

Secret Garden Newsletter

Autumn 2013 www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk



A late missive from the garden.....after a very busy summer and bumper harvest! The biggest news is that we are now a charity!! Thanks to Paula and the management committee for all their hard work to get us here; let's hope it makes a big difference to our ability to find new funding streams.

News

Our summer has been very busy with visitors from far and wide, camera crews, celebrities and even poetry! **The Media Trust** made us a promotional film, as well as bringing celebrity gardener Chris Collins to make 'Greening London' as part of the **City Bridge** Growing Localities funding. The resulting films were actually really good and can be seen on our website or at <http://vimeo.com/68692572> and <http://www.communitychannel.org/featured/greening-london> We also featured in another film, made as part of the London Mayor's Fit Cities programme. It can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPPKxLdOy0w>

There were visits from other film makers, bloggers (Tales from Duck Island Cottage, tubeforlols) and even two horticultural therapists from Ramat Hanadiv garden in Northern Israel who wanted to see how we work.

We also had a visit from the **Ministry of Stories** and a group of kids who took inspiration from our garden to write some fabulous poems which can be seen dotted about amongst the undergrowth.



Look!! We've finally got our **electric van** as part of our **Estate to Plate** funding through the Big Lottery's Local Food programme and in partnership with Shoreditch Spa. What does it matter that the Estate to Plate project has now finished?! Such are the vagaries of Welsh van suppliers. It will be very useful for selling at local markets and for increasing our revenue through off-site garden maintenance jobs. Let's hear it for the green machine!!



Our training groups are continuing to progress – the first **New Leaf** student cohort, funded by **City Bridge** will be finishing their course soon, whilst the third group of young people through Otesha are working towards their Award in Practical Horticulture, whilst the final Estate to Plate students have achieved their qualification. Antoinette and Noushine have also started delivering accredited garden training at the **Trowbridge Centre** twice a week, commissioned by Hackney Council.

Great news! We won **GOLD** in this year's **Hackney in Bloom** Competition for **Best Community Project (Professional)** category. The garden did look pretty stunning this summer and though it's now past its' absolute best, it's still looking pretty good for the time of year!



The Pop-Up Produce project, working with Hackney Young Carers has now finished after a really positive and successful summer. The Social Kitchen worked with staff at St Mary's to provide a variety of cooking, gardening and craft activities for the kids, and they got to eat a delicious meal at the end of each weekly session!

We are hoping to recruit some new garden volunteers to work with groups in the garden. We are running a number of training sessions currently, and need volunteers to help support students to learn. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please contact us at info@stmarysgarden.org.uk

"St Mary's Secret Garden is such a lovely place to spend the day, whatever the weather. The atmosphere is relaxed, and we always have a laugh together. And it is very rewarding to work with the clients to maintain the garden, and to see how they flourish, along with the plants!" Stephanie, Wednesday volunteer



Muriel helps Shani to pot on

This autumn in the garden...

Broad beans and sweet peas can be sown now; broad beans, varieties The Sutton or Claudia Aquadulce, can be sown where they are to grow or into pots which can be overwintered in a coldframe or unheated greenhouse. If sown outdoors, they may need protection from a very severe winter with horticultural fleece. Sweet peas can be sown into pots (remember to pinch them out when they have 2 or 3 sets of leaves) and planted out in spring. Sow some early next year as well for blooms right through next summer.