

Sensory Solutions

Create your own Community Medicine Garden Cultivating change

“A medicine garden in every community”

Here are some ideas about how you might approach this:

Small scale

Buy pots or trugs from a garden centre and make arrangements to locate them in your community – pub, post office, park, school etc.

Your home garden or allotment

- Develop the herbal element of your personal garden and open it to the public somehow – e.g. monthly meet-ups to work in the garden and learn about herbs.
- Perhaps a herb walk.
- Registration with the National Open Gardens event.
- Get an allotment that can be open through the National Garden Scheme - <http://www.ngs.org.uk/>

Larger scale

Connect with your local Transition Town, Incredible Edible or other community garden and ask about incorporating a medicine garden into an existing project

<https://transitionnetwork.org/> <http://incredibleediblenetwork.org.uk/>

Contact local schools to see if they would want to be involved or would like to have a medicine garden that you could liaise and create with them.

<http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/>

Starting a new project (this can be done with more of you pooling together)

- Apply to lease or utilize some council-owned land – perhaps a corner of a park, a disused corner or a field/brown land (agricultural)

It is a good idea to keep **Documentation of your project**

Describe your project...

Include the name of the project, address, website or contact information, photos, and a 200 word summary of your project. Then answer the following questions.

What herbs did you grow?

What compost did you use?

Did you use any herbs as plant food?

What methods did you research or use in growing?

Where did you get your seeds?

Did anyone make medicine with your herbs? If not, do you foresee it happening and how?

What were the biggest barriers you had to overcome?

What was your final budget?

How did you fund your project?

Where did you draw support from?

Who used the garden?

What educational information did you convey and how did you do it?

How did you share seeds?

What benefits of the project did you notice?

What ailments can you treat with the herbs you have grown?

Tell us about any stories, anecdotes, calamities, successes and magical moments:

A medicine garden in every neighbourhood

UK link with funding info:

<https://knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/how-to-set-up-a-community-garden>

The following steps are adapted from the American Community Garden Association's guidelines for launching a successful community garden in your neighbourhood:

- 1. Organize a meeting of interested people.** Determine whether a garden is really needed and wanted, what kind it should be (vegetable, flower, both, organic?), whom it will involve and who benefits. Invite neighbours, tenants, community organizations, gardening and horticultural societies, building superintendents (if it is at an apartment building)—in other words, anyone who is likely to be interested.
- 2. Form a Planning Committee.** This group can be comprised of people who feel committed to the creation of the garden and have the time to devote to it, at least at this initial stage. Choose well-organized persons as garden coordinators. Form committees to tackle specific tasks: funding and partnerships, youth activities, construction and communication.
- 3. Identify All Your Resources.** Do a community asset assessment. What skills and resources already exist in the community that can aid in the garden's creation? Contact local municipal planners about possible sites, as well as horticultural societies and other local sources of information and assistance. Look within your community for people with experience in landscaping and gardening. In Toronto contact the Toronto 4
- 4. Approach A Sponsor.** Some gardens "self-support" through membership dues, but for many, a sponsor is essential for donations of tools, seeds or money. Churches, schools, private businesses or parks and recreation departments are all possible supporters. One garden raised money by selling "square inches" at \$5 each to hundreds of sponsors.
- 5. Choose A Site.** Consider the amount of daily sunshine (vegetables need at least six hours a day), availability of water, and soil testing for possible pollutants. Find out who owns the land. Can the gardeners get a lease agreement for at least three years? Will public liability insurance be necessary?
- 6. Prepare And Develop The Site.** In most cases, the land will need considerable preparation for planting. Organize volunteer work crews to clean it, gather materials and decide on the design and plot arrangement.
- 7. Organize the Garden.** Members must decide how many plots are available and how they will be assigned. Allow space for storing tools, making compost and don't forget the pathways between plots! Plant flowers or shrubs around the garden's edges to promote good will with non-gardening neighbors, passersby and municipal authorities.
- 8. Plan for Children.** Consider creating a special garden just for kids—including them is essential. Children are not as interested in the size of the harvest but rather in the process of gardening. A separate area set aside for them allows them to explore the garden at their own speed.
- 9. Determine Rules and Put Them In Writing.** The gardeners themselves devise the best ground rules. We are more willing to comply with rules that we have had a hand in creating. Ground rules help gardeners to know what is expected of them. Think of it as a code of behavior. Some examples of issues that are best dealt with by agreed upon rules are: dues, how will the money be used? . How are plots assigned? Will gardeners share tools, meet regularly, handle basic maintenance?
- 10. Help Members Keep In Touch with Each Other.** Good communication ensures a strong community garden with active participation by all. Some ways to do this are: form a telephone tree, create an email list; install a rainproof bulletin board in the garden; have regular celebrations. Community gardens are all about creating and strengthening communities.

<https://communitygarden.org/resources/10-steps-to-starting-a-community-garden/>

Link to starting a community garden:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarden/CHILD/COM/COMMUN.HTM>