

ARBURY COURT REDEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

West Chesterton 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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Yes**, Guy Mills (LD): **Yes**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **Yes**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Yes**,
Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Maybe**, Guy Mills (LD): **No**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **No**, Nick Picton (Ind): **No**,
Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Yes**, Guy Mills (LD): **Yes**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **Yes**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Yes**,
Mike Harford (Con): **N/R**

Further comments regarding the PlayPark (max 400 characters)

Richard Swift (Lab): N/R

Guy Mills (LD): It is a vital local area for families and all local residents, and I will not support any proposals that negatively impact it.

Hannah Copley (Grn) Plans with the play area and protected open space being kept where they are should be created and circulated for review - if there are any perceived disadvantages from the council officers regarding keeping the park where it is, this should be put as a plan to the community for consultation so that all potential choices are fairly put to residents for review.

Nick Picton (Ind): I visited it recently as Eco Nick (my Instagram account). I spent 3 hours cleaning it up and the shopping area too. The dog poo bin was overflowing as were the bins. This must be sorted. The toilets were locked. Clean and open toilets are obviously important. This is part of my campaign. The nitty-gritty.

Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **No**, Guy Mills (LD): **No**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **No**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Maybe**,
Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Yes**, Guy Mills (LD): **Yes**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **Yes**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Yes**,
Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Yes**, Guy Mills (LD): **Yes**, Hannah Copley (Grn) **Yes**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Yes**, Mike Harford (Con): **N/R**

Further comments regarding the shopping centre (max 400 characters)

Richard Swift (Lab): Q5. A paved public courtyard surrounded by shops must remain the centrepiece of the Arbury Court site.

Guy Mills (LD): N/R

Hannah Copley (Grn) I strongly support a pedestrianised space for community events that a courtyard would deliver, and strongly agree with the concerns of others that linear arrangements of the shops will affect the feel of the location for community activities. The previous city council development at Akeman street had reports of empty shops for some time, we cannot allow Arbury Court to be similarly affected.

Nick Picton (Ind): Please inform me more about the grass / paved courtyard issue

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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **No**, Guy Mills (LD): **No**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **No**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Maybe**, Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Maybe**, Guy Mills (LD): **Yes**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **Yes**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Yes**, Mike Harford (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?

Richard Swift (Lab): **Yes**, Guy Mills (LD): **Yes**, Hannah Copley (Grn): **Maybe**, Nick Picton (Ind): **Yes**, Mike Harford (Con): **N/R**

Any further comments on these matters (max 400 characters)

Richard Swift (Lab): Q7. More work required concerning provision of schools and surgeries for increased population. Q8. Density distribution should be spread equitably between Arbury Court, Kingsway Flats and Brackley Close, potentially reducing height at Arbury Court to 4-5 storeys. Q9. Parking: explore underground car park / North Cambridge Academy (west) site.

Guy Mills (LD): Whilst we need new homes in Cambridge, this can be done in a way that protects our local facilities.

Hannah Copley (Grn): My aspiration for the area (that goes well beyond this development), would be that it is a thriving local centre where people can travel around with reduced reliance on cars. This area needs active and public transport improvements, and I would like to see car sharing schemes put in place from the start for residents, and car parking spaces for residents who need them.

Nick Picton (Ind): About the existing infrastructure. I don't know if there is capacity or not. I would assume no. However, I need facts.