



PROFESSIONAL GARDENERS WELCOMED FROM JAPAN

Two professional gardeners from Japan have been welcomed by Dubbo Regional Council this week as they conduct their annual visit to the Shoyoen Japanese Garden at Elizabeth Park.

Yasuhiro Kondoh and Susumu Morita arrived in Dubbo on 6 August and will spend a fortnight working with staff in Dubbo.

During the visit Yasuhiro Kondoh and Susumu Morita will instruct both paid and volunteer garden workers on correct techniques for maintaining the authenticity and quality of the area.

The professional gardeners, from Minokamo in Japan, have been visiting the region each year since the garden was first gifted 21 years ago, with the exception of three years during the COVID-19 pandemic when they were unable to attend.

They arrived in Dubbo as the students from Minokamo, Dubbo's sister city, flew home following their exchange visit.

Manager Recreation and Open Space Ian McAlister said the visit was crucial to the effort to maintain the gardens and give it the title of one of the most authentic Japanese Gardens in the country.

“The Shoyoen Garden was first gifted to Dubbo by our sister city Minokamo, Japan back in 2002. As part of that gift each year we bring out a gardener from Japan to do an audit on the garden.

“While they are here there is the opportunity for staff to be trained in Japanese gardening techniques allowing us to maintain the authenticity of the garden,” Mr McAlister said.

On arrival the Japanese gardeners joined DRC staff to do a walk-through of the garden to see what's being done well and what could be done better. This then allows them to develop a program of works to see what needs to be focused on during their fortnight in Dubbo.

“This year we are focusing on pruning the black and red pines and making sure they are appropriately shaped. By pruning the branches and tying them with bamboo string they are forcing them to grow down,” Mr McAlister said.

“The garden has been designed with a lot of thought and expertise and Dubbo is fortunate to have the relationship with Minokamo.”

The garden was first designed in 2002 by students from the Kamo Agricultural and Forestry High School and the 20th anniversary of the first sod turning at the Shoyoen Japanese Gardens was celebrated last year.

Shoyoen means ‘strolling and refreshing garden’.

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