

Garden Update 15 May 2013

Friends of Elder Farm

Tommy, David, Michelle, Daniel, Stevie, Rosa and Veronica, Kashya, Lucy, Morgan, Chris, John Paul, Sky, Kiera, Thomas, Katherine, Kaylie, James. DJ, Stewart and many more have all been stars this month. And new friends plus a great bag of toffees have made it to the garden this month and promised to come again – thanks for the support guys

Google Map

We asked Google map for an update and they have provided new map showing the building before the West Pavilion roof burned down, which clearly shows the greenhouse being built all the beds



We now have an address 1019 Govan Road G51 4AA and a letter box gratis the Dan Steve team

Elder Park

Friend of Elder Park had a seed sowing day, we opened the south gate and a couple of fruit trees have been added to the border. We have sent Raymond Sutton LES a map designating weedkiller free zones including the Riverside Bed. We need to consider the outside beds which are a bit scrappy - perhaps some quince?

Pergola and Black Box Cold Frames

Stevie and Daniel ripped out the rest of the burned polycarbonate, while Michelle cleared up and scrubbed uprights, we barrowed a lot of dubious compost / coke into the North Garden to make bigger beds for the pretty weeds which we like but tend to take over in the garden. The cleared space should allow a more garden friendly layout of containers / workshops when they arrive and provide a nice courtyard sheltered from north and east winds. Daniel suggests using an old car to make a generator to run lighting for this complex with sensor camera

A number of large tyres and three new boxes have been filled with a variety of compost, manure etc, and covered in wood chip ready for seedlings currently growing in tyres and a black box cold frame. Most of the tyre wall bedding is mixed with debris from the fire and only suitable for flowers and climbing bee / bird plants which we hope won't be affected. Poly tunnels (gratis Tommy), gravel and wood chip have all been brought in to play to combat leaf munchers, weeds and drought After watching Carol Klein's Cottage Garden series, we bought a ton of gravel, another of topsoil to mix with the compost and already seedlings are coming through – (NB It would seem that the seeds planted on the barren day are coming through faster than seeds planted on the advised moon day)

Boxes and giant tyres have been filled with compost leaves and manure mix ready for beans, sweetcorn, courgettes, cucumber and tomatoes. Supports for the beans have been added.

We are using a couple of black boxes as cold frames. The young team brought in zucchini and cucumber seed which we planted into pots and placed in a black box cold frame with some gourd seed. Stevie planted corn which is already coming, along with sweet william, stock, carrots, cauliflower, and cabbage, some of which, taking advantage of the constant rain, have already been planted out in the small polytunnels. Stevie, John G and Taylor planted beans, sweetpea, and pea with support.

Garden Beds

Stevie has taken to the garden like a duck with green fingers, planting out lots of soft fruit some from our own cutting in the fruit corner beside the chamomile lawn. A fox died so Dan planted him in the fruit corner. The fruit has been interplanted with kale because they are still so small, and may not grow much despite the muck and graft. A border of

rhubarb and wallflower borders the chamomile lawn which has mostly been weeded, excepting a few flowering plants for bees and pollinators til other flowers come on. Stevie, David, Rosa, Daniel have all planted potatoes, while the young team and Stevie sowed sunflowers, carrots, peas, cabbage, cauliflower, kale and broccoli. John G and Taylor planted beans and peas with pallet support Rosa watched over seed planting in planters, tyres, and beds. The tomatoes are a bit slow this year, but the all around the garden, seedlings are peeping through, cuttings are taking, chives and thyme from last year are starting to flower, while the wallflower continues to shine. Remaining climbers have been bedded with Yarrow and Herb Robert.

The dandelions are beginning to show. Ding is coming out in pink blossom, the big old cherries around the garden look great in pink and white. Michelle and Rosa have been working in the herb chi and we are looking for new herbs to add to empty spaces

Looks like we are a month ahead of last year and plants have a good chance to survive drought or another rainy summer. The wood chip is a bit twiggy, and we still don't have a generator to refine it, but we are picking out the twigs and have spread it all over the new beds in the old greenhouse / pergola space. It looks great and we will probably spread more around once the wild flowers in the Orchard and South Garden have come through.

Wildlife in the Garden

David helped Daniel and Stevie cut a barrel in half to make a new water feature at the gate. It looks great and saved the lilly. We hope the reeds will keep the water clean and the iris will like the damp, but are keeping an eye out for leaf munchers – which seem to have disappeared since the bath was ripped out. If they reappear we shall fill up the tub with more gravel and soil and have a boggy planter instead but currently it is a great place to start off seeds and also provides water for our garden friends.

We have scattered more wild flower seed, and gave some to the young team to take home.

We have been madly hoeing, but remembering last years beautiful wild patch, we have decided to save corners for “weeds” which feed bees and birds (with seed) so a space for those creeping buttercups which drive us crazy; another for nettles which are great for compost and popular with butterflies; another for dockens – the birds love the seed; thistle and fireweed – again the seed is loved. And of course loads of lemon balm and hopefully cat mint which drove the bees crazy last year.

The rocket is already flowering and we have a bumble bee who seems to like the container. We filled in the holes in the gate bed hoping the wasps won't nest there again this year although they are a boon to gardens feeding on aphids etc. Tommy's small polytunnels seem to be fending off the pigeons. The mice may have had more success, but there is a new cat in town, so they seem to be a little rarer these days. Still the year is young. There are a pair of blue tits visiting the garden. The robins came back last winter and seem happy, as are the wrens, the magpies, the gulls and pigeons. They all seem to like Lidl Digestive Biscuits

Tasks & Projects

Message from the Chair Sunday, May 05, 2013 1:14 PM Subject: Bikes at the Govan fair 7 June evening

Getting a bike procession at the Govan Fair this year. Trying to get as many kids adults on binged and bannered and unusual bikes as poss. Will post leaflet soon. Please tell friends bike people and others who may be interested.

Will organise a few banner and bling workshops nearer time. If you want to help out with this drop me a line. Bike workshops in the Elder Farm community garden on the Saturday fun day to. More later. In the common good.

If you have any unused bikes The Govan Community Bike Workshop 60 Shaw Street, Govan wants them Saturdays from 11.00am Thursday evenings from 5.30 – 8.30pm

The Bike Project needs your support / donations; if you have an unwanted bicycle they will put it to good use. Donations of broken bikes and bike parts gratefully accepted as long as not completely rusted up

They also need any spare tools for a new workshop, so any unused spanners, wrenches, sockets, pumps donated would be a great help at this time. The bike workshop is run completely by volunteers to repair and fix up bikes for anyone who needs one and can't afford one

The bikes are sold to raise funds for the project and a minor repairs service is also available but they could use some help, so if you are able to give a few hours to help restore old bikes please get in touch http://unitycentreglasgow.org/?page_id=397

Verge were in touch and looking to consider how they might get involved with the flotilla idea – we have tried to contact Alison to get the Luv Gallery for artspace and storage

Shearer Candles Bee Garden, Asda and Oxfam Event

Schools are back after a plethora of holidays and we went down to Govan Campus to talk to some of the students and show them the site. Students will think about a design over the weekend. Glasgow City Fruit and Fish Market residue is being used for bio fuel these days and Scottish Hydro have stopped making compost as well which was a bit worrying so Asda were called in to see if they could help. But a raised bed plan may reduce a need for more compost. And we should have loads of grass clippings and wood chip to hold in water, in case it doesn't rain. We are considering a combined Oxfam IF / barbi / digging event to entice parents and the community to lend a hand with the digging. Mrs Barnett from Shearers Candles has indicated First may join the fun, but we may still need help from the brilliant Payback Team to dig / tidy up plus manure from Pollock Park. Asda have offered a prize for best design

Future Cob and Energy Fun Workshops

Dreams are afoot to get wind and solar features running; make a start on the barbi / kitchen area, and thanks to a big download session of instruction on making bee hotels, rocket stoves, cob ovens with bench outlet, and cob shelter, there is promise of many interesting summer work shop sessions, including a cargo bike if we can borrow a MIG welder for a couple of days

Stevie gave us a sharpening workshop, sharp hoes will help keep the weeds springing up in the rain and sunshine in check - Tommy has been providing lunch :)

Uprights in the greenhouse have been scraped and look great but we still have more to do

The wood pile has been swept out and rebuilt and the boat needs new supports and a final resting place

The compost bins have been started – leaves and chip and earth mounds need sorting

Wish List

Jim McMillan from Sunny Govan have invited us to leave him a weekly wish-list

First item has to be a MIG Welder for a couple of days to make cargo bikes

A couple of adult scrap frames two working spindles

And cheap cheaper cheapest / free haulage for containers

Volunteers to help make flags and banners for bike flotilla

Paint vinyl matt/silk - blue /yellow / red / green

2.4 + kv generator