



STREET HARVEST
turning berms into food gardens



WELCOME

We're so glad you're interested in setting up a shared garden in your community! We're Street Harvest - a grassroots project that transforms roadside berms and shared public spaces into thriving edible gardens - complete with in-ground worm farms. It's about more than just growing food; it's about connection, reducing food waste, and building local resilience.

We've created this guide to help you get started. It's not a strict set of rules, but a collection of tips, learnings and tools based on what's worked for us, so you can create a version that fits your community.

A close-up photograph of a person's legs and hands watering a raised garden bed. The person is holding a silver watering can, and water is spraying out of the spout onto the dark brown soil. Several small green seedlings are visible in the bed. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the garden and the person's legs.

START WITH SUPPORT

Council is key

Before you break ground (or even start dreaming about it), get in touch with your local council. Berms and shared green spaces usually fall under their management, so having their support is essential. We've found the Transport, Sustainability/Climate, or Waste Minimisation teams are usually the best people to talk to first.

When you connect with your council:

- Ask about the **permissions process** for using berms or other public land
- Discuss **safety requirements** (e.g. visibility on corners, setbacks from driveways)
- Talk about **water access**, ongoing maintenance, and signage rules

Pro tip: Councils are often really supportive of sustainability-focused, community-led initiatives like this, so don't be afraid to start the conversation.

Pitching the project as a short-term pilot can be a helpful way to get it over the line.

FUNDING THE PROJECT



Funding sources

You don't need loads of money to get going. Here's how we pieced it together:

Grants

Apply for grants from sustainability or community funds (we started with our local Council's Community Waste Minimisation Fund).

Local sponsorship

Businesses often love getting behind a positive, visible initiative in their community.

In-kind support

Think donated timber, seedlings, compost, or even tools. You'd be surprised what people are willing to share when they believe in the project.

We've learnt that the biggest driver isn't money - it's people power. The more locals, businesses, and organisations you can rally behind the idea, the more momentum (and magic) you'll create. We found it's the kind of project people are naturally drawn to - it's positive, practical, and makes a visible difference.



THE RIGHT LOCATION

NOT EVERY BERM IS THE RIGHT FIT...

... and that's totally fine.

When scoping out potential sites, here's what to keep in mind:

Visibility & access

Choose spots where people naturally walk by and can easily stop to engage.

Safety

Steer clear of tricky driveways, busy roads, or narrow berms where space is tight.

Water

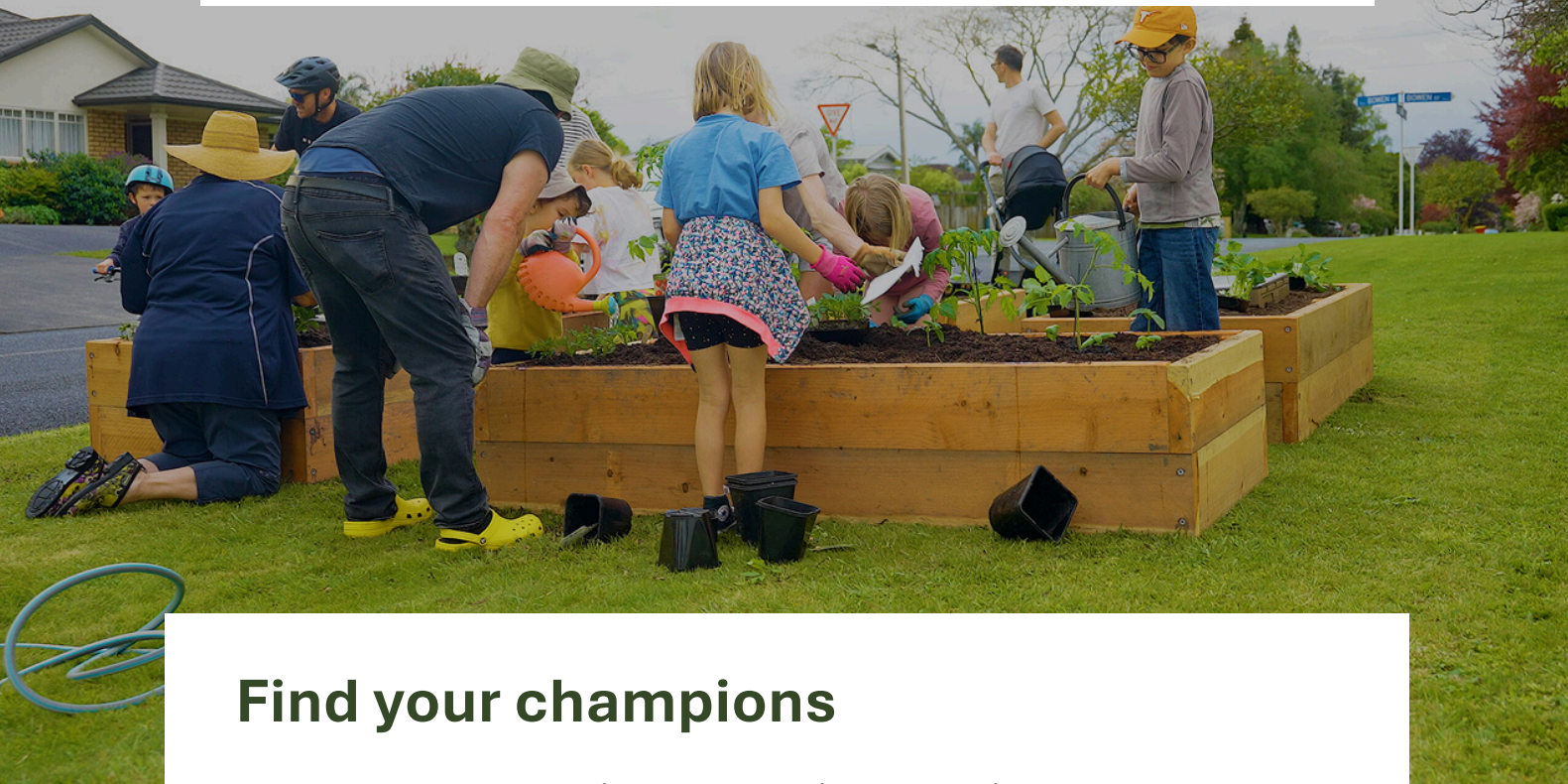
Is there someone nearby who can run a hose to the garden or fill a watering can without too much hassle?

Sunlight

Most crops love full sun, so aim for a spot that gets plenty of it.

And one more tip: go where the energy is. Look for neighbourhoods where someone's already buzzing with excitement to make it happen. A motivated local champion can make all the difference.

BUILD A LOCAL CREW



Find your champions

Each Street Harvest site needs a site champion - someone who lives nearby and wants to help guide the project. We find our site champions through word of mouth and posting on local social media pages.

We ask the site champion to connect with their neighbours to make sure everyone is aware and engaged with the project. We also ask that they find at least three other adjacent neighbours that are happy to host a garden on their berm and use the worm farms.

This means there is a visible cluster of gardens at each site and also helps with:

- **Shared responsibilities** to keep the garden tidy and productive
- More **buy in** and word of mouth
- **Increased use** of the worm farms for diverting waste

Pro-tip: Create a simple information flier about the project to help the site champion get others on board.



DESIGNING THE GARDENS

Keep it simple, functional, and tidy

We use uniform-sized raised beds made from untreated timber, and here's why:

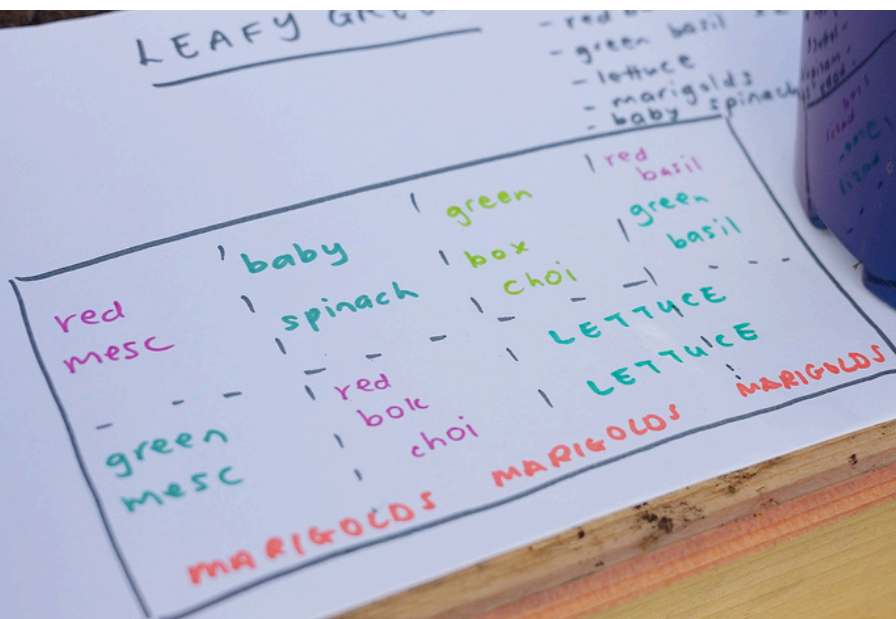
- No digging - so no risk of hitting underground pipes or cables
- It keeps the space looking neat and easy to maintain
- It makes it easy to attach signage that helps people understand and engage

Thanks to support from a local landscaping company, we have ours purpose-built, but that's not essential. You can absolutely get creative with reclaimed or donated timber or material or second-hand garden beds or planters.

Design for flexibility - We made sure our beds are easy to dismantle or move in case they ever need to be relocated.

Measurements - Our standard beds are 2m x 0.9m with a depth of 0.6m. This allows space for mowing, opening car doors and crouching on the berm around the bed. The depth allows for the in-ground worm farm while staying low enough that, once filled with fully grown plants, it doesn't obstruct visibility.

WHAT TO PLANT



Go for easy, useful, and inviting

We go for low-maintenance, shareable crops. Some of our go-tos include:

- Quick-growing greens like spinach, lettuce, and silverbeet
- Handy herbs such as parsley, oregano, and thyme
- 'Cut and come again' veggies like kale and broccolini - these keep on giving

We mix it up in each bed with a good variety of plants, and we love adding edible flowers like viola and marigolds. They brighten things up and attract helpful insects.

It's always a bit of a 'plant and learn' situation. Different things thrive in different spots, and what people want to pick can vary from site to site.

The key is to keep things:

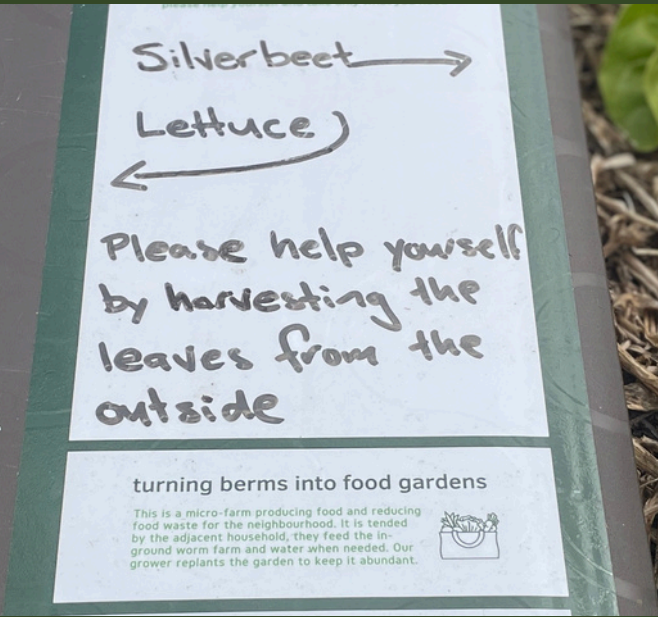
Useful - plant things people actually want to use

Recognisable - so people feel confident to harvest

Lush and healthy - it's key to keep the gardens lush and productive to maintain enthusiasm

We drop plants to our site champions every couple of months for replanting.

SIGNAGE



Silverbeet →
Lettuce ←
Please help yourself
by harvesting the
leaves from the
outside

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This is a micro-farm producing food and reducing food waste for the neighbourhood. It is tended by the adjacent household; they feed the in-ground worm farm and water when needed. Our grower replants the garden to keep it abundant.



Make it easy for people to engage

Simple, friendly signage helps people feel confident using the garden. We use waterproof stickers on the lids of our worm farms - they include info about the project and a whiteboard section so site champions can update what's ready to harvest. When creating your signage, think about including:

- General project info - so people understand what it's all about
- Space to celebrate your sponsors – we use logos as a way to say thanks
- Update-able sections - to show what's growing, when it's ready, and how to pick it

Signage is helpful, but nothing beats the power of a **good conversation**. Site champions often chat with neighbours and passersby about what's ripe, how to harvest it, and what's coming up next. It helps build connection and confidence.



WORM FARMS

The magic of worms

Our in-ground worm farms are one of the most-loved parts of the project.

The worm farms:

- Divert household **food scraps** from landfill
- Create rich worm castings that **feed the soil**
- Help locals connect with the **full cycle** of food and waste
- Can be used for the **green waste** that is removed from the gardens

We buy our worm farms, but you can DIY them using food-grade buckets or perforated pipes with lids.

Each site champion keeps an eye on the worm farm (making sure it's not too wet or dry, and that no-one's adding meat or citrus).



LAUNCHING THE GARDENS

Make a day of it

Our launch events are all about planting, and connection. People bring seedlings, dig in, and meet their neighbours. You only get one shot at launching a site, so make it count. A good launch helps to:

- Build community ownership
- Create buzz and visibility - make sure you take lots of photos and invite local media along
- Celebrate all the mahi that's gone into getting it started

Pro tips:

Create a **simple flyer** and pop it in local letterboxes to invite the neighbourhood.

Also **invite local media** who love a good news story, and your local **elected members** to generate even more support of the initiative.



KEEP IT GOING

Ongoing management

Maintaining the garden takes teamwork, commitment, and a bit of flexibility.

Here's how we do it:

- Site champions check in on things regularly
- The Street Harvest team supports each location with advice and check-ins
- Seasonal replanting days help keep the energy up
- Shared calendars or group chats make coordination easier

Flexibility is key - some sites need more support than others, and that's totally normal.

Work with your **site champion** to figure out the right approach for their crew.



TELLING THE STORY

Share the journey

Use photos, updates, and stories to bring others along with you on the journey.

We have done a variety of things including:

- Creating social media pages
- Posting on local social media pages
- Tagging council or funders to show impact
- Inviting local media to cover the project
- Chatting with passersby
- Celebrating and sharing the wins, no matter how small

Data helps prove the power of your project, and helps secure funding from other sources if you want to expand.

We're tracking:

- Kilos of food grown
- Volume of food scraps diverted
- Number of people involved

FINAL THOUGHTS

So much more...

Street Harvest isn't just about growing produce and reducing waste - it's about growing connection. We're constantly delighted at how the gardens create a space and reason to bring people together.

By turning under utilised spaces into shared gardens, we're strengthening communities, building food resilience, and showing that small changes really can make a big difference. If you're inspired to start something where you live, go for it! We'd love to see more gardens popping up on berms around the country.

Let's grow something amazing together.

We'd love to hear from you.

Get in touch at: www.bit.ly/StreetHarvest

