

<p>PURPOSE</p>	<p>To provide a Mornington Peninsula Shire framework for the appropriate development, management and sustainability of both new and existing Community Gardens.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>To provide a consistent framework for the development of community gardens or variations to existing community gardens based on agreed assessment criteria including site suitability, community need and available resources;</p> <p>To clarify rights and responsibilities of all partners involved in community gardening projects with reference to issues such as efficient and effective self management, public liability, maintenance and access that meets relevant public amenity and safety requirements;</p> <p>To promote the development of community gardens as demonstration sites for sustainability, community development and health and wellbeing;</p> <p>To expand opportunities for access to fresh, affordable and locally produced fruit and vegetables in a healthy community setting.</p>
<p>SCOPE</p>	<p>The policy recognises the emerging request for community gardens and ensures that community gardens are developed efficiently and maintained as attractive vibrant and sustainable spaces.</p> <p>This policy applies to all persons and groups seeking access to Council owned and/or managed land to establish community gardens or to amend or vary existing community gardens on Council owned and/or managed land.</p> <p>It is also relevant for individuals or groups seeking use of or access to Council services or resources in relation to community gardens.</p> <p>The establishment of Community Gardens on Council land or any request for resources in relation to community gardens must demonstrate that the garden will enhance open space and promote community development.</p>
<p>DEFINITIONS</p>	<p>Community Garden Community garden is an inclusive term for different types of enterprise that involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • horticulture, mainly of food species, usually vegetables and culinary herbs and sometimes, fruit and nut trees • community involvement • local government support and participation <p>They range in size and type and may include, but are not limited to, an allotment or shared garden, orchard, education facility, bush tucker garden, demonstration garden or a variety of combinations deemed fit for purpose.</p> <p>Community gardens are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places where people come together to grow fresh food and other plants, to learn, and make new friends.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not-for-profit and community based enterprises producing food primarily for the consumption of the gardeners and are multi-use places which are publicly accessible. • Can provide a wide range of environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits. The focus of activity within a community garden varies with the enterprise; larger projects may combine a number of activities such as gardening, education, and demonstration. <p>Community Development - Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.</p> <p>Public Land – for the purposes of this policy, public land includes all Council owned land and Crown Land under Council’s care control and management.</p>
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>Council supports, in principle:</p> <p>The establishment of a range of community gardens that are fit for purpose, and well located to serve neighbourhoods and towns around the Shire;</p> <p>The establishment of community gardens that are complementary to, or add value to, the existing open space network in the Shire;</p> <p>The establishment of community gardens throughout the Shire provided they meet certain criteria and specifically that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community gardens group/organisation has demonstrated that it is self-supporting, it has the required skills to manage the activity, suitable structure and mechanisms in place to manage the members, manage the administration requirements and maintain the land, • Suitable Council owned or managed land is available for the purpose proposed • Where possible they be co-located with existing community facilities, e.g. community centres or hubs • That they provide opportunities to build social capacity and have positive environmental, educational and health and wellbeing outcomes <p>Council will, subject to resources, facilitate opportunities for community gardens where appropriate by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing guidelines and conditions that would apply to community groups wanting to establish a community garden • Promoting awareness of community gardens and their value within the health and wellbeing context

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting in connecting local community gardeners to relevant networks that assist inform, advocate and enable the sharing of information and resources
<p>PROCEDURE</p>	<p>The procedure is relevant to both proposed community gardens and to existing community gardens that seek a variation or amendment.</p> <p>1. New Community Gardens For Council to consider supporting the development of new community gardens on Council owned or managed land, applicants will need to follow the procedure for starting a new Community Garden.</p> <p>The steps are outlined in the Mornington Peninsula Shire Community Garden Kit comprising:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mornington Peninsula Shire Guidelines Community Gardens 2013 MPS Community Garden Expression of Interest Community Garden Start-Up Checklist Mornington Peninsula Community Garden Site Assessment Procedure for starting a New Community Garden <p>Approval for all new community gardens on Council land will be subject to relevant standard Council permit and approval processes.</p> <p>2. Existing Community Gardens All existing community gardens on Council owned or managed land will be expected to comply with the Community Garden Strategy documents when making application to vary or amend their existing gardens.</p>
<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p>	<p>Council; For considering and determining requests for land and buildings that cannot be satisfied from available, suitable resources.</p> <p>All Directors; For ensuring the policy is appropriately applied in their respective areas of control. Particularly in the following Units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Systems Recreation & Leisure Property and Valuations Social Planning & Community Development Child Youth and Family Services Renewable Resources <p>Responsible for ensuring that team members and volunteers are aware of the policy when engaging in any relevant activity</p> <p>Coordinator, Social Planning and Community Development; For ensuring the Policy and procedures are implemented and maintained. For determining the suitability of the applications to ensure they comply with current legislation and council policies and strategies where</p>

	<p>appropriate.</p> <p>Health & Wellbeing Team Leader; For first point of reference, initial assessment of community benefit and ensuring that applications are progressed through Council in a timely fashion</p>
RELATED POLICIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPSC Strategic Plan Creating Safe, Healthy and Engaged Communities • Health Hope and Happiness II – Health and Wellbeing (Municipal Public Health Plan) • Open Space Strategy 2003 • Community Facilities Tenancies Policy
RELATED LEGISLATION	<p>Local Government Act 1989.</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Act</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network http://www.communitygarden.org.au/ • Community and Social Planners Network (CASPN) local govt community garden policies 2013 • Food for All, Vic Health • Council Leases Register • Standard Council Community Groups Lease.
AUTHOR	Social Planning and Community Development Unit
APPROVED	Council 23 rd June 2014
REVIEW	This Policy shall be subject to review within 12 months of the next general Council election to be held in November 2016.