# Canterbury Community Gardens Association

# March 7th 2019 5.15pm,

# New Brighton Community Gardens

Present: Catherine O’Neill, Debbie Nelson, Amanda O’Carroll, Hayley Guglietta,

Di Madgin, Rachel Vogan, Robyn Kilty, Heidi Wilton, Heather Davies,

Deanne Harvey, Peggy Kelly, Valentine Joyce, Brendon Lewis, Andrew Hay, Tamsin Harrington, Inga Jie, Maree Cooper, Gill Office, Hilary Wilson, Carl Craw, Michelle Craw, Steve Langley, Mandy Griener, Annette Walker, Wolfgang Bopp, Janet Cubey, Eric.

Apologies: Cathy Allden

Matters Arising from previous meeting: Hayley’s migration of web platform deferred until next meeting, deferred until next meeting.

General Business: Debbie Nelson extended an invitation to the CCGA committee and membership to attend the Official Grand Opening of the Kaiapoi Community Garden new building, Sunday March 17th 1pm.

Cathy Allden via email offered the CCGA a stand at the Avebury House Gala, Sunday March 31st from 10am – 3pm. A flyer invite had been sent to other Community Gardens to come along, for an opportunity to fundraise for their garden.

Rachel Vogan brought news that the possibility of an Autumn Show in 2020, in the Christchurch Botanical Garden as a proposed site for the venture.

More information to come

Speaker: Wolfgang Bopp Director of Christchurch Botanical Gardens and Parks.

Di Madgin, guardian of the River Road Garden, gave a gracious introduction for the new Director of the Botanic Gardens to speak with those who had attended.

It was a lovely informal affair in which Wolfgang asked each attendee about his or her involvement with their respective Community Garden. How the Community Garden was formed. How they came to be involved? How affective it was to attend? How they were funded? What issues arose from irksome elements? How is the watering going?

Di had a heartfelt précis of how she came to be a part of the Community Garden kinship, and a valuable member of the Canterbury Community Garden Association.

“A treat” was a word she used. The quiet solitude, and the idea that people could be using her garden, ie as a wedding venue, as it had been saved with the help of Avebury and Richmond House Outreach program via the Community.

Wolfgang’s partner, Janet is to be found volunteering, cataloguing the dried specimens, at the Laurie Metcalfe Herbarium, situated at Botanical Gardens Visitors Centre.

Each of the audience gave a variety of reasons to be involved in their respective Community Gardens, from board members to volunteers to co-ordinators, to Community Advisors and how the gardens are evolving.

Even though the Community Gardens are run and funded differently, if at all, several descriptive words struck a vital connecting cord.

“Solace.” “Committed.” “Passionate.” “Beautiful heart –healing time”

“Community Gardeners Good group Inside and Out”

Not all based on the idea of food, Friends of Beverley Park initiated in 2000, and Linwood Resource Centre, are two which vary differently, but converge with Community Spirit.

Other organisations such as Smile Dial, & Greening the Rubble, were given a mention. Both started by generous donations of time, and plants and time.

Recreational Services, & CCC were regarded to be good people.

Wolfgang noted that a lot of the Community Gardens have been set up in interesting sites, and not all are allowed to be permanent, an issue which several gardens have encountered, and that Richmond Community Garden is ready to take on, and he asked whether there was Community Roof Garden.

He recognised that a Community Garden is based on the positive energy of the people that founded, run, and volunteer in them. He noted that people don’t note that it’s a legal entity, they have no time restraints on being present. People like to take ownership, “becomes close to your heart”

Wolfgang would be keen to have a ‘planting army’ for the 40,000 native plants which need to be in the Christchurch Park Reserves.

A watering army was mentioned, which gave rise to this story from him

Whilst they were cycling the Red Zone, they found a sign and a bucket, “water us.” The sign was written by a child, and the bucket was near the water.

Nearby 20-30 plants. He thought that it was nice for people to take ownership, rather than commercial, not always easy to do.

Huge shout out to New Brighton Community Garden, “Best Place in The World” for hosting the afternoon. Nibbles and beverages were served.

Amanda O’Carroll