



• Cockburn MP Fran Logan, Peter Fry, James Trom, Cockburn mayor Logan Howlett, Laura Cheetham, resident Denver Ashley and house senior Joni Miller. *Photo by Matthew Dwyer*



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Feeling aware

by BRENDAN FOSTER

FOR many blind people the opportunity to experience nature is rare because of access difficulties.

But not-for profit group Senses Foundation has set about to change that for three community home residents by creating a sensory garden in their backyard.

Senses, which provides disability support services for people of all ages, chose plants with varied foliage, texture, smell and colour to provide maximum stimulation. The garden also has a water feature and wind chimes for relaxation and a trampoline for stimulation and exercise.

"We also included edible fruits, vegetables, herbs, and spices that provide both sensory and teaching opportunities in plants, cooking and nutrition," social worker Karen

Wickham said.

House senior Joni Miller said the garden provided the residents, who need round-the-clock care, with another form of stimulation.

"They particularly enjoy having fun on the trampoline and listening to the water feature for relaxation," she said.

The Makajanich Place home opened last year and Ms Miller says its residents have made dramatic progress because of the stimulation, structure and happy environment.

"Without a home like this and support from Senses Foundation, these guys would probably be in and out of institutions for the rest of their life," she said.

The garden was developed with assistance from the Rotary clubs of Victoria Park, Curtin, Bentley and Attadale, as well as the Gosnells branch of Rotaract