

Walled Garden Monthly Snapshot

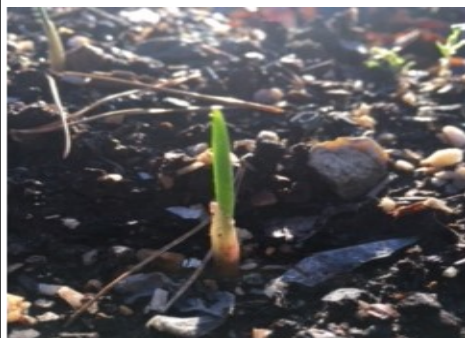
JANUARY 2020

Garden in January

Winter arrived with cold weather, frosty nights and even a bit of snow, just to confirm it is that time of the year.

During this month the focus on the garden shifts towards maintenance, renewing the woodchips paths, covering the last few empty beds with leaf mulch and soon starting the pruning duties.

Also we have nearly finished populating our green houses with more salad leaves and propagated Chinese cabbage leaves, onions, lettuces and herbs such as coriander. In addition, we started the planning of this season, ordering a great range of potato tubers and preparing our stock of other seeds to be used during the year ahead.



Garlic sprouting



Sun dial frosted



Scarlett Frills



The onion



Green house salads



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LOOKING BACK AT 2020

We would like to share an overview of some of the achievements of a very challenging year. 2020 has been defined by the arrival of Covid 19, changing the way we all live and work for the foreseeable future.

Despite the pandemic, we saw a renewed interest in gardening. We hosted 537 therapeutic gardening sessions at the Walled Garden and Orchards with very consistent attendance.

Thanks to the service users and volunteer's collaboration in these sessions we grew, harvested and sold, 40 kg of tomatoes, 66 aubergines, 71 cucumbers, 76 courgettes, 326 mixed salads and 41 other different vegetables and herbs. Another 17 varieties of fruit and soft fruit were also grown in the Walled Garden.

All this freshly harvested produce was available at our weekly shop. It was also used in cooking in the wards and processed in our Tuesday's jams & preserves group, held in the Main OT kitchen. The latter yielded more than 200 jars of jams and chutneys, 100+ packets of dried apples and plenty of dried herbal teas.

We looked after and harvested 15-20 different varieties of apples in our unique Orchards, with approximately 500Kg of fruit picked, mainly from the Bramley trees. There were less early sweet apples due to the low rainfall at the beginning of the year.

Overall, nature gave us a bountiful year which has been a great relief within the present times, always going forward, oblivious of our human struggles, always there to provide an anchor to where we can connect and ground ourselves.



To another fruitful season!



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One of our regular attendees to the gardening sessions provided the following quote :-

“The therapeutic benefits of gardening enable me to have a sense of calmness and relaxation in a somewhat chaotic life. Being outdoors with nature means for that short period I can breath and nothing else matters. It also helps me to discover new talents and in time build up my confidence which is something I lack on a daily basis“



OPEN GARDEN SESSIONS

In one of the open garden sessions, two large Canna Lilies were divided, the cuttings transplanted into new pots and placed in the glass house to over winter.



Canna Lily cuttings



Canna lily in flower



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Frosted Verbascum in the winter sunshine



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JOHN
MUIR
AWARD

wild places:
DISCOVER
EXPLORE
CONSERVE
SHARE

John Muir Award

In February 2021 we are planning to restart the John Muir award scheme.

The John Muir award scheme is an 8 week programme which inspires participants to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places. This is achieved through a range of activities including nature based mindfulness, surveying wildlife, improving wildlife habitats and wildlife garden.

The benefits of the scheme are to learn how being outside can help with healthy living, physical activity and relaxation as well as gain knowledge and skills about conservation and the environment. There is also the opportunity for participants to gain a nationally recognised certificate if all the requirements are fulfilled.

Participants will need to commit to the full 8 week programme and a referral from their OT will be required.



About John Muir (1838-1914)

John Muir grew up in Dunbar, east of Edinburgh, where he developed his love for nature. At age 10, he emigrated to the United States with his family.

He embraced all nature from mosquitoes to mountain ranges, recognising that everything is connected. His passion for wild places led to a life-long quest to protect them.

Muir's writings helped people understand the importance of wilderness. He saved Yosemite Valley in California and helped create the world's first national park system.



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JAMS AND PRESERVES GROUP



Soda bread prior to baking



Freshly baked Soda bread



Scones ready to be cooked



(Above) Freshly baked scones which were served with clotted cream and apple & ginger jam.



(Left) Chocolate chip cookies, sliced soda bread with a garlic and olive oil dressing and grape jelly.

YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE WALLED GARDEN

Bethlem CAMHS unit has been attending regular gardening sessions on Mondays for several months, where young people had the opportunity of experience nature through gardening. They all have been actively participating in gardening tasks from sowing to transplanting and harvesting. They have also held a veggies quiz and taken a sensory tour of the garden, making the most of the wonderful resources available at the Walled Garden and Orchards.

Charlotte Ellis, OT assistant who has been consistently supporting this CAMHS session, organized an aroma dough making activity aimed to connect with nature in an alternative way. This brought a sensory experience from the Walled Garden to the ward, through the harvesting numerous herbs grown in the Garden: thyme, sage, curry plant, rosemary and mint. They were processed by the young people into these beautiful scented doughs, providing a full interactive sensory experience.

We look forward to future fun collaborations!



Aroma-dough balls



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WINTER PICTURES FROM THE WALLED GARDEN



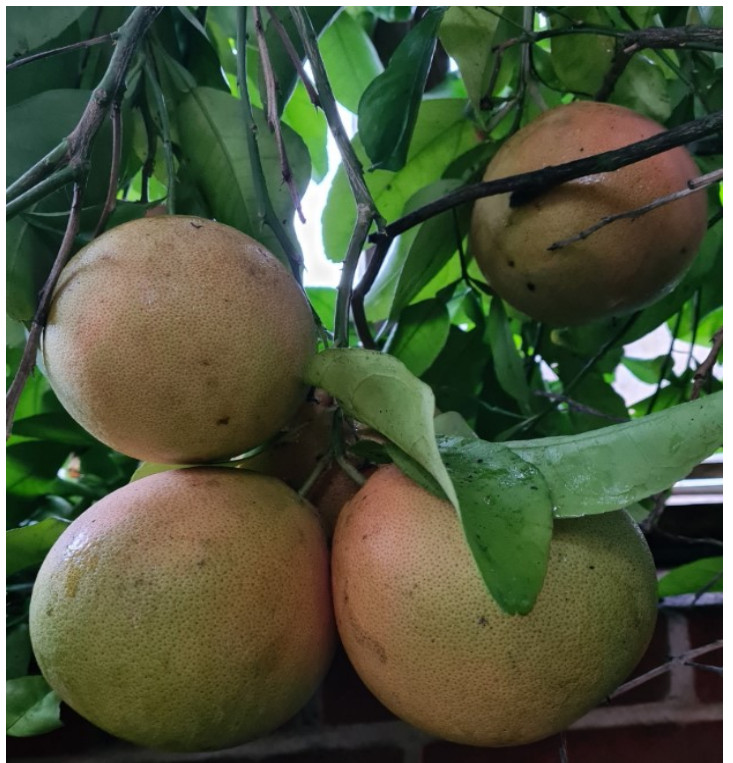
Japanese Quince



Frosted Sage



Helleborus orientalis



Grapefruit



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