

# Wyndham Adopt-A-Park Policy (2024)

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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# Wyndham Open Space Adopt-A-Park Policy

## PURPOSE

This Policy aims to provide clear direction on the approval of once-off and ongoing shared management partnerships of Wyndham's Open Spaces with the Community.

## SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Wyndham City owned and/or managed Open Spaces.

This Policy excludes social events, nature strips, community gardens, gardens associated with community centres and private land.

This Policy will be used to assess proposed open spaces and activities and the suitability of community groups who propose them for the once-off or ongoing care and management of an Open Space in partnership with Council.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Wyndham City recognises the benefits of volunteering, and the increased connections it fosters between volunteers and their local community, and with their open spaces.

The shared management of Open Space with Council via Adopt-A-Park is a way for individuals to become actively involved in the regular maintenance of their local open spaces, to learn new skills, meet new people, improve their local area, and undertake activities they may not have the opportunity to do in their own backyards.

Wyndham City values the contributions of community groups and volunteers towards the shared management of open spaces across Wyndham and the increased connection to place that this creates for the Community.

## PRINCIPLES

This Policy is based on the following three key principles:

1. The open space to be adopted will be mutually agreed to by the Community Group and Council.
2. The types and frequencies of activities proposed in the adopted park will be mutually agreed between the Group and Council.
3. The adopted park will be the joint responsibility of a Community Group and Council to maintain in partnership.

## POLICY OBJECTIVES

### 1. The Open Space to be adopted will be mutually agreed to by the Community Group and Council.

Adoption of a Park or Open Space by a Community Group must be supported by Council, and safe for community to access.

Open Spaces that may be considered include:

- Parks and Reserves
- Creeks and waterway corridors
- Laneways in town centres

Consideration will be given to:

- whether the land is flood prone, and
- if the land has specific conservation values

The adoption of Open Space land where contamination is known to exist or may be present through a past land use will not be considered.

### 2. The types and frequencies of activities proposed in the adopted park will be mutually agreed to by the Community Group and Council.

By Adopting-A-Park, the Community will take on the 'stewardship' of an open space and become actively involved in its management and improvement.

Options for the frequency of Activities include:

- One-off or Annual Activities in a Park such as Clean-up Australia Day or National Tree Day.
- Adopt-A-Park – taking on the 'stewardship' of a park and coordinating quarterly or monthly Activities in the park.

Examples of the types of activities that can be undertaken by a Community Group, and the support available from Council are summarised below.

Once-off and Annual Activities	
Community Group	Council Support
<p>Organise Activity Day and participants. Activities on the day may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once-off planting/mulching</li> <li>• Pruning</li> <li>• Weed control</li> <li>• Litter clean-up day</li> <li>• Graffiti Removal/Cover-up</li> <li>• Council or group remove graffiti</li> <li>• Community painting</li> <li>• Environmental monitoring</li> </ul> <p>Participants are encouraged to bring their own gloves.</p>	<p>Preparation of site and maintenance of park as usual post activity.</p> <p>Guidance for group to plan activity including OHS guidelines and volunteer registrations.</p> <p>Attendance of a Council representative on the Activity Day.</p> <p>Supply tools and equipment such as water trailer, plants, bags, litter grabbers, syringe containers, paint removal chemical and a quantity of gloves etc.</p> <p>Council will also provide rubbish removal, OHS signage and staff depending on the size of activity.</p>

Adopt-A-Park	
Community Group	Council Support
<p>Organise regular Activity Days and participants. Activities on regular Activity Days may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular planting/mulching</li> <li>• Beautification/pruning</li> <li>• Regular weed control</li> <li>• Regular litter control</li> <li>• Regular graffiti removal</li> </ul> <p>Participants are encouraged to bring their own gloves. Group members can maintain the Area regularly as they wish (weekends, after work etc.). Activities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weeding</li> <li>• Litter collection</li> <li>• Hand watering</li> <li>• Environmental monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>Permanent signage will be installed identifying the Community Group that has 'Adopted-the Park' to highlight their contribution and commitment. Prepare site, provide regular support, and regular maintenance of park as usual. Guidance for group to plan activity including OHS guidelines and volunteer registrations. Attendance of a Council representative on Activity Day. Supply tools and equipment such as plants, bags, litter grabbers, syringe containers, paint removal chemical and a quantity of gloves etc. This may be via pick up from Depot or delivered to the site/activity organiser. Council will continue to provide water trailer, OHS signage, staff and rubbish removal depending on the size and frequency of activity.</p>

Group members should agree amongst themselves how often they want to meet and for how long, but sessions of one to three hours that occur monthly, quarterly or annually are typical.

Groups are also encouraged to generate a calendar of events as this will assist in providing direction for existing members and in attracting prospective members.

**3. The adopted park will be the joint responsibility of a Community Group and Council to maintain in partnership.**

To clarify areas of responsibility and to make the Community Group's contribution as meaningful and enjoyable as possible, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be entered into. The intent of the MOU is to establish clear protocols and responsibilities as they apply to adopting a park and to assist in the undertaking of mutually agreed outcomes.

The Community Group:

- will have at least 5 members, including a nominated Convenor whose role will be to liaise with the Council representative
- will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Council
- will organise the attendance of the Community on Activity Days

Council will:

- nominate a Council representative whose role will be to liaise with the Community Group
- provide equipment and support on Activity Days (as outline above)
- continued to undertake regular maintenance of the open space

If the open space becomes unsightly or unsafe, or if the group ceases to function Council will end the MoU and resume full management responsibility for the open space.

If a Community Group is already Incorporated (and has public liability insurance) then attendance of a Council Representative on Activity Days is not required.

## ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL PROCESS

To adopt-a-park, you will need to obtain Council approval through the below process.

### Step-by-Step Application Process

**STEP 1.** Contact Council to speak with an Officer from Open Space Management about your ideas and chosen site. If the site is supported in principle, proceed to step 2.

- *If the chosen site is not suitable, the application process will not go any further.*

**STEP 2.** Establish a Community Group of at least 5 members and nominate a Convenor to liaise with Council.

- *If the applicant is unable to demonstrate a commitment from at least 4 other participants, the application process will not go any further.*

**STEP 3.** Develop a draft list of activities and a proposed calendar of Activity Days, these will be used to develop the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Submit the draft list to Open Space Management for discussion.

- *Council officers will be in contact to review and refine the proposed activities.*

**STEP 4.** Submit your application in writing to: [parksfeedback@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:parksfeedback@wyndham.vic.gov.au)

### Application Approved

Once approved by the Manager Open Space (or authorise delegate), the Community Group will be required to sign the MoU and activities can commence on site.

## Council Representative

A Council contact 'liaison' person will be nominated upon the Activity or Park Adoption being approved. The role of Council's contact 'liaison' person will be to:

- a. Support the Community Group.
- b. Discuss the proposed site and provide an onsite visit to ensure familiarity of the site.
- c. Ensure the Activity is consistent with what's been approved by Council.
- d. Coordinate communication through Council of any amendment to the Activity.
- e. Coordinate the supply of any materials, such as mulch, plants etc that has previously approved.
- f. Initially work with the Community Group to undertake key risk management assessments to be undertaken prior to each working bee. These assessments will then become the ongoing responsibility of the Group to undertake and may be required to be lodged with Council.
- g. Undertake a 'manual handling' training session. The expectation is that this will become the responsibility of the Group to undertake prior to each work activity.
- h. OH&S requirements such as safety apparel that is the responsibility of the group to arrange or supply

## TERMINOLOGY

**Open Space** – A Council owned or managed public space for people to relax, exercise, play and enjoy the natural environment.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** - A detailed proposal on how a group will allow the broader community to participate in the community garden.

**Council Representative** – Wyndham City Council’s key contact point (typically the Park’s Leading Hand)

**Community Group** – All signed-up members i.e. the collective

**Group Convenor** – The Group’s elected lead person

**Delegate/s** – Person/s leading the group on any given activity day

**Community Garden** – A piece of land gardened or cultivated by a group of people. Community gardens are designed for growing edible and ornamental plants such as fruits, vegetables, and flowers.

**Nature strip** - A grass strip in front of a house between a fence or footpath and a roadway, owned by the Local Government Authority and maintained by the resident.

## BREACH OF POLICY

Groups will be expected to manage their adopted open space to the standard agreed with Council. Council can revoke an agreement with a Community Group if:

- The open space is not being maintained or becomes unsafe for public access.
- The group disbands or stops functioning.
- The open space is no longer available or suitable.

## REFERENCES

The following Strategies, Policy’s, and Guidelines, which can be found at [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au), apply to this Policy:

Relevant Strategies/Policy’s:

- Resilient Wyndham 2021 – 2025
- Wyndham Public Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 - 2025
- Wyndham City Council Plan 2021 – 2025
- Environment ad Sustainability Strategy 2016 -2040
- Wyndham Open Space Strategy 2045
- Beatification of Nature strips Policy - 2022 - 2026

Relevant Guidelines:

- Nature Strip Landscaping Planting Guidelines
- Nature Strip Landscaping Guidelines

## VERSION HISTORY

ID	DATE	AUTHOR	REVISION REASON / KEY CHANGES	REVIEW DATE
1.0	MMM YY	ROLE	new policy	MMM YY

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
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OWNER	Role Title (Coordinator Manager or Director)
REVIEW	Risk Team – Role; <DD/MM/YYYY>
CONSULT	Staff Relations Consultative Committee < DD/MM/YYYY > (if policy contains compliance commitments as defined in the Enterprise Compliance Management Policy)
APPROV	ELT Member Title OR Executive Leadership Team <DD/MM/YYYY>
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ADOPT	Executive Leadership Team / Audit and Risk Committee / Council <DD/MM/YYYY>
NOTE	Staff Relations Consultative Committee < DD/MM/YYYY > (if policy contains only compliance requirements as defined in the Enterprise Compliance Management Policy)

**NOTE:** BLUE TEXT – PROVIDES GUIDANCE – DELETE FOLLOWING POPULATION OF SECTION REFER TO PROMAPP FOR SPECIFIC GUIDANCE AND EXAMPLES