



Chelsea Heights Community Garden

Rules and Guidelines



Chelsea Heights Community Centre

Beazley Reserve – 160 Thames Promenade

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Rules and Guidelines

Introduction

The Chelsea Heights Community Garden exists to enable members of the community to reduce their impact on the environment by producing their own food, primarily using harvested rainwater, and avoiding energy expenditure through 'food miles' and infrastructure. The garden will bring people together to garden and learn from each other thus strengthening personal and community esteem.

The Chelsea Heights Community Garden is an activity of the Chelsea Heights Community Centre. Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management, Manager and the elected garden representatives are responsible for management of the Community Garden.

This document outlines the rules and guidelines for the operation of the garden. Prior to an application for membership of the garden being accepted, the applicant must read this document and sign the application form agreeing to abide by the Code of conduct, Rules and Guidelines that it contains.

Any major breach or repeated minor breaches of the Code of Conduct or any other rules or guidelines outlined in this document by a gardener, or a visitor of a gardener may result in cancellation of membership and loss of the gardener's plot. The process for investigation of a breach and implementation of a penalty is outlined in Appendix 1.

Goals:

- Provide a place and opportunity for people to grow their own food locally.
- Increase people's knowledge and ability to live with minimal impact on the environment.
- An overall reduction in the water and energy used to obtain food.
- A strengthening of the community health and wellbeing.

Objectives:

- To allow all the local community to participate in gardening despite age, ability, or financial position.
- An increase in skills in growing food using sound environmental practices via:
 - workshops and demonstrations.
 - informal sharing of knowledge between gardeners.
- Maintain and upgrade as required communal areas and garden plots used by individuals, households, or organisations to grow food.
- The garden to be as self-sufficient as possible including via:
 - Rainwater harvesting and storage (from the Community Centre roof).
 - Compost bays and worm farms.
 - Keeping of bees and chicken.
- Establish links with community organisations.
- To provide a place for local artists to work and to create items of beauty for the garden space.
- To create a place where people want to be.

1. General conduct in the garden

Gardeners and visitors should respect the gardens as community spaces and will be required to adhere to the Code of Conduct outlined below.

Code of conduct

- **Treat everybody equally, fairly and with respect.**
- **Respect one another's beliefs and cultural differences.**
- **Encourage and support each other.**
- **Be responsible for the security, safety, and harmony of the Community Garden.**
- **No plants or equipment are to be removed from another gardener's plot without the gardener's permission.**
- **Wilful damage to any area of the Community Gardens is prohibited.**
- **Each gardener has the right to quiet enjoyment of the Community Garden.**
- **The consumption of alcohol or any form of substance abuse is prohibited in the garden. Gardeners are not permitted to enter the garden under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substances.**
- **Violence in any form is prohibited.**
This includes (but is not limited to) striking, scratching, biting, spitting, any other type of direct or in direct force, throwing objects, threatening with any type of object, pushing, shoving, tripping, or grabbing, any form of indecent physical contact.
- **Sexual harassment in any form is prohibited. This can mean:**
 - Sexual propositions or persistent requests for dates or sexual favours.
 - Unwelcome physical contact or touching in a sexual way.
 - Unwelcome or improper remarks.
 - Comments about a person's appearance or body.
 - Leering, wolf whistles, catcalls, obscene gesture.
 - Indecent exposure.
- **Bullying in any form is prohibited**
This can mean verbal abuse (swearing or shouting), false accusations, psychological harassment, and gossiping.

2. Membership

2.1 Who Can be a Member of the Chelsea Heights Community Garden

Membership of the garden is available to all members of the Chelsea Heights, Chelsea, and surrounding communities.

Members are entitled to take part in a range of activities at the garden including: maintaining the communal garden plots, working bees, propagation of plants, workshops, art activities, celebrations and events.

Organisations

Membership is also available to organisations, particularly those providing programs for people with physical or intellectual disabilities or those providing support programs for sectors of the community. The Membership fee for organisations is greater than that for individuals / households. Special agreements may be made with organisations regarding use of garden space in individual or communal plots at the discretion of the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management. Every organisation willing to participate must provide their own insurance Policy and ABN number.

2.2 Garden Plot Holders:

For an additional fee members will be able to apply to be a garden plot holder. Garden plot holders are allocated a plot to produce food for their personal use. A yearly rate will be paid for each plot. A second plot can be allocated after a year of membership and subject to availability.

2.3 How to Apply for Membership and Plots

To apply for a garden membership applicant must:

1. Enquire any information or new membership request with the Garden Representatives via email.
2. Be invited by the Membership Coordinator for an overview of the Garden.
3. Complete an Induction Tour (Info in the nutshell + membership form to be given if interested)
4. Fill out a membership form stating that they agree to abide by the Chelsea Heights Community Garden Rules and Guidelines.
5. Make payment to obtain the gate code and be recognised as a member of the Community Garden.

2.4 Fees

An annual fee will be payable to be a member of the Chelsea Heights Community Garden and an additional fee payable for each garden plot. Fees are payable upon acceptance of membership application and, if applicable, allocation of garden plot(s).

The annual fees will cover the period from 1 July to 30 June. If a plot is allocated during this time a quarterly pro-rata fee will be paid based on the number of months remaining to June 30.

The fees will be reviewed and determined annually by the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management.

Money collected as fees will be used for garden supplies, maintenance, enhancements, social gatherings for the gardeners and administrative costs.

2.5 Allocation of Plots

The garden representatives will allocate available plots to applicants based on:

- physical needs of the applicant
- date of membership

If no plots are available at the time of applying, the applicant's name will go on a waiting list and they will be advised when a plot becomes available. In such cases applicants may join as communal members.

2.6 Garden Access

The garden will be secured by a keypad gate. The gate code will be given upon completion of the induction and full payment of fees. The code is strictly confidential, and please do not share the code with anyone. Please make sure the gate is properly closed after you leave.

2.7 Forfeiture of Garden Plots

Plots are allocated to the person(s), or organisation named in the Chelsea Heights Community Garden application form.

Plots are not transferable. Gardeners cannot give their plot to another person. If a member no longer wishes to or is unable to maintain their plot, they must advise the garden representatives. The plot will be reallocated to someone who is on the waiting list.

2.8 Sale of Garden Produce

Garden plots are available for personal use only. Gardeners are not permitted to sell plants that have been grown in the community garden. The use of garden plots for growing plants commercially is not permitted.

2.9 Sharing Garden Produce

Gardeners may share any excess produce by leaving this on the 'Share Table' in the shelter. All gardeners may take a reasonable proportion of any produce left on the 'Share Table'.

3. Responsibilities of Gardeners for their Own Plots

3.1 General maintenance of plots

It is the responsibility of gardeners to maintain their plot and the pathways around their plot, keeping it free of weeds, rubbish and any items that may be obstructing the pathways. Mulching (covering plots with straw) is strongly encouraged to control weed growth.

If a gardener is unable to tend a plot for a period of two months or more (eg due to illness or travel), they must advise the garden representatives to discuss their situation, or they may be at risk of losing their plot.

If a plot is not maintained for a period of 3 months, the committee has the right to reallocate the plot.

3.2 Appropriate plants

Garden plots should be used primarily for growing vegetables, fruits, and companion plants to these. Gardeners should advise the garden representatives if they wish to grow plants over one metre in height. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots because they may block sun to other plots. Gardeners who wish to grow large plants must advise the garden representatives before plots are allocated. Communal fruit trees will be a feature of the garden. Input into planning the communal areas from any member of the garden is welcome and encouraged. Invasive plants such as mint are discouraged in individual plots.

3.3 Soil

Gardeners are responsible for improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that nutrients are put back into the soil after every season as plants use up the nutrients in the soil as they grow. This can be done by adding manure, compost, and mulch. **No synthetic or artificial chemicals** are to be used to improve the soil quality.

From time to time the garden representatives will purchase manure and other mulch for use in the garden. Compost bays and worm farms are also maintained in the garden (see 4.2). All members are asked to consider the needs of others and take no more than their share of these resources.

When a gardener hand back (forfeits) their plot, under no circumstances are they permitted to remove **any soil** from their plot. Soil is not to be removed from any plots that are in use or vacant.

3.4 Garden Tools

Gardeners are encouraged to provide their own tools such as hand trowels. Some communal tools will be available (refer 4.4).

3.5 Plot fences

Plot holders must not erect a fence around their plot.

3.6 Building and other materials

Permanent structures must not be built on garden plots or on vacant areas of the Community Garden. Gardeners cannot use the Community Garden to store building or other materials.

4. Maintenance and Use of Communal Areas, Equipment and Supplies

All gardeners are expected to take responsibility for the care, maintenance and development of common garden equipment, communal garden beds and public areas in the Community Garden.

The garden representatives encourage 'active gardening' in the Community Garden.

This includes:

- Reporting any leaking taps, damage to the gardens, lost or broken equipment to the garden representatives via the committee pocket in the front cream shed.
- Removing weeds along the border of garden plots and pathways adjacent to garden beds.
- Maintaining pathways.
- Picking up and disposing of any rubbish around the garden.
- Participating in at least 3 Working Bees in The Garden per year. This does not necessarily mean heavy labour. There are many simple ways of contributing to the communal nature of the gardens.
- Joining a roster for tasks such as compost turning, feeding chooks, weeding, or watering communal areas; these rosters are kept in the front shed.

4.1 Communal Garden Beds and Plants

The Community Garden includes communal garden beds and plants. Occasional meetings and working bees will be held to plan and manage these areas and all members of the garden are encouraged to participate. Members who want to take a particular responsibility for an aspect of managing these areas are encouraged to discuss this with a representant of the garden or leave a note for the committee in the committee pocket in the front shed.

Members may harvest from these areas unless specific signs stating otherwise are in place, considering the needs of others and taking no more than their share of this produce.

4.2 Compost Bays and Worm Farms

Compost bays and worm farms are located in the community garden and all gardeners are strongly encouraged to use them to both reduce household waste and support the production of good compost and nutrients for use in garden plots.

Gardeners are encouraged to attend composting workshops, read composting handouts or to contact the garden representatives if they need advice about using the compost facilities. Instructions for the compost bays and worm farms are on display in the garden.

Items that are suitable to be placed in the compost bins or worm farms include: fruit and vegetable scraps, eggshells, leftover rice, noodles etc leaves, grass clippings, other plant matter that can easily decompose. Gardeners are encouraged to chop up or break up any plant matter into small pieces, as this will assist in the composting process.

Items that are not suitable to be placed in the compost bins or worm farms include: wood, plastic bags, tin cans or polystyrene foam boxes, meat, fish, or chicken.

Items that are not suitable to be placed in the worm farms include citrus peel and onion family plants.

4.3 Water Management

The only water available at the community garden is harvested rainwater. All gardeners must use water wisely and efficiently. There is no drinkable water available in the garden, gardeners need to bring their own.

Hoses should be always handheld at all times and should not be left in plots running unattended. Nozzles on hoses are not to be removed. Garden hoses must remain connected to the tap and contained so that they do not lie across pathways.

Taps must be turned off on completion of watering.

4.4 Garden Tools and First Aid Kit.

Gardeners are encouraged to provide their own tools such as hand trowels. Some tools will be available at the garden for use by members within the garden. These tools will be stored in a lockable shed on the garden site and will be clearly (and brightly) marked as belonging to the garden. All members will be required to treat the tools with respect and return them to their place in the shed before leaving. The garden representatives will monitor use and condition of tools and replace, as necessary.

Community Garden members and visitors are obliged to follow the Chelsea Heights Community Centre COVID Plan and the COVID19 Work Health and Safety guidance. Please refer to documents available at the Community Centre.

If any garden equipment is missing or damaged, gardeners should report this to the garden representatives.

A first aid kit is located in the cream shed for your use. If any item is out of stock, please report it in the notebook or contact the garden representatives.

4.5 Chicken and Bees

One member of the garden will be responsible for supply of food and the roster for daily care of the chickens. Beehives to be registered with Dept. of Agriculture and hives to be attended to by trained beekeepers.

5 Garden Pest Control

No artificial or synthetic insecticides, herbicides or toxic chemicals for pests and weeds are to be used in the Community Garden. The only type of snail bait that is permitted is Multigrad. Gardeners can use safe, environmentally friendly products such as garlic or rhubarb sprays. Gardeners are encouraged to attend workshops and read handouts related to environmentally friendly pest control methods. Bait stations are located all around the garden.

6 Other Matters

6.1. Animals

Council aims to promote a safe environment for all users to enjoy the space. Pets are welcome to visit the Community Gardens but must be kept on a leash at all times, to ensure the safety of other visitors. If other members of the community garden feel unsafe or request that the pet be removed, we ask that members respect their wishes.

6.2. Garden security

When gardeners are exiting the garden, please ensure that the self-locking gate is properly shut. Gardeners must lock all sheds except the cream shed (which houses the first aid kit and contact numbers) when they exit the garden. Please keep the gate closed whilst in the garden for the safety of children. The garden gate code will be changed every financial year.

6.3. Children in the Community Gardens

Children are welcome in the Community Garden. Carers must always supervise children at all times.

7. Dealing with Problems of Concerns in the Community Garden

Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management is responsible for garden related main issues.

The everyday garden related problems are the duty of the representatives of the garden.

If gardeners have any concerns about the garden or about other gardeners, they are strongly encouraged to contact the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management. Sanctions will be made accordingly regarding Appendix 1 of this document.

Appendix 1 Process for investigation of breach of Code of Conduct or Rules and Regulations and Implementation of Penalty

If any of the items outlined in the Rules and Guidelines are broken the following will happen:

Minor breach of Code of Conduct, Rules and Guidelines (eg general untidiness):

1. A member of the representatives of the garden will contact the member, explain the breach, and ask that it not be repeated. If the breach is repeated, proceed to Step 2.

Medium breach of Code of Conduct, Rules and Guidelines or repeated minor breach:

2. A warning letter will be sent to the member within 5 days of the event by the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management. If action is taken by the member to rectify the breach and the breach is not repeated, no further action is necessary.
3. If the offence is not rectified and / or repeated after the warning letter, proceed to step 5.

Serious breach of Code of Conduct, Rules and Guidelines such as any form of violence, being drunk and abusive or sexual assault will require the person to immediately leave the garden and if necessary, the police will be contacted. Then **go to Step 5**

4. A member of the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management will contact all parties involved and any witnesses. Police will be contacted if needed.
5. Within five working days a meeting will be called for key parties involved and representatives of the garden and a member of Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management.
6. The Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management and garden representatives will decide on appropriate action.
7. Key parties will be informed of the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management decision within five working days. This will be in writing and translated if necessary.
8. If any party is not happy with the decision, they may appeal to the Chelsea Heights Community Centre Committee of Management (refer CHCC Policy 6.1)
9. If any parties are banned from the community garden, they have five working days to remove any vegetables or plants from their plot. This visit must be supervised by representatives of the garden and Chelsea Heights Community Centre staff member.
10. Once banned, entry to the community garden is strictly forbidden.
11. The community garden plot will be re-allocated to the first person on the waiting list.