

Healesville Community Garden



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- Empower people to create more sustainable ways to live for the environment, individuals, communities and our local economy
- Provide access to healthy, nutritious food
- Promote community connectedness by providing community members an opportunity to meet, share ideas, skills and work together
- Provide an area for recreation, exercise, food production, creativity and an appreciation of living things
- Create a sense of wellness and belonging
- Provide gardening opportunities for a broad cross section of the community including individuals and groups from a variety of backgrounds and capabilities



COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022-2023

President: Ethne Pfeiffer
Vice-President: Mima McDonnell
Secretary: Marion Innes
Treasurer: Bruce McMicking

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2023-2024

President: Ethne Pfeiffer
Vice-President: Betty Martens
Secretary: Marc Skolnik
Treasurer: Barbara Laug

MEMBERS 2022-2023

19 Plot holders (some with multiple plots)
4 Social members
1 Regular volunteer

PLOTS 2022-2023

28 Plots for rent
4 Communal plots

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A big thank you to all our hardworking members for their efforts over the year. In particular, I would like to acknowledge executive committee members Bruce McMicking, Marion Innes and Mima McDonnell – and workshop leaders Marcus Kaye, Jayden Kaye, Ashley Kaye and Barbara Laug.

We focused on the following during the year.

Site management and upgrades:

- Successfully applied for the State Government's Living Local grant (\$12,455) to improve the infrastructure, access and amenity across the site.
- Unsuccessfully applied for a Yarra Ranges Council Capital Development grant to purchase a small water tank. The executive committee will apply to a different funder in 2023 for a small water tank if there is support from the membership.
- The site was maintained to a good standard throughout the year by several dedicated members, this included plantings in common areas to grow food and reduce weeds
- Persistent weeds, such as dock, are still an issue and need to be better managed by all members
- The maple trees are being managed (as approved by Council)
- The liquidambar tree near the shed was removed by Council after a large branch fell in January 2023
- Factoring more regular flooding into our site management planning and flood-proofing the shed

New initiatives:

- Building the Community Compost Hub in the first half of 2022 and managing community registrations ongoing. Special thanks to Michael Brewster and Bruce McMicking for their hard work and ingenuity in making this a solid and ergonomic structure.

- Planting fruit trees in June 2022 (following agreement at the 2022 Annual General Meeting). Special thanks to Bruce for setting up the orchard and planting the seedlings.
- Volunteer program – led by Mima McDonnell – with Tina our most consistent volunteer who helps to manage the compost hub

Events:

- The inaugural Healesville Homegrown Food Fair – April 2022 (attended by Cr Fiona McAllister, Ryrie Ward)
- Mushroom foraging walks – April and May 2022 (led by Marcus)
- Pathways for Carers walks – July and December 2022 (garden visit by this Council-led group plus their end-of-year celebration)
- Jam Making workshop – September 2022 (presented by Marcus, Jayden and Ashley)
- Garden Essentials workshop – October 2022 (presented by Marcus)
- Grow Mushrooms workshop – November 2022 (presented by Tom from Fungiifind; initiated by Marcus)
- Swap and Chat meet-ups – January 2023/ongoing (initiated and managed by Barbara)
- Succulents workshop – March 2023 (presented by Barbara and Marcus)

Membership:

- The executive committee managed new memberships and inductions throughout the year
- This included welcoming Healesville Library as a new garden member and colleague within our local network

Stakeholder relations and community engagement:

- Maintained a positive relationship with Yarra Ranges Council workers (including the Parks and Bushlands team, Community Development officers and the grants team)

- Joined the Yarra Ranges Community Garden Network, an initiative of Chelsea McNab, the new Sustainability Officer/Sustainable Environment & Facilities at Yarra Ranges Council
- Attended CAWRS (Community Alliance for Waste Reduction and Sustainability) meetings and networking events

Communications and PR:

- Sent regular newsletter and email updates to members and key stakeholders
- Achieved 3 local newspaper articles on our garden events, 1 article on Marcus's mushroom foraging walks and a mention in Healesville Library's article on their programs and membership at the garden
- Regularly posted to the garden's Facebook page and increased page followers from 532 to 761

Challenges in 2022-2023:

- Two floods in October 2022 which impacted garden beds, paths and the shed
- Thank you to Nanette for researching whether the floodwaters contaminated the soil or food plants. We were advised there were no negative impacts, and this information was passed on to members in November 2022.
- Few members have the ability/availability to work on regular garden maintenance – such as keeping the easement clear; managing the compost bins; and weeding the fence lines, paths and polytunnel. This regular maintenance is required year-round.

Looking ahead:

- Garden members, community members, visitors, Yarra Ranges Council and many community groups see the value of the community garden in Healesville, and we hope we can sustain the site for years to come.

*Ethne Pfeiffer, President
March 2023*

FINANCIAL REPORT

MARCH 2022 – FEBRUARY 2023

INCOME

Membership and plot rental	\$ 1,125.00
Fundraising	\$705.45
Donations	\$20.00
Sale of compost caddy liners	\$20.00
Grants	
State Government 'Living Local'	\$ 12,455.00
Community Bank Healesville	\$ 1,000.00
	\$ 15,325.45

EXPENSES

Capital expenses	
Polyhouse recover	\$ 2,860.00
Espaliered fruit trees	\$550.28
Building maintenance	\$241.79
Consumables	Petrol, fertiliser, etc \$736.27
Equipment maintenance	\$28.00

Administration expenses

CAV, land lease, etc \$807.00

Sundry

Healesville Homegrown Food Fair, compost hub, tip fees \$574.35

\$ 5,797.69

Bruce McMicking, Treasurer



Site upgrades include refurbishing the polyhouse.

STORIES FROM OUR GARDENERS

Coming to the community garden is good fun. I love gardening, and the community garden provides a space for social connection and meeting people. The main things I get out of it are beautiful produce and great company.

Marcus



I like having my own supply of organic vegetables, and growing my own also provides economic benefits. I enjoy being in nature, and the Healesville Community Garden is a really nice place to be.

Carol



We are able to provide for ourselves and our extended family's need for vegetables. Especially during Covid, it was a godsend to be able to spend some time away from home in the community garden. There are a lot of people walking through Coronation Park, where the garden is located, and it is a very friendly environment where everyone says hello and chats. We get great pleasure from gardening, having grown up in families that have gardened.

Peter and Glenn



I started a Mums & Babes activity in the garden when our kids were little. These days I enjoy being able to provide food for my family and spend some solo time tending to my patch. I have many happy memories from our time in the garden when the kids were little. I enjoy the connection with plants and what I get out of being outdoors in the garden for my health and wellbeing.

Marianne



SOME EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Held the inaugural Healesville Homegrown Food Fair, 3 April 2022.



Planted a fruit orchard, June 2022.



Launched the Community Compost Hub, an initiative of the Community Alliance for Waste Reduction and Sustainability, September 2022.



Photo supplied by Mountain Views (Star Mail).

CONTACT US

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<https://www.facebook.com/HealesvilleCommunitygarden>

Website:

<https://foodpatchart.wixsite.com/healesvillegarden>

We thank community members, other community groups, local organisations, Community Bank Healesville and Yarra Ranges Council for their ongoing support. And we give special thanks to Healesville Connect for their efforts online – and in person – to promote and enable our events. Their team has helped make the Healesville Homegrown Food Fair a viable annual event.