

# Secret Garden Newsletter

Winter 2013 [www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk](http://www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk)



After another busy year we take time to reflect on all that we've achieved, and look towards the future of the garden in 2014

## News

We had an evening celebrating the success of garden trainees, young and old, with a presentation ceremony in November where TV gardener Chris Collins did the honours. Trainees from different programmes received awards, certificates and diplomas in Practical Horticulture, which they achieved here at the garden

We have been working in partnership with Otesha, a charity fighting youth unemployment; Shoreditch Trust, running the Estate to Plate project; and City Bridge Trust's Growing Localities project which funds the New Leaf training for people with learning disabilities and experience of mental ill health. There were also a few trainees from our Wish You Well project funded by the Big Lottery's Ecominds strand. Students from these diverse groups were able to meet each other and share their experience, during the well-attended evening of great food and conversation. It was a lovely opportunity to recognise everyone's hard work.

'Big congratulations to all the graduates from St Mary's Secret Garden ....onwards and upwards' said Chris Collins. And so say all of us!



We will be continuing much of our training in horticulture after a very successful year (see above). Although we have finished our Estate to Plate training, our New Leaf training for adults with learning disabilities or mental ill-health will be continuing on Mondays and Tuesdays. If you would like to join us, or know someone who would be suitable, please contact Paul: [paul@stmarysgarden.org.uk](mailto:paul@stmarysgarden.org.uk) or phone the garden: 02077392965.

We will also be running 3 more Branch Out training courses in partnership with Otesha – if you're aged 16 – 25 and fancy a career in gardening or just want to learn new skills, email Cecily: [cecily@otesha.org.uk](mailto:cecily@otesha.org.uk) for more information.

Once again we were at the De Beauvoir Christmas Fair, selling our home-made chutneys, bath bags, catnip cat toys and dog biscuits (!) as well as beautiful cyclamen and hyacinths ready to bloom. We have also sold our wares at the Chug Christmas Market and the Rochelle School Winter Fair. If you missed us, you can still catch us at the **Hoxton Christmas Market in Hoxton Street on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December**; we'll be there from 9 – 4.30 so come on down and buy some great gifts and stocking fillers. These are also available here at the garden 9 – 5 Monday – Friday until December 19th.



We will soon be letting you know about our upcoming Annual General Meeting. We are hoping to move it from the usual cold, dark January evening to a more suitable time, possibly in May, when we can discuss business while enjoying the beauty of our lovely garden! Watch this space!

After a hiccupping start on Twitter in March 2011, we really started tweeting seriously (and sometimes not-so-seriously) in July 2012 and have been tweeting ever since. We now have 277 followers! Let's make it 300! – If you're not following us, we're @StMarysGarden – you could be our number 300!



## This winter in the garden...

Look after wildlife by putting out food and water for the birds. There are plenty of fatball recipes on line, or put out mixed seed, bacon rind and apple skin. Make sure they're out of the way of prowling cats.

You can also give over-wintering insects a dry place to stay by making a bug hotel or buy a deluxe one at the garden for just £2.50.



We wish you all peace and happiness

