

The Happy Hens
Community
Garden –
Henley Green

Virtual Patrol Activity





Welcome to Henley Green Community Garden Virtual Patrol Activity

By Fia Johansson – 23rd March 2020

THE BEGINNING

Happy Hens Community Garden began, as three local friends:

Helen, Emma and Nicole, hence H.E.N. – Happy HENs! Their aim is to make Gladesville, Hunters Hill, Ryde and beyond an engaging, enjoyable and sustainable place to live, especially in our beautiful public open spaces.

- ▶ They commenced building **Henley Green** Community Garden with the support of Hunters Hill Council and the first seasonal working bee was in November 2018. It has become very productive very quickly.
- ▶ They love all sorts of characters coming to lend a hand. Socialising, learning and getting good work done is all part of the plan. Give an hour or two and see what a difference you can make!
- ▶ With Level 2 Water Restrictions currently in force, we have adjusted our gardening and watering times for Summer. They currently meet on Sundays between 4 - 6pm (watering and harvest) at Henley Green Community Garden.
- ▶ They also hold seasonal working bees to get the big jobs done. Follow them on social media for news and events.





Transformation

- Hunters Hill Council granted The Happy Hens a 2-year lease in 2018 for half an old bowling green at Henley Community Centre to build a community garden.
- They received funding from Hunters Hill Council in 2018 to buy materials for raised garden beds. They have arranged delivery of woodchip mulch from local arborists happy to deposit their load for free. They have collected coffee grounds and husks from local cafes and pony poo from Randwick Racecourse to mix with the composting woodchips. Thus beginning to create a growing medium.



Here are some benefits of a community garden:

- **Beautifying Cities.** Many community gardens sit on what were once vacant lots filled with rubbish. When urban gardeners take over, they clear away the debris and replace it with lush greenery. Community gardening turns urban eyesores into vibrant green space, which improves the quality of life for everyone in the neighbourhood – not just the people who actually tend the garden. There's even some evidence that having a community garden increases property values in the surrounding area.
- **Fresh Produce.** Community gardens provide fresh, nutritious produce for many families who couldn't otherwise afford it, improving their diet and their overall health. They also relieve hunger by donating their excess produce to food charities.
- **Healthy Lifestyles.** Urban gardening gives city dwellers a chance to enjoy fresh air and healthy outdoor exercise. They also provide a peaceful retreat from the noise and bustle of an urban neighbourhood, easing stress for residents.



- **A Cleaner Environment.** The plants in a community garden add oxygen to the air and help reduce air pollution. They also absorb rainwater, reducing the amount of runoff that runs through the streets and carries pollutants into rivers and lakes. Many community gardens also take part in composting, recycling plant waste such as leaves and tree trimmings into useful fertilizer.
- **Stronger Communities.** Sharing a community garden gives people a chance to connect with their neighbours. Gardeners also feel more personally invested in the places where they live, gaining sense of ownership and community spirit. And because they get people out of their apartments where they can keep an eye on the street, community gardens can help reduce crime in the surrounding neighbourhood.
- **Educational Opportunities.** Working in a community garden is a good way for kids to learn about where food comes from and gain a basic introduction to environmental issues, work skills, and business principles. It can be educational for adults as well. Community gardens give people a chance to meet and learn about neighbours who come from different backgrounds, including people of different ages, races, cultures, and social classes.

Everyone is Welcome

- Everyone is welcome at Henley Green Community Garden
- The garden caters for all abilities and ages
- Volunteers working on their Duke of Ed and other volunteer initiatives
- Families educating their young children and enjoying the outdoors together
- Community members coming together for exercise and socialising

THE HAPPY HENS

GROWING CONNECTIONS
with people to enrich our community

VISITORS ARE WELCOME TO:
Enjoy time in this beautiful and productive space we have created here at Henley Green Community Garden

WE ASK YOU TO:

- Tread lightly
- Observe what is happening
- Keep pets on leash
- Leave all as you have found it (please no harvesting)

WE SELL OUR EXCESS PRODUCE:
Here on Friday mornings at 11am whenever there is excess harvest

YOU ARE INVITED TO:
Join us during our regular gardening sessions here on:
Mondays 9-11am
Fridays 9-11am
Sundays 4-6pm
(during summertime and Sydney Water restrictions)

YOU ARE WELCOME TO:
Apply to become a volunteer member of our Henley Green Community Garden. Volunteers who work regularly in the garden are involved in harvesting and sharing the produce. We sell excess fresh harvest at 11am on Fridays.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU

THE HAPPY HENS

www.happyhens.org.au

So Much Variety

From flowers to fruit trees, vegetable, fruit and herbs









Jobs around the Garden

- Watering
- Mulching
- Weeding
- Mowing
- Composting
- Planting
- Picking produce

The atmosphere is relaxed and paced to fit with your own individual ability.



The Really Happy Hens...

The REAL HAPPY HENS of HENLEY

Rosie: Biggest girl, darkest head. Lead chicken. Likes cuddles.

Chookie: Second biggest and darkest. Chronic sunbaker- first to stretch out in the sun. Chilled chicken. Loves cuddles.

Daisy: Pinkest face. Not quite as quick as the others, poor thing gets a little confused and the other girls have to run back for her if she gets a fright. She freezes or runs in little circles if a bird swoops or anything. Likes cuddles, attempting to eat strange things and following the others around.

Snowy: The smallest and whitest (mainly wings) of all of them. Not keen on cuddles, prefers adventure. She is a good flyer. Loves sitting on your shoulder, head, or back like a parrot.



Rosie, Chookie, Daisy and Snowy are Hybrid Layers. They are a breed that have been developed by the CSIRO to be disease and pest tolerant while being a very friendly and great laying bird. These birds will lay at least 1 egg a day from about 20 weeks and if well looked after will live approximately 8 years.



Riverside Pre School who come and see us twice a day and feed us. And our friends the Happy Hens also take care of us.

If you would like to leave food for us, please put it in the covered bin near our door and someone will give it to us.

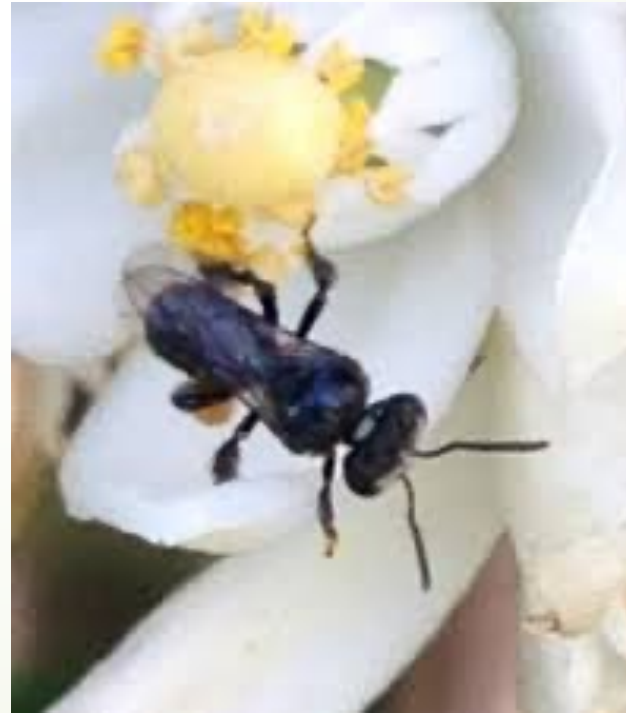
Please don't poke it through the fence as we are worried a fox will come to get it and scare us!

Please call 0403 822 099 to talk to our Hen friends.



Polinators

- ▶ Henley Community Garden currently has a hive of stingless native bees. These can be sometimes be mistaken for flies.
- ▶ These bees are excellent pollinators, especially for the smaller flowers.
- ▶ Happy Hens are working on getting a hive of honey producing bees in the future.
- ▶ It is estimated 1/3 of the food we consumer each day relies on pollination mainly by bees.



Supporting our Community

- Happy Hens support the community by given their excess produce to food charities, like the Food Bank to help people in need.
- They also sell their produce to raise funds for their ongoing expenses.
- Hiring out the space for events
- Looking to install shipping containers to increase community use for events



Initiatives – Happy Hen Beds

- Happy Hens are also involved in a number of initiatives like Happy Hen Beds, which you will find along Victoria Rd, Gladesville
- These beds help get the community involved in caring for our suburb and beautifying the area.
- Shop owners, are engaged with taking care of the beds, and can use the produce.





Sad Dinghy Project

- ▶ Happy Hens have rescued a number of 'sad' dinghys, which they plan to repaint with the help of the community and plant up then install at various community spaces, like schools.
- ▶ 1st Boronia Scouts have an opportunity to be involved in this project to gain and install a rescue dinghy at the hall as a scout community herb and flower 'Happy Hen Bed'.




My Contribution

My contribution to the Happy Hens includes the following:

- ▶ Collection and donation of empty egg cartons
- ▶ Donation of used hessian bags
- ▶ Organising and making insect houses for the garden to encourage native bees and insects
- ▶ Future contribution: Being involved in the 'sad' dinghy project and installation at the hall



Get Involved



Gold
Coin
Donations

- ▶ You can all get involved in this great social enterprise by visiting the gardens, sharing your skills or helping out with jobs
- ▶ Collect & Donate empty egg cartons
- ▶ Donate used hessian bags
- ▶ Collect scraps for the Chickens
- ▶ Become a member

Sources

- ▶ <http://www.happyhens.org.au>
- ▶ <https://www.moneycrashers.com/start-community-garden-benefits/>

