

Old Witney Road Food Forest Garden

Background

The Eynsham Parish Council (EPC) was leasing an allotment in Old Witney Road play area to a local resident. The lease was coming to an end, and the local resident was no longer using the allotment. The allotment was covered with weed membrane.

Cll Milly Chen has been joining the Eynsham Primary School Student Council on behalf of the EPC. In children's feedbacks on how to improve play areas, a number of children suggest more green space in play areas (e.g. trees and scrubs).

Joining the two dots, Cll Milly Chen proposed to the EPC that the un-used allotment in the Old Witney Road play area could be turned into a "food forest garden" for the local children. This would be a great place for the children to experience nature first hand, and enjoy the fruits of their labour year-on-year.

Food Forest Garden Creation

The EPC approved the proposal for the creation of Food Forest Garden for the local children.

Cll Milly Chen was working closely with the school to carry out initial planting for the food forest garden. All are perineal, such as of fruit trees, berry bushes and flowers. Many children and parents came to help in the plantings in Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022.

<https://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org-news.aspx?nid=1633#news>

<https://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/news.aspx?nid=1723>

Since then, the children of the Eynsham Primary School have been making visits to the food forest garden. They also designed and created bug hotels and bird houses to make wildlife there at home.

<https://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org-news.aspx?nid=1796#news>

Further planting and maintenance for A&E approval

With severe heat waves this summer, unfortunately, some of the plants did not survive.

Cll Milly Chen is liaison with the school to plan further planting in the food forest garden this Autumn and in future as needed.

We will keep the fruit trees in small size, so easier for the children to pick. Dwarf varieties are chosen where possible. The main stems of the trees are cut to limit height. Cll Milly Chen will continue to support annual pruning working with the school.

Appendix

Examples of further fruit trees for planting:

- Vine - Green grapes
- Vine - Red grapes
- Pear
- Peach
- Apricot
- Victoria Plum
- Cherry Plum (golden colour)

Not all are required, the remaining will be used elsewhere.

Costs of this project comes from donations and children fund raising at the school.