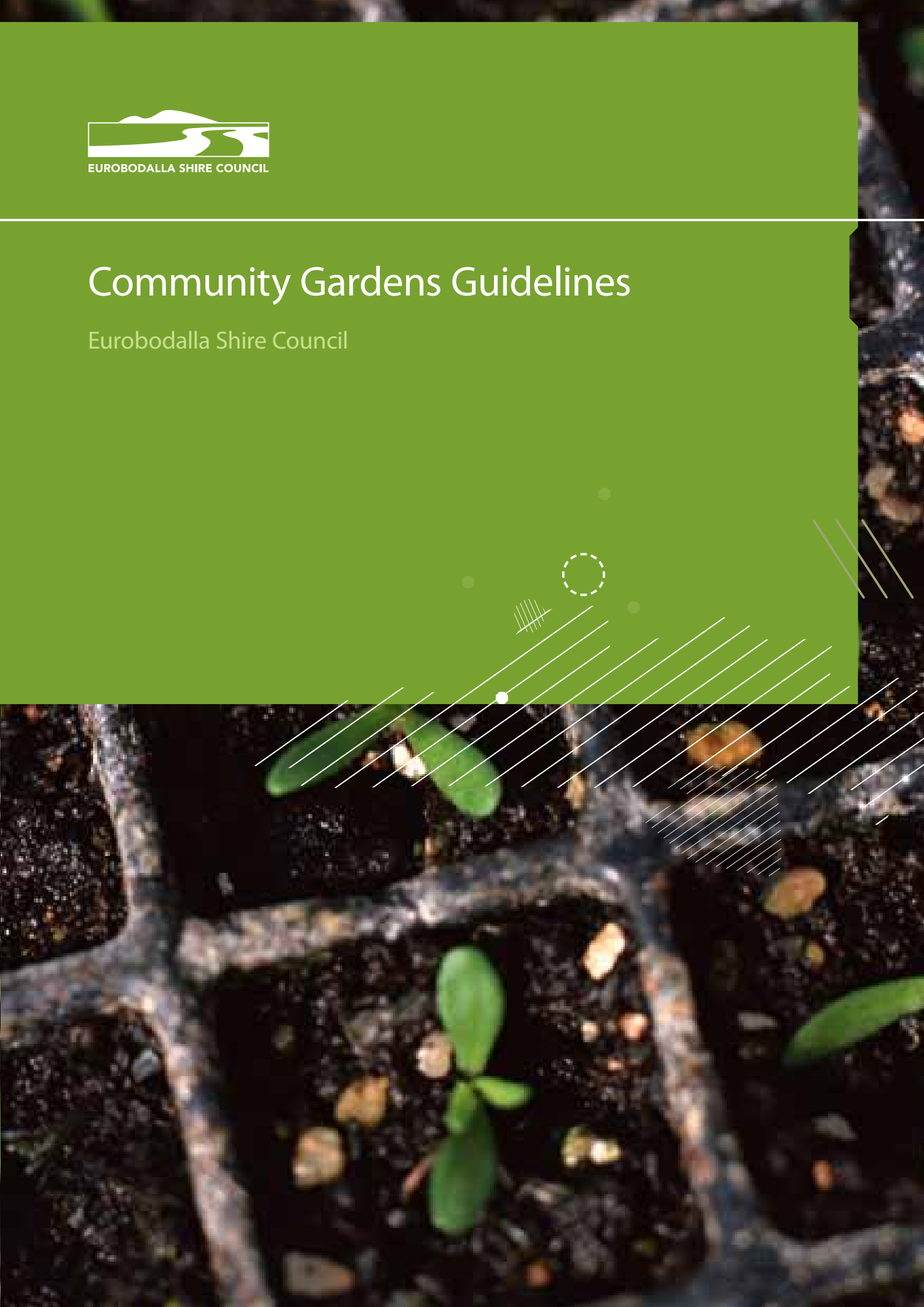# Community Gardens Guidelines

Eurobodalla Shire Council

These Guidelines have been developed to support Councils Community Gardens Policy. The Guidelines aim to provide valuable information about establishing community gardens on Council owned or managed land; assist community groups in preparing a licence application; and provide advice on the ongoing management of community gardens. They are not intended to be prescriptive but instead outline the range of considerations that will contribute to the long term viability of your community garden.

These guidelines draw heavily upon the Getting Started in Community Gardening document developed by Faith Thomas and the Council of the City of Sydney.

If you have any questions regarding the information contained in the Community Gardens Guidelines, please contact Council on 02 4474 1000

Council would like to thank SAGE, Tuross Head Community Gardens Group and Narooma Community Gardens Incorporated for their input into the development of these guidelines and the supporting Community Gardens Policy.

Developing a community garden is a big task, there is a lot of planning, design and approval work involved prior to implementation. It is important that you a re aware of the process and time frame from the outset such that your group can be certain they have the sustained interest to complete the project.

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Preparing the Soil...

1.0 Starting Out

You've had an idea, you and a couple of like-minded friends want to start a community garden! Sounds like fun and most likely, you're keen to start work, but don't pick up your shovel just yet... there is some important groundwork you should undertake to give your community garden the best opportunity to thrive.

1.1
Background Research

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The first step towards creating a successful community garden is to undertake adequate research. This will help to further your understanding of the concept of community gardens and provide an insight into the level of involvement that will be required from you.

1.1.1
Why a Community Garden ?

Groups establish community gardens for many different reasons. What will the purpose of your community garden be? Your purpose may change over time but when you first start out it is important to have in mind what you are trying to achieve by establishing a community garden. Some of the benefits that Community Gardens can offer members and the local community include:

Social: Community gardens bring together people from the community who might not normally otherwise socialise together. They foster social networking, encourage positive social interaction and relationships and contribute to broader community development.

Health & Wellbeing: Community gardening can promote self esteem, confidence and psychological well-being; improving physical health and fitness levels; reduce the risk of illness; facilitate stress reduction and supplement diets with a variety of fresh, locally grown fruit and vegetables.

Environmental: Community gardening can also have positive environmental outcomes. It promotes sustainable living practices such as waste minimisation and the reduction of energy used for the transportation of produce. Community gardens may rehabilitate degraded land or provide a sanctuary to urban wildlife. In-direct benefits to the environment include educating users to enable them to use sustainable living practices at home as well as in the garden.

Education: Community gardens are an excellent way to educate the community about various sustainable practices. For example, the garden may host workshops on composting or organic gardening. Education enables the community to feel a greater sense of self worth.

Arts: Existing community gardens have shown that the arts and gardens can be complementary, acting as an educational and display space for the production of arts and crafts. This provides more opportunities for different facets of the community to connect and form relationships. It also means your garden will be an interesting, creative and diverse place to be.

Recreation: Community gardens provide alternative recreation opportunities to assist in ensuring an active and healthy community.

1.1.2
Existing Community Gardens

As the saying goes, don't reinvent the wheel! One of the best ways for you to learn how to develop a successful community garden is to research existing community gardens, see how it has been done before and borrow a few good ideas to get your group off and running.

You might like to review plans for established community gardens, visit the gardens to see the layout and make contact with organisers to discuss ideas. You may wish to keep a file of notes and photos of your research for the group's reference.

Australian City Farm & Community Gardens Network is a valuable resource for community gardens

www.communitygarden.org.au

Eurobodalla Shire Council

An organised tour to existing community gardens is a great way to inspire existing members and attract new members to the group.

There is a great online presence for community garden groups that is always growing. You will find many resources online with people always willing to share information and have discussions about growing community gardens.

1.1.3
Community Demand

Your group might think the community needs a community garden but what do they think? Community gardens will only work in places where they are supported by the local population.

Ask yourselves, does our area really need this garden or are there other opportunities available? There may be existing community gardens on either Council owned or managed land or located in other places such as schools or churches.

Establish what existing recreation and community facilities are located in the area and if demand exists for further community based activities. Are there unmet needs that exist in your community such as open space, food security, social opportunities, health promotion, environmental improvement, or training?

If there is already a community garden located in the area, Council encourages you to join the established garden.

Council can help put you in touch with existing community gardens groups within the Eurobodalla shire, as well as help to establish community needs in your area.

Check out Councils Community Gardens Web page

www.esc.nsw.gov.au/communitygardens

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1.2
People Power

Community Gardens are hard work and demand time, energy and commitment. Establishing a community garden is a big task and a sense of community is crucial to the success of a community garden. You will need to have the enthusiasm of a group of people working towards a common dream or goal to bring your community garden to life.

1.2.1
The Group

In the initial stages it is important to form a working group that includes members with a variety of skills and abilities that can assist from the outset of the project. The size of the group will depend on the project.

A smaller group may be easier to manage, while a larger group will provide more energy and input. Until you have liaised with Council and determined that a site is available for your community garden, it is recommended that your group is small.

Once you have established that your group is committed to developing the community garden, you might like to hold a meeting to discuss how to proceed. It is a good idea to discuss strengths and skills of different members in the group and to assign roles to share the load. You have a lot of work ahead of you! Prior to your community garden being established the group will be involved in the planning and design of the garden,

the development of a Community Gardens Management Plan and preparing and submitting a licence application. This process can, in some cases, take up to twelve months before you even get to start digging.

As Council will be assessing the licence application for your community garden, it is advised that you liaise closely with Council throughout the process. It is a good idea to appoint a liaison person who will act as a conduit between your group and Council. This person should have good communication skills as well as having the time to have a good grasp of the process and to attend meetings when needed.

1.2.2
The Vision

A community garden can be many things to many people and unless group members are in agreement as to what the purpose of the garden will be it is likely that conflict may arise. It is a good idea to develop a group vision, at the outset keep an open mind and dream big!

We have briefly outlined some of the benefits of community gardens (Section 1.1.1 – Why a Community Garden). You could use this information, along with your groups research, and ideas as a guide to develop a vision for what your group wishes to achieve through your community garden project. Your vision should be well articulated, concise and kept in mind throughout the entire process.

Checklist - 1.0 Starting Out

Our Group has...

❑ Established community need/demand

❑ Researched existing community gardens

❑ Formed a working group

❑ Agreed on a group vision

Planting the seed...

2.0 Planning

Your preparation up to this point has most likely bought about excitement within your group. It is important that you harness that buzz and energy as you go into the planning phase.

2.1
Communicate with Council

Council is here to help and the earlier your group's dialogue with Council begins the better. Ongoing discussions with Council will assist your group and Council to choose the most appropriate location for your community garden.

Council will also provide advice for the lodgement of the licence application to assist the group which will provide for a more efficient assessment. Initially, you may wish to make contact with Council to notify of the formation of the group and early intentions for the community gardens project. You could discuss which suburb or area you were hoping to establish the gardens as a starting point. Council can provide you with mapping of existing community land within your proposed area.

2.2
Site Selection

The next step is finding a site for your community garden. Having come this far, you may even have a site in mind that may at first glance seem perfect for your project, however, finding the right site on which to establish your community garden may not be so straight forward. There are many factors Council must consider when determining an appropriate site for your community garden project, these include but are not limited to:

- The zoning of the land in accordance with the current Local Environment Plan
- The category of the land in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*
- Consistency of the land use with the Plan of Management for the site
- Available services and facilities
- Compatibility with surrounding land uses
- Community demand
- Proximity to existing community garden

Once Council and your group agree on a possible site, the site assessment form contained in

Appendix A should be completed by your group. You may like to undertake the assessment as a group or separately to allow people to put forward their opinions without influence. However you choose to progress, allow plenty of time for your site assessment as the site assessment form is quite detailed, there is a lot to think about, and the better you get to know the land the more realistic and successful your garden design will be.

2.3
Partnerships and Promotion

At this point it is a good idea to encourage broader community interest in your project. This will increase community involvement and group membership and help to secure funding. The earlier the community becomes involved in the project, the more ownership they will have over the garden which increases the potential for the ongoing success of your project.

You might like to hold an information session to introduce your group's ideas to the community. You could report on what you have achieved so far; what direction you are looking to proceed in; communicate your vision for the project; and show examples of established gardens to give people an idea of what you are trying to achieve.

You can also publicise your project through flyers, posters, through local media such as the radio or newspaper or by contacting other community groups directly to discuss your ideas and plans. Council can help by promoting information sessions, tours or open days on its community gardens web page.

Throughout this process get names and contact details of everyone who wants to be involved and make a mailing or membership list. This will enable you to keep everyone with an interest in your project informed along the way. Ongoing collaboration and communication between your community garden group, the broader community and Council will be vital throughout the process to ensure support.

Keep in mind that some members of the community may have concerns about the progress of the community garden, or even the use of the site you are considering. Remember that a community garden is a place for the community and their ideas need to be heard and considered. If concerns persist don't forge ahead. In the long term you will need the support of everyone in the community in order to get the best possible outcomes.

As part of this process you may like to approach local community groups to form partnerships to assist your project. Such as:

- Volunteer organisations to gain more workers and provide community activities for disadvantaged sectors of the community;
- Education establishments to help with training, education and workshops;
- Established community gardens can provide knowledge, experience and advice;

Once you have established a membership base and formed partnerships, work to develop trust and communication through social events such as bbqs, skill sharing workshops and planning days. Maintain the group's enthusiasm through activities that foster both personal and group development

Checklist - 2.0 Planning

Our Group has...

❑ Communicated with Council

❑ Undertaken a site assessment

❑ Agreed on a site to progress

❑ Promoted our ideas and pursued partnerships

Branching Out...

3.0 Develop Proposal

Now that you have chosen a site to progress, it is time to let the project grow. This part of the process will require a lot of time planning the more specific details.   This may seem like a lot of work, however, the most successful community garden projects are those where the initiating group takes the time to undertake a detailed process of planning and design.

3.1

Designing Your Garden

It is a good idea to actively involve as many people as possible in the garden design process, this will ensure that everyone's ideas are heard and the resulting plan will be something

If required get some professional assistance. A good site plan is inspiring to new members and helps the community see your group's vision. It will also form part of your licence agreement with Council.

3.1.1
Garden Layout

Your group will need to define a functional layout that allows for future growth by combining essential elements with art and ideas. The design should be a reflection of the people who will use the garden. It is a good idea to use the information you gathered during your site assessment to inform your garden layout and to keep some bigger picture elements in mind when you are designing:

Design for sociability: Your garden is a community space, and as such should be inviting to all kinds of social interaction. Think about incorporating places to sit and chat or have a cup of tea; or sheltered areas with long tables for morning tea or lunch breaks.

Design for the senses: Think about how you can make your garden an engaging place. Some ideas might include scented plants, bright colors, public art or auditory elements such as wind chimes. A garden designed to engage the senses will be a garden people want to spend time in. It will also enable your garden to involve a wider cross section of the community including children and the mobility impaired.

Design for learning: Education is an important component of community gardens. Think about how this will be accommodated, design in outdoor learning areas and paths with nodes that allow a group to pause for discussion, create

opportunities for demonstrations. Design for safety: It is important that visitors and users of your community garden feel and are safe. Think about sight lines, avoid creating enclosed or hidden spaces and incorporate seating to encourage people to spend time in the garden.

Design for continuity: It is a good idea to draw up a wish list of what you want to include in your garden, and at what stage you include these items. Initially, you may want to start small. Once you have gauged the success of the gardens and have accumulated more funds, you may want to consider expanding the gardens facilities and functions. A five year staging plan should accompany your licence application.

3.1.2
Building and Structures

Think about what structures you will require in your garden. You may want a shelter where people can sit and be protected from the elements and where you can hold meetings and workshops. The roof may be used for water catchment. Seating may be installed so that gardeners have an opportunity to rest. Other structures which may be considered include; tool shed, weather station, public art, educational signs, rainwater tank, wind breaks, fencing and solar panels.

As outlined in Councils Community Gardens Policy certain structures are exempt development under State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007, which means your group won't need development approval. However you will still need Council approval through your licence agreement and as such the size, location and number of these structures are required to be shown on the site plan and will form part of the licence conditions

3.1.3
Sustainability

As you will be promoting sustainable living through your community garden it is important that you design sustainability into your project at this early stage. There are many things that can be done to make gardens more sustainable including:

Water: maximise opportunities for water harvesting and passive irrigation while reducing run-off to the storm water system.

Sun: design for solar access. To achieve maximum benefit from the sun, place the shortest elements on the eastern side and the tallest elements on the western. If you have adequate roof space and funding, you may want to consider installing solar panels

Wind: design in wind breaks to buffer against the harsh westerly winds, while allowing gentle breezes that encourage pollination and reduce bacterial and fungal diseases.

Earth:it is much easier to work with the natural soil type, structure and topography rather than against it. Choose appropriate locations to minimise any disturbance to soils.

Materials: Council encourages the use of environmentally friendly, recycled materials.

Waste: Maximise the opportunities for onsite management of organic waste generated by the garden, specifically compost and worm farming systems.

3.1.4
Accessibility

There are a number of ways in which gardening can be made more accessible for people with mobility difficulties. Where possible pathways should be wide enough for prams and wheelchairs to pass and if raised beds are incorporated they should be made narrow enough for gardeners to reach the centre without strain. You may also like to consider vertical gardening which is normally designed using a wall or could involve hanging structures.

3.1.5
Animals

Animals may be incorporated into your community garden provided they are kept in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 5 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and in accordance with Councils Community Gardens Policy which states that animals should only be present on site when there is adequate supervision from the Community Garden members to ensure the welfare of the animals and reduce any nuisance they may cause to neighbours.

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3.2

Community Gardens Management Plan

It is now time to start planning in earnest. Your group will be required to prepare a Community Gardens Management Plan, this plan should prioritise tasks, allocates responsibility and set timeframes.

Spend time brainstorming what the group would like to see the garden become in five years time. You might not be able to have something straight away but having it in the plan might inspire someone in the Group to develop it later.

Council has prepared a Community Gardens Management Plan Template (Appendix C) for you to complete and submit as part of your licence application. Your Community Gardens Management Plan is a useful tool for many reasons including but not limited to:

- Demonstrating to Council and other funding bodies that an appropriate level of thought and research has gone into the project.

- Demonstrating that there is adequate commitment and capacity within the group to plan and establish the garden and provide for its ongoing maintenance.

- Planning for the long-term management of the garden.

- Clarifying directions for the group and ways to achieving the groups vision.

3.2.1
Management Structure

The recruitment and retention of members is important in the sustainability of community gardens. Being able to manage the human element of gardens can also translate to better outcomes since internal conflicts which may arise from misunderstandings can be effectively dealt with. The first step in developing a management structure is to formalise your group.

People

Your group will need to decide on a Committee which would generally include a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and committee members. Not all members of the community garden group will want or need to be on the committee therefore, it is a good idea to also have a list of members.

As outlined in Council's Community Gardens Policy, the group must be not-for-profit. It must also be an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 No 7, or an unincorporated association that has an auspicing agreement with incorporated association.

The advantage of being an incorporated group means that you are a separate legal entity from the individual members. Therefore the group is able to legally do things in its own name such as attain public liability insurance. In addition often grant funding requires that the group be incorporated. If your group is incorporated your constitution will specify most of the requirements for the management of the group

If your group is unable to become incorporated, you may be able to arrange for an incorporated association to auspice your group for the purpose of gaining grant funding and insurance. Examples of groups which may be able to assist are; existing community gardens, Landcare, progress associations and friends groups. If you are an unincorporated group that has an auspicing agreement you will need to pay mind to your auspicing association's constitution.

Please refer to The Australian Institute of Community Practice and Governance for more information on administration for not-for-profit organisations.

www.ourcommunity.com.au

The NSW Department of Fair Trading has more information on becoming an incorporated association.

www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

Insurance

In accordance with Councils Community Gardens Policy, all community garden groups are required to be covered by Public Liability Insurance to the amount of at least $20 Million. Incorporated Associations will be able to obtain cover of their own while unincorporated groups will need to become auspiced by another organisation.

It is a good idea to talk to other community gardens about insurance cover: what level of cover do they have, how much does it cost, and what level of service do they receive? Community Gardens are a unique land use that does not fit easily into established insurance categories. This can lead to significant variations in the cost of premiums so shop around. You might consider having your garden insured with another community garden, as an umbrella policy is likely to be much cheaper.

Policy

Effective management of your community garden is crucial to its success. There are some important issues you may like to consider regarding management of the garden at this early stage such as:

- Code of Conduct: You may wish to set a list of clear rules for the conduct of gardeners and visitors to your community garden. This will ensure that everyone has an understanding of the behaviour that is expected from them.

- Decision Making Process: Clear guidelines may be set for how the group will make decisions. This may include where the group meets, whether a quorum is needed and voting arrangements. This is also known as terms of reference.

- Resolving Disagreement: There may be some disagreements in the Gardens. It is good to be prepared for when this occurs and have a process for how conflicts will be managed and resolved.

- Communication: Members of the community garden and the broader community will want to stay informed on decisions and activities occurring. You may wish to detail how the group will communicate with internal and external stakeholders.

3.2.2
Budgeting and Funding

Community gardens cost money to construct and maintain. The amount required varies dramatically across gardens according to their size, scale of activities and the skill base and volunteer time of their members. Good financial planning will help to provide more stability and security for your garden and ensure you get maximum value from any time and energy your garden group puts into fundraising activities.

You will need to draw up a budget for the 5 year period of your licence to include in your Community Gardens Management Plan. When drawing up the budget for your project, consider all associated design and construction costs, set up costs and ongoing maintenance costs, which may include but is not limited to:

- Fees to become an incorporated entity
- Licence application fee
- Ongoing annual licence fee
- Public liability insurance
- Construction materials and fencing
- Plants and mulch
- Services
- Tools and equipment

Whatever the nature of your garden, at some point you will need to consider how to raise the funds required to get it up and running and to keep it thriving. Your Community Gardens Management Plan will also require you to outline possible funding sources. There are a number of options for funding a community garden including:

Membership fees:
Your committee will set your membership fees. It is a good idea to set your fees in relation to your garden costs. Set yourselves a goal for the proportion of the gardening running costs that your membership fees will meet. It is recommended that you set your membership fees at a realistic level so you get some income from those who are prepared and able to pay, and offer assistance to those in real hardship. Some alternatives to fixed fees are:

- Offering a range of ways to pay, e.g. a monthly rate
- Offering discounts if members provide volunteering services
- Have different rates for families, individuals and pensioners

Sponsorship or donations:
Consider negotiating ongoing discounts with local businesses such as garden suppliers, hardware stores and nurseries. It is important to adequately promote sponsors to encourage ongoing support.

Sale of produce:
Many community gardens have successfully raised funds by selling goods produced within the garden. Some common garden products include worm juice, worms, seedlings, garden produce, seeds, and preserves. In choosing to sell products from your garden, it is a good idea to consider whether you will be going into direct competition with other businesses in your local area and how

Eurobodalla Shire Council has in place policy for obtaining financial assistance from Council titled "Finance - Financial Assistance - Donations and Grants Etc" and "Fees for Licences Granted to Not for Profit Groups and Organisations" and available from Council's website

www.esc.nsw.gov.au

this might impact on levels of community support for the garden. It is also important to remember that the garden must remain not-for-profit at all times.

Grants:

Community gardens provide a diverse range of social and environmental benefits so they are eligible for a wide variety of local, state and federal grants Attracting grant funding for your garden can be another useful way of covering costs, particularly those associated with the initial construction of the garden, the expansion and development of the garden over time and running one-off projects and initiatives that expand the range of activities on offer in your garden or engage new groups from your community. Grants are made available via a competitive application process and are generally provided as one-off, time-limited funding tied to the delivery of specific activities and outcomes. Council recommends that the group enters into a licence agreement prior to applying for grants.

Events and Workshops:

Alternatively you may raise funds by using the gardens to host small events such as performances or public workshops. Examples of workshops run by community gardens include worm farming, organic vegetable gardening, permaculture, chook care and healthy seasonal cooking.

Fundraising:

Your garden could raise money by selling products not related to the garden (e.g. traditional fundraising initiatives like cake stalls, lamington drives, chocolate sales, sausage sizzles). Holding raffles can also be a low-effort way of raising funds for your garden. For some raffles you will need a permit, so make sure you investigate permit requirements.

For further information on obtaining grants visit:

- www.ourcommunity.com.au
- www.sustainingourtowns.org.au
- www.grantslink.gov.au

3.2.3
Ongoing Management

With a group structure established, policies and procedures can then be drawn up concerning the management of the gardens. Effective management of the community gardens is crucial to its success. Important issues to consider regarding management of the gardens include maintenance, health and safety, and amenity.

Maintenance
Maintaining the garden in an attractive, safe and functional manner is an important aspect of managing a community garden. It will also make the garden appealing to visitors, which may attract new members and showcase the aesthetic as well as the practical aspects of sustainable gardening.

Communal areas will need a management system in place to encourage all to participate in the maintenance of the gardens. One way of ensuring that communal areas are maintained is to stipulate that all members attend a monthly work-day, or participate in a working group. A number of tools can assist in the smooth functioning of garden maintenance systems including;

- Rosters for specific tasks
- Log book for recording tasks undertaken – this shows clearly who is doing the work;
- Allocation of specific roles and responsibilities with corresponding incentives;
- Work groups for specific tasks; and
- Regular work days accompanied by social activities such as a BBQ.

Amenity
In accordance with Councils Community Gardens Policy the garden must aim to not adversely affect the community and should take measures to reduce amenity issues to neighbours. As such there are a few recommendations Council can make to reduce possible amenity issues to neighbours:

Appearance: Try to make sure your garden is as visually attractive as possible to neighbours. This will be of benefit to the group when trying to attract new members. Locate messy parts of the garden such as the tool shed or composting areas away from visually prominent areas.

Odour: Locate any substance which may cause odours away from public areas or neighbouring properties.

Noise: Try to minimise the effect noise has on the amenity of neighbours. It is a good idea to restrict operation of tools that emit noise to days and times when they have least impact on neighbours

Health and Safety
Risk management is the process of forecasting risks, problems and disasters before they occur and then setting up procedures to prevent these things from happening. If prevention is not achievable the procedures should minimise the effects of any risks. Risk management is important to the health and safety of your group for the following reasons:

- Keeping workers/visitors safe and injury free;
- Better information for decision making;
- Better asset management and maintenance;

Your initial risk assessment should consider anything that has the potential to cause injury, and how you can eliminate or minimise the risk of this occurring. Some common hazards that might be included are:

- Poisonous or potentially allergenic plants;
- Dangerous materials poisons and pesticides;
- Use of sharp or dangerous tools;
- Trip hazards;
- Manual handling and heavy loads;
- Sharp or dangerous edges;
- Exposure to the elements;
- The impact you may have on the environment:
- Any other issue that may cause harm to users

Once you have identified how you intend to eliminate or reduce the risk it is a good idea to document any procedures or methods so that other garden users can be adequately informed. In particular, training in the use of tools, materials and chemicals will need to occur. There are examples of fact sheets addressing these issues available from the Australian City Farm & Community Gardens Network

Visitors and members will need to understand the procedures you have in place in relation to risk management and therefore It is advised that you have an induction process which includes a health and safety training session. First aid kits should be easily located within the site and a log should be kept of all accidents that occur.

Checklist - 3.0 Develop Proposal

Our Group has...

- ❑   Completed our site plan

- ❑   Developed Community Gardens Management Plan

- ❑   Is ready to submit our licence application
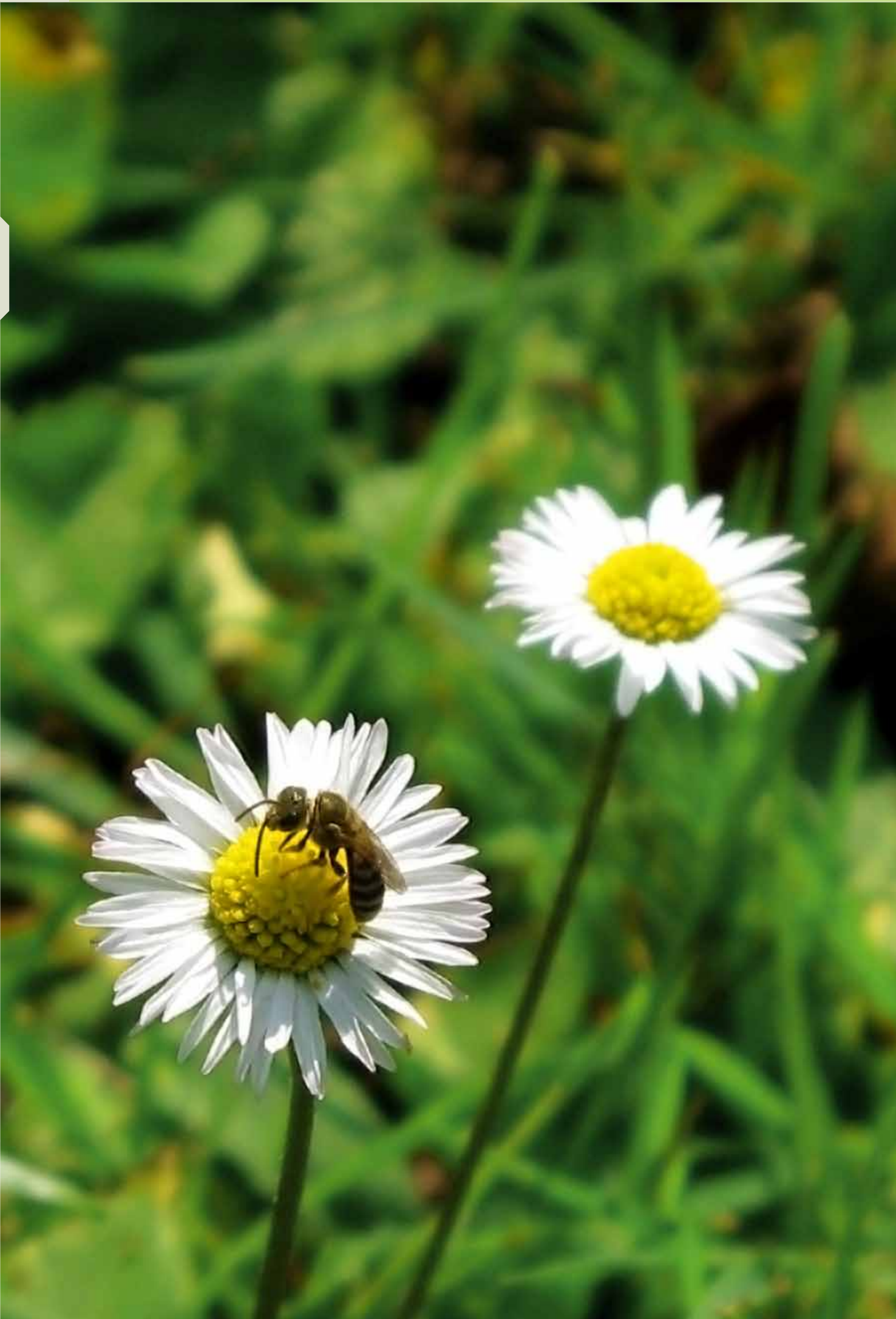
Pollination...

4.0 Obtaining Your Licence

You have finished planning the physical, organisational and social components of your garden and are ready to submit your application to Council for assessment. This is the final step in the process before you actually start work.

4.1
Submit Application

Once you have completed your Community Gardens Management Plan and Site Plan you are ready to submit your licence application.

It is recommended that you contact Council to arrange a pre-lodgement meeting prior to submitting your licence application.

At this meeting Council staff will review your licence application including your Community Gardens Management Plan and Site Plan, and determine whether your application is completed appropriately and ready for assessment. This meeting assists in ensuring application processing times are as fast as possible. Following this meeting you can make any amendments or improvements if necessary, complete your licence application form (Appendix C) and submit your Community Gardens application package.

4.2
Assessment Process

Now you can take a much deserved rest while Council plays the busy little bee. Once your application has been submitted, it must be assessed in accordance with relevant legislation and Council Policy. In particular Council will use the site Plan of Management, Community Gardens Policy and Guidelines and your Community Gardens Management Plan and Site Plan to determine whether the application may be granted a licence. The application then needs to go through the process of being reported to Council, notified and if so determined, a licence

1 **Assessment of Application**
Initially the application will be assessed by Council's property Management Section. During this time you may be requested to supply additional information.

2 **Recommendation to Council**
The Council officer will write a report to Council with a recommendation on whether to grant a licence. Council will advise you when the report will be considered.

3 **Council Support**
At the Council meeting, Councillors will decide whether the licence application is supported or not.

4 **Notification**
Should Council support the proposal, it will then be notified for a period of 28 days in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

5 **Licence Determination**
Following notification and consideration of any submissions, Council will make a decision whether a licence will be granted.

issued. The process, as outlined below, involves Council meeting and reporting cycles, as well as statutory notification periods and as such can take up to twelve weeks.

Please see the flowchart in Appendix D for further explanation of time frames.

4.3
Issuing of Licence

Once your application has undergone the reporting and notification process and Council has determined a licence may be granted, a licence will be issued. In the first instance the licence will be granted for a five year period and will include conditions relevant to:

- Ongoing costs;
- Minimising negative effects on neighbours;
- Ensuring no contamination of water;
- Ensuring no vermin are on site;
- Maintaining control of noxious weeds and pests;
- Maintaining the appearance of the site
- Ensuring sustainable practices are employed;
- Ensuring ongoing health and safety measures to minimise any risks; and
- Decommissioning the gardens

At this point Council staff will contact your group and arrange a meeting to go through the licence conditions with you and for you to sign a copy of the licence. Following this meeting your licence is signed by all parties and you are ready to start

Checklist - 4.0 Obtaining Your Licence

Our Group has...

❑ Submitted our completed application package

❑ Liaised with Council throughout assessment

❑ Signed a licence agreement

❑ Is ready to start work

Harvesting the Rewards...

5.0 Implementation

Congratulations!! After all your hard work you can put down your pen and pick up your shovel. This stage will see your community garden dream come to life.

5.1
Construction

The construction phase is a great way to establish a sense of belonging to the site and attract new members to the community garden group. During this phase you could publicise the gardens through appropriate media sources.

Consider available funding and human resources when commencing implementation of your project. Take on manageable tasks with sustainable outcomes, such as planting fruit trees and constructing compost bays, These will survive periods of inactivity where as planting of annual vegetables will not. Celebrate your successes and maintain enthusiasm during this initial stage of hard work and occasional setback. Be patient. Persevere. Build social capital.

5.2
Public Access

The gardens should be easily accessed by the public and constant communication with the community to encourage participation and interest is ideal. Make visitors feel welcome by having clear signs, information sheets and explanatory displays so they can easily navigate the gardens. Continue to publicise your gardens and hold regular events and local media outlets.

5.3
Evaluation and Review

Once you have established your community garden it is a good idea to evaluate your project annually in accordance with your Community Gardens Management Plan to understand the success and failures of your gardens and see if you are still on track. If necessary you can then undertake a review of any existing policies or make improvements.

Checklist - 5.0 Implementation

Our Group has...

❑ Implemented our design

❑ Put a system in place to evaluate project

EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL