



# POLICY AND PROCEDURES



Effective: Date 13/08/14

## Sustainable Landscaping Policy

### 1 Introduction

This policy has been prepared to enable Uniting Church congregations and agencies to live sustainability within the environments in which we live and operate.

### 2 Objective

- To promote improved landscape provision and design to align with a sustainable approach to living.
- To improve the visual impact appeal of developments associated with churches, schools, colleges, agencies and other church properties.
- To assist in education and outreach about the Uniting Church in Australia's concerns about the environment to different community groups.
- To promote environmental sustainable landscaping.
- To enhance the use of the local environment for Church purposes.
- To enable Churches to focus on their mission and ministry by reducing the time and cost required to manage landscapes.

### 3 Scope

This policy applies to

- Managers of all church properties.
- Leaders in church schools and colleges.
- Managers of church agencies (aged care) facilities.

### 4 Responsibilities

Properties owned by Uniting Church in Australia Synod of WA through its Property Trust are managed by agencies and congregational boards on behalf of the Synod. These groups are required to apply this policy and to report to General Council on its implementation.

### 5 Definitions

- a. **Sustainable landscaping** encompasses a variety of practices which incorporate environmental issues. These practices are used in the different phases of landscaping (including design, construction, implementation and management) of residential and community facilities.
- b. **Landscapes** in this context are the areas outside buildings over which we have some control.
- c. **Sustainable landscapes** include those which will be easy or low cost to maintain, will not damage native species or wildlife over the long term and which will not require unreasonable amounts of carbon-based energy to either create or maintain.
- d. **Community gardens**

Where there are community vegetable and fruit gardens these may be contributing to the food security and sustainability of a locality and therefore can also be described as sustainable landscapes, even though they require more maintenance and will include non-Indigenous plants.

## 6 Procedure

- a. **Existing landscapes or gardens:** Churches or church agencies should begin by conducting a survey of the current landscape or proposed landscape, to determine the ways in which a more sustainable landscape could be created, using advice from the Green Church website and other sources.
- b. Churches or Church agencies then take steps such as
  - Reduction of water use in landscapes through design of water-wise garden techniques.
  - Reducing the carbon dioxide load in the environment -by reducing the need for petrol driven lawn-mowing for example.
  - Integrated Pest Management techniques including but not limited to:
    - Creating and enhancing wildlife habitat in urban environments
  - Energy-efficient landscape design in the form of proper placement and selection of shade trees and creation of wind breaks.
  - Selection of paving materials on walk ways to reduce storm water run-off and allow rain water to infiltrate into the ground and replenish groundwater.
  - Recycling of products in the landscapes (e.g. mulching types).
  - Maintaining and enhance the condition of the soils through recycling (compost and kitchen wastes).
  - Integration and adoption of renewable energy (e.g. solar-powered lighting).
- c. **New landscapes or gardens:** using the above steps in mind, create the most sustainable garden or landscape possible within budget and site limitations.

## 7 Related Policies and Procedures

- Motor Vehicle Fleet Management Policy
- Air Travel Policy
- Congregation Sustainable Practice Policy
- Sustainable Buildings Policy