

## Green-fingered vegetable growing project at botanic garden

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Winterbourne House and Garden, a unique heritage attraction at the University of Birmingham, is running a community-based vegetable growing project with members of Birmingham's Islamic communities.

*Urban Veg* will teach volunteers the art of growing food through sustainable methods with the help of Winterbourne's dedicated garden team. The project, funded by the Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) charity, will grow vegetables in the walled kitchen garden, an original feature of the period home, which features more than 6,000 plant species from around the world in its grounds.



Phil Smith from the Gardening team commented:

"As a public garden within the University of Birmingham, we are passionate about our duty to educate visitors about the environment and the opportunities we have to protect it. We are thrilled to be working with BGCI under the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and hope that many local people from Birmingham's Muslim communities will get stuck in."

As well as green-fingered growing, Winterbourne are also encouraging participants to use their artistic talent to capture the project's progress for an exhibition of photographs and artwork based on the scheme to be showcased in Winterbourne's Coach House Gallery in 2012.

Local teacher and project volunteer, Saleha Begum said:

"I am taking part as I want to look at ways to integrate and build the community together with a common ground in mind, as we are all part of the Earth. The principle of stewardship in the Qur'an orders human beings to take care of the planet and I think we all need to take time from our busy lives to enjoy this beautiful creation in which we live."

For more information on the project or to take part, please visit the Winterbourne's website, [www.winterbourne.org.uk](http://www.winterbourne.org.uk) (<http://www.winterbourne.org.uk>) to access the online application form. The deadline for applications is Sunday 27 February and volunteers need to be available every Wednesday from March until October 2011.

### Notes to Editors

For further media information, please contact Anna Williams in the Winterbourne Press Office on 0121 414 9113 or [a.m.williams@bham.ac.uk](mailto:a.m.williams@bham.ac.uk) (<mailto:a.m.williams@bham.ac.uk>).