

# 9 COMMUNITY INITIATIVES PROGRAMMES (PLANTS)

## 9.1. Introduction

Community Initiative Programmes have been introduced to allow groups of landowners/ occupiers to control nominated pest plants collaboratively. Communities with particular pest plant problems often have the enthusiasm and local knowledge to undertake control to provide benefits to the community. Active community participation in pest plant problems is supported and strongly encouraged by the Council. Priority for assistance with weed and pest control will be given to community groups that are undertaking significant revegetation and restoration projects. This approach is consistent with other areas of Council, where the establishment of 'Care' groups is encouraged and supported.

Community groups will be encouraged through the provision of information and advice, to undertake control programmes for pest plants. These may be weed-led, targeting a particular pest plant species, or site-led, targeting a suite of pest plant species at a particular site. In some cases follow-up planting of desirable plants should be part of the programme, to lessen the chance of pest plants reinvading. The Council will consider financial support to 'seed' such initiatives through the Environmental Initiatives Fund programme.

**Any plant species identified as a pest in this Strategy may be considered under the Community Initiatives Programme, but only the plant species listed in Table 9.2a below may be subject to enforcement provisions.**

Community Initiative Programmes can also be formed in relation to animal pests, as outlined in Section 10 of this Strategy, or to address both plant and animal pests. The Community Initiative Programme can also be used to develop an integrated site-led pest control programme within a specified area (refer to Section 17.1 of this Strategy).

When proposed Community Initiatives Programme areas include roadside weed control, agreement from roading

authorities will need to be negotiated by the community groups, facilitated by the ARC. In situations where Community Initiatives Programmes are established, and roadside control is required, the roading authority will be allowed time to phase in management of the selected pest species.

## 9.2. Process

Any group may form a Community Initiative Programme, which may be species-led or site-led. There are no restrictions on the size, scope or membership of a Community Initiative Programme, however, if the group wishes ARC to undertake enforcement action on recalcitrant landowners/occupiers, there are additional requirements that must be met, including a minimum level of community support.

The steps to be followed in order to undertake a Community Initiative Programme are outlined below:

1. Landowners/occupiers join or establish a Community Group.
2. Community Group approaches the ARC outlining the nominated pest plant and the proposed area of the region to which the programme will apply.
3. The ARC evaluates the proposal taking into account a range of factors including:
  - The attributes of the pest(s) (e.g. dispersal, control options, likelihood of reinfestation, potential impacts);
  - The distribution of the pest(s) in the proposed area, and in the area immediately surrounding it;
  - How the programme integrates with other initiatives, i.e. proximity to other areas being controlled or proximity to Council's or other organisation's site-led programmes;

- The willingness of the community to accept responsibility for the problem.
4. The ARC approves Community Group proposal with/ without amendments, and recommendations on follow-up management (e.g. restoration planting).

The following steps are only applicable to groups requiring ARC to undertake enforcement action on recalcitrant landowners/occupiers for control of the plant species listed in Table 9.2a.

5. The ARC and Community Group establish a Scoping Plan, which defines the control area, desired outcomes, removal criteria, required publicity and dissemination of information.
- The first step is publicity to gauge the level of community support in the proposed area. For the programme to proceed, support must be gained from:
    - residents who own >75% of the land area and 50% of all occupants within the area; or
    - 75% of all occupants of the land area; or
    - a lesser percentage, at ARC’s discretion.
  - If the required support criteria cannot be met, the group will have six months to canvas further support for the proposal. The ARC will assist by providing publicity material, information and provision of landowner/occupier contacts.
  - To achieve the required support necessary to ensure ARC intervention, members of the Group must be implementing control programmes over a majority of the nominated area and also encouraging others in the control area to do the same.
6. If encouragement, assistance and advice from the Group has not motivated the remaining individuals to carry out control within the programme area, the ARC will provide regulatory intervention to ensure that landowners/occupiers are meeting their obligations\*.

\*Regulatory measures can only be undertaken in relation to those pest plants included in Table 9.2a below.

**Table 9.2a: Community Initiatives Pest Plants**

Common name	Scientific name
banana passionfruit	<i>Passiflora tripartita</i> var. <i>mollissima</i> , <i>P. mixta</i> & <i>P. tarminiana</i>
bartlettina	<i>Bartlettina sordida</i>
Blue morning glory	<i>Ipomoea indica</i>
Cape ivy	<i>Senecio angulatus</i>
brush wattle	<i>Paraserianthes lophantha</i>
climbing asparagus	<i>Asparagus scandens</i>
crack willow	<i>Salix fragilis</i>
elaeanthus	<i>Elaeagnus x reflexa</i>
German ivy	<i>Senecio mikanioides</i> syn. <i>Delairea odorata</i>
giant reed	<i>Arundo donax</i>
gorse	<i>Ulex</i> spp.
grey willow	<i>Salix cinerea</i>
Himalayan honeysuckle	<i>Leycesteria formosa</i>
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>
jasmine	<i>Jasminum polyanthum</i>
Madeira vine	<i>Anredera cordifolia</i>
mile-a-minute	<i>Dipogon lignosus</i>
monkey apple*	<i>Acmena smithii</i> syn. <i>Syzygium smithii</i>
moth plant	<i>Araujia sericifera</i> syn. <i>Araujia hortorum</i>
palm grass	<i>Setaria palmifolia</i>
pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i> & <i>C. jubata</i>
privet*	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i> & <i>L. lucidum</i>
ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
rhamnus	<i>Rhamnus alaternus</i>
smilax	<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>
tradesantia	<i>Tradescantia fluminensis</i>
tuber ladder fern	<i>Nephrolepis cordifolia</i>
wild ginger	<i>Hedychium gardnerianum</i> & <i>H. flavescens</i>
woolly nightshade	<i>Solanum mauritianum</i>

\* Control of monkey apple and privet will not be enforced if these plants are being used as a hedge, provided that the hedge is being regularly trimmed to prevent flowering and seeding.

## 9.3. Management Regime

Objectives, principal measures of achievement and Rules are the same for all Community Initiative Pest Plants, and are therefore outlined below to avoid repetition.

### (i) Objective

- a) To empower and assist communities to undertake pest plant control, in defined programme areas, throughout the Auckland region.

### (ii) Principal measures of achievement

Enforcement	Enforce landowner/occupier responsibility to control infestations of pest plants in the Community Initiatives Category by enforcing control in Community Initiative Programmes where the Community Initiatives criteria have been met (see section 9.2 above and Rule 9.3.1.1 below).
Education & Advice	Provide information and advice, and promote Community Initiatives Programmes.
Monitoring	Undertake inspections in programme areas where Community Initiative Programmes are being carried out.

### (iii) Rules

#### Rule 9.3.1.1

In addition to any other Rules in this Strategy that affect the pest plants included in Table 9.2a above, landowners/occupiers within a Community Initiative Programme area must successfully destroy all adult and juvenile plants of the pest plants listed in Table 9.2a above, on the land they occupy.

A breach of these Rules will create an offence under section 154(r) of the Act, or may result in default work under section 128 of the Act, or both.