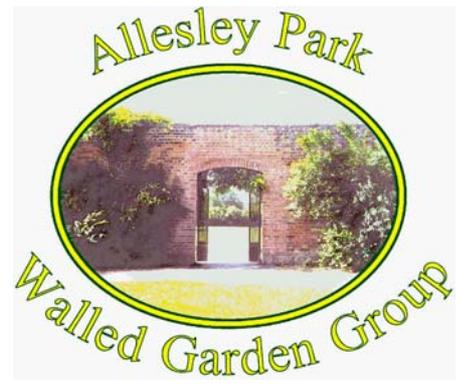


# The Masterplan Architects

It's just 12 months since the consultation into the future of the garden was concluded. It has been a long time in coming but the Council has now commissioned professionals to draw up a Masterplan for the Walled Garden.

David Lambert of the Parks Agency who has extensive knowledge and experience in the modern needs of visitors and developing historic landscapes, notably including several of the Royal Palaces.

The other professional is James Fox, an associate of Todd Longstaffe Gowan Ltd. The working party has had its first meeting with them during which the Chairman and Company Secretary presented a paper describing the activities we promote and a list of needs that should enable the potential of this valuable space to be used to the full.



May 2013

# The Lord Mayor visits



A heavy shower of rain failed to dampen the spirits when The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs Tim Sawden came to present us with a cheque for £850 to help promote our education work this coming season. We were also pleased to see Sue Heyes from The Heart of England Community Foundation.

A chance meeting between Councillor Sawdon and our Chairman resulted in a personal introduction

to the organisation Wild Earth. We have since commissioned the organisation led by Alex Hampson to work with us on several workshops and the cheque will help finance that educational work. The first workshop will take place during the first garden market of the season.

Councillor Sawdon seemed impressed by the amount of work we have already put in to prepare and plant up our Georgian quarter plot. Some of our gardeners joined the party for an official photograph to mark the occasion.



## First market of the season Didgeridoo Workshop

For the first market we have commissioned Alex Hampson of Wild Earth to run a Didgeridoo Workshop. There will be an opportunity for children to learn to play, make and paint a recycled didgeridoo to take home. There will be two sessions: 11.30am and 1.00pm.

AT 2.00PM Alex will lead a Wild Earth Walk discovering that hidden secrets nature has to offer. Each session is available at a nominal cost of £1-50 per child.

A new market committee has been formed to ensure the continuing success of the monthly markets. If you can offer any help setting up the stalls and tents or can bake a few cakes for the ever popular cake stall, or even serve at the refreshment counter for an hour, then please contact Ruth on 024 7633 4773.

For the May market you can expect to see the full complement of stalls: plants, cakes, mustards, hand made greetings cards, watercolour pictures, the book stall, and despite the very slow start to the growing season several vegetables including curly cabbage, chard and some purple sprouting broccoli.

**Please note new timing of markets:  
11am until 2pm**

## Garden diary

**April 6:** The first debris netting in place on the peas and bean plot. Drill of peas sown – Kelvedon Wonder. First row of Aran Pilot potatoes. A layer of compost was spread around the base of the peach and nectarines.

**April 13:** Soil warming up at last. First sowing of carrots and turnips. Ash from the fire incorporated into the onion patch. Stuttgart onions and



Senshu Yellow shallots planted.

**April 20:** Second drill of peas (Lincoln, traditional maincrop introduced in 1884) sown inside the netting. Welcomed Matteo and Laura to the garden for the first time. After a spell of hoeing more carrot seed was sown. (Amsterdam Forcing and Autumn King). The first row of beetroot went in (Egyptian Turnip-rooted and Barabietola di Chioggia). Matteo (pictured above with Kathryn), whose home is in Italy, was duly impressed!

**April 24:** The team couldn't stay away. A morning of extra gardening saw the first wigwams in place. It seems we have a shortage of bean poles this year as many have now dried out and are too brittle to use. The race is now on to find another supply. Any offers?

# The Big Dig A cheery day despite the cold and wet



Despite the cold and damp weather Surinder and Jo from Ryton Organic joined with our team of dedicated gardeners to talk to hardy souls who turned up to plant broad beans and lettuces. In view of the wet conditions underfoot we had positioned a wooden platform to enable families to plant their very own row of Aquadulce beans. That was much appreciated. On Ryton's table was a challenging board game designed to set everyone thinking about vegetables - whether they were brassicas, root crops, or legumes. A bit of fun and at the same time instructional. Goodie bags and lettuce plants were available for all.

Fortunately there was a good supply of boiling water from the pump flasks enabling us to make soup and hot drinks. We shall order a warmer day for the next Big Dig, but nevertheless this year's event was considered well worthwhile with several families taking part and staying awhile for a chat.

## A nation obsessed with food, but..!

An alien dropping in on Planet Earth would surely conclude that we are totally obsessed with food. A look inside Sainsburys would reveal shelves stacked with a dozen varieties of apple and pears, baking potatoes, new potatoes, everything under the sun diced, chopped, frozen and canned.

Suspensions are confirmed by the endless number of television programmes showing us how to cook. Yet this wealth of food has to be grown.

Speaking at the launch of the RHS Chelsea Centenary Appeal, Alan Titmarsh said:

"The centenary of Chelsea Flower Show gives us an opportunity that is not to be wasted—a chance to demonstrate that those of us involved in horticulture are not

thick, or dull, or unadventurous or simply incapable of doing anything else. Without horticulture we would be hungry, uninspired, artistically stunted, unhealthy house-bound, pale of skin and unsound in body. Our wildlife would be deprived of habitats, birds would go hungry, bees would be short of nectar and frogs would fail to find sufficient places to spawn."

These concepts are inextricably linked and we in the Walled Garden Group are committed to helping our younger generation have a hands on experience of growing food and flowers.

Our education initiative itself has grown this year with links to two local primary schools. Our first project will result in a small garden being created by pupils from Allesley Hall Primary School. We have already sown flower and vegetable seeds as a companion planting programme.

We asked the children about companions when we went to school to start the first stage the project. We were able to explain that our planting scheme (flowers next to vegetables) should obviate the need to spray the vegetables with insecticides.

The second project at St John's C of E School saw 30 pupils come to the garden in

April to plant six varieties of potatoes. Similar to last year each variety was illustrated with a cartoon image and in our previous experience the names make it a memorable experience. Winston, Rocket, British Queen—you will surely get the idea. In a few week's time we shall be receiving both classes into the garden. The potatoes will be harvested, taken back to school to be cooked and tasted. And Allesley Hall School will have its own plot in the Walled Garden to check out during the long summer holiday.

Who knows, the result could be a new generation of hobby gardeners. We might even have a budding Alan Titmarsh in our midst!



Seed potato time for St John's C of E



Seed sowing at Allesley Hall Primary

## Sowing new seeds with Ryton

For the second year running we are exploring the growing and cooking of food from a range of cultures. The seeds supplied by Anton Rosenfeld at Ryton Organic include: African White Maize, Vietnamese Mustard, Fenugreek, Haloon, Shark's Fin Melon, Jamaican Green Calaloo, Chick Peas and Bangladeshi Dudi.

We have allocated a much larger area for the demonstration area at the top of the garden and intend to erect an arbour to accommodate the Shark's Fin Melon. Those of you familiar with the garden will recall that the melon took over one whole plot and we had to curtail its growth before it overran the garden.

The Dudi seed was sourced from a garden at Tower Hamlets in London and should prove to be quite a challenge. Apparently the dudi is pollinated by moths in its home country, so the flowers open at night. So Anton recommends hand pollination late in the evening or early in the morning. Ryton Organic fondly called their fruit 'Doris the Dudi'. So let's try to get a result in Allesley and cast around for an appropriate name!

### Contacts

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Membership secretary: Mavis Lindop  
Committee members:  
Craig Marston, Kate Hughes,  
Mavis Boswell and Kathryn Unsworth

### CORRECTION

**Heritage Weekend** takes place  
September 13 Garden Market and craft  
11am to 4pm, also  
on September 14 Cookery and Craft  
demonstrations 11am to 4pm