

Secret Garden Newsletter

Winter 2011 www.stmaryssecretgarden.org.uk



Winter is finally upon us; most of the leaves have fallen from the trees and in spite of the mild weather, we are thinking ahead to the cold and frosts. There are still plenty of jobs to do in the garden.

News



The **Wish You Well Garden** will also be erecting a beautiful Wishing Tree sculpture, donated to us by the **Floating Forest**, which was part of an event created by Kindest for the Shoreditch and Hackney Wicked Festivals.

Kindest will be working with us in the future to run gnome stone carving workshops here in the garden, so watch this space....

Our **Ecominds*** project is nearing the end; it is due to finish at the end of January. The garden still needs some work but we are all very proud of how much we've done in less than a year. We had a celebration over the summer (see picture) to acknowledge the hard work of our volunteers and to name the garden, which will now be known as the **Wish You Well Garden**.

One of our garden volunteers, Cathy Collin, played us some fabulous fiddle music to liven up the occasion!

We are currently working on mosaics for the paved area with local artist and illustrator, Tanja Wilmot.

*The Ecominds project 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.

Once again, St Mary's entered the Hackney in Bloom competition, where we were highly commended for the Community Project category, got 3rd prize for Best Educational Garden, and 2nd prize for Best Food Growing category. We also received 2nd prize in Savoury Preserves and 3rd prize for our Container of Herbs at The Festival of London City Farms and Community Gardens. Well done us! (Although we think we probably deserve first prize!)



Other news....

It's getting busier and busier here, with even more people wanting to join us at the garden.

Paula is running Diploma Level 1 Horticultural Skills training with housing association, Circle 33, following a very successful initial training course earlier in the year with them.

We have welcomed 4 new gardeners to St Mary's having opened a third therapeutic group on a Tuesday.

This winter in the garden...

It's not too late to **sow broad beans and garlic** directly outside. They may need netting to protect them from being dug up or pulled out by busy squirrels and birds. Garlic can be grown in pots and window boxes as well as in the ground, and to give them a head start, you can plant individual cloves into multipacks on a window ledge and plant them out when they've started growing.

This Christmas, we will be setting up a stall at **Columbia Road market**, which opens late on the four Wednesdays before Christmas. We'll be there on **Wednesday 7th and 14th December**, selling festive chutneys and preserves, lavender bags, Christmas cards and other great garden gifts. **Come along and see us between 6 – 8p.m.**

We have a selection of winter plants and gifts for sale here at the garden on weekdays 9 – 5.

We are hoping to gain **charitable status** next year for the garden. We are currently a not-for-profit organisation, but becoming an official charity should help us with fund raising, amongst other things.

We will need **volunteers for the management committee**; if you have skills in accounts and finance or legal matters, or are interested in horticulture and learning disabilities and would like to be on our management committee, please contact Paula at paula@stmarysgarden.org.uk



We wish you all peace and happiness

