

Willoughby City Council

Establishing a Community Garden - Additional Information and Resources

Incorporation of the Garden group

Groups are encouraged to have a clear and identified legal structure. In order to do this garden groups can apply to the NSW Office of Fair Trading to become 'Incorporated Associations'. This allows groups the flexibility to manage funds, open bank accounts, obtain public liability insurance and apply for grants.

Incorporation as an association requires groups to establish a management committee with annually elected office bearers, and to commit to regular meetings. Having a committee also helps share the management of the garden and avoids responsibility being placed on one or two people.

This structure:

- facilitates the purchase of public liability insurance, (often a further requirement of councils)
- is often stipulated by donors for eligibility for grants
- is manageable by the gardeners because the annual reporting requirement of the NSW Office of Fair Trading is not onerous and does not call for skills beyond those present in most associations.

Most garden groups find the obligations of incorporation a minor burden. Appointing people as treasurer, public officer and secretary (as decreed by the rules of incorporation) may not be sought-after roles, but the demands are not great and most carry them out without difficulty. Most gardens that incorporate find that it opens opportunities, such as access to grants, not otherwise available.

Insurance for the garden

All community gardens should be covered by public liability insurance, either by obtaining their own insurance policy or by becoming auspiced by another organisation.

Insurance protects both the garden and the land owner against charges made against them if a gardener or visitor is hurt or injured.

Insurance can be obtained by several options, including:

- a) Landcare <http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au>
- b) Garden Clubs <http://www.gardenclubs.org.au>
- c) Auspiced by another organisation
- d) Other public liability insurers

Information on Funding/Grants

Community gardeners can receive funding from a range of sources to help them operate their community gardens.

- Annual plot and membership fees
- Visitor donation box
- Grant Funding -Visit <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au> and <http://www.grantslink.gov.au> for further information on obtaining grants

Small grants may also be available to the group through organisations such as Landcare, Open Gardens Scheme, Garden clubs or through sponsorships with local Business.

Useful Websites

a) Growing Community: Starting and Nurturing Community Gardens

The Growing Community booklet and website content were created to encourage the establishment of new community gardens and to support the flourishing of those already growing.

<http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

b) Getting Started In Community Gardening -

A guide to planning, design and implementation of community garden projects

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au> - Look under Community Gardens

c) Marrickville community gardens policy directions

<http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/environment/community/gardens.htm>

d) Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network

<http://www.communitygarden.org.au/>

e) Diggers Garden Club:<http://www.diggers.com.au/>

f) Eden Seeds: <http://www.edenseeds.com.au>

g) Green Harvest Organic Gardening Supplies: <http://www.greenharvest.com.au/>

h) Greenpatch Organic Seeds: <http://www.greenpatchseeds.com.au/>

i) Organic Gardening From Down Under: <http://www.organicdownunder.com/>

j) Permaculture Sydney North <http://permaculturenorth.org.au/>