



## Masefield Community Garden

On 19<sup>th</sup> May, Masefield Community Garden welcomed its first post-lockdown visitors to a Rogationtide Blessing, led by Canon Janet and Revd Theresa.

Sally Gopsill shares a few words with us:

### **Companionship - “Growing a Community”**

As we think of the Rogationtide blessing of the crops, we are aware of the ordered growing cycle of nature. In particular, the way we sow, nurture and harvest the crops.

Here at the garden, we are guided by nature and continue this cycle not only with our crops but also with our Community. We are sowing the seeds of learning by immersing the local children in the natural world. They are being nurtured and supported as they develop and grow. They produce their own food and learn about their environment. They have opportunities to build relationships with peers and to relate to the wider community.

As adults, we come together to enjoy each other's company, share our gardening skills, knowledge and life experiences. We are developing community companionship.





This concept is followed through in the growing of our crops. The cultivation methods that we are using can be compared to the way that this supportive community is developing.

We sow a mixture of plants and seeds. As they grow, they support and protect each other in a similar way. We call these growing methods Companion and Mixed Planting or Polyculture. An example of Companion Planting can be seen in our polytunnel where we have sown broad beans, French marigolds and spearmint; the marigolds deter the aphids which can infest the beans and the spearmint deters the ants and persuades them that they really do want to build their nests elsewhere.



Sowing a mixture of plants / polyculture can be seen in our raised beds. Planting in this way can provide varied and tasty food for families.



Some plants such as the courgettes and squashes provide ground cover which suppresses the weeds and help to stop the evaporation of water, whilst plants such as sweet corn can physically support others like climbing beans.

At Masefield, we have sown the seeds for growing a garden and a community. Please feel free to visit us, have a cuppa and maybe find a bit of time to help us as we grow. Open Wednesdays & Saturdays 10am – 2pm.