



The Gardener's Companion



Balwyn Community Garden

Balwyn Community Centre

412 Whitehorse Road, Surrey Hills 3127

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BALWYN
COMMUNITY CENTRE

Balwyn Community Garden Code of Conduct

The Community Garden is a shared community space, managed by the Community Garden Management Committee which in turn is responsible to the Community Centre Board of Governance through the Centre Director. When participating in garden activities or simply enjoying a visit to the garden, please abide by the Garden Code of Conduct set out below.

- Participants in the Garden are asked to be respectful of other gardeners and not act in any way that could spoil the enjoyment of this place for others.
- For safety reasons, gardeners working alone should only undertake gardening tasks appropriate to their abilities.
- All garden tools and equipment should be returned clean and in good condition to the shed at the end of gardening activities.
- Pests and diseases in the Garden are to be managed by natural, environmental and biological controls. The use of harmful chemicals in the garden is not permitted.
- Gardeners should not knowingly introduce weedy, prohibited or diseased plants to the garden.
- Pathways and access routes must be kept clear to ensure there are no physical barriers to anyone.
- General rubbish bins are not provided and so visitors and gardeners are expected to remove their own non-organic refuse, including punnets and labels. Organic refuse can be placed in gardeners' own compost bins or in the Council supplied green waste bins. It can also be left in a pile on their plot to rot down.



Sale of garden produce

Plots are available for personal use only. The use of garden plots for growing plants or produce commercially is not permitted and any such use will involve forfeiture of the plot.

Any excess seedlings or produce which gardeners wish to give away can be left on the seat in the Garden or in the kitchen of the Centre.

Vegie Swap

Balwyn Community Centre hosts a Vegie Swap on the third Sunday of each month from 9am. All produce is welcome including herbs, eggs, fruit, vegetables, honey, seedlings, flowers, compost and more.

You are welcome to attend with your excess produce.



Change in Circumstances

Gardeners must advise the Centre of any change in their address (email or postal) or telephone number or if they are no longer eligible to keep their plot.

Fees

Annual fees:

- are calculated on a charge per square metre.
- must be paid no later than the due date, as notified by the Balwyn Community Centre.
- Failure to do so may result in the plot being forfeited.

Dealing with Problems of Concern to the Community Garden

If gardeners have any concerns about the Garden or about gardeners they are strongly encouraged to contact a member of the Garden Management Group or the Director of the Centre.

Community Garden Membership Charter



Rights

As a Garden member, you have the right to:

- be kept informed about all of the activities and events organised for the Garden community;
- have your email contact details kept private by the Community Garden Management Committee and the Community Centre office;
- participate in the Community Garden Management Committee;
- contribute, as appropriate, to decision making processes about the Garden;
- feel safe within the Garden and be treated with respect by all Garden community members.

Responsibilities

As a Garden member you are asked to:

- pay your membership fees by the due date (as communicated by the Centre office);
- abide by the Community Garden Code of Conduct;
- assist in implementing the Code of Conduct by reminding others of its contents if necessary;
- provide your personal details to the Community Centre as requested on your membership application;
- read Garden notices and any communications to members about Garden activities and events;
- act in a spirit of co-operation and be respectful towards others in the Garden;
- act in a manner that ensures your safety and the safety of others in the Garden;
- apply to the Centre Director to have grievances resolved in accordance with the Community Centre's Dispute Resolution policy.

Allocation of Plots

- Only one plot will be allocated per household and members of that household must tend the plot.
- Plots are not transferable; no gardener is to allocate their plot to anyone else or give their key to anyone else. The exception is for gardeners who have a friend or relative attending their plot because of an extended absence. In this circumstance gardeners are required to inform a member of the Garden Management Committee or the Centre Director of their absence.
- Households may not hold a garden plot at Balwyn Community Garden and another community garden simultaneously.
- New gardeners must actively garden their plot within four weeks of it being allocated.

General Maintenance of plots

- Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their plot throughout the year.
- Gardeners are required to keep their garden plot, internal paths and the adjacent common pathways, clear of obstruction and in good order.
- It is the responsibility of each plot holder to maintain their plot and ensure that it is well utilized.

Mulching of garden plots is strongly encouraged to control weed growth. The use of plastic sheeting or old carpet is not permitted.

Weeds must be removed before they flower and go to seed. This will prevent weeds spreading throughout the garden plots.

- When gardeners go away and they know their plot will require watering, they need to take responsibility for it and ask another gardener, family member or friend to look after it.

Gardeners away for an extended period should inform the Garden Management Committee by email and note:

- the dates of absence;
- the name of the person responsible for the plot;
- the phone number of the person if it is not a Balwyn Community gardener.

If gardeners choose a non-Balwyn Community gardener, they should:

- stress the importance of not losing the key as duplicates cannot easily be provided;
- inform the person that they must only pick produce on the plot they are caring for, not on others in the Garden;
- plan ahead and not plant too much if they know they will be away. A green manure crop could be planted.

Other Matters:

Animals

Dogs, cats or other pets must not be brought into the Garden.

Children in the Garden

Children are welcome in the Garden but they must be supervised by adults at all times.

Visitors to the Garden

Gardeners are welcome to invite visitors to the garden if they wish. All visitors to the Community Garden are the responsibility of the gardener who invited them into the Garden.

Members of the community who are attending classes or an activity in the Function Centre may occasionally ask to look around the garden. They are welcome but are also the responsibility of the gardener who agreed to them entering the Garden.

Garden Security

Gardeners must close and lock the Garden gate when leaving the Garden. The shed must also be locked.



Control of Garden Pests

No toxic chemicals for pests are to be used in the Community Garden. Gardeners may use safe, environmentally friendly products such as those used in organic gardens and listed below:

- Multiguard (snails and slugs)
- Dipel (biological control)
- Derris Dust (**not** tomato dust)
- Pyrethrum
- Lux Flakes
- Clensel (garden type)
- Garlic spray
- Chilli spray
- Brown snail bait, based on Iron Chelates (not blue or green)
- Beer traps
- Slasher



Garden tools

The Garden key given to each gardener unlocks both gates, and also the shed.

It is important that all tools are **cleaned** and returned to the shed after use and the shed is locked.

A collection of tools are kept in the shed. Some tools are general garden property and others are owned by current gardeners who are happy for others to use them as a loan. If you are leaving your own equipment in the shed, **please ensure that it is clearly named.**

Tools are to be kept clean and in good condition.

If any tools are missing or require replacement, gardeners should report this to the Garden Management Committee.

General Conduct of the Garden

- Gardeners and visitors should respect the Garden as community space.
- Each gardener has the right to quiet enjoyment of the Community Garden. Threats or abuse of any form will not be tolerated.
- Gardeners and visitors must not remove any plants, produce or equipment from another gardener's plot without the permission of the gardener.
- Plants and equipment must not be removed from the Community Garden or the shed.
- Willful damage to the Community Garden will not be tolerated.
- Any person intoxicated or under the influence of other substances must not enter the garden.

Forfeiture of Garden Plots

- **Annual renewal of membership is not automatic.**
- In the event that there is concern about the utilisation and maintenance of a plot, the Garden Management Committee and the Centre Director will contact the plot holder to ascertain if there are any special circumstances. If not, and in the absence of any prompt action to rectify the condition of the plot, the lease on the plot will be terminated.
- If a plot holder gains a plot at another community garden, they are required to relinquish the plot at Balwyn Community Garden within thirty days.
- When a plot is relinquished, it is the responsibility of the plot holder to clear the plot of all vegetation and any garden equipment and to return the key to the Centre Director. If this is not done, a charge may be incurred.

Keys

- One key will be issued for each garden plot. This key becomes the responsibility of the person to whom it is issued.
- These keys are of a type which cannot be duplicated without the approval of the Centre.
- When a plot is relinquished, the key must be returned to the Centre.
- If the key is lost, its loss must be reported to the Centre as soon as possible. Replacement of a lost key will incur a \$60 fee.

Working Bees

The Community Garden Management Group will arrange working bees as necessary and all gardeners must attend to assist in maintenance of the Garden. If this is not possible, gardeners will be expected to contribute by carrying out community gardening tasks such as cleaning the shed, weeding the paths, putting out the green waste bins, at another time.

Types of plants

- Community Garden plots are for growing herbs, flowers and vegetables.
- Trees, including fruit trees, and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots.
- Care should be taken to ensure that plants do not overshadow neighbouring plots.

Soil and Garden material

- 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 soil nutrients as they grow. This may be done by adding manure, compost and mulch and the growing of green manure crops.
- It is important that gardeners wear protective gear when handling potting mix and compost. Please refer to the leaflet on the notice board for more information.
- **If gardeners arrange delivery of soil, manure or other garden material to the Community Garden, it must be moved on to the gardener's plot on the day of delivery.**
- When a gardener relinquishes or forfeits their plot, under no circumstances are soil or boundary plinths to be removed from their plot.

Building and other materials

- Permanent structures must not be built on garden plots or on vacant areas of the Community Garden.
- Gardeners cannot use the Community Garden or shed to store building or other materials.
- If gardeners wish to store stakes when not in use, they should be bundled at one end of the garden plot without obstructing pathways.



Waste management

Green waste can be:

- taken home;
- placed in the Council green bins in the Garden;
- put in a compost bin kept on the gardener's own plot;
- left in a pile on the gardener's plot to rot down.
- The Garden Management Committee will call for volunteers to have their names put on a weekly bin roster. The roster will be available on the shed noticeboard and gardeners will be notified of their duty time by email.
- The bins are emptied weekly. The person on duty wheels them to Como Avenue prior to the collection day and returns them to the Community Garden the following day after emptying.
- Weeds and diseased plants can be placed in the Council green waste bins. Gardeners should remove all soil from weeds and other plant material and ensure that they don't overload the bins, so that they are not too heavy for those wheeling them out for collection.

Water Management

- Gardeners are encouraged to use the tank water which is supplied from a tap in the centre of the Community Garden. This water comes from tanks that are filled from the roof of the Function Centre.
- There are also sufficient taps connected to the mains water supply with hoses to water all plots.
- Watering cans are also provided in the shed.
- All gardeners must follow any restrictions on usage of water imposed by the Government in times of drought. Water is a scarce resource and must be used wisely.
- Hoses must be handheld and should not be left running unattended.
- Taps must be turned off prior to leaving the garden.

