

Sustainable House Day:

6 Grevillia Circuit, Nightcliff



The residents and Body Corporate of Grevillia Circuit Apartment Block have created a fun and engaging community 'space' for everyone to join in on. Their Body Corporate funded the development and construction of a community garden and composting system for all residents to jump in, have some fun and learn about growing and harvesting foods in the Top End.

In the Apartment – Energy and Water efficiency

- Lighting is with CFLs, which provide sufficient lighting (especially preparation areas like the kitchen)
- Floors are tiled, as the thermal mass retains a cool temperature
- There is a large open window/sliding door to the back veranda which is left open all the time (when occupied) so the breezes can enter the apartment, cooling it down. Windows at the front of the apartment, and the front door, are also kept open, so there is good cross ventilation.
- There are air conditioning units in the bed rooms and lounge room, however the occupants don't use these at all. They are turned on once a year to make sure they still work, but not used for cooling.
- There is lots of natural lighting, so lights are only used at night time, and only when needed (for example, if in the kitchen).
- The whole apartment is kept open
- Appliances are energy efficient
- Appliances, lights and fans are always kept 'off' so power isn't wasted on stand-by power. They make sure they conserve power where possible



Open living plan ensures breezes can enter the apartment



Lots of shade in the back yard keeps sunlight off walls, keeping the place cool

Private Garden (Mark Austin, No. 6)

- There is a big outside living area, so meals and gatherings are generally outside. Cooking is on the BBQ much of the time.
- The veranda and back of the apartment is well shaded by a tall tropical garden. This is watered by drip irrigation system, so water is diverted directly to where it is needed and prevents evaporation. These are on timers and go for 20 minutes daily.
- There is a large shade cloth shading part of the veranda, so there is no direct sunlight hitting any walls. This also

keeps the whole veranda cool

- The garden in the back yard is covered with stones to prevent evaporation (and also for aesthetics)
- They have 'spot' composting so they move the small compost buckets around the garden for different species. This ensures that nutrients from composting go straight to the plant needed (also saving on labour!)



Communal Garden

- The body corporate funded \$1000 for upgrading communal spaces of the apartment block. The residents and body corporate decided to create a community garden.
- A community garden was decided upon because all of the apartments face north-south, so neither outdoor space (front and back verandas of each dwelling) has adequate sun light for growing veggies.
- Plants are grown from seedlings near the composting station (out the back of Mark's apartment). Seeds are much cheaper, and anyone who wants to grow a plant can have seedlings looked after and prepared by Mark.
- These are transferred to the front community garden when they've grown. Sometimes seedlings are also grown by a friend who has a green house in Nightcliff.
- There is mint, zucchini, eggplant, oregano, chilli, bok choy, rocket, parsley, okra, pumpkin
All plants can be harvested by anyone living there.

- The choice of plants is completely up to the residents, so if someone wants to grow a particular food they can do so first in the seed bank, then in the garden.
- Watering is done through drip irrigation, which saves on water by allowing water to drip slowly to the roots of plants through narrow pipes. This also prevents water evaporation as water is delivered directly where it is needed.
- There is communal composting at the back of the property. This is put onto the communal garden. Most food waste from all of the dwellings is composted here.
- Mark wants to write up instruction manuals for residents educating them on what is in there, and correct harvesting techniques. This ensures that plants aren't damaged and can reproduce fruits.



This is a fun and encouraging way for the residents to interact and learn how to grow and harvest plants for food.