

**March  
2021**



**The Bridge Garden  
Newsletter No 47**

## **Spring is getting closer.....**

Now that we are into March spring is getting ever closer when we hopefully really get to work with our seed sowing work although words of caution will need to be heeded – March can be very cold indeed! What we can do is get as much ready as possible so that when the weather becomes warmer, we are ready to go.....

## **Daffodil pots to raise money for Myton Hospice.....**



Here are some of the pots of daffodils that we are selling to raise some extra money for Myton Hospice.....



Signs of spring.....



More daffodils.....





**Spring flowering bulbs.....**

**Monday March 1<sup>st</sup> 2021.....**

After experiencing plenty of cold and really drab days in recent weeks, it really is a treat to see plenty of early spring flowering bulbs brightening up the mood.....

Also, with the world in the grip of the Covid Pandemic, to see nature at work is some sort of salvation that the world will eventually almost right itself and be able to move back towards some sense of “normality” .....

Here you can see some of the stunningly delicate tete-a-tete daffodils that are all coming into flower giving us a super splash of colour all around the different areas of The Bridge Garden.....



**Spring is getting closer**

## Growing bed preparation.....



A key part of getting your growing areas ready to both sow seeds and plant out any plants that you have ready is not only the air temperature but also the temperature of your soil...

After hoeing the weeds off the growing beds shown we have covered these prepared growing areas with horticultural fleece which will help to retain any warmth in the soil.....

Hoeing the weeds is different to actually digging down into the soil because we are trying as much as possible to adopt a no – dig growing philosophy which effectively is not damaging the soil structure or disturbing the earthworms either.....

## Early carrots have been sown.....



On the left you can see a pot of sand that we have used to mix in with our growing compost – this mixture has been used to fill the big empty pot that we have used to sow some early carrots.....

The mix of compost and sand creates the best growing conditions for carrots.....

# Early Carrots...



**Lots of growth in many areas.....**

**Friday March 5<sup>th</sup> 2021.....**

When you take a walk around the allotment – garden area you can see that there really is lots of growth in many areas, not least all of the spring flowering bulbs but if you look closely you can see lots of growth – below are some examples such as our wild garlic that is growing, our cherry tree has plenty of buds showing too... Wild garlic when it flowers has a wonderful smell – plus it is as tough as anything as it comes back year after year no matter what weather conditions are thrown its way. Plants really are adaptable.....



**Wild garlic...**



## **Cherry tree has lots of buds.....**

Cherry blossom really is stunning when it flowers, indeed in Japan they have dedicated cherry blossom festivals which are quite spectacular. One such area is the Meguro River which has over 800 cherry trees which line the river bank for 4km which at night time is floodlit and does create a stunning scene..... Have a look on the internet to see what we mean. We only have one cherry tree in The Bridge Garden but experience from previous years has shown that it produces plenty of striking blossom. Below you can see the cherry tree.....





## **Herb garden is coming to life again.....**

Some of our softer leaf herbs are starting to grow back after the colder winter months – so far, we have got fever few, comfrey, lemon balm and lime balm that are all starting to produce plenty of leaf, the lemon and lime balm really do produce some aromatic leaves which is a sure sign that spring is getting closer.....

### **Lemon balm..... Lime balm.....**



Here you can see both our lemon balm and our lime balm plants that are growing along the sides of the path that goes around the herb and sensory garden – these are plants that have both self-seeded because the “mother” plants are growing in pots.....

### **Comfrey is growing back too.....**



On the left you can see that our comfrey plants are growing back which are the bigger leaves that are growing in the middle of the pot – comfrey is a herb that can be used as a fertiliser and as a compost activator because the plant is high in nitrogen content.

Also, comfrey has some really amazing medicinal uses.....

## **Comfrey...**



**More signs of spring.....**

**Monday March 8<sup>th</sup> 2021.....**

With spring just twelve days away now there are plenty of signs of spring aside from the splendid colour that the spring flowering bulbs are providing.....

Below you can see some of these examples particularly the perennial plants that we have growing in The Bridge Garden. Below you can see our hellebores, lupins, sedum and primulas which are all providing plenty of new growth and flowers.....

**Hellebores.....**



**Sedum.....**



**Lupins.....**



**Primulas.....**



**Elder shoots.....**



# **The Bridge Garden**

# **Perennial growth..**



## More perennial growth.....

Below you can see lots of new growth that is coming from our Golden Rod plants. Golden Rod is a herb provides plenty of growth although it can be a very invasive plant but at the same time produces beautiful yellow flowers that are a real magnet for the bees and other essential pollinators.....





## Stunning early spring flowering crocuses.....

Crocuses provide not only some stunning colours but also, they provide one of the first sources of pollen for the bees who will on sunny days venture out from their hives in search for some food following the winter months.....





**More early spring colour.....**

**Friday March 12<sup>th</sup> 2021.....**

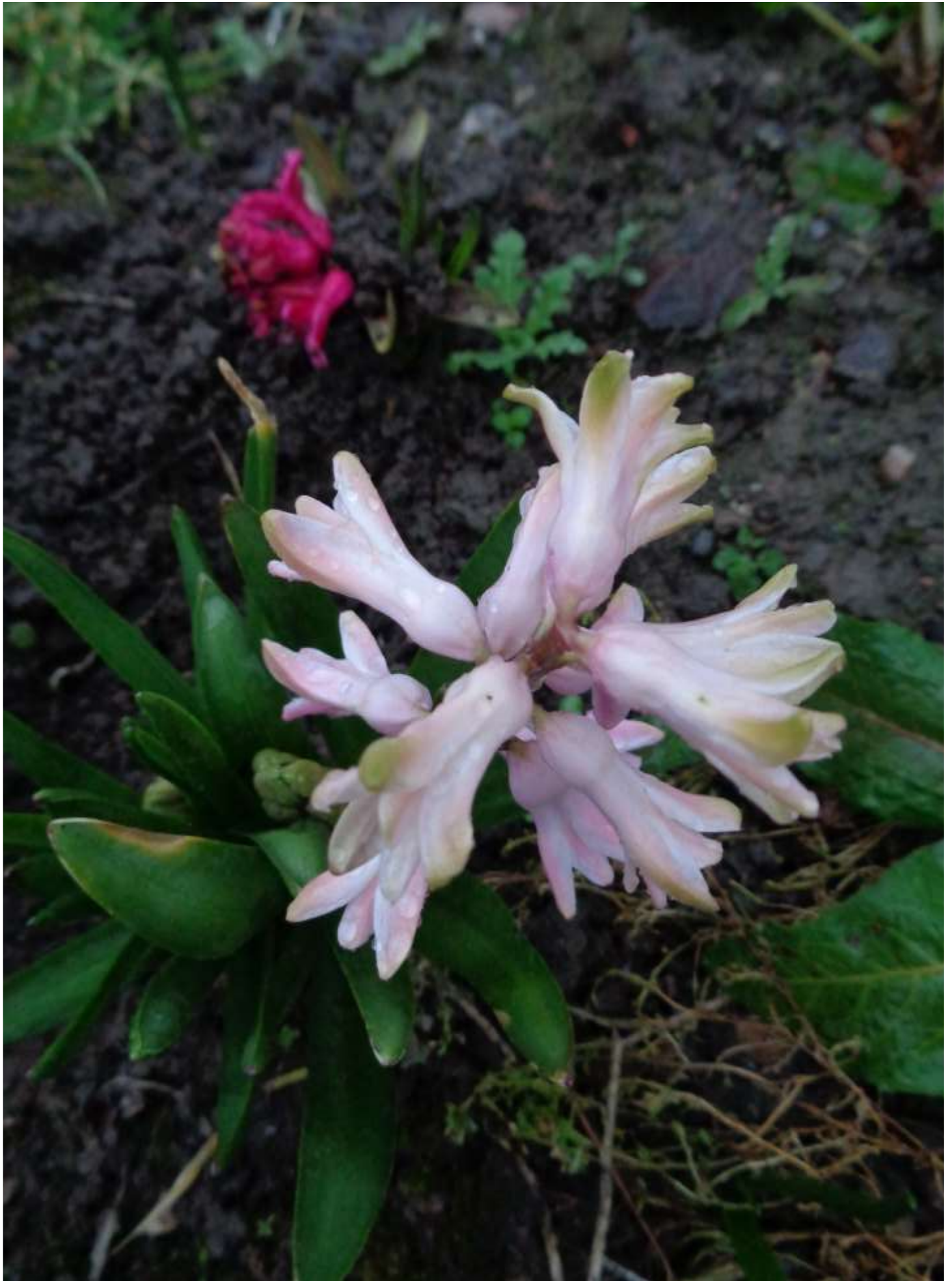
With the official start of spring just one week away, there are lots of colourful flowers all over The Bridge Garden giving us plenty of colour to brighten and lift the spirits during these very uncertain times.....

Below you can see a mix of blue hyacinths and blue muscari.....





More garden colour.....





## More herbs producing plenty of new growth.....

As the temperatures and just as importantly the daylight hours increase you can see plenty of new growth pushing its way through particularly some of our herbs. Here you can see our oregano and feverfew plants showing plenty of growth.....

### Oregano growing fast..... Feverfew growing too..



## Herbs.....

## Stunning hellebores.....





**New planting work.....**

**Monday March 15<sup>th</sup> 2021.....**

**At the front entrance to The Bridge Garden we have planted a new perennial shrub – Magnolia Black Beauty that once it establishes itself will provide some stunning flowers early in the spring.....**





## Plant passports.....

As part of Brexit regulations, even plants require passports to be moved around the country so that plant movement is controlled and pest free plants are sold and moved around the country.....



## Rhubarb is growing fast!.....



We have two growing areas where we have rhubarb growing with two different varieties growing..... On the left you can see the Victoria variety that we have growing, this variety has just started to emerge after the period of winter dormancy.... On the next page you can see that we have another rhubarb variety growing which is called Timperley Early..... This variety is far more advanced, indeed we have even started to force one of these plants so that we can pick some young sweet stems early..... Forcing rhubarb basically blocks the light to the plant which encourages the plant to grow faster as it searches for the light to grow.....



## More rhubarb.....

Here is the other growing area where the crop is much more advanced.....

Also, you can see the plant that is covered over with a black bucket to force the plant to produce some young sweet stems.....





## More signs of spring.....

Another sign that spring is here is when forsythia starts to flower – it produces lots of bright vibrant yellow flowers which are then followed by plenty of green growing shoots. Here you can see what we are talking about.....



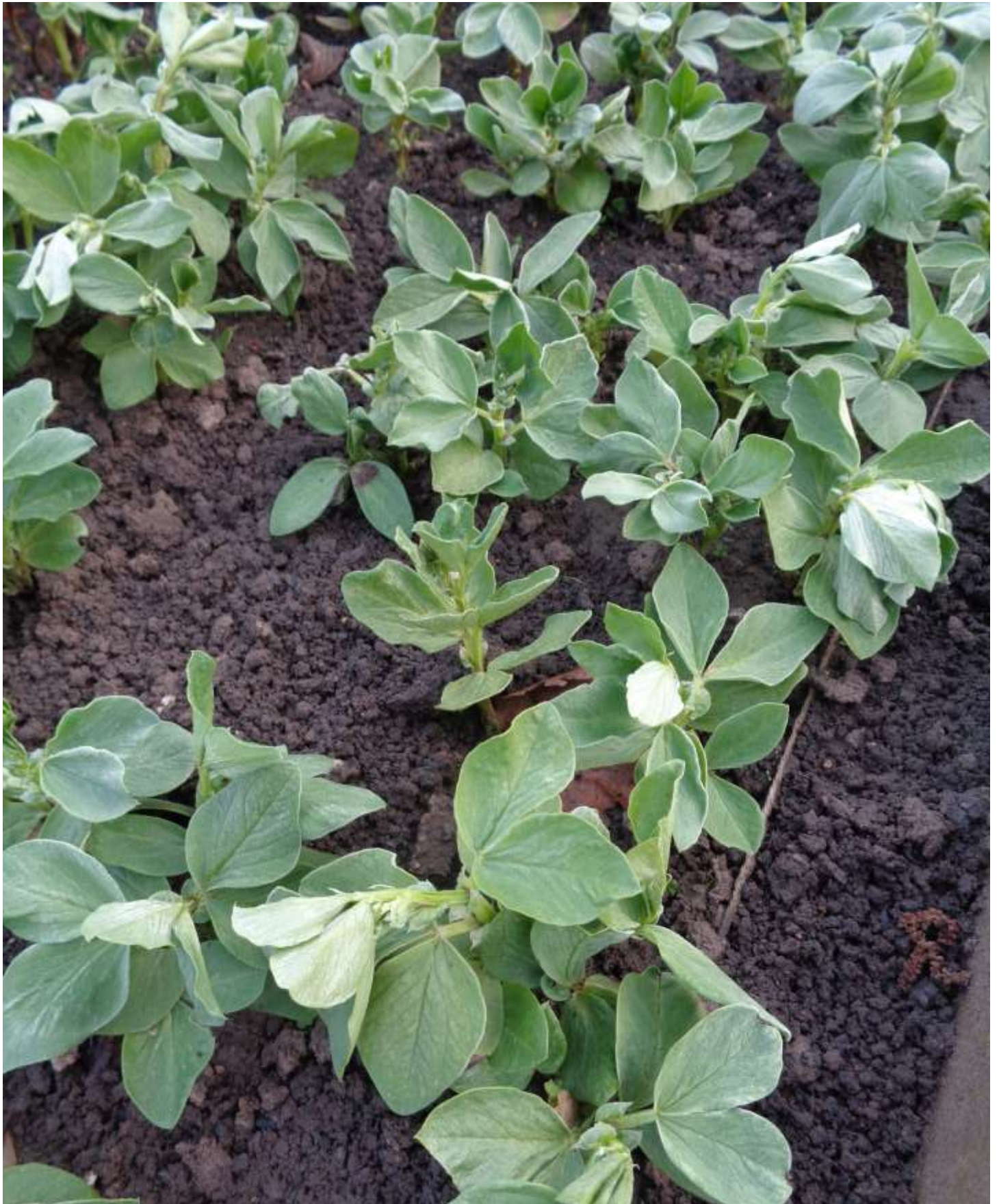


**Spring is with us now.....**

**Monday March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021.....**

Now that spring is officially with us there is no guarantee that the weather will be warmer – indeed we were greeted by a frost this morning which if you look at our Broad Bean plants you can see has left its mark!.....

But, Broad Beans are very resilient and they will soon recover.....





## Growing area preparation continuing.....

We are continuing with our growing bed preparation as we are setting up a bed ready to plant up some asparagus – now this is a crop that a real measure of patience is required because it can take two to three years to produce a crop of asparagus, to grow asparagus successfully it requires plenty of organic matter to be worked into the ground which is what we have been doing as you can see..... Here you can see the trenches set up ready to plant out our asparagus crowns.....

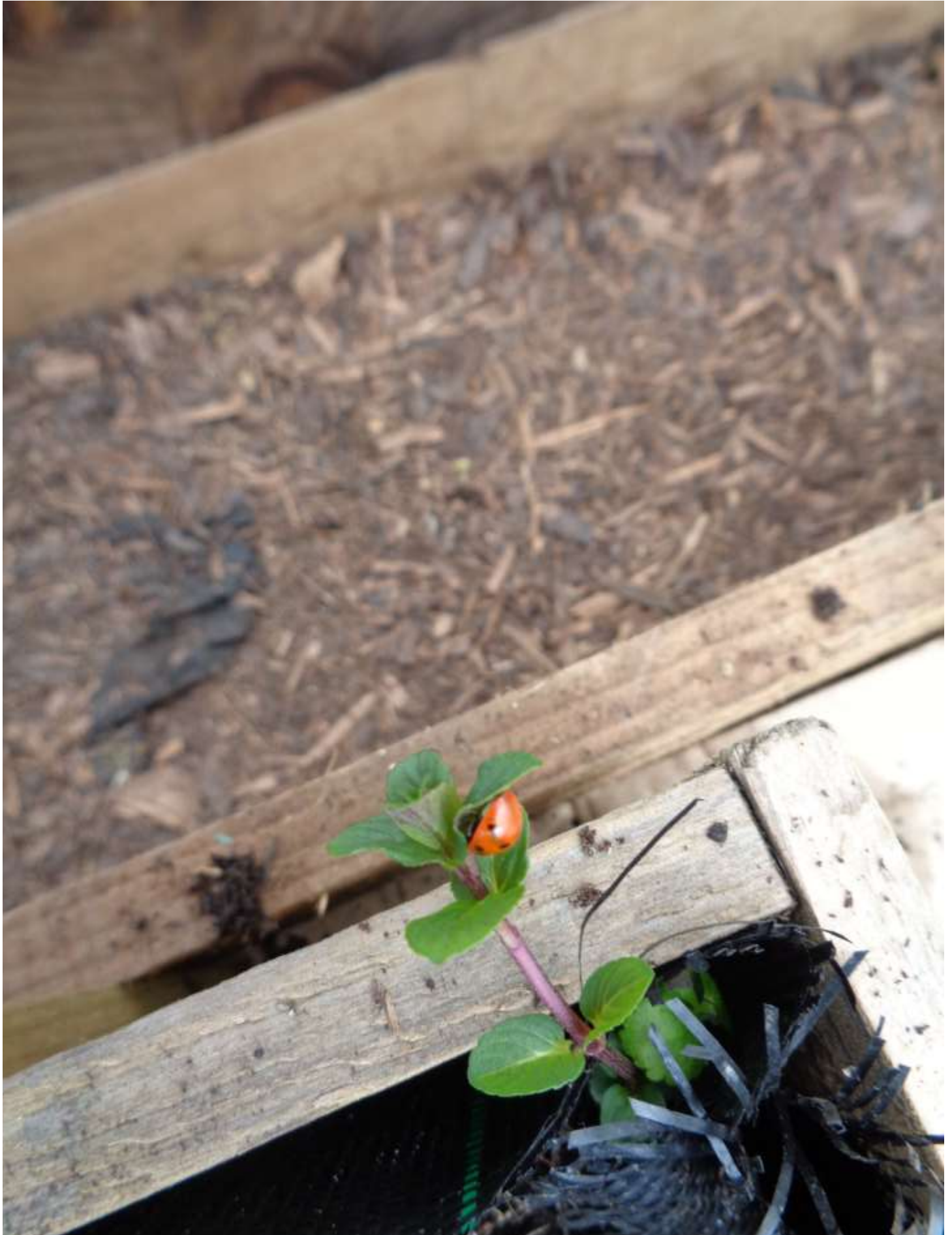


We have also added a very generous application of REMIN ROCKDUST to our asparagus bed which will add to the fertility of this growing bed.....



## Welcome visitors.....

Below you can see a very welcome visitor – in fact the more the merrier as ladybirds will munch through hundreds of aphids which are unwelcome visitors... This ladybird is finding our chocolate mint plant a friendly landing place.....





## Appletini apple trees.....



On the left you can see that one of our appletini apple trees is starting to produce some new growing shoots.....

These apple trees have been funded by Subway.....

**Appletini  
Apple  
Tree.....**

Subway continue to support our schools growing work



# Schools growing work



# **Plenty of fruit in The Bridge Garden.....**

**Monday March 29<sup>th</sup> 2021.....**

There is lots of fruit all growing in The Bridge Garden including our extensive rhubarb patch – these plants are really growing very quickly to the point where we will be able to pick some rhubarb very soon. Below you can see the growth that the rhubarb has made plus the plant that we have been forcing.....

## **Forced rhubarb..... Lots of rhubarb growing fast!**



Compare the difference in the rhubarb stems that we have forced on the left compared to the stems on the right which we have allowed to grow naturally. The thickness in the stems is obvious to see.....

## **Gooseberry bushes are making lots of growth.....**



On the left you can see the gooseberry bushes that we have growing in the garden..... They are certainly prickly!!

## **How much fruit is growing?**

In The Bridge Garden we have rhubarb, blackcurrants, gooseberries, raspberries, eating apples, cooking apples, plums, pears, cherries and our latest addition is a peach tree.....

# **Lots of fruit....**



## **New Peach tree planted up.....**

**Below you can see our newly planted peach tree which already has lots of blossom – hopefully this blossom does not get damaged by any frost and it sets to produce a crop of peaches for us this summer.....**

**You can see the amount of blossom that is already in flower.....**





## **Plum tree czar has plenty of blossom.....**

**Again, like our Peach tree, one of our Plum trees called czar has plenty of blossom which you can see from the photograph below. Hopefully like our Peach tree this blossom survives any frosts that come our way.....**

