



*5th Healthy Cities: Working
Together to Achieve Liveable Cities*
Conference

Jennifer Witheridge
Maribyrnong City Council

Kelly Heffer
Moonee Valley and
Hobsons Bay City Councils

Peter Huff
Yarra City Council

*Growing capacity:
Urban agriculture in local government*



- Jennifer Witheridge Growing Food Growing
Maribyrnong Coordinator
**Community Planning and Advocacy Team in the
Community Wellbeing Department**
- Kelly Heffer My Smart Garden Project Officer, Moonee
Valley and Hobsons Bay City Councils
**Environmental Sustainability Team in the Planning
and Environment Department**
- Pete Huff Urban Agriculture Facilitator, City of Yarra
Council
**Arboriculture and Streetscape Unit in the Recreation
and Open Space Department**



my smart garden



Kelly Heffer

**My Smart Garden Project Officer
Moonee Valley and Hobsons Bay City Councils**

mysmartgarden.org.au



Funded by
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Land of opportunity..?





The rise of the city farmer





Smarter gardening



food



shade



habitat

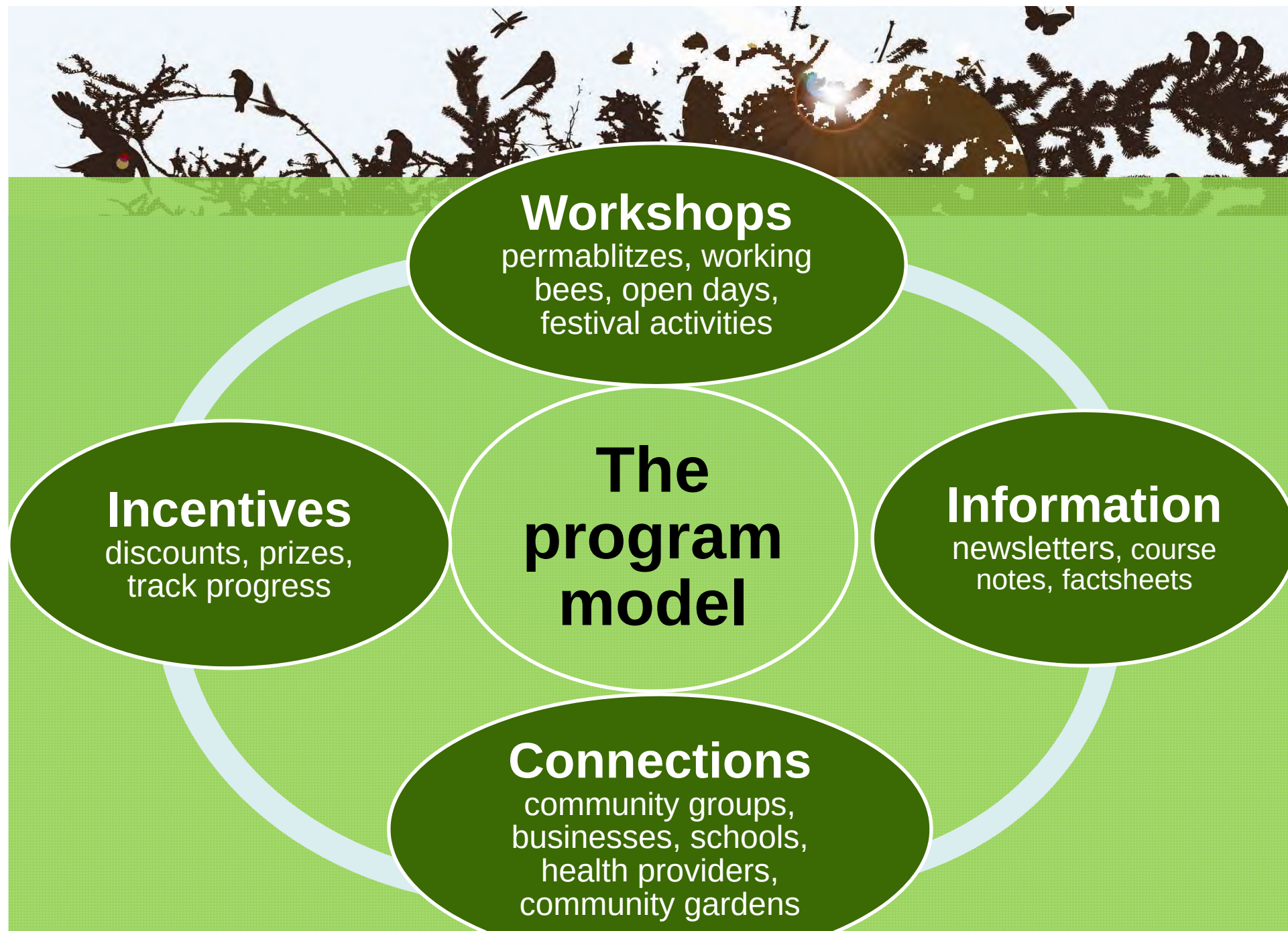


water



waste







Learning and sharing skills





Story so far....

Residents engaged

372 residents formally registered;
750 loosely engaged

Exceeds target of 200 residents

Workshop results

537 attendees at 20 workshops

325 attended at least one workshop

Av. feedback score 9 out of 10

Extra workshops scheduled to meet demand

"Once again it was great to get along and learn. This week about how to live with the good and bad guys (insects). Thanks guys 😊"

"I've been mulching with straw and leaving old bean crops to put more back into the soil as we'd be told at the session. Looking forward to better produce."

Taking action

All survey respondents that attended more than one workshop have taken action at home



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Making a start...



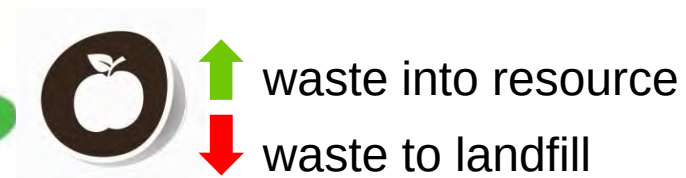
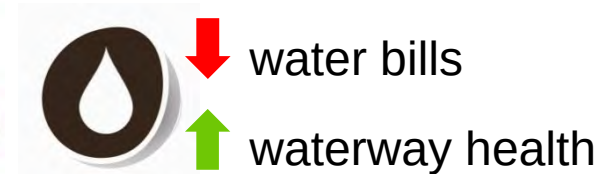
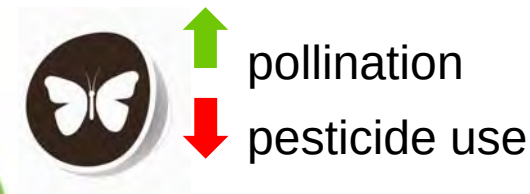
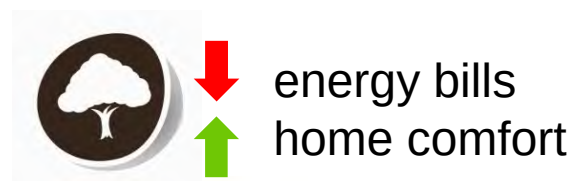


A few months to a smarter garden





Smarter gardening, many benefits





Smarter gardening , many benefits



Building practical skills

**Making connections within
community**

▼ waste to landfill



The future

Potential to expand?

Further resource savings

Enhanced business partnerships

**Community development and
greater sharing of local skills**

Growing Food, Growing Maribyrnong



Jennifer Witheridge

**Growing Food, Growing Maribyrnong Project Officer
Maribyrnong City Council**



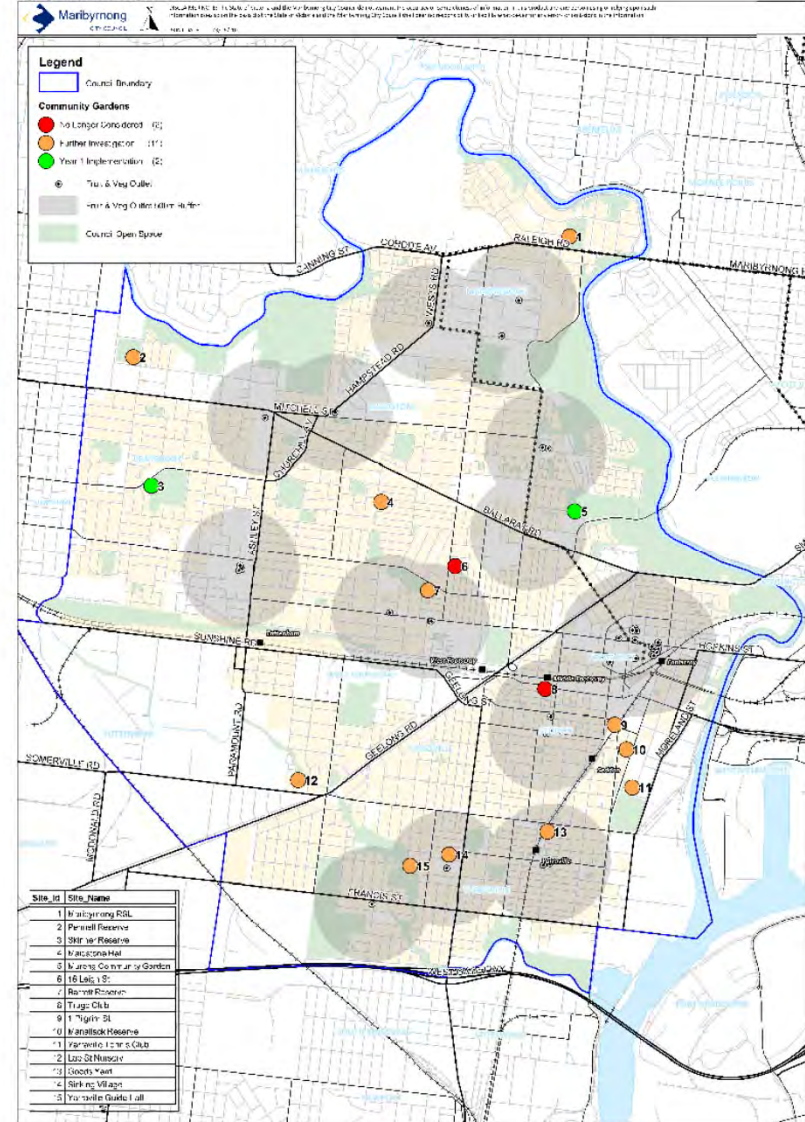
Maribyrnong City Council

- Food For All 2005-2010
- Food Security Policy 2011-2013
- Growing Food Growing Maribyrnong 2011

Community Gardens

- provide some secure food supplies in cities
- focus on nutrient rich and highly perishable foods
- build community capacity and efficacy

COMMUNITY GARDENS





Community Gardens Need:

- Secure land tenure
- Leadership and staffing
- Sustained interest
- Skills building opportunities

References:
Milburn *et al* (2010) and Twiss *et al* (2003)



Braybrook Community Garden



Small existing garden



Room to expand



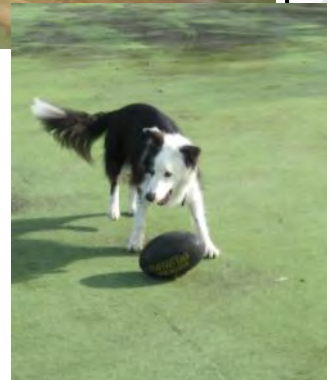
Maribyrnong Community Garden



Relocating the Murnong Community Garden to a new site in Maribyrnong



A disused bowling green



Urban Agriculture Guidelines



Pete Huff

**Urban Agriculture (Community Gardens) Facilitator
City of Yarra**



Urban Agriculture in High Density

Community/Cultural Origins:

- Strong sustainability & activism culture
- Active community gardening influences

High Diversity/Density Council:

- Open space average of 34m² per capita - ranging 0.2-384 across 7 precincts
- Strong advocacy and protection of public parkland and green space



2012 Community Target
5 community gardens
established across Yarra.



Conflict Driving Creativity and Collaboration

- Emergence of Community Gardens Advisory Committee (2009)
 - Tasked with the development of guidelines that empower residents identify and access public spaces for growing food in collaboration with the Council and the Community
- Result was the Urban Agriculture Guidelines, Urban Agriculture Facilitator, and the Urban Agriculture Advisory Committee (2011)
 - Addresses community gardens, nature strip gardens, street/footpath planter boxes, and productive food trees
 - Establishes adaptable process for assessing a proposed location, conducting resident-led consultation, and creating an agreement with Council for use of public space



Urban Agriculture Process

Successful:

Street and Footpath Planter Boxes



- Utilises uncontested space
- Easy and cheap to install
- Highly flexible and mobile
- Engages the public

Not So Successful:

Princes Hill Community Garden



- Second attempt w/ Guidelines
- Contested space
- High engagement
- Semi-permanent



Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Community Education & Awareness

Council Integration and
Collaboration

Perspectives on Open Space
Management

Local Law/Planning Alignment

Soil Contamination / Land Access

Council Staffing / Funding

Opportunities

Development of Unique Internal and
External Partnerships

Redefinition of Urban Environment
via Resident Empowerment

Utilisation of “Fringe” Spaces to
Create Food / Community
Education and Awareness

Development of Model Processes
for Urban Agriculture in Similar High
Density Councils



Conclusions



Jennifer Witheridge

Maribyrnong City Council

Growing Food, Growing Maribyrnong Project Coordinator

Tel: (03) 9688 0169

Email: jennifer.witheridge@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

Kelly Heffer

Hobsons Bay City Council & Moonee Valley City Council

Project Officer – My Smart Garden

Tel: (03) 9932 1142

Email: kheffer@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

Pete Huff

City of Yarra

Urban Agriculture Facilitator

Tel: (03) 9205 5782

Email: peter.huff@yarracity.vic.gov.au