

CITY OF SWAN

Friends Group Manual

September 2016



Foreword

This Friends Group Manual has been developed as a resource for City of Swan community members who are, or would like to become Friends Group volunteers.

This manual aims to ensure that Friends Group volunteers can work safely to achieve positive environmental outcomes. The City values the contribution and passion of our community members who wish to work with the City to conserve and enhance our natural areas, now and for the future.

The City of Swan has identified the need to protect our environment for future generations and retain biodiversity as key outcomes of its *Strategic Community Plan 2012–2022*.

The City's *Sustainable Environment Policy (POL-C-084)* states that the City will work internally and with partners in our community to preserve and protect the ecology and biodiversity of our natural ecosystems.

These outcomes are also supported by the City's *Local Biodiversity Strategy 2015*. The vision of this strategy is:

Protect, retain and manage a network of natural areas within the City of Swan that support the diversity of local indigenous biodiversity (plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms) in our region for the future.

This strategy recognises the important role that Friends Group volunteers can play in managing our local natural areas.

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Document prepared by Shenaye Hummerston

Cover image: Planting work day, courtesy of Friends of Bennett Brook

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1.0 Introduction

City of Swan encompasses a wealth of beautiful and important natural areas and welcomes community members to become partners in taking care of them. The City values the contribution that the community makes to the management of our natural areas and would like to continue to work with community members to manage, protect and enhance its unique natural assets now and for the future.

This Manual contains all the information you need to get a new group started, to plan and run activities and ensure you and other members of your group are working safely and are covered by insurance.

The City of Swan acknowledges the Noongar people as the traditional owners of the land in the Swan region and that the local biodiversity of the City is intrinsically linked with the cultural values of the Noongar people.

The City of Swan will be here on in referred to as "the City".

2.0 Objectives

The objectives of this manual are:

- To help ensure that bushland reserves are managed to maintain and/or enhance their conservation and community values;
- To provide safety guidelines for volunteers carrying out bushcare activities on City reserves; and
- To outline appropriate frameworks and processes for the City to support bushcare volunteers.

3.0 Getting Started

3.1 What is a Friends Group?

A Friends Group usually consists of a few people working together informally to conserve and protect a reserve under the management of the City. Friends Groups work voluntarily in their own time and at their own pace. You choose the activities most suited to the needs and objectives of your reserve based on your abilities and the time you have available and **in consultation with the City**.

It is usually best to start at a basic level with a simple work plan or action plan which can be upgraded as you gain experience. The City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance can provide advice, direction and priorities for bushcare activities.

3.2 Role of a Friends Group

The role of a Friends Group is to help maintain and enhance the environmental values of bushland areas. Friends Groups can do this by undertaking bushcare activities such as collecting rubbish, planting, surveying for flora and fauna and undertaking weed control. Appropriate activities are outlined in **Section 7** of this manual.

3.3 Forming a Friends Group

To register a Friends Group you will need to complete **Forms 1** and **2** (located at the end of this document) with the members of your group and return them to the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance. You will be notified of the acceptance of volunteer registrations.

It will be the responsibility of the group to keep a diary of bushcare activities, noting the hours worked by volunteers and a register of participants at bushcare events. (Refer to **5.1** Insurance and Public Liability & **Form 4**).

4.0 Working with the City of Swan

The City is legally responsible for the management of a large number of reserves with environmental values through management orders, vesting or ownership of the land. However it is not responsible for all reserves within its boundaries. Reserves such as National Parks, Nature Conservation Reserves and some Foreshore Reserves may be managed by government agencies such as the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) or the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC).

4.1 City Responsibilities

The City is responsible for ensuring that Friends Group volunteers are working safely on land under the City's management. This manual provides Friends Group volunteers with all of the appropriate safety information as well as outlining appropriate activities that can be undertaken by volunteers and the roles and responsibilities of both the City and its volunteers.

In support of Friends Groups working on land under the management of the City, the City's responsibilities include –

- Providing training and information to enable volunteers to work safely in the natural environment;
- Providing sound technical and environmental advice and direction to Friends Group activities;
- Providing access to appropriate City staff as necessary;
- Requiring all volunteers to adhere to safety recommendations;
- Encouraging all volunteers to report hazards, incidents and accidents in a timely manner;
- Encouraging all volunteers to accept that safety is the responsibility of all those taking part in the group's activities;
- Recording on file correspondence from the group, including the group's acceptance of the conditions that have been developed for Friends Group activities; and
- Providing support for grant applications for approved environmental restoration works on City managed lands.

4.2 Friends Group Responsibilities

4.2.1 Volunteer Responsibilities

The level of involvement and activities undertaken by volunteers will largely depend upon the management needs of particular bushland reserves and the capabilities of the group and its individual members. Responsibilities of registered Friends Groups and their members include:

- Acknowledging that health and safety is the responsibility of all those involved in the group's activities;
- Ensuring the activities of the group are carried out in a manner that is safe for its members as well as the wider community;
- Acknowledging that each member has a duty of care to themselves and others, and not attempting any task that is beyond their capabilities, nor expecting the same from others;

- Acknowledging that at no time should the achievement of outcomes be allowed to compromise safety; and
- Maintaining up-to-date records of their bushcare activities for insurance and reporting purposes (refer to **5.1 Insurance and Public Liability & Form 4**).

4.2.2 Coordinator Responsibilities

Each Friends Group, regardless of size is required to nominate a coordinator whose duties include:

- Liaising with City of Swan about the Group's planned activities in the reserve ahead of time, so the City can ensure the Group's environmental efforts synchronise with and do not compromise those of the City;
- Completion of all registration, requests for assistance, survey or annual reporting forms required by the City (not extensive);
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the group's membership and the bushcare activities carried out for insurance and reporting purposes including a register of participants on all bushcare workdays (forms are provided in this manual);
- Attending a free safety workshop in their first year as Coordinator and once every 3 years after that;
- Communication of the City's requirements to all group members (as per this manual); and
- Communication of any safety concerns, incidents or accidents to the City in a timely manner (**refer to 5.1 Insurance and Public Liability & Form 4**).

5.0 Safe Volunteering

5.1 Insurance and Public Liability

For insurance purposes, Friends Groups are comprised of volunteers of the City of Swan and come under the direction and control of the City. All non-incorporated Friends Groups registered with the City and their volunteers, are covered for personal accident and public liability under the City's policy once they are registered. To register (and ensure your group is covered by the City's insurance) volunteers must complete **Forms 1** or **2** as appropriate. This indicates that the volunteer accepts the conditions outlined by the City in accordance with this manual.

Incorporated Groups are not covered under the City's insurance.

It is a legal requirement for incorporated groups to seek and maintain their own insurance. Proof of the Group's insurance will need to be viewed by City staff and maintained on file prior to work commencing on City managed land. Incorporated Groups will need to adhere to the safety guidelines set out in this manual as well as adhering to the guidelines set out by their insurer.

Volunteers may also have the option of being covered under the insurance of an incorporated group such as a Catchment Group, by becoming members of the group. Volunteers should enquire with the group directly about this matter and not assume that insurance cover is extended. These options may prove useful where there are multiple land managers involved, or where the work moves onto private land.

If your group wishes to undertake work on land managed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) you will need to contact them (see Section 11 for contact details) to register as a DPaW volunteer and ensure that you are covered under their insurance.

5.1.1 Insurance cover

Personal Accident Cover

Please be advised that the volunteer insurance provided by the City is for personal accident cover. This type of policy covers **ONLY** specifically identified events such as;

- Death or total and permanent disablement;
- The loss of a limb; and
- Loss of sight, hearing etc.

A set lump sum payment is made for these occurrences. This policy totally excludes reimbursement of any expense which would, under normal circumstances, be fully or partly (including the gap) recoverable from Medicare. Claims from pre-existing medical conditions are excluded.

Please note that Medicare recoverable expenses are totally the responsibility of the volunteer and neither the City nor its insurer will consider any reimbursement of this nature.

Insurance cover under the City of Swan policy is **ONLY** available on reserves under the management of the City of Swan and Friends Groups need to understand that the City accepts no responsibility for activities that may be undertaken on other reserves.

If the reserve that a Friends Group wants to work on is not managed by the City, contact must be made with the appropriate controlling body to determine its requirements for bushland activities and insurance coverage. The Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance can help you determine the managing authority for the reserve that you would like to manage. In some cases, the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance can put you in contact with the appropriate land manager.

Volunteers between the ages of 16 and 80 are covered by the standard City of Swan insurance policy. If volunteers in your Friends Group are younger than 16 or older than 80, they can still be covered by insurance but are required to supply additional information about themselves and the tasks they intend to undertake. **Form 2** has a table for these volunteers to complete.

Public Liability Insurance

The City's public liability insurance covers volunteers for their legal liability to third parties for bodily injury and/or property damage arising from their activities as volunteers of the City.

5.1.2 Incorporation

If your group has a considerable membership number (i.e. more than five members) you have the option of becoming an incorporated body. Incorporation has several advantages such as being able to obtain more funding, larger grants, operate bank accounts, hold property, obtain insurance cover and provide some legal protection for members from unforeseen liabilities.

The Department of Commerce (DoC) website (<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au>) advises that "a member of an incorporated association is not by reason only of his being such a member, liable in respect of the liabilities of the association. However, members of incorporated associations are not protected from liability for their own negligence or other illegal acts committed by them."

As previously stated in **Section 5.1**, incorporated bodies are *not* covered under the City's insurance. If you decide to incorporate your group, you must get external insurance which can be costly.

The decision of whether to become incorporated (or not) is the responsibility of the Friends Group, but you are strongly encouraged to discuss this option with the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance and the Department of Commerce (DoC) prior to making any decisions. If you do register for incorporation, please inform the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance prior to application.

5.1.3 Volunteer Register

All Friends Group volunteers must be registered with the City. This is achieved by completing **Form 1** or **2** (located at the end of this manual) as appropriate and submitting them to the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance. They will advise of the acceptance of the volunteer. The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance maintains the City's Friends Group Volunteer Register.

Ensuring accurate information is provided to the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance is a key responsibility of a Friends Group's Coordinator. The Friends Group Coordinator must also keep an up to date record of volunteer registrations. Additionally, the Friends Group Coordinator must record all volunteers attending workdays or undertaking bushcare activities (utilising **Form 4**). These records may need to be examined by the insurance company in the case of an accident or related claim.

Please note that if the Friends Group Coordinator is not available to attend Friends Group work days, the group will need to nominate a registered volunteer to act as the 'Delegated Coordinator' for that event. This volunteer will be responsible for directing on site activities and must ensure all volunteer details are recorded accurately in the Workday Registration **Form 4** (see also **Form 2**).

5.2 Working Safely

To ensure all volunteers know how to work safely, the City will induct each volunteer. The City also supports a range of regular training opportunities. See **Section 11.0** for more information.

All bushcare volunteers are encouraged to attend a 'Green Card Training' workshop which is run annually as part of the 'Bush Skills for the Hills' program. This is a free workshop all about volunteering and undertaking bushcare activities safely. Friends Group Coordinators must undertake this training in the first year of the Group's operation and then once every three years, as safety regulations can change over time. The City also encourages each group to send other members along to ensure that this information is transferred throughout the group.

In Safe Hands Toolkit – A Safety Management Toolkit for Community Groups in Practical Conservation published by Conservation Volunteers Australia is a great reference for Friends Group volunteers, covering the main safety requirements necessary for the protection of volunteers engaged in bushcare activities. Copies of relevant elements of this toolkit are always provided at the annual Bush Skills for the Hills safety workshop (Green Card Training).

5.2.1 Personal Protective Equipment

Working Outdoors

Volunteers must wear protective clothing while carrying out bushcare tasks. The minimum standards are:

- Long pants;
- Long sleeved shirts;
- Sturdy, closed-in footwear;

- Hats and sunscreen;
- Gardening gloves and
- Sunglasses are also advised.

Volunteers must ensure they are well prepared for the conditions that are prevalent on the day.

Precautions to reduce the risks associated with working in **hot weather**:

- Maintain hydration through regular drink breaks;
- Work in shaded areas;
- Work in the cooler parts of the day and avoid heavy exertion through the hottest parts of the day; and
- Cease work if conditions are felt to be too extreme, or volunteers are experiencing any symptoms of fatigue.

Precautions to reduce the risks associated with working in **cold conditions**:

- Provide warm drinks and food at regular intervals;
- Carry out simple warm up stretches before work and after breaks;
- Rotate tasks to avoid prolonged exposure;
- Identify sheltered areas to use if conditions worsen;
- Work in the warmest parts of the day;
- Wear layered clothing so that it can be adjusted to stay comfortable in changing conditions; and
- Wear a warm hat.

5.2.2 Working Alone

The risks that volunteers may expose themselves to when working alone are –

- Inability to gain assistance when required; and
- Injury caused by attempting jobs that require more than one person, or are outside the capabilities of the individual due to health reasons.

It is preferable that Friends Group members do not work alone. Volunteers are recommended to work in groups of two or more and within earshot of each other, whenever possible. However, if working alone is the only option for the volunteers, the following should be observed.

Precautions to reduce the risk of working alone:

- DO NOT use power tools while working alone.
- DO NOT attempt tasks which are too large or difficult while alone.
- DO NOT work alone if you have a pre-existing medical condition which could affect your safety.
- Test mobile phone coverage prior to going out on a workday, ensure your phone is charged, and carry it with you on all workdays.
- Notify someone reliable of your expected return time, and ensure that this person will come and look for you in the event you are not back on time.
- Consider taking a basic first aid kit with you and keeping it with you at all times.
- Check out nearby locations which may be useful to you in gaining assistance in the event of an incident, i.e. busy street corners; local shops, schools or businesses.

- Ensure that you have the relevant numbers programmed into your phone for easy use in case of emergency. Mobile emergency number (112); SMS emergency number (116).
- Add an elected ICE (in case of emergency) contact phone number into your personal mobile phone (using 'ICE' as their contact name), in case emergency service personnel need to contact your family on your behalf.

5.2.3 Situational Awareness

Many natural area reserves include areas of uneven terrain, rivers and creeks and steep slopes. It is important to assess the hazards at your local reserve and ensure all members of your Friends Group are aware of them. The group should plan how they will minimise the identified risks.

It is also important to remember that the reserve you are working on is a public place. Friends Group volunteers need to ensure that they take all tools and equipment off site at the end of the work day and ensure that they are not leaving hazards, such as planting holes.

5.2.4 Manual Handling

Manual handling can be defined as 'any transporting or supporting of a load including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand or bodily force'. Manual handling also encompasses tasks involving:

- Repetitive actions, with or without force;
- Sustained and/or strained work postures; and
- Exposure to whole body or hand-arm vibration.

The following actions and postures should be **avoided** or **minimised** to reduce the risk of injury while undertaking manual handling tasks:

- Holding loads or arms away from the trunk;
- Reaching upwards and handling a load above shoulder height;
- Bending back or neck forwards and handling the load below mid-thigh height;
- Twisting the back or neck;
- Sideways bending or load handling on one side;
- Long carrying distances;
- Sudden jerky, rapid or unexpected movements;
- Bending hands or wrists forwards or to the side;
- Reaching behind;
- Crawling, kneeling, crouching, squatting, lying or semi-lying;
- Twisting or wringing using fingers or hands;
- Maintaining the same posture for long periods;
- Repeating similar movements or actions.

The City encourages volunteers to take regular breaks, change activities and seek the most comfortable way to undertake tasks and reduce the risk of injury.

Reducing the risk of injury through proper manual handling will also be covered in the City's induction process. At any time, Friends Group volunteers can also discuss strategies to minimise these risks with the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance.

5.2.5 Herbicides

Glyphosate Biactive (eg. Roundup Biactive) is the only chemical approved for use for weed spraying by Friends Group volunteers (see **Appendix 1** for a guide to weed management). Volunteers wishing to undertake chemical spraying to control weeds on City managed land must have approval from the City. Approval will only be given after documentary proof is provided which demonstrates that the herbicide operator has successfully completed accredited training and that it is confirmed the personal protective equipment recommended will be worn. Refer to **Section 11.0** for more information about relevant training.

Depending on the specifics of the chosen site, it may be necessary to implement measures to ensure that the public is safe from any potentially harmful effects (such as placing signs along a track while work is under way, signs are available from the City) These issues will need to be addressed with the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance prior to commencing work.

5.2.6 Chainsaws

Chainsaws are not to be used by volunteers without written approval from the City. Approvals will only be given after documentary proof is provided which demonstrates that the chainsaw operator has accredited training in basic chainsaw operation, and that it is confirmed the personal protective equipment recommended by the manufacturer will be worn. Training for chainsaw and slasher usage can be provided by Polytechnic West, where courses covering safety and operational aspects for this machinery are available.

5.2.7 Mechanical Equipment

When using other mechanical equipment, the manufacturer's recommendations for the operation of the equipment and recommendations for personal protective equipment must be adhered to. For whipper snippers, as a minimum, safety goggles, long pants and safe footwear are to be worn in addition to the standard clothing requirements (listed previously in **Section 5.2**)

5.2.8 Children

To ensure the safety of all concerned whilst undertaking bushcare activities, it is essential that children (persons under the age of 18) accompanying volunteers must have adult supervision at all times. The additional section on **Form 2** must be completed to provide insurance cover for volunteers between 12 and 16. Volunteers under the age of 12 are unable to be insured.

5.2.9 Volunteers over 80 years

The additional section on **Form 2** must be completed to provide insurance cover for volunteers between the ages of 80 to 85. Volunteers older than 85 years are unfortunately unable to be insured by the City.

5.2.10 Road Reserves and Verges

Because of the risks involved in working on roads and verges, volunteers must comply with *Main Roads WA Traffic Management for Road Works Code of Practice* and *Australian Standard AS1742 Manual* of uniform traffic control devices. To do this you will need:

- Traffic management plans approved by the City prior to work commencing;
- Sign placement approved on site by an accredited person;
- Reflective vests;
- To be part of a registered Friends Group (for insurance cover); and
- To notify the City where and when you intend to work along roadsides (marking locations on a map).

If your group is interested in working on roads and verges in the City, please first discuss this with the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance to ensure all appropriate safety measures are in place.

5.3 Risks to the Environment

Friends Group volunteers should also consider the risks to the environment of bushcare activities and take steps to reduce these risks. These risks include:

- Spreading Phytophthora Dieback or other plant diseases (see **Section 7.2.6**)
- Trampling or causing other disturbance to rare or poorly known flora or recently planted vegetation
- Spreading weed seed when removing weeds or when moving off-site or between sites (on footwear, clothing, bags, equipment, etc.). See **Appendix 1** for a guide to weed management and **Section 6.0** below.

Information on areas of environmental significance and identifying where recent works have been carried out can be provided by having a discussion with the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance.

6.0 Principles of Bushcare

6.1 Ask First

If you are not sure which species a plant is please don't kill it, plant it, collect or spread its seed. Do some research, attend some training or ask the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance first.

6.2 The Bradley Method

The Bradley Method is a simple and adaptable approach to bushland regeneration based on helping the bush to help itself. It was developed by Joan and Eileen Bradley from many years of hard work as conservation volunteers in NSW.

The Bradley Method advocates that the following three main principles should be adhered to as far as practicable when undertaking bushcare activities:

Minimal disturbance

Disturbance is an opportunity for weed invasion. Consider your options for weed control and apply methods appropriate to both the species being controlled and the scale of the problem.

Work from good to bad

Start to undertake weed control and other regeneration methods in areas of bush which are largely intact and in good condition. Work out from these areas towards weed infested areas.

Don't over clear

Clearing or 'cleaning up' your reserve can remove habitat niches and open the bushland up to weed invasion. Where possible, you should let the rate of natural regeneration dictate the rate at which you remove weeds.

6.3 Clearing

It is important to note that all native vegetation is protected under the *Environmental Protection Act, 1986*. This is governed by Clearing Regulations and administered by the Department of Parks and Wildlife. Under these regulations, trees, shrubs, ground covers, and native grasses are all protected - even if they are dead.

Although dead vegetation can look unsightly, it is important habitat for our native animals, particularly small birds, lizards and bandicoots. Dead vegetation often promotes regeneration of native plants through providing shelter, retaining soil moisture and moderating soil temperatures. If you are concerned about dead vegetation on your reserve in regards to fire hazard or fuel loads, talk to the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance. There are often several sustainable ways to reduce the fuel load or fire hazard of your reserve.

Clearing of woody debris from creeks and rivers can have a significant negative impact on these waterways. This may include removing natural habitat niches and speeding up the rate of flow of the water, leading to erosion issues.

6.4 Planting appropriate species

Any planting at a City managed reserve must be approved by the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance. Only local native species should be planted in City managed reserves. The City may be able to provide you with a list of species appropriate to your reserve.

7.0 Bushcare Activities

The following information provides a brief explanation of the various types of activities commonly undertaken on City managed reserves. Groups need to ensure that their activities are supported by appropriate training and are undertaken in a safe manner. The management needs for each reserve should also be reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with the conservation objectives.

Planning is key to the success of bushcare activities. Friends Group volunteers are encouraged to develop a simple action plan. A guide to preparing this is provided in **Appendix 3**. The City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance is available to provide advice and direction to your bushcare activities.

7.1 Basic Bushcare Activities

These activities require minimal training and can be undertaken by all Friends Group volunteers. Basic bushcare activities include the following:

7.1.1 Rubbish Collection

The City of Swan can organise the removal of collected rubbish from City managed reserves. It is recommended that Friends Group volunteers discuss timing of this activity with the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance prior to undertaking it so it may be coordinated to coincide with the schedule for waste pick up in your area.

Collection of large volumes of waste or weeds (e.g. woody weeds, typha) may require an allocation of funding to utilise an appropriate waste disposal contractor to remove it to an authorised receiving facility. Please talk to the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance before undertaking activities that may result in large quantities of waste.

7.1.2 Physical Weed Removal

Prior to undertaking physical weed removal, groups need to be sure that the species they are targeting is in fact an environmental weed. A field herbarium (i.e. a collection of pressed plants) of weed species should be established and verified to ensure that the correct plants are removed from a reserve.

Please note that collecting native (non-weed) species requires a Flora Collecting Licence and a letter from the City authorising collection of flora on specific reserves. Contact the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance if you would like to discuss this.

Resources such as *Western Weeds* and *Southern Weeds and their Control* are excellent, relevant references for our region (refer to **Section 14.0** for more information). If you are not sure if a plant is a weed, let it be and seek advice. **Remember that not all grasses are weeds.** The City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance and Bushland Maintenance Crew Team Leader can help to identify weed species and control priorities in your reserve. Please also refer to **Appendix 1**, 'A Guide to Weed Management'.

The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance can help you with planning a weeding program and the establishment of a field herbarium. A weeding plan will form part of your work plan or action plan, noting activities, dates and requests for assistance from the City.

7.1.3 Signage

Standard City of Swan reserve signage may be provided by the City, once confirmation of the reserve name is approved by the Geographic Names Committee (Landgate) and the City Council.

7.2 Intermediate Bushcare Activities

These activities require training to ensure members of the group use equipment and undertake tasks in a safe manner and in accordance with occupational safety and health standards as well as with environmental standards.

Training is required for volunteers and groups undertaking bushcare activities at this level. Please refer to **Section 11.0** for more information.

External funding may also be needed to undertake such projects on reserves. The City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance and the Eastern Hills Catchment Management Program Natural Resource Management Officers can assist you with identifying suitable grants and completing funding applications.

Intermediate bushcare activities include basic bushcare activities as well as more specialist activities, such as:

7.2.1 Action Plans

Scheduled planning is often essential to the success of more complex projects. In this situation an action plan is recommended. See the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance for more assistance, or look out for a Bush Skills for the Hills Action Planning workshop.

An Action Plan should be brief (no more than 5 pages) and address issues such as priority areas, mapping, weed plans, revegetation plans, seed collection and sowing plans, herbicide use, dieback management, liaison with authorities on fire management and the focus of bushcare activities. A guide to writing action plans is included as **Appendix 3**. The Action Plan may include a list of plant species found on the reserve and a separate field herbarium for native species and weed species that occur on the reserve. As a permit from the Department of Parks and Wildlife is required to collect native species, followed by a letter of permission from the City or other land manager, a photographic record may be preferred.

7.2.2 Seed Collection

Groups and individuals wanting to collect seed from bushland reserves for revegetation on their Friends Group reserve will need to obtain a Seed Collection Licence from the Department of Parks and Wildlife. Forms can be downloaded from the department's website. To apply, you will also need a letter of permission from the City and/or other land manager(s). Seed collection workshops may be held as part of the Bush Skills for the Hills program.

7.2.3 Weed Control Using Herbicides

Glyphosate Biactive (e.g. Roundup Biactive) is the only herbicide registered for Friends Groups to use on City reserves. Glyphosate Biactive differs from Glyphosate in that it contains a different surfactant, which makes it less hazardous to frogs. There are specific requirements for herbicide use around rivers, streams and wetlands – see the 'Guide to Weed Management' in **Appendix 1** for more information.

All herbicides are to be used in the concentration and manner outlined in the manufacturer's specifications. Training in the use of herbicides is periodically on the *Bush Skills for the Hills* training calendar.

7.2.4 Fire Management

Bushcare activities such as the removal of woody weeds and the control of non-native grasses or *Watsonia*, are environmentally friendly ways to reduce both the fire hazard and fuel loading of your Friends Group reserve.

Fire-breaks in City reserves are the responsibility of the City of Swan so please notify the City if your reserve's firebreaks need clearing.

7.2.5 Dieback Control

The City may already have information on the Phytophthora dieback status at the reserve your Friends Group wishes to adopt so talk to the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance. If this information is not available, a dieback interpreter will be needed to create a highly detailed dieback map. It is likely that grant funding will be required to pay for this level of detail.

Workshops on dieback control are held throughout the year via the Dieback Working Group and appear regularly on the *Bush Skills for the Hills* training calendar. These opportunities provide detailed training on the most effective methods of treatment. The two methods used for active dieback control within City of Swan reserves include spraying highly diluted phosphite over understorey plants and injecting less diluted phosphite into dieback susceptible trees.

7.3 Advanced Bushcare Activities

Advanced bushcare activities may include the use of slashers, chainsaws, construction works (walk trails, shelters, erosion control) as well as the intermediate and basic bushcare activities mentioned earlier in this document.

Approval for this level of activity requires the submission of an Action Plan to the City for approval. A Guide to Action Planning is provided as **Appendix 3**. An Action Plan includes a timetable for proposed activities and an outline of the resources and funding required for the project's implementation.

Volunteers wishing to undertake advanced bushcare activities need to undergo training through an appropriate course. Issues related to advanced bushcare activities are outlined below.

7.3.1 Chainsaw Use

Chainsaws are not to be used by volunteers without written approval from the City. Approvals will only be given after documentary proof is provided which demonstrates that the chainsaw operator has basic chainsaw operator accredited training and it is confirmed the personal protective equipment recommended by the manufacturer will be worn. An action plan will be required to clearly identify the species and location of woody weeds to be removed in this way.

7.3.2 Slashing

The City requires notification of any large-scale removal of vegetation (with brush cutter, whipper snipper or similar) before commencement of work. It is preferable that these actions will be included in an Action Plan approved by the City.

7.3.3 Erosion Control

Any changes to current drainage patterns including significant vegetation removal need to be approved by the City as this may impact on stormwater drainage systems. These should be addressed in an Action Plan as above. Creeklines should not be altered or modified in any way without appropriate approvals.

7.3.4 Walk Trail Closure

Walk trails, while important for recreation and amenity for the community, can lead to an increase in the impact of certain threatening processes such as dieback infestation, water erosion, and fragmentation of bushland areas. Rationalisation of walk trails (closing of some trails – often those created 'informally' by people walking through the reserve) is often required after the completion of a dieback study. This can also be done to change drainage patterns where erosion is occurring or where revegetation is preferred to ensure that the dieback is not transferred from infected areas to dieback-free areas and that soil is not lost through erosion. Trail rationalisation may be included in an Action Plan approved by the City.

7.3.5 Management Plans

A Management Plan is a comprehensive and detailed plan that considers all uses and values of a reserve and outlines long term management strategies. A Management Plan should follow the City's guidelines and include information on natural resources (landforms, landscape values, flora, and fauna) and recreational values such as bushwalking and nature study. If your Friends Group is interested in developing a management plan for a City reserve, you must discuss it with the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance first. Funding applications may also provide for the hiring of specialists where required (eg. Flora Surveys, Dieback Mapping).

8.0 Running Your Group

8.1 Group Management

Most Friends Groups are run informally. For a Friends Group that is not incorporated, there is no legal or City requirement to hold formal meetings. However, it can help to clearly identify who is responsible for a few specific roles: eg. the contact person for enquiries, person who tracks and reports on grants etc.

8.2 Communication

Group members will generally feel more a part of the group when they are kept informed. This can be done by holding an informal meeting with a cup of tea at a regular workday (eg. first Saturday of the month), or via an email group for core group members or an email 'newsletter' for a wider group of volunteers or community members who just want to keep in touch. Some groups find this easier to achieve through the use of a website or Facebook page.

8.3 Attracting New Members

Advertising to attract new volunteers is an important way to ensure longevity of the group through succession of members and helps to prevent volunteer burnout. It also gives other people the chance to enjoy being part of your great project.

There are a number of ways to encourage new members to join your group. Promoting an occasional community work day, such as a planting day is a good way to get the local community involved in your project. You may choose to promote this type of activity by doing a letterbox drop to homes adjacent to the reserve. You could also have a stand at a local shopping centre to talk to people about the work your group is involved in, advertise in a local paper, local school newsletter or advertise a volunteer position on an appropriate internet site.

Your group can register as a member of the **Swan Volunteer Resource Centre** (SVRC). The SVRC can help match suitable volunteers to your group and can help you to develop a simple job description and advertise for and interview potential new volunteers for you. The SVRC can also provide advice and training to help you manage your volunteers. The SVRC is an initiative of the City of Swan supported through funding from the Department for Local Government and Communities.

8.4 Orientating and Educating New Members

It is important to take the time to show new members around your reserve, point out any hazards and talk to them about what your group is trying to achieve and how you plan to go about it. Doing this at the beginning of the relationship will ensure you are all working safely, towards a common goal.

It is a good idea to nominate a member of the group to orient new members, eg. to show them how to plant on a work day, or how to use a hand tool. It is also necessary for the Coordinator of the group to be responsible for signing volunteers in and out on workdays, using **Form 4**.

8.5 Celebration

Take time to get together and celebrate your efforts. Your group may wish to have an end of year BBQ or afternoon tea. The City also supports a celebration event through the Eastern Region Catchment Management Program which all Friend Groups are invited to annually.

9.0 Support from the City of Swan

When you register as a Friends Group with the City, the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance will provide you with:

- A copy of this manual;
- A cadastral map of your reserve;
- An aerial map of your reserve;
- A copy of the latest Greenpage newsletter;
- A copy of the Bush Skills for the Hills training calendar;
- A catchment group newsletter where relevant; and
- Any other information relevant to your reserve.

The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance is available to meet on site with Friends Groups or individuals wishing to undertake works on City reserves to:

- Discuss the scope of appropriate work and timing of activities;
- Identify priority threats at your reserve;
- Help to identify weed species and native plant species;
- Provide environmental advice on potential environmental impacts or benefits of the project;
- Provide advice to minimise any adverse environmental impacts;
- Provide advice on how to undertake activities safely;
- Assist the group to complete funding applications; and
- Help the group to care for the local environment.

9.1 Bushland Maintenance Crew

The City of Swan's Bushland Maintenance Crew undertakes bush regeneration tasks in City managed bushland reserves to help to protect and rehabilitate bushland by:

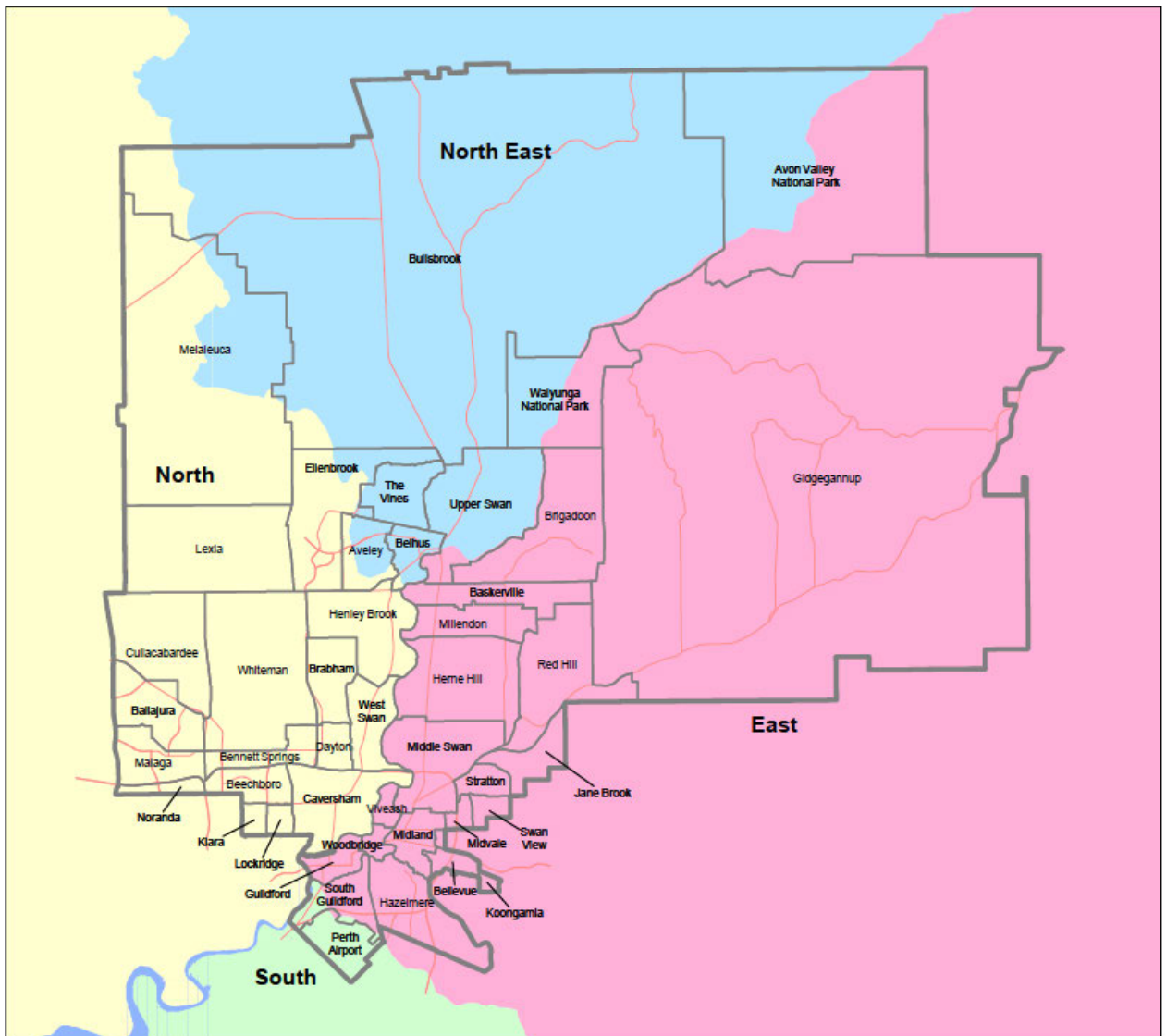
- Protecting and improving biodiversity; and
- Reducing the impact of threatening processes.

In some cases, assistance from the Bushland Maintenance Crew may be requested, for example with woody weed removal or chemical spraying. Please talk to the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance.

10.0 Additional Support

Within the City there are several distinct river catchment areas. These areas often form the basis for distinction between areas in which landcare groups work. The City supports several landcare groups in one way or another and as such, support from these groups is extended to Friends groups within these areas. **Map 1 below** depicts these areas and the sections which follow describe the support available in each area.

Map 1 - NRM Subregions in the City of Swan



10.1 East Catchment - Eastern Region Catchment Management Program

The Eastern Region Catchment Management Program (ERCMP) is a partnership between the Shires of Kalamunda and Mundaring, City of Swan, EMRC, Perth NRM and the Rivers and Estuaries division of the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

ERCMP, coordinated by the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC), provides support at City, Catchment, Friends Group and private landholder levels to address a range of landcare issues. ERCMP Officers can provide advice, networking support and assistance with site planning and grant applications. A wide range of educational resources can also be provided to help Friends Groups manage and learn about their patch of bushland.

Key activities of the ERCMP include production of the Greenpage newsletter, Bush Skills for the Hills workshops, organising an end of year volunteer celebration event, liaison with local governments and developing collaborative projects with a range of land managers.

ERCMP can also provide the use of a tools trailer free of charge for Friends Group Bushcare workdays. The trailer contains basic Bushcare tools such as planting tools, trowels, rakes, axes and saws. To borrow the ERCMP tools trailer, please contact Environmental Services at the EMRC on 9424 2222.

10.2 North East Catchment - Chittering Landcare Centre

The Chittering Landcare Centre provides support and advice to volunteer landcare groups, such as Friends Groups, that are working in the Ellen Brockman Catchment which includes areas within the City of Swan.

The Chittering Landcare Centre offers an annual program of workshops, can provide technical advice to Friends Groups in this area and may also be able to assist a group in applying for grant funds. Contact them on 9571 0400 or chitteringlandcare@iinet.net.au.

10.3 North Catchment – Water Quality Projects Officer

The Water Quality Projects Officer can provide Friends Groups and Catchment Groups in this area with sound technical and environmental advice, assistance with planning and implementing on ground projects and applying for grant funding.

This part-time position is supported by the Rivers and Estuaries division of the Department of Parks and Wildlife and the City of Swan. The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance can put you in contact with the Water Quality Projects Officer.

10.4 All Areas - Dieback Working Group

The Dieback Working Group is a not-for-profit organisation that provides access to information and training on the treatment and management of *Phytophthora* dieback on reserves and private land. The Dieback Working Group has a website (www.dwg.org.au) with many resources which can be of assistance to individuals and Friends Groups in understanding and managing *Phytophthora* dieback.

For more information on *Phytophthora* dieback and its control, contact the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance.

To ensure your actions as a Friends Group do not spread *Phytophthora* dieback either within the reserve or onto your own private property, a checklist has been compiled by the Dieback Working Group. This is included as **Appendix 2**.

11.0 Training

Training courses recommended for Friends Groups are based on the types of bushcare activities they are involved in. The more involved and complex the activity, the greater the level of training required.

11.1 Bush Skills for the Hills

The *Bush Skills for the Hills* program of workshops are free and available for all City of Swan community members and volunteers regardless of the activities they undertake on City managed reserves.

The City will continue to seek on-going opportunities to co-ordinate bushcare training programs specific to the City of Swan natural environment using local knowledge and recognised experts from this field. If there are any particular subjects you would like to see covered as part of this program, contact the EMRC or the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance to provide this feedback.

11.2 Thinking Green

The City runs an annual program of 'Thinking Green' workshops with a sustainability focus, in January to June. These may present opportunities for Friends Group volunteers to gain environmental knowledge and 'know how'. These workshops are provided free for the community.

11.3 Swan Volunteers Resource Centre

The Swan Volunteers Resource Centre also runs a program of information sessions and training events which may be useful to Friends Group volunteers, such as "Writing Successful Grant Applications". For more information visit: http://www.swan.wa.gov.au/Residents/Swan_Volunteer_Resource_Centre/Training_events_and_information_sessions.

11.4 Chattering Landcare Centre

The Chattering Landcare Centre runs an annual 'Landcare Workshop Series'. These workshops are open to all community members for a nominal fee which includes lunch or dinner. Workshops relevant to Friends Group volunteers that have been held in the past include: Understanding your soils; Birds, Wildflowers and Snakes; and Weed Forums. Check out <http://chatteringlandcare.org.au/news-events/workshops/> for up to date information.

11.5 Community Training Program

City of Swan provides a free Community Training Program with an annual curriculum designed to cover the things that community groups of all types may need to know.

Workshops in the past have included Grant Writing, Incorporation, running meetings and marketing and social media. To see the current curriculum, go to http://www.swan.wa.gov.au/Residents/Events_and_Attractions/Focus_Stories/Free_community_training_for_City_of_Swan_based_volunteers_and_residents.

11.6 Accredited Revegetation & Bushland Regeneration Training

Accredited training in bush regeneration is available through organisations such as; APACE, an environmental community organisation located in North Fremantle; the AABR (Australian Association of Bush Regenerators); courses run through Polytechnic West as part of their Conservation and Land Management program; and others.

11.7 Other Opportunities

There may also be opportunities for Friends Group volunteers to participate in training sessions held for the City's Bushland Maintenance Crew trainees.

12.0 Funding

12.1 Grants

As Friends Groups become involved in larger, more complex projects, it is likely that higher levels of funding will be required. External funds are available from a number of different sources. Some, such as Lotterywest grants, and the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP) are available each year and others change annually.

Different funding bodies supply funding for different activities and a brief outline of a number of useful funding bodies is attached at the end of this chapter to assist groups with sourcing appropriate funding.

It is important to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve and how you plan to go about it, including realistic and achievable timeframes, before beginning to seek funds. Ensure you read all application guidelines to find a funding program which is a good fit for the work you want to undertake. Applications that show good community support, value for money in terms of volunteer hours being contributed, and partnerships with other groups such as the City, are more likely to be successful.

For further information and advice on the most suitable grant for your particular project, contact the Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance. The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance can also provide maps and support letters as well as assist you in completing your grant application.

In addition, some funding organisations may require you to be incorporated or attached to an incorporated body. In these circumstances, the City or a local Catchment Group may be able to administer the grant funds on behalf of the group (auspicing).

12.1.1 Swan Community Funding Scheme

Friends Groups may also apply to the Swan Community Funding Scheme for a grant.

Applications are welcome at any time from community groups in the following categories:

- Small Grants – apply for up to \$1,000 to support seeding, and small scale local initiatives;
- Swan Community Grants – apply for up to \$20,000 to support seeding, small scale and larger activities.

Friends Groups applying for funding through this program for environmental projects are strongly encouraged to discuss the proposed project with City's Assets Management team prior to submitting an application. Groups applying to the Swan Community Funding Scheme are encouraged to use these grants as 'seeding grants' to leverage further funding from external sources.

Please note that non-incorporated community groups must be auspiced (supported by) an incorporated group (eg. a local Catchment Group) that will agree to be responsible for administering the funds on behalf of the group.

Assistance with completing applications is available by contacting the Community Development Coordinator for your Place Community. More information, including eligibility and how to apply can be found on the City of Swan website.

12.1.2 Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP)

The Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP) provides funds for community groups involved in on-ground revegetation and rehabilitation projects. The program aims to provide easy access to funding for a broad range of environmental activities within the Swan and Canning catchments. Perth NRM manages the program with support from staff at the two funding organisations, Alcoa of Australia and Department of Parks and Wildlife.

SALP is offered on an annual basis. It generally supports projects focussed on ground works, such as weed control and planting. The SALP grant round generally opens in March or April each year. Check out the Perth NRM website for more information: <http://www.perthregionnrm.com>

12.1.3 Lotterywest

Certain types of Lotterywest grants are provided to conserve natural habitats and maintain the diversity of animal and plant species. While projects can vary in their duration, they should have a start and end date.

Examples of what Lotterywest grants have helped include:

- Planting local species of trees and vegetation;
- Linking areas of vegetation with bush corridors (40 or more metres wide);
- Preventing rising salt from destroying vegetation;
- Fencing remnant vegetation and wetlands;
- Controlling weeds, animals, disease and fire;
- Preparing newsletters, pamphlets or training to educate people about conservation;
- Providing the equipment needed for a conservation project.

12.2 Funding and the GST

Friends Groups have two major options when dealing with GST:

- 1) To not register with the Taxation Department and pay GST on all goods and services bought or used; and
- 2) Low turnover (under \$50,000) not-for-profit organisations can be exempt from the payment of GST; however, to claim this exemption your group must register for GST and therefore complete and submit Business Activity Statements.

The City does not advise this second option as the amount of paperwork required in exchange for the small amount of GST the average group would save is not feasible. Unless you are a very large group dealing with substantial grants, it is easier not to register and pay GST on services and goods you utilise. If your group decides to register please contact the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance prior to application to the Taxation Department.

12.3 Australian Business Number (ABN)

Having an ABN is not a requirement for Friends Groups, however some funding opportunities are restricted to groups which do have one. If this is the case, it may be possible to apply for the grant in association with a Catchment Group or other incorporated community group; or you can apply for an ABN directly through the Australian Tax Office (ATO). Having an ABN does not mean you are registered for GST and therefore you do not have to complete Business Activity Statements (BAS).

13.0 Contacts

13.1 City of Swan Contacts

The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance is the key City contact for all Friends Group enquiries. Issues relating to the management of bushland reserves that are owned, managed or vested in the City of Swan are dealt with by a variety of City staff. The Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance can put you in contact with the appropriate City Officer, where necessary.

13.2 External Organisations

Table 1: Contact Information for External Organisations

Department / Organisation	Contact Details	Type of Assistance
Apace WA	Phone: 08 9336 1262 Address: 1 Johanna St, North Fremantle WA Email: apace@apacewa.org.au Web: www.apacawa.org.au	Courses in bush regeneration and plant propagation Local native plant nursery Native plant species lists by vegetation complex
Australian Native Nurseries Group	Phone: 08 9525 1324 Address: 141 King Road, Oakford WA Web: www.australiaplants.com.au	Native plant nursery
Birdlife Australia WA	Phone: 08 9383 7749 Address: Peregrine House, 167 Perry Lakes Dr, Floreat WA Email: wa@birdlife.org.au Web: www.birdlife.org.au/who-we-are/branches-and-locations/western-australia	Bird surveys and excursions Bookshop
Chittering Landcare Centre	Phone: 08 9471 0400 Address: 175 Old Gingin Rd, Muchea, WA Email: chitteringlandcare@inet.net.au Web: http://chitteringlandcare.org.au	Technical advice Assistance with grant applications Workshops
Conservation Council of Western Australia	Phone: 08 9420 7266 Address: City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA Web: www.ccwa.org.au/	Advocacy and action on conservation and environmental issues
Department of Agriculture and Food	Phone: 08 9368 3333 Address: 3 Baron Hay Crt, South Perth WA Email: enquiries@agric.wa.gov.au Web: www.agric.wa.gov.au	Advice on controlling noxious weeds and feral animals, use of herbicides, and soil conservation Publications for sale

Department of Commerce - Associations and Charities Branch	Phone: 1300 136 237 Address: The West Centre, Level 5 1260 Hay Street, West Perth WA 6005 Web: www.commerce.wa.gov.au (Search: Associations)	Information on incorporation
Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW)	Head office Phone: 08 6467 5000 Address: The Atrium, 168 St Georges Tce, Perth WA Perth Hills District office Phone: 08 9295 9100 Address: 51 Mundaring Weir Rd, Mundaring WA Email: info@dpaw.wa.gov.au Web: www.dpaw.wa.gov.au	General enquiries Variety of publications and information products available through Funding opportunities Land for Wildlife Nature Conservation Covenant Program Regulations for clearance of native vegetation Reporting of illegal clearing Prescribed burning Flora/Seed Collecting Licences
Department of Environment Regulations (DER) Emergency Pollution Response	Phone: 1300 784 782 (24hrs) Email: www.pollutionwatch@der.wa.gov.au	Respond to pollution incidents
Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) Herbarium of Western Australia	Phone: 08 9334 0500 Address: Keiran McNamara Conservation Science Centre (17 Dick Perry Drive, Kensington), Email: herbarium@dec.wa.gov.au Web: www.dpaw.wa.gov.au (Search: Herbarium) www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/plants-and-animals/wa-herbarium	The Public Reference Herbarium, a collection of typical specimens of all known plant species in WA, is available for use by the public to help identify wildflowers and other plants. The Florabase online database provides access to information on plant names, images, and distribution maps.
Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) - Urban Nature	Phone: 9423 2900 Address: 7 Turner Ave, Bentley WA (Technology Park) Email: urbannature@dec.wa.gov.au Web: http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/off-reserve-conservation/67-urban-nature	Botanical Library Technical advice and on-ground support for land managers working to protect, manage and restore bushlands and wetlands Field days, workshops and training programs Bushland News (formerly Ecoplan) quarterly newsletter

DPaW - Wildcare helpline	Phone: 9474 9055	A 24 hour, seven-days-a - week telephone referral service providing advice for members of the public who find sick, injured or orphaned native wildlife
Department of Aboriginal Affairs	Head Office Phone: 08 6551 8005 Address: 151 Royal St, East Perth WA Phone: 1300 651 077 Email: info2@daa.wa.gov.au Web: www.daa.wa.gov.au	Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System: information on Aboriginal heritage sites Aboriginal Lands Trust
Department of Water (DoW)	Head Office Phone: 08 6864 7600 Address: The Atrium, 168 St Georges Tce, Perth WA Regional Office Swan Avon Region Phone: 08 6250 8000 Address: 90 Ellam St, Victoria Park WA Web: www.water.wa.gov.au	Water Licensing (Bore licensing) Rights in Water and Irrigation Act Water Management Water Quality Bed and Banks approval
Dieback Working Group	Dieback Working Group Coordinator Phone: (08) 9360 2605 Postal Address: Alcoa Facility, Murdoch University 90 South St, Murdoch, WA 6150 General email: info@dwg.org.au Web: www.dwg.org.au	Information concerning Phytophthora infestation identification and treatment
Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC)	Phone: 08 9424 2222 Address: 1st Floor Ascot Place, 226 Great Eastern Hwy, Belmont WA Email: mail@emrc.org.au Web: www.emrc.org.au	Eastern Region Catchment Management Program (ERCMP) Bush Skills for the Hills Program Natural Resource Management fact sheets (weeds, dieback, other bushland issues) Environmental consulting
Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)	Phone: 08 6467 5600 Address: The Atrium, 168 St Georges Tce, Perth WA Web: www.epa.wa.gov.au	Environmental impact assessments System 6 recommendations Library
Fire and Emergency Services	DFES Head Office Emergency Services Complex 20 Stockton Bend	Advice on preventing and controlling fires Current bushfire news

Authority of WA (FESA)	Cockburn Central WA 6164 Telephone 9395 9300 Web: www.dfes.wa.gov.au	
Landcare Australia	Perth Office Landcare Australia Limited c/- Department of Agriculture and Food 3 Baron-Hay Court South Perth WA 6151 Ph: 08 9368 3166 Web: www.landcareonline.com	Funding opportunities
Lotterywest Grants	Phone: 08 9340 5270 Freecall: 1800 655 270 Address: 74 Walters Dr, Osborne Park WA Web: www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au	Funding opportunities
Greening Australia	Phone: (08) 9335 8933 Address: The Terrace, Fremantle WA 6160 Web: www.greeningaustralia.org.au Email: info@greeningaustralia.org.au	Weed control and environmental restoration services, management plans, and seed collection
Natural Resource Management in WA Aboriginal NRM	State NRM Office of Western Australia 3 Baron-Hay Court South Perth WA 6151 Australia Phone: (08) 9368 3168 Email: snrmo@agric.wa.gov.au	Provides advice with regard to indigenous issue relating to NRM projects in the Swan region
Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre	Address: 120 Gilchrist Rd, Lesmurdie, Western Australia 6076 Phone: (08) 9291 3900 Email: info@kanyanawildlife.org.au Web: http://www.kanyanawildlife.org.au/	Advice and assistance for sick, injured or orphaned native wildlife Nocturnal tours
Museum of Western Australia	Phone: 1300 134 081 Address: Perth Cultural Centre, James St, Perth WA Email: reception@museum.wa.gov.au Web: www.museum.wa.gov.au http://frogwatch.museum.wa.gov.au	Terrestrial fauna collections Frog watch and Cockatoo Care programs
National Trust of Australia (WA)	Phone: 08 9321 6088 Address: 4 Havelock St, West Perth WA Email: trust@ntwa.com.au Web: www.nationaltrust.org.au/wa/	Assessment of areas for heritage value Voluntary conservation covenants

Perth NRM	Phone: 08 9374 3333 Address: 80 Great Northern Hwy Middle Swan WA Email: enquiries@perthregionnrm.com Web: www.perthregionnrm.com	Funding opportunities – SALP program Advice on regional NRM priorities Access to environmental information and resources Advice on aboriginal engagement and consultation
Perth Urban Bushland Fungi (PUBF)	Phone: 08 9334 0500 Address: At Herbarium of WA, Cnr of George St and Hayman Rd, Kensington WA Email: fungi@iinet.net.au Web: www.fungiperth.org.au	Information about Perth's fungi Events and workshops Downloadable Fungi field book (Fungi of the Perth Region & Beyond, 2009, Bougher, N.)
Royal Western Australian Historical Society	Phone : 08 9386 3841 Address: Stirling House, 49 Broadway, Nedlands WA Email: histwest@git.com.au Web: www.histwest.org.au	Reference library
Rivers and Estuaries Division of the Department of Parks and Wildlife	Phone: 08 9219 9000 Address: Rivers and Estuaries Division 17 Dick Perry Avenue Technology Park, Western Precinct, Kensington WA 6151 Email: rivers.info@dpaw.wa.gov.au Web: www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/swan-canning-riverpark Emergency Contact Information Contact immediately if you have spotted an incident along the rivers or foreshore. Phone: 08 9219 9000 (8.00am - 5.00pm on weekdays) Mobile: 0419 192 845 (after hours emergencies only) Phone: 08 9474 9055 (Wildcare Helpline)	Legislation, policies, programs, research and community involvement to help keep our rivers healthy
South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council	Phone: 08 9358 7400 Address: HomeTown Centre, 1490 Albany Hwy, Cannington WA Email: reception1@noongar.org.au Web: www.noongar.org.au	Native title representative body which works in the interests of the Noongar People
Urban Bushland Council	Phone: 08 9420 7207 Address: 2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA	Support for local community groups by providing access to, information and expertise

	Email: ubc@iinet.net.au Web: www.bushlandperth.org.au	concerning bushland Lobby government for bushland protection
Western Australian Naturalists' Club	Phone: 08 9228 2495 Address: 1st Floor, 82 Beaufort St, Perth WA Web: www.wanaturalists.org.au	Bushwalks, talks and excursions Library
Wetlands Conservation Society	Phone: 9360 2274 (Phillip Jennings) Email: p.jennings@murdock.edu.au	Wetland revegetation projects Excursions to wetlands
Wildflower Society of WA	Phone: 08 9383 7979 Address: Perry House, Cnr Perry Lakes Dr & Oceanic Dr, Floreat WA Email: wildflowers@ozemail.com.au Web: http://members.ozemail.com.a u/~wildflowers	Wildflower talks and guided walks Plant identification Books for sale Native plants and seeds (for gardens) for sale when available Quarterly newsletter
Wildlife Land Trust (Humane Society International)	Phone: 1800 333 737 Web: www.wildlifelandtrust.org.au	Non-legally binding conservation agreements

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Bennett, E.M. 1988, The Bushland Plants of Kings Park Western Australia, Kings Park Botanic Gardens, Perth.

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15.0 Activity Schedule

Table 2: Schedule for Bushcare Activities

ACTIVITY	TIMING	DESCRIPTION
Dieback Injecting and Spraying	Sept–May	This activity is dependent on weather conditions, and is best undertaken in the drier months of the year.
Woody Weed Removal	All year round	Preferable in the warmer months when not busy planting or managing seasonal weeds and when trees are not in seed.
Herbicide spraying	All year round	Depend upon the species requiring control, but will often be focused from early winter to spring. Needs to be done when plant is actively growing, and with at least a few hours of fine weather and low wind to reduce the chances of off target damage.
Physical Weed Control	All year round	Dependent upon the species, but will often be focused from early winter to spring.
Rubbish Removal	All year round	Preferable in the warmer (but not hot) months when you are not busy planting or managing weeds.
Planning your works schedule	Nov–Mar	Plan ahead as far as practicable.
Ordering plants & related equipment	Sep–Oct	Allows the nurseries time to propagate your requested plants for the following winter.
Planting	Jun - Jul	To be undertaken as soon as possible after the first soaking rains of the season to ensure the seedlings can make the most of the winter rains and develop strong root growth.
Flora Surveys	Sept - Nov	This is the peak flowering time for the majority of local species. Surveys taken at varying times of the year will give a more complete species list.
Erosion Control Earthworks	Oct–Nov & Feb–Mar	To be undertaken in the dryer months of the year to reduce the risk of spreading dieback and to allow access to creek lines for bank stabilisation works.
Signage & Fencing	Oct–Nov & Feb–Mar	To be undertaken in the dryer months of the year to reduce the risk of spreading dieback (signs should be ordered 4 weeks before installation).

Seed Collection	Oct–Apr	Will vary from species to species but is concentrated in late spring and summer after the prolific flowering season.
Fire Management	May–Aug	Plan in the cooler months for the following fire season to ensure any management activities required are implemented prior to the warmer months.
Training	All year round	As required.
Funding applications	All year round	Varies from funding body to funding body (refer to Chapter 4) but allow at least 6 months from the planning stage to the time you will require the funds to start the project.

16.0 Standard Forms

16.1 Definitions

Coordinator

Each Friends Group, regardless of size, is required to nominate a Coordinator whose duties include:

- Completion of all registrations, request for assistance, or survey forms required by the City (not extensive);
- Maintain an up-to-date record of the Group's membership and the bushcare activities carried out for insurance and reporting purposes, including a Register of participants at all bushcare workdays (forms provided in this manual);
- Attend a free 'Safety for Bushcare Volunteers' workshop;
- Communication of City requirements to all Group members (as per this manual);
- Communication of any safety concerns, incidents or accidents to the City in a timely manner; and
- A Group can have more than one Coordinator registered to carry out these tasks.

Delegated Coordinator

A member of a Friends Group who takes responsibility for Supervision of activities and operations during any working day on the specified reserve.

Supervision

It is a requirement that at least one Delegated Co-ordinator be on site at all times to supervise any Friends Group activities on a City reserve.

Supervision duties include:

- Maintaining an accurate Volunteer Register utilising the forms in this manual; and
- Recording the activities and time spent by all attendees.

Volunteers who intend to work alone are considered to be Delegated Coordinators for insurance purposes.

Volunteer Members

A person who has registered interest and actively supports a Friends Group's operations for a specified reserve.

Friends Group Register of Attendance on Working Days

Coordinators and Delegated Coordinators are expected to maintain a register of volunteers in attendance on any particular working day on a reserve. This information does not need to be relayed to the City on each occasion and can be retained by the Coordinator of a Friends Group. This register also caters for additional volunteers who are not listed as recognised Volunteer members.

16.2 Form 1 – Friends Group Registration Form

Application Date: _____

I (Name): _____

Of (Address): _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email Address: _____

Represent the Friends Of (Name Of Reserve): _____

At (Reserve Address): _____

And Reserve Number: _____

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the following and that I:

1. Acknowledge that health and safety are the responsibility of all those involved in the Group's activities and workplace;
2. Will not operate chainsaws and/or use herbicides without written approval from the City;
3. Will wear appropriate protective clothing at all times;
4. Will ensure that children under my care are supervised at all times;
5. Will maintain an accurate Volunteer Register of all people attending workdays for examination by the City and Insurance Company in the case of an accident;
6. Will ensure all activities undertaken are approved by the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance
7. Will provide an action plan to the City's Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance prior to undertaking intermediate or advanced Bush Care Activities.
8. Recognise that, for insurance purposes, we are acting in our own right and are not linked to any incorporated group;
9. Recognise that insurance cover will only be available on reserves that are legally under the management of the City of Swan and that the City will not accept responsibility for any activities undertaken on other reserves;
10. Will only undertake bushcare activities during day light hours;

Signature of Coordinator _____ Date _____

Please return as soon as possible to:

City of Swan

Attn: Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance

PO Box 196

MIDLAND WA 6936

16.3 Form 2 – Friends Group Volunteer Registration Form

Application Date			
Name			
Address			
Phone		Mobile	
Email Address			
Member of the Friends of (Name of Reserve)			
Reserve Address			
Reserve Number			
I will be acting as a Delegated Coordinator	Yes / No (please circle)		
I have a pre-existing medical condition/ allergy/ disability that could affect my ability to carry out on-ground activities	Yes / No (please circle) Note: All volunteers with pre-existing medical conditions are required to notify a group member, preferably a Coordinator at all work days. Volunteers are responsible for management of their own medical conditions. Medical claims for pre-existing conditions are excluded under City insurance.		

Extra information for volunteers aged 12–16 or 80–85

Date of Birth	
Expected Duties	

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the following and that I:

1. Acknowledge that health and safety are the responsibility of all those involved in the Group’s activities and workplace;
2. Will not operate chainsaws and/or use herbicides without written approval from the City;
3. Will wear appropriate protective clothing at all times;
4. Will ensure that children under my care are supervised at all times;
5. Will maintain an accurate record of the time I spend on bushcare activities for examination by the City and Insurance Company in the case of an accident;
6. Will ensure all activities I undertaken are approved by the City’s Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance to ensure they are not detrimental to the City’s environmental management of its natural areas
7. Recognise that, for insurance purposes, we are acting in our own right and not linked to any incorporated group;
8. Recognise that insurance cover will only be available on reserves legally under the management of the City of Swan and that the City will not accept responsibility for any activities undertaken on other reserves;
9. Will ensure that I will only undertake bushcare activities during day light hours.

Signature of Volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form as soon as possible to:
 City of Swan
 Attn: Coordinator - Natural Environment Maintenance
 PO Box 196
 MIDLAND WA 6936

16.4 Form 3 – Work Day Registration Form

Name of Friends Group: _____
 Reserve Address: _____
 Reserve Number: _____
 Date: _____

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the conditions of Volunteer Registration (Form 2).

Name of Participant	Activities Undertaken	Time Worked	Volunteer Registration Form Completed (Please Sign)

Please retain this form for your records, for examination by the City and Insurance Company in the event of an accident.

16.5 Form 4 – Annual Report / Survey Form

Annual reporting of Friends Group activities is vital to ensure the quality of the services provided to the groups. The City is also interested in quantifying the contribution of Friends Group volunteers and monitoring where budgeted funds are going. Please complete this form annually and return it to the City of Swan Administration office by 1st November.

Name of Group: _____

Number of members: _____

Number of hours worked this year: _____

Number of seedlings planted: _____

Have you direct seeded? YES/NO

Amount of grant funding received other sources eg. SALP: _____

Have your activities (tick one):

increased

decreased

or are the same as last year?

Have the City's Officers been of assistance to you during the year? YES/NO

Have you received assistance from your local Catchment Group? YES/NO

Has the condition of the bushland/creek your group looks after improved compared to last year? YES/NO

In what way? _____

Any comments? _____

Signature of Coordinator _____ Date _____

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please return as soon as possible to:

City of Swan

Attn: Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance

PO Box 196

MIDLAND WA 6936

17.0 References

Bradley J. (2002) *Bringing Back the Bush The Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration*, New Holland Publishers, Sydney, Australia.

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Appendix 1 - A Guide to Weed Management

This 'Guide to Weed Management' has been prepared to assist Friends Groups in undertaking weed control on City managed bushland reserves and road verges. The guidelines draw from best practices for the control of weeds, including the Bradley method of bush regeneration and the application of herbicides (in accordance with manufacturer's instructions) based on the precautionary principle.

Any weed control should be undertaken with consideration of the Bradley Method Principles, namely:-

- Minimal disturbance;
- Work from good areas to bad; and
- Don't over clear

Alternatives to Herbicides

Wherever practical, alternatives to chemical control of weeds such as physical methods should be used, providing that it will not result in a large disturbance of the soil and lead to other impacts such as erosion and/or damage to native vegetation. Hand removal is recommended if the weeds are not too invasive or if the infested area is small (<1m²).

Biological control can be effective if the correct agent can be identified and safely introduced. The Bridal creeper leaf-hopper and/or rust fungus is an example of a current biological control method available.

Herbicides

The use of herbicides is recommended when –

- The weeds are thick and little native vegetation is present;
- Removal of plant roots will cause erosion;
- Removal of plant roots will remove/displace soil and associated microbes;
- A steep slope will erode with the removal of weed roots; and
- The area to be weeded is a distance of 1 metre or more from a watercourse or drain containing water.

Permitted Chemicals

Glyphosate Biactive (eg. Roundup Biactive) is the only herbicide to be used by Friends Group volunteers on City managed reserves. Envirodye - red should be used by all volunteers in conjunction with glyphosate biactive.

Glyphosate Biactive

A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) should be provided with the chemical at the time of purchase. The Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance can also provide this information at any time on request. The MSDS must be kept with the chemical at all times, so that it can be referred to as necessary.

It is a non-selective systemic herbicide which kills most plants on contact. The surfactant in this formulation has lower aquatic toxicity than standard glyphosate.

The following recommendations are made when using Glyphosate Biactive –

- It is only to be used in dry conditions (3 non-rain days following spraying);

- It is not to be used within 5 metres of a flowing creek; and
- The City of Swan's practice is that spraying in dry creeklines can only occur if dry weather is expected over the following 3 days.

Procedures

1. Read herbicide label and attached information before using.
2. Read the Material Safety Data Sheet before using the chemical and ensure you always have a copy with the chemical.
3. Weeds are best treated when actively growing and healthy.
4. Don't use herbicides when:
 1. The weeds are stressed and unhealthy (drought, heat, frost, flooding) as the herbicide will not be absorbed well;
 2. Wet weather is forecast in the next 3 days as the herbicide will wash off;
 3. Windy weather (12kph) as this may increase herbicide drift (and cause damage to natives).
5. Spraying within 5 metres of a creekline should only take place when the creek is dry. This may not be the optimal time to spray the weed, but it is the least environmentally damaging.
6. Use low drift nozzles and a large drop size to minimise overspray.
7. Wiping or using a wand is another method of applying herbicide to minimise the effects to surrounding vegetation.
8. To protect a lone plant amongst weeds, place a bucket over the plant and spray around it. Do not remove the bucket until the spray has dried on the weeds.
9. Envirodye must be used with Glyphosate Biactive. This will help to identify areas that have been treated.
10. Warning signs are to be placed at each end of the spraying operations to notify anyone who may enter the area.
11. If signage is not available, a person can be posted at these locations.
12. Seek advice as required from the Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance.

Herbicide Safety and Insurance Cover

1. All instructions on the chemical container for decanting, use and cleaning equipment afterwards are to be complied with.
2. Suitable clothing should be worn when using chemicals:
 - a. Enclosed footwear with socks;
 - b. Long trousers ;
 - c. A long sleeved shirt; and
 - d. Nitrile (chemical resistant) gloves.
3. A responsible person (a delegated coordinator) is to ensure that herbicide users know what they are doing.
4. If anyone approaches within 10 metres of the person spraying then spraying should cease immediately.
5. Spraying activities will only be covered by insurance if the appropriate records are kept in accordance with this Friends Group Manual.
6. If extensive areas are to be sprayed, notification to the Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance is required. The public can then be advised that the volunteers are working with the permission of the City.

Training

Volunteers of the City of Swan must have completed relevant training in herbicide use and handling before undertaking any herbicide use on City managed reserves. Polytechnic West in Midland and other agencies run training courses through the year.

Assistance with Herbicide Use

If the Friends Group does not feel qualified or capable of using herbicides, there are alternatives, such as employing a contractor to undertake the works.

Grant funding becomes available throughout the year from other agencies and organisations, such as the Swan River Trust and Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP), the DPaW Community Grants program and Lotterywest. All of these agencies will fund weed spraying/wiping contractors. Contact the Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance to discuss your plans and obtain assistance in applying for these funds. Information on grant funding opportunities are regularly updated in the Greenpage newsletter.

Spraying on Reserves Adjoining Roadways

- Generally only verges adjoining bushland reserves should be sprayed for weed management.
- A traffic management plan may be required for work on verges in the City of Swan.

Appendix 2 - Community Group Work Day Checklist

This Checklist has been produced to ensure that Friends Group volunteers are not inadvertently spreading *Phytophthora Dieback* while undertaking bushcare activities.

General Best Practice

- No soil will be moved between areas within the bushland, or into other areas of bushland.
- Activities are scheduled for days when the soil is too dry to stick to footwear and tools.
- Equipment, tools and footwear are free of soil and mud.
- Footwear will be free of mud and soil when entering the bushland, and when you are moving between areas within the bushland.
- No vehicles will be taken into the bushland. If vehicles are necessary, they will be clean on entry and confined to hard, well drained surfaces.
- Techniques that minimise soil disturbance will be used.
- Carry Phytoclean in a water spray bottle to clean shoes and equipment.

Planting

- Direct seeding has been considered.
- Tree planting will be conducted in moist, not wet, soil conditions.
- Plants have been grown using hygienic methods.
- If using mulch, it has been well composted.
- Mains or sterilised water is being used to water plants.

Weeding

- If practical, weeding is scheduled for dry soil conditions.
- Weeds will be immediately placed in a bag or container so soil doesn't drop out during transport.

Appendix 3 - A Guide to Action Planning

Action planning can help you to achieve your goals. An action plan outlines exactly what you are trying to achieve, who will do what and when key tasks will be undertaken.

The Benefits of creating an action plan:

- Everyone works towards a common goal;
- Tasks can be shared amongst the team;
- Short and long terms objectives can be seen;
- A sequence of works can be determined which meets the sites needs;
- Objectives are undertaken at the right time to year and with the right resources;
- Future Shire funding or external funding (grants) can be applied for;
- Objectives can be adjusted to ensure success;
- Encourage effective management.

Here are six simple steps to creating an action plan for your reserve;

1. Determine a **common goal**
Example; improve the environmental values of the reserve.
2. Identify the **values** of your reserve
Example; diversity of plant species, large mature trees, walk trail and seating, presence of animals and birds such as Black cockatoos and Quenda.
3. Identify the **environmental issues** on your reserve
Example: Weeds, illegal dumping and access, feral animals, erosion and dieback.
4. Determine your **objectives**
Think about the values and issues your team has already identified. How do you want to manage these and what do you want to accomplish; does your objective meet the team's goal? Remember to be specific, as your plan should detail:
 - a. **What** you are targeting;
 - b. **When** you will target or undertake the works;
 - c. **How** you will achieve it; and
 - d. **Who** will be allocated the responsibility of undertaking or managing the action.

Examples of Objectives:

Control Weeds - friends group to hand remove Cotton Bush in January before it seeds and seek assistance from the City to remove from site.

Encourage Black Cockatoos to frequent the site – revegetate the north-west corner of the reserve with plants known to be used for foraging by Black Cockatoos, in June.

Another way of presenting the your objectives is through a simple table which provides a visible overview, for example:

Objective	What	When - Timing	How	Required Resources	Who - Person Responsible
Control Weeds	Cotton Bush	January 2016 before seed set	Hand removal	Bags, gloves, vehicle to remove from site. Cutting tools. Team of three Friends Group volunteers with assistance from the Bushland Maintenance Crew for two hours.	Fred

5. **Monitor and Review**

Monitoring involves checking, observing and recording the progress and outcome of your objective. Did your team achieve its objective and was the desired outcome achieved? Have you collected enough information to assess success?

Photos are a great way to track progress. Make a list of what didn't go to plan and what lessons you learnt. Review your objectives and adjust them as necessary to meet constraints, changing issues and resourcing needs.

6. **Reporting**

It is important to keep track of hours, specific areas of work within in your reserve, how many plants you planted or what has naturally regenerated for example The City's annual report / survey form that your friend's group coordinator completes certainly provides some of this valuable information - not only for your team but also for the City.

The Coordinator - Natural Environmental Maintenance can provide expertise and assistance to produce your own action plan specific to your reserve. They can also help you align your values and issues with the many high level strategies in local and state government, to maximise available opportunities and allow us all to work towards a common goal.



www.swan.wa.gov.au

City of Swan
2 Midland Square Midland
PO Box 196 Midland WA 6936
t (08) 9267 9267
f (08) 9267 9444

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.