

Path of Peace created in Duddingston

School children have helped create a stunning 100ft long "Path of Peace" in a tranquil church garden in Edinburgh.

Eighty youngsters from Duddingston and Parsons Green primary schools each made a tile for the pebble mosaic project at Duddingston Kirk Glebe.

They are decorated with peace symbols such as doves, hearts and the CND logo which represents nuclear disarmament.

The path, which will eventually wind through the four-acre site on the banks of Duddingston Loch, was officially opened today by Tommy Sheppard, MP for Edinburgh East.

Children from the two schools were the first to walk along it and all those in attendance were invited to commit themselves to live in peace and remember those affected by recent tragic events in Sri Lanka, New Zealand and Northern Ireland.

Mr Sheppard said: "I'm delighted to be able to join with members of the congregation, local community and the pupils who have built this path to celebrate their work.

"It's an honour to officially open the path and to congratulate all those involved for their hard work in creating a lasting legacy."

Rev Dr Jim Jack, minister of Duddingston Kirk, said: "In a world of so much conflict, with much of it carried out in the so called name of religion, peace is often overlooked," he added.

“Most people of faith and of none have a deep desire to live in peace and a world of mutual respect, acceptance and acknowledgement of a common humanity.

“The church gardens are open for anyone to come and walk the path of peace and to pray for world peace.”

The Path of Peace, which took 12 months to create, was funded by a £6,700 National Lottery Awards for All grant.

It features tens of thousands of colourful stones, sourced from Scottish quarries and from as far afield as Japan.

A metal sculpture of a Galloway Vine adorns the wall next to the path and people can engrave the name of a loved one on a copper leaf and hang it on one of the 170 pegs.

Space has been created at the base of the artwork for the internment of ashes and people are invited to lay cut flowers and sit quietly on a bench to reflect.



Bill Holden (6) left and Daniel Creelie (11)

Project manager, Lizz Spence, said the path was a labour of love for children who were in P6 and P1 classes last session

and around 20 volunteers who created it.

She revealed that the sub-base was dug by people serving community payback sentences for crimes they have committed.

Ms Spence said: "We are delighted with the Path of Peace which is a welcome addition to the Glebe.

"It is a beautiful place of tranquillity in the heart of Edinburgh where people can come and escape the buzz of the city.

"It has been a very long, labour intensive project and the pupils, who worked together on a buddy system, were given little boxes lined with plastic and they pushed stones into potters clay which held the design in place.

"Myself and some of the volunteers turned them into 30cm square slabs, created more pebble mosaic around them, and put them in place along the path.

"It looks lovely and given that stones last a long time, it is nice to think that the pupils will be able to come back and visit with their grandchildren."

Susan Cochrane, head teacher at Parsons Green Primary School, said older pupils had previously participated in a peace project with a partner school in Tanzania. She said : "When the opportunity arose to work with their buddies and create their own peace legacy at the Glebe in the form of a path that will hopefully last for generations, it was too good an opportunity to resist.

"The children in both classes thoroughly enjoyed working together and creating a lasting contribution to the local community and we are grateful to be part of such a positive and an inspiring project.

"We hope that whoever walks this Path of Peace within the beautiful setting of the Glebe will take a moment to reflect,

enjoy and be inspired by the message of peace it represents for the whole community.”

The Duddingston Glebe was traditionally the field where the minister could tether his horse and grow crops to augment his meagre stipend.

Today, it is used for a variety of purposes and two groups which support people with learning needs are currently cultivating vegetables and herbs.

Plants are grown for sale and four bee hives were recently installed.

It is hoped that honey will soon be served and sold in Duddingston Kirk’s Garden Room café.

The Glebe, which is supported by the Church of Scotland’s Go For It fund, is next to Dr Neil’s Garden.

The award winning garden, which is run by an independent trust, includes Thomson’s Tower and the Museum of Curling.