

Background to re-opening Ebury Play Area

Update 6 July 2026

The much-anticipated refurbishment of a well-loved play area in Rickmansworth has been completed in time for the summer holidays. We hope you enjoy the new play space.

Update 2 July 2026

We are on track to re-open Ebury play area as planned.

There are still a few areas where the grass needs to establish, but this will grow over the coming months as the weather changes.



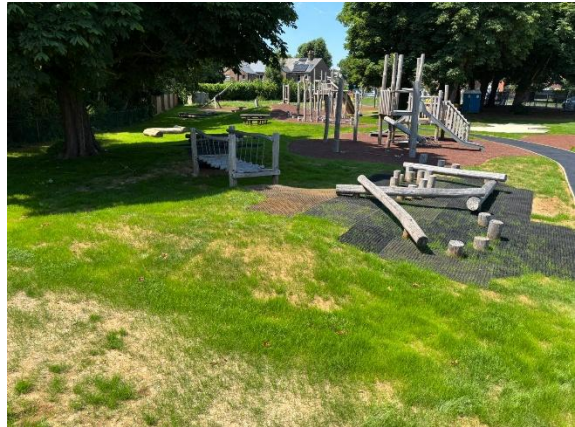
Update - 19 June 2026

Work this week:

- The container has now gone and the area has been soil and seeded
- The painting of the pathway has been carried out
- Grass is continuing to grow and has established well

Upcoming works:

- Works to the boundary will start
- Awaiting delivery of swings and ropes – anticipated to be delivered at the end of next week/early the following week
- New benches to be installed





Update - 11 June 2026

Work this week:

- Grass continues to grow and is benefiting from the recent weather
- The rubber mats continue to be installed across the site and is almost complete
- Sand has been installed into the sandpit
- The remaining container is due to be removed from site by the end of the week
- Ropes have started to be re-installed on the play equipment closest to the main entrance

Upcoming works:

- Rubber matting continues to be installed
- The final section of soil and seed will be completed once the container has been removed from site
- Final section of tarmac pathway to be painted
- A second coat will be applied subject to good weather
- Awaiting delivery of the new ropes for the remaining play equipment and new swing seats





Update - 8 June 2026

The first coat of tarmac paint has been put down on the pathway and rubber matts are being installed with reinforced mesh underneath. The safety Bouncy Bark installation is complete and the Gabion Tables and Seats have been moved into position.



Update - 22 May 2026

The council is pleased to have opened the new seating area opposite the play area for the public to enjoy. This week has seen the balustrade around the seating area installed along with new bin facilities which have been designed with anti-vermin openings. Safety surfacing has been installed around the pendulum seesaw and grass see has been laid.





Update - 18 May 2026

- Swing frames have been installed
- Landscaping around the swing frames has been completed
- Due to weather conditions, the laying of the bouncy bark around the pendulum seesaw has been delayed until the week commencing 18 May, again subject to weather conditions.
- Finishing off the soiling to the whole of the play area has continued this week



Update - 8 May 2026

- Works have been concentrating on finishing off the soiling to the whole of the play area
- Willow tunnels have been planted
- Finishings off of the bouncy bark play safety surface has taken place to all the areas where there is equipment



Update - 1 May 2026

The seating area and bridge have been resurfaced and the bridge has been reopened to the public. The seating area will remain fenced off to the public until hand rails are installed and the furniture is fully secured. Grass seeding is taking place this week alongside the reinstatement of play equipment.



Update - 24 April 2026

- All works to remove the contaminated materials from the site have taken place with the last remaining waste transfers taking place
- High grade weed membrane has been installed across the site
- New soil has been delivered to the site and spread across the weed membrane
- All equipment including seating, has been decontaminated and quarantined

- Sand pit has been remediated and prepared with weed membrane, reading for sand delivery
- New safety surfacing has been installed around all the new and existing equipment
- Climbing ramp has been resited



Update - 21 April 2026

Work has continued with replacement of new soil on site to restore the playground. This week contractors will be focusing on the seating area across the pathway and bank area around the bridge. We will work to reopen the bridge access as soon as possible.



Update - 10 April 2026

The contractors have continued to excavate around the equipment where possible and to remove all the contaminated equipment. The contaminated materials are due to leave site today.

Some items of equipment, seating etc, have been decontaminated and placed into the designated quarantine area and will be returned once cleared. The climbing ramp has been resited, the climbing tunnels have been prepped for concrete, membrane and soil recovering and the safety surfacing has been decontaminated.

The soil analysis report from the new soil, which is quarantined with the supplier, has been received and new soil will start arriving on site next week

During the next stage of work, it is necessary to implement a short-term closure of the bridge entrance from Riverside Drive in order to allow the contractor to carry out the works safely. The bridge will be closed from Monday 20 April and until no later than Friday 1 May 2026. Communications will be issued next week with a [signed diversion route](#) in operation as was the case during the bridge replacement



Update - 2 April 2026

Please see below an update of the works that have taken place during the week commencing 30 March:

- Excavation works have been carried out to revised depths in accordance with instructions from the Environmental Clerk of Works
- Installation of weed membrane is ongoing within the Root Protection Zones (RPZ)

- Grab lorries have commenced removal of contaminated material. All waste transfer documentation is being retained on site by the contractor and shared with the council. Materials within the hazardous waste holding area are being relocated to the site frontage to facilitate efficient collection upon vehicle arrival
- Existing swing seats have been safely removed
- The sand pit area has been levelled and excavated to the correct formation depth
- The climbing wall has been repositioned
- Storyboards have been installed on the site informing the visitors of what is happening at the play area and other play opportunities in the area over the Easter holidays



Update - 30 March 2026

Vegetation and soil layer removal has continued, with soil and materials removed stored securely. Lorries are booked in for this week to start removing the hazardous soil and materials.

Furniture and other equipment that can be retained is being checked and quarantined until it is cleared for reinstatement.

On Friday our contractors visited the soil suppliers to review, test and ensure that the soil for our reinstatement works is quarantined/ring fenced prior to delivery on site.



Update - 20 March 2026

The outgoing contractor left site late on Wednesday afternoon and the site was handed over to the council's new contractor, The School Renovation Company. The works site is now established, works are being undertaken and are progressing well. New fencing and signage has been erected around the perimeter of the site detailing the knotweed removal. A quarantine zone and hazardous waste collection area has been established ready for the specialist environmental company to remove the materials. This first phase of work will see the contractor scrape off of the site removing vegetation and then excavation of soils will form the second stage.



**Update - 18 March 2026****Work begins to remove invasive plants at a popular Rickmansworth play area.**

The removal of invasive non-native species in the Ebury Play Area is beginning, paving the way for the anticipated re-opening of the much-loved playground.

Remediation works to safely remove the Japanese Knotweed and other invasive weeds at the site by Riverside Drive in Rickmansworth has started on Wednesday 18 March 2026 and is expected to take up to 16 weeks, completing no later than Wednesday 8 July 2026. There are a number of phases to the work which are outlined below. The timing of each phase will be dependent on factors such as ground conditions, weather and material supply.

[Read more here.](#)

Phases of work	Key activities
Mobilisation	Site setup, fencing, compound
Excavation	Invasive species removal & soil excavation
Specialist Removal	Off-site disposal
Reinstatement	Soil replacement & membrane installation
Surfacing	Play surface reinstatement
Completion	Final inspection & handover



RE-OPENING EBURY PLAY AREA

Remediation Plan

Japanese Knotweed is classified as an invasive, non-native species and is subject to strict controls under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. The council is therefore removing all of the newly created landscaped areas to ensure that the Japanese Knotweed, soil and other invasive weeds are taken away from the play area and the adjacent seating area. These will then be disposed of at a site registered to take these plants and weeds. As part of the remediation and to protect the site, there will be a period when the new bridge will need to close – notices will be displayed on site and the website updated with information once dates are known.

Introducing our new contractors to deliver the plan

Three Rivers District Council has contracted The School Renovation Company, who have previously delivered successful playground improvements at Denham Way, Maple Cross and Barton Way, Croxley Green, along with the installation of the Heritage Trail and other works at Leavesden Country Park. They will work alongside Environet, who are invasive plant specialists to ensure the effective remediation of the site.





When can we expect to play?

Work is underway and is expected to take up to 16 weeks, subject to weather conditions.

How can I stay up to date?

Please visit the council's website to see the latest information as the work progresses: www.threerivers.gov.uk – please select: Leisure, Parks and Culture, followed by The Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project and finally the Ebury Play Area tab.

Thank you for your understanding and patience during this period.
We look forward to delivering an exciting play area for all the community.



Want to know more?
Scan the QR code for
additional details

www.threerivers.gov.uk



Update - 11 November 2025 *“Progress is being made in resolving the issue of Knotweed at the Ebury Play area. Investigation works will be taking place at the play area on 13 November. This forms part of the work required to enable the council and others involved to consider the best mobilisation plan to treat and safely remove invasive weeds here.*

“Once this investigation is completed and the results analysed, we hope to be able to share the full plan and dates for full remediation of Ebury Play Area...”

Ebury Play area - CLOSED

The anticipated reopening of the Ebury Play Area has been delayed following the unexpected discovery of Japanese knotweed.

We are currently working with specialists to resolve and manage the situation.

It is anticipated that the play area will remain closed until later this year.

Cllr Sarah Nelmes, Deputy Leader of Three Rivers District Council and Lead Member for General Public Services, said: “I share the immense disappointment and frustration of all those who would like to be using the Ebury Play Area. I am working with council officers and closely with our contractors to agree an effective remediation plan for the removal of the Japanese Knotweed. The remediation work that is needed at this location to remove the Japanese Knotweed is of significant complexity due to the fact that it is a playground. The remediation works need to provide confidence that they will prevent any recurrence that would result in further closures of the playground in future years. We will make sure that happens and I look forward to seeing the play area open and being used as it should as soon as possible. Once we have agreed programme of works it will be published and shared.”

What is Japanese knotweed?

Japanese knotweed is an invasive non-native species to the UK; in this instance it means that the plant was transported from its native range (East Asia) to a new region (the UK) by humans and now has a negative impact on the environment. It was introduced as an ornamental plant in the 1850's, it now poses a great issue as it disrupts the natural ecosystem and can cause significant damage.

As the majority of Japanese knotweed plants in the UK are female, this means that it rarely spreads by seed; and instead spreads through rhizomes. Rhizomes are special stems that grow underground and allow the plant to store nutrients and also reproduce by making clones of themselves. Therefore, from each small piece of rhizome a new plant can grow.

While it is not illegal to have Japanese knotweed present, it is illegal to allow it to spread. Therefore, the treatment of this species must be carefully considered and is controlled through legislation, including the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. It is also a controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which means it can only be transported by a registered waste carrier to suitably permitted or exempt sites.

For more information on Japanese knotweed and how to stop it from spreading please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-japanese-knotweed-from-spreading>

Ebury play area design:





habitats for play...
Earth Wrights
...inspired by nature

Earth Wrights Ltd
 Woodlands Yard
 Dartington
 Totnes, TQ9 6NS

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Project: Ebury Play Area
 Date: 24/04/2024
 Scale: Not to scale

1. Willow dens
2. Accessible picnic bench
3. Existing spinning dish
4. Traversing ropes and crow's nest
5. Tunnel
6. Small tower
7. Balance log
8. Log scramble
9. Hill top tower
10. Rubber belt
11. Willow tunnel
12. Climbing ramp
13. Upside down tree stump for den building
14. Willow fort
15. River bank hut/hide
16. Existing structure
17. Picnic benches
18. Bench

All structures will be below 4m in height