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COMMUNITY
GARDEN

**PALMY COMMUNITY GARDEN
GUIDE**
NOVEMBER 2021

Introduction

Community gardens in Papaioea are supported by the Vegetation Framework and Placemaking Plan. Community gardens contribute to building social resilience in neighbourhoods and play a role in enhancing individual food growing skills.

The social capital that can build neighbourhoods around shared garden spaces fosters outcomes that the City is looking for from public spaces through the:

- Welcoming Communities Plan
- Connected Communities Plan
- Policy for the Use of Public Space

What is the purpose of this guide?

1. To strengthen existing community garden initiatives first.
2. To support new community gardens in Papaioea where a need is not met.
3. To acknowledge the role that community gardens play in Papaioea.
4. To accommodate different types of community gardens that meet diverse needs.
5. To clarify roles, responsibilities and processes for creating and running community gardens on Council land.

What is a community garden?

The Council defines a community garden as ***land gardened collectively by a group of people for the benefit of the community or members of that community.***

A community garden is often:

- scaleable and low cost.
- managed by a group of people in a neighbourhood setting.
- primarily grow fruit or vegetables for personal use of the garden volunteers or for the benefit of their community.
- May be on public or private land. Note that community gardens on private land are not covered by this guide. Check the District Plan rules for your private site to see what kind of planning requirements there are for community gardens.

Contacts for support

PNCC Community Development Team: CommunityDevelopment@pncc.govt.nz

Environment Network Manawatu (ENM): Food.Action@enm.org.nz

What types of edible gardens are there?

There are many different types of edible gardens that may meet different groups or objectives.

Allotment	A collectively managed group of individual garden plots where a person can care for and harvest their own plots as they see fit (eg, Awapuni Park Community Gardens).
Community garden	Garden managed by a group of people (eg, Moheke Community Gardens).
Community orchard	Fruit trees managed by a group of people (eg, RECAP community orchard).
Home Garden	Fruit and vegetables grown at home.
Berm Garden	Use of the road berm by residents for a productive use in their neighbourhood.
Institutional Edible Gardens	Garden facilitated or cared for by a business's organisation (eg, St. Peters Anglican Church).
Permaculture Garden	Permaculture principles applied in a community garden or orchard setting (eg, Ashhurst Community Library Garden).
Food foraging and wild harvesting	Food gathering from land, along rivers or coastal areas.
Guerrilla gardening	Informal planting on under utilised or vacant land.
Mahinga kai sites	Traditional Māori gathering sites for food and materials like flax for weaving.
Rongoa gardens	Gardens that nurture medicinal plants according to the Rongoa Māori traditional healing system.
Māra kai	Gardens that focus on traditional Māori nutrition and tikanga.
Productive parks	Fruit or nut trees or edible gardens on neighbourhood parks informally managed by local people (eg, Ahimate Reserve Community Orchard).
School gardens	Edible gardens managed by students, teachers and the school community.
Pātaka Kai & Surplus Sharing	Sharing surplus food from private or public gardens (eg, Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū, Te Pātaka Kai 4412).
Urban agriculture	Larger scale market gardens often surrounding cities managed for the benefit of the local community, linked to local distribution networks, on a commercial basis.

Why join or run a community garden?

❖ Hauoranga – Health and well-being

- People can access low-cost fresh fruit and vegetables more easily.
- Gardening activities can provide an alternative physical activity for people.
- Mental and physical health is enriched through healthy eating and stronger personal relationships.

❖ Pāporitanga - Close knit and self-reliant communities

- Shared work and food bring neighbours together.
- Volunteering by the community is rewarded with tangible results.
- The space that hosts the community garden becomes loved and cared for by the neighbourhood as a valued gathering space.
- Community gardens are hubs that empower residents to solve local problems in creative ways.

❖ Matauranga – Lifelong learning

- Practical knowledge of how to grow, harvest, prepare and enjoy food is shared among the community.
- School gardens enable children to learn where their food comes from.
- At community gardens people can learn how to grow food and compost at home, but also about traditional/cultural uses for plants, medicinal uses, weaving, art and a wide variety of recipes and cooking methods helps add delight and diversity to city life.

❖ Pūkenga rawa – Economic strength

- New business opportunities and jobs are created by the community supporting their locally grown food economy.
- Pathways that lead to both paid and voluntary work are encouraged.
- Entrepreneurs foster new business models such as local food co-operatives, boxed food delivery, farmers markets, and grower incubators.
- Knowledge of how to sustain a diverse and resilient local food economy can be shared with other communities.

❖ Tiaki taiao - Resilient and sustainable food system

- A more diverse and localised food production and distribution system builds resilience and enables more sustainable production and distribution methods that reduce the environmental footprint of food.

❖ **Kaitiakitanga – Creating a city that flourishes**

- Edible gardens our important life supporters: bees, birds, and butterflies.
- Seedlings can be grown by communities to complement existing native and exotic planting throughout the city.
- Productive gardens will become an essential part of the city’s green infrastructure.

❖ **Manaakitanga - Creating a welcoming community**

- Edible gardens can provide social support for communities of interest to feel a part of the City.
- For instance, refugee groups, special needs groups, student halls of residence, young people and retirement villages.

❖ **Whakapapa - Celebrating our heritage**

- Papaioea has a strong food history, from Te Awa o Manawatū and its five lagoons that formed a food bowl for Rangitāne o Manawatū, the market gardens that took advantage of river soils in Hokowhitu, to the food innovation that Massey University and Food HQ have produced to keep Aotearoa a leader in the international market.
- Community gardens reinforce our City’s food bowl history.



Shailer nursery, Albert Street, circa 1930 Credit: *Garden nursery – Unknown circa 1930 to circa 1939, No Known Restrictions*

What's the process?

We aim to have a process that fits the scale and impact of each type of edible garden. Some tactical gardens with little effect on others require no process or simple processes. Some gardens that have potential effects on others or may affect our requirements under the Reserves Act will require a formal lease agreement to help futureproof the community garden.

Edible gardens and processes to follow:

Edible Garden	Likely Process	Attributes
Community Garden, Orchard, Food Forester Allotment	Full lease agreement needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupies a large amount of space relative to the surrounding area. • Potential impact on other users or neighbours. • Type of land requires community consultation and special agreements. • Long duration of occupation. • Restricts access to some extent. • Includes use of Council assets or funds. • May require a resource consent from PNCC or Horizons Regional Council, depending on the site.
Institutional garden	Mid-level process needed (eg, licence to occupy or management agreement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of on-site management needed. • Occupies a small amount of space relative to the surrounding area.
Productive Park	Simple process needed(eg, Memorandum of Understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal impact on other users or neighbours. • Type of land permits activity. • Planting is transitional or temporary.
Food foraging, Surplus sharing, berm gardens	No formal process needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities already managed by established relationships (eg, through residents' associations or an established organisation). • Activities already managed by national, regional or city policies or regulations (eg, harvest limits).

How To set-up and maintain a successful community garden on Council land

The Manawatū Food Action Network has a great body of knowledge for local food resiliency initiatives (<https://enm.org.nz/manawatu-food-action/About-MFAN>). Check out their community garden directory for existing initiatives.

You will need to:

1. Create a management group.
2. Establish your vision, purpose and operating guidelines for the garden.
3. Grow support from your community.
4. Choose a suitable location.
5. Identify resources needed, budgets and funding options.
6. Create or identify a host not-for-profit legal entity or trust.
7. Prepare a written proposal to the Council.
8. Sign a licence to occupy, lease or memorandum of understanding to use Council land.

The Manawatū Food Action Network and Palmerston North City Council are here to help you prepare what you need to get started.

1. Create your management group

You will need a core group of people who are committed to setting up and maintaining the garden over time. Initially you may need 3 or more people to set things in motion. Consider how much time each person is willing and able to commit and break up the roles and tasks to fit.

2. Establish your vision and purpose

Decide on a vision and purpose for the garden. Here are some questions you could ask:

- What type and size of garden do you want to create?
- What will it look like when your garden is fully established and running successfully?
- What will you grow – fruit, vegetables, herbs, flowers, bees, native plants?
- Who will benefit from the produce – yourselves, community, schools, and food banks?
- Who will help care for and enjoy the garden – stakeholders, volunteer?
- What surrounding community groups, gardens, schools, churches or businesses could partner with you?
- How will you communicate with your community and volunteers?

- What activities could take place in the garden – BBQs, food market, composting, growing seedlings, hand crafts, art, lessons on how to grow and prepare food?
- Could individuals manage their own plot or tree – allotment style?
- How can the garden be self-sustaining – garden coordinator, volunteers, and funds?

3. Grow community support

You will need a strong level of support from the surrounding community and direct neighbours. Community engagement is essential to build support for establishing and maintaining the garden over the long-term. You will also need to provide written evidence of support to the Council before public land or resources can be committed.

Useful stakeholders in your area could include:

- Resident or neighbourhood associations
- Schools and early childcare centres
- Church groups
- Sports clubs
- Environmental groups
- Local businesses
- Community Centres

You may also want to “buddy” with an existing community garden near you, who could mentor and support you through the process.

4. Choose a suitable location

Consider the following, when choosing a site for your garden:

(a) Community needs

- **Strategic fit** - will the site meet your vision and purpose.
- **Community support** – can the surrounding community support the garden over the long term.
- **Health and safety** – potentially polluted land or soil contamination – need to consider the former use of land, has it been used for the storage of horticulture chemicals or been a former petrol station. Also consider wider hazards such as busy streets, steep slopes, riverbanks or waterways.
- **Access** - is it easy and safe to reach the garden by foot, bicycle, bus? Consider access for maintenance vehicles.
- **Services** - services such as water is essential. Toilets, building for meetings and storage is desirable.
- **Amenity** – does the site have an enjoyable, sunny aspect, with some shelter from cold winds and

pleasant spaces for gardening, relaxing and space for children?

- **Compatible** – complements existing or surrounding uses and is able to manage issues such as noise, smells, fruit drop or traffic.
- **Visible** – is it reasonably open to street, neighbourhood or surrounding homes? Good visibility can enhance personal safety and reduce vandalism.
- **Equity** – does the location give preference to high need communities?
- **Clear of infrastructure** – not likely to disrupt underground pipes, wires, footpaths, sports or play equipment and other structures.

(b) Growing needs

- **Water** – an adequate supply of water is readily available or can be accessed without too much cost.
- **Soil quality** - soils support year-round productive uses, not flood prone, waterlogged, too sandy or rocky.
- **Sunlight** - not too shady from buildings or in competition with large trees, need at least 6 hours of direct sunlight during summer months.
- **Space** – Adequate space is available for the garden, sheds and composting etc, but also potential for future expansion.
- **Longevity** – reasonable certainty is provided for the use and occupation of the land – will the land be needed in the future for other uses eg, stormwater management, roads or buildings.

5. Identify resources needed, budgets and funding options

Your community will be able to contribute in many ways to the establishment and running of a community garden – time, labour, skills, materials and funds. A good place to start is to create a detailed list of the resources you need and set-up a skills and resource bank of your willing helpers and potential sponsors - then ask for help. Income can be created by the sale of food, seeds, seedlings or handcrafts etc, provided funds are used for charitable purposes.

6. Create or identify a host legal entity for your management group

A Community garden must have an established and legally formed management group for the Council to lease or licence land to. A new community garden can either find an existing host organisation or create their own charitable trust (see www.societies.govt.nz/cms/charitable-trusts).

Responsibilities of a Community Garden Management Group:

A group wishing to establish a community garden on Council land is responsible for any day-to-day management of the garden, including the following:

- (a) Agree with the Council on the layout (an indicative landscape and site plan will be needed), access by people and vehicles for maintenance, and other conditions of the licence-to-occupy for a community

garden.

- (b) Undertake engagement with neighbours and surrounding community to determine how the community garden can benefit or impact upon the area. The Council Strengthening Community Advisors may offer support for this process.
- (c) Ability to comply with requirements of the licence-to-occupy that will include legal accountability, financial obligations, public liability insurance, and compliance with local regulations, policies and bylaws and national regulations such as Hazardous Substances and Health and Safety laws.
- (d) Manage and operate the community garden according to established operating guidelines.
- (e) If an allotment style garden is applicable, ensure that plots are allocated to members of the local community through a fair and transparent process.
- (f) Ensure gardens are maintained to a minimum standard and utilised year-round.
- (g) Ensure that produce is not sold for personal profit. Any sales may cover reasonable gardening expenses and be used for charitable purposes.
- (h) Any education and learning opportunities for garden users and the wider community such as offering training on how to grow, compost, cook and other related skills.
- (i) Ensure the site is returned to an agreed condition should the garden be dis-established, or the lease terminated.
- (j) Explore opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders in the community.
- (k) Establish a general public complaints procedure.
- (l) Maintain regular contact with the Council.

7. Prepare a written proposal to the Council

Prior to a new community garden being established, the management group must submit a written proposal to the Council. Council will assess the proposal on a case-by-case basis.

Please note:

- Public notification or consultation with neighbours may be needed under the Reserves Act 1977 or the Local Government Act 2002.
- A licence to occupy, lease or memorandum of understanding to use Council land will need to be signed by a delegated representative from your management group and the Council.

Your proposals will be assessed based on the aspects described in the sections above and the following matters:

(a) Community outcomes

- Vision and purpose of the proposed garden.
- Benefit of the garden to the local community including who and how they will benefit.
- Opportunities for links and synergies with local community organisations.
- Written commitment from the surrounding community in support of the garden.
- Clear understanding of how to establish and maintain the garden over the duration of the lease or licence.
- Opportunities for the garden to demonstrate and educate the surrounding community about gardening, composting, water conservation, food preparation, and wider themes of community resilience and sustainable living.
- Understanding of how the garden will complement the surrounding existing and future activities, users and neighbours, including how adverse effects will be managed.
- Feedback received by Council from any community consultation Council undertakes on the proposal.

(b) Management

Information on how the management group will be structured and operated including:

- Proposed legal and organisational structure.
- Objectives of the management group and information to demonstrate that the group is viable.
- Identification of a liaison person for the Council (Community Development Advisor).
- Skills and competencies of the management group.
- Processes for decision making, problem solving, conflict resolution, training and induction of new members.
- Budget, sources of funding and timeline for start-up and maintenance.
- Hours of operation.
- A management plan covering:
 - Organisational meetings and requirements.
 - Proposed gardening techniques.
 - Mowing and maintenance.

- Weed and pest control principles.
- Management of vandalism, security and safety.
- Management of composting and organic wastes.
- Health and safety, public liability.
- Details of any proposed structures or buildings.
- Details of any proposed signage.
- Management and containment of noise and odour.
- Storage facilities.

How the proposal fits with relevant legislation, Council, policies, strategies or management plans for the Council land proposed for the garden.

(c) Design

An aerial photograph (eg, Google or web-map) and site layout showing the proposed extent of the community garden and any proposed locations for structures, services eg, water connections, and storage.

8. Sign a licence to occupy, lease or memorandum of understanding to use Council land

Discuss this process with the Council Community Development Advisor.

How the Council can help you create or maintain a community garden

1. Proactively identify Council land potentially suitable for community gardens.
2. Low-cost rentals for Council land used by community gardens.
3. In-kind support for edible trees and compost.
4. Staff support for groups undergoing the process of applying to the Council for creating a new community garden. This could include support from a Community Development Advisor for community engagement processes and a Parks Planner to give an understanding of the site, surroundings, and Council legal agreements and approval processes.
5. Promote and raise awareness about community gardening on the Council website and through the Council's networks and media channels.
6. Consider potential use by community gardens when the Council is investigating disposing of community facilities, assets or land.
7. Maintain a contact database for all community gardens and notify representatives when there are planned works that may affect the community garden operation.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the Christchurch City Council for the great Community Gardens Guidelines that formed the basis for our Community Garden Guide.

We'd also like to acknowledge the Environment Network Manawatu, particularly the Manawatu Food Action Network, for the contribution of their time and experience in the development of the guide and their ongoing support of community gardens. MFAN work as key champions in support of building food sovereignty in the Manawatū.

Reviewing this guide

This guide will be updated as needed to reflect the policies, processes, and levels of service that Council has at the time.

Community Garden Checklist

Check	Task	Things to consider
	1. Create a management group	3 or more people – consider time commitments
	2. Establish your vision, purpose and operating guidelines for the garden	Type/size of garden? What you want to grow? Who will benefit? Who will help support?
	3. Grow support from your community	Including neighbours Community engagement
	4. Choose a suitable location (consulting with Council staff on the opportunities and constraints of possible locations)	<u>Community needs:</u> Strategic fit of site for vision Community support long term Health and safety Access to site/equipment Amenity – pleasant space/sheltered Compatible to surrounding uses Equity for high needs communities Clear of infrastructure <u>Growing needs:</u> Water – adequate supply Soil quality supports production Sunlight – a least 6 hours per day Space is adequate for current/future needs Longevity of availability of land
	5. Identify resources needed, budgets and funding options	Create detailed list of resources required.
	6. Create or identify a host not-for-profit legal entity or trust	Establish legally formed management group.
	7. Prepare a written proposal to the Council	Provide <u>written</u> evidence of support to Council. Public notification or consultation with neighbours may be needed under the Reserves Act 1977 or the Local Government Act 2022.
	8. Sign a licence to occupy, lease or memorandum of understanding to use Council land	If required. Discussed with PNCC.