

CLIFTON COMMUNITY FOOD GARDEN INC

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POLICIES

1) Aims

The garden was incorporated to provide food gardening and educational opportunities that promote good health and wellbeing. With this in mind we aim to:

- Grow food and exchange crops with other CCFG members as well as other members of the wider community.
- Ensure community consultation by inviting (not limited to) schools, seniors groups and social clubs to become part of the project.
- Provide educational opportunities by offering sessions for (not limited to) parents, school children, senior citizens and lone households on the best methods of ensuring organically grown produce.
- Invite nutritionists to teach the value of good food which is locally grown, thus reducing the distance food travels, promote slow food and the value it brings.
- Promote wellbeing through healthy regular meals.

2) Additional office bearers

Additional office bearers who may be appointed from time to time include:

- Membership co-ordinator: maintains register of members, organises member inductions and other membership business.
- Media Liaison: Responds to media enquiries and issues media statements.
- Social organiser: Plans and implements social activities such as shared meals in garden and celebrations.
- Compost co-ordinator: Someone who knows about composting to help skill people up and monitor compost.
- Education co-ordinator: To co-ordinate skilling up of gardeners over time.

When a person is appointed to one of these positions, the Committee at that time will decide if the new appointee will sit on the committee.

3) Code of conduct

- a. It is expected that on becoming a member of the garden you will:
 - Always act in the best interests of the garden and all members.
 - Maintain the neat appearance and integrity of the garden such that it builds an attractive and creative environment that is appealing to other residents of the community.
 - Manage good relationships with our neighbours including keeping noise within the garden at a level that does not disturb them.
 - Not discriminate against another member due to differences in race, disability, culture or sexuality.
 - Ensure that any children who accompany you are adequately supervised.
- b. As an organisation:
 - Our decision-making is democratic, inclusive and transparent.
 - We operate an inviting garden where new members are always welcome.
 - Smoking is not permitted in the garden. Drinking of alcohol is permitted only on social occasions.
 - Members are encouraged to openly express and discuss their issues, concerns and ideas.
 - Produce will be shared amongst members using the “pick some, leave some” method.

Please note that the Code of Conduct may be changed and updated by the Committee at any time. Members will be notified of any changes.

4) Gardening methods (refer also to Procedures)

Create healthy soil; Utilise a composting system; No use of pesticides or herbicides; Crop rotation; Water management; Companion planting; Be aware of sun and shade; Use mulch.

5) Financing

The association will need to cover future spending, which could include, but not be limited to:

- Public liability insurance.
- Plants & seeds.
- Top-up organic soil/manure/mulch.
- Replacement of garden tools & equipment.
- Repairs & maintenance costs.
- Training & workshops for Members.
- Costs of involving the community (e.g. local advertising & venues for meetings, photocopying any promotional material, newsletter, postage & stationery etc.)

The annual membership fee is intended to assist in covering some of the above costs. However, options for additional funding include:

- Grants (e.g. from Shoalhaven City Council, Clubs Grants or others).
- Gold coin donation for non-members who receive produce from the garden.
- Donations or sponsorship from local businesses or individuals.
- Fundraising (e.g. open day, sausage sizzle or selling coffee & cakes, selling raffle tickets, dinner fundraising, selling preserves, plants and excess vegetables).
- No waste approach (recycle & reuse material if possible, plant cuttings or seeds from friends & other gardeners).

PROCEDURES

1) Membership fees

Joining fee is \$5.

Annual fees are payable on a financial year basis i.e. 1st July to 30th June.

		No concession card	Have concession card
Annual fee	Individual	\$20	\$12
	Family	\$30	\$18
If joining between January and June:			
First Annual fee	Individual	\$10	\$6
	Family	\$15	\$9
(Thereafter, normal annual fee)			

Members are encouraged to pay their fees annually but fees will be accepted in two payments, one half 1st July, one half 1st January.

2) Annual Membership Renewal

All existing members are required to renew their membership by submitting new membership forms at the beginning of the financial year. Acceptance will be subject to Committee approval. The annual fee, but no joining fee is required to be paid upon acceptance.

3) Attendance at the garden

On arrival at the CCFG:

- On entry to the CCFG, you must sign into the attendance book provided, detailing name and time in. The attendance book can be found in the hut.
- ID's should be worn at all times whilst working in the garden and must be clearly visible.
- Check the jobs list and action accordingly.
- Review the Garden Bed History log to ensure things such as feeding and fertilising is not duplicated.
- Ensure that the garden gate is closed at all times when the garden is vacant, so kangaroos and wallabies don't get in and eat crops.
- Apply all Health & Safety practices set out in section 6 below and as per your site induction.

Before leaving the CCFG you must ensure the following:

- All the tools that you have been using are thoroughly cleaned and returned to the store.
- All rubbish other than green waste is taken off the site with you or placed in the rubbish bin.
- Green waste is put into the green waste storage area.
- Update the job lists with all activities undertaken during your time on site i.e. watering, feeding, harvesting and any actions from the jobs lists. All records will be kept online in Evernote.
- Update the incident book detailing any incidents or injuries that may have occurred during your time in the CCFG.
- Sign out in the attendance book noting type of work. (More detailed information is recorded on the job list sheets)

The last person to leave the CCFG is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring all watering systems i.e. hoses have been fully turned off and stowed away, pump is turned off and the mains water tap is turned off.
- Locking all sheds and container.
- Locking the main and rear gates.

4) Gardening methods

Members can use their own discretion for low impact undertakings such as weeding, some harvesting etc.

Actions requiring major decisions are to be referred to the committee.

CCFG will engage in chemical free gardening and will aim to get as close to organic principles as possible.

This means:

Create healthy soil - the key for successful organic gardening. Compost, moisture, drainage, mulch, plant diversity and crop rotation all contribute to healthy soil. Any soil brought into the garden should be high quality, chemical and disease free. Our compost should be the main contributor to soil upkeep once the garden is established.

Utilise a composting system. It is important not to include diseased plants or weeds. The compost will be used in the garden and will be the major 'soil builder' and 'garden feeder' for the garden.

Non-use of non-organic pesticides or herbicides. Biological controls will be used for weeds and pests. Refer to "Care with organic chemicals" in section 7 below.

Crop rotation. This will be an important aspect of successful organic vegetable growing as it helps to interrupt the cycle of pests and diseases. Crop rotation also helps to create healthy soil, as some vegetables take a lot of nutrients from the soil, however, others replenish the soil (beans, peas, legumes).

Water Management. It is important to consult the Garden Bed History log, assess the weather conditions and do a 'moisture test' of the soil to check for moisture content before watering. Excess water can harm plants as much as not enough water. Water should be used from the water tank first and if this is empty then town water supply is available from the tap close at hand. Use the irrigation system when appropriate.

Companion planting. This is recommended as different plants can help maintain healthy vegetable crops. Herbs are especially useful in and around vegetable plants. A couple of examples include marigolds near broccoli, cabbage & eggplant, also parsley, pyrethrum & basil around tomato plants.

Be aware of **sun and shade** and other plant needs in the garden when planting out tall or vertical growing plants. That is, it may be appropriate to plant climbing plants to the south of the garden to allow sunlight on smaller plants. It could also be appropriate to plant taller plants on the western side to give some sun/heat protection to smaller plants that require less sun.

It is important that all **tools** be cleaned after use to avoid the spread of weeds and disease.

A mix of fine and coarse organic **mulch** is recommended. Mulching will reduce moisture loss and suppress weed growth. When mulching, water the soil first, apply 5 cm thick on the garden but not directly around plants and finally water the mulch in. Mulching frequency will depend on how quickly the mulch breaks down.

5) Waste management

All organic matter (except diseased plants and weeds) will be composted on site. Waste that cannot be composted or recycled will be placed in the rubbish bin.

Signs will be erected stating compost rules, including items to be placed in the compost bays.

It should be particularly noted that the following should not be added to compost: wood, plastic, plastic bags, cans, polystyrene foam boxes, meat, fish or chicken.

6) Health and safety

All new Members will receive a brief site induction before they work at the CCFG. The site induction will provide general information about the garden as well as relevant health and safety precautions (refer section 7 below) and can be given by any member of the group who has already been inducted themselves.

Members are responsible for their own well-being and that of others, while on Council property. Members should be careful and act safely at all times.

Any potential hazards should be noted on the notice board by Members as soon as they are found and also reported to committee members.

If any accidents occur, details should be written into the Incident book. All accidents will be discussed at monthly meetings and preventative actions taken as agreed.

7) Garden safety

Tool Use

- Before using a spade, garden fork, rake or other long handled tool, look to make sure there is nobody behind or beside you so that you don't hit them with the tool.
- When you have finished using a garden tool or you put a tool aside for a moment, place it out of the way of people.
- Never lay a tool across a path or place it in long grass where it is hidden and where people could trip over it.
- Lean a garden rake or long handled tool against something when you put it aside. If you have to lay it down, place it away from where people might walk. Place it with the pointed prongs or blade on the ground, not pointing up.
- When putting a garden spade, shovel or fork aside, do not push it into the soil as plastic water pipes may be pierced, leave it upright and visible.
- Carry tools such as spades, garden forks and rakes in your hand rather than over the shoulder. Carried on the shoulder, it is easy to hit someone accidentally if you turn around and they are close by.
- Members should report damage or wear and tear of garden tools and general tool maintenance needed.

Avoid sunburn and dehydration

- Wear a hat to avoid sunburn.
- If you sunburn easily, consider wearing a lightweight shirt with long sleeves as well as long trousers.
- Use a sunscreen cream to avoid sunburn.
- If in the garden for some time, remember to drink water to avoid dehydration.

Care with creatures

- Do not try to pick up bugs, spiders and other creatures you come across. They might defend themselves by biting, stinging or scratching.
- Look before lifting buckets, watering cans, boxes and other things. Redback spiders sometimes nest in them and a bite can be dangerous.
- Do not interfere with any snakes or goannas you see in the garden.

Lifting

- When lifting something heavy, bend your knees and crouch down, then lift it by straightening your legs.
- To avoid back injury, do not bend over to pick up something that is heavy.

Storage

- Store materials so that they are unlikely to fall over or spill. Place heavier materials close to the ground and lighter materials on top of these.
- Stack and store materials neatly so that they are easily accessible and out of the way of paths and places where people walk.

Caring for children

- If children are to visit or participate in the garden, avoid planting toxic plants and remove species (such as castor oil bush and oleander) that are toxic to children. Consider what might be a danger to children even if it is not dangerous to adults. It might be an idea to label hot-tasting plants such as chilli with visual and word warnings.
- If growing water crops (such as water chestnut, arrowhead or watercress) in a container or pond, cover it with a barrier (weldmesh, for example) that prevents children falling in but lets the plants grow through.
- Keep a watch on young children in case they wander off-site.

Construction

- When planning to build structures, obtain advice on design and construction from the Construction Committee.
- Keep paths clear.
- Make garden bed edges strong so that they will not collapse. Avoid edging garden beds with sharp or pointed materials.
- If digging a hole, make your work visible to gardeners passing by so they do not fall in it. Mark the excavation with coloured tape or a barrier if you are leaving it for a while.

Care with organic chemicals

- The manufacture of organic controls for garden pest and plant disease management (sometimes called 'botanic' controls because they are derived from plants) should be done under the guidance of a gardener or adviser who has experience and is knowledgeable of the precautions to be taken in production, handling and application.
- Some organic pesticides can cause injury. When making, handling and applying chilli based insecticides such as chilli spray, wear gloves and keep hands away from your face (chilli in the eyes is painful).
- Avoid getting botanic sprays and other controls in your eyes or in cuts on your hands or legs. It is best to wear gloves when applying any botanic or synthetic control.

- Wash your hands after making, handling or applying organic pesticides, herbicides or other organic controls.

Other protective precautions

- If you suffer breathing difficulties or asthma, consider wearing a dust mask when making or turning compost or spreading mulch.
- Consider wearing gardening gloves to protect your hands and to avoid blisters from handling garden tools, and when doing garden construction and spreading compost and mulch.
- Wear enclosed shoes to protect your feet. Do not garden in sandals.
- Cover standing water, such as in a pond, to reduce the incidence of mosquito breeding. Water plants such as azolla and duckweed reduce the surface area available to mosquitoes. Species of small native fish that eat mosquito wrigglers can be introduced.

8) Garden tools and storage

A collection of garden tools and equipment will be stored in the storage shed. The committee will be responsible for issuing keys to the container. Select members will be issued with a key to the lock on the front garden gate.

Members are also welcome to bring their own tools to use in the garden.

Garden tools are to be cleaned and returned to the correct storage area after use.

9) New members

When needed, new members can be recruited through some or all of the following:

- advertisements and articles in "About".
- signage at the garden.
- flyers posted on notice boards in the local area (e.g. community centre, library, and other relevant places).
- use of Council Notices in local papers.
- internet - community gardening websites, Wiki page, Facebook or Council website.
- word of mouth/talking with visitors.
- letterbox drops.

Application forms are available at the garden or can be printed from the website. Completed application forms are to be lodged at the garden. Applicants will be advised as to the success of their applications within a week of lodgement. Successful applicants will be requested to pay their joining and annual fees at the garden.

The members' details will be entered into a Database held by the Secretary. The Secretary will also hold the hard copies of the forms.

As soon as convenient after the application submission is approved by the Committee, a site induction will be arranged by the Secretary and the new member will be informed.

As soon as convenient after the onsite induction is complete an ID Badge/ membership card will be issued by the Secretary or Treasurer.

10) Membership ID's

Lost or stolen ID cards are to be reported to the committee immediately via email, which can be found on the "Contact Us" page on the website, or by direct contact. Lost or Stolen membership cards will be re-issued.

11) Keys

Select members will be provided with a key to the garden when necessary. Members must not give their key to another person without permission of the committee. If a member loses their key, the committee must be informed immediately via email, which can be found on the "Contact Us" page on the website, or by direct contact. A replacement key will be issued by the Committee at the cost of \$10 to the Member. This fee can be paid by the member at the time of issue/pickup. Members will be contacted by telephone /email once the replacement key is available for pick up and advised where it can be picked up from.

12) Leaving the group – keys and ID's

Members that wish to no longer participate in the CCFG, or have been asked to leave the group are required to return their key and ID badge/card immediately to a Committee member. Membership fees already paid are non- refundable.

13) Change of member's details

Members must advise the committee of any change in their address, email or telephone number.

14) Water Management

Hoses should be hand held and should not be left running unattended.

The use of watering cans is strongly encouraged along with the mulching of garden beds.

15) Garden Signs

Signs that will be displayed at the garden:

- Fire Assembly point.
- Medical Kit Location.
- List of authorised (non-toxic) chemicals.
- Watering guidelines.
- Compost Signs.
- Safety Guidelines & First Aid Procedures.
- Emergency Contacts i.e. Fire/Police/Ambulance & SES.
- List of Out of hours CCFG contacts (in case of break-in etc.)

16) Sale of Garden Produce

The produce of the garden is intended primarily for the use of the members. Excess produce may be sold, together with preserves and plants, to the public, to help sustain the garden financially. Where appropriate, plants and produce may be donated to the public.

17) Conflict Resolution Policy

1. Policy Overview

Members are encouraged to use this policy where they feel aggrieved about a situation or event and where there are grounds for complaint.

Open and constructive communication between all its members is encouraged. Members are actively encouraged to approach and discuss any issue that arises with their fellow members.

Because of this, members are encouraged to attempt the informal resolution of grievances in the garden for most types of interpersonal conflict or gardening related grievances. The informal process is different from the formal process in that the informal process involves direct discussion and debate between the

aggrieved member and the party(s) who is allegedly causing the grievance. In the informal process, everything is verbal, nothing is done in writing and no formal investigations are involved.

2. Grievances relating to sexual harassment, harassment, bullying and discrimination

Because grievances involving bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or discrimination are viewed very seriously and because of our duty of care, members with these kinds of grievances need to avail themselves of the formal procedure for dealing with harassment and discrimination, to ensure that the matter receives the proper and necessary attention.

3. Using the Informal Grievance Resolution Process

Members are encouraged in the first instance to discuss their grievances directly with the person who is causing them concern, with a view to trying to resolve the situation. In situations where this is not appropriate or a member does not feel comfortable in doing so, then the member with the grievance should feel free to involve their committee members as mediator or facilitator to help resolve the dispute informally. If this does not deliver a satisfactory outcome then the member may invoke the formal grievance procedure.

3.1 Guidelines for the Informal Resolution of Grievances

Briefly describe the problem – wherever possible strive to be objective, provide facts and not opinions. Provide enough information to allow the other person to understand the issues and to make an informed response.

State the impact of the behaviour or action of the other person on you. Take responsibility for your feelings by giving “I” messages. For example – “I feel angry when you won’t acknowledge my contribution to the group....”

Ask the other person to respond. Listen to what they are saying. Do not interrupt.

State the outcome that you desire, that will resolve the conflict. Try and keep the discussion focused on solutions. Try and avoid blaming.

4. Formal Grievance Procedure

The following grievance procedure is designed to provide members with a formal mechanism for the resolution of issues and concerns. At each stage, the grievance will be investigated thoroughly and members will be notified of the outcome.

The formal grievance process is different from the informal process in that the member’s allegations are made in writing, a formal investigation is convened which is minuted and a member is informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation.

4.1 Procedure for the Formal Resolution of Grievances

4.1.1 Role of Member

Stage 1

You need to submit a written summary of your grievance to a committee member, stating the facts and what outcome you desire to resolve the grievance. You should include in the document any attempts that you have made to informally resolve the problem. This should be completed within 14 days.

The committee member will then take the complaint to the full Committee, normally within five working days of receipt. The Committee will arrange an investigation of the matter with a view to attempting to resolve the matter. The member will be informed of the outcome of the investigation in writing within 7 days.

Stage 2

If the grievance is not resolved to your satisfaction, an appeal may be made in writing within 14 days of receipt of the original decision, to all committee members.

The President and in his/her absence, the Vice-President, must respond to your appeal in writing, within 7 days.

This will constitute the final stage of the procedure to resolve the dispute within the association.

Any further appeal will need to be in accordance with Clause 10 of the Constitution "Resolution of disputes".

Right of Assistance in the Grievance Process

You may be accompanied by a fellow garden member at each stage of the formal grievance procedure.

If the Grievance Concerns a Committee Member

If the grievance concerns a committee member, you are requested to contact another committee member to provide you with guidance as to how to proceed. This may involve escalation of the matter to all committee members at a specially called meeting.

4.1.2 Role of Committee Members

To treat all grievances seriously, act in a timely manner and endeavour to resolve any issues raised informally, wherever possible.

Where the member invokes the formal grievance procedure, to thoroughly investigate the facts of the situation, and to provide a written timely response to the member raising the grievance. The committee member is to ensure that grievances are handled in a sensitive, professional and efficient manner.

5. Frequently Asked Questions

Q. May I go directly to the formal grievance process?

A. Yes you may, although you are encouraged to try and resolve the matter through the informal process via discussion directly with the person(s) against who you have a grievance.

Q. How can committee members assist in this process?

A. By providing guidance to you about general principles involved in conflict management and resolution. By acting as mediators or facilitators on request from the member to resolve a grievance.