

Patricia Stadler 2nd report 22.05.22

It feels like it's only been a couple of weeks since I last wrote my report to you, not because we haven't been busy, but because the time has simply flown by so quickly! As you know, spring is a thrilling and busy period, with so many wonders to observe, tasks to fulfil and upcoming growth to get excited about.



Planting out sweet peas, supervised by Pamunkey, one of two Fulham Palace cats

Having found my feet at Fulham Palace, it is so nice to be given the task to be in charge of a vegetable plot in the walled garden. Each apprentice has the responsibility to look after specific vegetable groups, nurturing those from seed to harvest. Having been given a basket filled with various seeds I found myself researching and planning out the following groups:

- Legumes such as broad beans, peas, edamame, mange-tout, runner beans and climbing beans
- Miscellaneous such as spring onion, celeriac, celery and leeks
- Annual and perennial herbs from rosemary to chervil to name a few

Having only grown produce within a domestic set up, I have learned so much about how to plan, understand and fulfil each step required for a productive yield. These organic, local and grown-with-love products will then be sold on our barrow for the delight of our visitors.

These steps do not only require the skills to sow the seeds, but also to have a vision of what the plot will look like. Therefore our vegetable plots also have cut flowers that will attract as many pollinators as visitors.



Penny, one of Fulham Palace's garden volunteers, holding the first 2022 broad bean harvest

The diversity of tasks makes each day unique and interesting. To keep it even more exciting, unexpected events do occur such as when the cats fought within the tomato seed trays, tipping them all upside down! Luckily, we had started sowing the tomatoes early enough to still be able to re-sow them on time and have plenty to fill our stall for our event in May called 'The Green Meet'. Fabulous weather, lovely crowds and great stalls were all part of the success of this eco-friendly event. Visitors could come on mini-tours led by the apprentices, on which we would explain the moat, the woodland, the compost and the walled garden.

As part of the eco-conscious led vision of head garden Lucy Hart, Fulham Palace invested in a weather station to record the daily temperature of the ground and the

air such as the humidity and rainfall. This is all part of the 'microclimate emergency' announced by Chelsea Physic Garden and Fulham Palace.



Fulham Palace's bees chose to swarm on our new weather station!



Lathyrus odoratus 'Spencer Mix' in front of the new wisteria arches

Thanks to many donors in a successful crowdfunding campaign, our beautiful old *Wisteria sinensis* has finally been given the support structure it deserves. Stunning iron arches based on a Victorian design can now be seen. Unfortunately, the drastic weather changes between a long period of warm weather, which triggered all buds to awaken, was followed by a nasty frost. This has resulted in the fragile buds bursting, meaning all future flowers sadly drooped down... to our biggest regret.

Nevertheless, this has only increased our excitement to see the wisteria bloom next season and it has not stopped visitors from telling us, 'the garden has never looked this good'!

There are many more things to be mentioned such as the fact that the bees have swarmed more than 6 times, the great day trip the gardeners made to Hampton Court Palace and that we shall soon get some chickens in the walled garden!

Thank you so much for providing this opportunity to be part of so many mesmerising moments here at Fulham Palace! I'm in no doubt that until my next report, time shall fly by as quickly as the last six months have done.