

COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES AND GUIDELINES

The Buninyong Sustainability Community Garden has been designed to offer members the opportunity to grow their own vegetables and herbs and engage with like-minded community members.

The goal is to cultivate a local community of food growers; support food growers with soil and composting facilities and assist with regular garden grower working bees.

We encourage sharing of knowledge and produce, whilst building capacity in growing food and sustainability practices.

1. Membership

Any member (individual or family/group) aged 18 years and over who becomes a member of **Buninyong Sustainability Inc**, is eligible to apply for a vacant plot, provided that they agree and adhere to the rules and guidelines in this document.

2. Fee schedule

See Fee schedule via Buninyong Sustainability Inc website. Garden Plot Fees are due 1st July annually, with fee payable via;

- Direct deposit to Buninyong Sustainability Inc, BSB: 633000 Account: 131642639 Ref- your name followed by 'GARD'
- Online payment via Square (also website donation button)

PLEASE NOTE: If the fee is not paid by 1 August, and we have not had communication from the Garden plot holder, Buninyong Sustainability Inc will consider the Plot is no longer required and it will be re-allocated or scheduled for fallow.

Members of Buninyong Sustainability Inc whose membership is approved after 1 October may apply for a Garden Plot on a pro rata cost, consistent with the annual cost. That is 1/12th of annual fee for each month, based on the approval date.

Money collected from fees will be used for limited garden tools/equipment purchases and maintenance, social gatherings for the gardeners and other community garden costs as agreed by the Buninyong Sustainability Inc. Committee.

Fees will be reviewed by The Buninyong Sustainability Inc as required.

3. Applying for a plot

Garden Plot application forms are only applicable once you have confirmed Membership to Buninyong Sustainability.

Garden Plot applications form a written agreement to abide by the Buninyong Sustainability Inc., and Community Garden Rules. Please read these rules prior to applying.

Information can be found on the Buninyong Sustainability website, alternatively a hard copy can be requested via the post/hand delivery. General enquires can be made in writing to Buninyong Sustainability; P.O. Box 167 Buninyong 3357.

4. Allocation of plots

Allocation of plots will be based upon a First come, First served basis. Plots are numbered and allocated via committee mapping. Plot sizes vary and can be subject to change as the gardens evolve. We aim to provide plots to meet needs of gardeners' where possible. "All abilities plots" will be prioritised to those with a disability where possible.

Groups will need to have a nominated responsible person.

Allocation of plots will be on a 'One plot per membership basis', unless Buninyong Sustainability Committee decide more plots can be allocated. It should be noted in period of high demand member with 2 or more plots will be asked to surrender that extra bed to accommodate new members.

If no plots are available at the time of application, the applicants name will go on a waiting list and they will be advised when a plot becomes available. Once an offer is made to an applicant, if forms and payments are not completed within required timeframe, next person in line will be offered plot.

Plots are allocated to the member named on the application form. Plots are not transferable. In the spirit of fairness and waiting list management members cannot give their plot to another individual/family or group.

If a member no longer wishes to maintain their plot, they have the responsibility to advise the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** committee in writing and return their key if applicable (and their bond money will be refunded). The plot will be reallocated to someone on the waiting list. Plot fees cannot be refunded.

5. Keys

Members of **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** who have a Garden Plot will be given an option to have keys allocated (on receipt of the bond money) for access to 1) shipping container/content and water supply via hose 2) toilets within the soccer change rooms adjacent the Community Garden. Keys are the responsibility of member, they should not give the key to another person, or have the key copied (Keys will be allocated by **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** committee only (Note: Toilet key allocation details are shared with City of Ballarat). If a member loses their key, the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** committee must be informed

immediately, and your bond will be used to provide a replacement (lock/and or key depending on item). A further bond will be applicable at this point for any future key replacements.

6. Responsibilities of gardeners for their plots

6.1 Safety

Safety of Members who manage a Garden Plot and members of the public is of paramount importance to **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Members are strongly encouraged to engage in careful and safe activities while managing garden plots. This request for acting carefully and safely relates to personal safety as well as to biosecurity, safeguarding soils, plants and the environment in our local community.

General maintenance of plots

Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their allocated individual plots throughout the year and should ensure that the area around their plot is free from weeds, rubbish and any items which may be obstructing the pathways.

Mulching of garden plots (to control weed growth) and composting of green waste is strongly encouraged.

If a gardener is unable to maintain a plot due to illness or other exceptional circumstances, they are asked to discuss their situation with the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee, who will work with individuals to find a solution or provide assistance if possible.

6.2 Volunteering and attendance at working bees

As a member of the Community Garden, plot holders are required to join in with working bees to help maintain the communal areas and other social events whenever possible, to cultivate community of local food growers. **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** also holds an annual Sustainability Expo in February and where possible volunteering for this would be most welcomed.

6.3 Plot boundary fences

The major goals of our Community Garden is sharing and community access. Thus, fencing or isolation/segregation (or signage to suggest the same) of individual garden plots is strongly discouraged and any such erections/signage may be removed by **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee.

6.4 Building and other materials

Permanent structures should not be built on garden plots, without consultation with the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee. We encourage 'individual expression', through structurally safe artworks etc, but it must be assessed and sanctioned by the Committee (who have the right to discuss any *reasonable* objections with other plot holders). Installations must not impact other users; shade, cause personal risk or have potential to blow away during windstorms. All associated costs sit with plot holders and need to be removed should membership end/lapse.

6.5 Types of plants

Community Garden plots are for growing vegetables, small fruits, herbs and flowers. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots because they can block light to other plots. The Buninyong Sustainability Inc, Committee reserves the right to ban plants that may be invasive or are potential weeds.

Garden members must ensure that plants introduced to the Community Garden are not on the national or local declared weed list and not be transported from areas that have current pest outbreaks such as red fire ants, etc.

Climbing plants (beans, peas, tomatoes etc) should be grown using stakes, with consideration for adjacent gardeners.

In the spirit of reducing tripping risks and ongoing maintenance at site; plants must stay within plots and not encroach pathways and surrounding areas.

6.6 Soil

Gardeners are responsible for maintaining and improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that the nutrients are put back into the soil after every season as plants use up nutrients as they grow. This can be done by adding compost, manure and mulch. Soil must not be removed from the plots. Please contact the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee should you have excess soil.

Soil and any manure brought on site **must be** of reputable source and free of contamination.

6.7 Composting

Composting stations have been built to service the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Community Garden. Material from outside the gardens should not be added without permission from the Committee.

Composting stations must be regularly maintained and turned over. Signage at the site will provide guidelines for what can be added to the composting stations.

6.8 Control of garden pests

Pest control must not be undertaken with products that are detrimental to the environment. Virtually all community gardens throughout the world use alternative (organic) methods. Chemicals can contaminate a neighbour's plot and could be a serious health risk to them. The **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee can provide advice on the safe control of garden pests.

7. Animals

Dogs, cats and other pets must be kept off Community Garden plots. This is primarily a food growing area, and such animals can be a health risk. As per City of Ballarat regulations, pets must be on a leash at all times and owners must pick up poo and dispose of it in appropriate garbage bins. Please do not add dog poo to the compost at **Buninyong Sustainability Inc. Community Garden.**

8. Water management

The hose provided by the Community Garden is to be shared by plot holders.

Water will normally be available from the tank(s) at Community Garden, or via tap on west wall of soccer change rooms. Watering should be done with the watering cans provided. Gardeners accept that we cannot guarantee water supply (rainfall and damage to infrastructure is beyond our control). Water supply should be distributed equally and fairly between plot holders (and will be monitored by the committee).

During Drought: Gardeners are required to adhere to any water restrictions that are currently in place.

9. Tools

Tools, wheelbarrows and watering cans are provided for use by members of the Community Garden. These must always be maintained then returned to the store after use and should not be removed from the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Community Garden. We ask user to take care in using equipment, any damaged or missing items/tools or equipment must be reported so we can manage any replacements.

10. Sale of produce

Garden plots are available for personal use only, and the produce should be for the members and their families, friends and community. The use of garden plots for growing plants commercially is not permitted.

11. General conduct

The general rule is to be considerate to other gardeners and respect their plots and way of gardening, and to provide a welcoming place to visitors.

Children are welcome in the Community Garden but must be supervised by an adult at all times.

Based upon our goals sharing of plants and produce with community is encouraged. Gardeners and visitors must not remove any plants or equipment from another gardener's plot without permission. Likewise, plants and equipment must not be removed from other areas in the Community Garden without the approval of the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee.

12. Dealing with any problems or concerns

Dealing with garden related issues is the responsibility of the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee. If members have any concerns about the garden or other gardeners, they should contact the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee in the first instance.

Grievances or complaints received by Committee will be guided by Buninyong Sustainability Inc Constitution (available via our website).

13. Security

The Community Garden is an open community space. **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee cannot be held responsible for any theft, damage or other illegal activity to the garden plots.

Please report any such activity to the **Buninyong Sustainability Inc.** Committee (and Police if a serious incident) immediately.

Community Garden ethos is to share produce from these public community garden spaces; signs to encourage best picking methods and reminders to consider others could be considered. If food is taken/stolen, a charitable, community minded view is that *the person was in need of some free fresh food, and we were happy to help them.*

14. Buninyong Sustainability Inc.

Members who have a Garden Plot are especially encouraged to attend Buninyong Sustainability General Meetings which are held approximately twice a year and keep abreast of information and changes via the website.