

Merton in full

The council tax bill and who receives it, spending by service, payments over £500, senior pay, the report card and how the council compares.

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Executive summary

The key figures from each part of this report, with the change on a year earlier where the source gives one.

Merton: your area

£2,147

Band D council tax, 2026-27
+£52 (+2.5%) vs 2025-26
As of 6 April 2026

£14.6m

Parking surplus, 2025-26
As of 6 April 2025

37.5%

Household waste recycled,
2024-25

Council tax in Merton

£2,147

Band D a year, 2026-27
+£52 (+2.5%) vs 2025-26
As of 6 April 2026

£1,431

Band A, the lowest
As of 6 April 2026

-£264

Band D against the England
average of £2,411
Below average
As of 6 April 2026

Where your council tax goes in Merton

£2,146.76

Band D bill, 2026-27
As of 6 April 2026

£1,604.29

Goes to Merton itself (75%)
As of 6 April 2026

£455.12

Largest line: adult social care
As of 17 September 2026

Parking income in Merton

£14.55m

Parking surplus
+£2.95m (+25.4%) vs 2024-25
2025-26

£25.32m

Parking income
+£3.88m (+18.1%) vs 2024-25
2025-26

£10.77m

Spending on parking
+£0.93m (+9.4%) vs 2024-25
2025-26

Merton: your area

[Your area](#) · Last updated 27 September 2026 · <https://whereyourmoneygoes.co.uk/your-area/merton/>

Merton sets a Band D council tax of **£2,147** for 2026-27, 277 of 296 councils in England from the highest. Police: Metropolitan Police. Fire and rescue: London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. Health: NHS South West London Integrated Care Board. This page links to everything the site holds on the area; the full bill, the report card and parking each have a page of their own.

Key figures

£2,147

Band D council tax, 2026-27
+£52 (+2.5%) vs 2025-26
As of 6 April 2026

£14.6m

Parking surplus, 2025-26
As of 6 April 2025

37.5%

Household waste recycled,
2024-25

6%

A roads where maintenance
should be considered, 2024-25

73%

Reserves as a share of spending,
2025-26

What is the council tax in Merton?

Band D is **£2,147** a year for 2026-27, and Band A, the lowest, **£1,431**. That is £264 below the England average of £2,411, 277 of 296 in England from the highest.

Of a Band D bill, **£1,636** goes to Merton.

[Every band, who gets the money and how Merton compares](#)

[Where your council tax goes: from your bill to each service](#)

How does the council compare?

- Council tax rise this year 2.5% Lower than the England figure of 4.9%
- Council tax per head £792 Lower than the England figure of £796
- Ombudsman uphold rate 92% (11 of 12) Higher than the England figure of 86%
- Reserves as a share of net spending 73% Higher than the England figure of 50%
- Borrowing per home £433 Lower than the England figure of £3,474
- Accounts, 2024-25 Delivered by backstop 92% of bodies had an opinion delivered by the backstop date
- Ofsted, children's services Outstanding 73% of English councils are good or outstanding
- CQC, adult social care Good 62% of assessed councils are good or outstanding
- A roads needing maintenance considered 6% Higher than the England figure of 5%
- Recycling rate 37.5% Lower than the England figure of 42.0%
- Major planning decisions on time 97.4% Higher than the England figure of 91.0%

Each figure is set against the figure for England as a whole. They are plain comparisons, one measure at a time: there is no overall score and no ranking of councils. Higher is not always better or worse; what each measure does and does not show is on the [methodology page](#).

[The full report card: complaints, finances, audit, pay and services](#)

Roads, bins and planning

Roads, recycling and planning in Merton

Measure	Figure	Period
A roads where maintenance should be considered	6%	2024-25
B and C roads where maintenance should be considered	8%	2024-25
Unclassified roads where maintenance should be considered	17%	2024-25
Household waste reused, recycled or composted	37.5%	2024-25
Major planning decisions made on time	97.4%	24 months to end of June 2026

Road condition is from the Department for Transport; each figure is compared with England as a whole in the [report card](#).

What does the council make from parking?

Parking income and surplus for Merton

Authority	Year	Income	Surplus
Merton	2025-26	£25.3m	£14.6m

What the law lets a council spend a parking surplus on is on [parking fines and council parking income](#).

Who is your MP?

A council area can span several constituencies, so your MP depends on your address. Enter your postcode in the box at the top of this page to see your MP and what their office cost, [find any MP by name or constituency](#), or see every constituency and its MP on [the MP map](#).

How much crime is recorded here?

In the 12 months to June 2026, police recorded **59.5 crimes per 1,000 residents** in Merton, excluding anti-social behaviour, against 82.4 across England.

[Merton on the crime map, down to streets of a few hundred homes](#)

Your police precept

In London the police precept is part of the Mayor’s precept on your bill. It funds **Metropolitan Police**, which has £4.0bn in all for 2026-27. The precept is set once for the whole force area and spent across the whole force area, so the crime figures above for Merton are not what its precept bought.

[Metropolitan Police: funding, precept and results for the whole force](#)

Who runs police, fire, health and ambulances here?

The bodies that serve Merton, and their latest money

Service	Body	Latest	Per resident
Police	Metropolitan Police	£4.0bn (2026-27)	£440
Fire and rescue	London Fire Brigade	£576m (2025-26)	£63.15
Ambulance	London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	£756m (2024-25)	£82.58
NHS	NHS South West London Integrated Care Board	£4.7bn (2028-29)	£3,023
Roads	Merton	£5m (2025-26)	£24.21
Schools	Merton	£174m (2026-27)	£797
Council spending	Merton	£500m (2025-26)	£2,285
Social care	Merton	£139m (2024-25)	£633
Housing	Merton	£21m (2025-26)	£96.94
Waste and recycling	Merton	not published	—

Each body serves a wider area than Merton, and its money is for the whole of that area. Its page has its funding over time and what is recorded alongside it; [public services near you](#) looks them up for any postcode. Water is not covered yet: see [Discover Water](#).

Which bodies cover Merton: ONS lookups of local authorities to police force areas, fire and rescue authorities, integrated care boards and local health boards (Open Government Licence v3.0); where an area is split between integrated care boards, the one covering most residents is named.

How does Merton look against other councils?

See Merton on [the council map](#), alongside every other council on council tax, complaints, reserves, audit and inspections, or [browse every council](#).

Common questions

- **How much is council tax in Merton?** Band D is £2,147 a year for 2026-27. [Every band](#).
- **Which police force covers Merton?** Metropolitan Police police force area. Fire and rescue: London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.

Council tax in Merton

Your area · Last updated 27 September 2026 · <https://whereyourmoneygoes.co.uk/council-tax/england/merton/>

Council tax in Merton for 2026-27 is **£2,147** a year for a **Band D** home, £1,431 for Band A and £4,294 for the top band. That is £264 below the England average of £2,411. It ranks 277 of 296 billing areas in England. Figures are the council's own set rates.

Key figures

£2,147

Band D a year, 2026-27
+£52 (+2.5%) vs 2025-26
As of 6 April 2026

£1,431

Band A, the lowest
As of 6 April 2026

-£264

Band D against the England
average of £2,411
Below average
As of 6 April 2026

277 of 296

Rank in England, highest first
As of 6 April 2026

What is the bill for each band?

Council tax by band in Merton, bands A to H

Band	A year	A month
Band A	£1,431.17	£119.26
Band B	£1,669.70	£139.14
Band C	£1,908.23	£159.02
Band D	£2,146.76	£178.90
Band E	£2,623.82	£218.65
Band F	£3,100.88	£258.41
Band G	£3,577.93	£298.16
Band H	£4,293.52	£357.79

Who gets the money?

Band D bill in Merton by receiving body

Who receives it	Band D	Share
Merton	£1,636	76%
Other precepting bodies	£511	24%

Each body sets its own precept and the council simply collects them together. The council that sends the bill keeps only its own share.

[Where your council tax goes: from your bill to each service](#)

How does it compare?

Band D here is **£264** below the England average, 277 of 296 councils from the highest.

Merton among the England councils nearest it, Band D 2026-27

Hounslow	£2,186
Stoke-on-Trent	£2,183
Doncaster	£2,168
Wigan	£2,153
Merton (Merton)	£2,147
Dudley	£2,145
Bromley	£2,140
Ealing	£2,139
Barnet	£2,133

Ranked highest first. Every council is in the full table.

How does Merton compare? The report card

Official figures on complaints, finances, audit, pay and services for Merton, each from the body that published it and set against the figure for England. See every council on the [council map](#).

- Council tax rise this year 2.5% Lower than the England figure of 4.9%
- Council tax per head £792 Lower than the England figure of £796
- Ombudsman uphold rate 92% (11 of 12) Higher than the England figure of 86%
- Reserves as a share of net spending 73% Higher than the England figure of 50%
- Borrowing per home £433 Lower than the England figure of £3,474
- Accounts, 2024-25 Delivered by backstop 92% of bodies had an opinion delivered by the backstop date
- Ofsted, children's services Outstanding 73% of English councils are good or outstanding
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What do complaints to the ombudsman show?

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman: Merton, 2025-26

Measure	Merton	For comparison
Complaints and enquiries received	131	—
Complaints and enquiries decided	98	69 in 2024-25
Detailed investigations	12	—
Upheld	11	—
Uphold rate	92%	86% for every body the Ombudsman covers; 88% for similar councils
Upheld cases where the council had already offered a satisfactory remedy	0%	13% for every body the Ombudsman covers
Ombudsman's recommendations the council complied with	100%	99.9% for every body the Ombudsman covers
Uphold rate in 2024-25	93%	—

An uphold rate depends on how many complaints reach a detailed investigation. With few investigations, one decision moves it a long way.

Source: [Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Annual review of local government complaints](#), 2025-26.

This council is not in the Housing Ombudsman's landlord tables for 2025-26, which list landlords with five or more findings. Most councils without their own homes are not.

How healthy are its finances?

Reserves, spending and borrowing: Merton

Measure	Merton	For comparison
Net revenue spending, 2025-26	£186.2m	—
Reserves at the end of 2025-26	£135.8m	—
Reserves as a share of net spending	73%	50% for England; 79% in 2024-25
Outstanding borrowing at 30 June 2026	£38.0m	—
Borrowing per home on the valuation list	£433	£3,474 across English billing authorities

Earmarked and unallocated revenue reserves at the end of the year, excluding schools and public health, as a share of net revenue expenditure. Much of any council's reserves is set aside for particular purposes. Borrowing is total outstanding loans of every kind; councils borrow mainly to pay for buildings, roads and housing, and the figure does not show what the borrowing was for.

Source: [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Local authority revenue expenditure and financing: revenue outturn time series](#), 2025-26; [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Local authority borrowing and investment live table](#), 30 June 2026; [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Council Taxbase statistics](#), 2025.

What have the auditors said?

Audit of the accounts: Merton

Accounts year	Status recorded by PSAA	Opinion signed
2024-25	Delivered by backstop	16 February 2026
2023-24	Delivered by backstop	21 February 2025

“Delivered by backstop” means the auditor gave an opinion by the statutory backstop date. Many opinions given that way were disclaimed or qualified because the deadline cut the audit short; PSAA publishes which type of opinion each council received only as national totals, so it is not shown here. Auditors’ value-for-money findings are in each auditor’s annual report on the council’s website.

Source: [Public Sector Audit Appointments, Monthly audit opinion data](#), 2024-25.

What are senior staff and councillors paid?

Senior pay and councillor allowances for Merton have not yet been read from its statement of accounts. There is no central dataset of either; they are being added council by council, each with a link to the page of the accounts it comes from.

How are its services rated?

Service ratings and performance: Merton

Measure	Merton	For comparison
Children's services, Ofsted overall effectiveness	Outstanding	27 August 2025. 73% of English councils judged good or outstanding
Adult social care, CQC assessment	Good	13 August 2025. 62% of assessed councils rated good or outstanding
A roads where maintenance should be considered, 2024-25	6%	5% in England
B and C roads where maintenance should be considered, 2024-25	8%	7% in England
Unclassified roads where maintenance should be considered, 2024-25	17%	17% in England
Household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting, 2024-25	37.5%	42.0% for England
Major planning decisions on time, 24 months to end of june 2026	97.4%	91.0% for England
Non-major planning decisions on time, 24 months to end of June 2026	88.2%	90.7% for England

Inspections happen at different times, so a rating can be several years old; the date is shown with each. Planning figures are measured differently in each nation: share of decisions made within the statutory time (13 weeks for major, 8 for non-major) or an agreed extension, over 24 months. Recycling rates are measured differently in England, Scotland and Wales, so compare within a nation.

Source: [Ofsted, Children's social care: local authority inspection outcomes](#), as at 31 March 2026; [Care Quality Commission, Local authority assessments](#), latest assessment; [Department for Transport, Road condition statistics: data tables \(RDC\)](#), 2024-25; [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Local authority collected waste management: annual results](#), 2024-25; [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Live tables on planning application statistics \(P151, P153\)](#), 24 months to end of June 2026.

What has happened recently?

Decisions and publications by official bodies about Merton, newest first. Each links to the body that made or published it. News reports are not included.

1. 7 May 2026 Election [Local election: 57 seats won](#) Labour Party 32, Liberal Democrats 19, Conservative and Unionist Party 4, Merton Park Ward Independent Residents 2 Democracy Club
2. 1 April 2026 Council tax [Council tax for 2026-27: Band D £2,147, up 2.5% on the year before](#) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
3. 27 February 2026 Audit backstop [Listed by MHCLG as not meeting the audit backstop requirements for 2024-25](#) Draft accounts published by the deadline: yes. Audit opinion delivered by the backstop date: yes. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
4. 16 February 2026 Audit [Auditor's opinion on the 2024-25 accounts signed](#) PSAA records the status as "Delivered by backstop"; auditor Ernst & Young LLP. Public Sector Audit Appointments
5. 5 May 2022 Election [Local election: 57 seats won](#) Labour Party 31, Liberal Democrats 17, Conservative and Unionist Party 7, Merton Park Ward Independent Residents 2 Democracy Club

Does the council think something here is wrong?

If you represent Merton and think a figure here is wrong, out of date or unfairly presented, email hello@whereyourmoneygoes.co.uk with this page's address and the source you would point to. Every correction is logged, with its date, on the [corrections page](#).

How much of the council's spending does this cover?

Council tax paid for 17.9% of the money Merton had to spend in 2025-26. The rest came from government grants (49.6%), business rates (7.3%) and fees, charges and other income (25.1%), with 0.1% taken from reserves. That is why a grant cut can raise your bill even when the council has not changed what it does. [See where it goes](#).

Where can I find out more?

[What council tax is and why it works this way](#), including why the bands are still based on 1991 property values in England and Scotland, and [how every area compares](#), everything else on [Merton: parking, roads, your MP and local services](#), and [Merton on the council map](#).

Common questions

- **How much is council tax in Merton?** Band D is £2,147 a year for 2026-27. Band A is £1,431 and the top band £4,294.
- **Is council tax in Merton higher than average?** No. Band D here is £264 below the England average of £2,411.

Where your council tax goes in Merton

Your area · Last updated 27 September 2026 · <https://whereyourmoneygoes.co.uk/council-tax/england/merton/where-it-goes/>

A Band D council tax bill in **Merton** is **£2,146.76** for 2026-27, split between Merton £1,604.29, Merton: adult social care precept, this year's increase £31.96, Greater London Authority (Mayor, TfL, London Fire Brigade) £176.38, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime £334.13. Shared out in proportion to what each body spends, the largest single line is adult social care at Merton: **£455.12** of the bill. Council tax pays for 18% of the council's own spending; the rest is government grant, business rates and fees.

Key figures

£2,146.76

Band D bill, 2026-27
As of 6 April 2026

£1,604.29

Goes to Merton itself (75%)
As of 6 April 2026

£455.12

Largest line: adult social care
As of 17 September 2026

17.9%

Of the council's money that comes
from council tax, 2025-26
As of 17 September 2026

Who gets your bill

Figures are for a **Band D** home. Bands A to H pay a fixed fraction of this, set in law.

And where does that bit go?

Choose any part of the bill to see how it divides, then keep going as far as the published returns allow. Every level has its own link you can share.

An interactive map or explorer appears here on the live page.

Parks, street cleaning and roads here

What Merton spent, net of income, on the lines readers ask about most. Roads and street cleaning are also shown per mile of road the council looks after, where it is the highway authority. Gully cleaning and verge cutting are inside routine maintenance; no return splits them out.

Merton, 2025-26

Line	Net spending	Per resident	Similar councils, per resident	Per mile of road	Change
Parks and open spaces (including play areas)	£4.4m	£20	£20	—	up 16.7% on 2024-25
Street cleaning	£7.4m	£34	£45	£31,961 (similar: £65,252)	up 87.7% on 2024-25
Road and bridge maintenance	£4.2m	£19	£12	£18,167 (similar: £12,659)	up 6.0% on 2024-25
Environmental, safety and routine maintenance	£3.5m	£16	£11	£15,116 (similar: £13,707)	up 30.9% on 2024-25
Structural maintenance (resurfacing, bridges)	£711k	£3.25	£4.00	£3,052 (similar: £4,507)	down 45.4% on 2024-25
Winter service (gritting)	£296k	£1.35	£0.77	£1,270 (similar: £1,069)	up 348.5% on 2024-25
Street lighting (including energy)	£758k	£3.46	£4.93	£3,253 (similar: £5,814)	down 11.6% on 2024-25

Miles of road: Department for Transport road lengths, 2025; locally managed major roads and all minor roads. More on [what council tax does and doesn't pay for](#).

What it adds up to

Merton: net spending per resident by service, 2025-26, against the median for London boroughs

Service	Per resident	Median
Education	£1,259	£952
Adult social care	£371	£443
Children's social care	£250	£306
Environment and regulation	£138	£104
Housing (not council homes)	£97	£149
Running the council	£70	£67
Public health	£60	£89
Parks, leisure, libraries and culture	£36	£40
Other services	£12	£17
Roads and transport	£-2.00	£1.42
Planning and development	£-5.86	£24

- Merton spent **41.9%** of its gross service spending on its own staff in 2025-26 (median for London boroughs: 33.2%); the rest went on suppliers, contractors, grants, benefits and other running costs.

What this data does and doesn't show

- These are each body's own figures, as reported to government in its revenue outturn return. Net spending is after the fees, charges and grants a service brings in.
- Your bill is for 2026-27; it is shared out using the latest published return, which covers an earlier year. The mix of spending changes little from one year to the next, but it does change.
- Council tax is not ring-fenced: this shows your bill in proportion to spending, not what your money bought. Where a precept is set aside for adult social care, it is shown against adult social care.
- No council publishes spending at street or property level, so nothing here says what was spent near you.
- Sub-service lines are the ones the national returns itemise. Councils describe their own budgets differently; their budget books and statements of accounts have more detail.

Sources

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [Council Tax levels set by local authorities in England: Table 10, local authority level data](#), published 25 March 2026. Open Government Licence v3.0.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [Local authority revenue expenditure and financing: Revenue Outturn multi-year data set](#), published 17 September 2026. Open Government Licence v3.0.

How the split is worked out, and how the three nations' returns are matched to one list of services, is on the [methodology page](#). The dataset is on the [data page](#). See also [council tax in Merton](#) and [everything else about Merton](#).

Common questions

- **What does council tax pay for in Merton?** A Band D bill of £2,146.76 is split between Merton, Merton: adult social care precept, this year's increase, Greater London Authority (Mayor, TfL, London Fire Brigade), Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. In proportion to spending, the largest line is adult social care, £455.12.
- **Is council tax ring-fenced for particular services?** No. Council tax is pooled with grants, business rates and fees. The adult social care precept is the exception: councils raise it for adult social care.

Parking income in Merton

Your area · Last updated 27 September 2026 · <https://whereyourmoneygoes.co.uk/parking/merton/>

In 2025–26 Merton took **£25.3m** in parking income and spent **£10.8m**, a **surplus of £14.6m** against **£11.6m** in 2024–25 (+25%), the 28th largest of 290 councils in England. Penalty charges brought in **£13.0m**. Figures are from the council's own return to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Key figures

£14.55m

Parking surplus
+£2.95m (+25.4%) vs 2024–25
2025–26

£25.32m

Parking income
+£3.88m (+18.1%) vs 2024–25
2025–26

£10.77m

Spending on parking
+£0.93m (+9.4%) vs 2024–25
2025–26

£13.00m

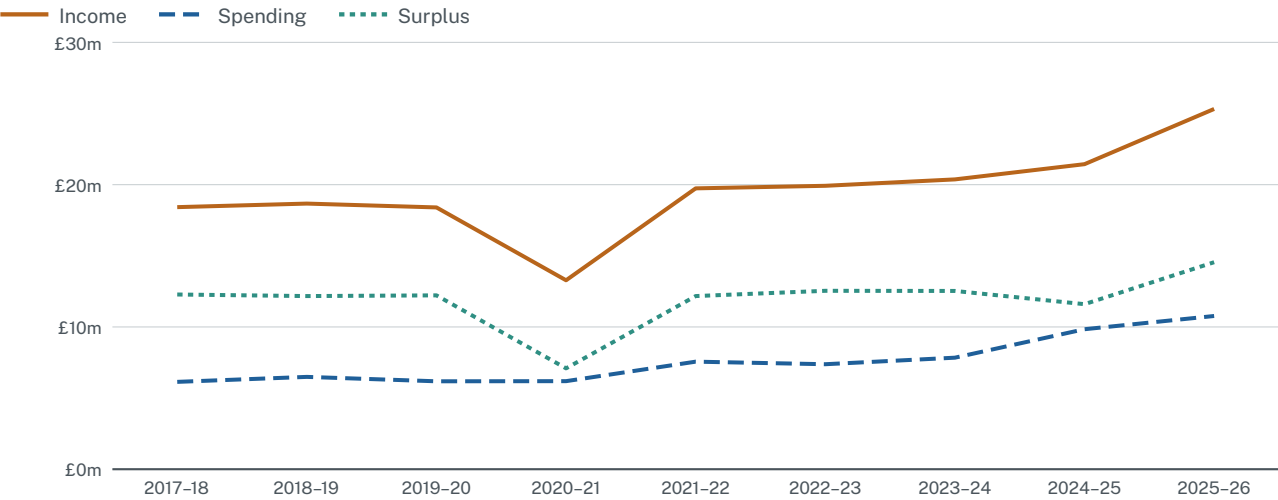
Penalty charge income
+£2.74m (+26.7%) vs 2024–25
2025–26

28 of 290

Rank in England, largest surplus
first
2025–26

How much has Merton made from parking each year?

Merton: parking income, spending and surplus, £ million



Merton: parking income, spending and surplus, £ million. Income: £18.42m in 2017–18, £25.32m in 2025–26. Spending: £6.14m in 2017–18, £10.77m in 2025–26. Surplus: £12.28m in 2017–18, £14.55m in 2025–26.

Merton: on-street and car park accounts

Year	On-street income	On-street spending	Car park income	Car park spending	Penalty income
2017-18	£15.99m	£3.66m	£2.43m	£2.48m	£9.53m
2018-19	£16.28m	£3.85m	£2.38m	£2.65m	£9.17m
2019-20	£15.88m	£4.29m	£2.51m	£1.89m	£8.26m
2020-21	£12.08m	£4.93m	£1.20m	£1.27m	£0.00m
2021-22	£17.68m	£6.17m	£2.06m	£1.40m	£0.00m
2022-23	£17.52m	£6.01m	£2.40m	£1.36m	£0.00m
2023-24	£17.88m	£6.62m	£2.49m	£1.22m	£17.88m
2024-25	£18.87m	£8.31m	£2.57m	£1.53m	£10.26m
2025-26	£22.77m	£8.82m	£2.55m	£1.94m	£13.00m

All figures are cash, in the council's own return. The most recent year is a first release and may be revised. Merton is recorded as: London.

What can Merton spend a surplus on?

On-street parking charges and all council parking penalty charges (England and Wales)

Ring-fenced by law a ring-fenced parking account. A surplus may only be spent on parking, public transport, highway and environmental improvements and similar purposes; a deficit is made good from the general fund.

[Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s55, as applied in England by SI 2022/71, regs 25 and 27](#)

Council car park (off-street) tariffs

Kept by the body that collects it the council's general fund. Section 55 covers on-street parking and enforcement income, not car park fees. Not verified

[Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s55\(1\), and DfT statutory guidance on civil parking enforcement](#)

How does Merton compare with other councils?

Merton among the England councils nearest it, parking surplus 2025-26



Ranked largest surplus first; a negative figure is a deficit. Every council is in the full tables.

[Every council's parking surplus](#), penalty charge levels and the national trend.

Sources and licences

Every dataset behind the figures in this document, with its publisher, the date its figures are as of, and the licence they are used under.

Source	Publisher	Figures as of	Licence	Used in
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legislation.gov.uk and official guidance, provision by provision	legislation.gov.uk	22 September 2026	Open Government Licence v3.0 (legislation.gov.uk)	Parking income in Merton
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