

Social and Therapeutic Garden Spring News 2026

February, 2026

Welcome to Spring!



Upcoming Events

All bookings via www.eventbrite.ie



- **Mar 8** – Awaken the Senses: Wellbeing in the Fragrant Garden
- **Mar 17** – St. Patrick's Day Family Fun
- **Mar 21** – Spring Equinox Self-Care Workshop
- **Mar 22** – Sting Into Spring
- **Mar 28** – Spring & Easter Bloom Wreath Workshop
- **Mar 30** – Kids Easter Nature Camps
- **Apr 4** – Easter Egg Hunting – Family Event
- **Apr 12** – Spring & Easter Bloom Wreath Making

"Despite the forecast, live like it's spring." —Lilly Pulitzer

Warm welcome into the new season from Festina Lente's Social & Therapeutic Garden. Encouragement to connect with nature, nurture wellbeing, and embrace spring's energy. This season's feature plant: the marigold, symbolising joy, warmth, and renewal. Invitation to reflect, plant seeds, and grow with the community.

Community connection...

The gardens connect with the community through:

- Garden shop (seeds, starter herbs, vegetables, gifts)
- Allotments
- Events, workshops & family activities
- Birthday parties, school tours, parent-toddler groups, weddings

All activities can be adapted to special needs.

Contact: Events@festinalente.ie

Connect With Nature & Nurture

We at Festina Lente Gardens have discovered that regular self-reflection with plants supports emotional regulation and overall mental wellbeing.

We invite you over the seasons to spend mindful time with the wonderful sensory garden plants, as part of daily wellbeing practice.

Mindful Connection:

The Marigold
We invite you to sketch, paint, or print the marigold illustration.

Reflection prompt with Marigold:

"How has love transformed you, even in the face of loss or absence?"

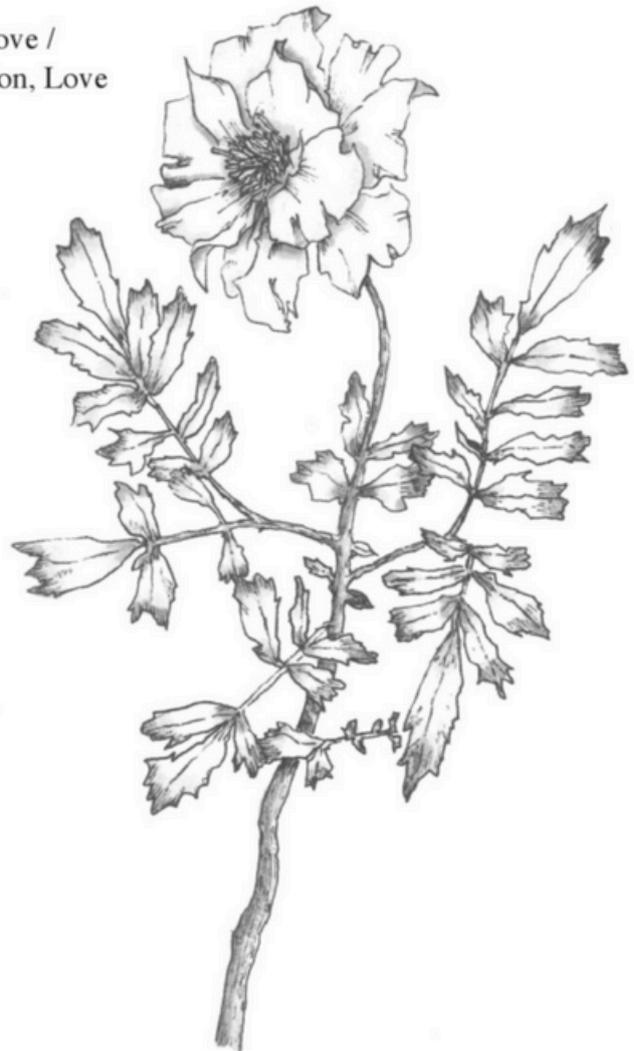
Suggest a walk mindfully through the sensory garden as you reflect on the seeds and promise of Marigold, as a 2026 companion

Acknowledgement of Owen Hartmen for his sensory garden botanical illustration, to support community wellbeing, created intentionally, during his 2025 internship.

Marigold

Symbolism:

Grief over lost love /
Warmth, Affection, Love



Kids Corner: Magic Marigold Moment

- Create a sensory bin with dried marigold petals, smooth stones, pinecones, and moss.
- Invite children to explore the textures freely.
- Encourage children to say, sing or quietly reflect: "Like a marigold, I shine bright, grow strong, and bring joy to the world around me."

This affirmation builds confidence, calm, groundedness, and happiness, with the friendly support of Marigold.

Feature Plant Guide — Marigolds (The Golden Flower)



Types of marigolds explained

Calendula officinalis – Pot marigold; daisy-like flowers, 30–60 cm

Tagetes patula – French marigold; frilled petals, 20–30 cm

Tagetes erecta – African marigold; pom-pom flowers, up to 1m

Easy to grow from seed indoors from February or outdoors after frost.

Prefer sunny position, well-drained soil.

Connect & Grow — Seed Harvesting & Benefits

Harvest seeds in autumn: cut dried flowerheads into a paper bag and store cool & dry until spring.

Marigolds offer medicinal, culinary, and traditional significance.

Excellent companion plants—some species repel pests (whitefly, aphids), others attract beneficial insects (lacewing, ladybirds).

Open-centred blooms support pollinators like bees & butterflies.



Register your interest — Workshop Series

- **Essential Skills for Creating a Wellbeing Garden:** a 7 part workshop series running April - November 2026
- **The Victorian Kitchen Garden Programme:** a 7 part workshop series running April - November 2026
- Led by expert gardener Patrick Howlett
- **Feedback and interest:** Events@festinalente.ie