

# ARBURY COURT REDEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

## Kings Hedges 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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Yes**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **Yes**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Cons): **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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **No**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **No**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Cons): **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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Yes**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **Yes**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Cons): **N/R**

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

**Martin Smart (Lab) : N/R**

**David Creek (LD):** I attended as a KH local resident a forum on the Arbury Court Development and voiced my concern that the local wish I was aware of is that this popular mature green space is a well used three ward connected play area would not be used and seen in the same way if removed and repositioned into the centre of a new development that would shadow over it & could be seen as theirs and not for all as now.

**Daniel Quinn (Grn):** I'm afraid I can't fit everything I want to say about that in 400 characters. This seems a classic case of planners relocating green colours on a map and assuming the results will be the same.

**Mahfuj Ahmed (Cons) : 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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **No**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **No**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Cons): **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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Yes**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **Yes**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Cons): **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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Yes**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **Yes**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Con): **N/R**

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

**Martin Smart (Lab): N/R**

**David Creek (LD)** Budgens, PO and library are the main reasons why people use Arbury Court. The hardware store is sorely missed where the PO use to be as is the pharmacy and hairdressers. The cycle shop and fish and shop mustn't follow and be forced out or cease trading by closing "temporarily" or by higher rents now or in the future.

**Daniel Quinn (Grn):** The phrase "some kind of courtyard design" is doing a lot of heavy lifting in Q5. I support a courtyard-style redevelopment, but wouldn't want to be tied to "the same as it is, just newer-looking".

**Mahfuj Ahmed (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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Maybe**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **Maybe**, Mahfuj Ahmed (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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Maybe**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **Yes**, Mahfuj Ahmed (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?**

Martin Smart (Lab): **N/R**, David Creek (LD): **Maybe**, Daniel Quinn (Grn): **No**, Mahfuj Ahmed (Con): **N/R**

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

**Martin Smart (Lab): N/R**

**David Creek (LD)** Q7 I need evidence to answer honestly, but I am concerned. Q8. I need to see designs how they blend in. If like other recent city builds they fit in well. Q9. I answer maybe to the car parking question as the priority groups of people housed in other new council developments around the city that I expect will here has shown most don't have a car and those developments then have empty car spaces.

**Daniel Quinn (Grn)** There seem to be some assumptions baked into these questions that I think are doing a disservice to the process. Taller buildings are not in themselves a bad thing, and building more homes does not necessarily lead to more cars. We need to have the courage to collectively imagine a future where more people have high-quality homes and transport consists of something better than an SUV.

**Mahfuj Ahmed (Con): N/R**