



Happy New Year to all of our supporters and readers! Members of Moseley in Bloom took advantage of the milder winter and held a pre Christmas gathering out of doors in December. We were delighted to be invited to Sabreena's garden that had been wonderfully lit and had two fires to keep us warm. It was a lovely opportunity to get together and try out some new ideas for showing off Moseley's wonderful gardens. Although we didn't see any snow over the festive period it has definitely turned colder this week so do wrap up when you are in the garden. As usual, we would love to hear what you are up to and stories and photos can be emailed to doctorcarolmiller@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you, Carol Miller and Kerry Jenkins, Joint Editors.



BOSF Christmas Lecture

Every year Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF) hold a Christmas lecture for its volunteer groups and this was held at the Council House in December. Bloom Committee volunteers Benita, Fiona and Radley attended with many other groups from across Birmingham to hear a lecture given by Mike Hardman, Professor of Urban Sustainability at the University of Salford, about 'Greening the City'. Mike has completed work all over the world, bringing 'green' to cities and other urban areas. He acts to encourage community involvement by creating growing space in the shadow of high rise towers and has converted old industrial rail tracks and unused cityscapes for architectural design and green spaces. You can find out more about his work here - www.salford.ac.uk/our-staff/michael-hardman. Volunteers attending the event were thrilled to receive a hand-turned dibber as a token of appreciation and then enjoyed a Christmas buffet. We have agreed to host the BOSF monthly coffee morning in September, so please do look out for more information on this very soon.



Waxwings at Windermere!

There was great excitement at Windermere Fields at the beginning of January when Waxwings gathered in the trees there. The word soon spread and over several days, thrilled twitchers gathered to watch them. According to the Wildlife Trust, 'with a magnificent crest, a liberal dose of black eyeliner and dazzlingly bright flashes of yellow, Waxwings are considered one of the most beautiful birds to be seen in the UK. They're winter visitors, travelling here from Scandinavia when the food supply there runs low. Some winters there are only a hundred or so across the UK, but in other years they arrive in their thousands - an event known as an irruption'. What a treat! Alex Eden from the Friends of Windermere Fields took these wonderful photos.



What to do with your Christmas Tree

Real trees are biodegradable, and unlike many other types of timber, free from wood preservatives. This soft wood rots away disappearing into the soil within a year or two if nature is left to take its course. Simply cut up your Christmas tree into sticks and stack neatly in a shady out-of-the-way part of the garden. The rotting tree fragments support many insects and other wildlife, as well as improving the soil and feeding nearby plants. You can also shred your tree and this greatly speeds up decomposition. Shreddings make a good mulch for shrubs and paths. Other ways to stay eco friendly:

- **Pot up and reuse plants:** After using living outdoor plants as decorations e.g. pernettyas, skimmia and hollies, pot them up and use them in the garden.
- **Choose long lasting Christmas plants:** Choose plants that you know will last in your home e.g. Christmas cacti that can last for years.
- **Grow your own baubles:** Gourds and dried flowers can make great, natural baubles so have a go at growing your own. These can then be composted after use
- **Compost your short-lived Christmas plants:** Poinsettias and orchids are often short-lived and best composted. You can also disassemble and compost cut flowers, ivy and other evergreens used on wreaths and garlands – the artificial ribbons, fabrics, wires and frames can be retrieved and reuse next Christmas.
- **Compost or recycle paper and cardboard:** Paper and cardboard can be composted; although recycling is also an option as it reduces the number of trees that have to be felled to make wood pulp, the raw material for paper and card.
- **Purchase locally:** Greengrocers fill their Christmas shelves with lovely apples, pears and nuts which are environmentally sound if grown by UK fruit farmers. Avoid buying tropical fruits or crops that have been flown thousands of miles – dried fruits are usually ok as they travel by ship.



Clean and green!

In November, an enthusiastic group of Year 4 children from Anderton Park School helped to sow poppy seeds, plant bulbs and clear litter at Taunton Road Carlton Memorial. Big thanks to Naima, another one of our MiB volunteers for organising this activity.



Planter news

Loyal volunteer Trevor Hocking has re-planted the Wake Green Road planters on St Mary's Row with some winter colour and has removed the middle one, that was falling apart, for reconstruction. We are now beginning to put sponsorship signs into planters and Trevor has inserted one in one of the planters outside the CDT/Post Office. Bulbs are beginning to come up here so there are signs that Spring is on its way. Watch out for more signs around the Village as our blooms appear. Thank you Trevor.