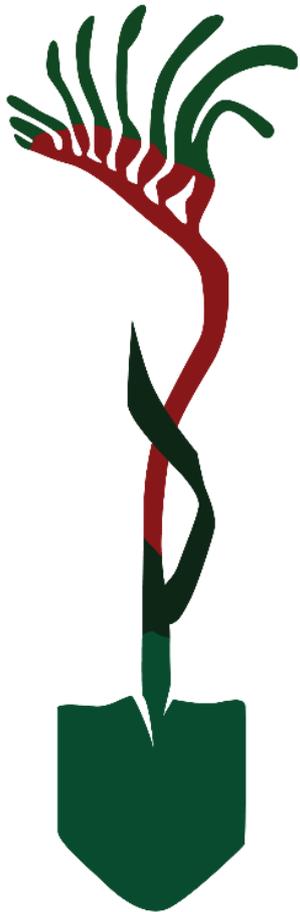


# Open Gardens West Coast

Bringing people and gardens together

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## Garden Owners Guide

2018

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## Welcome

We are delighted that you will be opening your garden with Open Gardens West Coast and we thank you in advance for your generosity in sharing it with the public.

Please read this kit to find out what you need to do to get ready for opening your garden.

Open Gardens West Coast is a local volunteer- run association and our goal is to promote the enjoyment and benefits of gardens and gardening across Western Australia by opening gardens for public viewing. We also run members events throughout the year, with opportunities to hear from gardening professionals, to view special gardens and share our love of gardening with our members. Our constitution and more information about Open Gardens West Coast are available at: [www.opengardenswa.org](http://www.opengardenswa.org)

We hope you enjoy the preparation as well as the Opening itself. If you would like to discuss any aspect of your Opening, please feel free to contact us via your Selector or by email to [info@opengardenswa.org](mailto:info@opengardenswa.org) .

## The Open Gardens West Coast Team



Open Gardens West Coast Inc has a group of enthusiastic volunteers who can assist in making your garden opening a great success.

The first contact most of our garden owners have with us is through one of our volunteer garden selectors who seek out, visit, and assess the gardens. Others in the team will liaise with you ahead of your opening to confirm all the practical arrangements for your opening. If Open Gardens West Coast is providing catering or gate volunteers at your garden, our team will usually arrange a site visit before the opening. Arrangements for support may vary for regional gardens.

Assistance and support for the preparation and opening of each of our gardens includes:

- This Garden Owners Kit which provides detailed information and a timeline to help you prepare for opening
- Volunteers to help on the gate, as required
- Equipment, signage and publicity
- Insurance for the event
- Catering services – by arrangement: Our experienced team can provide tea/coffee and light refreshments and will discuss all the arrangements with you before your opening.



## Publicity and Promotion

Our promotion activities focus on local media and on-line publicity and includes publicity to our members and other gardening groups. Often, the most effective publicity will be through your own contacts and local community so we suggest you consider all your own contacts - friends, family, work colleagues, clubs, Facebook and other social media. We also recommend that you contact your local newspaper and provide them with a photo and some information about your garden as experience shows that they are more likely to respond to personal contact from a local resident. Our publicity activities include:

- Our website [www.opengardenswa.org.au](http://www.opengardenswa.org.au) provides a full description and photos of your garden along with the Garden Notes and/or plant lists provided by you. Your garden will be added to the website once dates are agreed and photos are available.
- Our Facebook page will include your garden opening and it will be actively promoted in the days leading up to the event. We have a lively facebook following and encourage you to share our Facebook page widely with your friends.
- Press releases are sent to a wide range of local media contacts including: The West Australian; community newspapers; commercial, ABC and community radio. Please note that publication is subject to editorial policy and we can't guarantee publication.
- We provide an electronic version of a flyer which you can print and use in any publicity you undertake. You may choose to adapt or change the flyer, and we ask that you retain our logo and branding on your publicity. A draft of the flyer will be sent to you in advance, so that you can check the details and suggest any changes you'd like.

The publicity flyer is also circulated to many independent nurseries, though display of the flyer is at the discretion of the individual nursery. We suggest you visit local nurseries to promote your garden.

- Upcoming gardens are advertised at the monthly meetings of Gardeners Circle Inc, and are also mentioned in their quarterly newsletters.

### *Multiple gardens*



During our peak season, there are often two or more gardens open at the same time. Our experience shows that mutual publicity benefits everyone, so we ask that you consider this in your publicity activities. For example, if the gardens are close to each other, then distributing a flyer locally, with both garden details will help boost visitors at both gardens. We will also provide address information for each garden at the entry gate, to encourage people to visit both gardens.

On occasion we open multiple gardens as a single event. Where the gardens are located near to each other and can open on the same dates, this provides a great opportunity to build local interest. Sometimes the owners will propose to open together, and at other times we may propose this option with owners before finalising dates. For these events, we offer a

discounted ticket price for multiple gardens, while still allowing single entry (eg: one garden entry \$6, two gardens for \$10) and the gate revenue is shared equally between garden owners and Open Gardens West Coast. These arrangements offer great cross-promotion and publicity opportunities as well as providing added interest for visitors. Financially, garden owners will usually gain, as Open Gardens West Coast reduces it's own percentage.

## Signage and equipment



You will be supplied with several road signs for guiding visitors to your garden and you should put these in place before the start time of your opening, and collect them after closing time. Choose the best locations for the signs at major intersections and roads leading to your garden. The signs will be delivered two or three days in advance and we also provide weighted bags to hold the signs in place.

- Other signage – such as teardrop signs for the entry gate - will also be delivered and will generally be set up on the first day by our volunteer team. These will usually need to be brought in overnight for security, so you should liaise with the volunteers to bring them in and have them ready again the next day.
- Marquee, table and chairs (if needed) will be delivered ready to set up on the first day for the Garden Gate. If the marquee is set up on the verge, it may be necessary to bring it inside the garden overnight for security and this will be discussed in advance when our team is making the final arrangements.
- We provide a full Garden Gate Kit, which has everything needed at the entry table and includes instructions for setting up the gate, placing signage, and managing & banking the cash

## Preparing for your opening

### *Your Garden Notes*

The Garden Notes are an important part of the garden-visiting experience. The story of your garden adds interest for visitors and provides a personal touch to the visit. The notes are important for promotional purposes too and will help in the preparation of media releases and are posted on our website so visitors can view them there either before or after their visit.



These notes can provide a tour of the garden, punctuated with items of interest or may tell the story of how the garden developed and why certain choices were made. You may like to discuss challenges you faced in relation to the site or conditions of your garden, a favourite part of your garden or any special plants or features. In other words, tell the story of *your* garden. And if you have opened your garden before, you may need to refresh your notes to incorporate any changes since your last opening.

Garden notes are usually about one A4 page in length but should not exceed two pages. We recommend that you have your garden notes available for visitors – either as printed copies or posted on an easel or wall in your garden. We encourage our visitors to return printed garden notes so that they can be re-used by other visitors.

## *Photos*



Photos of your garden will be included on our website, along with your garden notes. You can provide your favourite photos of your garden, to add to the photos our selector provides. A photo display wall or album showing the development of the garden is always popular with visitors.

## *Your Pets*

Consider the impact of the opening on your domestic pets, and make suitable arrangements for them. It's not recommended to have your dog/s around the garden during visiting hours, but if you choose to have them participate please be mindful that your visitors may not feel as comfortable with your dog as you do. Keep your dog with you as much as possible, and please don't let pets wander near any food preparation or sale areas.



## *Fund Raising & Community Giving*



The entry fees are divided equally between the garden owners and Open Gardens West Coast - many garden owners choose to pass on their share to a charity, but you may also choose to retain it. The remaining portion goes to Open Gardens West Coast to cover administration, insurance, promotion and the production of the Open Gardens program and our members' events.

If you choose to give your share of the gate (or some of it) to a charity, you may like to display a sign at the gate or in your garden. If you are involving a charity, consider asking them about the following support activities:

- Publicising the opening through their own networks and promoting the event
- Providing morning and afternoon teas for additional fundraising and to enhance the day for garden visitors
- Supplying volunteers to staff the gate or other support activities. If charity workers are active on site, then that charity should provide suitable insurance cover for them in the first instance.

You also need to ensure your charity is aware of the fee split with Open Gardens West Coast. If you are donating your share of the gate to them, they will receive the agreed percentage of the total gate takings (or a smaller proportion if you choose).

## *Additional Activities*

You may decide to include some additional activities or attractions to complement your Opening. All proceeds from these activities are retained by you or your charity.



On occasion, Open Gardens West Coast may make arrangements to provide additional activities such as guest speakers, raffles or other events. These activities will always be discussed and agreed with you before your opening.

Popular activities and attractions include plant sales, refreshments, specialist talks, live music, produce stalls, art displays/sales etc.

## *Setting up the Entry Gate*



The entry table should be placed near the entry to the property or the garden and may be under your carport/ garage/verandah or in a marquee. Usually, we will provide a marquee, table, chairs and all the equipment needed for the entry gate. Volunteers on the Gate need to have weather protection but we will always try to ensure that the marquee doesn't spoil the entry view for your visitors. For Openings outside the metropolitan area, we'll discuss arrangements with you.

For the entry table and your volunteers, you will be provided with a Gate Kit and instructions for setting up the entry table and running the gate activities.

You will need to provide:

- Copies of your Garden Notes
- Charity signs, if you are involving a charity
- Access to toilet and water/tea/coffee for volunteers
- The completed *Information for Volunteers* page which is at p14 of this guide.

## *Entry Fees*



The entrance fee for your garden will have been agreed prior to the garden opening and the entry fee sign will be placed on the table where it is visible to arriving visitors. All adult garden visitors are required to pay the entry fee; children under the age of 18 enter free. Open Gardens West Coast does not provide concessions for entry as we aim to keep our entry fees low for all our garden visitors.

Volunteers, Selectors and Committee members of Open Gardens West Coast are not required to pay for entry. Volunteers and helpers arranged by either you or your charity also don't pay for entry, but must be provided with a name badge or other identification so that those staffing the gate can allow entry. If you wish to provide free entry to any of your visitors (eg: neighbours), please let us know so that the gate staff can be advised of the arrangements.

## Staffing the Gate



There should be two people on the Garden Gate throughout your Opening, whether from our volunteer team, your own network of friends & family or from your chosen charity. It is important to have people who are reliable, friendly and welcoming on the gate as their enthusiastic attitude sets the tone for a happy visit.



These arrangements will be discussed with you, and if you are providing some or all of the Gate staff, you will be asked to provide their names for insurance purposes.

Often we can provide volunteers for the whole Opening, but during peak times this may not be possible and we'll discuss this with you.

All our volunteers are given training and background information, so if you are providing volunteers, you'll be sent an information pack to pass on to them. Please urge them to read this **before** commencing their shift as it contains important information for managing the gate.

Name Badges are provided in our Gate Kit: white cards for volunteers and orange cards for Garden Owners so that visitors can identify you if they have questions. You need to keep yourself available and visible in the garden as visitors will want to talk to you, so you should not roster yourself to be collecting entry fees.

You must not rely on an 'honesty box' system. Please do not allow anyone under 18 to be on the gate alone. It would be appreciated if you could provide volunteers with access to a toilet, drinking water and tea/coffee where possible, even if you are not providing refreshments at your garden.

## Parking and Access



If your road has very limited parking, you may be able to identify nearby places where cars can park (a neighbouring paddock, school car park, etc). Please advise us of any parking arrangements so that we can include it on the website and other publicity. If you are concerned about parking, please discuss this with your Selector.

If possible, leave space for a 'drop off' point or disabled parking near to the entrance for visitors who have limited mobility. Ask your volunteers to park their cars away from the main entrance so as to leave the most convenient places available for visitors.

## Toilet Access



If you have an external toilet please signpost it clearly. If a toilet is not available for visitors, you should note the location of the nearest public toilets on the *Information for Volunteers* page. (There are a number of websites which provide this information, just google 'public toilets' and your suburb name)

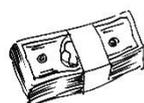
For security reasons, we do not recommend indoor toilets be made available except in emergencies, and our volunteers will not give visitors access to your house unless you accompany the visitor.

*Please Note:* Open Gardens West Coast does not reimburse for the hire costs of portable toilets.

## *Cash and Banking arrangements*



As part of the Gate Kit, Open Gardens West Coast will provide a cash box and a cash float of \$160 in small notes and coins. If we are not able to provide this, we will confirm arrangements with you prior to your opening.



- Any cash which is removed from the cashbox for safekeeping must be receipted.
- You should place the cash box in a safe place overnight and return it to the gate for the next morning's opening.
- For single metropolitan gardens, a representative from Open Gardens West Coast will attend on the final afternoon to manage the cash distribution. After deducting the initial float, the cash is counted, and you will receive your portion in cash on the final day. You should make appropriate arrangements for distribution of funds to your charity if applicable.

Where multiple gardens are opened as a single event, banking arrangements will be agreed with you.

## *Beware Water signs and other special signs*

If there are water features in the garden, please display a Beware Water sign at your gate to warn visitors of potential dangers for children. You may also wish to place signs close to the water area.



Other signs may be needed to cover special circumstances such as uneven surfaces, bee hives or other potential risks in the garden.

## *Insurance*



This is one of Open Gardens West Coast's key services to our garden owners. Open Gardens West Coast is vigilant concerning insurance issues and as part of our program you enjoy the benefits of a policy tailored especially for open gardens and volunteer-related activities. We arrange insurance cover for Public Liability, Personal Accident (including volunteers) and Cash-In-Transit for our gardens on their designated open days. The key aspects for you to note are listed below, and you may request confirmation of our insurance cover if you wish.

- The Public Liability cover is in place only on your scheduled open days.
- Personal Accident Cover for Voluntary Workers is provided on your open days. The Voluntary Workers Insurance covers workers aged 12 to 85, and includes cover for any unpaid helpers, including any you invite to run a stall for a charity. The liability cover indemnifies the garden owner against claims in the event of an accident, however will only become effective after Medicare treatments have been exhausted. Please advise us of the names of any helper outside the age limits of 12 and 85.

- Before your opening, ensure that any potentially dangerous areas of the garden are roped off and all garden tools and equipment are safely stowed away. Place signs or other indicators in areas there are potential risks eg: where the footing is uneven, or reticulation may create a trip hazard. Consider using brightly coloured tape or similar on uneven bricks or paths.
- On your open days, take normal precautions to make your home secure. Close curtains and blinds to discourage visitors from looking into your house.
- The liability policy covers the standard activities on open days, including the provision of food and other stalls. However, the policy does not automatically extend to include activities associated with farm or domestic vehicles, animals (pony rides etc.), jumping castles and other hired amusements, model train rides, or power tools. If you are contemplating any activity of this nature, or if you need any further information on our insurance cover, please contact the Selector or email [info@opengardenswa.org](mailto:info@opengardenswa.org).
- On your open days, if you become aware of any incident – no matter how minor – that may give rise to a claim, whether any claim has been made against you or not please take the name and address of the people involved and fill in the Incident Report Form that is provided in the gate kit.
- Neighbouring Properties: where there is insufficient parking on site, garden owners often arrange to use neighbouring properties. If this is the case for your opening, please provide the address of any properties being used so we can inform our insurers. If access to your garden is through land not owned by you, we will also need the address of that owner. Please notify the Selector of these details.
- If you open your garden to anyone other than Open Gardens West Coast or on any other dates such as for bus tours or garden groups, you will need to arrange appropriate insurance for these activities. Note that for these activities, the payment of any consideration to you or a third party – whether a fee, gift, donation or token – may result in the cancellation of public liability cover under domestic insurance policies.

## Open Gardens West Coast Catering



Our volunteer catering team provide tea/coffee and a range of cakes and sandwiches at many of our garden openings. If you'd like to have them cater at your Opening, please request this as early as possible so that we can discuss the arrangements with you. On weekends with multiple gardens open, we can only provide catering at one location, but we may be able to provide some options for you such as providing tea/coffee facilities.

There are some important considerations for our Catering service:

- All our catering team are volunteers, so please treat them with respect. They do have professional experience on the team and you can leave all the arrangements for food preparation and serving in their hands.
- Our team will be preparing and serving food for your guests, and food hygiene is an important aspect of their work. It is generally not suitable to prepare food in a laundry or other secondary facility. Serving tables will need to be set up close to the kitchen and access to a power point for the hot water urn should be organised.
- The team will require access to your kitchen for food preparation and washing up. Please advise your family or other residents that they should minimise their use of the kitchen during the opening. Food hygiene considerations and staff operations can be disrupted when others choose to cook or prepare food during the Opening times.
- Your kitchen will be left clean and tidy at the end of each day. Benches will be cleaned, and our equipment stacked out of the way. We hope you'll understand that we can't arrange to wash the floors.
- We provide everything needed for food preparation and service, however we don't provide seating/tables for your visitors. You will need to consider where you can place tables and chairs, and we suggest providing seating for 15 – 20 people. Some of our visitors have mobility limitations, so it's a good idea to have some of the seating on level ground where there are no stairs involved.
- While volunteers will have access to the toilet facilities our team will not allow unidentified garden visitors into your home, so if your family or friends wish to enter your home via the catering area please escort them, to prevent embarrassment if the team refuse entry.
- Our catering always includes gluten free options, however individuals with other specific food allergies or intolerances will need to take normal precautions.
- Garden Owners and gate volunteers may have complimentary refreshments during their shifts, but we cannot extend this to family, friends or other helpers who may be on site.

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• Icons courtesy of [www.freevector.com](http://www.freevector.com)

## YOUR ACTION TIMELINE

8 WEEKS OUT	
	Write your Garden Notes and email to <a href="mailto:info@opengardenswa.org">info@opengardenswa.org</a> or mail to PO Box 2, South Perth 6059
	If you are involving a charity and/or having additional activities, advise the Selector so this information can be included in promotional material
	Identify opportunities for local promotional activities for your opening. eg: contact your local newspaper, arrange to put flyers in local businesses etc
	If you are having additional activities, make arrangements with the participants regarding their requirements, opening times etc.
	If there are any circumstances you feel are unusual in relation to insurance, contact your Selector
	Consider how you will manage garden access, parking and toilet access if applicable

4 WEEKS OUT	
	Advise immediate neighbours of your forthcoming opening
	Follow up on promotional opportunities, eg. contact your local newspapers
	Prune hedges etc to avoid that 'just clipped' look
	Contact your helpers, and send Open Gardens West Coast a list of volunteer names if you are providing gate staff.

3 WEEKS OUT	
	Identify the best locations for placing your road signs
	Identify where to set up the entry table, and other activities (if relevant)
	Contact friends and colleagues and ask them to come to your opening
	Print and distribute flyers or other local publicity

1 WEEK OUT	
	If your garden is in a high traffic area, consider putting a sign outside your garden to promote the opening
	A team member will contact you to arrange drop off for equipment and signs

	Confirm arrangements with your charity, other participants, and with gate volunteers
	Print copies of your garden note for visitors
	Place plant labels if applicable

### 3 DAYS OUT

	Mow & water lawns for the last time to minimise damage during the opening
	Ensure your garden is safe for visitors – refer to the safety checklist provided

### 1 DAY OUT

	Establish some ‘rules of entry’ with family regarding access to the house. If Open Gardens are providing catering, please remind your family that the kitchen will be in use throughout the weekend.
	Sweep paths, remove any trip hazards and put away tools, equipment, hoses, etc
	Place garden signs for water, toilet or hazards if applicable
	Complete the “Information for Gate Volunteers” (next page of this kit) and have it ready for the entry table.

### OPENING WEEKEND

	Put up the road signs before 9am
	Be ready for the volunteers to set up the entry table, chairs and marquee before 10.00am.
	Let the gate volunteers know about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to toilet facilities, drinking water and other facilities</li> <li>• Any additional volunteer help who may enter free</li> </ul>
	Secure your home and put on your orange name badge ready to welcome your visitors
	And last of all, collect the road signs after closing time.



## Information for Gate Volunteers

<b>Dates/s</b>	
<b>Garden Name</b>	
<b>Owners Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>OGWC contact name &amp; phone *</b>	
<b>Raffle Information</b>	<i>Open Gardens will advise if applicable</i>
<b>Entry</b>	\$6 per person Free entry to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All volunteers</li> <li>• OGWC committee members and selectors with name badge</li> </ul>
<b>Nearest public toilet</b>	
<b>Additional Parking</b>	
<b>Charity supported by owner</b>	

\*Check with your Open Gardens team contact for this information

If you are providing free entry to any visitors, please note the details or arrangements on this sheet.

*This page is to be printed and placed at the entry table for the volunteers*