



Registered charity 1150651

Helping children with disabilities and their families

A school for parents which helps parents to help their own children with cerebral palsy or other forms of motor and sensory impairment



8th March 2019

To Whom it May Concern @ Richmond Planning:

I would like to add my voice to others expressing an urgent need to keep Marble Hill Play Centre open, with a view to creating a Family Community Hub with MeToo&Co and The Otakar Music Trust.

It is a no-brainer! Losing the Play Centre would be a terrible blow to the community, in particular the SEND community, who are so poorly provided for already. Both MeToo&Co and The Otakar Music Trust deserve having a permanent home given the great work that they do with our most vulnerable children and young people in need. And given the funding crisis for SEND services and facilities, this Project could have a transformational effect on the local community without needing any Council funding. The creation of a hub within which many local organisations can work together will enable synergies and efficiencies to be achieved and will ensure sustainability of essential services.

The improvements proposed to the Playcentre, including a sensory room, sensory garden and more adapted equipment would be of huge benefit to the SEND community, not only for the children, but their extended families too. Those families who face battles not of their own making every day and could do with the certainty of an accessible secure place to call their own. I understand that there is potential to increase the inside space at the Centre thus enabling it to be open year-round, which would be transformational to children and parents needing access to provisions during long holiday periods when there are limited facilities available.

I understand too that there is potential to hire and train at least one adult with a learning disability to work in the new Centre which would be amazing and so very beneficial; there are very few such opportunities available.

As a 'soon to be resident in Richmond' charity (Burleigh House, Worple Way) we will be delighted to signpost our parents and children in the direction of this unique Community Facility; as I said at the beginning, it is a no brainer. The proposal gets our full support.

Sincerely,

Anita Coppola MBE
Head of Small Steps

Small Steps SFP

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Peer support for parents/carers with physically disabled children

9th March 2019

To: Planning Department, Richmond Council

Re: Proposed Redevelopment of Marble Hill Play Centres

To whom it may concern,

I understand that you are currently considering a possible plan to redevelop the Marble Hill Play Centre site to incorporate improved facilities and integrate additional services.

As a local parent of a child with a severe physical disability and the co-founder of Phyz, a support group for families of children with physical disabilities, I wanted to write in support of the proposal.

There are very few places in the Borough where children with physical disabilities can play and meet other disabled children. When my own child was younger we often made use of the one o'clock club at Marble Hill and as she was older, also the adventure playground. Although the staff were extremely welcoming and made great efforts to integrate her in the play, the facilities are not ideal for a child who uses a motorised wheelchair.

Marble Hill is a fantastic community resource, and a place where many families can go and enjoy the peace and space, whether playing football, enjoying picnics, or making use of the play facilities. In particular it is a place where both my disabled and non-disabled child could play together.

As someone who tries to bring parents together so that they can find a community and support from others in a similar situation, I am very aware that there are very few social activities suitable for our children, meaning that they and their families are often lonely and isolated. I believe that a new, accessible hub in Marble Hill Park would be a fantastic resource and would be extremely well used and highly valued. It is a place where our support group could arrange for families to meet at particular times of the week – enabling their children to get to know one another and perhaps form friendships. Nothing like this exists at the moment, and in fact with funding becoming tighter all the time many of the services that families could rely on in the past are no longer available.

I do hope that you will look favourably on the proposals. It could make a huge difference to the lives of the many families with disabled children in Richmond.

Yours faithfully

Penny Hoffmann-Becking
Co-founder of Phyz
30 Lancaster Park, Richmond, TW10 6AB



6th March 2019

MARBLE HILL PLAYCENTRES REDEVELOPMENT

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of The Auriga Academy Trust in support of the Marble hill Playcentres redevelopment.

As providers of special needs education covering a wide range of needs and ages we are acutely aware of the importance of accessible play for all children and the value such centres add to the community, often providing much needed support to local families.

We appreciate the value of current playcentres and the services they provide and, during a period when we are all under increasing pressure, the new playcentre would be an organisation with which we could collaborate with to maximise our contribution to the local community.

We fully support the proposal.

Your faithfully,

H.C.T. James

H.C.T. James
Chair, Board of Trustees
The Auriga Academy Trust



21 & Co

Enhancing the lives of children with Down syndrome & their families

10th March 2019

To: Planning Department, Richmond Council

Re: Proposed Redevelopment of Marble Hill Play Centres,

As a representative on 21&Co, I am writing in support of plans to redevelop the Marble Hill Play Centre. 21&Co is the local charity supporting children with down syndrome and their families. Our members have always relied heavily on Marble Hill. It is unique in the area in the way that it provides safe play space for disabled children and their siblings, and consequently a meeting place for their parents.

Over the last few years I have worked as the short break lead for Richmond's disabled children's parent carer forum. I have seen first hand how, in these times of austerity, finding good leisure and social opportunities for disabled children has become more and more difficult (note the recent closure of the Marble Hill art club for disabled young people, and the constant trimming back of local authority short break provision). I have repeatedly heard how socially isolated families with disabled children find themselves. What parents want more than anything for their disabled children are structured opportunities to make friends. A purpose built resource which can act as a hub for our community would provide this and be a lifeline for many of these families.

I therefore ask you to support the proposals, and promote the significant positive impact that they will have on some of the most vulnerable and isolated families in Richmond.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Derrick
21&Co
6 Blenheim Place, Teddington TW11 8NZ

Planning Department,
Richmond Council

11th March 2019

To whomever it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Richmond Borough Mind to offer our support for the proposed redevelopment of Marble Hill Play Centre in Marble Hill Park, by Me Too & Co.

Across our organisation we offer support to individuals with mental health issues, as well as their carers, and we often see the challenges that individuals can face in accessing support and resources, and the subsequent impact that this can have on their family and their wellbeing. We support this initiative as we see this as an opportunity to provide a free community resource which would benefit local families in the long term. We would also support the proposed site due to its central location making it easily accessible, and therefore more beneficial, for local residents.

Most importantly, RBMind recognises the impact that play, exercise and being in the great outdoors can have on an individual's wellbeing, and we see this as an exciting opportunity to provide accessible support locally for individuals who may face barriers in accessing this support otherwise.

We look forward to hearing how this opportunity progresses, and the positive impact it could make on our local community.

Kind regards,

Kat Moore
Operations Manager

From: **adhd richmond** communications@adhdreichmond.org
Subject: **Marble Hill Play Centre**
Date: 12 March 2019 at 12:39
To: **chair** chair@marblehillplaycentres.com
Cc: **Annette Wilson** awilson4@btconnect.com, **chair** chair@medicaandco.org.uk

Dear Katy

I am writing on behalf of ADHD Richmond and Kingston to register our support for the continued operation of the play centre at Marble Hill. In particular, we have participated in the inclusive play sessions run on Saturdays, which have been widely used by our members and the play centre also was frequently used at other times. As you are aware ADHD is a neuro developmental disorder and many children with ADHD often also have co-occurrences such as dyspraxia, sensory processing, aspergers and autim presentations too. The importance of play and physically exercise in the development of children cannot be under-estimated. It is particularly important for the children of our members that such play and exercise is in a supportive environment, where skills are often gained at a slower pace than other children.

Therefore we fully support the continued operation of the play centre and would be happy to attend any meeting where this matter is to be discussed.

Regards

Annette Wilson

Chair ADHD Richmond and Kingston

11th March 2019

To Whom It May Concern

Letter of Support – Development of Marble Hill Centre

I am writing on behalf of Ruils – a user-led charity based in Richmond. We provide information, advice, support and short breaks to parents of children with additional needs and disabilities in the borough.

We currently provide 1-2-1 advice sessions to parents at Me Too & Co. We are able to do this as parents can leave their children to play, while they attend the session. At present we are limited to seeing 3 parents per session, because there is no more space for us to meet. A new facility, with a greater number of 1-2-1 rooms, would enable us to offer more sessions thereby helping more parents across the borough.

Me Too & Co is providing essential activities that make a real and significant difference to families with children with disabilities and complex needs. Not only do these activities open up new worlds to children, who are at risk of social exclusion, but it creates a supportive network to parents who often marginalised and isolated. At present they are only able to offer these activities 2 days per week. Many of their services are oversubscribed. They need more space, but most importantly they need their own space.

As a charity, we strive for an inclusive society. This partnership between Marble Hill, Play Centre, Me Too & Co and Otakar Kraus Music Trust is a beacon of what can be achieved when organisations work together. I believe that the new Centre will build on Marble Hill's work and reputation of providing an inclusive space for all children to play together and Me Too & Co's specialist support provision to provide a truly unique space for the families of our borough. It will also provide a space for other voluntary sector organisations, like Ruils, to provide specialist services and will enable mainstream providers to provide activities for all children.

At a time when funding is tight, activities and services need to be protected. This is an opportunity to create a Centre in the heart of the borough for all families. It has the potential to create funding opportunities through charging, hiring etc. which would safeguard services for generations to come.

This development has our full support.

Yours faithfully,



Cathy Maker
CEO
Cathymaker@ruils.co.uk



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Joint Presidents: Zac Goldsmith MP
Sir Vince Cable MP

Chair: Denise Carr
Chief Officer: Laura Turner

12/03/19

To Whoever it may concern

Re: Marble Hill Adventure Play Centres.

At Richmond Mencap we work with groups of young people with Learning Disabilities, Social Communication Conditions and additional needs (including ADHD) in Richmond Upon Thames. We regularly bring groups to the Adventure Playground which we find invaluable. The centres offer our groups recreation within the community whilst providing supported social contact.

We feel that the loss of the play centres would be damaging for the community. We know many young people that spend their time productively in the playground while being supported by the staff. We appreciate having an integrated provision where we can bring young people to play with a degree of independence.

The proposed improvements to the Playcentres, including adapted equipment as well as a sensory room and sensory garden would be very beneficial to the people that we work with, allowing our groups greater access to the centres as well as giving families some respite after school and at the weekends. Opening the centres all year round would greatly increase the support to families who are looking for activities and respite.

As we run an employability project for adults looking for work we are pleased that there are plans to offer work opportunities to a member of staff with a Learning Disability.

We are aware that services for families with SEND are stretched so the proposed improvements will provide space where local organisations can work together and keep essential services running.

Yours sincerely

Laura Turner
Chief Executive Officer