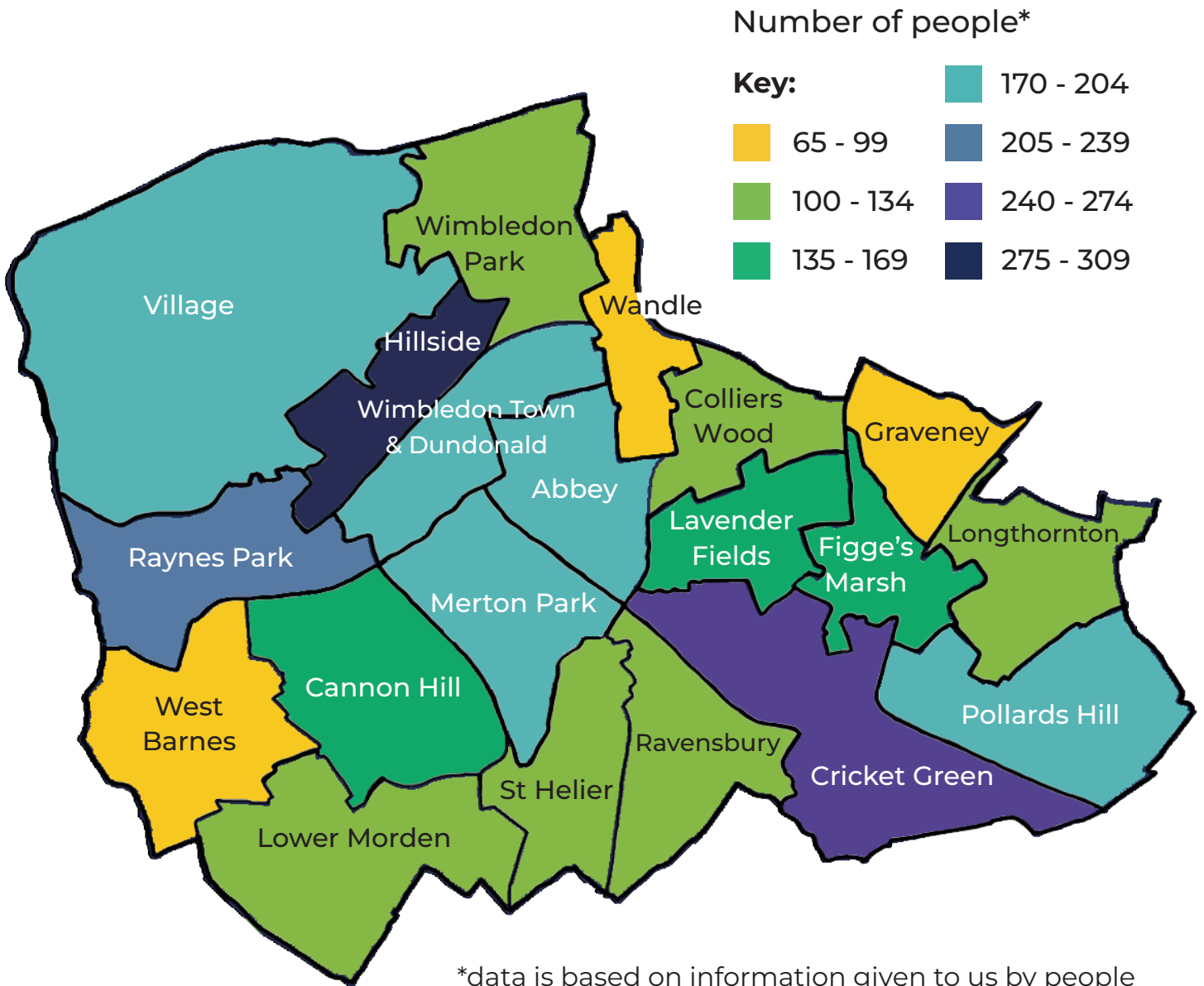


Wendy

Wendy Pridmore, Chief Executive



Our work across Merton



*data is based on information given to us by people with a fixed address and excludes café customers

"I would like to thank you very much for your help. Me and my children are happy. My son's words, with tears in his eyes, were: 'I can't believe I will have my own bed.' I am really very grateful for your help."

Key achievements

- 1 new base in Morden
- 5 new Talking Therapies services
- Last year, we supported over 4,000 people

Supporting more people in our community than ever

WG Morden

- Our new base in Morden has enabled us to provide more activities, one-to-one support and counselling sessions.

Merton Moves

- Our exercise programme - Merton Moves - designed to help people get active in later life, continues to grow. Over 240 people have completed our free 6-week Merton Moves pledge since it began.
- 40% of Merton Movers are from BAME communities and 32% are from wards in the east of the borough, which is typically a more difficult group to engage.



“I have re-found my confidence thanks to Wimbledon Guild. My daughters are so happy with my improvements. I feel calmer, my physical health has improved, and my blood pressure has stabilised. I am now in a better place.”

Grants

- The number of grants and value of grants we've given has reached a new peak.
- We received and disbursed £193K to 483 local people, 44% of which have a disability.

Activities

- Our low-cost activities remain extremely popular. Pre-Covid we typically saw 350 participants per quarter. This has now increased by 70%, to 600 each quarter.
- The proportion of men attending activities has remained constant at 21%, and the proportion of BAME community members has also remained at 24%.
- We are planning to increase representation from these groups by introducing additional activities in more accessible locations throughout Merton.

Befriending

- This year, 192 clients received befriending support, up from 172 last year, showing how our impact is growing.
- 32% of our clients come from BAME communities, a steady increase from 21% in 2019.

Community Café

- Our café has flourished this year, growing by an impressive 45%, and welcoming a total of 8,414 visitors.
- We're thrilled to see an average of 40 guests each day, with 60% of our café-goers also joining in our activities.

Wellbeing Support

- We received 321 new referrals this year—a 10% increase on the year before. This equated to five new referrals each week, with a total of 426 people supported.

Improving support for marginalised and vulnerable people in Merton

New therapy services funded through City Bridge Foundation and the National Lottery's Community Fund

- We secured a five-year grant for a short-term BAME counselling service. This has quickly reached its capacity with an active waiting list.
- We secured funding for three more short-term services at the end of this year, focused on supporting refugees and asylum seekers, people who struggle to leave the house, and people within the LGBTQ+ community.
- The therapists offering these services come from the same communities as their clients, bringing valuable lived experience to their support work.

Group therapy services

- Participation in our group sessions – including art therapy, group therapy and our emotional support groups – grew steadily this year, with over 100 more attendees than in 2022/23.

Workshops and courses

- The NHS commissioned us to lead a pilot programme of workshops supporting mental health in Merton. We led a very successful Assertiveness & Boundaries course for women, attended by 15 women from across the borough.
- Following the pilot's success, we will deliver several more assertiveness and boundaries courses for people with long-term health conditions, disabilities and from BAME communities in 2024/25.

Individual counselling

- Our long-term counselling service has remained in high demand. We're pleased to report that around 30% of clients are allocated a therapist within six weeks of assessment, compared to just 18% the year prior.
- While there is still work to be done, we are confident that, by continuing to expand our range of Talking Therapies services, we will be able to help more people without delay.

Ada* attended free counselling with our BAME service. She struggled with anxiety, low self-esteem, and questioned her sexuality. At first, she feared being gay due to worries about judgement. Counselling gave her a safe space to speak openly and explore her feelings. Ada described the experience as transformative, helping her accept her true self.

*not real name



Thank you to our wonderful volunteers

We want to thank each and every one of our wonderful volunteers for their dedication, kindness and enthusiasm over the past year. Over 130 of you supported us, and the time and effort you generously gave has made a huge difference.

We were also delighted that some of our volunteer team were recognised at the Merton Volunteer Awards. Our volunteer manager, Zara, won the Volunteer Manager of the Year Award, while our incredible volunteer, Ruth, was a Chris Frost Volunteer of the Year finalist.



Volunteering is such an important part of community life and we're so grateful for the time you give and the support you provide. We couldn't do it without you!

"Since my befriender's stroke, she's struggled to get out of the house by herself, so we explore activities she can do locally. It's wonderful seeing how doors are starting to open for her from the support befriending provides."

Wimbledon Guild Financial Summary 2023/24

Total income:
£2,331,912

Total expenditure:
£3,033,255

Inflation and global issues continue to increase the costs of running our services. However, improvements in our investment portfolio allowed us to end the year on a surplus. A copy of our full set of statutory accounts is available on our website.



Looking ahead

With winter approaching and fewer people eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment, we know our help and support will be needed across the community. Our team are ready to help with grants, energy saving advice, and practical and emotional support.

We will also start work on a project to refurbish our Wimbledon base at Guild House, with the idea that this will allow us to improve access to our classes and services.



Thank you to all our supporters, including the local community, partners, companies, and trusts. We rely on your support and generous contributions to make sure that Wimbledon Guild can continue to make sure no one in Merton faces life's challenges alone.

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