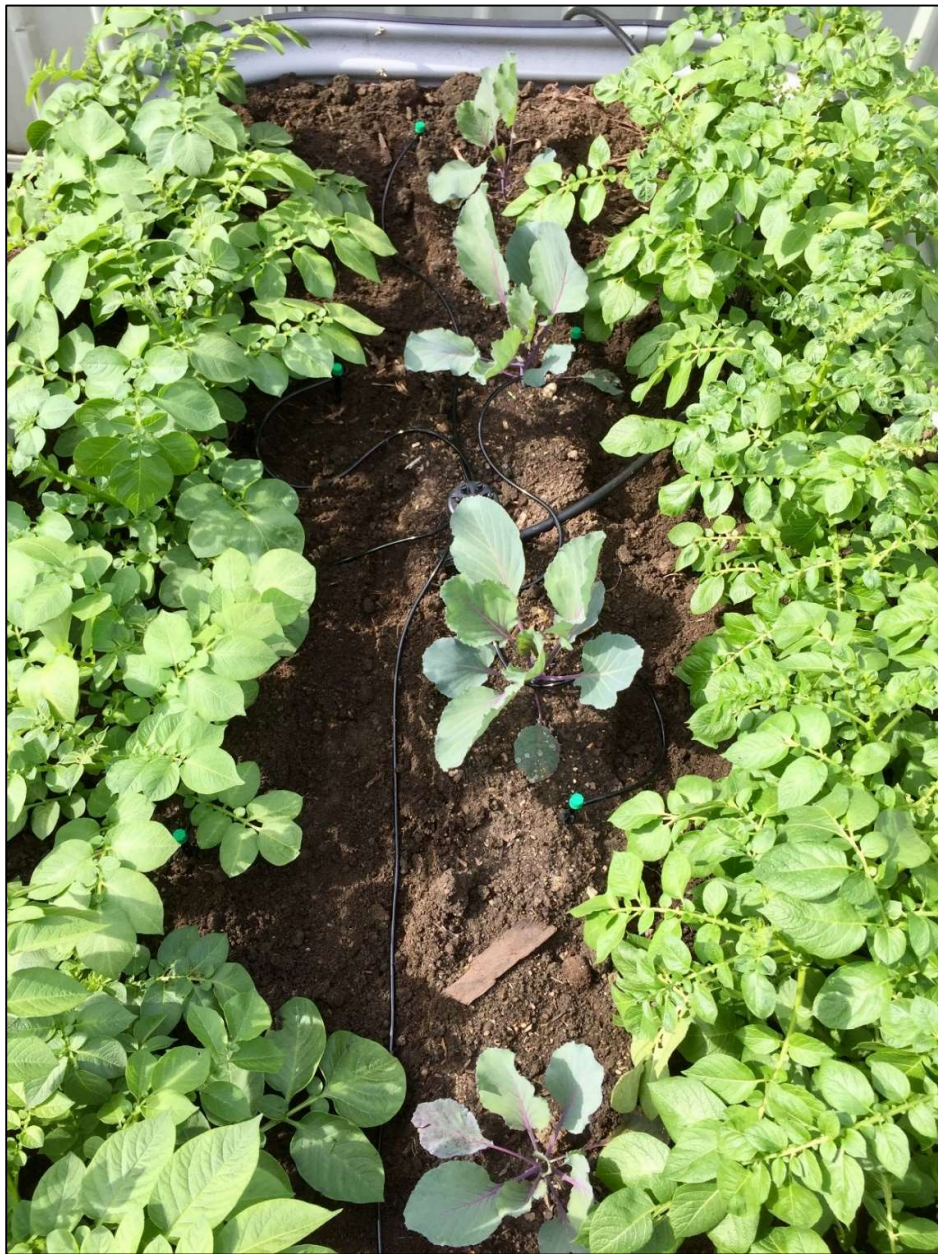


# **St Paul's School Community Garden**

## **Management Handbook and Member Guidelines**



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# 1 Introduction

## a. Purpose of this document

This Management Plan (including guidelines for members) has been prepared by St Paul's School for the Community Garden site to:

- Establish the community garden as a shared space intended to build community and encourage learning.
- Provide information on the use of the community garden site by members of the group.
- Encourage a cooperative and positive relationship between community gardeners and St Paul's School.
- Minimise the risk to the health of members and visitors to the community garden.
- Minimise the risk of environmental damage as a result of the management of the community garden.
- Encourage informed management of the garden for the production of food and other plants.
- Facilitate community enterprise in access to locally produced food, recreation, developing a place for informal social interaction and a place in which residents can address global trends at the local level.

## b. Aims and Objectives

St Paul's Community Garden is a space where students, their families, past students and residents of the Bald Hills area will have an opportunity to connect with each other and to develop our community.

Growing fruit, vegetables and herbs will be a primary focus of the garden. It will provide a chance to engage in, experiment with and promote sustainable practices. The Community Garden will also provide the opportunity for education. St Paul's School pupils, as well as young and older community members, will benefit from the multiple tasks of keeping a garden healthy.

Everyone has skills to offer, and the garden will provide a perfect environment for workshops in composting, bee keeping, plant propagation, planting and harvesting. Children will learn where their food comes from and will engage in the benefits of helping things grow and develop.

Generally, St Paul's Community Garden aims to:

- Build strong neighbourhood relationships, provide a meeting place for local people and opportunities for hands-on learning for students and residents of all ages.
- Encourage people to work together as a community to develop a practical relationship with and an understanding of our interdependence with the natural environment.
- Produce fresh, seasonal food grown locally by the community. Community gardening provides the opportunity for residents to produce some of the food they eat using gardening methods they approve of.
- Reduce green waste, pressure on landfill, and the food miles of the food we eat.
- Demonstrate environmentally responsible Integrated Pest and Weed Management.



### c. Other documentation

Other related documents that should be read in conjunction to this Plan of Management include:

- St Paul's Community Garden Code of Conduct
- St Paul's Community Garden Site Safety Guidelines
- St Paul's Community Garden Induction Form
- St Paul's Community Garden Incident Report Form
- St Paul's Community Garden Design



## 2 Governance and Management

### a. Final responsibility

Ultimately, all proposals in relation to the development and management of the St Paul's Community Garden are subject to the approval of the Headmaster.

The Executive Director of Faith & Community will chair a Management Committee, to oversee a participatory decision-making process and make recommendations to the Headmaster.

### b. Membership

Membership of the St Paul's Community Garden will be open to:

- Students and staff
- School families
- Past students
- Residents of the Bald Hills (& surrounds) community

The garden will be primarily an 'allotment' style community garden where individual residents or groups are allocated their own plot and are to maintain and harvest their own produce. An annual allotment fee is required to occupy a plot, see section 4.1.

### c. Membership and allocation of plots

Anyone residing in the Bald Hills area (or surrounds) or member of the St Paul's School community, over the age of 16 can apply for a plot (children under 16 can be involved in the garden under adult supervision). Shared plots will be available to all community members. Individual plots will be allocated per household/group/individual. Only one plot will be allowed per household/ group/ individual. In order to apply for a plot you must fill out an application form and sign the Code of Conduct, see appendix 7.2.

The process of allocating plots will comprise two stages.

1. Members who contributed to the establishment of the garden, based on their participation in activities such as working bees and/or Committee work will have priority in the initial allocation of plots. This will be based on the length of time, effort and assistance put into the development and maintenance of the St Paul's Community Garden (both during the construction phase and ongoing).
2. If, once the garden is established demand for plots exceeds supply, applicants who have demonstrated their commitment to the garden through participation in working bees or equivalent activities will be placed on a waiting list and plots allocated on a first come first served basis. If a plot is disused for 1 month and the plot holders have not had any communication, in writing, with the management committee, then the plot holder will forfeit their plot and fees will not be refunded.

All plot holders will need to also contribute to the general maintenance and upkeep of the site and infrastructure as necessary (such as attending working bees, working on the compost team, or being on the management committee) and attend an induction meeting and some workshops.

#### d. Management of shared areas

Communal garden areas are grounds within the community garden that are not allocated to personal cultivation in the form of allotments. Allotment holders are encouraged to participate in the maintenance and development of shared areas. Some gardeners may want to participate only in shared gardening and forego the opportunity for an allotment.

To help in the management of the shared area there will be a 'Garden Coordinator'. This role includes the following activities:

- Organising maintenance of the shared areas.
- List of tasks that need completing on the communal notice board.
- Indicating on the notice board what has been done.
- Coordinating a schedule for working bees and making sure they happen.
- Dispute resolution.
- Resource management.
- Compost management.
- Mentoring.
- Accident report.

#### e. Opening Times and Access

St Paul's Community Garden will be accessible via the School entrance adjacent to the Strathpine Road bus stop. School parents who are driving to use the garden may park their vehicles in one of the School car parks (subject to normal conditions). Other members of the community are able to use the car park of the Bald Hills Presbyterian Church next door to the Community Garden at their own risk (not available on Sundays or other days as advised)

For security reasons, and being situated on St Paul's School property, the gardens will only be accessible by members (and guests). Normal visiting times (including over weekends, public holidays and school holidays) will be from sunrise to sunset.

Members will gain access to the garden as soon as their membership fees have been settled and they have been given an OH&S induction and introduced to the garden practices.

Members of the garden will be allowed to bring visitors such as family and friends as long as the code of conduct is respected and they sign in at the guest register upon arrival to the garden.

All children (under the age of 16) are required to be accompanied by a supervising adult.

The general public will be invited to visit the garden on open days.

#### f. Child Protection, Site safety and Community Garden OH&S Policy

The St Paul's Community Garden is committed to the health and safety of all students, members and visitors to the garden. All precautions will be made to reduce the risk of harm, these precautions include:

- Any gardener who is not a St Paul's School parent or staff member will be required to obtain a 'Working with Children' Blue card, before they are permitted to join;
- Ensuring all premises are safe and without risk to health;



- Ensuring that any equipment or substance provided for use is safe and without risk to health when properly used;
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure health and safety;
- Providing adequate facilities for the welfare of the employees and volunteers.

All new members of the Community Garden will be given a Site Induction and be provided with the Garden's 'Site Safety Guidelines', see appendix 7.3. The Site Induction will be a short talk, given by the Garden's OH&S officer, to ensure that everyone is aware of the hazards associated with working in a garden environment.

Members of the St Paul's Community Garden will be made aware that they have the following responsibilities:

- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other members;
- To cooperate with fellow members in the interest of the health, safety and welfare of everyone at the garden;
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety and welfare.

All visitors will need to be accompanied by a member and are required to sign the guest register. By signing in, the visitor is acknowledging that they understand the Garden Code of Conduct and will abide by them at all times.

If a member is away, their plot could be looked after by a friend or family member, this person will need to be inducted and made aware of OH&S regulations.

#### g. Managing waste on site - organic and non-organic

All food and organic matter will be composted on site. Any waste and litter that cannot be composted is to be taken home for recycling or placed in own garbage bin as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

#### h. Will our garden use organic gardening practices?

Not exactly. Some of the organic principles that we will encourage include:

1. Composting.
2. Building healthy soil to reduce pest and diseases.
3. Crop rotation.
4. Mulching.
5. Companion planting.
6. Regular hand weeding.

In terms of weed, pest and disease control, we will employ an Integrated Pest & Weed Management (IPM/IWM) approach. This means that synthetic chemicals should be used as a last-resort, rather than standard practice.

Alternate means of pest and weed control include:

A. *Physical control* (eg. digging out weeds; mulch to suppress weeds; squashing insect pests; netting to exclude pests)

- B. *Biological control* (encouraging the proliferation of beneficial insects and birds by providing a suitable environment)
- C. *Cultural control* (eg. companion planting to suppress nematodes and the like; crop rotation)

#### i. Responsibilities of Gardeners

Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their individual allotment throughout the year, even during the winter months and school holidays. It is the responsibility of gardeners to maintain their plot and the area around their plot, keeping it free of weeds, rubbish and any items that may be obstructing the pathways. Mulching of garden plots is strongly encouraged to control weed growth.

If a plot is disused for 1 month and the plot holders have not had any communication, in writing, with the management committee, then the plot holder will forfeit their plot and fees will not be refunded. If a gardener is unable to tend a plot, temporarily leaves the community garden due to illness or for the purposes of travel, work or emergency, they must discuss their situation with the Membership Co-ordinator, or have another member of the Garden maintain their plot.

Members are not permitted to take produce from plots that are not their own, unless given permission by the plot owner. Produce grown in 'shared area' will be allocated to members via a roster system.

Gardeners should use stakes for climbing plants, such as tomatoes and beans. Consideration should be given to shading of other gardeners' allotments from tall climbing plants.

Gardeners who want planting space in addition to their allocated plot i.e. polystyrene boxes, seed trays, planter boxes and containers, must seek permission to do so from the committee. Shelving for seed raising pots will be provided. If permission is granted, gardeners are asked to put their plot number on their boxes so that they can be identified.

Community Garden plots are for growing herbs, flowers and vegetables. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots because they may block sun to other plots.

Gardeners are responsible for improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that nutrients are put back into the soil after every season as plants use up the nutrients in the soil as they grow. This can be done by adding manure, worm castings, compost and mulch. When a gardener hands back (forfeits) their plot, under no circumstances are they are permitted to remove any soil from their plot.

#### j. Water management

At this stage, the Community Garden can be watered using mains water from eight taps located around the Garden. It is the responsibility of all gardeners to minimise their use of water (including by the application of mulch to minimise evaporative loss from the soil).



#### k. Use of sustainable materials on site

We aim to use sustainable (including recycled and re-purposed) materials where possible and when available. We will keep in contact with the School when relocating the materials to the site. No materials will be stockpiled on the site without a purpose in mind.

#### l. Garden tools and storage

Some tools and equipment are provided for the use of all gardeners. All tools will be stored in a lockable shed. The shed door is to be kept closed and locked when not in use. Tools are not to be left lying around to avoid trip hazards and are to be returned to the shed. Hoses are to be rolled up and placed back at tap after use.

No tools or equipment belonging to the Garden are to be removed from the Garden.



#### m. Garden animals

It is anticipated that the garden activities will eventually include bee keeping. There will be a 'Bee coordinator' appointed to manage the activities involved in keeping these animals, including collecting honey.

#### n. Alcohol, smoking and drugs on site

As per the Code of Conduct, no smoking is allowed at the Garden. The consumption of alcohol is also prohibited. All illegal drugs are prohibited from the site.

#### o. Dogs

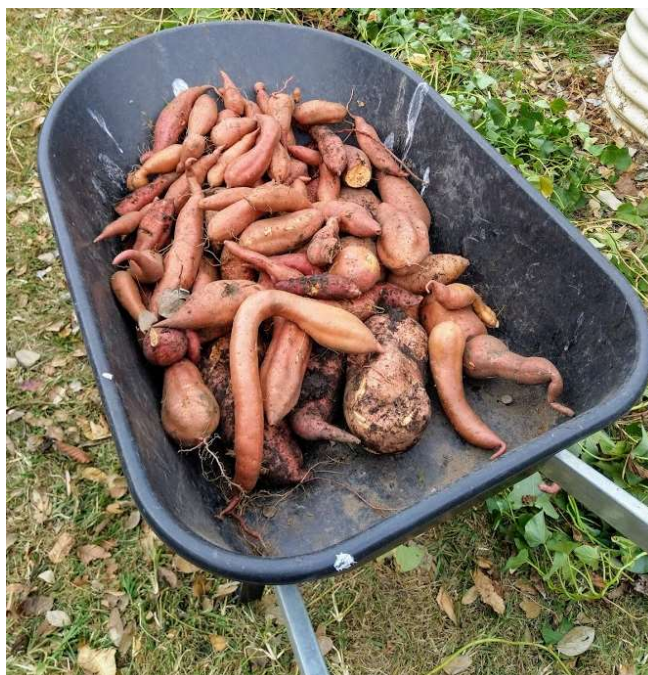
Dogs are not permitted within the Community Garden.

#### p. Getting on with the rest of the community (including our neighbours)

Most of the objections are dealt with through the design of the Community Garden and the training of community gardeners. The objection that community gardens alienate public open space for the benefit of the few is dealt with by thinking about how we make it possible for the public to visit our site without interfering with our gardening.

How will we deal with:

- a. Odours- these may come from poorly managed compost and the use of some organic fertilisers such as blood and bone. The Garden Coordinator will monitor the recycling systems closely to ensure that they are well managed at all times.
- b. Noise - Garden activities will be restricted to within sunlight hours to minimise the disturbance to local residents. The Code of Conduct requests that members are considerate of neighbours when on the site.
- c. Poor aesthetics and unsightly or messy gardens- this is a subjective appreciation that depends on how individuals think gardens should look. A Garden design has been completed for the site, residents will have a chance to comment of the aesthetics during the community consultation phase.
- d. Vermin – rats and mice are attracted to poorly maintained compost bins. The Garden Coordinator is to ensure the compost area are effectively managed.



### 3 Management structure

The management of the Community Garden is based on the following principles that are enacted through the management committee:

- a. democratic procedure through which topics are deliberated as a means of decision making.
- b. participation by all members interested in being involved.
- c. fairness and due process.

#### a. Management Committee roles and responsibilities

ROLE	FUNCTIONS	NAME
President	General management of garden development and on-site operations, including being the single point of reference for all internal communications. Signatory for the Association and an external contact for the official business. St Paul's School liaison.	Nigel Grant
Vice President	Provide a support role to the President and ensure a smooth set/construction up phase to a level acceptable to the community and St Paul's School.	
Membership Coordinator	Manages all aspects of membership of the organisation, including maintaining the register of members. Organisation of waiting list for future members.	
Secretary	Organises meetings and other correspondence with members; keeps records including minutes of meetings; manage general committee correspondence.	
Treasurer	Management of community garden finances; coordination of bank account(s) and facilitation of payments and receipts; preparation and budget management; preparation of financial reporting, including monthly/quarterly income statement and balance sheet. Responsible for ensuring compliance with all tax and external reporting requirements.	
Media and Events	Liaises with media and arranges interviews for the President or any other members of the committee. When required the media and events coordinator can be the external face and voice of the group. Plans and implements social activities such as public workshops and celebrations.	
Fundraising and Sponsorship	Preparation of grant applications and fund raising.	
OH&S Manager	Manages and keeps record of the site safety induction of all members. Conducts monthly OH&S audit.	
Garden Coordinator	Someone with good knowledge of gardening skills. This could be a shared role with people who have specialist skills in various areas of gardening. Responsible for the day-to-day running of the garden.	



### b. Code of conduct/gardeners' agreement

The St Paul's Community Garden welcomes local residents and St Paul's School community members who are interested in fostering a sustainable urban environment by growing and harvesting their own food. The Garden exists for the good of the community.

We ask St Paul's Community gardeners to share responsibility for maintaining the Garden and, for the enjoyment of all, we ask our gardeners to follow the guidelines below:

1. We maintain a neat and orderly Garden, and we build an attractive and creative environment that is appealing to other residents of the community.
2. We manage good relationships with our neighbours, other gardeners and the organisations that generously support us.
3. We keep our noise within the Garden at a level that does not disturb our neighbours.
4. We do not discriminate against one another due to differences in race, age, disability, culture or sexuality.
5. Our decision-making is inclusive and transparent.
6. We make sure that any water leaving the Garden is not contaminated by sediment, fertiliser, manure or excessive organic matter that might pollute our precious waterways.
7. We maintain our composting, chicken coops and farming systems in a healthy condition so they do not attract vermin or produce unpleasant odours.
8. We look after our rainwater harvesting systems to ensure our water is of a high quality.
9. We operate an inviting Garden where new members are always welcome.
10. The Garden will be accessible from sunrise to sunset every day, including weekends, public holidays and school holidays.

### c. Decision making process

The Management Team will meet monthly when the garden is first established and will review the meeting frequency after the first 6 months. The quorum is 4 people from the Management Team. This must include at least one of the Management Team (Coordinator, Secretary or Treasurer). If the Secretary is not present, they must organise a delegate to complete and distribute the minutes.

All of the coordinators will be welcome at the Management Team meetings and encouraged to attend, particularly if there are specific issues on the agenda relating to their role. Management team meetings will be scheduled 1 month in advance. There must be at least 2 weeks' notice for any garden meetings to allow members sufficient notice.

The Management Team is responsible for making decisions on the following areas:

- Financial (including grant applications and fundraising).
- Disputes between garden members that have been referred directly to the Management Team or escalated via a coordinator.
- Breaches of the code of conduct.
- Any change to policy, rules, procedures or fee structures.
- Any change to coordinator or Management Team roles.



- Any occupational health and safety issues or breaches.
- Significant media engagements (with the involvement of the Media Liaison Coordinator).
- Significant changes to the Garden (with the involvement of relevant coordinators) e.g. increasing/reducing number of garden beds or adding a new physical structure.
- Membership – limits on membership, management of the waiting list and fee collection (with the involvement of the Membership coordinator).
- Approval of visits to the Garden by external groups.

#### d. Resolving disagreements

Where people attempt to cooperate in an endeavour such as community gardening, interpersonal conflict is possible because people's differing life experiences, beliefs, attitudes and learnings, influence how they think and react to things. The purpose of the gardener's Code of Conduct is to suggest ways to minimise conflict and permit constructive decisions to be negotiated in the interest of all gardeners. It sets out standards of conduct expected of gardeners so that the experience of gardening is personally fulfilling and so that the shared experience is harmonious.

In order to ensure that any disagreements are resolved quickly and with minimum disruption, the following process must be followed by all members of the Garden:

1. The issue causing disagreement must first be raised between the parties involved in the conflict. These parties should attempt to solve the problem by themselves.
2. If the parties are unable to resolve their conflict and the issue continues, then it will be raised at the next management meeting.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved at the management meeting, then an outside mediator will be engaged to resolve the issue. There are free community services offering mediation.
4. If the conflict is still occurring and is causing significant disruption to the community garden, the management committee will consider asking the person/people involved in the conflict to leave the community garden.

## 4. Funding

### a. Membership fees

An annual membership fee is required for individuals to take part in the garden. The structure of fees for membership is as follows:

- General Membership (includes members of the household): \$44 per year (incl. GST). Note: membership for St Paul's School staff, students and parents is free.
- Concession Membership: \$22 per year (incl. GST) Proof of Health Care Card required

Members can attend workshops, be involved in working bees, maintenance of communal areas and general activities around the Garden; they could also tend a member's plot for a short amount of time. Membership fees are non-refundable.

Once a member of the Garden, a member can apply for an allotment. The number of allotments is limited. Once all allotments have been taken, further applications will go on a waiting list, see section 2c.

## b. Sponsorship

In the initial stages, letters requesting donations will be sent to local businesses. Businesses can contribute to different levels of donation, which will be defined as follows:

- Gold sponsor: \$1000 and above
- Silver sponsor: \$500 to \$1000
- Bronze sponsor: under \$500

The benefits of becoming a supporter of the Garden are that the business name and logo will be displayed on the website and the contributor will also be recognised through an Honour Board at the garden site. The supporter will also be given a certificate indicating the support for display in their workplace. Other Garden supporters might make an in-kind donation in the form of (for example) garden tools, shed, water tank, fruit trees. These contributors would also become sponsors based on the value of the gift.

## c. Allocation of funds

The St Paul's Community Garden operates as one of the individual Supporter Groups under the umbrella of the St Paul's School (Bald Hills) Supporters Association Inc., and any income will be put back into the development of the Garden. In the establishment phase of the Garden most funds will be put towards the purchasing of capital items such as additional raised garden beds, soil, water tanks, storage sheds, fruit trees, mulch and garden tools.

On-going costs that the Garden is likely to incur include;

- Seed and stock plants.
- Manure.
- Maintenance costs such as resurfacing of paths and mulching garden beds.
- Composts and soil.
- Occasional purchasing of water.
- Social and community events.

# 5. Training

## a. Workshops

Training workshops will be necessary to develop a range of skills and practices that will be valued by all members and will become a staple of the garden. These workshops might include:

- Soil testing, improvement, preparation and mulching.
- Compost practices.
- Growing fruit trees.
- Organic pest and weed control.
- Worm farming.
- Companion planting.
- Seed saving.
- Handling and maintenance of tools.
- Water saving practices.

## 6. Partnerships and community engagement

The partnership between St Paul's School and St Paul's Community Garden will be beneficial for the educational purposes of having a working garden on school grounds. It will encourage and demonstrate to children about sustainable living practices that can be achieved in their own backyard. The Garden will benefit from the School's commitment to the Garden in its development and may be involved in workshops to provide on-going support to the project.

The Garden could collaborate with local cafes by recycling their green waste for composting. Local cafes may be interested in becoming a member of the Garden as a way to support a great community cause but also to reduce their food miles.

Other Community Gardens and Seed Savers Groups - The Garden would gain valuable knowledge from other established gardens in sharing advice and tips. It would also be a great asset to the garden to become part of the Seed Savers network.

