

Springfield Infant School, Worthing, Rain Water Garden Project
TRANSITION TOWN WORTHING ECO OPEN HOUSES 2018 BROCHURE RELEASE – FUTURE PROJECTS
IN DEVELOPMENT



SITE: Springfield Infant School
Sackville Road,
Worthing

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR:
K EVANS-MAKRAKIS
Parent, PTA Treasurer

The proposal to introduce a Rain Water Garden¹ is an innovative and environmental assisted method to disperse a historic issue of standing water within Springfield School's outdoor play area.

The current soakaway and drainage; located directly underneath standing water (see photo, 27.02.17.) is constantly overwhelmed whenever there is heavy rain, due to a high water table in the area. Creating a 4m by 1.5m pool of water in the main playground, over the tarmac area and throughout the grass bank. This large body of water remains, keeping the grass bank boggy for days.

The school loses at least a 1/3 of their valued playground/outdoor space, with the hard standing and boggy grass bank deemed not fit to play on. This scenario results in inhibiting the children's welfare/physical need for activity and play, during their day.

The idea of this type of flood prevention project is strongly supported by the WSCC through the initiative Operation Watershed (OW). Financial support can be sort/awarded through 'Active Community Fund Application' available through the WSCC website².

The School welcomed the concept/project, and I will be representing the school in any further development/investigation. Being in the project manager role I had to put together a winning funding application, then steer the project from feasibility into construction and then hopefully onto completion. Application stage involved collating historic data, discussing with WSCC, co-ordinating site meetings, putting together an initial brief/scope, sourcing contractors and services for competitive quotes.

The OW representative met with me for initial talks/visits at the School, assessing the physical site and feasibility aspects. I knew that I could pick up the phone and the knowledgeable and friendly OW representative would give me sound guidance, assisting in forming my strong application.

¹ A Rain water garden is a sustainable drainage system also known as a bio-retention pond, without a presence of open water. The water tolerant plants act as a focus point for the drawn water, sitting on top of filtration layers in the gardens basin; dispersing any remaining water at a deeper level back into the soil.

² Shortcut to WSCC application (correct at time of writing document) <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/supporting-local-communities/operation-watershed/>

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Further talks with OW and WSCC assisted me in to gathering historical data relating to the school's estate, any previous completed projects, also suggesting several potential contractors that have historically developed these kinds of projects before.

An application was made late September 2017 and then funds awarded by the end of October2017.

Presently the Project is in its first work phases, no physical presence on site till September 2018;

- Site topographical survey into existing services (carried out in Jan2017)
- Tree survey (carried out in Jan2017)
- Initial ideas drawing meeting during Feb/March
- Concept drawings/designs scheduled to be developed and approved in May/June.
- Construction is scheduled over the Summer break, when the school is closed.
- Planting to follow during the Autumn term to let the plants settle along with the wetter weather. 90% of the Garden complete, 10% of project remaining (i.e. deep drainage clean)
- Educational boards designed and installed; leading to a completed and signed off Garden by the end December 2018.
- Admin & paperwork completed by mid Feb (invoices cleared, school records current)

The Rain Water Garden will remain a clear focal point of the playground and school. Educational outdoor graphics/boards will highlight the garden's content and enhance educational and other ecological purposes. Extending community discussions and attention throughout the year; teaching individual and group responsibilities towards 'our' environment.