

# THE ADVENTURE OF PLAY

## A Theories Landscapes Adventure Playground case study

Acacia Intergenerational Centre (IGC) - London Borough of Merton £275k 2010/11

Building upon a strong local reputation for producing individual and distinctive play environments, and following a comprehensive selection process, Theories Landscapes Ltd were commissioned by LB Merton to design and build a new Adventure Playground on a site shared with the Intergenerational Centre.



The site as it was

...as blank a  
canvas as it gets...

*"Theories have been essential in helping us realise our plan for a new and innovative adventure playground. It has proved highly successful and popular with the local children and staff alike. The play environment designed by Theories is supporting creative play activities in many different and varied ways."*

Tim Walder, Acacia Centre Deputy Manager and Adventure Playground Manager

Good play opportunities with sympathetic and creative adult support are sadly a rarity. We believe that the IGC adventure playground project has not only provided an imaginative, well used and successful play environment for the local community but also helped raise the standards of good play design practice.

The Intergenerational Centre, as its title implies, aims to integrate a wide range of age groups and their various needs and activities. Merton Early Years, Childcare and Children's Centre Department approached Theories in 2010 to creatively and competitively support their objectives to provide an integrated and exciting, high quality play environment with an emphasis on 'risk benefits' and play innovation.



The successful transformation

...to this....and more...

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Net bridges and towers



...the net outcome...

*"Theories Landscapes provided an extremely flexible approach to this project, and developed a very imaginative solution for the new IGC adventure playground. Most importantly, liaison with ourselves and the end user was first class, ensuring that the brief was correctly adhered to. The quality of the end result is demonstrated by the extensive use the facilities are already receiving."*

Russell Blaber (Merton Project Manager)

Theories had great fun working creatively with a group of volunteer children from a local school who helped develop the play design brief and to act as a test bed for ideas and concepts.

The design drawn up with their help created a dramatic and attractive play landscape incorporating custom-made play structures featuring slides, swings and climbing. The design also included softer grass mounding and extensive planting giving opportunities for active as well as quieter play activities all around a central social core with dens and open fire pit.

Theories were chosen not only for their innovative play design reputation but our capacity to always deliver on time and on budget. Funding for this project came from Play Pathfinder, and has become Merton's flagship play project.

Theories were able to handle the entire project comprehensively from beginning to end, from consultation and design to building and aftercare. A Design/Build solution has once again demonstrated real value for money at the same time as its capacity to create extraordinary play environments and great play experiences.

"Twigwams", climbing, and balance play



...to have a central place within the local community...

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