


Community Garden Guide

PALMY[™]
PAPAIOEA
PALMERSTON
NORTH
CITY





**Nā tō rourou, nā taku
rourou ka ora ai te iwi.**

With your food basket and my
food basket the people will thrive

**Community gardens strengthen
neighbourhood ties and build social resilience,
while improving individual gardening skills.**

Gardening features as one of the top five active recreation activities for adults in New Zealand and the Manawatū. These shared spaces contribute to creating vibrant communities and achieving positive outcomes.



What is a community garden?

The Council defines a community garden as 'land gardened collectively by a group of people for the benefit of the community or members of that community'.

A community garden is:

- Primarily to grow fruit or vegetables for the benefit of their community.
- Scalable and low cost.
- Managed by a group of people in a neighbourhood setting.
- May be on public or private land. Note: Community gardens on private land are not covered by this guide. Check the District Plan rules for your private site to see what kind of planning requirements there are for community gardens.

Steps to gain approval for a Community garden

1. Bring your group together.
2. Talk to us about your plans – we will provide feedback and advice.
3. Identify budgets and funding options.
4. Apply to Council.
5. Council officers will seek feedback about your proposal from the direct neighbours and park users.
6. Council officers will make a decision including what terms and conditions will be with a permit.
7. If approved - sign a permit and get gardening.
8. Provide a brief annual update.

A more detailed explanation is provided below outlining each step.

Step 1: Bring your group together

You will need a core group of at least three like-minded community members to help establish and maintain the garden (only 2 can be from the same household). It is important to consider how much time each person can contribute to ensure the garden's future success.

Step 2: Talk to us about your plans - we will provide feedback and advice

Council wants to support your vision. We'll talk with you about your chosen location, whether there is support from neighbours and the community, and assess the garden's practicality.

Factors to consider when choosing the location for the garden:

Water Supply

Having easy access to water is crucial. Think about how you'll ensure a reliable and cost-effective source.

Waste Management Plan/Composting

Take into account the location of your compost bin, your plan for handling green waste, and how you will manage potential pests associated with composting.

Buildings

If you're thinking about adding a shed, it will need to be at least 3.5 meters from the boundary. Consider how this will work with your overall garden layout.

Accessibility

Make sure your garden is welcoming and accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Sunlight

Choose a spot that gets plenty of direct sunlight—about 6 hours a day during summer is ideal. Avoid areas with too much shade from buildings or trees.

Space

Ensure there's enough room for the garden, a shed, a composting area, and space for future expansion if needed.

Longevity

It's important to have some certainty about the land's use over time, considering any future developments.

Health and Safety

Be mindful of potential issues like polluted land or soil contamination, especially if the land has been used for other purposes before.

Infrastructure

Make sure the garden won't interfere with underground pipes, wires, pathways, or other structures.

Visibility

A visible garden can enhance personal safety and reduce the risk of vandalism.

Resources

Create a list of what's needed and explore fundraising or in-kind options.

Step 3: Identify budgets and funding options

- An annual fee for using the land will be outlined in your permit (typically ranging from \$50 to \$150 per year).
- Council funding support is available through Environment Network Manawatū. These funds support projects that align with the priorities of Council and Environment Network Manawatū to improve environmental outcomes in the city. For more information, visit the ENM website: enm.org.nz/about/resources/environmental-grants-fund.



Step 4: Apply to Council

Submit your application through the online Smarty Grants portal (you are welcome to contact us so we can show you how). We will assess your application based on the factors outlined in Step 2, as well as the following key areas:

Community benefits

- What do you hope to achieve with the garden and why it's important to you? For example, is it about community connectivity, food supply, teaching gardening skills, recreation or more than one of these?
- The steps you'll take to set up the garden and keep it well-maintained.
- The methods you'll use to keep the neighbourhood informed and engaged.
- How the garden can be used to teach skills such as gardening, composting, water conservation, or food preparation.

Team achievements

- How your group will make decisions, resolve issues, and involve new people.
- Your budget, sources of funding or resources, and the plan for starting up and maintaining the garden.

Step 5: Community engagement

Once we have heard from the immediate neighbours, the reserve users, and Rangitāne o Manawatū, we'll consider their feedback and make a decision.

Step 6: Assessment and decision

The decision might include conditions such as minimum setbacks from the neighbours, specific areas that must be avoided e.g. where they are pipes under the ground.



Step 7: Sign a permit

If approved, a draft permit will be sent to you for feedback and then finalised.

The permit will need to be signed by at least three delegated representatives from your group and the Council, no more than 2 of which can live in the same household.

It will require that if any of the three people involved in signing the agreement move on then a suitable replacement contact is added, so, there is always a good communication channel.

The permit will contain specifics around area that can be gardened, maintenance, what to do if you want to add new things (e.g. a shed) as well as identify details around any service connections such as water.

Step 8: Annual Update

Each year, your group will need to submit a brief annual update through Smarty grants covering:

- **Goals:** What were the goals for the year, and were they met?
- **Challenges:** Were there any significant issues faced during the year?
- **Achievements:** What feedback have you received from participants or the community?
- **Plans:** What changes or improvements are planned for next year?
- **Impact:** How has the garden benefited the community?
- **Participation:** How many people were involved in the garden during the year?
- **Include a few photos to help document and showcase progress over the last year.**

The annual update helps us see how your garden is doing, what's working well, and any challenges you faced. It also lets us know how the garden is benefiting the community and how many people are involved. This helps the Council provide better support and keep the garden growing strong.

How the Council can help you create or maintain a community garden

- Low-cost rentals for community gardens on Council land.
- Some limited in-kind support for trees and compost.
- Promotion of community gardens on Council's website and media channels.
- Environment Network Manawatu administers funding provided by the Council to support community initiatives on its behalf.

Contacts for support

Council are here to support you through this process please contact our Community Development Team at **CommunityDevelopment@pncc.govt.nz** or **06 356 8199**.

Manawatū Food Action Network provide and support local food resilience initiatives, check out their community garden directory at **enm.org.nz/manawatu-food-action/About-MFAN**

Take a look at the community garden directory to find initiatives you might like to support and to connect with other local groups.

Guide Objectives

This guide is designed to achieve positive outcomes aligned with the following plans and policies:

- The Welcoming Communities Plan
- The Community Support Plan
- The Policy for the Use of Public Space
- The Support and Funding Policy
- Reserve Management Plan
- Kai Resilience Policy
- Urban Design Plan

Reviewing this guide

This guide will be updated as needed to reflect changes in Council policies, processes, or service levels.



Te Kaunihera o Papaioea
Palmerston North City Council

pncc.govt.nz / info@pncc.govt.nz / 06 356 8199

