

WHAT.WILL.THE.HARVEST.BE ?

AT ABBEY GARDENS

Press release
for immediate release

Volunteers invited to plant our fruit wall Sat Jan. 16th, 10.30am - 3.30pm

Friends of Abbey Gardens and artists Karen Guthrie and Nina Pope invite you to join them for their first gardening event of 2010 – the planting of 30 young fruit trees in their East London public garden as part of the visionary project *What Will the Harvest Be?*

The wall-trained trees are the crowning glory of this unique open-access 'harvest garden' where literally anyone may learn about, grow and harvest fresh vegetables, herbs and flowers.

What Will the Harvest Be? at Abbey Gardens, West Ham is a communally-gardened vegetable and flower garden initiated by Friends of Abbey Gardens, a dynamic group of local residents living on the adjacent Bakers Row, a stone's throw from the 2012 Olympic site. The residents challenged London Borough of Newham (LBN) to halt the neglect of the overgrown third of an acre / 1600 sq m plot, protected from development by its notable historic ruins, to which English Heritage has awarded Scheduled Ancient Monument status. The remains span from those of a 12th C Cistercian abbey gatehouse to the foundations of terraced homes of the late 19th C and are a prominent feature within the new garden.

The *What Will the Harvest Be?* project was designed by artists Karen Guthrie & Nina Pope of Somewhere, commissioned to come up with how both plants and people could grow together. The artists, who are both garden enthusiasts, designed bespoke raised beds in a formal, triangular layout inspired by the local 'Plaistow Landgrabbers', an early 20th century land squatter group whose 'Triangle Camp' picture is emblazoned life-size on the Abbey Gardens shed. The artists also recruited Chris Cavalier, a young performing arts graduate and gardener who has led free garden club sessions at the site since April.

Event details

Abbey Gardens, Bakers Row, London E15 3NF

Volunteers are advised to bring lunch and to wear stout shoes and warm clothes including gloves.

Tools are provided. New participants for 2010 are always welcome.

Contacts

Andreas Lang T 07866 566162

Dasha French T 07815 776385

E mail@abbeygardens.org

High-resolution pictures available from somewhere.org.uk

T (44) (0)15394 41242 / 07976 359477 E artists@somewhere.org.uk

www.abbeygardens.org

www.whatwilltheharvestbe.com

[Notes to editors and funding information >](#)



Notes to editors

Though garden landscaping finished only in June 09, the project's highlights this year included:

- the participation of more than 100 Londoners of all ages in regular free garden club sessions led by leader Chris Cavalier
- a packed Harvest Festival in September, where Observer Food award-winning restaurateur Sam Clark of Moro cooked fresh garden produce for over 150 visitors
- an innovative website showing the more than 150 vegetable and flower varieties planted and harvested by participants, including some brand-new tomato cultivars bred by a volunteer

Plans for the open-access site in 2010 include hosting cookery and social events, growing an experimental tropical fruit selection outdoors, work with local mental health charities and schoolchildren, and distributing excess fresh produce to local groups and businesses.

Funding

To date *What Will the Harvest Be?* has been funded by London Development Agency, London Borough of Newham, Arts Council England and supported by Chiltern Seeds. In Autumn this year the Friends of Abbey Gardens group made a successful bid to the Community Spaces programme to support on-going development of the garden. The Community Spaces grants programme is being managed by Groundwork UK as an Award Partner to the Big Lottery Fund. Community Spaces is part of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces initiative.

Community Spaces

Community Spaces is a £50 million open grants programme that is managed by Groundwork UK as an award partner to the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces initiative. The programme helps community groups create or improve green and open spaces so that the quality of life in neighbourhoods across England is enhanced.

Only community groups in England are eligible to apply to Community Spaces – a full eligibility criteria is available at www.community-spaces.org.uk. The programme has been open for small and medium grants (£10,000 - £49,999) since March 2008 and will remain open for these sizes of grants until 2011.

Groundwork UK

Groundwork supports communities in need, working with partners to help improve the quality of people's lives, their prospects and potential and the places where they live, work and play. Our vision is of a society of sustainable communities which are vibrant, healthy and safe, which respect the local and global environment and where individuals and enterprise prosper. For further information visit: www.groundwork.org.uk

Big Lottery Fund

The Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme was launched in November 2005 to help communities enjoy and improve their local environments. The programme is funding a range of activities from local food schemes and farmers markets, to education projects teaching people about the environment. Groundwork UK was appointed as a Changing Spaces award partner, responsible for distributing £50 million through its Community Spaces scheme.

The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. It was established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.

Big Lottery Fund Press Office: 020 7211 1888 Out of hours: 07867 500 572
Public enquiries line: 08454 102030 Textphone: 08456 021 659

Full details of the work of the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards are available on the website: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk