

Corfield Green Planting Project:

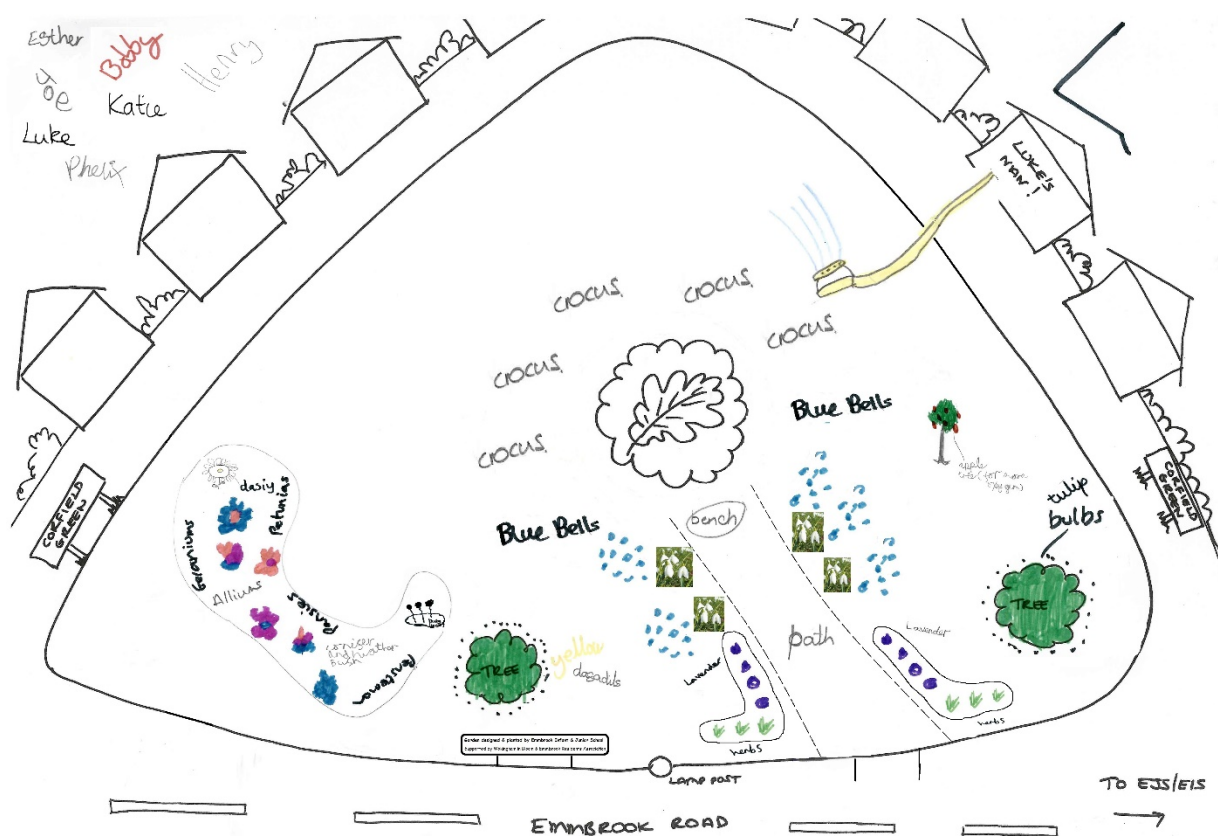
Since 2016 ERA has been working with Emmbrook Infant and Junior Schools, supported by Wokingham in Bloom (WIB), to develop the grassed area bordering Corfield Green. ERA is committed to working closely with local schools for the benefit of the whole community and this project is a great example of this in action, situated at the heart of the Emmbrook Village.

Special thanks go to teachers Sally Blee and Jenny Wright who have helped throughout, and Paul Smith (WIB) who provided valuable advice and whose enthusiasm, hard graft and great contacts sourcing financial and plant donations from WIB have made the project possible.

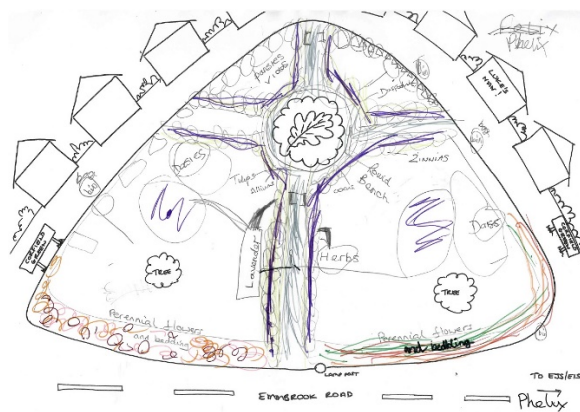
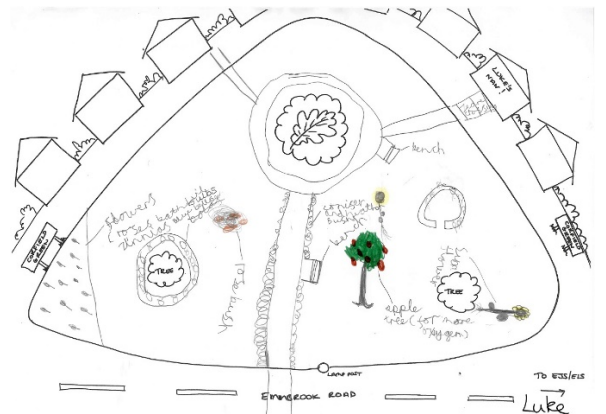
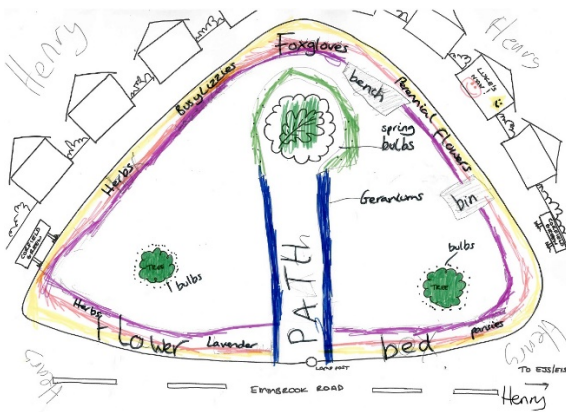
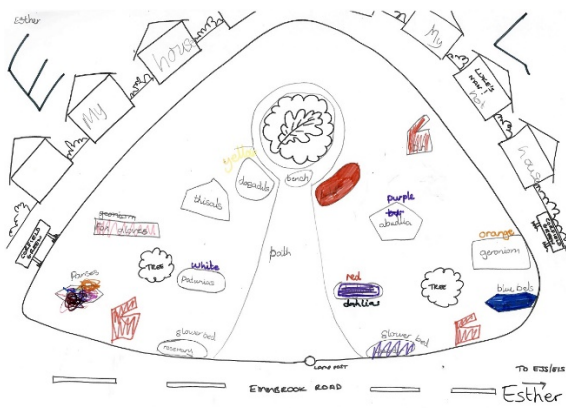
October 2016

Big thanks go to Bobby, Ester, Henry, Joe, Katie, Luke & Phelix from the Emmbrook Infant and Junior Schools who developed their own designs, over a couple of weeks, with ERA and WIB attending the school to lend support and advice. We received such imaginative plans and worked with the children to combine best bits from each one to arrive at the final planting scheme. As you can see they even thought about where to source water for the plants.

The combined design



And their individual designs:



November 2016

The first phase gets under way with hard work digging out the beds. Thankfully we were able to make good use of the Wokingham Community Service programme, with the guys working very hard making light work of the very tough ground. Very limited topsoil meant a healthy dose of compost was needed.



This was quickly followed by the first planting phase of daffodils and crocus bulbs donated by WIB. The very enthusiastic team from Emmbrook Infant and Junior Schools were in charge of the planting to make sure it was all done in accordance with their carefully prepared design. Not much to see at that stage but we only had to wait till spring 2017 to start to see the product of their hard work.



June 2017

The school children were back in action for the next phase of planting to start filling out the beds prepared the autumn before, using plenty of bark chippings to help control weeds and reduce evaporation from watering. The bark chippings were all donated by WIB and ERA provided the funds for most of the planting, with the taller plants donated by a local resident.



October 2017

This time the children completed the bulb planting using tulips, snow drops and bluebells. We didn't expect much to show in the spring of 2018, but did see a few tulips and snow drops pop their heads up. We hope for a much bigger display in the early part of 2019.

June 2018

Our second summer of planting provided the opportunity to complete the children's planting scheme to their design, and to refresh the annuals. We learnt from the previous year opting for less thirsty ones. Little were we to know what a scorcher the summer would be (the best ever alongside 1976!). This provided real challenges with watering, especially as the compulsory water metering programme caught up with our local resident. Thankfully we had help from another resident who hadn't yet been transferred, but this will remain an ongoing challenge for future planting.



What's next?

We are hoping to fulfil the children's wish to install a new bench around the large oak tree, but have been struggling to get agreement from Wokingham Borough Council. We will continue to push to get their design completed. All lobbying is welcome!

On the planting front, we are hoping spring 2019 will bring an array of colours with the snow drops, bluebells, crocuses and tulips. Based on how well they do we will decide on the need for any further bulb planting.

We will also be tending to any weeding & upkeep over the autumn, ready for further planting in spring summer 2019.

We are always looking for keen volunteers, whatever experience, so please contact Chris Mallett chris.mallett@ntlworld.com if you would like to offer your services for future work.