

# **Leongatha Community Garden (LCG)**

## **Garden Plot Guidelines & Conditions**

### **2024/25**

*Thank you for your interest in renting a Plot at the Leongatha Community Garden! Plots are garden beds that are leased to individuals, households or community groups (plot-holders) to cultivate for their own use. There are also several community plots where produce is grown for community use/activities.*

## **1. ALLOCATION OF PLOTS**

As Plots become available, vacancies are advertised through the LCG newsletter and social media if there is nobody on the waiting list.

Plot applicants need to be familiar with these LCG Plot Guidelines. Completion of the Membership Application Form indicates agreement to abide by these guidelines.

In the event of there being insufficient Plots, a waiting list will be kept and Plots allocated as they become available. The method of allocation will be 'first come-first served', based on the current waiting list, unless, in the opinion of LCG Committee, there are special circumstances.

Each Plot-holder must be a current member (Friend/s of the Garden) of Leongatha Community Garden Association Inc.

## **2. HOLDING OF PLOTS**

LCG operates on land provided by Gippsland Community College whose responsibilities include demonstratively serving the community. Plot-holders may not transfer their Plot to another person/group without the permission of LCG. If a Plot-holder is unable to maintain their Plot, it is the Plot holder's responsibility to inform LCG by email and the Plot will be re-allocated.

A contact phone number is required on all Application forms to allow the LCG to contact a Plot holder when email correspondence has failed regarding an untended Plot.

## **3. FEES AND MEMBERSHIP**

There is an annual fee payable for a garden Plot, which is invoiced before the start of the financial year. Fee options are as follows:

### **Membership Type**

- Friend of the Garden (Single Membership)
- Friends of the Garden (Family, household or Group Membership)

**Garden Plot renter/s** (must be a 'Friend/s of the Garden' to rent a Plot)

For a new Plot holder, the fee is calculated pro-rata to cover the remaining period until June 30<sup>th</sup>. If the Plot is allocated in April, May or June, then the membership fees charged, if any, are at the discretion of the Committee.

For a renewal, the fee shall cover the next full financial year, and a reminder email sent approximately 2 weeks before the fee is due. LCG will not chase up unpaid Plot fees. If a fee is not received by June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Plot will potentially be re-allocated.

Plot-holders who give up their Plots during the (paid) year will not receive any Plot fee refund.

LCG Friend/s of the Garden members receive a discount on certain items purchased from LCG's Cluck 'n Collect - Mini Market, where eggs, veggies, preserves and flowers, along with Plot needs like seeds and seedlings can be purchased.

Plot holders are encouraged to exercise their membership rights by participating in the running of this community organisation. Members are also encouraged to participate in community events that are undertaken by the LCG. This includes participating in the manning of the LCG stall at the monthly Rail Trail Community Market and/or at other events nominate by the LCG Committee.

#### **4. Safety in the Garden**

The Leongatha Community Garden is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all members. To achieve this, we have identified the following potential hazards and implemented corresponding control measures:

##### **Summary of Key Risks and Control Measures for Leongatha Community Garden**

The Leongatha Community Garden is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all members. To achieve this, we have identified the following potential hazards and implemented corresponding control measures:

- **Slips, Trips, and Falls:**
  - Uneven ground, poor lighting, and wet surfaces can increase the risk of slips, trips, and falls.
  - Control Measures: Regular maintenance of paths and walkways, adequate lighting, warning signs, and appropriate footwear are required.
- **Equipment Hazards:**
  - Incorrect use or maintenance of tools and equipment can lead to injuries.
  - Supervision of children on playground equipment must be undertaken.
  - Control Measures: Members must undergo proper training on tool and equipment use. Regular equipment inspections (including the playground) and safe storage of tools are mandatory.
- **Weather-Related Hazards:**
  - Extreme weather conditions (heat, cold, rain, storms) can pose risks to health and safety.
  - Control Measures: Members should be prepared for varying weather conditions by providing shade, staying hydrated, and wearing appropriate clothing. Activities may be adjusted based on weather conditions.
- **Insect and Animal Bites:**
  - Exposure to insects, spiders, and other animals can result in bites or stings.
  - Control Measures: Protective clothing and insect repellent are recommended. Members should avoid disturbing wildlife.
- **Chemical Exposure:**

- Exposure to pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers can harm health.
- Control Measures: Chemicals must be used cautiously, with appropriate protective gear and adherence to label instructions. Secure storage of chemicals is essential.
- Biological Hazards:
  - Contact with contaminated soil or water can lead to infections.
  - Control Measures: Thorough handwashing after gardening is vital. Avoid touching your mouth or eyes, and wear gloves when handling soil.
- Foodborne Illness:
  - Improper handling of food can cause foodborne illnesses.
  - Control Measures: Practice good hygiene, wash produce thoroughly, and store food safely.
- Conflict and Disputes:
  - Misunderstandings or disagreements between garden members can lead to conflict.
  - Control Measures: Members are expected to adhere to established guidelines, engage in open communication, and utilize mediation services if necessary.
- Theft and Vandalism:
  - Garden property may be subject to theft or vandalism.
  - Control Measures: Security measures are in place. Members should report any suspicious activity.

#### Member Responsibilities:

- Be aware of and follow all posted safety guidelines.
- Report any hazards or unsafe conditions to garden management immediately.
- Use caution when operating tools and equipment.
- Dress appropriately for the weather and gardening activities.
- Practice good hygiene and food safety habits.
- Respect fellow garden members and their property.

A safety notice poster is displayed at the tool shed and a first aid kit is contained inside the shed. By working together and adhering to these safety measures, we can ensure a safe and enjoyable gardening experience for everyone.

## 5. The HUB, TOOLSHED and TOOLS

### 5.1. The HUB Facility

The HUB is the office and registered kitchen of the LCG. It is available for members to hire for a fee under certain conditions. For conditions of Hire please refer to the document titled “LCG HUB Hire Conditions”. The HUB cannot be hired and used for any commercial purposes.

### 5.2. Lock

The HUB and the tool shed must be locked when there are no members or the gardener present at the Garden. A combination lock on the tool shed is provided for this purpose. The combination shall be issued to all Plot holders.

This combination should not be shared with other people unless they are maintaining your Plot whilst you are not present.

### 5.3. Garden Tools

There is a range of tools and wheelbarrows provided in the tool shed for communal use. If any garden equipment is missing, Plot-holders should report this to a Committee Member or the gardener (present on Thursday and Friday), as soon as possible.

## **6. SIGN ON & INCIDENTS**

### **6.1. Sign on**

All Plot-holders are required to log their attendance at Garden Events and working bees by signing in and out on the form provided. This is required to ensure all Plot-holders are covered by the Garden's insurance while on site.

### **6.2. Incidents**

Please report all incidents, no matter how minor, to a member of the Committee as soon as possible. An incident report may be required to be filled out.

## **7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PLOT-HOLDERS FOR THEIR OWN PLOTS**

### **7.1. Maintenance of Plots**

Plot-holders are responsible for the care and maintenance of their individual Plots throughout the year. It is the responsibility of Plot-holders to maintain their Plot. There is an expectation that the Plot holders tend their Plots regularly.

It is expected that the Plots are actively being used and are kept free from weeds.

The Plots may have a sign placed in them with the Plot owners name and wording to discourage theft. Due to personal safety and insurance issues, Plot-holders are strongly advised to work on their Plots in daylight hours only.

### **7.2. General Garden Maintenance – Working Bees**

All Members who have a plot are expected to attend at least one (1) Working Bee per financial year.

### **7.3. Pathways**

Plot-holders are responsible for keeping the pathways around their Plot free of weeds, rubbish and any items that may be obstructing the pathways or be a hindrance or safety issue, including overgrown plants from the Plot, netting, stakes and trellis/fencing material.

### **7.4. Appropriate Plants**

Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for Plots because they may block sun to other Plots. Plot-holders who wish to grow large plants must advise LCG before Plots are allocated.

### **7.5. Trellises**

Consideration must be given to other Plot-holders regarding trellis placement, height and shading.

## **7.6. Building and other Materials**

Permanent structures must not be built on Plots or on vacant areas of the LCG. Plot-holders cannot use the LCG facilities to store building materials.

Inappropriate materials such as chipboard, medium-density fibreboard (MDF), glass or treated pine must not be used. If you are in any doubt, please contact a Committee Member.

## **7.7. Soil and Organic Inputs**

Plot-holders 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 season. This can be achieved by adding manure, compost, and mulch provided by the Garden. Soil is not to be removed from any Plots. At times, LCG will make soil and compost available to Plot holders. Plot holders will be notified of the availability of soil, compost and mulch.

## **7.8. Water**

All Plot-holders are required not to waste water. We encourage mulching to conserve water in your Plot.

## **7.9. Waste Management**

Plot-holders are required to keep their Plots and surrounding areas tidy and recycle organic materials appropriately. As far as practical, all organic refuse from the Plot that is placed in the compost area provided, must be cut into smaller pieces. All non-plant rubbish must be disposed of in the appropriate bin provided onsite or taken home. Rubbish is not to be left in the Plot area. Unused pots must not be left within a Plot.

## **7.10. Fertilisers and Control of Garden Pests**

Please use organic garden practices. **Pesticides, herbicides (including glyphosate), other toxic chemicals or non-organic fertilizers are not to be used (or introduced to the site).** Consult LCG Committee members for acceptable alternatives.

## **7.11. Noise**

Please consider LCG's neighbours and other Plot -holders.

## **7.12. Children**

Children are welcome at LCG. Parents are responsible for their own children in the garden and on the playground equipment.

## **7.13. Animals**

Dogs on a leash are permitted in the Plot area. Dogs not on a leash, cats and other pets are not permitted in the Plot area.

## **7.14. No Smoking**

Leongatha Community Garden is a designated no-smoking area.

### **7.15. Alcohol**

The garden is a public space and drinking of alcohol is not permitted unless at an authorised garden event.

## **8. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each Plot-holder has the right to quiet enjoyment of the LCG Community Garden. We are all responsible for the security, safety and harmony of the LCG Community Garden. Respect one another's beliefs and cultural differences.

Members are required to abide by the LCG Rules and the Garden Etiquette:

- Be friendly and introduce themselves to other gardeners.
- Be respectful of other gardener's plots – don't weed, water or help themselves to others produce.

## **9. RELEASING A PLOT**

When you release your Plot, you are responsible for removing all weeds and structures from your bed. Further, all plants should be removed unless notified by LCG Committee members that they may remain for the next Plot holder or for communal use if the bed cannot be allocated.

## **10. FORFEITURE OF PLOTS**

Plot ownership operates strictly on a 'use it or lose it basis'.

It is expected that Plot owners will visit the garden regularly to maintain their beds, water, grow crops, and remove weeds and finished or diseased plants promptly. If Plot-holders are going away for a period, they must arrange a minder for their Plot. Please notify a committee member if you will be unable to attend the garden for an extended period.

If the Plot becomes overgrown or vegetation encroaches onto neighbouring plots, the Plot holder will be notified of the issue by email. The Plot may be forfeited without refund unless the Plot holder responds and steps are taken address the issue. Alternatively, the Plot-holder must satisfy LCG that there are exceptional circumstances. The Plot-holder will receive an email, a follow up phone call, followed by forfeiture of the plot two weeks later if no substantial improvement takes place.

LCG reserves the right, at the time that Plot subscriptions are due, to discontinue Plot allocations which have not been maintained in accord with these guidelines and the application agreement.

## **11. MAINTENANCE OF COMMON GARDEN BEDS AND PUBLIC AREAS**

Plot-holders are invited to help care for the common beds and public areas within the Plot area.

As indicated, all Members who have a plot are expected to attend at least one (1) Working Bee per financial year. Monthly working bees are arranged by LCG. They provide a time for Plot-holders to meet, share knowledge and exchange ideas. Plot-holders who are not able to attend working bees

are invited to put in the equivalent hours work in the communal areas of the garden, or other tasks, which may be listed on the Tasks notice board.

Leaking taps, damage to gardens, or lost/broken equipment need to be reported to a Committee Member.

Non-Plot areas are not for personal use and plants must not be removed from non-Plot areas unless approved.

## **12. DEALING WITH PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS**

If Plot-holders have any concerns about the garden or about other Plot-holders, they should contact a LCG Committee member.

## **13. REVIEW OF GUIDELINES & VIABILITY**

'LCG Plot Gardens - Guidelines' is a living document and may be revised from time to time. LCG reserves the right to amend or add to this document.

Plot holders will be advised of changes to the guidelines.

***I have read, understood and agree to abide by the Leongatha Community Garden - Garden Plot Guidelines 2024/25.***

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_