

John Irving Park Committee

Community Garden Application

The Community Garden was established so community members and groups can engage in gardening and activities encouraging harmony, cooperation and a sense of belonging.

The intention of the garden is to bring together individuals, neighborhoods and communities for a common purpose: building a better community in the Harris Park and Rosehill area.

The Community Garden project is for the whole community and it promotes:

- Family activity
- Physical fitness
- Health
- Equity and fairness
- A sense of community where trust, effort, knowledge, skills and responsibility are shared
- Creativity
- Quality
- Environmental awareness through community education on waste minimization and through recycling waste by composting and mulching.

Plots will be available for communal planting activities and for individual or group gardening. There will be workshops from time to time. You will find other gardeners are generally very happy to help you.

To join, please read these rules, fill in the attached form and lodge the form with John Irving Park Committee through Harris Park Community Centre. The address details are at the end.

The process is:

1. Read the rules and if you agree with them, fill in and sign the form.
2. Lodge the form with Harris Park Community Centre
3. The John Irving Park Committee will review your form and let you know whether there is a plot available or you have been put on the waiting list.
4. Once a plot is granted, you will be introduced to the Garden, to its community of gardeners and to the practicalities of growing your own vegetables in the community garden.
5. Remember to sign in and out of the garden - this is a Parramatta City Council requirement.
6. Enjoy yourself

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1 Membership

Any individual or group who becomes a member of John Irving Park Committee and the Community Garden is eligible to take up any plot the committee offers, provided they stick to the rules and guidelines in this document.

Before you apply make sure you satisfy the following criteria:

- You must live or work in Parramatta City Council area
- You must be prepared to contribute to communal upkeep of the Community Garden
- You must be prepared to make the most of a plot (there could be a list of gardeners waiting for a plot)
- If you don't meet the criteria, but are keen, contact the John Irving Park committee through the Harris Park Community Centre coordinator on 9635 0157.

2 Applying for a plot

Complete the application form at the end of this document. This is a written agreement to comply with the rules and guidelines. It also makes you a member of the committee with the right to take part in the committee's decisions for the garden.

3 Allocation of plots

Priority may be given to applicants who:

- live closest to the garden
- have the least alternative opportunity to garden
- participate in the general maintenance of the garden.

Apart from that, plots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Plots may only be allocated after each communal area of the Community Garden is developed. The development of each stage is your opportunity to engage with the Garden and its members and assess whether you would like to participate.

Plots are allocated to the member who signed the application form. If a plot is allocated to a group and the signatory moves on, another member of the group may become the new signatory by filling in a new form. The plot will then be kept by that group.

If there are more applications than plots when the first round opens, the plots will be allocated on the priority basis.

If no plots are available when an application is received, the applicant's name will go on a waiting list and they will be advised when a plot becomes available.

Generally there will only be one garden plot for each household and one plot per membership. If there is a surplus of plots, extra plots may be offered to existing members.

Gardeners can apply to the committee if they want an additional plot. These plots will be given for one or two seasons.

When a person is added to the waiting list they will be given priority and gardeners will hand back those additional plots at the end of the season.

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Plots can only be transferred with the permission of the Committee. Members cannot give their plot to another individual or group. If a member no longer wishes to maintain their plot, they must advise the committee. The plot will be allocated to the next eligible person.

Plot sizes are normally about 3 x 1.5 metres and around 400 mm high for individuals, but other sizes can be built for groups or gardeners with special needs. Note that these sizes may change. Wheelchair plots are narrower and higher - around 800 mm and this can be varied.

Plots which are not being used or maintained may be reallocated.

Please advise the committee:

- of any change in email, postal address or telephone number.
- if you become ineligible to keep your plot
- if you will be unable to care for the plot for two months or more.

4 Keys

Keys will be provided to successful member applicants with a \$30.00 refundable deposit. The garden key will allow access to the garden and the shed, during daylight hours. Members must not give the key to another person, or have the key copied. If a member loses their key, the Committee must be informed immediately.

5 Responsibilities for your plot and General garden areas.

5.1 General maintenance of plots

Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their individual plots throughout the year, and should ensure that their plot and the area around their plot are free from pests, weeds, rubbish and free of any items which may obstruct access, particularly access for people with limited mobility. Pests and weeds must be controlled so they do not become a problem to others in the garden.

We encourage mulching of garden plots (to control weed growth and retain moisture).

All green waste must be composted unless there is some reason not to - such as disease.

If a gardener cannot maintain their plot and participate in the maintenance of the general garden areas because of illness or other exceptional circumstances, they must discuss their situation with the Committee. If you intend to be away for more than one month, you must formally notify the committee in writing, so that arrangements can be made to organise volunteers to care for your responsibilities.

There will be a seasonal review of use, maintenance and participation of member's plots and use of community garden, by the garden committee. A yearly renewal of applications from current members will be carried at end of year. Members will be notified by mail of any decisions made that will affect them.

5.2 Attending working bees

As a member of the Community Garden, plot holders are expected to participate in working bees to help maintain the communal areas and to participate in other events when possible. The committee considers working bee participation when it allocates plots.

Allowance is made for people with access problems etc.

5.3 Alterations

Gardeners may not put any form of fence around their plot.

5.4 Building and other materials

Permanent structures must not be built on garden plots without written approval from the committee. We encourage individual expression through artworks etc, but each must be approved by the committees (who have the right to discuss any objections with other plot holders). Other individuals and other cultures may not share your taste. Anything deemed unsuitable by the committee will be removed. The committee is not responsible for any damage or loss. The committee decision is final.

5.5 Types of plants

Plots are for growing vegetables, small fruits, herbs and flowers. Trees and permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots because they can block light to other plots - note that generally this does not limit planting of herbs or perennial edibles such as rhubarb, asparagus, artichoke etc.

The committee reserves the right to ban plants, such as those that may be invasive or are potential weeds or that cause shading problems for others.

You are permitted to grow customary food crops of your cultural background, appropriate to the limitations of the site.

No noxious weed may be left on a plot. A noxious weed is one listed as illegal in this area.

5.6 Climbing and spreading plants

Climbing plants (beans, peas etc) should be grown using stakes etc, with consideration for adjacent gardeners - such as around shade. All plants must be confined within your plot.

5.7 Soil

Gardeners are responsible for improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that nutrients are put back into the soil after every harvest because plants use nutrients in the soil as they grow. Nutrients can be added by adding compost, worm juice and suitable animal manure (no pet manure, no human manure, and no carnivore manure).

Manures are generally best put in the compost bin or worm farm.

6 Pest management

Members must not use any artificial chemicals as fertilisers or to control pests. Virtually all community gardens throughout the world use organic methods. Chemicals can contaminate a neighbour's plot and could be a serious health risk to them. The Committee can provide advice on the safe control of garden pests using safe, environmentally friendly products such as garlic or rhubarb sprays.

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Also, gardeners must not use any chemicals such as derris dust, chili spray, tobacco or pyrethrum which may pose a health risk to other users.

The garden is a non-smoking area and anyone who smokes outside the garden (such as at home) is requested to wash hands before arrival to reduce the risk of bringing in TMV, tobacco mosaic virus that can damage tomatoes and other plants.

7 Animals

Dogs, cats and other pets must be kept out of the Community Garden area. Certified guide etc dogs are permitted.

8 Water management

Please conserve water. Gardeners must adhere to any Sydney Water or John Irving Park Committee restrictions that are in place at the time, as issued to gardeners or as displayed in the garden.

- Avoid wasting water in the garden.
- Hoses should be hand held and should not be left running.
- Trigger nozzles must be used.
- No hosing hard surfaces.
- Available water and watering times should be distributed fairly between plot holders.
- We encourage you to use watering cans. Note: if you have any difficulty with access, carrying loads etc, please make a note of this on your application form and we will do our best to allocate a plot near the taps.

9 Tools

Tools and equipment are provided for use by members of the community garden. These must be returned to the shed after use and must not be removed from the garden.

Personal property should be clearly labeled.

10 Sign on and off

Please sign on before you start gardening and sign off as you leave. Visitors are the responsibility of the gardener who has invited them in and they must sign in and out and provide current contact details. **This is a Parramatta City Council requirement.**

Please consult the notice board inside the shed for any new info.

11 Safety

Safety is a priority, and gardeners need to practice safe gardening. Wear a hat, gloves and strong enclosed shoes at all times. It is advisable to bring sunscreen and sunglasses.

Before using tools or equipment, please make sure you are familiar with and follow the safety directions.

Make sure you know where the first aid kit is - inside the shed.

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12 Sale of produce

Garden plots are available for personal use only, and the produce is for the members and their families and friends. You may not sell any of the garden produce.

The garden is a limited resource and needs to be treated appropriately.

13 General conduct

Smoke free: The garden is a non-smoking area. All smokers please read about TMV and washing hands under **the Pest management** heading.

All gardeners are welcome.

The general rule is to be considerate to other gardeners and respect their plots, their culture, their level of skill and way of gardening. No abusive or threatening behavior will be tolerated.

Children are welcome under the care and supervision of a parent, guardian or other responsible adult. This particularly applies to ensuring they do not play with or interfere with plots other than your own.

This is a community garden and all gardeners are expected to contribute to the weeding, watering, maintenance and planning of the garden. All are invited to share knowledge and experience and to assist with fundraising and other activities as needed.

People under the influence of or who are using alcohol or other drugs are NOT permitted in the garden at any time.

Visitors are the responsibility of the gardener who has invited them in. They must sign in and comply with John Irving Park Committee community garden rules, provide current contact details.

Gardeners and visitors must not remove any part of any plant, soil or equipment from another gardener's plot or from other areas in the community garden without the approval of the Committee.

14 Dealing with any problems or concerns

If there are problems, the people involved should discuss the matter with the Harris Park Community Centre Manager or an executive of the John Irving Park committee, who will Endeavour to resolve the problem.

Harris Park Community Centre Manager or an executive of the John Irving Park committee may act as mediator to the parties in an attempt to resolve matters as amicably as possible.

If appropriate, a verbal warning will be issued. If the problems continue, a written warning will be issued. At the third notice, the person will be asked to withdraw from the community garden.

Final decisions will be made by the John Irving Park Committee.

Anyone making racial, political, gender, religious, cultural or other slurs in the Community Garden will be removed, if necessary by police.

The committee has the right to change a person's access and membership at any stage.

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15 Security

By signing the agreement, you agree not to hold the Committee responsible for any theft, damage or other illegal activity to the garden plots.

Please report any inappropriate activity to the Committee (and **to Police on 000 if it is illegal and serious**) immediately.

The garden shed and gates must be locked when gardeners leave the garden. **Before locking the shed, you must check that there is no-one inside.**

16 Compost bins and worm farms

There are compost bins and worm farms in the community gardens. Please use them as a means of reducing kitchen waste, for example fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, leftover rice, noodles etc. Do not put meat, fish or chicken in the worm farms or compost bins. Do not add wood, plastic bags, tin cans or boxes to the compost.

Ideally, chop up or break up any plant matter because this will improve the composting. You can bring waste from home, provided it meets these requirements.

John Irving Park Committee, Harris Park Community Centre, 11 Albion Street, Harris Park 2150,
Phone 9635 0157 Fax 9635 0685, Email hpcc11@bigpond.com

**John Irving Park Committee
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**Application to become a member of the John Irving Park Committee and
Application for a plot at John Irving Park Community Garden**

Given Name			
Family Name			
Address			
	Postcode		
Postal address if different			
	Postcode		

Contact Numbers

Home	
Work	
Mobile	
Email	

Name of Emergency Contact Person (we can contact them if we need to when you are at the garden)

Name of Contact	
Who (Partner, mother, friend)	
Contact Number	

Do you have a Health Care Card (Please circle)

Yes	No
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Are you (Please circle)

Female	Male
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Age Group (Please circle)

18-35	36-59	60+
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Preferred Language

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Second language

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What gardening experience do you have?

If little or no experience or if you are unsure, we can help you.

If you have more experience, would you like to share it with other community gardeners?

We will have some plots for people with limited mobility or who are in wheelchairs etc. If you have special physical needs for your garden plot, please give us some info so we can cater for you as far as possible. For example access for wheelchair, stroller can't carry heavy loads etc.

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If you are joining as a household, family, group, please list all the names and ages

Name	Age

Please circle the times and days you are able and willing to attend working bees or meetings. Mark as many as suits you. We will use this to pick days that work best for the group overall.

For example:

Put a circle around Thursday if any time on Thursday suits you.

Circle the row of evenings if any suits you.

Put a big circle around the whole week if any time on any day suits you.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	Morning	Morning	Morning	Morning	Morning	Morning
Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening

I have been given a copy of the Community Garden Rules.

I have read them and agree to participate in line with them.

I agree to sign the attendance book on arriving at the garden and when leaving the garden.

Signed		Date	
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Please return this form to John Irving Park Committee, Harris Park Community Centre, 11 Albion Street, Harris Park, NSW 2150, Phone: 9635 0157 Fax 9635 0685 or to hpcc11@bigpond.com