

Vegetables at Olden Garden – 2020 lockdown

Everything was going so well until Covid 19 brought lockdown...

We are an informal group of adults and children who come together to grow things, mainly vegetables. We've helped with tree pits and other street gardens, including a wonderful parklet (in Mayton Street N7). We have a special focus on children, especially providing opportunities to grow stuff for kids who do not have gardens. Over the last couple of years, we have helped out with the vegetable beds at Olden Garden.

This report focuses on what we did to keep gardening during lock down.

Right from the start, it became clear that Olden Garden was a life saver for many people and especially families with young children and those without a garden. Many people discovered gardening and wanted to grow things. With no school, both kids and parents were looking for interesting things to do. But in addition to all the lockdown restrictions, plus social distancing, there was a national shortage of seeds!

We quickly set up a seed kit project, providing seeds, pots, compost and instructions for any children wanting to have a go at growing. We also created spaces in the beds for children to come along and plant vegetables - beans, tomatoes, chilli peppers, potatoes - as well as a few pots and containers.



Over the weeks of lockdown and beyond, some of the children involved sent in photos of their plants, and left a series of flowerpot notes, asking questions and describing their progress. Some children were able to come in and make use of the Olden Garden greenhouse.



Within the constraints of social distancing, we still managed to do some harvesting, with good crops of potatoes, beetroot, excellent garlic, lots of salad leaves and a few beans and courgettes. Once again we had amazing herbs, with especially good basil.

Now that children are back at school, there's a lot less time for gardening. Even so, we believe those initial seeds have been sown for a future love of nature and growing.

Thanks: Huge thanks to Andrew & Laura for continuing to support us and make us so welcome. And especially to Celia, whose encouragement and presence through lockdown made all the difference.

Lynne