

Crinkle Crinkle Garden reports by the Project Co-ordinator

8th June 2013

After the late spring, the garden is beginning to look really good. Last weekend a small group of us put netting over the fruit cages to keep off the birds. We completely covered the currant bushes and have started covering the raspberries; if anyone has spare tent pegs knocking around their attic these would be very useful to tether down the netting at the sides. Jeff has also wired up the stepover apple trees along the side beds, these could present a trip hazard but as long as you stick to the paths you should be OK.

Now all risk of frost has passed, the courgettes, runner beans and sweet corn have gone in. The potatoes are looking pretty good with an overflow patch next to the raspberries. The radishes and spinach are almost ready for harvesting and the strawberries are looking very hopeful. There is still some space along the east wall if anyone wants to plant edibles for communal use.

We haven't been so lucky with pest and diseases. The pesky pigeons have decimated the rocket and the peas, peach leaf curl is seriously affecting the peach and threatening the nectarine and the roses are heavily infested with greenfly.

Next weekend we'll be open for the National Garden Scheme, come along between 2.30 and 5.30pm to help sell plants and show people around. We're planning to round off the afternoon with a glass of wine around the bonfire for all helpers. Hope to see you then.

21 May 2013

You'll be glad to hear that the internal west and east walls have now been repointed. The hessian will remain on the walls over the summer while the builders "nurture" the mortar until it sets. It's just the crinkle crinkle wall left now. We've added some sweet corn to the west bed and have removed most of the purple sprouting broccoli. This bed needs to be dug over to make room for runner beans and leeks, so if you're feeling energetic at the weekend.... The watercress seeds are just beginning to peep through the soil and the old plants are recovering, so we should have plenty later in the summer. The kitchen garden is also looking great with neat rows of salad crops gradually appearing. Along with the flourishing crops we also have flourishing weeds so please have a go at these when you're in the garden. Unfortunately we do have a couple of cases of gooseberry sawfly so the plants will have to be sprayed with pyrethrum to save the crop; I'm hoping to do this Wednesday evening.

13 May 2013

You'll all be pleased to hear that the scaffolding has been taken down from the west wall of the garden although the hessian will remain for some time while the mortar goes off. This means we can start to cultivate the side beds, so at the weekend we planted rows of globe artichokes, Florence fennel and Swiss chard 'bright lights'. The purple sprouting broccoli is coming to the end of its run but there is still some good picking to be had.

Stephanie's potatoes survived the frosts after Easter and are now poking their leaves above the soil; and she has been busy earthing them up. The potatoes left in the shed have been planted in spare space on the raspberry bed to help work the soil and the students are keen to plant some more potatoes beside them, so as long as we're not afflicted by blight again we should have plenty of spuds.

Jane has planted two rows of peas on the communal plot which have miraculously avoided being eaten by the mice and are looking very healthy. The broad beans are beginning to flower and are also looking good; French beans and runner beans are being nurtured inside at the moment.

I harvested about 2kg of rhubarb at the weekend for the Richard the chef, who is going to make a rhubarb crumble for the café this week. It would probably be best to leave the rhubarb now for a while to recover.

Finally, we welcomed some new members to the garden: David Jeffries, a local resident; David Tanguay, a student; and Penny Broad, an alumnus.