



PRIVATE HOUSING ESTATE

# GROWING COMMUNITY GARDENS

A garden leader's guide to  
community garden projects

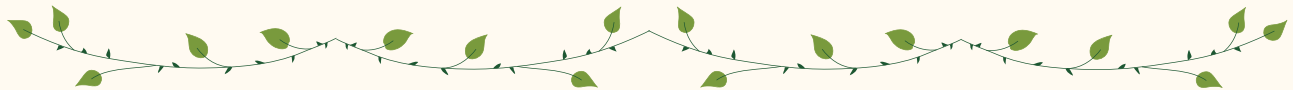


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## **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks to the following Community Gardens:

- Bukit Gombak Hillview NC Community Garden
- Limau Estate NC Gardening Club
- Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden
- Yishun Sapphire Condominium

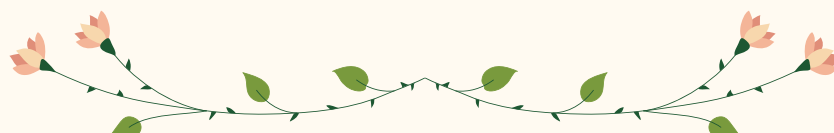


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National Parks Board, 2018

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INTRODUCTION



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# INTRODUCTION

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## Community Gardens

Community gardens are where people come together to nurture, develop and sustain a lively green space in their estate. They give communities a sense of ownership and belonging, and can be found throughout the world.

Such gardens reflect the purpose they serve: engaging, educating, building and strengthening relationships amongst neighbours in a significant way. They inculcate values such as cooperation, volunteerism, respect for diversity, and ecological awareness.

## About This Guide

This guide aims to help residents and volunteers start and manage gardens that will bring out the best in their communities. Like a person, each garden is unique. While tips offered here will start you off on your gardening journey, each plot of land will grow to have its own personality. Hence, beyond getting the right mix of soil or using the right tool, the following points may be useful to consider:

1. Good projects are a reflection of our community and help to improve it.
2. Diversity adds strength; strive towards being an inclusive group.
3. A successful community garden is built by empowered individuals.
4. The most important word in “community garden” is community.
5. The best community gardens are always evolving.



### Support From NParks

NParks supports Community Gardening through the Community in Bloom (CIB) programme. CIB aims to promote a gardening culture among Singapore residents by encouraging and facilitating gardening efforts by the community. It is a programme based on collaborative partnership between both public and private sector organisations, and volunteer groups. As part of this island-wide community gardening initiative, NParks provides guidance and advice, such as:

- Choosing a suitable site for gardening.
- Working out the garden layout and design.
- Selecting the right plants.
- Improving gardening skills.

For residents of private housing estates, NParks works with the Neighbourhood Committee (NC), management committee of your Condominium and the MCST Chairman to provide support.

If you are interested in setting up a Community Garden, contact NParks early as it takes approximately three months for a community garden to be launched from its inception to completion.

**Website:** [www.nparks.gov.sg/cib](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/cib)

**Email:** [CommunityinBloom@nparks.gov.sg](mailto:CommunityinBloom@nparks.gov.sg)



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# ABOUT COMMUNITY IN BLOOM

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Community in Bloom (CIB) is a programme that was launched by the National Parks Board (NParks) in 2005.

It aims to nurture a gardening culture among Singaporeans by encouraging and facilitating community gardening efforts. It is also an opportunity to build community bonds and strengthen social resilience in our City in Nature.

**Visit our website to find a community garden near you:**

[www.nparks.gov.sg/cib](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/cib)





GET INSPIRED



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# GET INSPIRED

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## Award-winning Community Gardens

A community that plants together grows together. As there are no set rules in gardening, the garden model may differ according to location and the community's needs.

The pictures below are a compilation of award-winning community gardens cultivated by residents in common green spaces within condominiums and private estates.

### Bukit Gombak Hillview NC Community Garden





**Bukit Gombak Hillview NC Community Garden**





# Ivory Heights Condominium





# Laguna Park Condominium





Limau Estate NC Gardening Club





Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden





## Yishun Sapphire Condominium







# GETTING STARTED





# GETTING STARTED

Planning is the key to building a strong foundation when starting a community garden. Successful community gardens are often those where gardeners take the time to plan and design right from the start.



*Regular meetings are held among gardeners to facilitate planning and upkeep of the garden.*

## Steps For Success

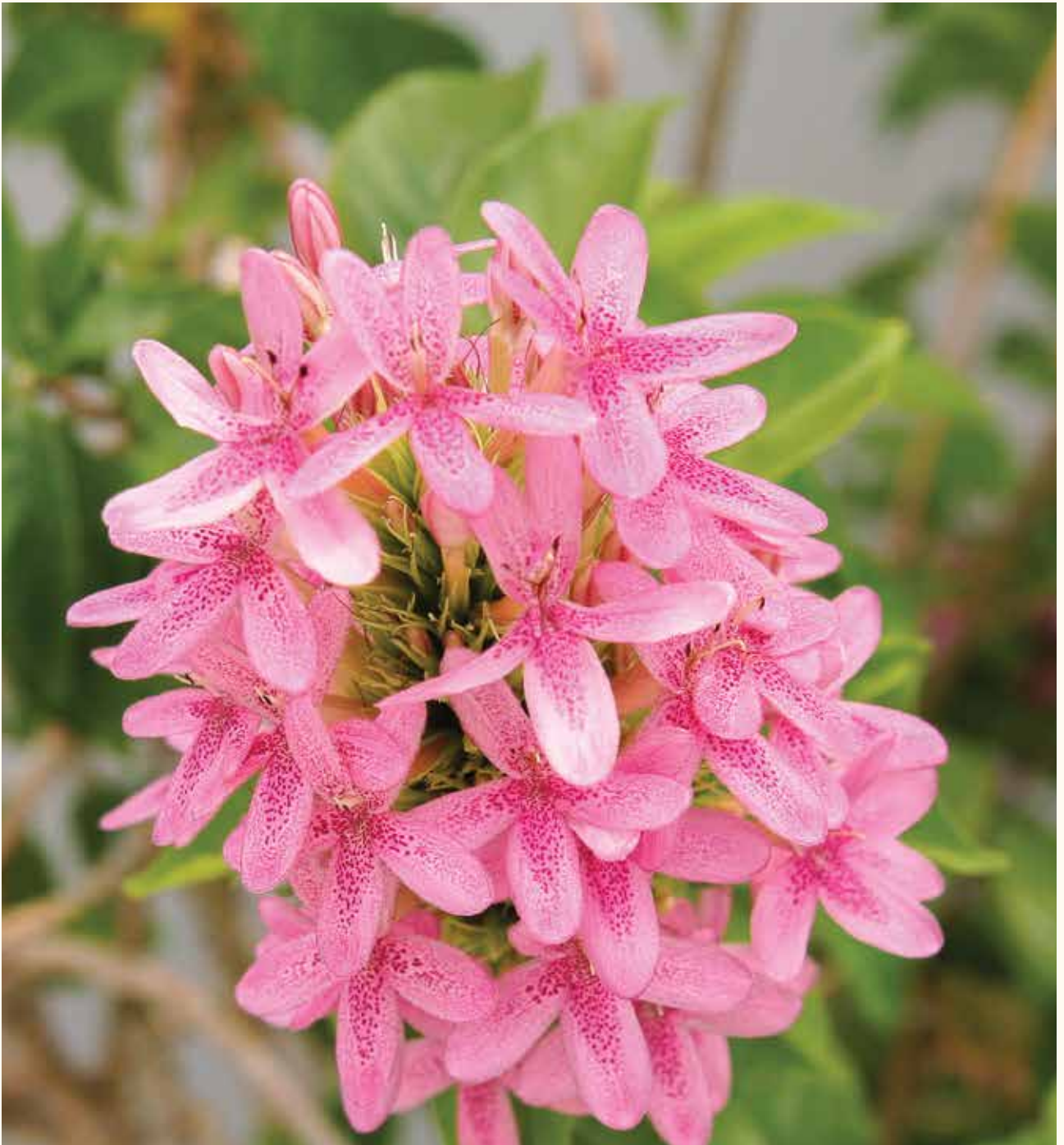
Starting a community garden is hard work and requires time, energy and commitment. To achieve a successful garden, learn to prioritise the following tasks:

- Develop a strong and committed gardening group that will share the responsibilities.
- Conduct adequate research and site visits to other community gardens to learn important tips.
- Work as a group to achieve your objectives.
- Plan and create a roadmap that prioritises achieving the shared vision.
- Design the garden with the vision in mind.

Before starting, it is important to ask yourself the following questions:

- Are there enough interested and committed people within the group to sustain the project in the long term?
- Would joining an established community garden be a better way to achieve your aims, while also strengthening and enhancing that garden?
- Is there an appointed leader (or co-leader) to oversee the gardening project and activities?
- Are there candidates with “green fingers” and those with specialised skills?
- How will the group raise funds to start-up and sustain the garden?
- Has the group allocated adequate time to plan garden details?





**STEP 1: GET PEOPLE**





## STEP 1: GET PEOPLE



Before starting a community garden, it's important to make sure that there are people who share the same interest as you and are willing to support and sustain the garden.

### Form A Gardening Group And Get Support

- Gather interested participants from among your neighbours.
- Appoint a leader for your gardening group.
- For private estates – get support from the Neighbourhood Committee (NC) of your estate for your community gardening project.
- For condominiums – inform and get support from the management committee of your condominium or the MCST Chairman for your community gardening project.

### Tips To Get People Interested

- **Share benefits:** inform interested participants of the health, environmental, educational and social benefits of community gardening.
- **Word of mouth:** promote the garden to neighbours and ask them to spread the word.
- **Partner with established organisations:** talk to groups such as community centres, schools, clubs and businesses in your neighbourhood about getting their members involved.
- **Promote internally:** create simple posters that list contact information, meeting times, and upcoming activities and post them at your garden entrance or on social media. Consider making a simple flyer to give out during community events in your neighbourhood.



*Journals are a great way to keep track of past events and activities.*



## A Simple Checklist

### 1. Forming a gardening group

- Is there interest in the community for a garden?
- Do you know who will be using the garden?
- Are there at least four to five interested participants?

### 2. Assigning roles and responsibilities

- Are there volunteers willing to take on the different roles?
- Who is the appointed leader(s)?

### 3. Identifying participants and their skills

- Gardening experience?
- Landscaping experience?
- Other types of beneficial skills and experience e.g. project management

### 4. Selecting the site

- Is the site easily accessible to the participants?
- Does the site have favourable sun, shade and wind conditions?
- Are amenities such as a water source nearby?

## Organise A Sharing Session For Participants

It is a good idea to hold a sharing session to discuss the potential community garden and to recruit participants if they have not already been identified. At this session, share who will be involved in the garden, who it will benefit, and what kind of garden it will be. Send invitations personally or through friends to interested individuals who may be keen on participating.

- Organise a sharing session for residents for NParks staff to share ideas on setting up garden plots and tips on good gardening practices.
- Recruit more participants for the gardening project through the session.
- Visit established community gardens in other public or private estates to learn and exchange tips.
- For private estates – draw up a list of households who are interested in setting up their own roadside frontage garden and hand it to NParks. The list should include the following information:
  - > Street name
  - > House numbers
  - > Name and contact details of house owner
  - > Photographs of the green verge outside the homes and the estimated measurements in metres



## Sample Agenda For First Garden Meeting

Below is a sample agenda for your first meeting and a list of tasks to accomplish.

### Welcome and introductions

- Welcome residents and participants as they arrive.
- Conduct an icebreaker activity by asking the group to share their names and reasons for their interest in community gardening.

### Garden project overview and update

- Provide background information on the garden project and explain how the idea originated.
- Explain what has been done so far and the purpose of the meeting.

### Brainstorm and discuss the garden project

Some of the key questions to be discussed during this session include:

- What is the purpose of the garden and who is the garden for?
- Who will be in the garden committee?
- Will gardeners be charged a fee and what resources will they receive in return?
- What is the best way for the group to stay in touch?
- How will garden duties be split and allocated?
- What will be the name of the garden?
- How will money be raised to support the garden?

### Next steps and wrap up

- Create a list of action items (planting, watering, propagation, etc.) and ask people to sign up as leads for these items.
- Follow-up promptly after the meeting by distributing the meeting minutes and the list of actions required, as well as key contact information.



## Tips For Active Leadership – Resolving And Avoiding Conflicts In Your Community Garden

### #1 Promote an open culture

Keep the garden accessible. Allow visitors the freedom to explore the garden on their own. Your community garden belongs to your community. Let people know they are welcome to be involved in activities that they are interested in.

### #2 Shared leadership

All participants should have a sense of ownership towards the garden. Allow them to take the lead in an area of their interest. Everyone has something to offer; tap on their strengths. The garden's sustainability and success depends on a core group of leaders, not just one or two individuals.

### #3 Turn the 'ME' into 'WE'

A community garden is a collaborative effort. Working towards consensus should be a core principle in how things get done. Have garden meetings where opinions are respected. It is important to understand what motivates each individual's participation.

### #4 Be open and flexible

Listen and be open to the ideas each participant brings. Keep an open mind; some gardens had brilliant ideas contributed by young gardeners. Be responsive, act on all suggestions. Let participants try out their ideas and allow their creativity to grow.

### #5 Acknowledge all contributions

A little appreciation goes a long way. Always say 'thank you'. Give credit when it is due and acknowledge all efforts, big or small.

### #6 Setting guidelines

Garden guidelines are an excellent way to ensure that everyone understands how the garden will operate and what is expected of them.

### #7 Community building events

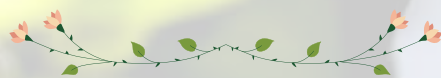
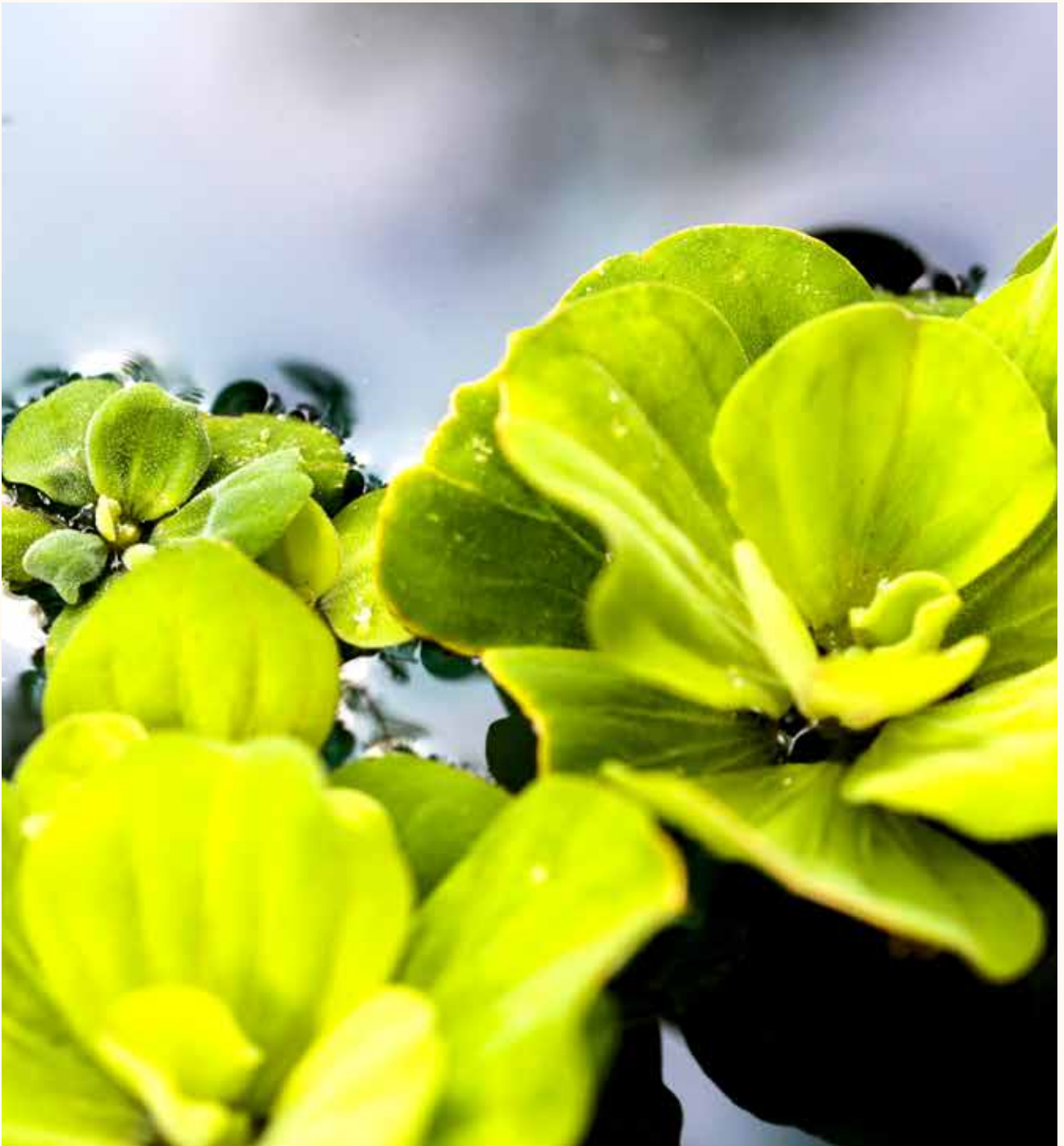
Celebrate and enjoy the garden as a group. The more time people spend together the better they get to know and understand each other. Encourage participants to bond and socialise by organising potlucks or other events that build understanding and community morale.

### #8 Be inclusive

Be sensitive to cultural differences. Food can either bring people together or tear them apart. Respect each other's cultural preferences. Encourage gardeners to grow ethnic foods. This can provide a learning opportunity for the whole group.

Highlighting and observing gardeners' ethnic and cultural celebrations also go a long way towards making participants feel like part of a group.





## STEP 2: PLANNING YOUR GARDEN





## STEP 2: PLANNING YOUR GARDEN



*Having meetings in residents' homes is a good way for neighbours to socialise and discuss plans for the garden.*

It is important to have a garden plan and site design before actual planting. Community gardens should be developed for communities to gather and grow together in the long term.

The needs of every gardening group is different. Thus the garden plan should be designed according to the group's needs. Through initial community meetings and public outreach activities, the group should have an idea of the type(s) of garden(s) that best meets their objectives.

### Identify A Suitable Site For The Garden

Contact NParks to help you select a suitable location for the proposed community garden. The following points should be considered when selecting a gardening site.



**Location of nearby private residential clusters** – Locate community gardens in places with high human traffic to generate interest and encourage participation.



**Accessibility** – The site should allow for comfortable mobility for participants, easy movement of soil, plants, tools, water and access to other common amenities (space for vehicle access, loading area, etc).





**Water source** – Water is key. Look around the plot area to ensure that there is a water source nearby. If there is none, getting a water point installed by the Neighbourhood Committee, MCST or relevant approving authority will make it easier for watering.

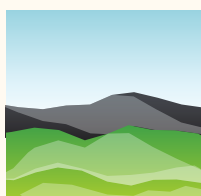


**Amount of sunlight that the site gets** –

It is important that the site gets adequate sunlight for a variety of plants to survive. Observe the site at different times of the day to determine whether it receives adequate sunlight and whether there are any potential obstructions in the form of large trees or buildings.



**Plot size & shape** – Determine the size and the shape of the plot. This will influence the number and size of plants you can grow. It will also influence the space for structures that your group will require, such as a storage shed, rest and play areas, compost area, etc. Remember to make allowance for the garden to grow.



**Level or sloping ground** – While levelled ground is preferred for a gardening site, it is also possible to create beautiful gardens on sloping ground. A terraced layout lined with wooden or stone frames can add a special touch to a garden. Avoid sites with inherent ground conditions e.g. waterlogging.



**Air circulation** – All plants need good air circulation to stay healthy and prevent pests and diseases. However, sites that get strong wind are not recommended.

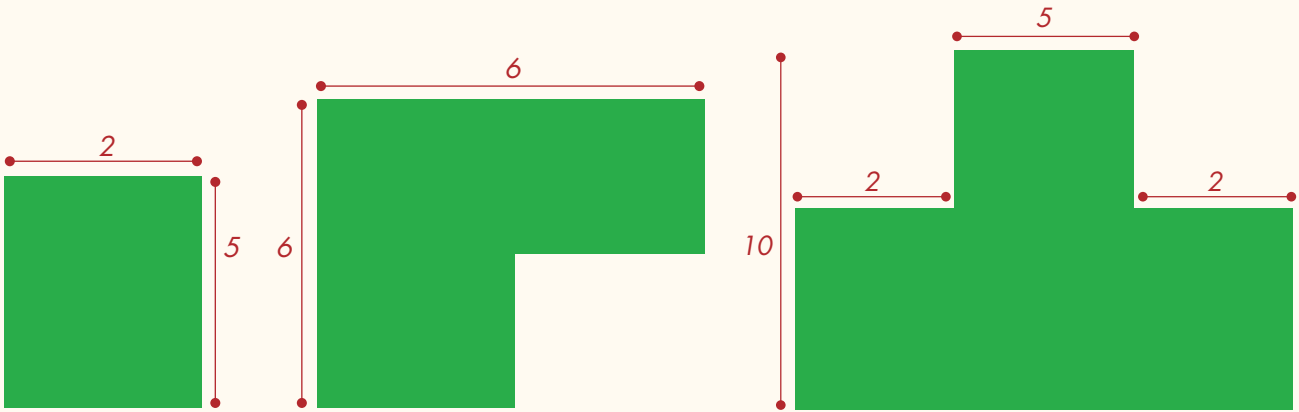


**Other safety considerations** – Site should be away from the main road or heavy vehicular traffic. Check for electrical cables and gas pipelines that may be buried under the soil surface; existing lamp posts, electrical boxes or other markers on site are indicative of their presence.



### Getting The Scale Right

Keep the garden plan simple and manageable for the first year. Once the garden is established, there will be lots of opportunities to add new elements. For gardens that are medium and large in size, allocate groups to work on specific plots before moving to other areas. Below are some examples of different plot sizes.



*Small – 5 to 10 sqm*

*Medium – 10 to 50 sqm*

*Large – above 50 sqm*

### Selecting A Garden Theme

Gardens can be designed to any style or theme, with each having its own beauty and character. Choosing a style can help you decide on the type of plants, patterns and garden features to have.

Community gardens can include a combination of themes such as vegetable and herb gardens, butterfly and bird gardens, children and seniors gardens. Your gardens will be as unique as the community tending it.

Themed gardens are designed around specific ideas, such as particular plant groups or purposes. They are characterised by an overall concept, and plants with similar growing requirements are grouped together to form unique collections or landscapes.





**Herb and spice gardens** focus on planting a variety of herbs and spices.



**Ornamental gardens** are designed to increase the aesthetic value of an area.



**Fruit gardens** are gardens that grow a variety of seasonal and tropical fruits.



**Bird and butterfly gardens** focus on planting specific biodiversity-attracting plants which provide food and shelter to sustain biodiversity growth.



**Edible gardens** encourage the community to grow their own food. This includes vegetables and other edible varieties.



**Kitchen garden** is one that is designed for and by people who love to cook using fresh ingredients.





## Design Considerations for new Gardens

It is useful to speak to other garden leaders and obtain professional guidance from NParks when designing a community garden. Where possible, try to recruit a permaculture or landscape designer into your group. Bear in mind the following points when designing your garden.

### Design for:

**Low waste** – Build a compost area for onsite management of organic waste generated by the garden.

**Sustainability** – Use recycled and local materials in construction. Where possible, install energy and water saving systems. For example, solar energy can be used to power the timers for sprinklers while rainwater harvesting can help to conserve water.

**Water management** – Maximise opportunities for rainwater harvesting and efficient irrigation. On sloped sites, use swales, terraces or beds that run along the contour of the slope to catch water.

**Integrated pest management** – Include a range of plants that provide shelters for small birds, frogs, lizards and predatory insects. Also include sources of water such as ponds and bird baths.

**Windbreaks** – Planting native trees and shrubs on the perimeters will protect the garden and reduce evaporation of valuable moisture in the soil.

**Biodiversity** – When carefully designed, community gardens can be part of a citywide network of local native bird and animal habitats.

**The senses** – A garden designed to engage the senses will be a place where people want to be. It will also enable your garden to 'speak' to a wider cross-section of the community, including children and the disabled. Try to include scented plants, colour, public art and auditory elements such as wind chimes.

**Learning** – Think about how groups will be accommodated; design for outdoor learning areas and paths with nodes that allow a group to pause for discussion. Create opportunities for experiential learning, demonstrations and practical small-group activities.

**Accessibility** – Narrow pathways will make it difficult for participants to move equipment around. Trellises should be easy for gardeners to maintain and harvest fruits from.

**Cultural diversity** – Include plants and cultural traditions of various cultural groups who make up your neighbourhood. Invite participants of various cultural groups to participate in the design.

## Plant Selection

Place plants with similar growth requirements (e.g. watering and light requirements) in the same planting bed or area. This makes it easier to water and maintain. Consider companion planting (a form of polyculture) for pest control, pollination and space maximisation. The following are some recommended plants that you can begin planting with.

### Plant Care Requirements



Prefers full sun



Prefers semi-shade



Prefers full shade



Prefers little water



Requires moderate amount of water



Requires abundant water

### Vegetables/Leafy Greens

Vegetables need lots of sunlight, water and fertiliser. Most are non-woody plants.

#### Choy Sum

*Brassica rapa var. chinensis*



#### Lady's Finger

*Abelmoschus esculentus*



#### Chinese Spinach

*Amaranthus tricolor*



#### Lettuce

*Lactuca sativa*



#### Cekur Manis

*Sauropus androgynus*



#### Long Beans

*Vigna unguiculata*  
subsp. *sesquipedalis*



#### Eggplant (Brinjal)

*Solanum melongena*



#### Sweet Potato

*Ipomoea batatas*



#### Kang Kong

*Ipomoea aquatica*



#### Radish

*Raphanus sativus*





## Herbs and spices

Spices and herbs are aromatic plants used for flavoring food. Some have medicinal properties. Most are small, non-woody (herbaceous) plants that need full sun and regular fertilising.

### Chilli

*Capsicum annum*



### Curry Leaf Tree

*Murraya koenigii*



### Chinese Parsley

*Coriandrum sativum*



### Basil

*Ocimum basilicum*



### Fragrant Pandan

*Pandanus amaryllifolius*



### Sawtooth Coriander

*Eryngium foetidum L.*



## Vibrant Flowers

These are plants grown for their brightly-coloured flowers. Most of these need full sun, lots of watering and frequent fertilising.

### Canna

*Canna hybrids*



### Hibiscus

*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis cultivars*



### Flaming Beauty

*Carphalea kirondron*



### Star Cluster

*Pentas lanceolata*



### Heliconia

*Heliconia cultivars*



### Periwinkle

*Catharanthus roseus (L.) G. Don*



## Biodiversity-attracting Plants

Having these plants in your garden will invite, birds, bees and butterflies.

### Cape Honeysuckle

*Tecoma capensis*



### Orange Jasmine

*Murraya paniculata*



### Common Lantana

*Lantana camara*



### Pagoda Flower

*Clerodendrum paniculatum*



## Ground Cover

These plants occupy little ground space and are ideal for screening unsightly features and brightening up hardscape elements such as fences, trellises, arches and bare walls.

### False Heather

*Cuphea hyssopifolia*



### Red Flame Ivy

*Hemigraphis alternata*



### Japanese Rose

*Portulaca grandiflora* cultivars



### Yellow Peanut Plant

*Arachis pintoii*



## Climbers

These plants take up little ground space and are excellent for brightening up bare walls, fences, trellises and arches, and for screening unsightly features.

### Golden Trumpet

*Allamanda cathartica*



### Pale Blue Flower

*Clitoria ternatea*



### Kock's Bauhinia

*Bauhinia kockiana* Korth



### Money Plant

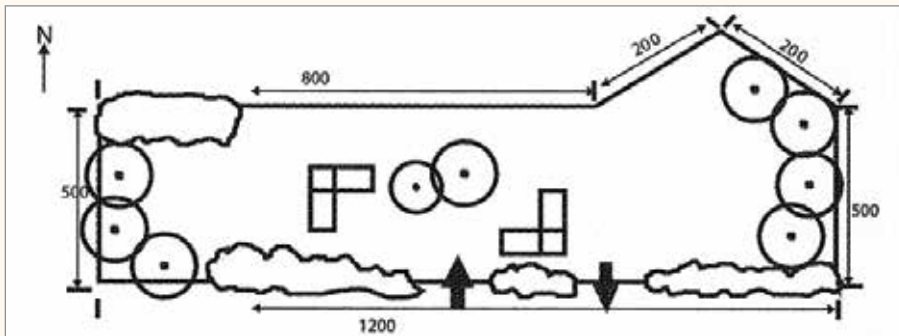
*Epipremnum aureum* 'Gold'





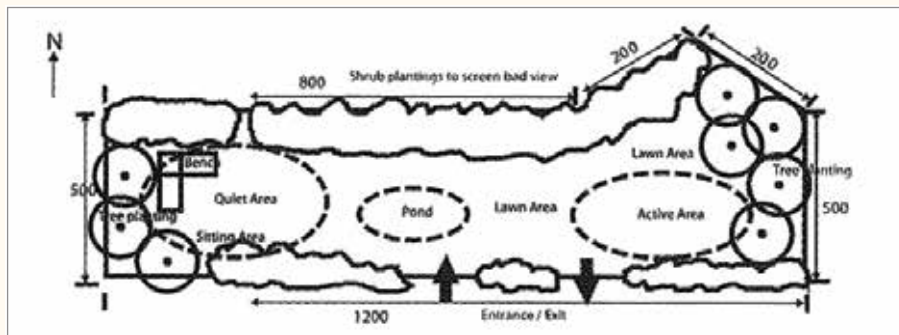
## Drawing Your Garden Design

Drawing out your design can help you plan your garden better.



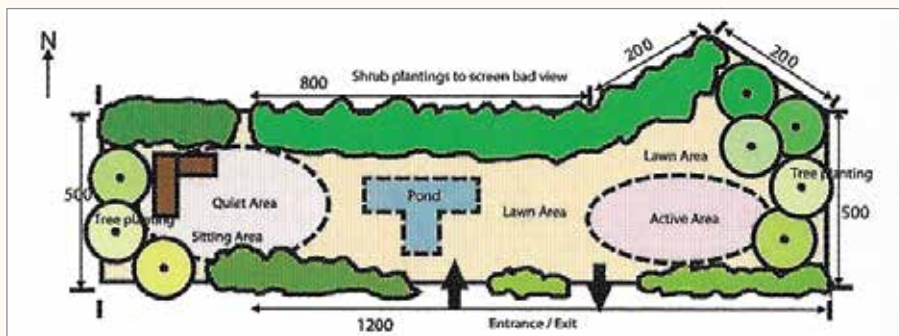
### 1. Make a scale drawing

Include measurements, physical conditions, boundaries, existing plants and built-up structures.



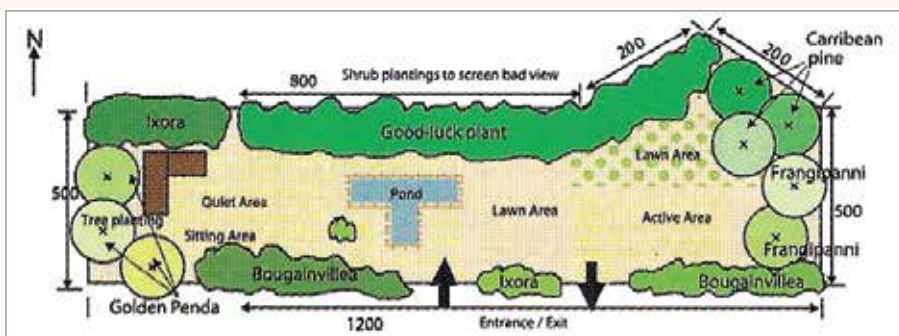
### 2. Create a few designs

Make a few copies of your scale map and try different designs. Use different shapes to represent plant beds or areas occupied by trees or large shrubs.



### 3. Evaluate and finalise the design

Incorporate the best features into the final design.

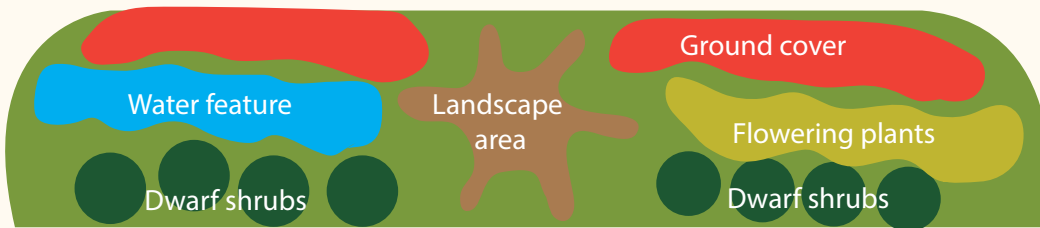
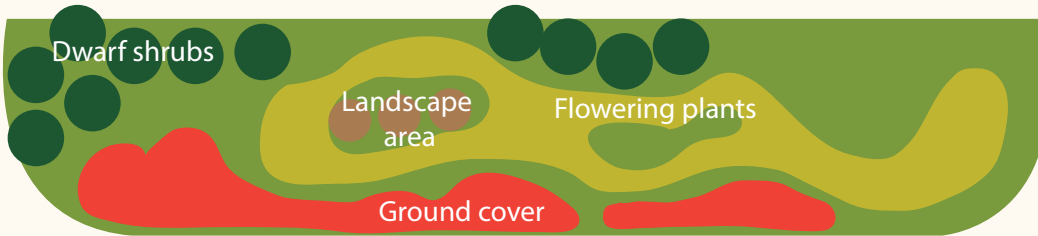


### 4. Fill in the details

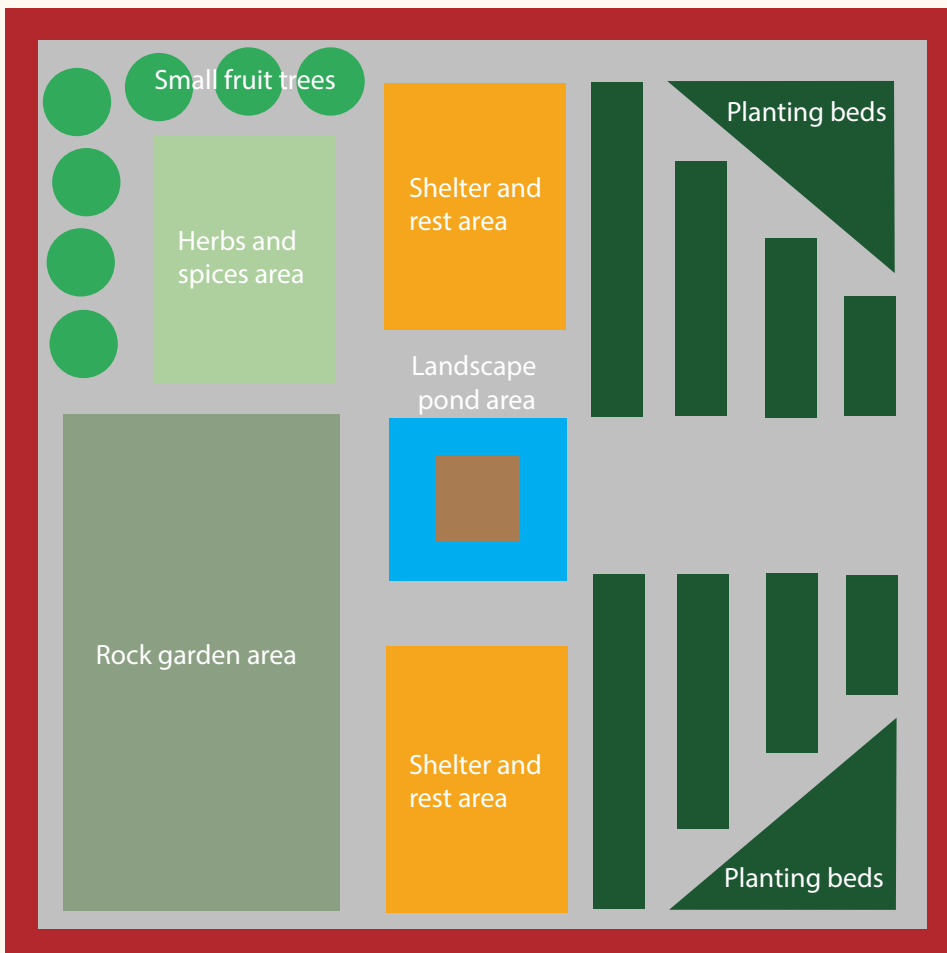
List the selection of plants, materials to be used, and types of garden decorations.

## Examples Of Garden Design Layouts

### Example 1 - A roadside garden layout



### Example 2 - A community garden layout







**STEP 3: PLANT YOUR GARDEN**



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## STEP 3: PLANT YOUR GARDEN

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### Preparing The Groundwork

For Private Estates, NParks will inform you in advance of the date for the preparation of the ground works. If the number of participating households is large, works will be scheduled in separate phases.

NParks will evaluate and may replace the existing turf with good quality planting media to help you get started.

Residents and participants from the gardening clubs should be present to facilitate the preparations.

For condominiums, once the management committee or the MSCT Chairman has endorsed the garden plan, the gardening committee can commence by preparing the groundwork with the committee members or by engaging a suitable contractor.

There are four key stages to constructing the garden, which can occur at the same time or separately depending on time and available resources. It is important to be organised and to work collaboratively with members during these stages:



Stage 1: Prepare the site



Stage 2: Build and install garden infrastructure



Stage 3: Plant the garden



Stage 4: Maintain the garden



### Purchasing Gardening Materials and Tools

Always plan before you purchase. Ask what you will need to start and run a garden. Figure out what you already have and make a list of the skills and resources available from your own community.

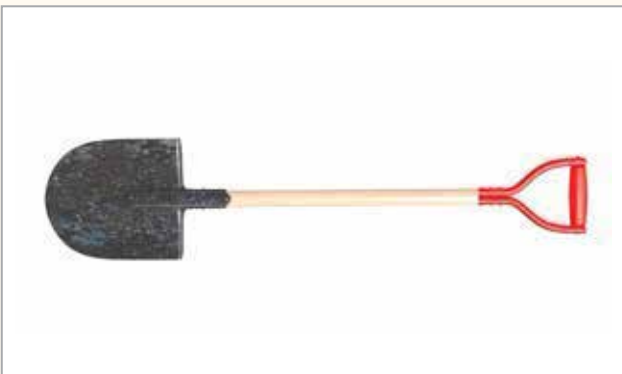
Here is a list of some basic gardening tools for any gardener:



**Spade** – to dig in transplants and remove small weeds.



**Gloves** – essential to prevent blisters and protect you from thorny plants.



**Shovel** – comes in many types and used for breaking ground, moving soil and more.



**Watering Can/Hose** – for ease of watering plants.



**Rake** – useful for gathering leaves to use as mulch.



**Secateur** – used for pruning and clipping.



**Wheelbarrow** – used to move heavy objects such as soil and large plants.



**Digging Fork** – good for loosening hardened soil and dividing perennials.



**Shears/Loppers** – are a larger, two-handed, long-handled version for branches thicker than secateurs can cut.



**Changkol** – available in different sizes for moving small amounts of soil, weed control and digging.

The infrastructure that is installed will depend on garden design and needs of the group. Keep in mind that not everything needs to be completed in the first phase, and that projects can be added as the garden develops. Some of the items you can consider installing include:

- Raised beds
- Pathways and ramps
- Composting bins
- Garden shed
- Fences and gates

- Trellises
- Irrigation systems
- Rest areas
- Play areas
- Art and feature areas

In the first few years of gardening, it is important that gardeners have successful yields and enjoy eating what they grow in order to build confidence and enthusiasm. Consider planting a mix of both ornamental plants and vegetables to allow participants to have a choice of activities.

Depending on experience and timing of planting, the group may choose to plant the garden from seeds, seedlings or young plants that are transplanted into the garden, or a combination of both. Start gardening immediately to avoid hardening or erosion of the soil.



## Checklist For Community Garden Projects

The checklist below is a useful guide for garden leaders to determine their aims and objectives before starting on a community garden.

### 1. What type of community garden?

- A shared garden where participants share the gardening and the harvest
- An allotment garden where participants garden their own plot and share the maintenance of common areas
- A garden with both allotments and shared gardening space

What is the size of the shared and allotments spaces?

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How long can allotments be held while they are not being used?

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### 2. What will be the purpose of the community garden?

- A place for people to garden together and get to know each other
- A place for people to relax and get closer to nature
- A place where parents can bring their children
- A place that provides access to fresh, nutritious food
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Will the garden be open to use and/or visitation by surrounding community groups and schools? Yes  No

### 3. How will we garden?

Organic gardening? Yes  No

Container gardening? Yes  No

Raised bed gardening? Yes  No

In ground gardening? Yes  No

Other methods: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. What structures should we include?

- Rest areas to sit
- Lockable shed for storage
- Compost area
- Nursery for plant propagation
- Educational signs
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What training do we need?**

- Gardening skills
- Design skills
- Basic construction skills
- Education on plants
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

Are any of these skills available within the group? Yes  No

**7. How will we manage waste?**

- Create own compost
- Mulching
- Recycle materials
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

**8. How will we conserve water?**

- Mulching
- Hydro-zoning
- Irrigation systems e.g. Drip irrigation, Soaker hose
- Plant low-water-use plants
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. How will we fund the garden?**

- Sponsorships and donations
- Membership fees
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_





  
**MANAGEMENT TIPS**  


# MANAGEMENT TIPS

## Administrative Matters – Keeping Records And Handling Funds

If your group is seeking to raise funds or solicit donations, you will need a secure place to put the funds where they can also be monitored. It is recommended that the group elect a treasurer and create a bookkeeping system for accountability and transparency for the allocation of funds.

As your group grows, it will be essential to keep records of achievements, expenses, maps of the garden design and individual plots, projects, an up-to-date list of participants, their respective leadership roles and their contact information. Take regular photographs of the project's progress and significant events for use in promotional material.



A photo wall gives visitors the opportunity to learn more about the garden.



Keep a journal of past projects and achievements to share with visitors and interested participants.



A simple notebook or spreadsheet is useful for recording contact information. Below is an example of an application form to collect basic information of participants.

### Gardener Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Paste  
photo  
here

Other household members:

Relationship to member	Name	Age	Gender

Please sign up for at least one of the garden jobs/roles listed below:

- Garden coordinator
- Administrator
- Grounds
- Maintenance
- Composting
- Events
- Treasurer
- Communications
- Outreach and community relations
- Horticulture advisors
- Safety
- Garden committee
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a new gardener, would like an experienced gardener to help you? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If you are an experienced gardener, would you like to help a new gardener? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Photo permission: From time to time, gardeners, garden leaders and the media will take photos of the garden.

- Please check here if you are not agreeable to having your photo taken. If you encounter photographers in your garden, please let them know you are not agreeable to being photographed.

Phone and email: All gardeners are required to share their phone number and email address with garden leaders. In addition, a gardener phone and email list is shared with all gardeners.

- Please check here if you do not wish to share your phone number and email with all gardeners.

*By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand the Gardener Guidelines and plan to abide by all of the garden rules. I understand that neither the garden group nor owners of the land are responsible for my actions. I therefore agree to hold harmless the garden group and owners of the land for any liability, damage, loss or claim that occurs in connection with use of the garden by me or my guests.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Responsible Gardening – Health And Safety

### Health and safety

A responsible gardener practises personal safety and considers the safety of others. By anticipating problems before they occur and implementing systems to avoid or minimise them, you will protect both the community from injury and your project from costly and potentially damaging allegations of negligence.

Conduct a simple risk assessment that considers the following, with particular reference to the safety of children and the elderly:

- Poisonous or potentially allergenic plants
- Trip hazards
- Sharp or dangerous edges
- Manual handling of heavy loads, including the use of wheelbarrows
- Use of sharp or dangerous tools
- Use of soils and manures
- Poisons and pesticides



*Always use gloves when handling, soil, sharp tools and garden chemicals.*



*Beware of trip hazards; demarcate work areas to make them visible.*





*Maintain and store your tools and equipment in an orderly manner.*



Be careful not to collect water and breed mosquitoes in your garden:

- Keep unused containers upturned and stored away.
- Keep drains and gutters clear of leaves.
- Always have fish in ponds and water features.
- Check pots and plant dishes for stagnant water.
- Clean and scrub the inner sides of plant dishes thoroughly to remove mosquito eggs.



**SUSTAINING INTEREST**



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# SUSTAINING INTEREST

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## Activities

Maintain the long-term interest of your participants by creating ongoing activities and learning opportunities.

### Attract new participants

- Engage nearby residents by running short practical workshops.
- Hold open days, events and celebrations.
- Make your garden interesting and inviting by including musical and artistic elements; art in the garden can be a source of fun and amusement.
- Create a simple brochure to promote your garden during community events.
- Design and install attractive graphical signage to reach out to children as well as those who might not be fluent in English.

### Orientate and retain new participants

- Conduct a simple induction and introduce new participants to the group. Match participants' tasks with their skills to keep them interested.
- Ensure new participants are familiar with the garden and its rules.
- Consider setting up a mentoring system. Mentor and share gardening knowledge with new students by pairing them up with skilled gardeners.

### Commission special projects

- Create sculptures from recycled materials to stand out and make a bold statement.
- Challenge your participants with new or creative projects to sustain their interest. For example, research and install an efficient irrigation system or create a vertical garden feature as a team.

### Create opportunities for learning

- Organise or facilitate garden education activities for all ages.
- Arrange gardening workshops, talks or sharing sessions presented by skilled gardeners, or bring in an expert to build capability within the group on a range of related topics.
- Co-ordinate visits to other gardens to exchange ideas; invite other community gardeners for networking and information-sharing sessions.

### Community building

- Organise and celebrate the harvest party as a community event by inviting nearby residents. Harvest parties can be organised as educational events where gardeners participate in a workshop on harvesting techniques for crops that have been planted in the garden.
- Fruits and vegetables harvested can be shared among the participants and residents living near the garden.
- Host simple social events such as potlucks and breakfast meets, to encourage social interaction among the participants.
- Promote the garden through public announcements over local radio, television, newspapers, free local publications, as well as via websites, blogs, and social media platforms.

## Garden Rules

Everyone involved in the community garden should be aware of the rules and policies that underpin the project. Doing so would ensure participants understand their responsibilities and rights. It is also important to consider every individual's inputs when drafting these rules and policies.

The following are some guidelines on garden rules and policies:

### **#1 Garden organically**

Gardens are part of a diverse ecosystem and we should use organic and natural methods to encourage plant diversity, attract beneficial insects, and create conditions for healthy plant growth. Chemical fertilisers and pesticides are not recommended. Observation and good soil fertility are the best defences against pests and diseases.

### **#2 Ensure regular attendance**

The garden survives only through the dedicated efforts of its participants. Remember: many hands make light work.

### **#3 Conduct regular garden maintenance and inspection**

Keep the garden weeded and trimmed. Paths should be kept level and clear to allow visitors to access. A well-tended area where vandalism is immediately reported has been observed to be a big deterrent to further destruction.

### **#4 Care for common tools**

Treat the shared tools and equipment with care. Clean the dirt off tools and wind hoses before storing them. Keep sheds and storage boxes locked except when removing or replacing tools, and never leave personal valuables unattended. Double-check before you leave the site to ensure that all tools have been locked away.

### **#5 Do not smoke in or around the garden**

The garden is a place where the community can enjoy nature and be committed to a healthy way of living. Keep the air fresh for fellow gardeners.

### **#6 Have a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate behaviour**

The garden is a place where everyone should act in a respectful manner. Disrespectful and abusive language, destruction or any behaviour deemed inappropriate will not be tolerated within the garden grounds.



## Growing An Inclusive Community

### Make your garden elderly friendly:

- Incorporate raised beds where possible.
- Pathways should be made wide enough for wheelchairs to pass.
- Plots should be made narrow enough for participants to reach the center without straining themselves.



*A wide pathway enables wheelchair users to safely stroll through the garden.*

### Learning opportunities for youths:

- Community gardens provide youth with a place to explore and get close to nature. Residents can also bring their children to the garden during opening hours, as well as open the area for tours from neighbouring schools.



*Reach out to neighbouring schools and work with them on enrichment programmes.*

### Include participants from different races and cultures:

- Assign shared lots to people of different cultures and races. This will encourage them to share their skills and knowledge related to gardening, cooking, nutrition and health. This will also allow them to learn about other traditions and practices.

## FEATURE GARDEN 1

### Limau Estate NC Gardening Club

**Location: Jalan Limau Manis Playground and Bedok Ria Crescent**

**Theme: Orchid Street & Limau Garden**

It started off from a love of orchids – in 2009, a group of neighbours decided to grow them to beautify the roadside along their houses. Over the years, they have nurtured a variety of orchids, and when in bloom, the richness of the diverse colours had drivers slowing down, and other neighbours walking over, to admire the flowers.

The gardening club then expanded from roadside planting to starting and managing another community garden site in Limau Estate, where they planted various types of limes such as Limau Bali (Pomelo), Limau Kasturi (Calamansi), Limau Nipis (Key Lime) and Limau Purut (Kaffir Lime).

They also volunteered at Bedok View Secondary, taking care of the organic vegetables rooftop garden. It has been a wonderful and enriching learning experience for them as growing vegetables was not initially their area of expertise. The harvested vegetables are sold to residents and volunteers, and all proceeds go towards helping the needy students of the school.

In addition to regular volunteer work, the gardening club also organises garden parties at the community garden and nature walks. They actively visit other community gardens and conduct farm tours for research and to learn more about planting. Their mutual love and interest for gardening keeps the bond between team members strong.

The gardening club is currently in the midst of planning a second community garden at the Bedok Ria Park Connector to spread the spirit of community gardening.



*Members from the Limau Estate Gardening Club.*





*The kerbs of Bedok Ria Crescent are lined with many species of orchids.*

### Tips From The Gardeners

- Select plants that are suitable for the site conditions, e.g. sun, shade, watering etc.
- Prune and trim your plants regularly so that they do not obstruct the movement and visibility of pedestrians and motorists. Avoid planting on road junctions that obstruct motorists' views.
- Regular maintenance ensures that the garden remains aesthetically pleasing long after it matures.





*A tree planting day event at the Community Lime Garden.*



*Young Pomelos growing in the Community Lime Garden.*

“

There needs to be strong guidelines and rules to follow to achieve the planned themes.

**Garden Leader – Ms Judy Soo**

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## FEATURE GARDEN 2

### Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden

**Location: End of Goldhill Avenue**

**Theme: Ornamental and Edible Garden**

Years back this empty land was just a dumping ground. Fortunately, residents saw its potential and banded together to dream up a garden, clear the trash, and prepare the soil and foundations. That marked the starting steps of its transformation from ugly duckling to beautiful swan. Foreseeing a rock garden, unearthed rocks were kept aside for reuse when crafting a Zen area.

Today, this beautifully manicured garden is nestled at the end of Goldhill Avenue, and is a place where residents gather to socialise and relax.

This open garden is divided into sections for ornamental, vegetable, and fragrant plants, fruit trees, a Peranakan-themed rest area, a rock garden and a future orchard. Residents work on the individual sections based on their interests.

Instead of levelling the ground, this garden retains its ornamental, vegetable, and fragrant plants terrain and uses it to its advantage, adding a unique charm to the garden. A well-placed garden footpath leads visitors on a walk through the garden, ending in a small valley where the future orchard will reside.

Sited at the edge of a secondary forest, the garden has attracted many species of animals and birds such as hornbills, kingfishers and sunbirds. Birdwatchers frequent the garden as a result. International students, as well as members from the American Horticultural Society (AHS) also make their way to this garden for its variety of plant and animal life.



*Photo credit: Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden*

*Members from the American Horticultural Society (AHS) posing with Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden members during their visit.*



To keep the bond strong between members, trips to other local and overseas gardens are regularly organised. Members also participate in educational programmes and tours with schools and institutions within the vicinity. The harvest is shared among the gardeners and surrounding residents.



*Photo credit: Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden*



*Photo credit: Moulmein Goldhill NC Community Garden*

*When it's harvesting time, residents and gardeners gather to share in the bounty.*



*The Peranakan-themed rest area surrounded by many species of flowering plants and plants with coloured leaves.*





*A wide pathway inside the garden allows wheelchair users to stroll through the garden.*



*The rock garden with different species of miniature and medium-sized bonsai plants.*

### Tips From The Gardeners

- Water and electrical points are essential amenities to a community garden.
- A core leadership team is vital to sustaining and managing the garden.
- Don't be shy to approach your neighbours to join your community garden.
- For new gardens, plant flowers to attract bees to help with pollination.

“

The garden has become the meeting point for us to celebrate birthdays and events.

Garden Leader – Mr Casey Ang

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