

# Secret Garden Newsletter

## Summer 2011

[www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk](http://www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk)



Summer is on its way, although it feels like it's been here a while with all the warm, dry weather we've been having. The roses have come early and are looking and smelling beautiful, the list of jobs for the veg patch doesn't seem to diminish, and the promise of long summer days hangs in the air.....

### News



Our **Ecominds Changing Minds** garden is coming along in leaps and bounds, as you'll see from this picture taken from a local resident's flat. The turf mounds are finished, and we've now added a turf chair for visitors to relax in. We will now turn our attention to the gravel garden; we need to lay some paving and cobbles, put down a membrane, plant up the area and add a couple of tonnes of gravel, so we've got our work cut out! We are hiring Leaside Wood Recycling Project to build a wonderful deck which will be used for sitting and relaxing in the shade of the maple, but will double up as a performance stage. We're also going to be doing some decorative mosaics, so there'll be plenty to look at!

Once again we will be opening as part of **Open Garden Squares Weekend** on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of June. During the weekend, garden lovers can visit numerous gardens in the capital, some of which aren't normally open to the public, or like us, don't open at weekends. Our garden is free to visit as usual, but if you want to visit any of the 200 gardens which are part of the scheme, weekend tickets are £10 or £7.50 in advance; visit [www.opensquares.org](http://www.opensquares.org) for more information.

**We will be serving tea and cakes and there will be lots of plants to buy.**

The Golden Company will be giving bee talks throughout the day on Saturday.

The Corali Dance Company will be performing in the garden on Sunday at 1pm, 2pm and 3pm.

We'll be open from 10 – 5 on Saturday, and from 11 – 4 on Sunday.



**Changing Minds\*** has been funded by Ecominds, a £7.5million funding scheme run by Mind on behalf of the BIG Lottery Fund. Ecominds involves people with direct experience of mental distress in environmental projects that improve their mental and physical health, and local communities.

Over the summer holidays, we will be running 4 four **Grow, Cook, Eat** sessions at the garden for local children aged 6 – 11, with a follow up Halloween Special in the Autumn half term. The sessions will run from 10.30 – 1.30 on Mondays July 25<sup>th</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and October 24<sup>th</sup>. Children will get the opportunity to get their hands dirty in the garden growing fruit and veggies which they will then make into healthy and delicious meals.

The sessions are funded by Help a Capital Child (formerly Help a London Child) and will be free. Please contact the garden if you would like to book a place or if you would be interested in volunteering to help run the sessions:

Email – [info@stmarysgarden.org.uk](mailto:info@stmarysgarden.org.uk)

Phone – 0207 739 2965

Website – [www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk](http://www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk)



## This summer in the garden...

It's not too late to **sow vegetable and flower seeds** for your garden – dwarf and climbing beans, courgettes, beetroot and pak choi are among many plants which can still be grown from seed, as well as cosmos, hollyhocks, pot marigolds and sunflowers for some colour.

We have a variety of edibles, summer bedding and collected seed available to buy at the garden.

We also sell bags of nutrient-rich garden compost for £3 and bottles of comfrey liquid plant feed, to help you get a bumper crop!

The spring/summer has been extremely dry so far, and the dry spell looks set to continue.

**Remember to water well** and regularly – mornings and evenings are best. Collect what rain there is in water butts or buckets to use on your plants: if you use environmentally friendly products, you can even use grey water from your washing up or baths.

Mulching is a great way to preserve water – just spread garden compost, manure or bark chip around your plants, but remember to water thoroughly first.