**Garden Feedback and Q&A – Presentation 15/8/2021**

During the Toiora Group meeting on Thursday 12th August, the point was raised that the Garden Group had not been submitting meeting minutes and activity reports to the whole group as required by group procedure.

We accept this point, and will work to rectify group communication practices in line with Toiora Meeting Guidelines.

The purpose of the Q&A is, in part to rectify the lack of some 12 months of planning and discussion reports, so as to catch up the rest of the Group with the reasons behind our eventual garden layout, and also to take feedback for future garden development planning.

**Keep in mind that the garden remains a work in progress, and will continue to develop and mature, in part, based on the feedback and wishes we hear about in this meeting today.**

**Planning Timeline**

2/8/2019 – Call for expressions of interest in joining Garden Group. Layout plan circulated.

Rainer’s Sunshine Map circulated

14/03/2020 First meeting of the High Street Garden Group. Garden wishlist developed. Extensive minutes circulated to group on 19/3, so please read it if you’d like to see the entire wishlist we started off with. The idea of personal plots was first raised here.

Covid Lockdown.

7/2/2021 Vegetable Garden Subgroup meeting to discuss what we wanted from a vegetable garden. Due to the wide range of gardening styles, group feeling was generally positive towards developing personal use plots, rather than a communal farm/mass planting type operation.

22/3/2021 Planning started for the Memorial Garden area, coordinated by Kristin.

2/4/2021 Vegetable Subgroup meeting to agree proposals to feed back to the General Garden Group

2/5/2021 Visit to Rory Harding’s Urban Food Forest in George Street. Rory is a “no-till” gardener.

11/5/2021 Garden Group meet & walkabout to discuss overall garden plan. Invitation extended to whole group. General agreement on layout. The layout plan was displayed in the Common House with an open invitation to any Group member to raise questions an comment on. I understand a plants list was circulated around this time as well.

23/5/2021 Rory Harding visit to Toiora Site. Marianne’s excellent notes circulated to whole group in her 28/5 email.

8/6/2021 Fruit trees added to landscape plan

June 2021 Fruit trees planted, including feijoas along Alva Carpark entrance. Two apple trees, and a pear tree along the south side of the lawn. Space reserved for one more pear and apple tree to be planted next year when stock is available. Note that all fruit trees were donated by individuals, and not purchased by UCOL or the Body Corporate.

23/6/2021 Landscaping/Gardening group funding request submitted by Donald, and $2500 pre-approved.

July 2021 Purchase of topsoil & Woodchip. Mad dash to have gardens presentable for Official Opening & Open day. Kristin and the Memorial Garden Group were working especially hard to get the Memorial Garden looking pristine for the event.

August 2021 As based on Maria’s landscape layout (copy in the Common House), the back part of the vegetable garden has been re-allocated for a secure bike shed with power supply for charging e-bikes. This area has been marked out, and will be part of the bike shed proposals to be brought to the group. We require storage for some 30 bicycles.

Vegetable raised beds laid out with left over timber. We chose to go with non-symmetrical, fun shapes rather than basic rectangles.

Donald conducted an informal survey, and noted approximately 8 people/households who would like use of a personal plot. There should be enough raised beds for this, although a few more could be constructed on the lawn opposite the vegetable garden.

**USE OF PERSONAL VEGETABLE PLOTS – GUIDELINES**

* Vegetable garden plots may be allocated for personal use, with priority going to those who do not have access to other reasonable planting areas, in particular the D-unit residents.
* Please note that while we do not consider the High Street side gardens to be suitable for vegetable planting, the commons facing private gardens certainly get plenty of sunshine. Please consider if your needs can be met by creating raised beds in your yards, or container planting.
* Plots are provided for personal use, but not personal ownership, and will revert to the commons if they fall out of use.
* Plots are intended for food production rather than for ornamentals.
* Unclaimed plots will be planted and cared for by the Garden Group, so there will never be neglected or empty plots.
* The herb bed is for communal use, and will be cared for by the Garden Group. Likewise, the rhubarb bed.

**Common Garden General Guidelines**

* Fruit trees and berry bushes will be cared for by the Garden Group, with the produce available to the whole community.
* All common garden areas apart from personal use vegetable plots will be cared for by the Garden Group.
* The Lawn Group will take care of the Lawn
* Kristin is coordinator for the Memorial Garden Group, who will care for the Memorial Garden with help from the wider Garden Group as required
* The Garden is a work in progress. Plants may be removed or moved if deemed necessary or if they become a nuisance. Eg. Manuka close to Catherine’s unit.
* Dangerous plants and “Pest Plants” as listed by the Otago Regional Council will be avoided.
* For those who wish to offer their private gardens to another party to care for, please undertake these private arrangements yourself, as the Garden Group as a whole is unable to facilitate garden /caretaker matching of this sort. For example, Sue has a private arrangement with Marianne to care for her High Street side garden.

**Feedback & Ideas for the future: Comments from meeting.**