

27. COMMUNITY GARDENS SUBCOMMITTEE

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Community Secretary
Corporate Plan Output: Burwood/Pegasus Community Board	

The purpose of this report is to seek Board endorsement for the Community Gardens Subcommittee's recommendations on the portable community garden pilot project.

The Board's Community Gardens Subcommittee has established a number of pilot schemes for portable community gardens. The gardens themselves are manufactured by the Mature Employment Services and are raised to allow elderly and disabled people to garden in comfort. They also have the added benefit of portability, which enables them to be relocated when no longer required by a particular user.

An initial trial was established at the Concord Place Council Housing Units and proved very popular with the Units' residents. The Board funded the pilot through its Strengthening Community Action Plan Funds and a contribution from its Discretionary Funds. All of the portable gardens are now in place and composting facilities will be installed within the next few weeks.

The trial itself has great potential to be expanded throughout the community into Council Housing Units, disabled people's residences and possibly marketed to the wider community. This has social, economic and environmental benefits to the community as the gardens provide a focal point for people to congregate, provide potential employment and revenue for Mature Employment Services and also contribute to putrescibles being composted rather than deposited into the Burwood Landfill. For these reasons the Subcommittee believes that expanding the scheme will have long-term triple bottom line benefits to the Burwood/Pegasus community.

Despite its enthusiasm for the pilot project the Subcommittee is also realistic about its future, and as a consequence has requested that a survey gauging Concord Place residents' perceptions of the scheme be undertaken at the end of the 2000/01 summer period. This will provide information on the success, or otherwise of the project, and provide a structure for the pilot to be expanded more efficiently and effectively into other housing complexes.

At its last meeting, held on Tuesday 18 July, the Community Gardens Subcommittee decided to forward the following recommendations for the Board's endorsement to allow continued development of the portable community gardens pilot scheme.

- Recommendations:**
1. That the Chairperson, Glenda Burt and Community Secretary, with advice from Muriel Buhrs, prepare a brochure outlining the portable gardens pilot project, available gardening resources and advice on how to establish community gardens.
 2. That the Board, through its various funding avenues, continue to support and initiate community gardens.
 3. That the Subcommittee approach Housing New Zealand and the Council's Housing Unit to subsidise community garden projects in housing units.

4. That at the end of the 2000/01 summer period appropriate staff survey Concord Place residents to determine adequate levels of subsidy and the benefits of the portable gardens pilot scheme to allow for expansion of the pilot into other housing units.

Chairperson's

Recommendation:

That the aforementioned recommendations be adopted.