

Guidelines for establishing Community Gardens





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These guidelines support the City of Canterbury Bankstown Community Gardening Policy.

Community gardening is becoming more popular worldwide with the growing awareness of food security and climate change, and as a way to encourage a healthier lifestyle within the local community. These guidelines provide information about setting up and running a community garden in Canterbury-Bankstown. Community gardens are a unique form of open space that is self-managed by the community primarily for the production of food and to contribute to a sustainable urban environment.

The City of Canterbury Bankstown is committed to providing residents and visitors with an engaging and vibrant city, in a manner that responsibly manages the shared use of its public spaces.





Principles for a community garden

The following principles should be followed, in order to receive approval for community gardens on Council managed lands or seek support for community gardens not on Council-managed land:

- The garden must allow the general community to participate;
- When on City of Canterbury Bankstown managed lands you must have public liability insurance of minimum \$20,000,000;
- When on non-council managed lands the group should be covered by the landowner's public liability insurance or where not available incorporated groups must carry their own insurances;
- The group must have local residents who participate in and support the garden;
- The proposed garden must be supported by the landowners and the local community;
- The group must have the skills to organise, manage and maintain a community garden or have a mentor from an existing group to assist them;
- The group must demonstrate the capacity to fund the garden and provide ongoing maintenance;
- The group's activities may include growing plants, seed collecting, harvesting, organic pest management, incorporating animals, composting and worm farming;
- The garden must have a management plan and design layout of the garden; and
- The group's knowledge, skills, experience and produce will be shared amongst gardeners and the local community.

The project must be a long-term community initiative, with community participation a key objective, striving to reach 25 members for establishing a community garden group.



Procedure for starting a new community garden on Council land

The timeframe to establish a community garden on Council land may vary. It must incorporate the time to obtain approvals including community consultation and endorsement followed by approval obtained by Council's delegated officer are required. The group's management plan must be reviewed and approved by the landowner or Council.



Idea

Applicants would like to develop a community garden

Contact

Applicants contact Customer Service Centre Officer 9790 9000 or email council@cbc.city.nsw.gov.au

Assess

Applicants and the appropriate council officer assess sites for a potential community garden.

Plan

Applicants talk to residents to gauge interest and support. Applicants organise a committee group and develop a management plan and design.

Consult

Council undertakes community and stakeholder consultation. Council considers feedback and works with the group and local community to address concerns. If there is opposition Council may consider alternative sites or designs.

Apply

If the proposed garden is supported by the community the application including the management plan and garden design goes to the appropriate director in council.

Approved

Council staff meet with the group to develop written agreements for the garden.

Declined

Council to provide written feedback. Alternative sites considered.

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Build

Once all documents have been approved by Council, the group may apply for grants to fund construction.

Induct

Council organises a site meeting with the group to discuss reporting, monitoring, maintenance and safety requirements.

Garden

The group organises a working bee to plant crops, attend workshops and discuss maintenance of the garden.



Community garden management plan and garden design template

Use this template to guide your group on all aspects that could be considered when developing a management plan.

- Define the overall vision for the garden, describe the roles and responsibilities of the group members, and outline the benefits to the broader community.
- Develop a landscape design layout to show the placement of the garden beds, pathways, tool shed and composting systems.
- This will assist your group in gaining funding, sponsorship, landowner approval or assist with new members.
- This documentation must be submitted to council for final approval before a License or Permit agreement is approved.
- Community Garden applications should include, but not be limited to the following information:



1) Title page

- a) Group name, picture and date
- b) Location of garden and address

2) Vision

Describe the overall vision for the garden.

- a) What is the purpose of your community garden? Is it to be a place for gardeners and the community to meet and learn about growing food? Is it to assist with food security? Is it to demonstrate food production to residents, schools and educational institutions?
- b) How will this garden benefit the broader community?
- c) Will you develop the garden in stages over a couple of years?
- d) How will you achieve your objectives within the community garden?

3) Site of the garden

Describe the site location of the garden.

- a) Who owns the land? Do you have permission for a garden?
- b) Does the location fulfil the site selection criteria?

4) Management of the site

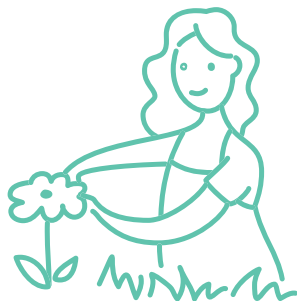
Describe the resources you will require as part of your garden design.

- a) Garden beds – describe the design and size of your garden beds, and what they will be made of.
- b) Sustainable materials – will you use sustainable materials?
- c) Garden tools and storage – will you have a tool shed?
- d) Accessibility – have you allowed for people with disabilities on the pathways? Or provided disabled access to at least one garden bed? Will your garden be open to the public? If not, will you hold open days for the community?
- e) Managing waste and contamination – how will you deal with organic and non-organic waste on site? And dumping of rubbish? How will you deal with soil contamination?
- f) Water management – do you have access to water onsite? How will you deal with water runoff from the site?
- g) Facilities repairs – how will you manage or fund repairs if facilities are broken or vandalised?
- h) Signage – how will you provide notices to other gardeners or the public in your garden?

5) Gardening

Describe the gardening methods you will use and the resources required and the structure to maintain these.

- a) Style of garden – is the chosen style suitable for the current number of gardeners? Does it allow for new gardeners to join?
- b) Methodology – does this method of gardening suit the site? Does your group have the skills to develop this method of gardening?
- c) Allotment or leased plot gardens (garden spaces and the produce produced in them are leased to individuals or groups) – what happens when members are on holidays or sick? Do you have a communal garden for new gardeners on the waiting list for a plot garden?
- d) Communal or shared garden (All garden beds and areas including the produce are shared by all garden members) – will the group meet to discuss what to plant for each season? Do the members harvest throughout the year or will you have a harvest day?
- e) Crops in the garden – what will you grow? Will you grow vegetables, fruit, herbs, medicinal herbs, flowers, bush tucker, native or other crops? Does your group have the skills to manage pests and diseases? Does your site have enough space for these crops?
- f) Maintenance – how will you ensure maintenance of the garden? What if gardeners are on holidays or sick? or a gardener does not maintain his/her garden? Will you have processes in place to manage these situations?
- g) Access – will members require keys or combinations to unlock the gate or access the tool shed?
- h) Animals or native bees – does your garden have enough space for animals or stingless native bees? How will these creatures be maintained? And funded?





6) Management structure

Describe your group's structure and how it will be managed.

- a) Member coordinator – who will be the group's contact person and liaise between the Council and the group? Council will need their contact details to promote the group on the Council's website.
- b) Roles and responsibilities of members – Can you provide a list of roles, responsibilities and contact details for the gardening group?
- c) Children in the garden – will you have children under the age of 18 working in the garden? Will they be supervised by a parent or guardian? Is your garden within a school? If so, your members will need to have a working with children check.
- d) Committee – will you have a committee or a smaller group to make decisions?
- e) Gardener's agreement – will your group have a gardener's agreement or a set of rules to follow for a gardening plot? What happens if a gardener disobeys the rules? Will these rules be incorporated in the management plan?
- f) Garden beds or allotment space – will residents go on a waiting list if there is no garden bed available or can they still participate?
- g) If a member forfeits his/her garden bed or allotment space how long will it be before a new member is allowed to take it over?
- h) Conflict resolution and resolving disagreements – how will your group deal with conflict within the group, neighbours or local residents?

7) Budget

Provide a detailed budget of the costs of developing and running the garden. This should include:

- a) Proposed budget for the development and construction of the garden;
- b) Costs for planting out the garden; and
- c) Ongoing maintenance costs including plants, mulch, manure.

8) Funding

Describe how your group will fund the garden for short-term and long-term goals.

9) Health and safety

Describe how your group will meet health and safety requirements, to protect members and garden visitors.

- a) Induction to site – how will you induct new members to health and safety procedures?
- b) Personal protective equipment – will you supply personal protective equipment to gardeners or will they have to supply their own? Will you ensure all gardeners are wearing covered shoes when gardening?
- c) Risks and safety – how will you assess and manage risks in the garden?

10) Garden membership

Describe how your group will manage garden membership and partnership.

- a) Membership – will you have an annual membership fee to participate in the garden? will you have a process for new gardeners?
- b) New memberships and friends of the garden – Will you have a category of membership for friends of the garden?

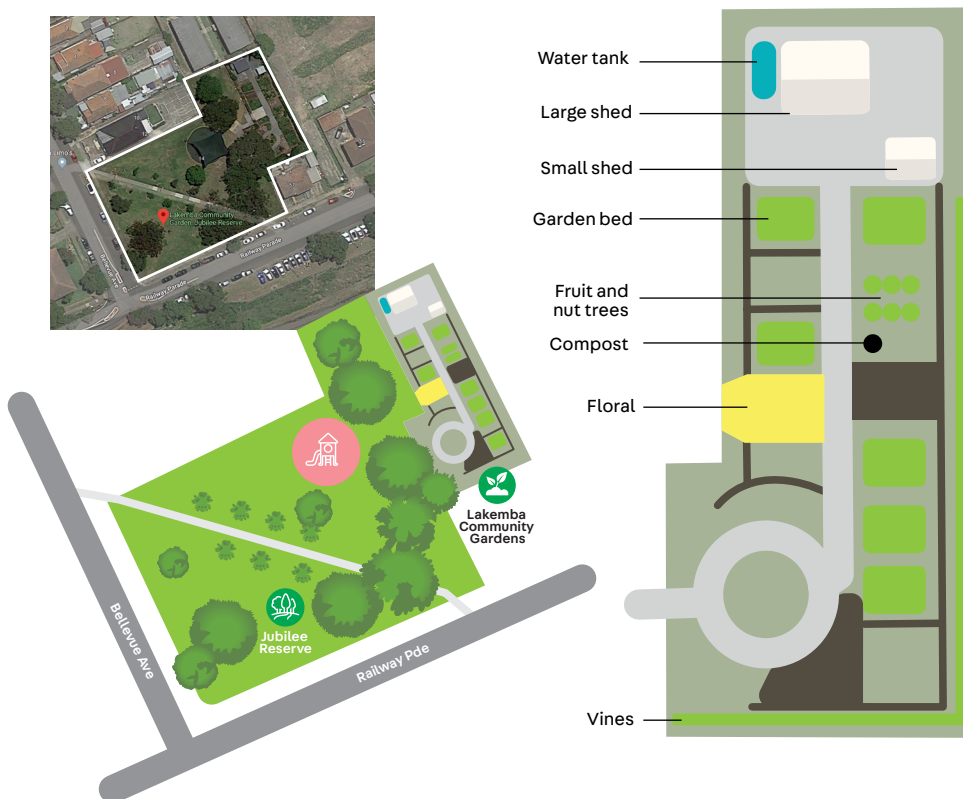
11) Communication

Describe how your group will communicate with each other about meetings, issues, new ideas or suggestions.

12) Garden design

Describe in detail the overall garden design and placement of materials on the site.

- Design principles – what materials and styles will be used?
- Garden design layout plan – provide an detailed plan of the garden design, showing:
 - Show the boundary of the garden area and the neighbouring properties;
 - Show the placement of the garden beds, composting system and tool shed;
 - Show the types of crops you may grow to indicate the size and height;
 - Stages of construction.





**WHERE
INTERESTING
HAPPENS**