

MINUTES FOR LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION MEETING
Thursday 23rd July 2015 at 2pm in Leechwell Garden

PRESENT: Dave Mitchell, Lu Overy, Keith Rennells, Alex Whish, Sue Holmes, David Martin, Shirley Prendergast, Wendy Reid.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to meet with Keith and Alex and discuss the replacement of the eucalypt part of the Play Structure in the garden. The notes below summarise what we discussed and decided.

1. any replacement should be safe and suitable for children from toddlers up to 11 or 12 year olds. Like the current structure it needs low-level features that are safe for toddlers as well as components that very young children can only access with help from parents.
2. any replacement should have a natural, non-engineered look - not likely this time to be made of a large tree trunk, but with wood platforms and possibly an earth mound rather than metal or plastic.
3. As much as possible of the current structure should be retained (those parts which have a reasonable life span remaining)
4. A plan to replace the current structure needs to be in place before the end of the year
5. We should try to minimise the time there is no play structure at all (and complete the work before next Spring is well under way
6. We should budget for the replacement costing less than £20,000
7. SHDC believe we (the LGA) should be eligible for a grant under the “New Homes Bonus Grant” scheme that should cover most if not all of the cost. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-house-building/2010-to-2015-government-policy-house-building#appendix-8-new-homes-bonus> for details
8. The first step is to get Mike Jones of EarthWrights to come up with two or three possible costed designs – SHDC will contact Mike
9. To satisfy the conditions of obtaining a “New Homes Bonus” grant we will probably need proposals from two other designers (again SHDC will contact them)
10. When we have some proposed designs we should consult with the local community (Grove School in particular) to help select the one to pursue
11. SHDC will arrange for the eucalypt trunk to be sawn up and disposed of before work on the replacement starts (logs will probably be available for local residents who want them)

Various other garden issues were discussed with Keith and Alex (the Japanese Knotweed around the pool for example). We thanked Keith for all his help with the garden over the years and hoped that we can continue work together after he leaves SHDC at the end of the month.