

WAITOHI PICTON COMMUNITY GARDEN



WAITOHI PICTON
Community Garden

Our Vision

Waitohi Picton Community Garden is a beautiful, bountiful and beneficial space. Where people work together to grow healthy food and promote friendships, wellbeing and sustainability.

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Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of the Waitohi Picton Community Garden newsletter.

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed as we navigate establishing the garden, and then beyond.

Let us know if you have a great name for our newsletter!

A brief history

The project was initiated in 2017 by Picton Smart & Connected, spearheaded by Linda Thompson. The idea received a huge amount of support, and Council allocated \$15,000 in the Long Term Plan. Unfortunately driven only by love and volunteer hours, capacity quickly became an issue and the project was put on hold.

In 2021 the project was picked up by Envirohub Marlborough.

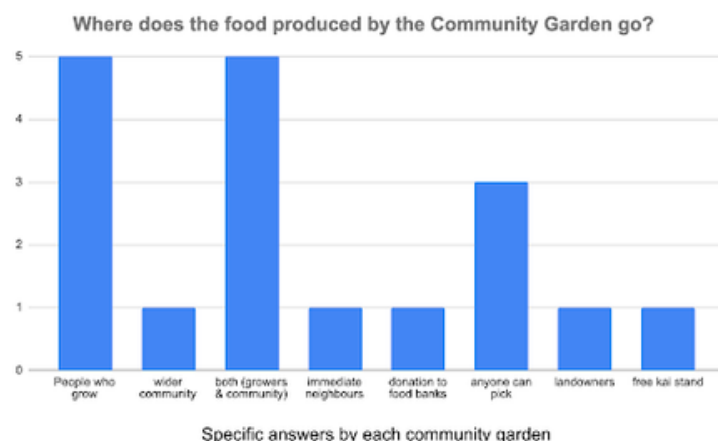
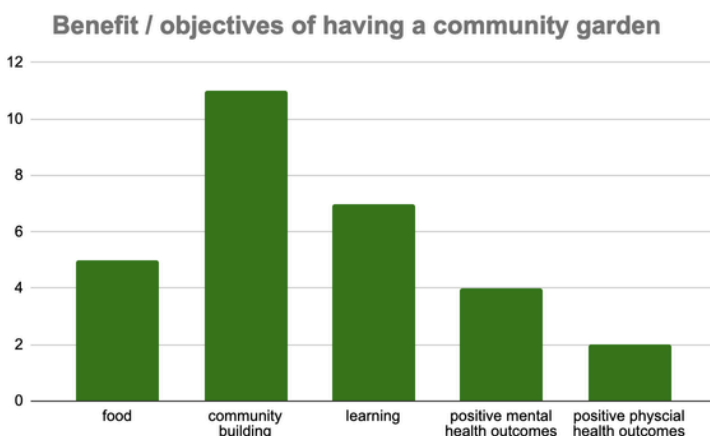
Numerous sites were considered, though ultimately rejected for a variety of reasons, until Council suggested the Huia/Ranui paddock. An in-depth proposal was submitted, and approval was received in March 2022.

Community consultation was initiated with a community meeting in May, and is still continuing.

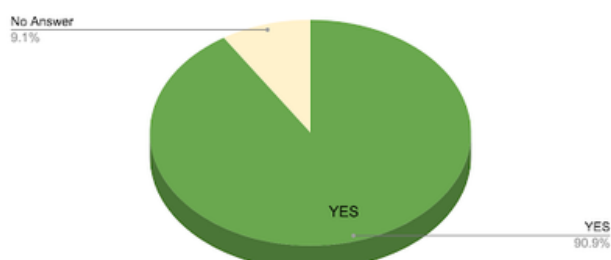
We are now at the establishment phase, and continuing with consultation (page 4).

NZ Community Garden Survey

As part of our research, we sent a survey to community gardens around the country:



Do you operate under organic / semi-organic principles?



Gardens are a fabulous context for teaching and learning. Many learning areas can be integrated into the context of a garden, including maths, English, social sciences, science, technology, health and physical education".

*MaHala Faulkner,
Waikawa Bay School*

We learnt that every garden is different, each adapting and catering to their community.

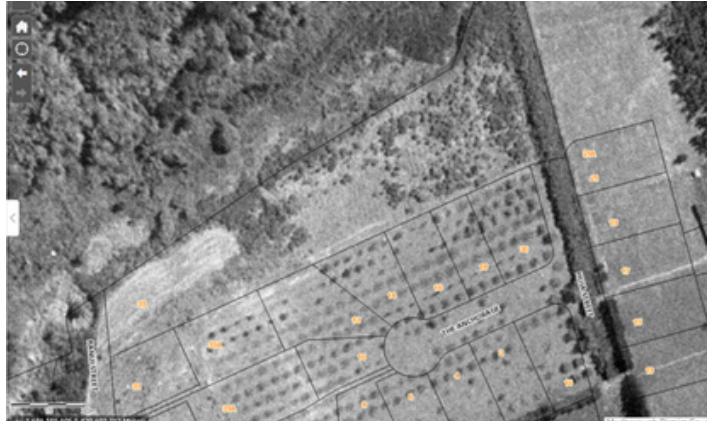
However, there were some common themes: the benefits to participants was far more than just producing food. With Health & Safety and sustainable principals resulting in primarily organic practices. And surplus produced was shared where there was a need.

What's in the soil?

Out of the long list of nature's gifts to man, none is perhaps so utterly essential to human life as soil. Hugh Hammond Bennett

The historical land use of the paddock was primarily low intensity grazing and horticultural crops, as seen in this photo from the late 1950s. However, we wanted to be sure we weren't going to be growing our food in toxic soil, which may have resulted from drenches and other agricultural and horticultural chemical inputs.

In late March, we extracted 20 12-15cm cores across the paddock, and sent them to Hill's Lab for analysis. We tested for nutrient levels and a "BioGrow profile", which tests for heavy metals and pesticides.



Matt Oliver, Soil Scientist for MDC, kindly interpreted the results:

"The ground is pretty depleted as can be expected with continual horse grazing (and manure removal).

It is also quite compact, again probably after horse hooves in wet conditions.

Phosphorus, calcium and magnesium.

The low pH needs to be lifted to grow veges well. Organic matter is good however, and the trace minerals are all within range.

All the trace metals are below background....
So you are all good to go!".



Community meeting, 2nd May

We held our first meeting in May to scope the communities thoughts, concerns and ideas. Diana Brooks from the Marlborough Community Garden in Blenheim gave an inspiring talk on how they established, things they learnt and what they were proud of.

We then workshopped concerns and ideas from the floor. Main concerns were parking, increased traffic and Picton's infamous winter shade. You can learn more about how we are mitigating those concerns in our FAQ's, link on pg 4. People were excited about opportunities to learn from others, the increased community spirit, getting children involved in growing food, and sharing produce. Overall, the message was to keep going, but to keep talking to the community. You can have your say via our survey (pg 4).

Envirohub Marlborough

The Waitohi Picton Community Garden is a project under the umbrella of charitable trust Envirohub Marlborough.

Envirohub Marlborough are an environmental hub that unites, inspires and assists the community achieve their environmental goals. With Envirohub Marlborough overseeing the project, the garden will have strong oversight, resilience and security into the future.

Your views

We are continuing to scope what your community garden could look like. We invite you to complete our survey. See link below to have your say!



Next steps

The project team are busy working to establish the garden. Our current tasks include:

- Finalising a lease with the Council;
- Implementing environmentally sensitive drainage;
- Designing a site plan taking into account feedback from the community.

More information

- If you not already on our e-mailing list, contact info@envirohub.co.nz
- Like our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/pictongarden
- Check out our webpage, including in-depth FAQ's: www.envirohub.co.nz/wpcgarden



Picton Foodbank has had around a 35% client increase in the last 12 months. The Community Garden would be a huge help to our community, seeing families being able to have fresh veges, meaning better health and better eating."
Barb Jones, Manager