

## Visit to Callala Bay Community Garden

**20<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

SlowFood2JB members were given a very warm welcome at the Callala Bay Community Garden on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022 where an extremely pleasant and informative morning was spent. Our hosts, Gail and Victoria, gave an excellent background to the formation of the garden, how it functioned, who and how people are involved. It was established in 2018 on a building plot rented from the Council opposite the shopping centre in Emmett Street and was fortunate to get a 350k\$ grant which allowed them to establish a club room, a large storage shed, water tanks, perimeter fencing and 20 raised beds of all shapes and sizes some which are sponsored by individuals and local businesses. Additional fundraising events include selling the produce they grow, raffles, cake and plant sales. It was clear that the garden was a vibrant social hub for Callala with over 60 members and welcomed all individuals who wanted to be involved.

The tour round showed what they were growing, mainly vegetables and fruit but also a welcoming flower bed by the entrance. There was a big white board with what was growing in each bed ..... lettuces, peas, spinach, potatoes, herbs to name but a few ..... when it was planted and what was to follow. Crop rotation was recognised as a key issue but sometimes difficult to follow when there were so many beds and different people coming in and out. To help this there was another white board on the well-equipped shed which gave a list of regular tasks and jobs that needed doing straightaway. Gail logged everything in her record book and so there was a comprehensive history of what had happened and was happening in the garden. The compost system was established, well organised and provided the garden with most of the compost it needed, helped considerably by the local IGA providing veggie scraps.

All in all it was a splendid morning and much enjoyed, especially the super morning tea. There were many lessons even for the experienced gardeners amongst us ..... including the need for regular watering and feeding, getting the compost heap properly organised, the importance of bird/animal protection and the use of straw/pea mulch to keep weeds down and water retained.

