

Design and Access Statement for the proposed community garden at Waterlooville Health Centre. Produced by Love Outdoors CIC and NHS Property Services.

Site Location

Waterlooville Health Centre is located off Dryden Road in Waterlooville, Hampshire and is set in a residential area surrounded by private dwellings, retirement flats and social housing. Within a short proximity from the Health Centre, there are blocks of flats and maisonettes, many with no outdoor space.

The Health Centre is part of Vine Medical Group and serves as a GP site, as well as offering services including out of hours.

The Health Centre is set on extensive grounds and includes a large car park and a grassed area at the back, measuring a total of 0.6 hectares. The Health Centre has recently seen investment in a ground source heat pump, and the associated structures are in the rear garden space. Other than this, the grassed area at the back of the surgery is not utilised, has very few trees and is bounded by fences, and some hedgerow.

Existing Site context (photos)



View looking east, back towards the Health Centre from the end of the green space



View looking south from the side of the green space with Waterlooville Health Centre on the left.

Background to the proposals

Waterlooville Health Centre has a large space behind it which is under-utilised and with many local residents not having access to outdoor space, a nurse practitioner and team approached Love Outdoors CIC after seeing a space behind a GP surgery transformed into a community wellbeing garden in Gosport. It was discussed that a community garden in Waterlooville would be to the benefit of local people and could be used for a variety of means including rehabilitation, to improve wellbeing through community connections and connections to nature, and as a place to both relax and enjoy as well as a place to incorporate exercise.

A steering group was set up formed of Vine Medical Group, Havant Borough Council, Love Outdoors, Horizon Leisure Centre and NHS Property Services (landowner) to discuss moving the project ahead.

Love Outdoors then ran a number of engagement events to speak directly to the community, staff and patients, asking them what they would like to see in the garden, how they would use it, what the barriers might be and how they would like to get involved. A total of 8 different engagement sessions were undertaken, mainly at Waterlooville Health Centre as well as Stakes Lodge, Havant Health Centre and The Borrow Centre. Local community groups were also spoken to including Motiv8 (young people), a SEND support group (for children and their families), dementia groups (including a gardening group) and

the local leisure centre. There was also an option for online feedback via Love Outdoors website, and a 'design your own' space which was left in Waterloooville Health Centre.

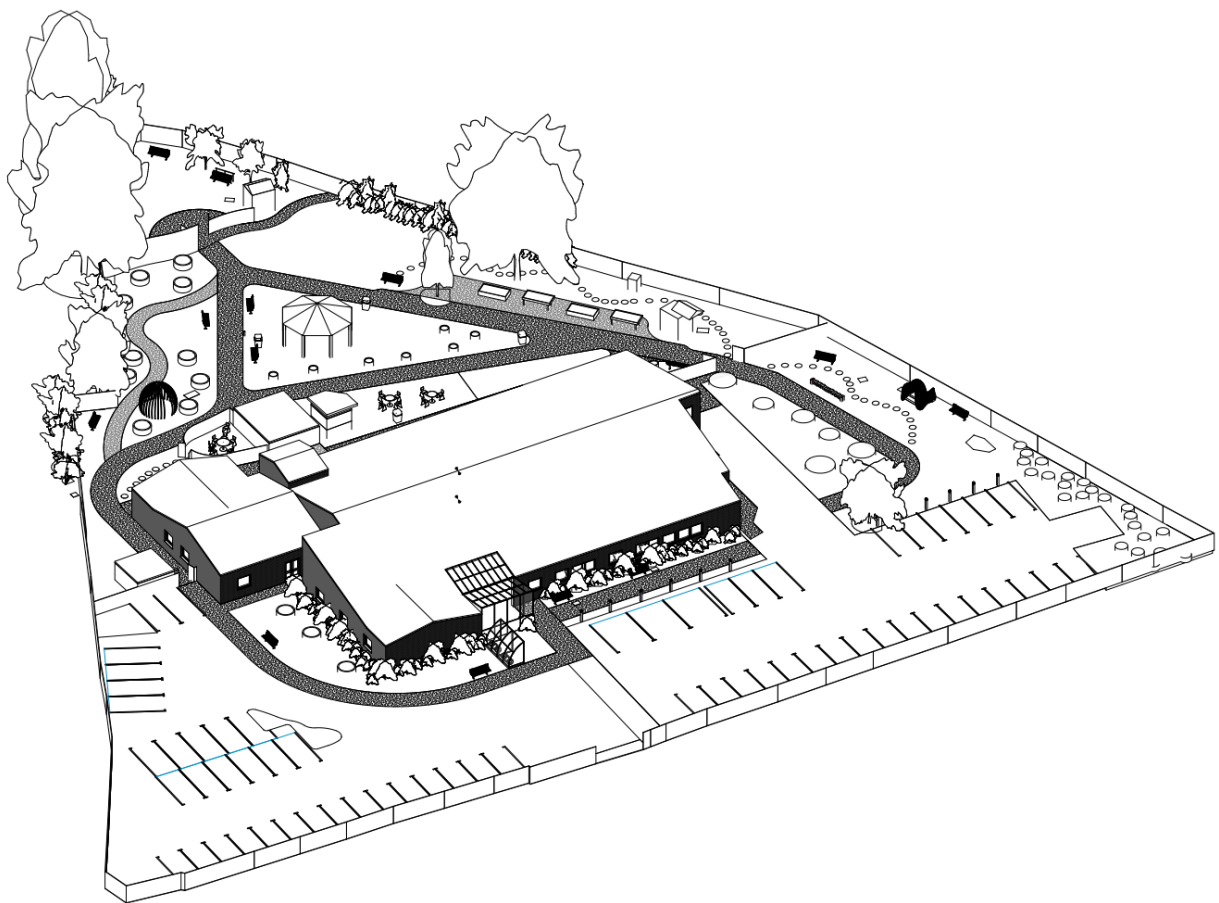
Following the initial community engagement, word clouds were created highlighting the key themes emerging from the community discussions. In January 2026 a community day was held where two options were presented to the community and additional feedback was gathered, with views sought on what the public thought, as well as being provided with an opportunity to view the site and take part in some activities.

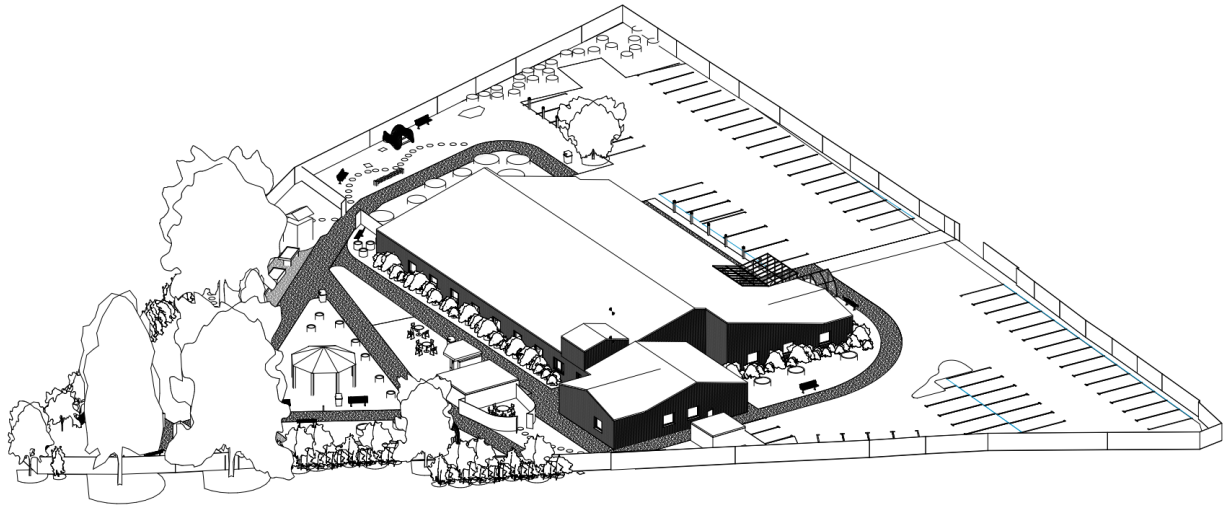
Based on all of the engagement a final plan has been created, which has considered requirements with regards to accessibility, maintenance, biodiversity, funding, changing climate and sustainability.

Garden design

The shape of the main space is triangular, with minimal tree coverage and is mainly to the west of the building. We considered many things raised by the community engagement and drew on our experience of creating smaller community wellbeing gardens. To try and incorporate the different elements of the garden that were suggested, and due to it being a large site, we decided that zoning the space would be the best solution.

An illustrative 3D design of the garden is set out in the images below:





Zones:

- The design has tried to include all the different elements requested, but in a way that flows and is as accessible as possible. A description of the different zones is set out below:
 - **PLAY:** this is to the north of the car park just outside the main triangle area. As there are many local people without access to garden space, an area where families with young children could meet and play was requested. This is a natural play zone with natural mounds and stepping stones, a low balance beam and potentially a tunnel. Benches would be installed to allow for seating and socialising.
 - **GROW:** through the gate there will be a growing zone containing raised beds of different heights, including some for wheelchair users. Behind the beds would be stepping stones through a community orchard with new fruit trees and bushes.
 - **SOCIAL:** the central triangle zone is a multi-use space for meeting, moving and socialising, with a covered bandstand type space and room for associated seating. Just off this area will be a 'tea hut' where light refreshments can be provided, alongside some accompanying outdoor seating.
 - **ACTIVE:** the end zone is a grassed area, with benches and a pull up bar, that can be used for light activity, including for rehabilitation using equipment which attaches to a bar, or basic sit ups on the benches. The grassed area can also be used for mindful activities including yoga, tai chi and Pilates. A willow fence is proposed to ensure some privacy for users of the active zone.
 - **RELAX/SENSORY:** an area for people to relax, that is full of sensory planting and winding paths, as well as a willow structure for relaxing and enjoying the space. Sensory planting will be very important here so colours, scents, touch and sound will be important in our choices.

Accessibility:

- The site needs to be as accessible as possible. We decided that a path that linked all the key areas up and allows people to access sections of each was the best solution. The main path surface we suggest is paving grids (heavy duty recycled plastic grids which are then filled with light-coloured shingle). This surface drains well, is easy to maintain, is flat, accessible for wheelchair users and doesn't become slippery. We have tested this in other gardens and it seems very suitable for a community wellbeing garden.

- We have included raised beds of different heights and wheelchair accessible beds.
- The main central triangle is proposed to be a resin-bound light-coloured gravel which provides a flat and level surface, suitable for chair-based activities.

Hard Landscaping surfacing:

- As mentioned above, the primary path is paving grids infilled with gravel/shingle
- The secondary paths that shoot off from the main path are proposed to be compressed scalping's as per a typical 'countryside path.'
- The main triangle multi-use space is proposed to be resin-bound light-coloured gravel which is permeable but creates a solid, flat surface suitable for different activities.
- The active zone at the end of the garden is proposed to be grass to enable activities like yoga, tai chi and Pilates that work best on a natural surface.
- Surfaces will be light-coloured to reflect light and heat.

Hard Landscaping and structures:

- There will be a main wooden bandstand type covered structure in the main triangle area, to provide shade and a space to meet despite the weather. This could be used for staff meetings, group consultations or for community groups to utilise, and fits within the social multi-use space. Specification attached in Appendix 1.
- There will be a wooden tea hut adjacent to the social area which volunteers can serve light refreshments from. Specification attached in Appendix 2.
- Three new sheds are also proposed to store garden equipment. Specifications attached in Appendix 3.
- The play zone will be open all the time the health centre is open, however there will be a 6 foot wooden fence and gate just beyond this, meeting with the boundary fence and the surgery building. This will be on both sides of the site. This is intended to ensure safe use of the site and so that the garden can be locked overnight.
- Raised beds will be built using new wooden treated sleepers and built on site.
- Storage containers will be built on site to house gardening equipment and tools, and outdoor activity equipment. They are likely to be made of plastic.
- Benches will be heavy duty and made of recycled plastic.

Soft landscaping planting:

- Planting of the site will improve the biodiversity and range of plants currently in the space, to attract wildlife and encourage interest.
- We will use sensory plants to include lavenders, herbs, roses and grasses. There will be native wildflower beds which will include ox-eye daisies, cornflowers, red campion and corn poppy, and the hugelkultur beds will include a mix of perennial and annuals that give both colour and height. We will plant dwarf fruit trees and bushes, and look to include additional native whips including blackthorn, hazel and crab apple.
- We aim to plant a living willow fence (such as the following <https://www.thewillowbank.com/living-willow-structure-kits-for-sale/willow-fedge-screens/>) alongside the active zone, and potentially in the play area, which are easy to grow and maintain, and can create shapes and places of shade in the summer months.
- We will use drought-resistant plants in the main planted sensory garden and a willow structure such as the following <https://www.thewillowbank.com/living-willow-structure-kits-for-sale/willow-arbour-arbor/> or <https://www.thewillowbank.com/living-willow-structure-kits-for-sale/willow-teepee-dome/> are proposed.

- We will ensure beds are layered and incorporate materials that retain and then release water (hugelbeds and raised beds).

Habitat creation

- We will incorporate bug hotels, bee hotels, beetle mounds, bird feeders and bird boxes within the garden to encourage wildlife.
- We will also add WildPods around the garden which are a planter that incorporates space for wildlife including bee holes, amphibian spaces and a hedgehog house.
- The wildflowers will encourage bees and butterflies in to the garden and the new trees will encourage birds.

Opening times of the garden:

- The garden should be open as much as possible but it is not intended to be used overnight.
- The intended opening hours will be during daylight hours only when the surgery is open so from 8am-6pm usually, but will close earlier in the winter months.
- The site will not be lit, other than a security light at the gates.
- Site staff should lock up the site and reopen the garden when they open/close the main building.

Maintenance:

- The materials, surfaces, structures and equipment proposed in the garden is as low maintenance as possible, but everything has a life and a plan will be developed with the landowners for recommendations on how often wooden structures need treating, and equipment and surfacing needs inspecting.

Use of the space:

- Use of the space is for the whole community, staff, patients and groups.
- Local community groups have expressed an interest in booking the space for their group so that the gates can be shut and the space becomes safe and accessible only to them.
- This is a consideration that will be worked through with Vine Medical Group and NHS Property Services as to how this would work, but there is support to make the space work for the community and groups that wish to use the space in this way.

Flood risk and SuDs measures

- There is a slight identified risk of surface water flooding in the play zone and as such, natural materials will be used here (but benches will be recycled plastic).
- A willow structure will be built here which loves water and will thrive in the play zone.
- Additional dwarf trees will also be planted here to support drainage.

Sustainability measures

- Benches will be recycled plastic with a long life.
- Grid surfacing will use recycled plastic and will be filled with natural gravel to allow good drainage.
- We aim to keep all materials on site, so if the grass is dug up, it will be composted or used to line raised beds and form hügelkultur beds.
- We would like to compost on site.

- We would like to harvest rainwater through adding waterbutts on to drains on the buildings.
- Hugelbeds and raised beds will be layered to retain water and slowly compost on themselves.

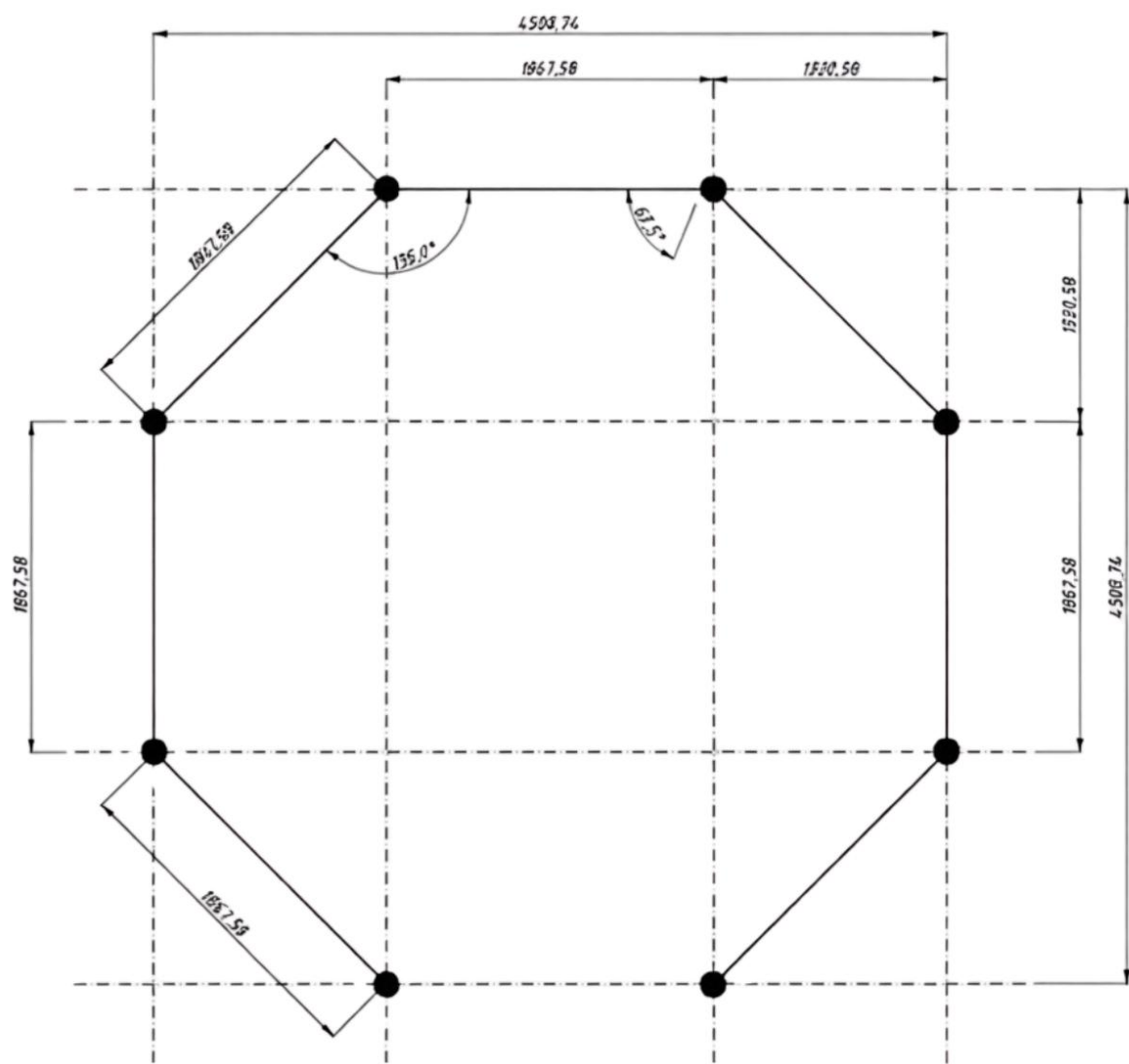
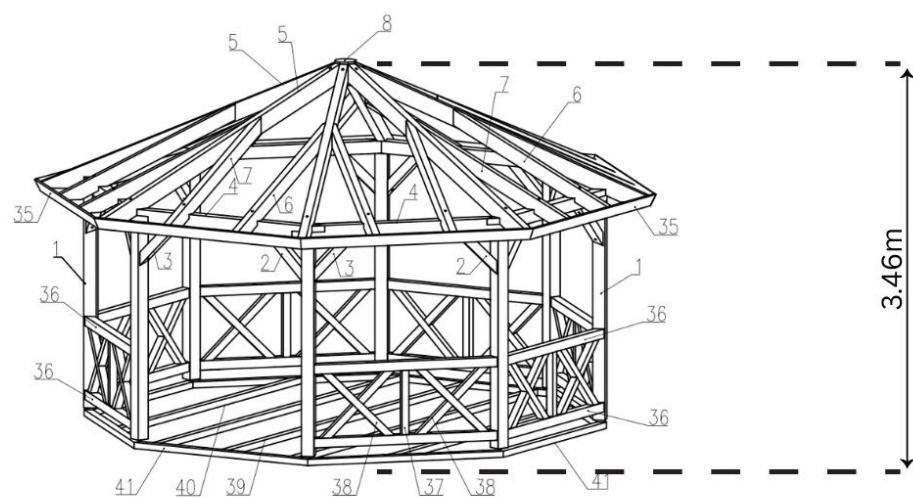
Cycle parking/sustainable travel methods

- We envisage that most people who come to the garden will arrive on foot if they are local, and this is most likely from our experience at other community gardens.
- There is an existing cycle parking covered structure at the front of the Health Centre, which accommodates 10 cycles.
- The Health Centre is just off Milton Road which is served by two buses- the number 7 which goes from the centre of Waterloooville to Wecock Farm, and the D2 which goes from Denmead to the centre of Waterloooville.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- No trees will be removed.
- Additional dwarf fruit and native trees will be planted.
- Additional fruit bushes will be planted.
- Raised beds will be used to grow fruit and vegetables.
- Native wildflowers will be grown to attract wildlife.
- Sensory plants will be chosen based on their drought-resistance- more mediterannean plants and herbs.
- Habitat will be created to encourage wildlife and pollinators.
- Please see the submitted BNG Assessment and Matrix for more information.

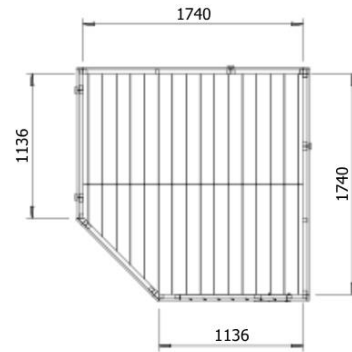
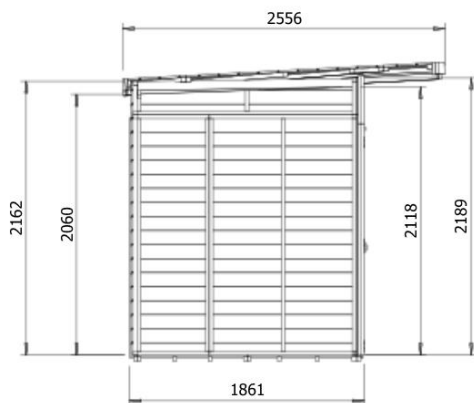
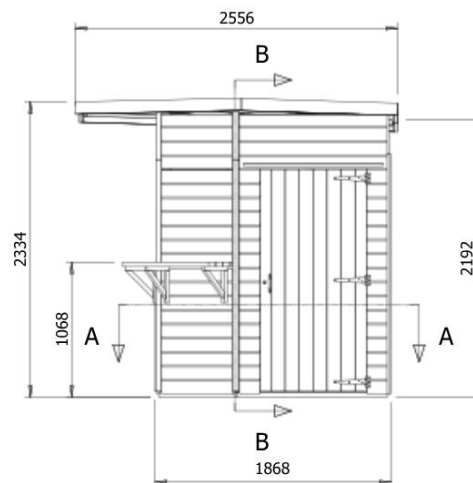
Appendix 1: Specification of proposed pavilion structure



Appendix 2: Specification of proposed tea hut

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Proposed Tea Hut

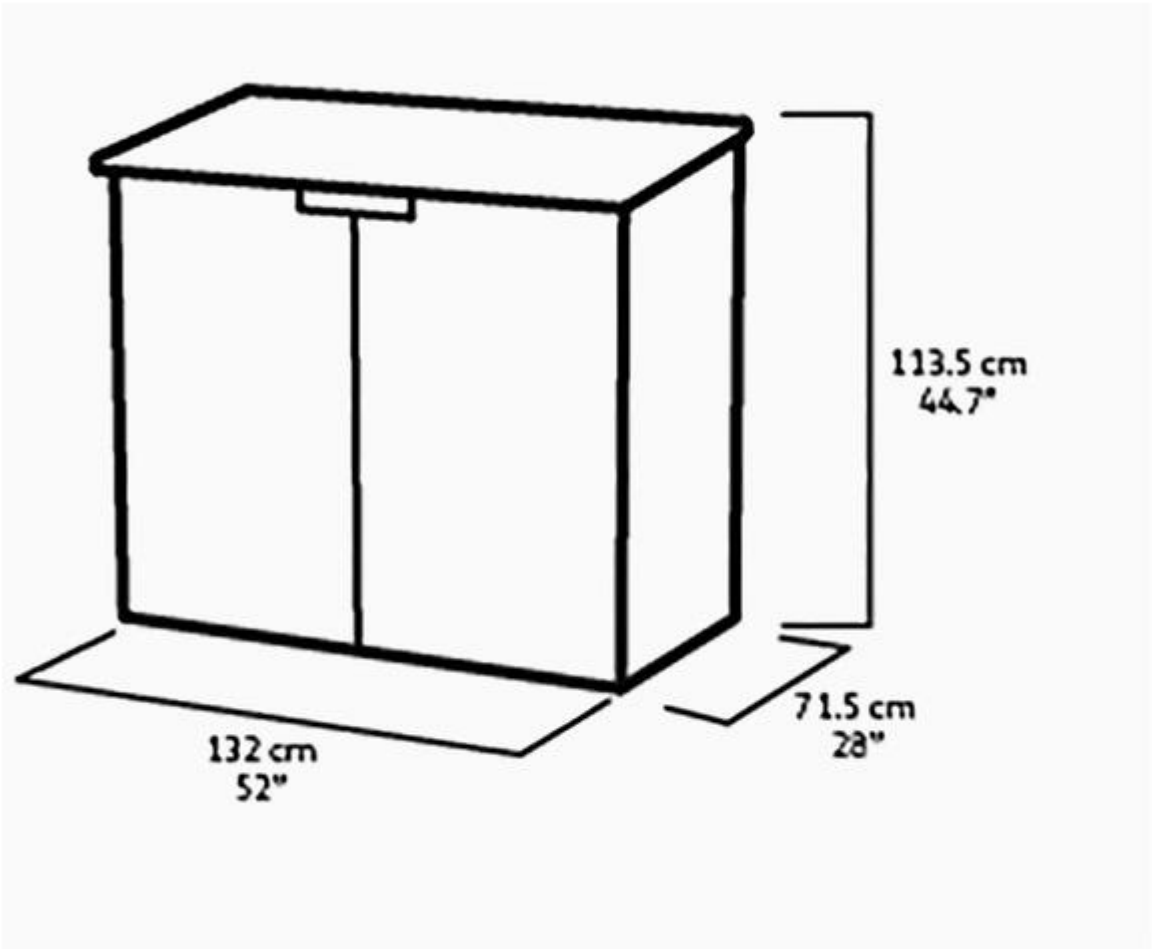
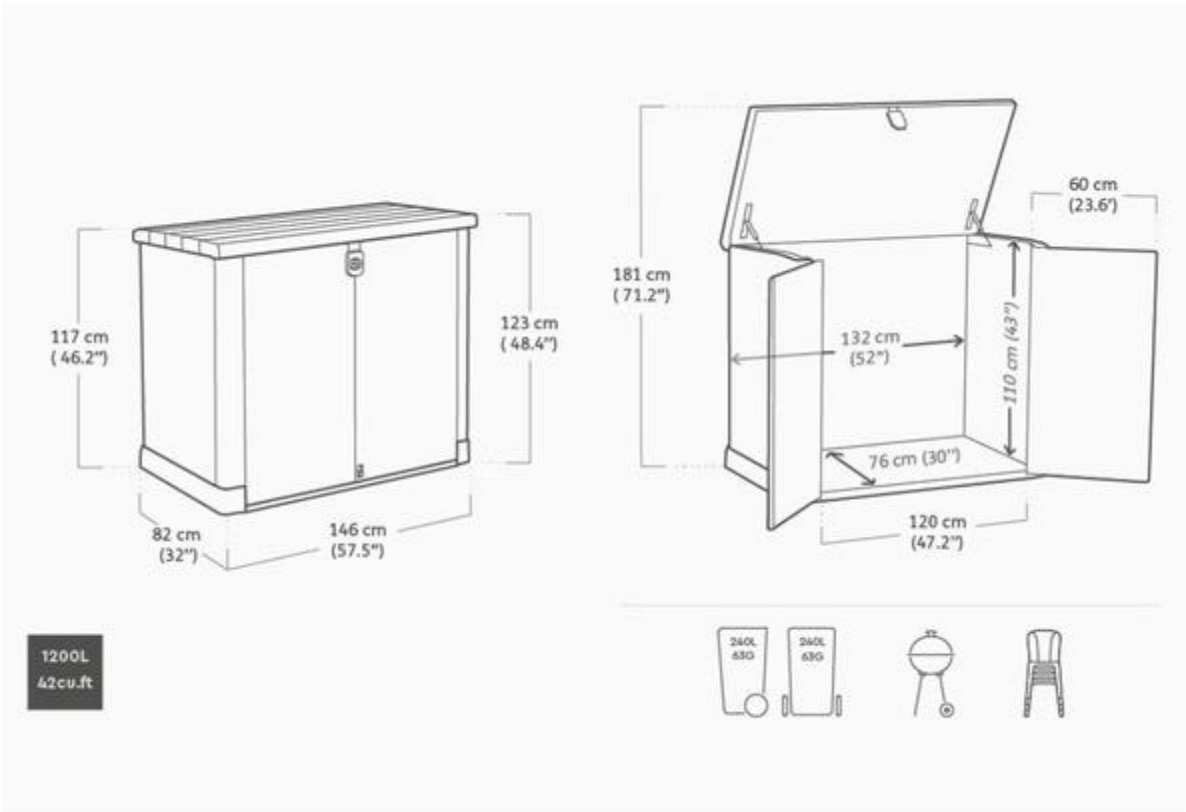


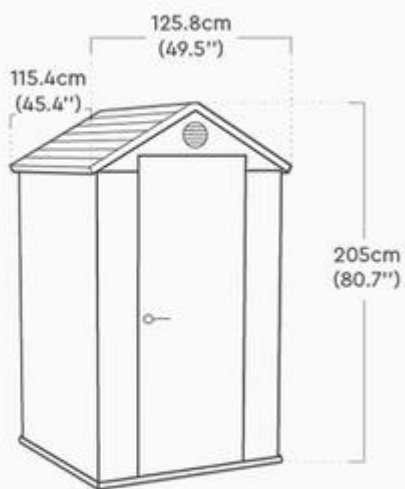
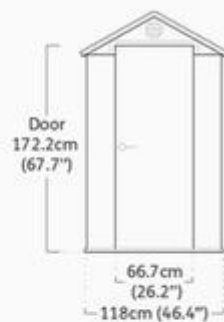
Specification

- Overall External Dimensions: 2.556m x 2.556m (8' 4.75" x 8' 4.75")
- External Width: 1.868m (6' 1.5")
- External Depth: 1.861m (6' 1.25")
- Internal Width: 1.740m (5' 8.5")
- Internal Depth: 1.740m (5' 8.5")
- Internal Area (m²): 3.028m²
- Internal Eaves Height: 2.189m (7' 2.25")
- Ridge Height: 2.334m (7' 8")
- Roof Thickness: 15mm
- Wall Thickness: 15mm
- Floor Thickness: 15mm
- Framing: 28mm x 34mm
- Walls: 100% Slow Grown Spruce
- Timber Treatment: Pressure Treated for Longevity

- Door Walkthrough Height: 1.728m (5' 8")
- Door Walkthrough Width: 0.850m (2' 9.5")
- Guarantee: 10 Year Guarantee on Pressure Treated Timber
- Approx DIY Assembly Time: 2 Days* *This is an approximate time only, based on 2 people. Assembly time may vary depending on season/weather conditions, foundation type, ability of those constructing, etc

Appendix 3: Specifications of sheds proposed





Interior Dimensions (WxDxH) : 109.1x111.4x199.8 cm | 42.9"x43.8"x78.6"