Project Cultivate

Enhancing the natural surrounds of key historical cemetery sites

What is happening

Project Cultivate explores innovative horticultural possibilities at key historical cemetery sites managed by the Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (SMCT). Our long-term aim is to enhance the natural surrounds of these sites in a way that supports the unique needs of our heritage locations, community and environment.

A pilot program at Melbourne General Cemetery allowed us to explore and establish an understanding of community expectations and inform our future vision as well as testing the practical application of innovative plant selections and landscaping approaches in a cemetery environment.

Why we're using locally native plants and grasses

Our project at Melbourne General Cemetery has enhanced the current landscape with an array of locally native plants and grasses that are already delivering a number of benefits, including:

- Improved soil quality and reduction in runoff
- Increased biodiversity with an expected increase in insects, birds, lizards, and more
- Increased canopy coverage to mitigate the heat island effect of the site
- Increased sustainability and resilience to the effects of climate change

Our plantings are developing a native grassland in the heart of the city which can be enjoyed by all.

How the community will benefit

Project Cultivate adds to the current landscape of key historical sites in a way that complements existing graves, pathways and monuments and ensures sites maintain a respectful atmosphere for reflection in perpetuity.

Project Cultivate is consistent with the City of Melbourne's 'Urban Forest Strategy' which aims to adapt our city to climate change and mitigate urban heat island effect.

What you can expect

We are improving existing soil quality through the application of organic mulch. We are planting around 500,000 carefully selected locally native plants, including Kangaroo Grass, Wallaby Grasses, Tufted Bluebells and Clustered Everlastings - plants that existed upon this site prior to its current use as a cemetery.

When works will occur

Horticultural works are taking place from 7am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Visitors can continue to access the cemetery with detours provided for any temporary path closures.

For more information about Project Cultivate, please visit our website at smct.org.au/cultivate
or contact us at community@smct.org.au

SMCT acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which Melbourne General Cemetery is located and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

SOUTHERN METROPOLITAN CEMETERIES TRUST

Project Cultivate

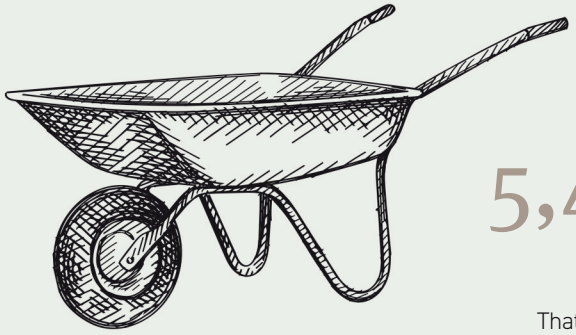
Improved soil quality

Increased biodiversity

Increased sustainability

Reduced heat island effect

Reduced use of herbicide



5,400m3
of mulch

That's enough to fill 54,000 wheelbarrows.

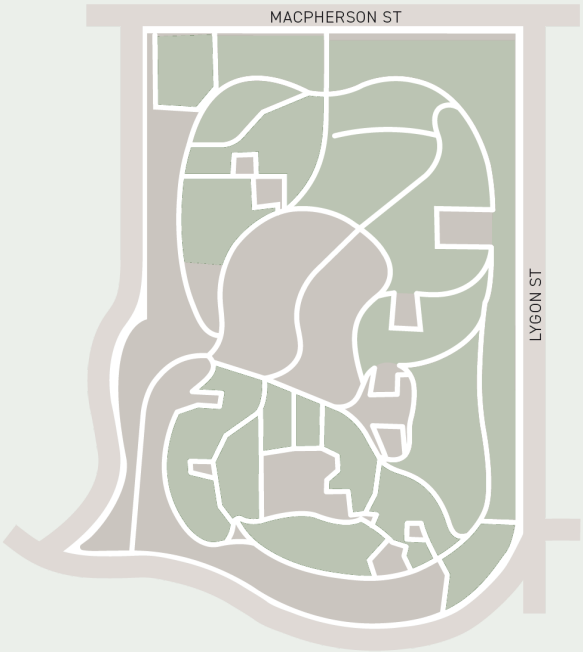
Equivalent to

12.9 x
Melbourne Cricket Grounds

of revegetated land.

500,000
locally native plants

To recreate a grassland.



53%
of Melbourne General Cemetery will be planted

That's 56.6 acres of planted land.

For more information about Project Cultivate, please visit our website at smct.org.au/cultivate

SOUTHERN METROPOLITAN CEMETERIES TRUST