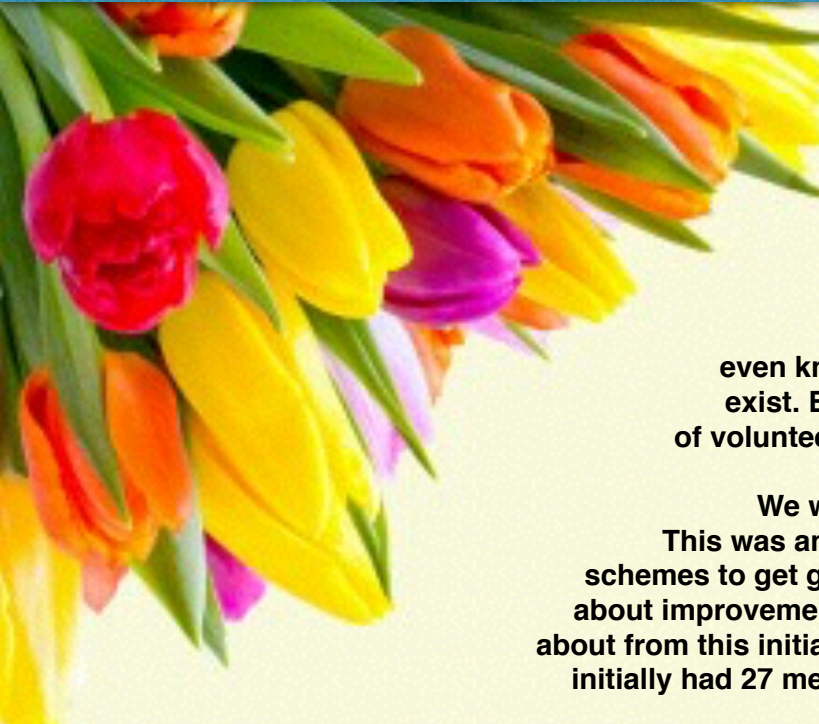


# ECCLESFIELD IN BLOOM NEWSLETTER



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**Hello all,**

It's been a while since we had a news letter, so long in fact that many of you won't even know who we are, what we do or that we even exist. Briefly, Ecclesfield in Bloom is a small group of volunteers that try to keep our village looking good.

We were formed off the back of The Village Plan. This was an initiative set up by DEFRA to come up with schemes to get groups involved with their local area to bring about improvements. We are one of several groups that came about from this initiative. We started our group back in 2008 and initially had 27 members in the group, we are now down to 11.

## **What we have achieved so far**

One of our first projects was the repair of the walls along Priory Road and Church Street where the topping stones had been stolen or damaged, (in fact this is what prompted us to form a group). Benches along the path were also repaired as these were no longer serviceable.

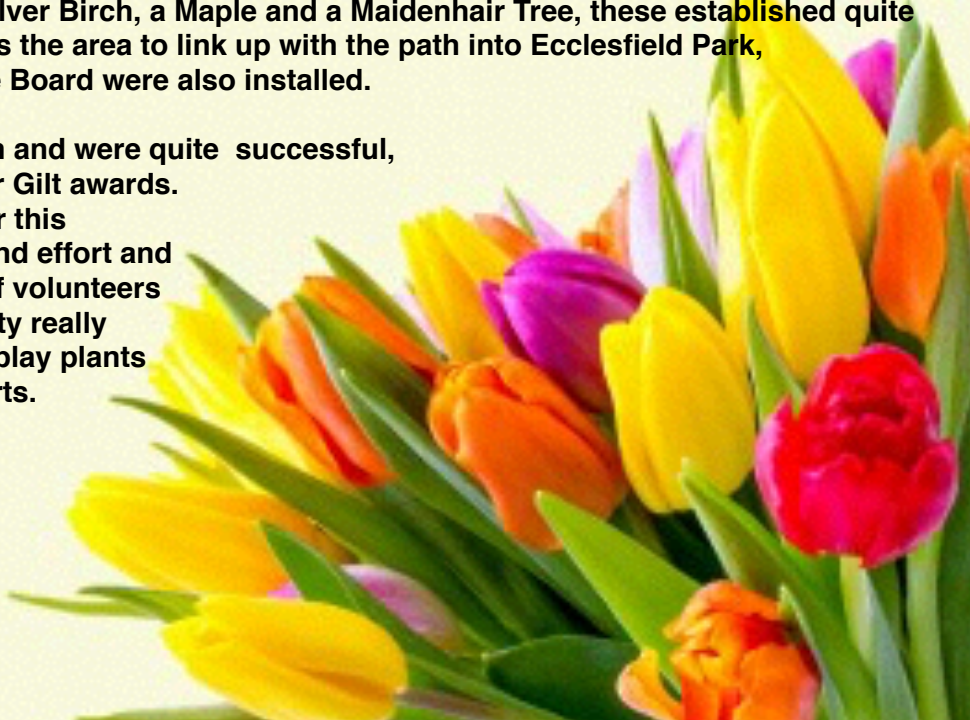
We provided planters on Church Street opposite the Black Bull, on the central path from Priory Road into the Churchyard, at the bottom of Greaves Road and in the alcove down Church Street where the bus stop used to be.

The area that most of us in Ecclesfield know as 'The Square' (this is the car park adjacent to what was The White Bear) is also an area we look after. We planted several trees on the grassed area at the end of the car park and we are pleased to say all but one are flourishing.

We repaired the walls of the raised bed at the entrance to the car park as the top stones were all loose and were likely to be lost or stolen and we planted and maintain the flower bed.

The group has also been responsible for what we now call 'Ladycroft Meadow'. This is where the bus stop is on St Mary's Lane. Ecclesfield in Bloom now have this on licence from Sheffield City Council. We imported soil to cover the area and initially we planted grass and wild flowers. Unfortunately the grass was too vigorous and swamped the flowers out. We had more success with the trees we planted, two Silver Birch, a Maple and a Maidenhair Tree, these established quite nicely. We installed a path across the area to link up with the path into Ecclesfield Park, benches and the Heritage Notice Board were also installed.

We also entered Britain In Bloom and were quite successful, achieving Merit, Silver and Silver Gilt awards. Unfortunately the preparation for this competition takes a lot of time and effort and we just don't have the number of volunteers to continue entering. This is a pity really as the whole village used to display plants and posters supporting our efforts.



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## **What we do now**

We maintain the area opposite The Black Bull, at the junction of Church Street and Priory Road (which most people think of as part of the Churchyard). Ecclesfield in Bloom secured a long lease on this land which should give it some protection against development.

We organise 'Working Parties' to replant and maintain the planters, The Square, Ladycroft Meadow and other areas around the village

We organise litter picks a couple of times a year. This is something we would like to do on a more regular basis, perhaps every other month.

One thing we do that can't be missed and is appreciated by many, is the Christmas tree. Ecclesfield along with all the other villages in the Parish had a tree supplied and erected by the Parish Council each year but this stopped a number of years ago due to cost and vandalism. Ecclesfield in Bloom revived this. The Parish Council were contacted to see if they would provide and install a tree but they were no longer in a position to do this, however they would provide us with a grant to help towards part of the cost, if we could take up the mantle. This we did. A call was put out locally to see if anyone had a tree they wanted removing, we were fortunate a resident on St Michaels Crescent had such a tree. We duly went and felled that tree and a local builders firm assisted with removal and delivery. We erected and decorated the tree with lights and have now provided a tree for the village every year since 2008.

## **How are we funded.**

As with everything we need funding to run our group. We need to pay for insurance, planters, compost and plants to fill them and mowing machines, which need maintenance and fuel. We raise most of our funding ourselves by holding a couple of fundraisers each year. Unfortunately due to Covid we haven't been able to hold any for a couple of years. We have a Plant Sale and Coffee Morning in May and a Christmas Fayre in November. We also receive some private donations and funding from a couple of local charities. Ecclesfield Parish Council provide us with a grant towards part of the cost of the Christmas tree each year which is a great help. Ecclesfield In Bloom make up the majority of the cost.

## **Where are we going.**

Unfortunately the future of Ecclesfield in Bloom is looking a little bleak. Unless we can attract more volunteers it is unlikely we will be able to carry on much longer. The majority of our group are not as young as we once were. Tasks we used to take in our stride now take a little longer. We really need enthusiastic people to come and join us, to bring new ideas and help with what we already do.

The Ecclesfield In Bloom Group meet on the **1st Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm in The Stocks**, Stocks Hill. Please come and join us, bring ideas of what you would like to see and more importantly how we can achieve it with your help.

Lastly thank you to everyone who supports us either by donating, picking litter, pulling out the odd weed sweeping their pavement and attending our fundraisers.

**PLEASE COME AND JOIN OUR GROUP**