

**SHERWIN PARK
COMMUNITY GARDEN
HANDBOOK**

OUR VISION

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

OBJECTIVES

Sherwin Park Community Garden (SPCG) aims to create a thriving and inclusive community garden that serves as a vibrant hub for connecting people, cultivating sustainable practices, and fostering a sense of belonging. We envision a place where individuals of all ages and backgrounds come together to grow produce, share knowledge, promote environmental stewardship, and nurture a strong sense of community. To achieve this, the garden will focus on 3 key objectives:

Fostering a Sustainable Environment

Develop a sustainable community garden by prioritising environmental responsibility and sustainable practices.

Educational Hub

Transform the community garden into an educational hub where community members can acquire gardening knowledge, sustainable living skills, and nutritional awareness.

Building Community Connections

Use the community garden as a platform to foster social interaction, inclusivity, and a sense of belonging among community members.

GARDEN CONTACT DETAILS

Contacts for the garden for any questions or comments are nominated below.

Email sherwinparkcommunitygarden@gmail.com

Website www.spcg.com.au

The Sherwin Park Community Garden is a joint initiative between residents and the City of Parramatta Council. This Handbook covers garden procedures and garden 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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MANAGING THE GARDEN

1. Garden administration

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

2. Garden management structure

- 2.1 SPCG is managed by the CoP Section 355 Park Committee (“The 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. Committee meetings

- 3.1 The Committee will hold a minimum of four committee meetings each year, including the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 3.2 Dates for a committee meeting for the ensuing year will be agreed to at the AGM.
- 3.3 A minimum of 14 days’ notice for a committee meeting will be given to garden members.
- 3.4 Garden members should contact the Secretary via the SPCG email to place any items of concern on the meeting agenda.

- 3.5 Garden members should be available to attend a Committee Meeting to present their item of concern for the Committee's consideration.

4. Reimbursements

- 4.1 The Treasurer is responsible for reimbursing individuals for monies expended on approved items required by SPCG.
- 4.2 An individual will be reimbursed after submitting a reimbursement request form including a receipt.
- 4.3 Expenses must be approved by a member of the Committee.

5. Garden feedback

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

PARTICIPATING IN THE GARDEN

6. Garden participants

- 6.1 Garden participants include individuals participating in SPCG gardening activities (including planting and maintenance) as a member or volunteer.
- 6.2 Garden members are registered, financial members of SPCG.
- 6.1 Volunteers are individuals attending SPCG for gardening activities that are not a registered financial member of SPCG.

7. Garden visitors

- 7.1 Visitors include any individual attending SPCG for purposes other than gardening activities e.g. open days, public events.

8. Garden code of conduct

- 8.1 Garden participants must follow CoP policies (including Code of Conduct), strategies, guidelines, manuals, and other guiding documents relevant to the SPCG, volunteer activities and occupational health and safety.
- 8.2 Garden participants must operate and maintain SPCG so that the health, safety, and amenity of the surrounding community is not adversely impacted.
- 8.3 Garden participants must establish and maintain effective relationships with the surrounding neighbourhood, partnering organisations and other gardeners.
- 8.4 Garden participants participate in SPCG activities at their own risk and must do all things reasonably necessary to mitigate any risks with those activities.
- 8.5 Garden participants will participate without discrimination, bullying or harassment and follow CoP's Code of Conduct, regardless of race, religion, gender, marital status or other differences.
- 8.6 Garden participants should respect the cultural and other diversity present in the community.

- 8.7 Garden participants must respect the personal property of other participants and garden visitors.
- 8.8 Garden participants may raise concerns, grievances, or differences of opinion with a garden participant by following the Community Garden grievance process.
- 8.9 The Committee may rescind a garden member's membership if the Member does not comply with the code of conduct.
- 8.10 The Committee may rescind a garden volunteers or visitors access to the SPCG if they do not comply with the code of conduct.

9. Garden membership

- 9.1 Potential garden members must complete a Garden Membership Application Form.
- 9.2 The Committee has the discretion to approve, reject or revoke garden membership.
- 9.3 Parramatta Local Government Areas (LGA) residents can apply for garden membership. The Committee may consider residents from adjoining LGAs for garden membership.
- 9.4 The committee is responsible for the approval of new garden members.
- 9.5 The first 4 months of garden membership is deemed to be probationary. During this time a SPCG entry gate access code will not be issued.
- 9.6 Garden members must abide by the rules and code of conduct in this Handbook.
- 9.7 Garden members can participate in gardening activities and workshops and hold voting rights at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 9.8 Garden members must pay an annual Membership fee.
- 9.9 All fees are subject to review at the AGM.
- 9.10 Garden members must pay their annual fees to the Committee Treasurer on or by 1st May each year.
- 9.11 Any garden memberships which remain unpaid by 1st June each year will be deemed to have expired and exclude themselves from SPCG.

- 9.12 Non-financial garden members are not entitled to vote or be elected to the Committee.
- 9.13 Garden members must be 16 years or older.
- 9.14 Garden members share in the harvest of crops and will be given priority over volunteers and visitors.

MAINTAINING AND OPERATING THE GARDEN

10. Garden rules

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

Watering

- 10.9 Garden participants must comply with any watering restrictions.
- 10.10 Garden participants will share responsibility for watering and the Committee may implement a roster when necessary.
- 10.11 Garden beds will be mulched to reduce evaporation.
- 10.12 SPCG will always use water-saving methods.

Garden Beds

- 10.13 SPCG consists of raised, shared community garden beds. Individual plots are not provided.
- 10.14 Garden participants share responsibility for maintaining SPCG, including garden beds, compost areas, grounds, and buildings.
- 10.15 The Committee will maintain a roster for garden upkeep.
- 10.16 If a garden member cannot attend SPCG for a specified period, they must notify the Committee to ensure that rosters can be amended if necessary.
- 10.17 No one garden participant has exclusive rights to plant or harvest the produce growing at SPCG.
- 10.18 Only garden participants who have contributed to the maintenance and community spirit of the garden are able share in the harvest of SPCG.
- 10.19 The timing of harvesting from shared garden beds will be determined by the Committee. Edible produce will be shared with garden participants on the day of the harvest.
- 10.20 If a decision regarding what is to be planted at SPCG can't be agreed or more information is needed, the decision may be deferred until the following working day meeting. If unresolved, the issue will be referred to the Committee for a decision at the next meeting.

Chemical use

- 10.21 Garden participants must use organic methods and products where possible. The use of organic products for pests, weeds or diseases must follow the relevant SPCG procedures.
- 10.22 Garden participants must seek approval before bringing any chemicals to SPCG.

11. Garden safety

- 11.1 Safety is a priority and garden participants must always use safe practices.
- 11.2 Garden participants must dress appropriately for the works being undertaken (including hat, gloves, covered shoes, sun-safe clothing). Remember to apply sunscreen and drink water on hot days.

- 11.3 Prior to participating in any SPCG activities, it is required that garden participants undertake a site induction.
- 11.4 Site inductions are regularly held by the garden committee.
- 11.5 Any garden participant must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and make sure that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- 11.6 Any garden participant must comply with any reasonable instruction that is given by the garden committee regarding work health and safety and all other policies and procedures.
- 11.7 Understand the list of duties and be aware of any personal medical condition that may impact on their own health and safety and or limit their capacity to undertake duties.
- 11.8 Only undertake work that is consistent with the agreed action plan for SPCG.
- 11.9 Each activity or event requires a garden member appointed as a lead coordinator. The lead coordinator is responsible for ensuring completion of the event briefing prior to commencing any activity.
- 11.10 Any garden participant 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 always follow safe work practices outlined in the work and safety policy. All garden participants must be vigilant when using equipment to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.
- 11.11 Garden participants must remedy hazards as they become apparent. If garden participants cannot remedy the hazard, they should immediately report the hazard to the Committee and complete an incident, near miss and hazard report form.
- 11.12 Any injuries must be attended to promptly and noted in the incident, near miss and hazard register. The First Aid Kit is stored in the SPCG storage container.
- 11.13 All garden participants must complete a Site and Safety Induction before participating in garden activities including using any machinery or equipment.
- 11.14 Where possible, garden participants should avoid attending SPCG alone.
- 11.15 Children must always be supervised by an accompanying parent(s) or carer(s).

12. Incident reporting

- 12.1 When there is an incident, accident or near miss, ensure the wellbeing and safety of all participants as a priority.
- 12.2 Review the required level of medical attention e.g. first aid only (e.g., a band aid, ice pack). In an emergency call Triple Zero (000).
- 12.3 After any immediate dangers or injuries are attended to, incidents should be reported to an onsite committee member or other gardeners.
- 12.4 After an incident, complete an incident, near miss and hazard report form.
- 12.5 The completed incident, near miss and hazard report form should be sent to the committee via email sherwinparkcommunitygarden@gmail.com or handed to a committee member onsite.
- 12.6 The committee will review incident, near miss and hazard reports.
- 12.7 The committee will forward incident reports to the CoP Open Space Officer.

GARDEN ACCESS

13. Access code distribution and management

- 13.1 After completing the 4-month probationary period, garden members can request the SPCG entry gate access code by contacting the Committee via email.
- 13.2 The Committee will determine if a garden member will be issued the access code.
- 13.3 The Access Code Registrar issues access codes following the Committee's approval.
- 13.4 Each access code holder is not to share the access code with anyone.
- 13.5 The Access Code Registrar maintains an access code register.
- 13.6 All access codes will be changed bi-annually or when a breach has occurred.

14. Member access times

- 14.1 Probationary garden members can access SPCG at times set by the Committee and subject to seasonal variation.
- 14.2 The last garden member (excluding probationary garden members) to leave SPCG must ensure all tools and equipment are returned to their designated location and storage shed/s and gates are locked.
- 14.3 Garden members with access codes can access SPCG during daylight hours.

15. Garden open days

- 15.1 Open days will be held periodically during the year, at the discretion of the Park Committee, to invite the public to visit SPCG or for fundraising activities.
- 15.2 An open day should showcase SPCG and help raise funds for future educational and gardening activities.

- 15.3 Garden members should help with extracurricular activities and attend open days if possible.

16. Garden events

- 16.1 Events may be held at SPCG with approval of the committee.
- 16.2 Event organisers must complete an Event form at least four weeks before the event and at least one week before the next scheduled Park Committee Meeting.
- 16.3 The garden Committee will consider all requests for events and notify the event organiser of the outcome.
- 16.4 CoP may hold events at SPCG.
- 16.5 Organisers events must work with the Committee to ensure that events do not conflict with other SPCG uses, such as regular working days or open days.

17. Parking and Toilet Facilities

- 17.1 Toilets are in Sherwin Park near Gladstone Street.
- 17.2 No designated parking is provided at SPCG, but on-street parking is available.

DEFINITIONS

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.
Annual General Meeting	The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Garden Members, which will occur annually.
City of Parramatta	The City of Parramatta Council (CoP) that owns the land on which SPCG is established.
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.
Garden Member	A registered, financial member of SPCG.
Garden Participant	Includes any individual attending SPCG to participate in gardening activities including planting and maintenance. This can include garden members and volunteers.
Probationary Member	A new member of SPCG, committed to a 4-month probationary period, during which time, a SPCG entry gate access code will not be issued.
Visitor	Includes any individual attending SPCG for purposes other than gardening activities e.g. open days, public events.
Volunteer	An individual attending SPCG for gardening activities that is not a registered financial member of SPCG.

