A guide to community gardening in Logan
This Community Garden Guide aims to guide and assist you and your community group to establish and manage a successful and sustainable community garden.

Background

In Logan City, Community Gardens are the responsibility of the community to manage. Community gardens are community managed garden spaces that provide a range of environmental, social, health and economic benefits (City of Sydney, 2009). Community gardens increase health and nutrition through the cultivation and consumption of fresh produce, and have the potential to address future issues of food security (Grayson, 2008).

Community gardens provide a source of food close to where people live, reducing food miles, creating employment opportunities, and delivering economic benefits (DeKay, 1997). The creation of community networks centred on communal gardens results in greater levels of social cohesion and social capital, and provides a public space where education and training can be delivered (Holland, 2004).

Community-led Garden

There are a number of things for you to consider before establishing a community garden. Community Gardens can occur on either your own, privately owned or Council owned/controlled land.

Are you looking to establish a Community Garden Group?

If you are unsure who owns the land at your proposed community garden site, please contact Council.

If the community garden is to be established on Council owned or controlled land, a Community Garden Policy exists that requires the completion of a Community Garden Application on Council Owned or Controlled Land Form.

What are the benefits of becoming an incorporated Association?

Community groups interested in establishing a community garden should consider being an incorporated association, under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009.

Being an incorporated Community Garden group:
- Assists with the structure of the garden group through the requirement to establish a management committee and to hold regular meetings;
- Enables the group to be a legal entity, separate from individual members;
- Provides an ability to obtain and manage your own public liability insurance; and
- Allows you to apply for grant funding.

For a community garden to be established on Council owned or controlled land, the group must be incorporated, or be auspiced by an incorporated association.

Do you need Public Liability Insurance for a community garden?

Garden groups need to be aware of the risks associated with a publicly accessible garden space, therefore should consider obtaining relevant Public Liability Insurance.

For a community garden to be established on Council owned or controlled land, the group must have Public Liability Insurance to a minimum of $20,000,000.
What are some considerations when choosing a site for your community garden?

When you are choosing a site for a possible community garden, you should take into account these factors:

**Safety**
Sites should have no major safety or health concerns; and have good Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles including passive surveillance (for example, can be easily seen from nearby houses or shopping areas).

**Accessibility**
Sites should be accessible for a range of needs (for example, maintenance, user groups, visitors).

**Solar access**
Sites need to receive sufficient levels of sunlight each day.

**Size**
Sites be appropriate in size to accommodate the intended purpose (for example, garden beds, composting systems, rainwater tanks, seating areas, shelter for gardeners and for community workshops and demonstrations).

**Water**
Sites should have access to an adequate water supply, where possible re-using collected rainwater.

**Soil**
Sites soil conditions are suitable.

**Multiple Uses**
Sites where a community garden can be integrated without conflicting adversely with other land uses and where the community garden can still be used by non-gardeners for passive recreation and educational workshops.

**Zoning & Tenure**
Site zoning and tenure arrangements must be able to be used for the purposes of community gardens.

What things to consider when managing a Community Garden?

After you have selected a garden site, it is always a great idea to come up with a Community Garden Management Plan. A management plan can assist your community garden group in managing its garden and should include, although not be limited to:

- Have a main contact person;
- Expectations of behaviour on site, by members and garden users;
- A decision making process that is democratic, transparent and inclusive;
- Proposed security plan for the site;
- Safety induction;
- Water supply and storage;
- Impact on current function of the site, including other users, flora and fauna;
- Fenced off areas;
- Budget and finances for starting-up and maintaining the garden and group;
- A dispute and conflict resolution process;
- Risk assessment in terms of public liability and Workplace Health & Safety obligations;
- Maintenance requirements and who will be responsible for maintenance;
- Expected number of gardeners and proposed arrangements for allocation of individual garden beds;
- Clarification of ownership of any produce grown on the site;
- Environmental considerations such as chemical usage, water testing and runoff management;
- Safe storage area for gardening equipment and supplies;
- Proposed community activities including educational activities;
- Detailed design drawings;
- Planned review periods; and
- Decommissioning policy (return site to original condition if the gardening group Association disbands).
What are some key ingredients to growing a successful community garden?

Community gardens that are successful and sustainable take into account the following key factors:

**Management:**
- A garden management plan;
- Simple rules that everyone understands clearly and follows, but that allow the opportunity for individual expression;
- Gardener participation in decision making;
- Good communications within and beyond the garden;
- Democratic and inclusive approach to management and decision making;
- Good management systems and processes;
- An effective process for dealing with conflict; and

**Members and garden users:**
- A focus on social aspects of the garden;
- A meeting place, preferably undercover with facilities for refreshments;
- Mix of ages, cultures and skill levels;
- Development of interpersonal relationships;
- Gardener commitment;
- Allowing gardeners to adopt specialist roles in the garden;
- Involving people from the outset;
- A broad support base;
- Time spent in leisure as well as work; and
- Provide training for gardeners.

**Garden site:**
- Keep the garden neat and tidy through regular maintenance;
- A balance of communal and individual garden areas according to the needs of the gardeners;
- An appropriate location; and
- Good garden design.

Logan’s approach to community gardens

Logan City Council Community Gardens Policy provides a consistent and streamlined approach in responding to community garden requests on Council owned or controlled land.

A number of key principles guide this policy:
- Improve the health and wellbeing of the community;
- Fostering a sense of community;
- Success through improved sustainability;
- Provide increased opportunity for social connectedness and intergenerational exchange; and
- Provide skills development and learning opportunities.

For community garden groups interested in developing a community garden on Council owned and/or controlled land, a requirement is to prepare and submit a completed Community Garden Application on Council Owned or Controlled Land Form.

To obtain a copy of Logan City Council's Community Gardens Policy or Community Garden Application on Council Owned or Controlled Land Form, please visit Council's website www.logan.qld.gov.au
References

Auckland City Council 2002, Community Garden Policy, Auckland City Council.

City of Sydney 2009, Community Gardens Policy, City of Sydney.

City of Victoria 2009, Community Gardens Policy, City of Victoria.


Holland, L 2004, Diversity and connections in community gardens: a contribution to local sustainability, Local Environment, 9:3, 285 - 305

Lake Macquarie City Council 2009, Community Gardens Policy, Lake Macquarie City Council.


