



# FLINDERS ISLAND COMMUNITY GARDEN & SUSTAINABLE LIVING CENTRE

## KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2009, Flinders Island Council identified the development a community garden and sustainable living centre as a priority initiative to increase local food production on the island. This report presents a summary of the community engagement activities that were carried out in 2010 in order to begin the process of understanding the community's vision for this project.

Through this process it was found that the Council and community had a similar understanding of the core benefits and outcomes that could be achieved through this project. This included social, economic and environmental benefits with an emphasis on improving food security and promoting sustainable livelihoods. However, it was established that the community felt this project needed to be about more than a just community garden in order to achieve these kinds of outcomes. It was also evident that a lot is already being done on Flinders Island and the project needs to connect and strengthen existing activities while fostering new opportunities.

Based on these findings this report makes five integrated recommendations:

1. To develop an community food network
2. To develop an island food map
3. To develop partnerships with existing community gardening initiatives
4. To establish Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
5. To build a community garden and sustainable living centre

It is anticipated that these recommendations would engage the community in a process that strengthens and builds on existing local food production and distribution systems in a staged approach that develops in line with community interest, capacity and the availability of resources.

## INTRODUCTION

In 2009, the Flinders Island Council identified a community garden and sustainable living centre as a priority project for the island (Flinders Island Council, 2009). The Council (2009 p.5) anticipated that such a project could have a range of benefits for the island, including:

- Less reliance on imported fruit and vegetables;
- Healthier choices for the community;
- Provision of fresh, healthy and affordable fruit and vegetables that have minimal "food miles" associated with the produce;
- Creation of both employment and business opportunities through management of the garden and leasing of allotments;
- A community centre where people can meet, socialise and share their knowledge and learn about gardening, harvesting the produce and preparing meals;
- Provision of information and practical application of alternative technologies for energy and water utilised on site;
- Provision of skills to implement sustainable living techniques; and
- Closed loop recycling of green waste produced on site, together with an additional opportunity for community members to direct their own "kitchen" and green waste to the composting facility.

As a first step in realising this project, in 2010, Josh Byrne & Associates were engaged by the Council to begin a community consultation process comprised of a site visit, community engagement activities and desk-top study designed to:

- identify a shared vision (including purpose and benefits) for the project;
- establish key design objectives, elements and features;
- investigate potential sites for the project;
- identify different governance models available; and,
- explore the economic, social and environmental opportunities that the project could create.

This report is presented in two parts. Part I of the report provides an overview of the community engagement process and presents a summary of the key findings. The recommendations for the community garden and sustainable living centre, hereafter referred to as 'the project' are presented in Part II. Case studies that support the recommendations and additional resources are also provided.

It is important to note that approximately 50 individuals participated in the community engagement process which comprised of a range of activities including garden tour, community forum and targeted stakeholder meetings. This included residents, visitors, council staff, councillors, commercial growers, a member of the Aboriginal Association and local shop owners. These participants may not be representative of the needs and wishes of the entire community and subsequent community engagement activities should aim to engage more broadly with the Flinders Island community.

# PART I: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS

## 1.1 Introduction

Josh Byrne of Josh Byrne & Associates visited Flinders Island from 16 – 18 March 2010. The three day visit included a garden tour, stakeholder forum and meetings with key stakeholders. The objective of these activities was to capture the ideas, aspirations and concerns of the community to help direct and prioritise recommendations for the project.

Section 1.2 describes the activities and provides a synthesis of the feedback obtained from stakeholders during these activities. Section 1.3 presents a summary of the key findings that informed the recommendations presented in Part II of this report.

## 1.2 Key activities

### 1.2.1 Garden tour

Twenty five community members (Appendix A) joined Josh Byrne on a tour of five productive gardens around the Island (see Figure 2), including four home gardens and a small commercial production facility. The tour provided a useful informal way for members of the community to engage with the project and to get a feel for the existing food production opportunities and local capacity which the project could build on.

The garden tour highlighted the fact that there are many home gardeners on Flinders Island who supplement their diets with home grown food and that the sharing of produce between community members is common, albeit on a limited and informal basis. Likewise, several small commercial growers produce crops for the local market and there is significant potential to increase this with appropriate co-ordination and support.

The five sites provided an interesting snapshot of the range of food gardening skills and experience on the island. All gardeners were acutely aware of the need for physical exclusion strategies to minimise crop damage by animals, as well as the importance of wind protection. Water conservation and soil building were also identified by people on tour as being of critical importance, however knowledge of best practice irrigation, weed management and plant nutrition was limited. Access to plant stock was also identified as an issue, as was advice on pest and disease control.

An opportunity for the project is to connect these home growers and develop mechanisms to assist with networking between gardeners with the aim of increasing the exchange of produce and information. There is also an opportunity to provide these growers with ongoing education and training grounded in a demonstration of relevant gardening techniques and appropriate technologies.



**Figure 1:** Wendy & Allen Reid's garden at Buffalo Beach, where a well built exclusion structure provides good growing conditions for a wide of vegetables, herbs and fruit trees as well as housing chickens. A productive garden system such as this has the capability to provide a significant proportion of a household's fresh fruit and vegetables.



**Figure 2:** Flinders Island Garden Tour - Locations Visited

1	Wendy & Allen Reid – Buffalo Beach
2	Kathleen Ives-Heap & David Heap – Trousers Point
3	David & Lila Tresemer – Trousers Point
4	Mary MacTier - Whitemark
5	Rosemary Amos & Anne Walker – Emita

## 1.2.2 Community forum

The community forum 'Growing Communities' took place in Whitemark on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March. The forum was attended by 33 individuals including three local councillors, one council staff member and 29 local residents (Appendix B). A presentation was given by Josh Byrne on: sustainable design and lifestyles; community food production; community gardens; and, community sustainability hubs (Appendix C). This was followed by a breakout session and discussion around three questions:

1. What are at least five benefits that a community garden project would bring to Flinders Island?
2. What do you see as the most important functions of a community garden at Flinders Island?
3. Who do you think should manage the community centre – council, community, elected management committee, other?

After the forum community members were given the opportunity to provide further feedback on the project using a feedback form (Appendix D) or by contacting Flinders Island Council and/or Josh Byrne & Associates directly.

The data obtained from the feedback forms and breakout sessions was analysed using qualitative methods. This process involved sorting responses according to themes and prioritising information based on the number of responses. The results of this analysis relate to the following aspects of the project:

- Benefits and important functions
- Key design elements
- Potential governance models

The themed raw data is presented in Appendix E.



**Figure 3:** Flinders Island community members work through discussion questions during the Community Forum breakout session

Community members involved in the forum also made available additional information and documentation. One individual provided feedback and documents from the Flinders Island Cooperative Society which described a successful cooperative that was run on the island from 1990 – 1999. A copy of a letter submitted to Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2010 by a community member was also supplied. This includes information and ideas about establishing a community garden. This community member has been gathering information and support from the community for such a project for the past two years and would be well positioned as a local champion for any actions coming out of this process.

### **Benefits and important functions**

Community members identified a range of potential social, environmental and economic benefits of building a community garden and sustainable living centre (Table 1). The three core benefits, in order of highest to lowest ranking, were:

1. Enhanced community spirit and opportunities for social interaction
2. Provision of fresh local produce
3. Economic opportunities including local and community enterprise, employment and training

**Table 1:** Summary of potential benefits of a community garden and or sustainable living centre

<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhancing community spirit</li><li>• A space for social interaction and social networking</li><li>• Access to fresh local produce</li><li>• Providing opportunities for sharing knowledge and skills</li><li>• A place for education</li><li>• A mechanism for promoting improved health outcomes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to fresh local produce</li><li>• Boosting the local economy</li><li>• Local and community enterprise opportunities</li><li>• Employment and training opportunities</li><li>• Promoting Flinders Island as a 'destination'</li><li>• Maximising resources and efficiencies</li><li>• Creating sustainable infrastructure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunity to reduce carbon footprint of the island</li><li>• Opportunities for recycling</li><li>• Access to fresh local produce</li></ul>

The participants also identified a range of local and global sustainability benefits including increasing the resilience of Flinders Island and reducing the island's carbon footprint.

In terms of what community members felt that the project could offer them. Social benefits and fresh produce were reiterated. However, a number of individuals also identified increased capacity and education opportunities as important outcomes. This included "learning/sharing of ideas and knowledge" for example about "what to grow," "gardening demonstrations" and "access to expertise."

The responses suggest that the vision for the project needs to incorporate the communities desire to improve food security and foster social cohesion at the same time as harnessing existing and fostering new economic opportunities. Developing growers' knowledge and skills is also seen as an important outcome.

### **Key design elements**

Community members identified key design elements relating to the physical design and function of the project.

Physical design features identified as important included:

- Outdoor kitchen facilities
- Outdoor seating including somewhere to sit and relax
- Garden beds
- Orchard
- Nursery
- Good drainage
- Easy maintenance
- Water catchment
- Making use of recycled materials (e.g., fridges for worm farms)

Community members also stressed the importance of the facilities being easily accessed and inclusive for people with disabilities and from different age groups. One person felt strongly that a wetland would not be appropriate due to mosquitoes.

Functional design features identified as important included:

- Vegetable/fruit, herb production, sales and distribution
- Sale of seeds, fresh produce, mulch and manure
- Food processing facility [or link with]
- Recycling facilities
- Facilities/machinery for mulching and a compost area
- Small animal production such as ducks for eggs
- Seed preservation
- Community supported agriculture
- Provision of information
- Education

The key design elements identified were consistent with benefits and provided further indication that food security and economic opportunities need to be core elements of the project. Additional emphasis was given to the project having a role in information provision and education around gardening, growing and sustainability more broadly.

### **Management**

A range of suggestions were made during the community forum about whom or how the community garden or centre should be managed. These included:

- The community not the council, with some form of paid position.
- Owned by the council on behalf of the community and run by a representative management committee. Needs a full time paid manager, someone who is a good project manager, but who actually knows about gardens.
- A cooperative with people having shares. From the shareholders, we have elected officers who would decide whether to use paid staff and/or volunteers. Definitely not council.
- A combination of private enterprise and community contributions.
- An incorporated voluntary community association that is supported by the council.

Although, there was no consensus about management, a number of people supported the idea of a cooperative due to one successfully operating on the island for a period of nine years. Flinders Island Cooperative Society Limited was "set up by island residents who aim to provide low cost health food, ethical investment and promoting community development" (Flinders Island Cooperative Society, 1990). Full details of the cooperative are available in the local library, however a former cooperative member explained that members paid \$25.00 to join and had 25 shares. Further, that during its operation the cooperative stimulated the beginning of four businesses as it provided a place to try products before producers "took the plunge."

### **1.2.3 Targeted stakeholder meetings**

A strong theme identified throughout the visit to Flinders Island was that the project needed to focus on 'connecting the dots.' As noted by one stakeholder "I believe that if we can all pool our resources and experiences we can better our chances at achieving a common goal." To begin the process of understanding the available opportunities as well as any tensions, during the community engagement process targeted meetings (conducted face-to-face and via telephone) were held with several stakeholder groups:

- Trousers Point Pty Ltd (David and Lila Tresemer)
- Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Inc. (Maxine Roughley)
- Flinders Island Council (Raoul Harper and Michael Sherriff)
- Local Retailers (Max Parker (General Store, Lady Barron) and Rachel Dallas (IGA))
- Commercial Growers (Sophie Pitchford and Roger Watson (Unavale Wines, Furneaux Tavern))

All the meetings except for one were recorded using a digital voice recorder. These were later transcribed and analysed to ascertain key points relevant to this project. Where appropriate this information was supplemented with additional document (e.g., emails and reports).

### **Trousers Point Pty Ltd**

A food processing area [FPA] has been constructed by Trousers Point Pty Ltd (TPPL) on their property. The facilities available include canning, bottling, cryovacing and labelling. The owners of this facility recognise that “this facility represents a significant infrastructure on Flinders Island” (TPPL, 2010 p.2). There are opportunities for existing local cottage industries, and for other growers to legitimise their food processing and create small to medium size batches of island produce for sale locally and in particular to tourist markets. The facility would also be valuable in processing produce that is seasonally abundant for storage and use out of season and represents a significant resource for community food security on the island.

The owners of the facility have organic certification and see benefit in promoting Flinders Island as a source of organic produce. They have reserved the name “Flinders Island Organic” with the trademark agency and are willing to, subject to labelling criteria, allow use of that name to those who grow organic but who do not wish to pay the annual fees. They are also willing to host non-certified users in the FPA, provided protocols are followed.



**Figure 4:** Food processing facility at 'Healing Dreams' near Trousers Point.

### **Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Inc.**

In 2007 the Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Inc (FIAAI) began the process of establishing a market garden enterprise on the Island. As part of this process FIAAI began construction of the market garden on a site just outside the township of Lady Barron. Concurrently, a feasibility study was carried out by Rural Solutions SA.

The feasibility study outlines two broad options for a market garden enterprise: 1) to produce two to three selected crops for shipment and sale in Melbourne; or, 2) producing up to 10 crops for sale locally either to the major buyers on the island or through direct sales (e.g., a box system of retail sales). The study summarises the local business market, growing conditions and potential planting regimes. Although slightly outdated the report includes an account of the resources required, costs involved as well as well as projected profit of a box system.

The facilities include three hothouse tunnels, water supply infrastructure (soak, pump, tank and drip line irrigation system), a potting shed, fencing and a large poultry enclosure. A fourth tunnel structure is in storage. The site was managed and extremely productive for a period of years. Crop pests and diseases became an issue and production was stopped. The facilities are not currently in use, but they have been well maintained and could easily be brought back into production.

The infrastructure and information contained in the feasibility study are valuable resources for the project. FIAAI has indicated that they are willing to explore ways to collaborate.



**Figure 5:** FIAAI hothouses and associated production infrastructure near Lady Baron are well maintained and could easily be brought back into production.

### ***Flinders Island Council***

Currently there is a \$5 million dollar redevelopment planned for the hospital. The plans for the hospital include landscaped areas and a community garden. The manager of the Flinders Island Multi Purpose Centre (MPC) has indicated the hospital is keen to use locally produced foods and have an outlet for their patients to focus on while they are recovering. They are also happy to consider coordinating their efforts with this project.

### ***Local Retailers***

The local retailers talked to during the community engagement process demonstrated that they already support existing growers both through formal and informal arrangements. Two local products regularly sold through local retailers were salad greens and potatoes. Other processed foods were also stocked when available.

The retailers, expressed willingness to stock more local produce, but identified some challenges:

- Organic produce is nutritious and tasty, but does not always look good
- Pricing of local produce is difficult
- There isn't a continuous supply of many local products
- Seasonal produce is difficult to manage

In spite of the challenge retailers commented on the market for organic produce during the tourist season. For tourists this is often a selling point and there is a willingness to pay higher prices for this produce.

### ***Commercial growers***

The Pitchford's started an organic garden production enterprise two years ago and in the process of getting NASAA organic certification. The intention is to sell this produce locally and then in Tasmania and the Mainland. They indicated that any support that they could get through the project "would be great." They also saw benefit in people "banding together", exploring ways "to encourage small producers" and reducing the produce grown locally that goes to waste.

Unavale Wines is a good example of a small commercial production enterprise that would benefit from increased local market support and co-ordinated Flinders Island produce branding for their export market.

In addition, Roger Watson indicated that they would be supportive of using produce from local growers in their Furneaux Tavern restaurant. He currently supplements a small amount of the fresh vegetable requirements from their family property, but demand is significantly greater than what they can produce.

In summary, the targeted stakeholder meetings identified a range of existing opportunities:

- Food processing facilities
- Market garden infrastructure
- Detailed research on the feasibility of a market garden
- Potential partnership with the hospital to jointly develop a community garden
- Retailers who support the sale of local produce
- Commercial growers with experience and expertise to build on

### 1.3 Key findings

There were three key findings from the community engagement process that inform the recommendations presented in the second part of the report:

1. **There is a shared understanding of the outcomes and benefits of the project:** the Council and community agree that core benefit of the project relates to improving food security. There is an understanding that the project needs to increase local production of high quality fresh produce through actions that: provide support to growers (home and commercial); promote sharing and learning; cultivate community spirit; and, develop local economic opportunities.
2. **The project is about more than a community garden:** there was a strong sense that the project needed to be about more than a 'conventional' community garden in order to achieve the kinds of outcomes and benefits identified.
3. **The project needs to connect the existing opportunities:** a lot is already being done on Flinders Island and the project needs to connect and strengthen existing opportunities and foster new opportunities to promote sustainable livelihoods.

## PART II: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROJECT

### 2.1 Introduction

The community engagement activities described in this report initially sought to engage the community in the process of designing Flinders Island Community Garden and Sustainable Living Centre. However, through this process it became apparent that the community had a vision for the project beyond this initial scope. In order to deliver the social, economic and environmental benefits described in this report a series of integrated recommendations are made:

1. To develop an community food network
2. To develop an island food map
3. To develop partnerships with existing community gardening initiatives
4. To establish Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
5. To build a community garden and sustainable living centre

A matrix (Table 2) has been developed that provides a snapshot of how these recommendations respond to the desired benefits of the project presented in Part I of the report. These recommendations are expanded on in the following section. Section 2.3 presents case studies that provide examples and additional information to support these recommendations.

**Table 2:** Matrix of correlation between recommendations and desired benefits

BENEFITS	RECOMMENDATIONS				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Community Food Network	Food Map	Partnerships with Community Gardening Initiatives	Community Supported Agriculture	Garden & Sustainable Living Centre
Community Spirit/Interaction	•		•	•	•
Fresh Local Produce	•	•	•	•	•
Economic Opportunities	•	•		•	•
Education/Skill Development	•		•		•
Environmental Benefits		•		•	•
Increased Food Security	•	•		•	•

## 2.2 Recommendations

### 2.2.1 Develop a community food network

The main purpose of the community food network would be to provide support to home and commercial growers. It is suggested that this network is coordinated via a website that would give people easy access to resources and provide an efficient way to organise network activities (e.g., visits from experts). The site could also be a vital way to gather information used to inform other parts of the project. Additionally, development and engagement with the community food network would be a good community building process.

The website could include:

- **Resources:** that provide quality information on establishing and maintain a productive garden e.g., crop selection, crop timing, irrigation requirements and pest and disease management.
- **Discussion board:** for sharing ideas and information and coordinating activities.
- **Produce noticeboard:** to list surplus produce for sale or swap.
- **Fruit tree register:** for developing a calendar of what fruit will be available where and when on the island and a map of where there will be a surplus.
- **Blog:** that invites guest bloggers or experts to write about areas of interest for growers.

The Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network (Case Study 1) and Food Connect (Case Study 2) are two examples of online communities that provide support for growers and virtual space for sharing produce.

### 2.2.2 Develop an island food map

It is argued that "strong local food networks benefit people and places" (CPRE, n.d.). To strengthen Flinders Island's food network it is recommended that a food map is developed. This map would provide a detailed picture of the existing opportunities, linkages and gaps as a basis for strengthening and developing this food network further.

The map would include information about:

- Local growers at different scales
- Existing infrastructure
- Local produce/products
- Demand for produce
- Sites with good potential for growing
- Retailers, including retailers stocking local products/produce
- Service providers using local product/produce
- Exports of local produce/products

A food map of Flinders Island could be developed by combining a detailed qualitative study (e.g., desk-top study, interviews and surveys) and site assessment.

### **2.2.3 Develop partnerships with existing community gardening initiatives**

As an intermediary step towards developing a community garden and sustainability living centre it is recommended that partnerships are developed with existing community gardening projects. This would provide local stakeholders with practical experience in the design and operation of community gardens. Importantly, it would also provide an opportunity to explore synergies and ways to coordinate and complement efforts. This could include working with the hospital to develop their garden and further developing the existing school food garden.

The Randwick Community Garden is presented as an example of a successful community garden (Case Study 3).

### **2.2.4 Establish Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

The findings in this report provide a good rationale for establishing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) on Flinders Island. CSA involves communities giving financial support to growers in exchange for a share of the produce. CSA has a number of benefits for consumers and growers that align with the desired outcomes for this project.

Consumer benefits include:

- Insulation against risks of food scarcity (Adam, 2006 p.2)
- Access to fresh and healthy seasonal produce at a lower cost with nutritional benefits (Tegtmeier and Duffy 2005 p.5)
- A shared learning experience (Friends of the Earth, 2002 p.23)

According Gradwell et al. (1999) grower benefits include:

- A reliable income that is received at planting time (shared risk and pre-payment)
- Guaranteed market of an approximate size for the season
- Less effort needed for marketing produce
- More effective use of resources for marketing, packaging and transporting produce

Recommendations one, two and three would provide a strong basis for establishing a CSA program on Flinders Island. However, further research would be required to establish the most appropriate model of CSA. A grower-consumer cooperative model might be appropriate given that cooperatives have been successful in the past on Flinders Island (Section 1.2.3).

Case Study 4 provides information about different models of CSA and presents an example.

### **2.2.5 Build a community garden and sustainable living centre**

The final recommendation is to build a community garden and sustainable living centre. The garden would provide a focal point for community engagement and a useful demonstration site for home gardeners to see appropriate techniques in action. The centre would also demonstrate best practice in sustainable living through the use of appropriate technologies and promotion of sustainable behaviour in five core areas: food, water, waste, energy and shelter.

Given the diverse models for the enterprise, design and management of community garden and sustainable living centres, it is suggested that the community food network website, food mapping activity and community gardening partnerships are used to consolidate the information gathered through the community engagement process and inform the design of the community garden and sustainable living centre. As the community garden and centre will require significant financial resources it is suggested that this is the longer term goal of the project.

## 2.3 Case studies

### Case Study 1: Australian City Farms and Community Garden Network (ACFCGN)

ACFCGN is a national association of city farms, community gardens and partners. It is an informal, community-based organisation with the aim to network community gardeners around Australia (ACFCGN, 2010). The network facilitates the sharing of knowledge and innovative ideas about community gardens and in doing so promotes the benefits of community gardening and urban agriculture. ACFCGN provides information about organic production, city farms, community gardens, permaculture, community-oriented sustainability, upcoming events and information for specific interest groups (e.g., schools, home growers and local government). This information is distributed via the website, email and a newsletter.

For more information visit: <http://communitygarden.org.au>

### Case Study 2: Food Connect

Food Connect started in 2004 as a way to develop a local and regional food system for South-East Queensland. Local produce is collected from 80 local farmers living within a five hour radius of Brisbane. Subscribers collect their boxes from their local "City Cousin", which is a network of places (families, schools or community centres), located around the region. Food Connect in Brisbane now distributes approximately a thousand boxes a week. The system is now also replicated in Melbourne, Adelaide, Bellingen, Coffs Coast and Wollongong.

Food Connect has online ordering and paying system that offers flexibility for subscribers in accessing information about the farmers' produce. This includes information about:

- **Box types:** different box types are available to meet various demands. For example, Gourmet Box for 2 adults per week, Family Veg Box for 4-6 adults or teenagers per week and Tucker Box (Large or Small) which is made affordable and includes long-lasting vegetables.
- **Weekly harvest:** this provides information about the produce that farmers' intend to include in different box types for a particular week.
- **Quality:** Participatory Farmer Assessment (PFA) is used to provide information about the quality of the produce. This is a peer assessment process that involves Food Connect staff, farmers, City Cousins and subscribers assessing each farm in areas such as: farming techniques, nutritional value, organic methods, chemicals used and farm ethics.

For more information visit: <http://www.foodconnect.com.au/>

### Case Study 3: Randwick Organic Community Garden

Randwick Community Organic Garden (RCOG) in New South Wales was established in 1992. It is a not-for-profit incorporated association that is managed by the local community members. RCOG offers both communal and private plots for the community to grow fresh vegetables, herbs and flowers using organic gardening methods. Membership is open to any interested individuals. To become a plot holder, individuals are required to attend three working bees.

In addition to garden plots RCOG: provides free monthly workshops on sustainable gardening and living; works with local community groups such as schools who utilise the garden as an outdoor workshop; and, offers art classes that focus on recycling and reusing materials.

For more information visit: <http://www.rcog.org.au>

#### Case Study 4: Community Supported Agriculture

The Soil Association's (n.d. p.2-4) defines CSA as "a partnership between farmers [growers] and consumers where, at best, the responsibilities and rewards of farming are shared." They also explain that there are a number of different models of CSA including:

1. **Grower Driven:** the CSA is managed by a grower or growers. Typically there is little or no involvement from the CSA members other than financial support, but it is possible for members to be involved in growing activities like planting and picking.
2. **Community Driven:** the community shareholders and/or not-for-profit organisation have responsibility for decision making and management of the CSA. Growers tend to focus on production, although they could become involved in the distribution and promotion aspects of the CSA.
3. **Grower-Consumer Cooperative:** consumers co-own land and other resources with the growers and work together to produce and distribute food.
4. **Grower Cooperative:** local growers form a cooperative to bulk purchase inputs they require and to coordinate the marketing and distribution of their produce.

**Sweetwater Organic Community Farm** was established in 1995 as a non-profit community supported agriculture and environmental education centre in Tampa, Florida. It is located on six acres of suburban property along the Sweetwater Creek. It is an example of community driven CSA.

The community members are responsible for the management of the CSA and day-to-day operations of the farm. The roles of community members range from director, marketing manager, farm manager, book-keeper, education, events, project and volunteer coordinator to graphic designers and webmaster. Capital investment for CSA depends on the community to donate money through the purchase of shares. This money is also important for running educational programs and events.

CSA members are provided with fresh organic produce while supporting local, sustainable and healthy agriculture. Members are required to pick up produce each week either from the main barn at the farm or another pick up location for the convenience for the members. Produce varies in quantity and variety depending on the season. It aims to provide 10-15 different items per share which will typically fill 2-4 grocery bags.

To promote understanding about the concept of CSA, the farm asks for four hours of volunteer work per season for farm activities. Communication tools used by the farm include a website, discussion board, newsletter and facebook. These are used to disseminate information about the farm and upcoming events and for members to share ideas and opinions about the farm.

For more information visit: <http://sweetwater-organic.org/>

## CONCLUSIONS

This report has presented a summary of the community engagement process used to explore the Council's proposal to build a Flinders Island community garden and sustainable living centre. Part I of the report described the community engagement activities and key findings. It was found that the community had three desired benefits for the project: 1) increased community spirit and social interaction; 2) greater access to fresh local produce; and, 3) improved economic and livelihood opportunities. There was also a strong emphasis on strengthening the food security of Flinders Island and delivering a project that built on and strengthened existing opportunities.

Based on the findings from the community engagement activities Part II of the report presented five recommendations:

1. To develop an community food network
2. To develop an island food map
3. To develop partnerships with existing community gardening initiatives
4. To establish Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
5. To build a community garden and sustainable living centre

As agreed with Council, this report will be made publically available for feedback. Once the community has made comment it is suggested that as a next step a timeframe is agreed upon between the Council and a service provider to action these recommendations. If the report was made available for comment in July 2010, assuming resources are available, implementation of recommendations one, two and three could begin as early as August 2010,

## RESOURCES

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### **The Growing Community: Starting and Nurturing Community Gardens Booklet and Website**

As described on the website: The Growing Community booklet and website content were created to encourage the establishment of new community gardens and to support the flourishing of those already growing. The information this booklet contains is based on questions posed by people starting community gardens and advice from experienced community gardeners, as well as research in community development, project management, and sustainable gardening. Printed copies are available from CANH for \$10.00 (plus postage and handling). Contact CANH on 8371 4622 to purchase a copy.

For more information go to: <http://www.canh.asn.au/projects/community-gardens.aspx>

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### **Eat Well Tasmania Program**

Eat Well Tasmania "is a state wide program that provides support and assistance for activities or projects that promote enjoyable healthy eating". Eat Well Tasmania can: Raise the profile of projects through media networks; link projects with the broader nutrition network through use of the Eat Well Tasmania symbol, which is readily recognised throughout the community; identify and source funding, sponsorship and in-kind support; and, provide access to promotional resources and nutrition information.

For more information go to: <http://www.eatwelltas.com.au/gardening.php>

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### **Making Local Food Work Website**

Making Local Food Work (n.d.) "believe that communities are best placed to tackle the challenges facing them and that community food enterprises are the most effective way of enabling communities to ensure long term access to local food." They promote and support different types of community food enterprises through Making Local Food Work. Projects include: CSA, Farmers Markets, Food Distribution and Supply, Food Co-ops and Buying Groups, Food Webs and Mapping and Governance and Legal Structures.

For more information go to: <http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/about/index.cfm>

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### **A Share in the Harvest: An Action Manual for Community Supported Agriculture**

The Action Manual for CSA includes practical information for people interested in establishing CSA. It contains information about models of CSA, organisation and legal issues, finance, management and production. This manual was developed by the UK Soil Association. Additional information is also available on their website.

To download this report go to:

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/tabid/201/Default.aspx>

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### **Sustainable Gardening Australia (SGA)**

Sustainable Gardening Australia (SGA) is a not-for-profit organisation in Australia "dedicated to changing the way Australians garden." Their website includes factsheets, resources and publications about sustainable gardening practices (e.g., water conservation, soil health, garden design, and companion planting) and sustainable living. The site also includes an online discussion forum for home gardeners to share knowledge and ask questions.

For more information go to: <http://www.sgaonline.org.au/>

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Garden Tour – List of Participants

No.	Participant	Stakeholder type
1	Jeremy Blyth	Resident
2	Mary Bushby	Resident
3	Jenny Cooper	Resident
4	Anna Anderson	Resident
5	Mary MacTier	Resident
6	Rosemary Amos	Resident
7	Carole Crute	Resident
8	Cynthy Shapiiro	Resident
9	Ruby Blyth	Resident
10	Wanda Humphries	Resident
11	Judy Walsker	Resident
12	Lisa Bergamin	Resident
13	David Freer	Resident
14	Barbara Freer	Resident
15	Lila Tresemer	Resident
16	David Tresemer	Resident
17	Angus Campbell	Resident
18	Robyn Campbell	Resident
19	Phylly Steward	Visitor
20	Carey Della-Petra	Visitor
21	Janet Dwyer	Visitor
22	Jan Kneebush	Visitor
23	Kate Posch	Visitor
24	Viv Brown	Visitor
25	Mick Sherriff	Council Staff
26	Josh Byrne	Consultant

## Appendix B: Community Forum – List of Participants

No.	Participant	Stakeholder type
1	Judy Walker	Resident
2	Carole Crute	Resident
3	Rosemary Amos	Resident
4	Barbara Freer	Resident
5	Dave Freer	Resident
6	Cynthy Shapiiro	Resident
7	Dale Williams	Resident
8	Graham Baldry	Resident
9	Leone Osbourne	Resident
10	Zeer Kochfaust	Resident
11	D'reen Lovegrove	Resident
12	Steve Crawford	Resident
13	Sally Walker	Resident
14	Max Parker	Resident
15	Mary MacTier	Resident
16	Wanda Humphries	Resident
17	David Tresemer	Resident
18	David Heap	Resident
19	Kathleen Ives-Heap	Resident
20	Rachel Dallas	Resident
21	Roger Watson	Resident
22	Ronald Wise	Resident
23	Kate Posch	Resident
24	Ralp Posch	Resident
25	Ian Bayly	Resident
26	Jude Cazaly	Resident
27	Jon Hizzard	Resident
28	Karen Ziegler	Resident
29	Jeremy Blyth	Resident
30	David Williams	Councillor
31	Marc Cobham	Councillor
32	Mary Anne Roberts	Councillor
33	Michael Sherriff	Council Staff
34	Josh Byrne	Consultant

# Appendix C: Community Forum – Josh Byrne's Presentation

Growing Communities - Community Forum  
17/03/10



**GROWING COMMUNITIES**  
Community Forum  
Wednesday 17 March 2010  
JOSH BYRNE

### Forum Outline

- Presentation
  - Sustainable design & lifestyles
  - Community food production
  - Community gardens – form & function
  - Community sustainability hub
- Feedback activities
  - Breakout groups – 20min
  - Reporting back – 20min
  - Q&A – 20 min



### Energy Efficiency



- Landscape to improve thermal performance of buildings
- Local food production and on-site waste management to reduce transport

### Materials Impact



- Source impact & environmental footprint
- Embodied energy
- Lifecycle assessment

### Create Habitat



- Incorporate native plants
- Increase leaf litter
- Create refuges
- Create nesting sites
- Suitable water features

### Organic Waste Recycling



- Composting
- Vermiculture
- Fermenting
- Poultry

### Grow Food



- Vegetables & herbs
- Fruit trees & vines
- Poultry
- Aquaculture
- Small livestock

### Organic Systems



- Diversity & balance
- IPM & systems approach to landscape design and development
- Tolerance

### Water Efficiency



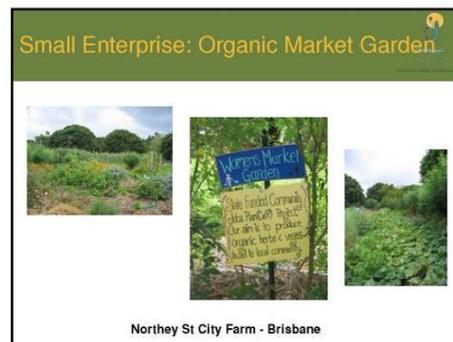
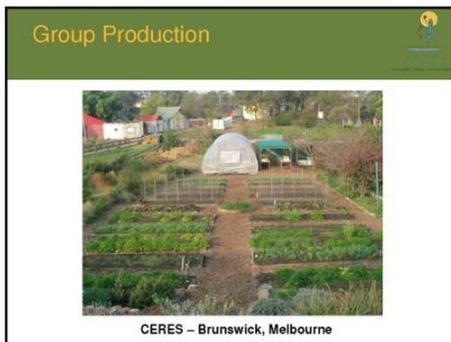
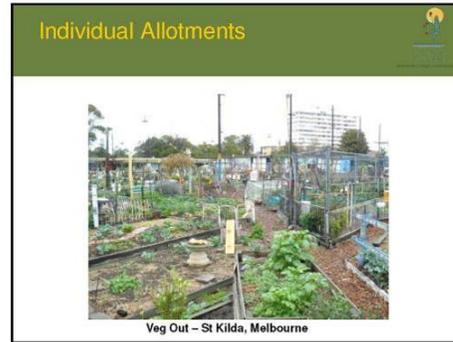
- Plant selection
- Soil conditioning
- Microclimate
- Irrigation efficiency
- Rainwater & stormwater harvesting
- Wastewater reuse

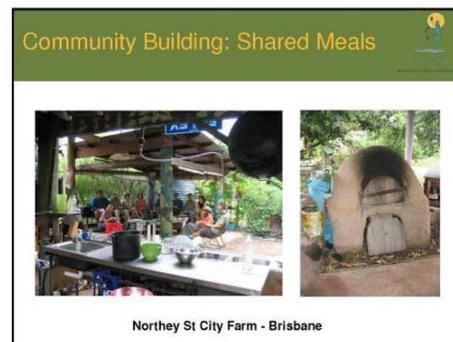
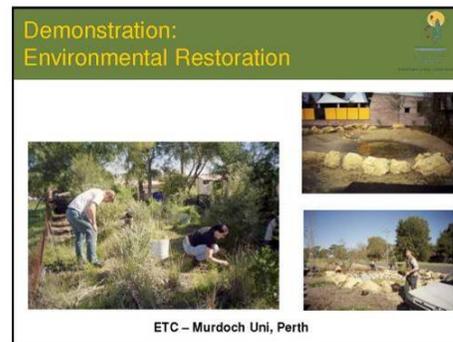
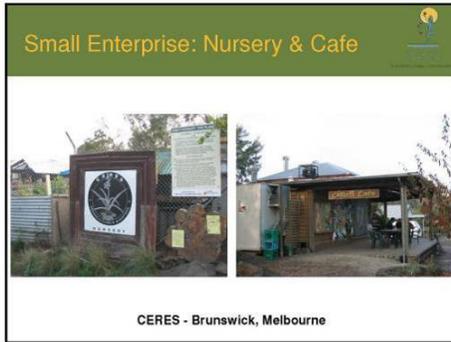
### Community Food Production: Organoponicos, Cuba

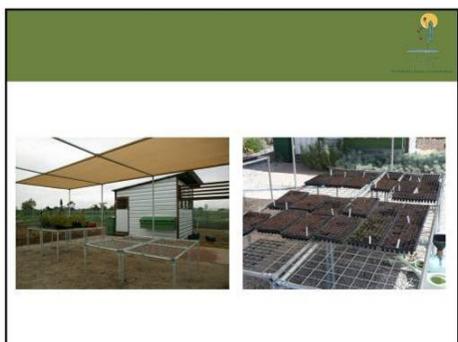
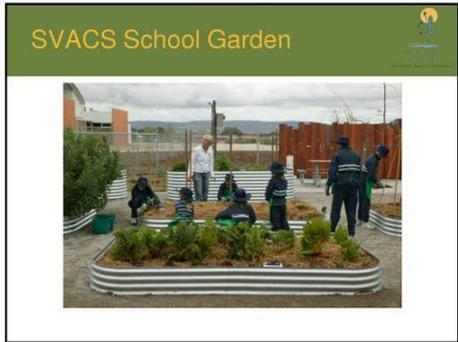


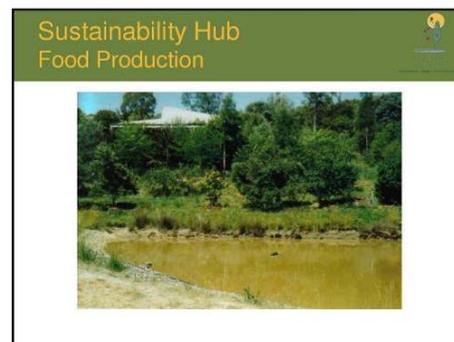
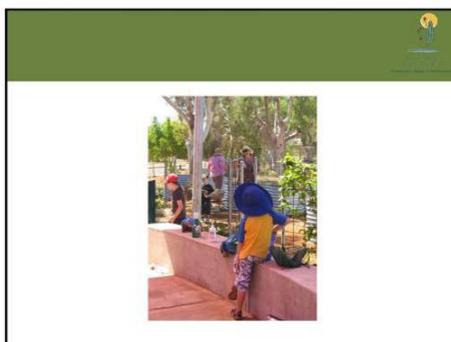
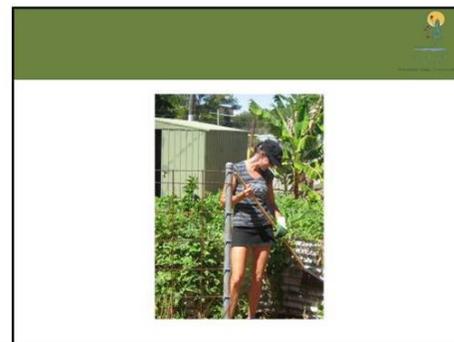
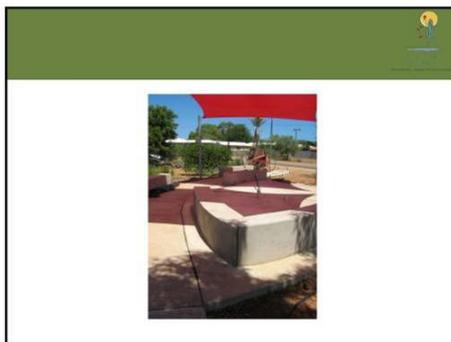
### Community Food Production: Community Supported Agriculture

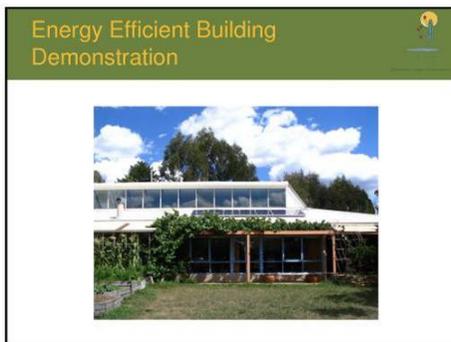












## Appendix D: Community Forum – Feedback Form



*Working with you to care for the natural resources of our island home.*



### Community Garden & Sustainable Living Centre – Community Forum Feedback

Date		Collected by	
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#### Sector – one only (best fit)

Community group	<input type="checkbox"/>	NGO staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local govt staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
General community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resource manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	State govt staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industry representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consultant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal govt staff	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Questions:

In your opinion what are the benefits of having a community garden and sustainable living centre?

What could the community garden and sustainable living centre offer you?

How would you like to be involved in the community garden and sustainable living centre?

Who do you think should manage the garden/centre (e.g. the council, community, an elected management committee, other)?

What key elements would the community garden and sustainable living centre include?

Any other comments?

***Thank you for your time. If you have any questions or additional feedback about the community garden and sustainable living centre please contact Michael Sherriff (Flinders Council)***

***or email:***

***[community@joshbyrne.com.au](mailto:community@joshbyrne.com.au)***

## Appendix E: Community Forum – Themed Data

### Benefits of a community garden and sustainable living centre

#### Community spirit, sharing and interaction

(14 Statements / 9 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Bring community together in a positive healthy way
B3	Community spirit (including fun, education)
B4	Increased community interaction
B7	Fun place to be that does not revolve around drugs or alcohol especially for youth
B7	A project that islanders can take pride in
B7	Meeting place to share ideas and produce
G2	Build sense of community
G2	Draw school and community together
G2	Social outlet
G3	Enhance community spirit
G4	Social networking
G4	Skill sharing
G5	Sharing (skills, seeds, work)
G5	Community spirit

B5	<i>Community focus/spirit is not lacking on this island and there are million things to do – as much almost as in the big city so I don't see this as a reason for the project.</i>
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#### Locally produced food

(10 Statements / 9 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Fresh produce in season
B3	Food for the island
B4	Quality (and affordability) of veggies
B6	Fresh seasonal fruit/vegetables
B7	Fresh local produce
G1	Local produce
G1	Know origin of product
G2	Seasonal food
G2	Fresh produce
G5	Food production

#### Economic benefits – employment and local enterprise

(10 Statements / 7 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Lower costs of living
B1	Boost local economy
B1	Create jobs/training opportunities
B3	Sale or barter of produce keeping island money on the island
B3	Funding for land, equipment, seeds
B6	Community enterprise
G1	Potential for trainees/retraining
G2	Paid work, not voluntary
G4	Money stays here so good for local economy
G4	Creating work opportunities

### Education and demonstration

(7 Statements / 5 Individuals/Groups)

B6	Education
G1	Education
G1	Workshops for community
G2	Education
G3	Community awareness of the health and lifestyle benefits
G4	School-community education
G4	Showcase for sustainable living

### Increased resilience

(5 Statements / 5 Individuals/Groups)

B2	To provide as much of our own food as possible in this time of global uncertainty
B3	Not dependent on transport from mainland
B4	Reduced reliance on the ferry
G2	Local reliance – not outside
G3	Self sustainability

### Global environmental benefits

(4 Statements / 4 Individual/Groups)

B1	Reduce carbon footprint
G1	Reduce carbon footprint generated by freight
G3	Transport "miles" for food – reduced
G4	Reducing food miles/carbon footprint

### Opportunities for recycling

(4 Statements / 4 Individual/Groups)

G1	Allows for recycling opportunities
G3	Encourage recycling
G4	Recycling materials and green waste
G5	Recycling

### Flinders Island as a destination

(4 Statements / 4 Individual/Groups)

B1	Promote FI as a brand representing? Cottage industries
B4	This needs to be part of the Flinders 'Brand'. King Island is known for its cheese. We need to be known for our produce.
G2	Makes our community attractive for visitors and potential residents
G4	Raise community profile of Flinders

### Health

(2 Statements / 2 Individual/Groups)

G2	Health
G4	Healthier lifestyle: food & exercise

### Other

G2	Easy access – inclusive
G4	Turning difficulties into positive outcomes
G4	Benefits for all age groups – young to old
G5	Keep someone occupied

## What could the garden/centre offer you?

### Technical support

(7 Statements / 4 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Learning/sharing of ideas and knowledge
B1	Opportunity to have guest gardeners/chefs to do cooking and gardening services/demos
B3	Shared knowledge of what to grow
B4	Access to expertise
B4	Access to local growers and produce
B6	Improved gardening conditions
B6	Secured resources

### Community engagement/interaction/community spirit and social cohesion

(6 Statements / 6 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Gathering place
B2	The satisfaction of seeing all the island pulling in the same direction for once!
B3	Community spirit
B4	Access to community
B6	Social interaction
B7	A place to be part of the community in something that I am interested in. Somewhere to take family and achieve something. A chance to participate

### Fresh produce

(3 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Fresh produce
B6	Fresh produce
B3	Place to sell or barter home grown veggies

## What do you see as the most important functions of a community garden at Flinders Island?

### Community

(8 Statements / 4 Individuals/Groups)

G1	Assists w. transient residents can be looked after 7 days a week.
G1	Company and inspiration
G2	Local effort benefitting local community
G2	Reconnecting age groups
G2	Family time / alternative to 'snake pit'
G2	Mentoring
G3	Community arts & harvest festival
G4	Social cohesion for whole island

### Food production / produce

(7 Statements / 4 Individuals/Groups)

G1	Eat quality food
G2	Fresh produce available
G2	Bringing in lesser known foods
G2	Extending growing windows/seasons
G2	Food mapping/network
G4	Potential to develop self sufficiency in seasonal fruits and veges
G5	Food production (fresh/local)

### Garden related functions/demonstrations

(5 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

G2	Community nursery
G3	Community demonstration
G3	Seed preservation
G5	Small animal production
G5	Heritage/organic principles

### Education

(4 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

G1	Learning/education
G2	Reinspiring skills
G3	Community education – children/school
G5	Education

### Connecting/strengthening food system and security

(3 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

G3	Create a holistic 'island' system
G3	Creating sustainable infrastructure – processing, selling etc. value adding
G4	Maximising resources and efficiencies e.g., equipment, produce and labour

### Recycling

(2 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

G3	Recycling
G4	Recycling to produce 'saleable' products & stop tip fill

### How would you like to be involved in the garden/centre?

#### Design, administration and discussion

(3 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B6	Administration – possibly, it depends on how it is set up
B7	Designing
B7	Discussions

#### Labour

(3 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B3	I would work happily under direction. I am currently unemployed so could volunteer several hours most days – unless we are fishing.
B4	Well, I can dig and weed and cook and process produce – anything but sell
B6	Labour
B7	Labour

#### Occasional volunteer

(3 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Occasional voluntary working bee days
B1	Social days
B5	Well I would happily be a shareholder in a coop but not much more than that other than to slide from volunteering in the school garden into the community garden for an hour or two per week.

#### Anyway

(2 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B7	Anyway
B2	In any way that I can be found useful

#### Other

B1	Consumer
B1	Provide green waste – then buy back as mulch`
B1	I make good preserves and would be keen to assist

## Who do you think should manage the garden/centre?

### Cooperative

(6 Statements / 6 Individuals/Groups)

B2	I like the idea of a cooperative, but thing it should be in conjunction with the council
B3	Apparently co-ops work well here. I would say council should have a representative on the committee if they are to put up the money
B4	A cooperative with elected members
B5	The most worthwhile management model as I see it is a properly registered cooperative with shareholders who could be active or non active. This would raise funds, give a sense of ownership and active stakeholders could receive a discount on buying products.
B6	Elected management committee/cooperative
G5	Cooperative: shareholders elected officers not council

### Full-time paid worker

(5 Statements / 5 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Employ a permanent 'gardener' to assist with paperwork to obtain grants and traineeships to then follow
B3	I think there should be one full-time paid worker giving direction and supervising selling.
B5	Absolutely essential that a professional properly qualified person is employed to be a project manager (that person would need to be imported) and the operation could be augmented by volunteers but should never be totally dependent on them.
B7	Somebody who wants to do it. It does not matter who they represent as long as they want it to work.
G4	Owned by council on behalf of community. Run by representative management committee. Need full time manager (experienced gardener)

### For profit centre / private enterprise

(4 Statements / 4 Individuals/Groups)

B1	For 'profit centre' to keep 'sustainable' economically
B3	I don't think a private enterprise should take the profit while volunteers do the work.
B3	I am very willing to put effort in to make this work, but not if someone else is going to take all the money from my labouring.
G1	? Private enterprise

### Combined private enterprise/community venture

(2 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

G1	...balance of paid/private enterprise + community contributions. Possible mix. 'Working bee' days with community feast.
B1	Process veges at Tresemer"s to be sold locally and produce surplus to 'export' to promote island brand – working bees monthly with BBQ as 'pay'

### Community association

(1 Statement / 1 Individual/Group)

G3	Voluntary community association – incorporated with council support
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### Council involvement

(3 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Council donation of land and assistance with planting and development
B5	The proposal has come from the Council down and not the grass roots community up
G4	Owned by council on behalf of community. Run by representative management committee. Need full time manager (experienced gardener)

## Other

B3	A pre-order system would give an idea of what to plant
B3	A paid deposit could pay for seed etc.

## What key elements would the garden/centre include?

### Mulch/composting

(3 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Mulch/Manure for sale
B3	Compost area
B5	Mulch machine

### Kitchen

(3 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Outdoor kitchen
B3	BBQ area
B7	Bush kitchen

### Seating and relaxing environment

(2 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Outdoor seating
B7	Somewhere to sit and relax

### Recycling facilities

(1 Statement / 1 Individual/Group)

B5	Recycling of fridges for worm farms
B5	Recycling of glass for road surfaces
B5	All other recycling

### Produce and seeds for sale

(3 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Seedlings for sale
B1	Fresh produce for sale
B4	Unusual veg

### Nursery, garden bed and orchard

(5 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Nursery
B1	Raised beds for wheelchair and aged access
B3	A growing area
B7	Garden
B7	Orchard

### Local enterprise

(4 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B3	Selling area (which could be inside walkers supermarket)
B6	Vegetable/fruit, herb production and distribution
B6	Food processing central facility [or link with]
B7	Community supported agriculture

### Other features

(5 Statements / 3 Individuals/Groups)

B1	Drainage and ease of maintenance
B1	Water catchment
B1	Toilet facility with wheelchair access
B4	Ducks for the eggs
B3	Not keen on wetland – fine for school, but mozzies would be a problem for people gardening after work!

### Education/information

(2 Statements / 2 Individuals/Groups)

B5	A focus for education towards a more sustainable standard of living.
B7	Information

### Other

B5	Garden mapping
B7	Anything that promotes a happy healthy environment

### Other comments

B1	Very excited about this project! The idea of 'community' is great, though I do feel that it would not be sustainable (or equitable to those on the island already trying to make a living) without some paid employment opportunities. The island has so many great resources/infrastructure available it would be contrary to use the term 'community' and not use them or detract from their businesses. The offer to use the 'Flinders Island Organics' facilities is a fantastic opportunity and I really think we as a community have an opportunity to create a name for this island that is synonymous with fresh produce...
B3	I think a central garden in Whitemark is being called for, but the outlying areas should just go on in their own gardens, but sell through the co-op. I think either a website, or community notice board (or both) should be set up now for people to advertise what surplus they have, or to call for pre-orders to get an idea of crops to plant. I really believe an information sharing system, for who has what extra could be set up ASAP.
B5	Position would be ideal at the school because – the land is available, it is central, water is available, funding for the school garden project is only for 3 years and one has gone already and what better way to continue than slide gently into the community garden project, the Tree Action Group nursery is on the school site and anything new should work in with them also.
B5	A lot has been tried before... [people growing veggies and supplying Walkers and/or Tavern]. The point I wish to make here is that none of these operations have been truly successful at making a worthwhile profit or really reducing the reliance of the island on outside imports. Is a community garden going to be any different?
B7	There are a few people who have either tried or are trying to grow local food for local consumption. I believe that if we can all pool our resources and experiences we can better our chances at achieving a common goal.
B5	Community representation was skewed (Wed night) – no aboriginal community, only one person under 25, most people in the 60 plus bracket (up to 95), mostly the warm and fuzzy tending to be green types, many are new people i.e. less than 10 years and some less than 6 months, many couples therefore audience was smaller than it looked.