

## Spring Time report by BWGA Secretary (March 2011)

The weather is warming up and there is increased activity in the Bohemia Walled Garden. Volunteers have been steadily working throughout the winter months, preparing the ground by digging and weeding and creating user-friendly paths. There is a terrific sense of achievement as the garden is looking less like a wilderness and more like a purposeful horticultural haven.

Even with the rain and winds, the work has continued. Fortunately, we now have a beautiful new Skinner's shed to retreat to in bad weather. It has a nice long bench inside, so anyone looking for a place to sit and rest can now go inside and feel comfortable in our new shelter. The shed was paid for by a grant administered by Hastings Voluntary Action on behalf of the Primary Care Trust. We are very grateful to them, as we can now offer members and visitors a quiet place to relax and restore their energies.

This new facility has come at the perfect time!. We now have a garden full of enthusiastic members, cultivating their own plots and helping with the communal tasks. We have also been able to welcome a class of Year 2 children from St. Paul's Primary School. They are participating in a programme, the "Forest School", organised by the Excellence Cluster which will introduce them to the pleasures of Summerfields Wood and the walled garden within it. St. Paul's School has been allocated a large plot next to the one used by St. Mary's Star of the Sea School, so more and more local children will have the benefit of growing their own food in this idyllic setting.

Katharine Slater has been liaising with St. Paul's School to provide some stimulating outings. Katharine says that the children will be "learning about biodiversity through play. All activities will be taught in the Forest School context of a 'can do, hands on' attitude, which foster confidence and develop creative thinking skills, through nurtured support. We are all very excited to be incorporating vegetable planting as one of our activities in the secret walled garden. This ties in wonderfully to the the Year Two science topic of 'plants and growing'. When the ten-week Forest School course has finished, St. Paul's teaching staff will hopefully feel confident enough and inspired to bring more groups to the Walled Garden to continue working on their plot and grow, grow, grow!!!"