**Mission Statement**

“Manaaki Tangata, Manaaki Whenua, Haere Whakamua”. “Care for the People, Care for the Land, Go Forward.

**The Purpose**

asert - Tātou Development Trust facilitates a training and work environment in which tātou (all people) are given an opportunity to learn the life skills of: growing food and plants of various kinds and acquiring an income in a sustainable way. To empower people with the skills, knowledge and the confidence to “go forward” into a career in the horticultural sector. We provide our service to those with a real desire to learn and improve themselves particularly those with barriers to acquiring meaningful employment.

**Te Rito Gardens** **Cooperative**

It is a Social Enterprise Cooperative growing and selling NZ native plants. Motivated individuals are encouraged to volunteer for a period of time, working and learning in our nursery, gardens and workshop. A volunteer may then be invited, by the current shareholders, into the cooperative. They then become ‘stakeholders’ in their own business and therefore share in the profits. This enterprise encourages workers to learn on the job, improve their work ethics and skill level in order to increase their own income.

**Our Deed of trust is based on the Treaty of Waitangi**

“Respecting and implementing the dual heritage of the partners of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi); Respecting the cultural diversity of people and encouraging people from all nationalities to utilize the Trust’s facilities and services; Ensuring that every person who is a member of, participates with or relates to the Trust is treated with the utmost respect”.

**Current Activities**

* Community Education Programme – we teach the art of growing NZ native plants as well as organic food gardens sustainably. Teaching basic woodworking skills and producing products from sustainably sought timber. This is available to those willing to volunteer their time in the gardens. We use a guided, practical teaching philosophy with a focus on “hands on” learning.
* Developing integrated eco-systems, planting native plants to create shelter and habitats for beneficial microorganisms, insects, birds and lizards. Propagating the appropriate native plants for them to survive in our urban areas. We have created a large collection of eco-sourced native plants suitable for restorative plantings in the Porirua catchment. These are made available to local bodies, schools, community groups and the public.
* Working with the; Enviro-schools organisation, supplying native plants to ten local schools (GWRC funded) and community groups that are restoring native flora in the region.
* Research in the areas of: organic and inorganic recycling/reusing, thermophilic composting, exploring wet-land/greywater remediation systems (using plants that grow on soils near or in waterways).

**How can you become involved with Te Rito Gardens?**

Contact us and offer to volunteer as a helper in the garden; working with our team or offer a financial donation (we are a registered charitable trust CC48242).

**Our Bank account number: Westpac 030543-0268150-00 ASERT – TATOU DEVELOPMENT TRUST**