

Gainsborough Residents Association Research.

Possible play equipment for Makins Recreation Ground

By Paula Isaacs of the Gainsborough Residents Association

I have looked at the residents surveys and chatted to parents on the estate during our recent community afternoon.

I have looked at some of the suggested play equipment suppliers and include pictures of equipment that may be suitable to add to Makins play area.

The key issues with the current park noted from talking to residents were:

- 1) The lack of facilities for toddlers to play on safely. The current park has a large climbing frame and slide which is great for older children, but not accessible to toddlers.**
- 2) The lack of inclusive play equipment, we have lots of children on the estate with physical disabilities and the equipment just isn't inclusive enough. There is a basket swing, but that is the only bit of equipment which is accessible.**
- 3) Easy access and safety flooring in the park. The park is currently grassed but very uneven and quite often left uncut. Park Services agree with us that it would save them time and money if they did not have to maintain the grass within the play area, and it is tricky to maintain. Other play areas in the town have suitable flooring such as bark or rubber flooring, safer and easier to maintain**

4) Lots of residents have expressed an interest in having an outdoor gym/fitness equipment. A number of families on the estate are low income families who do not necessarily have the money to access sports facilities in town, an outdoor gym would greatly benefit these families and get more children out and active for free. I know there has been a discussion about where to put an outdoor gym in Henley. Although the river park is a good place, we would argue that:-

a) there are already lots of nice, new facilities down at the river and

b) Makins serves as a recreation area for quite a large portion of town and it would be nice to put it the map.

Also when families are having to work longer hours and squeeze more into the day it would be nice to have decent facilities close by rather than a half an hours walk away.

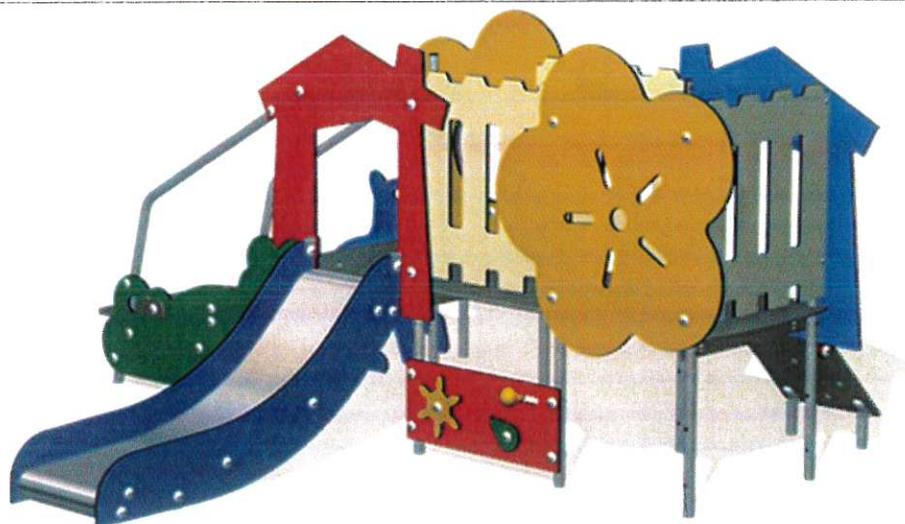
5) We are trying very hard (and increasingly more successfully) to build on the community on Gainsborough Estate and new, improved and more inclusive facilities would bring out more parents with young children and encourage families to mix more. We feel this is essential for communal well-being moving forward.

6) There is a lack of seating on Makins, it is a lovely park with beautiful views of the town, many families commented that it would be nice to picnic there and have somewhere to sit whilst their children are playing.

Here are a few suggested pieces of equipment. I have not looked at too many as I was not sure of how much room we have to play with, or what financial constraints there are. I looked at suggested play equipment suppliers Kompan and Wicksteed. There are lots of other similar companies and

equipment ranges, I am more than happy to look in more detail if needed and consult in the process of choosing equipment etc.

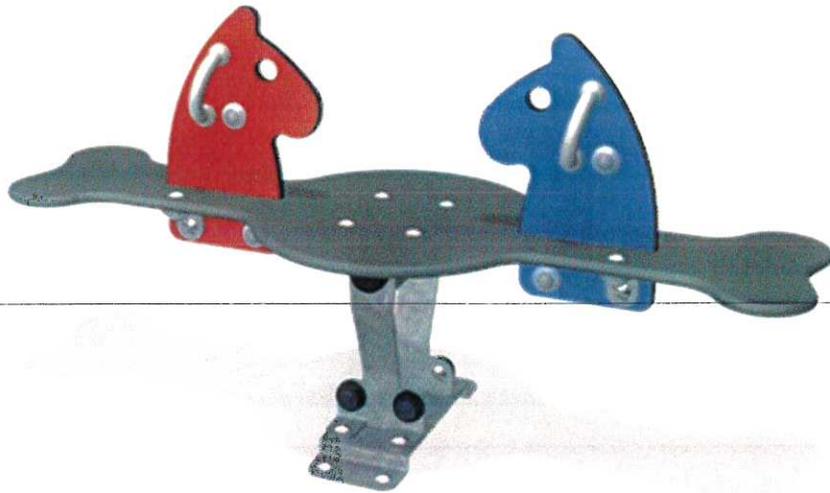
Kompan: www.kompan.co.uk/



This is a slide unit with climbing and and play equipment attached, an alternative is adding single use equipment such as:



Single slides



Seesaws

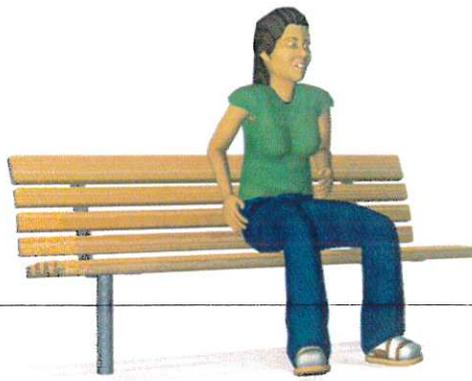


Springers

Wicksteed: www.wicksteed.co.uk/

Wicksteed had a great range of benches/ picnic benches and an example of the kind of flooring that we would like to match other parks in Henley.





Example of possible rubber flooring Wicksteed:



There are more examples of equipment from other companies, and we are happy to consult or research specific equipment if needed. We are also happy to try to get a community grant to help pay for any improvements to the park. We would ask that Henley Town Council seriously

consider our request on behalf of residents to have the park improved. The park is a lovely area and just needs bringing up to date to meet the needs of residents and their families in a more fitting and inclusive way. We feel this would truly benefit the town and the immediate local communities.

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