

# ARBURY COURT REDEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

## Arbury ward candidates' responses to our questionnaire

( N/R = No Response )

### Arbury Court Playpark

The existing PlayPark provides a vital community resource, not only for families living at the Court but also for those in the wider area. It is the only protected green open space accessible in the area bounded by Arbury Rd, Mere Way, Carlton Way, Gilbert Rd and Milton Rd. The developer's initial proposal is that the park will be built over, with a new park area to be provided in the middle of the new development between the shops and flats.

#### **Q1. Are you in favour of avoiding removal of Arbury Court PlayPark and keeping it in its current location?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **Yes**, Fiona Tod (LD): **Yes**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **Yes**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

#### **Q2. Is it feasible for the existing open space with its mature trees and hedges and facilities for families, young children and teenagers to be recreated successfully in the centre of the new development?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **Maybe**, Fiona Tod (LD): **No**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **No**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

#### **Q3. If elected will you work with officers and other councillors to get alternative design options developed for public consultation which might allow the PlayPark to be kept where it is?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **Yes**, Fiona Tod (LD): **Yes**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **Yes**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

#### **Further comments regarding the PlayPark (max 400 characters)**

**Jocelynn Scutt (Lab):** Q2. Essential ballgames included and I doubt it in the current design, so my maybe is VERY maybe. Q3. Essential to work with residents + officers NOT JUST OFFICERS for alternative plan/s. I work with RESIDENTS which is why anyone is elected. My track record shows that is my practice. That's representative democracy.

**Fiona Tod (LD):** I have young children and use the playground multiple times a week, whatever the weather. It is a brilliant, safe space and I am infuriated at Council claims that it is "underused". We have been the only family in Histon Road Rec or the playground on Jesus Green many times during the winter, weekdays, early morning etc and they wouldn't dream of trying to concrete over those facilities.

**Sefira Davison (Grn):** Hopefully I've already made my view clear on this, both as a local and as an earth scientist: the current redevelopment plans (in particular moving the park, and the planned amount of demolition and rebuilding) will have a big cost, both in taxpayer money and in carbon footprint. I'm strongly in favour of different plans, in particular keeping the park in-place.

**Robert Boorman (Con):** N/R

### The Shopping Centre and Courtyard

The current shopping centre is laid out as a courtyard with a paved area to allow people to circulate, and for social events to take place. The courtyard style layout has been a defining characteristic of Arbury Court for nearly 70 years. The shopping centre was recently granted **local heritage listing**, but this occurred after the redevelopment plans were proposed and was not accounted for in the initial design.

#### **Q4. Do you believe that a grassed area, as currently proposed for a relocated play park, could fulfil the same function as the paved courtyard?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **No**, Fiona Tod (LD): **No**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **No**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

#### **Q5. Should the new development respect Arbury Court Shopping Centre's established heritage so that some kind of courtyard design for the shops can continue into the future?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **Yes**, Fiona Tod (LD): **Yes**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **Yes**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

Shopkeepers will be offered a discount on rents for the first two years following the rebuild. It is rumoured that they could face increases as high as 40% after that, which would likely make their businesses unviable.

**Q6. If elected will you oppose such large increases and work to retain the much valued independent shops?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab) **Yes**, Fiona Tod (LD): **Yes**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **Yes**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

**Further comments regarding the shopping centre (max 400 characters)**

**Jocelynn Scutt (Lab):** Paved courtyard essential. Wheelchairs, buggies, prams, pushers need access to community space, grass not viable. Children's carols on pavement NOT wet muddy grass. Budgens, PO, butcher, bakery, fruit&veg, takeaways must be retained and good, effective support for transition essential, maybe increased in current financial uncertainty for traders and shoppers. Must retain character of Arbury Court!

**Fionna Tod (LD)** The courtyard and independent shops are the heart of our community. I am at ease letting my children play in the middle while I go into the shops and since moving to Alex Wood Road 6 years ago we have got to know the traders. It is a unique space and the current redevelopment plans completely disregard this. I feel the Council want to push out the independent shops and put a chain supermarket in.

**Sefira Davison (Grn)** A finite-term rent cap to me seems like the council trying to build in a buffer to find wealthier traders (chain businesses, etc) to fill the spaces that will inevitably be there when current businesses are priced out. Bluntly, there's already enough struggles facing brick-and-mortar retailers; I see it as the council's role to reduce, rather than add to, these struggles.

**Robert Boorman (Con): N/R**

## **Development Density and Infrastructure**

There are currently 31 flats in Arbury Court. Under the redevelopment plan this will increase to 213 flats plus 7 terraced houses.

**Q7. Do you consider that existing local infrastructure such as nurseries, education, health services, traffic management and transport provision will be adequate to support the increase in population?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **No**, Fiona Tod (LD): **No**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **No**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

To accommodate the proposed number of dwellings it is likely that there will be a mix of residential blocks of five and six storeys in height. This is in the midst of a neighbourhood of largely two storey properties with a few up to 4 storeys.

**Q8. Will this be out of character with the rest of the neighbourhood and an overly dense development?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **Yes**, Fiona Tod (LD) **Maybe**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **Yes**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

The parking provision for the new flats is planned to be less than 5 spaces for every 10 flats. The existing parking area for the shops is also expected to be built on and the number of spaces reduced. This will exacerbate parking congestion for existing residents in surrounding streets.

**Q9. Should this provision be increased?**

Jocelynn Scutt (Lab): **Yes**, Fiona Tod (LD): **Yes**, Sefira Davison (Grn): **Yes**, Robert Boorman (Con): **N/R**

**Any further comments on these matters (max 400 characters)**

**Jocelynn Scutt (Lab):** Q7 eg Arbury parents were relying on Darwin Grn for schooling so solution is essential. Ditto other services, traffic+public transport. Q8 I raised density at cabinet mtg. Distribution over 3 sites must be equitable + suitable to plot sites and surrounds. Brackley Close flats included could spread density, retaining greenspace. Q9 Underground parking? Must retain free parking for shoppers + staff.

**Fionna Tod (LD)** Having spoken to local service providers including Colleges Nursery, Arbury Road GP, Arbury Primary, it is clear that no attempt has been made by the council to assess the impact this development will have. On the height of buildings, I think up to five stories along Arbury Road could be manageable as they won't face residential houses, but agree with concerns on density and parking.

**Sefira Davison (Grn)** I strongly believe that in a city like Cambridge, we shouldn't be as reliant as we are on cars. In Valencia (my regular point of comparison, since I've a lot of family there), buses run like clockwork and cost 60 cents; it's just not worth having a car in the city at those rates. I'm not in favour of reducing parking supply, but I'd love to see some measures to reduce parking demand.

**Robert Boorman (Con): N/R**