

**SHERWIN PARK
COMMUNITY GARDEN
HANDBOOK**

OUR VISION

Nurturing Growth: A sustainable place for our community to learn and connect.

The Sherwin Park Community Garden is a joint initiative between residents and the City of Parramatta Council. This Handbook covers Garden procedures and member conduct.

We thank Permaculture Sydney West for their help and guidance in establishing the garden.

In the spirit of reconciliation, Sherwin Park Community Garden acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We acknowledge the Burramattagal people of the Dharug nation on whose land the garden is located.

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GARDEN CONTACT DETAILS

If a member has any questions or comments, the contacts for the Garden are nominated below.

Email:	sherwinparkcommunitygarden@gmail.com
Website:	www.spcg.com.au

AIMS

Sherwin Park Community Garden was established to create a space where community members can come together to garden, participate in other activities and projects.

The Garden and its activities and projects will encourage harmony, cooperation, and a sense of belonging amongst those involved.

MANAGING THE GARDEN AND MEMBERSHIP

1. Garden administration

- 1.1 The Garden is a project of the City of Parramatta Council (CoP).
- 1.2 CoP administers the Garden through the Park Committee under the Section 355 and 377 of the NSW local government act 1993.
- 1.3 Any monies the Garden receives is used for administering garden activities for the benefit of members and the community.

2. Garden management structure

- 2.1 The Garden is managed by the PCC Section 355 Park Committee.
- 2.2 The Committee is made up of a maximum of 13 people, including, office bearers, ex-officio, and ordinary committee Members.
- 2.3 Office bearers are the chairperson, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer.
- 2.4 Ex-officio Members include the CoP Mayor and Dundas Ward Councillors.
- 2.5 Office bearers and ordinary committee Members are elected at the AGM.
- 2.6 The Committee deals with garden issues and management issues, including liaising with CoP.

3. Garden membership

- 3.1 The Committee has the discretion to approve, reject or revoke membership.
- 3.2 Parramatta LGA residents can apply for Garden membership. The Committee may consider residents from adjoining Local Government Areas (LGAs) for membership.
- 3.3 The committee is responsible for the approval of new Members.

Committee meetings

- 3.4 The Committee will hold a minimum of four committee meetings each year, including the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 3.5 Dates for a committee meeting for the ensuing year will be agreed to at the AGM.
- 3.6 A minimum of 14 days' notice for a committee meeting will be given to Members.
- 3.7 Members should contact the Secretary to place any items of concern on the meeting agenda.
- 3.8 Members should be available to attend a Committee Meeting to present their item of concern for the Committee's consideration.

Membership applications

- 3.9 Potential Members must complete a **Membership Application Form** (available from the Garden website).

Membership requirements

- 3.10 The first 4 months of membership is deemed to be probationary.
- 3.11 Members must abide by the rules and code of conduct in this Handbook.
- 3.12 Members can participate in gardening activities and workshops and hold voting rights at the Annual General Meeting.
- 3.13 Members must pay an annual Membership fee.
- 3.14 All fees are subject to review at the AGM.
- 3.15 Members must pay their annual fees to the Committee Treasurer on or by **1 May**.
- 3.16 Any Memberships which remain unpaid by **1 June** will be deemed to have expired and exclude themselves from the Garden.
- 3.17 Non-financial Members are not entitled to vote or be elected to the Committee.
- 3.18 Members must be 16 years or older.

Reimbursements

- 3.19 The Park Committee Treasurer is responsible for reimbursing a Member for monies expended on approved items required by the Garden.

- 3.20 A Member will be reimbursed after presenting a receipt and reimbursement request form (available from the Garden website).
- 3.21 Expenses must be approved by the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, or other member of the Committee.

4. Garden code of conduct

- 4.1 Members must follow CoP policies, strategies, guidelines, manuals, and other guiding documents relevant to the garden, volunteer activities and occupational health and safety.
- 4.2 Members must operate and maintain the community garden so that the health, safety, and amenity of the surrounding community is not adversely impacted.
- 4.3 Members must establish and maintain effective relationships with the surrounding neighbourhood, partnering organisations and other gardeners.
- 4.4 Members participate in community garden activities at their own risk and must do all things reasonably necessary to mitigate any risks with those activities.
- 4.5 Members will participate without discrimination, bullying or harassment and follow Council's Code of Conduct, regardless of race, religion, gender, marital status or other differences.
- 4.6 Members should respect the cultural and other diversity present in the community.
- 4.7 Members must respect the personal property of other gardeners.
- 4.8 Members may raise concerns, grievances, or differences of opinion with a garden committee member by following the **Community Garden grievance process** (available from the Garden website).
- 4.9 The Committee may rescind a Member's membership if the Member does not comply with the code of conduct.

MAINTAINING AND OPERATING THE GARDEN

5. Garden rules

- 5.1 All Garden Members and visitors must sign in and out when they arrive and leave the Garden. This is for safety and is a mandatory insurance requirement.
- 5.2 All Members should help maintain the garden and complete related activities as much as they can, including helping with fundraising and participating in open days.
- 5.3 Members should share their gardening knowledge and experience.
- 5.4 Members may use garden tools and supplies but must use equipment safely, clean each tool after use and return any tools to the storage area.
- 5.5 Members must not leave personal property at the Garden. Members must label any equipment they bring to the Garden and remove it once they leave the Garden. The Committee or other Members are not responsible for loss or damage of any personal property.
- 5.6 Plantings in the garden must follow the annual planting calendar. Members may propose ideas for plantings to the Committee to consider. Garden Members must not plant or remove any plants without the Committee's approval.
- 5.7 Any proposals for garden projects and activities must be raised with the Committee for consideration.
- 5.8 Members must use water efficient gardening techniques and organic gardening methods.

6. Garden safety

- 6.1 Safety is a priority of the Garden and its Members. Gardeners must always use safe gardening practices. The Committee recommends that gardeners wear a hat or head covering for sun protection, gloves, and strong enclosed shoes at all times. Remember to apply sunscreen and drink water on hot days.

- 6.2 Any member who undertakes activities which involve mechanical or hazardous equipment (such as mowing or “whipper snipping”) must use the appropriate level of personal protection for that equipment and follow safe work practices at all times. All gardeners must be vigilant when using equipment to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.
- 6.3 Gardeners must remedy hazards as they become apparent. If Members cannot remedy the hazard, they should immediately report the hazard to the Committee.
- 6.4 Any injuries must be attended to promptly and noted in the Injury Register. The First Aid Kit is stored in the First Aid Cupboard.
- 6.5 All new Members must complete a Site and Safety Induction Program before using any machinery or equipment.
- 6.6 Where possible, avoid attending the garden alone.
- 6.7 Children must always be supervised by an accompanying parent(s) or carer(s).

7. Garden access

Access code distribution and management

- 7.1 Garden Members can apply to the Committee for the Garden entry gate access code after completing the 4-month probationary period, by completing a **Garden Access Code Application Form** (available from the Garden website).
- 7.2 The Committee will determine if a garden member will be issued the access code.
- 7.3 The Access Code Registrar issues access codes following the Committee’s approval.
- 7.4 Each access code holder is not to share their access code with anyone.
- 7.5 The Access Code Registrar maintains an access code register.
- 7.6 All access codes will be changed bi-annually or when a breach has occurred.

Member access times

- 7.7 Probationary members can access the Garden at times set by the Committee and subject to seasonal variation.

- 7.8 The last Member (excluding probationary members) to leave the Garden, must ensure all tools and equipment are returned to their designated location and Garden storage shed/s and gates are locked.
- 7.9 Garden Members with access codes can access the Garden during daylight hours.

Garden open days

- 7.10 Open days will be held periodically during the year, at the discretion of the Park Committee, to invite the public to visit the Garden or for fundraising activities.
- 7.11 An open day should showcase the Garden and help raise funds for future educational and gardening activities.
- 7.12 Members should help with extracurricular activities and attend open days if possible.

Requests for use of the Garden

- 7.13 Members must gain the Committee's approval to hold unscheduled events in the Garden.
- 7.14 Members must complete a *Request for Use of the Community Garden for an Unscheduled Non-Garden Event* form (available from the Garden website) four weeks before the event and at least one week before the next scheduled Park Committee Meeting.
- 7.15 The Committee will consider all requests for unscheduled events and notify the requesting Member of the outcome.
- 7.16 CoP may hold events at the Garden.
- 7.17 Organisers of non-garden events must work with the Committee to ensure that organised activities do not conflict with other Garden uses, such as regular working days or open days.

Parking and Toilet Facilities

- 7.18 Toilets are located in Sherwin Park near Gladstone Street.
- 7.19 No designated parking is provided at the Garden, but on-street parking is available.

8. Garden maintenance

Watering

- 8.1 Members must comply with any watering restrictions.
- 8.2 Members will share responsibility for watering and the Committee may implement a roster when necessary.
- 8.3 Garden beds will be mulched to reduce evaporation.
- 8.4 The Garden will always use water-saving methods.

Garden Beds

- 8.5 The garden consists of raised, shared community garden beds. Individual plots are not provided.
- 8.6 Members share responsibility for maintaining the Garden, including garden beds, compost areas, grounds, and buildings.
- 8.7 The Committee will maintain a roster for garden upkeep.
- 8.8 If a member cannot attend the Garden for a specified period, they must notify the Committee to ensure that rosters can be amended if necessary.

Chemical use

- 8.9 Members must use organic methods and products where possible. The use of organic products for pests, weeds or diseases must follow the relevant Garden procedures.
- 8.10 Members must seek approval before bringing any chemicals to the garden.

Garden feedback

- 8.11 Feedback to the garden committee can be sent via the 'contact us' section on the community website.

DEFINITIONS

Annual General Meeting	The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Garden Members, which will occur annually.
Committee	Section 355 Park Committee, which is the body that manages the Sherwin Park Community Garden.
Committee Meeting	A meeting of the Section 355 Park Committee, comprising Committee Members.
Committee Member	A Member of the Section 355 Park Committee and includes any person acting in that capacity appointed in accordance with this Handbook.
Management Plan	The Sherwin Park Community Garden Management Plan.
Garden Handbook	This handbook, detailing the day-to-day regulations of the Garden.
Garden Member	A registered, financial member of the Garden.
CoP	The City of Parramatta Council (CoP) that owns the land on which the Garden is established.
Access Code	A code, provided by the Committee to Garden Members (excluding probationary members), to unlock the garden entry gate access code.
Access Code Register	Register of Members with access codes.
Access Code Registrar	The committee member responsible for maintaining the Key Register.
Local Area	The Parramatta Local Government Area.
Probationary Member	A new member of the Garden, committed to a 4-month probationary period, during which time, a Garden entry gate access code will not be issued.
Register	A register of Members approved, kept and maintained by the Committee.