

About us

We are a landscape architecture & inclusive design consultancy, specialising in the following areas of work:

- **Public Space Access & Inclusion**
- **Healing & Care Environments**
- **Learning environments**
- **Parks & Play**
- **Gardens & Residential**
- **Sustainable Business & Industry**
- **Training, Research & Education**

If it sounds like we might be able to help, please take a look at what we do, www.westleydesign.co.uk & contact us to discuss your project.

Inclusive Approach

Westley Design begins any project with a thorough understanding of its physical and human context. Three principles underpin our approach to each challenge, and the service we deliver.

Inclusive Design

That is to say:

- 'Stakeholders' innovatively involved in the design process
- Creatively balancing future user's needs & aspirations
- Delivering equality of enjoyment & access; both physical, sensory, social & information / interpretation

Multi-disciplinary Collaboration & Innovative Solutions

Our working practice involves direct collaboration with a select range of complementary professionals & designer-makers, appropriate to each project's requirements. This approach allows us to deliver an efficient, project specific service, from concept to finished product, leading to original, creative, holistic solutions.

Sustainable Relationships between People & Place

Successful places are nurtured by people who use, love & care for them, because of the benefits which they bring to their lives. Our design process aims to foster these relationships through creative consultation; extending throughout the design process and continuing the engagement into the life of the completed space. Westley Design is skilled at resolving conflicts & building positive partnerships for action between different users and the places that are special to them.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS PORTFOLIO CASE STUDIES

Play

Play design is a key aspect of Westley Design's learning environment work. Practice Principal Michael Westley is a Play Advisor to the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE Space) & Play England, for whom he helped design and deliver a national program of training, covering both play strategy development and play design.

We believe that play is a right for all the community, particularly children to engage in and benefit from, delivering fun, health and social & learning skills.

Inclusive access to & enjoyment of play spaces is fundamental to our design philosophy. In, school & nursery environments as well as public parks, open spaces and healthcare settings, we design play environments responsive to the particular needs of the users

We are advocates of 'natural play' and of designing the play experience to build on the opportunities offered by the setting itself.

We believe that play design should be a collaborative process, engaging future users in a creative and fun process, aimed at meeting their needs and building a relationship of respect for the setting and other users.

Westley Design believe that environments need to grow out of the creativity of their users, and are flexible and robust enough to allow each succeeding generation of users to re-engage, re-invent, and gain personal connection to their environment.

Both the consultation process and the final product which we arrive at invariably involve the creative input of a select range of designer makers from a variety of disciplines.

Set out below are recent case studies from our learning environment portfolio.

January 2009

westley design

CABE & Play England - Play Strategy & Play Design Training & Advisory Program (2006 – 2008)

The challenge

The majority of U.K. local authorities had no strategy for the inclusion provision of play services & facilities & variable degrees of play design expertise. CABE & Play England secured lottery funding to fund a national program of training and advisory seminars to address these issues

What we did

In his role as a CABE Play Enabler, Mike Westley designed and delivered training materials at a range of national seminars and went on to carry out specific advisory consultations on behalf of CABE regionally across the South West. His special area of focus as part of the project team was inclusive access to play

The result

A raised profile of the subject of play nationwide was achieved with over 98% of local authorities having a play strategy in place and improved levels of awareness and play design skills within two years



Launceston Play Strategy Project (2006 - 7)

The challenge

The rural market town of Launceston is ringed to the north & west by peripheral residential housing neighbourhoods. Community action group, Launceston Forum had identified these neighbourhoods' low social & environmental indices and poor social facilities (including play). They appointed Westley Design to develop & deliver a Program of public play consultation events leading to neighbourhood play strategies & masterplans.

What we did

Westley Design devised & delivered an inclusive, community consultation process and visioning process for play proposals across three neighborhoods within Launceston. We held a series of consultation events, culminating in three 'Fun Days', one per neighborhood, at which a variety of activities and entertainments were provided to demonstrate the play & amenity potential of each space. A variety of workshop and creative consultation formats were provided to generate feedback. From this material Westley Design produced a play strategy and master plan for each site.

The result

The proposals were approved by each community team and are now helping Launceston Forum in the process to secure funding in partnership with the local planning authority and town council.



Bath & North East Somerset Play, Pathfinder Projects (2008 - 9)

The challenge

We were appointed under the Play Pathfinder project, by Bath & North East Somerset District Council as their designers for play space development within six existing run down parks. The challenge was to design play landscapes focussed on 8-13 year olds (but also involving inclusive provision for children in older & younger categories). The key elements of the project brief were natural play and inclusion of opportunity for disabled stakeholders. A further challenge was the project program which required consultation with six sets of local stakeholders, design and implementation management of all six projects over a period of just 6 months.

What we did

Westley Design worked with Mor Design and Bath Area Play Project & Wansdyke Play Association play rangers to facilitate consultation sessions with local people. We responded to the feedback from these sessions and the design brief from the client (Bath & North East Somerset District Council and District & Town Councils) to produce first, a Conceptual Play Strategy, then an Outline Proposal and finally a Play Masterplan for each of the six parks working with timber designer-makers Touchwood Enterprises.

The result

Our consultations with the community were effectively focussed into the successively resolved proposals, which were successfully presented to the community and received their endorsement. The schemes is now being developed into a detailed proposal with our project partners Touchwood Enterprises. The plan is to continue community involvement throughout the project implementation phase, through on-site public design and making workshops, developed in a close working relationship with skilled bespoke play design-makers. The plan is to implement the six play landscapes on site by spring 2009.



Springfield Park Play Pathfinder Project (2008 - 9)

The challenge

We were appointed under the Play Pathfinder project, by Bath & North East Somerset District Council as their designers for play space development within six existing run down parks. The challenge was to design play landscapes focussed on 8-13 year olds (but also involving inclusive provision for children in older & younger categories). The key elements of the project brief were natural play and inclusion of opportunity for disabled stakeholders. A further challenge was the project program which required consultation with six sets of local stakeholders, design and implementation management of all six projects over a period of just 6 months. Springfield Park is an extensive area of grass and tree clumps bounded by woodland and residential developments overlooking bath. Slopes made the existing under 8 play area inaccessible and created security problems for the games court.

What we did

Westley Design worked with Mor Design and Bath Area Play Project & Wansdyke Play Association play rangers to facilitate consultation sessions with local people. We responded to the feedback from these sessions and the design brief from the client (Bath & North East Somerset District Council and District & Town Councils) to produce first, a Conceptual Play Strategy, then an Outline Proposal and finally a Play Masterplan for each of the six parks, working with timber designer-makers Touchwood Enterprises. Our design response at Springfield was to: use earth modelling to open access and views to existing court, create BMX track with spoil from earthworks, create spine path and install solar light standards, supply and install youth shelter and surface, linking to key inclusive play element, install surface and free play elements beneath existing tree canopy for natural/adventure play.

The result

Our consultations with the community were effectively focussed into the successively resolved proposals, which were successfully presented to the community and received their endorsement. The schemes is now being developed into a detailed proposal with our project partners Touchwood Enterprises. The plan is to continue community involvement throughout the project implementation phase, through on-site public design and making workshops, developed in a close working relationship with skilled bespoke play design-makers. The plan is to implement the six play landscapes on site by spring 2009.



Truro Nursery School (2005 - 2008)

The challenge

Westley Design worked with Wendy Titman Associates; school grounds design advisors to government on a program of Cornish Pre-school Projects, including Truro Nursery School. Although the site included a play space surrounded by trees, it was heavily shaded and contained a limited range of standard play equipment. The school wished to create a multi-sensory learning/ play environment in this space and to develop an adjacent woodland site in order to extend its breadth and scale of provision.

What we did

Westley Design collaborated directly with the inspirational Wendy Titman Associates and the school staff to design & deliver an inclusive vision for an enriched sensory learning environment. Westley Design helped produce briefs & detailed designs for multisensory learning & play opportunities, including: a water play area, canopies, tree canopy walkway & design development with specialist furnishing designer-makers Touchwood. We then ran the tender process and managed the project onto the ground with contractor, Mid-Cornwall Landscape, including the design & installation of the planting design.

The result

The project produced a highly successful, flexible landscape rich with sensory play and learning opportunities. Even in winter the majority of the nursery children's time is spent outside.



Pottery Quay, Plymouth LAP's (2008 -)

The challenge

Pottery Quay is a residential enclave on the historic waterfront of Devonport, Plymouth, which has recently experienced total redevelopment of its post war public housing stock. The challenge was to design two play landscapes in this new development, through consultation with the local residents, and to manage their implementation over a period of just 6 months.

What we did

Westley Design worked with Playlink to facilitate consultation sessions with local people. We responded to the feedback from these sessions and the resultant design brief from the client (Westcountry Housing & Guinness Trust) and Playlink to produce first, a sketch scheme for consultation and then a full proposal, which will be developed into a contract package for implementation.

The result

Westley Design's Sketch Proposal was successfully presented to the community and received residents and clients endorsement. The scheme is now being developed into a detailed proposal. The plan is to implement both play landscapes on site by spring 2009.



Launceston Children's Centre (2008-9)

The challenge

The Children's Centre project has established a series of facilities offering family and child support, learning, parenting skills and family health advice. Play, especially with younger children (both leaning & therapeutically focussed) & often accompanied by counselling activity, is a key element of each centres program. The site comprised a plain, grassed space bordered by mature hedgerow trees including a semi-enclosed courtyard. The client wished to create a multi-sensory learning/ play environment in this space to extend its breadth and scale of provision. The design also needed to incorporate discrete social spaces serving an associated public health facility.

What we did

Westley Design facilitated a detailed brief development exercise with the Centre's staff to design & deliver an inclusive vision for an enriched sensory learning environment. Westley Design helped produce briefs & detailed designs for multisensory learning & play opportunities, including: a water play area, tree house walkway, trike track and story-telling / hammock willow domes. We then ran the tender process and managed the project onto the ground with contractor, Mor Construction, including the design & installation of the planting design.

The result

The project produced a highly successful, flexible landscape design, rich with sensory play and learning opportunities. The project is due for completion on site in April 2009.



Glen View Pocket Park – Inclusive Play-park Consultation & Design (2005 – 2007)

The challenge

The site was a sloping strip of wasteland behind houses in Glen View, Penryn, an area of local authority housing with no public open space, or nearby play facilities. The community had called for these facilities to prevent children playing on streets and the housing provider (Carrick Housing) had begun some capacity building work to develop a constituted group. Westley Design was asked to creatively engage the community in producing ideas for a play park and overall project brief, leading to a full design for the park for project fund raising and implementation.

What we did

Westley Design facilitated an inclusive community consultation & design process leading to an initial design report. This documented process secured funding toward the first phase of the park. Westley Design produced & managed the contract package, tender process and construction management.

The result

The first phase of the park is complete and the residents group is actively engaged with Carrick Housing to generate funds to complete the project.



Magharalone Therapeutic Play Space Project & Cork Health Authority Training (2005-6)

The challenge

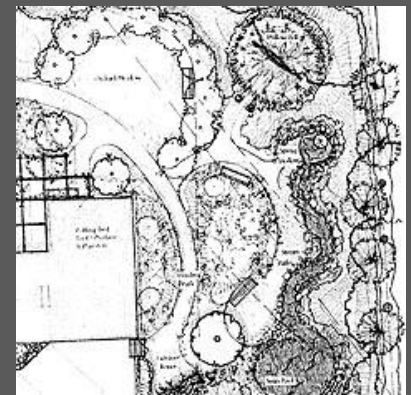
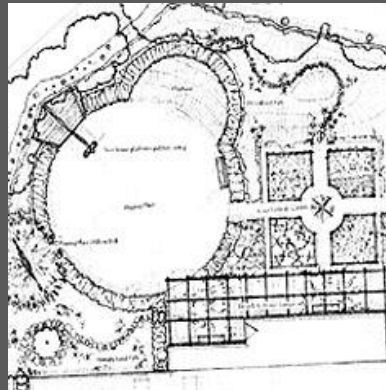
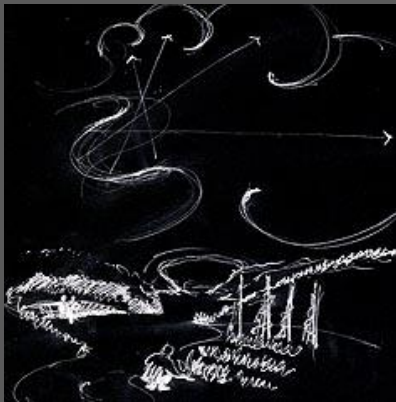
Eadaion Brannach, an inspirational Consultant Occupational Therapist & Attachment Counsellor has developed clinical specialism in Sensory Integration & Attachment Classification. Her work involves analysing the individual's capacity to maintain an appropriate arousal state when engaged with others. Sensory Integration Theory deals with understanding of how we process sensations and how we can use sensory experiences to regulate our emotional states and behaviour. Attachment Classification gives us an understanding of the nature of parent child relationships and how this impacts on; one's ability to regulate arousal states, the capacity to learn, and the capacity to engage in healthy attachment relationships with partners and children. Eadaion has integrated these two approaches and developed her own treatment approach called "Sensory Attachment Intervention" (SAI). It combines the use of sensory regulating techniques, parent/carer management strategies, and provision of therapeutic space (indoor and outdoor). From her own practice Eadaion was able to observe how much benefit was gained when working with clients in garden settings rather than inside buildings.

What we did

Mike Westley worked with her to develop a landscape setting for her own treatment centre that would provide a series of specific sensory and spatial settings. The therapist might then develop client specific sets of activities based on combinations of different experiences obtained from the landscape settings. Westley Design later used the principles developed in their collaboration to deliver a program of training for children's services providers commissioned by the Cork Health Authority.

The result

This proposal formed the basis for a separate set of training sessions delivered to a private service provider for the Cork Health Authority. The proposal for the garden never went ahead due to the sale of the treatment centre; however Eadaion continues her unique practice as a consultant and Westley Design remain committed to the principles developed during this project.



Play For Life Inclusive Play Project Royal Cornwall Hospital (2007 -)

The Challenge

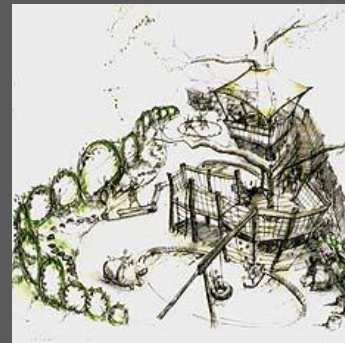
The instinct to play is fundamental to human behaviour at all ages. In children, play is essential to the development of the whole child; physical, mental, intellectual, social & spiritual. Children learn both life skills and knowledge more deeply & intuitively through play. If the nature of the play engages all of the child's senses & their imagination & creativity, that learning is exponentially greater. As with its learning benefits, so play brings healing benefits which increase with multisensory engagement & the stimulation of the imagination & innate creativity of the child. Whatever the child's range of sensory or intellectual ability, there is always a form of play which they can engage in? Play is just as important to children in hospital as it is to children in the wider community. It is difficult to overestimate the impact on a hospitalized child of an environment dominated by clinical routines dominate each day. This project has sought to listen to the younger hospital patients as well as adults. They've made it clear that they have aspirations to be outdoors and the need to respond to acknowledge the 'whole' patient experience, not just the routines of hospital life.

What we did

Westley Design advised on the design & delivery of an Inclusive Consultation & Design Process developed by RCHT with Royal Cornwall Hospital School. We then produced an inclusive play design masterplan and report in support of funding application.

The result

The Royal Cornwall Hospital Inclusive Design Play space is designed to offer the child, carer, clinician, teacher or health worker a range of different sensory, intellectual, social & physical/ mobility options for the play experience. All areas and play elements are designed to be used by children of all abilities & mobility to different degrees, depending upon their capacity and choice to interact. As well as specific therapeutic effectiveness, the design is intended to offer a place of respite and sensory richness to children, teenagers & adults. It is a place with something to offer to everyone in the wider hospital community. The project proposals comprise a diverse landscape that will entertain, inspire, & absorb the users, taking them out of the hospital environment and into the world of their own imagination. The proposal is currently being promoted by the trust for funding.



Camborne Nursery School (Phase 2) (2006 - 08)

The challenge

Even school grounds for our most vulnerable children are often no more than deserts of grass or tarmac, creating poor environments with little or no educational function. They lack the shelter and shade which makes outdoor play & learning possible for early years/ nursery children to safely enjoy. Hence children are confined to the classroom and lose contact with natural world and the rich multi-sensory stimulating developmental experiences. Wendy Titman Associates are experts and advisors to government on the subject of the benefits of enriching the school environment. They appointed Westley Design as project partners and designers on their program of Cornish Pre-school Projects, including Camborne Nursery School.

What we did

Westley Design worked directly with the inspirational Wendy Titman and the school staff to develop design & deliver an inclusive vision for an enriched sensory learning environment. Westley Design helped produce briefs & detailed designs for multi-sensory learning & play opportunities.

The result

The project produced a highly successful, flexible landscape, rich with sensory play and learning opportunities.

