

M A Y 2 0 1 6

Community Garden 3231

Growing food, friendships and community

New Committee and Team Members Needed

Being a member of CG3231 is great fun, but quite a lot goes on behind the scenes to make sure everything works. We have a committee of management and activity teams. We are seeking nominations for the committee as a few people are stepping down.

This year Tania is stepping down as Social Events Team Leader – HELP we need someone to replace her! Angela is no longer going to edit the newsletter and Marg Dunn has agreed to take on the job.

What about being on a team? We particularly need people to help with the Newsletter/Communication team and the Social Events team. You just need to put up your hand to be on a team.

If you want to know more about the roles and what they entail, speak to a committee member or have a look at the document on the board in the shed. We generally meet monthly in the pub on a Friday afternoon.

Position	Current incumbent
Coordinator	Gretel Lamont
Secretary	Leonie Mugavin
Treasurer & Membership	Debra White
Building & Maintenance Team Leader	Keith Bremner
Garden Team leader	Kim Neubecker
Social Events Team leader	Tania Teague
Newsletter / Communications	Angela Berry
Education Team Leader	Terrence Hoffmann

Next working bees

Saturday

7 May 2016

Add compost to 1st wicking bed.

Place 2nd wicking bed and fill.

Sunday

22 May 2016

Please see whiteboard for jobs

Saturday

4 June 2016

Please see whiteboard for jobs.



Compost week

International Composting Awareness Week

2 – 8 May

Penny Woodward has provided a recipe for compost success

<https://www.organicgardener.com.au/blogs/compost-recipe-success>

Note: You may need to cut and paste this url as it probably won't click to open.



Working Bee – 2 April 2016

It was a beautiful day on 2 April and lots of people arrived to help in the garden. We welcomed new members and visitors and finished the working bee listening to Brian Brennan of Bellbrae Organics give an interesting talk on the benefits of compost.

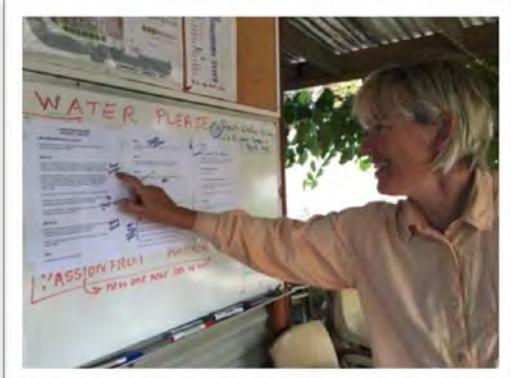


Graham and Alistair worked in the compost. Loved seeing Alistair set up and use his ingenious sieve to sift the soil.

Annie cuts down the 7-year beans



Unice topped up the bed with beautiful compost, where the fennel had been harvested.



Jo checks the list of jobs on the whiteboard. We love the way people just arrive, look at the board and get to work!



Celery and lettuce are planted in Bed B.

Gretel weeded in Bed K.





Update on plantings in our community beds

Jo Murray

Last year, the gardening team introduced a rotation system for our plantings in the community beds. This means that we rotate crops so that no bed sees the same crop in successive seasons. This benefits the garden by:

- Reducing the build-up of pests and diseases in the soil
- Managing soil pH and nutrient levels to help our vegetables get the most out of the soil. Use of composts, manures, lime and fertilisers at the right times, benefits successive crops.
- Building soil. Using organic matter, our own compost and growing green manure crops to add nitrogen to keep our soil healthy and working – good soil is the key to producing great crops.

Beds A & B will continue to have leafy greens. So far we have sown lettuces, silverbeet, bok choy and tatsoi. We have also planted celery in Bed B – this is great for winter soups and stews.

Last year, most of the garlic planted within the garden was affected by rust, so this year we will grow one small, trial plot only. Hopefully it will not be affected again. If all goes well, we will all be able to plant garlic in our beds again in 2017.

The table shows our summer 2015 – 16 plantings and our current autumn crops.

If you have any ideas and suggestions for what to plant in the garden, please talk to a member of the gardening team – Kim, Angela, Barb, Gay and Jo.

	Summer 2015/16	Autumn 2016
Beds D & F	Zucchini, cucumbers and melons	Green manure
Beds E & G	Root crops – carrots, beetroot, fennel, celeriac.	Root crops – carrots, parsnip, beetroot, fennel. Also spring onions
Beds H (new wicking bed) and L	Tomatoes, capsicums	Brassicas – broccoli, cabbages
Beds I (new wicking bed) and K	Beans – climbing and bush; salsify; chervil	Peas; Broad beans

Working Bee – 17 April 2016

Wicking bed ... mainly!

The two wicking beds arrived in time for the working bee last month. Lots of people answered the call for 'many hands' to help with their installation, on a lovely sunny Sunday. The first one is now in place and filled with scoria. The second will be placed in position at the next working bee on Saturday 7 May.



Preparing the site, levelling the ground, rolling the tank to its position and then lowering it down. Then final adjustments before filling with scoria.



Ask Kim

How does a wicking bed work?

The wicking beds are made of heavy duty galvanised steel (the same as water tanks) so that they remain water-tight and withstand the rigors of being used in a community garden by lots of people. Wicking beds essentially work by growing plants above a well of water so it is important that the well doesn't get any holes in it.

So far we have filled the first bed two-thirds full with large pieces of scoria. This is the well. Scoria is ideal because it is covered in holes which means that it holds the maximum amount of water as well as supporting the weight of the soil that is placed above it. A plastic pipe is laid inside from the base and up the side of the bed and some fabric put on top to cover the scoria layer.

The next job will be to fill the remaining one-third of the tank with soil. It is important that the soil doesn't mix with the scoria as the well would then turn into a bog.

Once the soil has been put in the top third of the wicking bed, the garden hose is put into the plastic pipe and the scoria layer filled with water until it starts to come out the overflow pipe, that has been built into the side of the tank. When this water level is reached, the garden is ready to plant.

Overhead watering may be necessary initially to wet the top layer of soil enough, but once that is done, water will move up from the well, through the fabric and into the top soil. This is the wicking process and eliminates the need for overhead watering. Because water can't escape through the soil or be taken up by other plants (especially gum trees), the bed is very water efficient. I would estimate that it needs topping up only once a fortnight over summer, but this will vary according to the size of the vegetables grown in it.

To top up the beds with water, a garden hose is inserted into the plastic pipe and left there until water once again, comes out of the overflow pipe.

We've decided to get a machine to fill the second wicking bed as it is very heavy work barrowing all the scoria and soil.

We look forward to planting up the new beds and hope to construct some ourselves out of recycled materials in the future.

These photos show happy workers at the working bees enjoying time to chat to other members while weeding and planting.

