



Community Gardens Guidelines

Albury City



AlburyCity supports and encourages community gardening as a valuable recreational activity. Community gardening contributes to the health and wellbeing of the wider community and provides a range of environmental stewardship, social, educational and community benefits. Community gardens can restore or transform neglected, degraded plots of land and create a vibrant location to come together to share and celebrate a rich neighbourhood community. This document provides a framework for residents who would like to establish and manage a community garden.

Purpose

- Provide clear direction for the establishment of new gardens.
- Provide standardised processes, procedures and criteria to ensure consistency in the management of all community gardens located within the Albury Local Government Area (LGA).
- Clarify the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in community garden projects including the community gardeners, AlburyCity and partnering organisations.
- Provide a rationale for decision-making that ensures consistency in the management of all community gardens located within the Albury LGA.

Principles

Community gardens are to embrace the following principles:

- The garden must allow the general community to participate.
- The group must have local residents participate in and support the garden. Local residents include anyone in the Albury area but ideally those who live in the immediate vicinity of the garden location.
- The initiative must be supported by the local community and adjacent residents to the proposed location.
- The group's activities will include growing plants, seed collecting, harvesting, pest management and composting.
- The project must be a long-term community initiative with community participation a key objective.

AlburyCity's role

AlburyCity has adopted a community development approach to community gardens by:

- Providing funding for approved community gardens (pending budget approval by Council).
- Ensuring that any new structures meet relevant building standards.
- Providing advice, support and assistance when establishing new or managing existing gardens. This includes but is not limited to, assistance with the complying of information to be included in the Community Garden Concept Application, community engagement and collection of community surveys.
- Promoting community gardens on AlburyCity's website, media, in publications and at events.
- Encouraging the gardens to be self-managed and have community ownership.
- Assistance with ongoing repair and maintenance of the community garden.
- Developing partnerships with other garden groups and gardeners involved in community gardening activities.
- Encouraging groups to apply for grants and sponsorship to assist with funding their garden.
- Supporting the establishment of relationships between individuals and groups to form new community garden groups.
- Connecting interested residents with established community gardens.
- Reviewing and inspecting the community garden every six (6) months to ensure that the garden is being maintained and well-kept.



Application process

1. Form a community garden group.
2. Explore and identify a suitable location for the community garden.
3. Consultation with AlburyCity to gain "in principle" approval for garden location.
4. Undertake and record community consultation to demonstrate the level of community support.
5. Complete and submit a Community Garden Concept Application (refer Appendix 1) including information such as number of gardens beds, garden boundary and access to water supply.
6. AlburyCity Community Garden Panel to review applications and notify nominated gardening coordinator of the decision of the panel.
7. If Concept Application approved, AlburyCity to request funding from Council through the quarterly budget review process.
8. Commence building of garden.

Approval

Submissions for new community gardens and amendments to existing community gardens are assessed by an internal AlburyCity Panel consisting of representatives from the Communities, Parks and Recreation, and/or Streetscapes and Gardens Teams. Approvals will be granted in accordance with these guidelines. The decision of the panel will be notified in writing to the nominated garden coordinator.

New community garden groups must have:

- AlburyCity "in principle" approval for garden location.
- Developed a design layout of the overall community garden.
- Submitted a Community Garden Concept Application which includes a detailed site management plan.
- The skills and ability to become self-managed and maintain the garden to a high standard through community participation.

Considerations for establishing a community garden

<p>Location</p> 	<p>The sites for community gardens are usually established on AlburyCity managed land within open spaces and parklands or within the grounds of community centres.</p> <p>Once you have identified a location and discussed with AlburyCity, consult with your neighbours, and seek their feedback.</p> <p>Proximity to existing community gardens is considered at the time of application. Ideally, a radius of at least one kilometre will be in place from one garden to the next. However, this is assessed on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>Garden members</p> 	<p>The proposed community garden is to be led by a group of community gardeners. This group should be represented by the surrounding neighbours. All community members are to have access to participate in the garden and its activities. A committee is to be formed to lead the project, assist with enquiries and act as a AlburyCity contact. Committee members are to make fair decisions and to be transparent. All community members must have an equal opportunity to participate.</p> <p>It is important to have support from others so that a group approach is undertaken, and the responsibility can be shared. You can then work on a garden design.</p>
<p>Accessibility</p> 	<p>Sites must be physically accessible to all and should be readily accessible for delivery of materials.</p>
<p>Car parking</p> 	<p>Sites must have easy access to car parking.</p>
<p>Safety</p> 	<p>Sites must be safe with good passive surveillance.</p>
<p>Solar access</p> 	<p>Sites require suitable growing conditions, ideally with at least six hours of full sunlight per day.</p>

<p>Size</p> 	<p>Sites should be large enough to accommodate the proposed garden, while maintaining sufficient access for other users. The overall footprint should be no larger than 800m².</p>
<p>Water</p> 	<p>Sites should have easy access to water. Sites that require extensive work to connect will not be considered.</p>
<p>Multiple uses</p> 	<p>Community garden sites must not interfere with other land uses.</p>
<p>Conflicting uses</p> 	<p>The proposed site will be discussed internally by AlburyCity to determine if it is appropriate and can support a community garden. Criteria for rejecting a proposed location include, but are not limited to, plans for development, playground expansion or for new water mains.</p>
<p>Existing features</p> 	<p>The surrounding buildings and facilities should be considered and may be utilised or retained in the garden or integrated within the existing space.</p>
<p>Land suitability</p> 	<p>The topography of the land should be reasonably flat.</p>
<p>Environmental impact</p> 	<p>The proposed site should not negatively impact the surrounding environment, including consideration of the impact of any run off into waterways.</p>

Operating a community garden

Maintenance and Management

- Plots must be mulched to prevent weeds. We ask you to commit to tend to this at least once per week to ensure the garden is well-kept.
- Use of pesticides and black plastic mulch is prohibited.
- The community garden group will be responsible for the safe maintenance, upkeep, and activation of the garden spaces for the enjoyment of the community.
- Weeds and plant materials should be disposed of in designated compost bins/green bins (where relevant).
- Community gardeners are encouraged to be water wise and to water in the mornings and evenings. Gardeners must comply with any water restriction when in place.
- Use of environmentally friendly recycled materials is encouraged.
- Additional structures, garden beds and planting of fruit trees outside of the original concept design application will require AlburyCity approval prior to installation/planting.

Other considerations

- The community gardeners must be considerate of surrounding neighbours with regards to noise and water run-off.
- Smoking and Chewing tobacco is not allowed because it can transmit a virus to plants and have toxins. Second-hand smoke can also harm other gardeners.
- Keeping of animals such as chickens or goats is not permitted.



Community Garden Management

AlburyCity requires community gardens to establish a Garden Management Committee with a designated person of contact to which AlburyCity can address any concerns as well as expressions of community interest. It is the responsibility of the Garden Management Committee to notify AlburyCity if the person of contact changes.

At a minimum the Garden committee must meet annually. Minutes of this and any other meeting are to be provided to AlburyCity.

All community gardeners are required to read and sign the Community Gardener Agreement (refer Appendix 2). A copy of which is to be forwarded to AlburyCity. Private information is stored in accordance with the Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIP Act). Community gardeners will be required to sign this agreement annually.

Complaints and Conflict management

Community gardens should aspire to promote a welcome, tolerant, and inclusive environment. Immediately after conflict arises, the conflict should be acknowledged and addressed in a respectful manner. AlburyCity will consider requests for help with mediation between members of the group and community.

Conflict may arise due to the following issues:

- Rosters and working hours.
- A member not following the rules of the community garden.
- Money and purchasing of goods.
- Noise.
- Ownership of tools and equipment.
- Creating and building new structures.
- Sharing of the produce.
- Theft of produce.
- Use of someone else's garden beds.

AlburyCity recommends that community garden groups establish 'terms of reference' which explain the rights and responsibilities of its members. A template that can be used is attached to these guidelines (Appendix 3).



Safety

When working in the garden, community gardeners must take care of their safety and be attentive to the risks that may cause harm to themselves and to others. Children under the age of 12 must be actively supervised at all times.

Consideration is to be given to the following:

- Appropriate personal protective clothing (PPE).
- Appropriate and safe use of tools.
- Being sun smart.
- Careful handling of materials, soils, and fertiliser.
- Keeping sharp object such as pitch forks stored safely.
- Easy access to a First Aid Kit.
- Seating (where possible) for gardeners to rest.

Preventing Crime

The proximity of the garden to surrounding houses and the visibility from the street will help to prevent graffiti, vandalism theft and anti-social behaviour. Any evidence of such behaviour should be reported to AlburyCity immediately.

Removal of a community garden

In the event that a community garden ceases to operate in accordance with AlburyCity's requirements, AlburyCity reserves the right to remove the community garden and its associated infrastructure. AlburyCity will provide written formal notice for any community garden removal.

As the land on which community gardens are established is managed by AlburyCity, AlburyCity reserves the right to remove the garden if the land is required for other community purposes. If this were to occur, AlburyCity will investigate options for a substitute location in the vicinity and will provide written formal notice for the community garden removal.



AlburyCity Community Gardens Guidelines

Contact

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