



ANNUAL GARDEN REPORT NOVEMBER 2018





SUMMARY

On May 1st 2017, the Richmond Community Garden Trust were issued with a 2 year lease from LINZ for 1 acre of Red Zone land in front of the paddling pool to create a transitional community space, floral garden, fruit forest and edible native garden. We are directly across from the Avon Otakaro cycleway, making us a logical gateway and point of interest. 6 months later the lease was amended to cover 2 acres of land and in June 2018 our lease was extended by another 3 years.

Our Volunteers do over 80 hours per week, several regular groups come to the garden each week, we deliver a box of fresh veggies to Delta once sometimes twice a week, we have held 3 key events and 6 workshops this year.



OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

SPACE

Develop our 2 acres of Red Zoned land as an exemplar of a safe community space.

Incorporate food resilience, education and nature play.

Combat social isolation, poverty and limited access to healthy food.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

By creating a circular economy with our own resources and waste.

Explore relevant commercial opportunities to earn our own income through our produce, location and ecotourism activities.

VOLUNTEERS

Recruit, nurture and retain volunteers.

ORGANIC ETHOS

We have a documented and thorough ecological practise and are committed to working towards organic certification.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Increase the amount of fresh food we distribute to our immediate community.

Build on the number of community groups we regularly engage with and facilitate and appropriate regular community events and actively contribute to the wider food resilience network.



WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO IN RELATION TO OUR STRATEGIC GOALS?

Whew, we have had a massive year! Since our last report in November 2017, our team has completed the main hazelnut woven garden beds, where we got very busy planting for our first growing season over the summer of 2017/18 which was very successful. We donated lots of food to Delta, the City Mission and had more than

enough for our local community and volunteers to enjoy. We learnt a lot about what worked and what didn't, we have applied those learnings to our current growing season that has just got underway.

The trees in our Future Food Forest have all survived the first season and are growing nicely to create the canopies for extending the understory this winter.

Thank you to CCC and PGG Wrightsons for putting in place a new tap, outside power source and piping for the much needed irrigation to the garden beds and little garden.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AND EDUCATION AREA

The students from the ARA social work school were pivotal in getting the outdoor classroom designed and implemented. We have received funding from the Enliven Spaces Fund to purchase seating to be installed into the logs and to create a sculpture competition utilising 16 mailboxes from Red Zoned properties, once installed this will complete the space and hopefully bring attention to it from the commissioned sculpture.

RICHMOND COMMUNITY GARDEN OLIVE OIL CO'OP

In June we harvested olives from the Red Zone and private properties in and around Richmond. These were pressed to produce our own olive oil which was distributed to our volunteer pickers, property owners and the remainder is still being sold in our shop. This coming winter we are going to make this into an event where our volunteers will team up to see who picks the most, followed by a prize giving and a BBQ.

COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

Our community composting scheme is well underway. We are working with the Avebury Mens Shed to build the compost bins to be situated at the Vogel Street entrance of the garden for our community to deliver their green waste. We will provide detailed education signage to encourage them to learn and apply the principles at home or get involved at our site. We will then provide bags of compost to the neighbourhood. We are hoping to secure funding to pay for a compost manager to ensure this project is successful.



BERMINATORS

We have systematically taken over all the berms fronting the river side of our site in order to stop the spraying and the energy required for mowing. We have planted the berms with natives and in collaboration with a local weaver a number of flax varieties for her classes.

This winter, we took over a large berm at the end of Eveleyn Couzins Drive that had been destroyed by boy racers driving over it. We spoke to the council contractors about our plan and they were more than happy for us to take it over as it was becoming difficult to mow and to stop people from walking and driving over it. We applied piles of seaweed, pigeon manure, straw, coffee waste and topsoil and then covered it for a few months. Bailey Perryman from Cultivate Christchurch came and rotary-hoed the plot and with the help of Zealandier, we planted corn, beans, pumpkin and sunflowers. It is our take on the 3 Sisters and we call it the 4 Maidens. Maiden Group Construction have come to the party and are helping us with educational signage to explain why these plants grow well together. We are planning a combined event with Avebury House in March 2019 to have a gala and community harvest festival where we will feed our community with the spoils of this crop.

LITTLE GARDEN BESIDE AVEBURY HOUSE

Over the last 12 months, we have slowly converted the old Richmond Community Garden into a cut flower garden for the purpose of Avebury House to utilise. We have a volunteer with the expertise in this area who focuses on this project with the help of our other volunteers and the Delta Friendship Group.

BEE HIVE

Bee Awesome have installed a test bee hive in our space to form part of their education programme teaching school kids about bees and sustainable planting.

FEDGE

Emma from Nature Play helped us install a willow fedge and one of our local supporters Mike made us seating to create a space that our community or anybody wandering through can enjoy. Once it has matured it will look more like a roof-less hut that the young and old alike can enjoy.



NATIVE EDIBLE GARDEN - KORU GARDEN

Over the winter, we created a koru-shaped garden at the front of the native regeneration area with the intention to plant native edible or medicinal plants. As these plants grow, it will become a koru-shaped maze and education spot. We were donated a carved koru from the Wood Whisperer that has been stolen twice but keeps returning. We believe this is due to the level of engagement our community has for our space.

LITTLE SHOP

We have our Little Shop open on a Wednesday and Saturday morning. This has been very successful and well received. We make products from the things we grow such as hand creams, olive oil, jams and chutneys, worm wees and planter sticks. The income from the store helps us immensely and is part of the drive to be somewhat self-sufficient.

CANTERBURY COMMUNITY GARDENS ASSOCIATION (CCGA)

A number of our volunteers are also active in the CCGA committee. This year we have helped set up a stand at the Horticultural Society Autumn Garden show promoting community gardening. Supported other community gardens with Health and Safety plans, recruitment and seedlings. During Feasta, we put on the closing event where we grew the food that was then harvested and prepared by the team at the iLex cafe. Most recently we entered the Pop-Up Garden in Cathedral Square which we were selected in the final 6 gardens, but were pipped at the post. The AGM and Xmas function for the CCGA was held at Avebury House and the Richmond Community Garden respectively.

EVENTS

We have run a number of successful events this year. In June we held Matariki in the Zone with Avon Otakaro Network and Avebury House. We laid a hangi and we had Richard Till cook up soups from the food that our locals provided, over 500 people attended.

In September, we tried a Car Boot Sale in our Red Zone space. This attracted over 80 vendors and at least 500 people to the site.

At the Arts Centre Monster Garage Sale, we sold our seedlings and produce, whilst providing an educational activity for kids.



At Meet in the Middle we held our seedling workshop and portable Little Shop

During Feasta 2018, we were part of the "For Love of Bees" cycle tour highlighting sites from the city to the sea that are creating spaces for pollinators to thrive.

Most recently in conjunction with Avebury House, we held a Xmas Night Market inside and outside of Avebury House with over 30 vendors and over 500 participants.

WORKSHOPS

Our workshops are directed to our volunteers first and foremost, then offered to the wider community. They are always well attended and create an opportunity to generate income for ourselves and for the experts we bring in.

This year we have held a fruit bottling course, jam making course and a number of school holiday garden fun programmes including Autumn leaf gathering. We recreated the wonderful weaving course Juliett Arnold from Rekindle helped us with and this is something we will do every winter.

The garden was part of the Necessary Traditions Festival recently run by Rekindle. We hosted the earth building workshops which is located in our garden and will be used for further workshoping and once finished will be our clubhouse and dry store. This project has given our volunteers an opportunity to try something different and be part of the process of building a structure, as well as this, it has given Kerry Mulligan, who is now a Richmond local the opportunity to practise her trade by tutoring the workshops. Thanks to Richie's Brick and Block for preparing the brick floor, Paddy from The Pump House for the door, Salts Used Appliances for the window, Steve Brailsford for all the timber, specialist tools and his expertise and Butlers Auto Mart for the loan of the trailers. During the festival weekend, we had a stall in the Arts Centre showing people how to seed out plants and encourage gardening.

Most recently we have organised a Wild Edible Food tour with Peter Langlands. There was so much wild edible food on our 2 acres we didn't get much further into the red zone. The team from Greening the Red Zone organised a Weed Wackers tour which started on our site to identify unwanted invasive plants and prior to all of this, Mary Tingy came and taught our volunteers about weed identification and how to weed in a more sustainable way.



GROUPS

Dementia Canterbury continue to visit us once a month. We love this group as they bring a special energy and they absolutely thrive being in the garden. The men particularly like to do heavy work, pushing wheelbarrows, digging and interacting with our other volunteers.

With the rebuild of the Delta Community building and the Crossway Church, we have embraced the Grow Our Own Free Lunch group run by Mary Tingy. Mary has brought with her, her huge horticultural knowledge for which we are most grateful for, and the Delta friendship group who bring an enormous amount of energy and fun to our space.

Youth Town come to us regularly and help out when we have a big job to do. This year they helped with mulching our berms, moving our propagation house and chopping up compost. We are looking forward to having them again during the next school holidays. As well as Youth Town we have had young people from Christs College who helped us with the Richmond Village plantings and a clean up at Di Madgins garden in the Red Zone. Earlier in the year we had the No 17 Squadron Air Training Corps come down and do a heap of mulching in our space. Our local kindergartens and schools regularly visit our site to explore and for education.

We continue to support Avon-Otakaro Forest Park in the native regeneration area situated at our site, they provide us with an amazing amount of local knowledge, eco sourced plants and help with our native planting plan.

We always work closely with Greening the Rubble and Avon-Otakaro Network to provide volunteers and resources for planting days, events and other activities.



CHALLENGES

Although the petty theft and vandalism has reduced it is still an issue, attracting more people to the space and local supporters help. However, we will need to start putting in more intensive security measures, stronger doors, signage, lighting and cameras to further discourage this behaviour.

We attempted to put in a meadow this spring it was a spectacular failure but a great learning experience for next year.

The growth and interest in our space has been so massive and fast, our coordinators, trust team and key volunteers at times cannot keep up with the pace, more funding is required to extend our coordinator hours to ensure the needs of our volunteers and community are met and that we don't lose the momentum.

The transitional nature of the site presents us with some barriers and we look forward to the day when we can plan longer than a few years at a time and freely plant in the ground.



WHATS NEXT?

Continue to nurture existing volunteers and recruit for new ones, ensuring there is always a varied education and wide range of activities to choose from. Fostering an open friendly and safe environment.

Continue to develop our community outreach programme to encompass, the Richmond Streetscape, Di Madgins garden, our local parks, Housing New Zealand site in Evelevyn Couzins Avenue and locals in need.

Collaborate with Greening the Rubble on the Swanns Road entrance to set up a community cafe and seating area to encourage people into our space as well as the Avon Otakaro cycle walkway.

Work closely with the Richmond Residents and Business Association (RRBA) to incorporate food resilience aspects to any projects they undertake.

Further develop our Organics Ethos into a more formal written plan.

Build on our events from last year to make them bigger and better.

Deliver on our sculpture competition to have it commissioned in time for our harvest festival.

Connect to other nature play practitioners to create more nature play activities with in our site.



THANK YOU

Our Coordinators, volunteers, our locals, LINZ, Regenerate, Central and Papanui Community boards, Rata, COGS (DIA), Maiden Group, Avon Otakaro Network, Avebury House Mens Shed, Avebury House, Food Resilience Network, Canterbury Community Gardens Association, Tui, Delta, John Rhind, Yates NZ, Trees for Canterbury, University of Canterbury Nursery, Avon-Otakaro Forest Park, Evan Smith, Otakaro Limited, Treetech Limited, Bryan and Colleen Fairburn, Ouruhia Nursery, Enliven Spaces, Cocopelli, Wood Whisperer, Kiwi Care, Rekindle, Mary Tingy, New World Stanmore Road, Peter Langlands, Butler Auto, Cultivate Christchurch, Zealandia, PGG Wrightson, The Pump House, Ritchies Brick and Block, Salts Used Appliances, Steve Brailsford.

Sorry if we have left anyone out we are very blessed to have so many amazing supporters.



