



COMMUNITY  
ENVIRONMENT  
PARK

# Annual Report

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2015-16

# CERES

is a place for  
community-based  
learning and action.

Through learning and action,  
we create better ways of living  
together in five areas:

- **Environmental**
- **Social**
- **Economic**
- **Cultural**
- **Spiritual**

We operate in all of these areas  
in order to protect and enhance  
our natural environment in  
every way we can.

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Get Involved

# Chair's Report

Whenever I walk into the CERES park, I exhale. This place of (rehabilitated) natural beauty and demonstration of what community-led innovation can create by way of socially and environmentally sustainable ways of living in urban space is a truly remarkable living legacy of its founders and all who continue to help CERES thrive.



**Jo Barraket,**  
CERES Chairperson, 2016

My thanks to our CEO, the senior management team, staff and volunteers of CERES for all that they do to make CERES what it is. Thanks also to all who continue to support CERES, through purchasing from our social enterprises, donating to our environmental work, and contributing to the colour, life and community spirit of the organisation every day.

Over the 2015-16 financial year, CERES board and staff have been considering how we might be more outward-focused in our leadership about the things that matter most to the organisation; contributing to more sustainable and just ways of living together. This kind of leadership is not about building new empires, but about partnering more with likeminded others, using our voice to influence those not yet persuaded, engaging more with our membership, and celebrating local ingenuity consistent with our mission, both within and beyond CERES. Some recent actions and projects consistent with these approaches are detailed throughout this report, and more are planned for the future. I particularly thank my fellow board members and all board committees for their energy and commitment to progressing CERES' strategic work, in all its diversity. This financial year has seen particularly active boards (2015 and 2016) supported by board committees working in areas ranging from communications to member engagement about on-site developments to fundraising, site planning, neighbor relations and beyond.

While we look toward new ways of working together, the board has also continued to focus on good governance and financial sustainability of the organisation this year. As noted in our CEO's report and financial statements, we are pleased to record another year of improved financial performance, which has been recognised in the independent auditor's report. While financial sustainability is not an end in itself, it provides the basis upon which we are able to achieve our greater purpose. My thanks to our CEO, Finance Manager, Finance Committee and senior management team for their continued attention to this aspect of our operations.

As we review the year past, I also look forward to a year ahead in which CERES will increase the reach of its messages about what is possible when communities lead the kind of change they want to see in the world.



**I love the fact that CERES has been built up as a model for sustainability practices and social enterprises from a rubbish dump! CERES always inspires me about what is possible.**

📍 CERES Member, September 2015

# CEO's Report

Another year has passed and CERES continues to thrive, thanks to the love and energy of all our staff, volunteers, customers and visitors. With warmth in the air and spring blossoms appearing I am again (as always) delighted by our beautiful place and the natural and human creativity that make it so appealing.



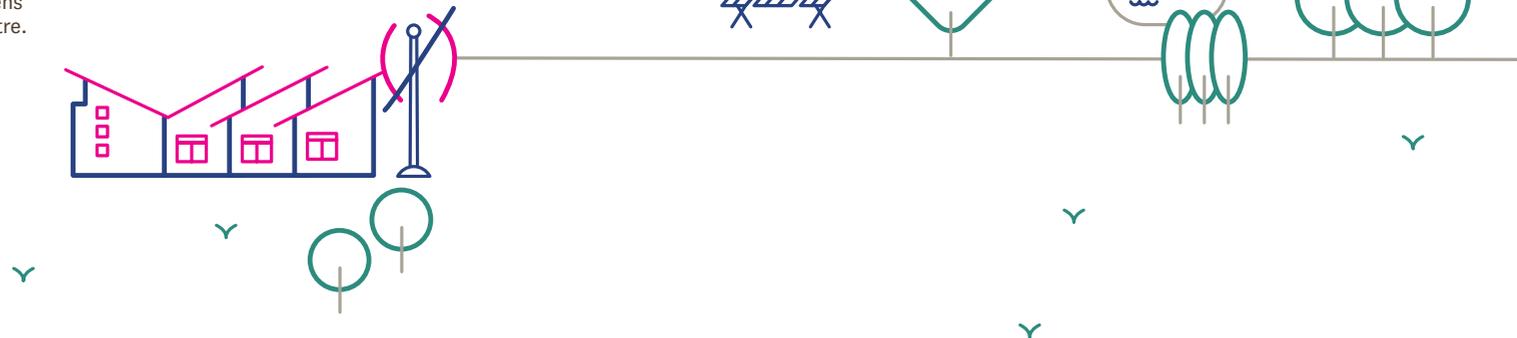
*Cinnamon Evans, CEO*

During the last few years we have put considerable effort and resources into improving the built infrastructure in the CERES park to cater for both CERES-run and community-run programs and activities. Several older buildings have been upgraded to improve their amenity, including the Multicultural Classroom, Training Room and Dapur in the Cultural Village. Of particular note this year was the renovation and expansion of the CERES Grocery, which we hope now provides a more complete household shopping experience, and the transformation of the former cafe building into the new 'Village Pavilion' multi-purpose space. I love the way that removal of old infrastructure has opened up magical views through this part of the park. We have also made all sort of improvements to gardens, fences, paths, carparks, lighting, toilets, and more, as part of our ongoing program of maintaining the park for the people, with more to come in the year ahead, including a new Bike Shed, renovation of the old ATA building, renewal of the Community Gardens and landscaping around the Learning Centre.

We estimate that we reach more than 1 million people each year. Half of those come through the gates to visit the park, use our spaces, participate in education and training programs and/or visit our social enterprises. A further 300,000 people connect with us via our excellent new website, various social media channels and/or email updates, including the endlessly entertaining Fair Food newsletter. The remaining 200,000 people are supported by CERES Education Outreach Team to make their school more sustainable. This year CERES joined a consortium that successfully tendered for the New Schools PPP Project, and, in addition to the 291 schools we visit each year, over the next few years CERES will deliver school environmental management plans and sustainability education programs in 15 new schools in Melbourne's growth areas.

CERES has a 'freemium' business model: there is no charge to visit the park, but we do charge for plants, coffee, organic food, education programs and room hire, and the surpluses from these social enterprises fund the facilities in the park. It is always a delicate balance, because we could easily spend more money improving the park, and our aspiration to offer programs and activities that change the world is almost limitless. However, I am pleased to report that after almost a decade of poor financial health, we have almost recovered to 'break even', our working capital deficit having been reduced from around \$1m in 2011 to \$300k in 2016. With ongoing community support for our social enterprises and education programs, I am optimistic that we will clear this shortfall in the year or two ahead.

The CERES Board recently developed a new set of strategic directions which involve CERES becoming stronger in the areas of communication, leadership, innovation and activism. I am looking forward to leading CERES into a new phase that includes everything we are already doing, but which also sees us extend ourselves in our areas of expertise and strength, in order to build a more sustainable and just world.



# Our Reach

## VISITORS



**400,000**  
visited our park (estimated)

## MEMBERS

**988**  
bought or renewed their memberships

## VOLUNTEERING



**2,000+**  
**volunteers**  
in Honey Lane,  
Joe's Garden and  
across the park

## IN THE CYBER WORLD



**164,692** visited our website

**100,398** follow us on social media channels   

**10,197** receive our newsletter every month

**1,363** used our Chook Guide on their smartphone

## EDUCATION



**Excursions** **59,222**  
**students and adults** visited  
for excursions and tours

**Incursions** **9,685**  
**students and staff** had CERES  
attend their school for incursions

**Global** **147**  
**people** joined us on our cross-cultural,  
educational and friendship building  
trips overseas

**Outreach** **153,117**  
**staff and students** worked with the  
Education Outreach team

**Training** **1,320**  
**people** participated in workshops,  
courses and programs

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISES



**55,000**  
ordered **Fair Food** organic grocery boxes

**40,442**  
ate organic food with their friends  
in the **Merri Table**

**61,103**  
visited **Grocery** to buy organic food

**47,536**  
bought plants from the **Nursery**  
to grow at home

**3,400**  
attended **Tamil Feasts** nights

**234**  
groups hired us as a **Venue**

## EVENTS & FESTIVALS



**21,275**  
came to the park for events run  
by outside groups

**500**  
attended our Winter Solstice Festival

**1,465**  
attended Harvest Festival

**200,000+**  
saw or interacted with us at  
conferences, festivals and  
events outside CERES

**95%** of CERES' income is from  
social enterprises and educational  
services. Our reach across all realms  
(including digital) is approximately  
**1,000,000 people.**

# The Year at a Glance

 **Propagation** gets a new polytunnel for growing seedlings.

 **Global team** visits Timor, Indonesia and China.

 **Communications team** launches our new website.

 **Workshops team** attend the Horticulture and Gardening Festival.

 **Venue Hire** has their busiest month ever.

 **Merri Creek Market Garden** is renamed Joe's Garden after Joe Garita.

 **Fair Food** has two biggest weeks of trade ever.

 **New point of sale systems** are installed in on-site enterprises.

 **Harvest Festival** is well attended with 1,465 people.

 **Training team** launch a new Food Producer Incubator program, working with recent migrants.

 **Jane Burns** is named joint 2015 Victorian Environmental Educator of the Year - Community Sector by EEV.

 **Global team**, in partnership with the Swinburne University "IT for Social Impact" project in India, wins the Best Staff Mobility Experience award at the QS International Higher Education Impact Award in Valencia, Spain.

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

 **Outreach team** announce their involvement in a new partnership which will see them delivering sustainability outcomes in 15 new schools over 5 years.

 **Excursions team** presents at STAVCON (teachers conference).

 **Grocery** closes for renovations & operates from a Pop-up Shop near the front entrance.

 **Education team** attends the Sustainable Living Festival.

 **Women from Mapuru** run a basket weaving course.

 **Winter Solstice Festival** is a sell out to 500 people.

 Our new visitor guide app for smartphones is launched called "the Chook".

 Work is started on a new educational **bee** display, funded by a generous bequest.

 **Grocery** re-opens after renovation.

 **Venue Hire** brings in a record number of visitors through room bookings and events.

 **The Merri Table** hosts the Moreland Business Network event.

 **Nursery** expands their seedling sales area.

 **Nursery** has their busiest day ever.

 **Tamil Feasts** present at Festival21 and are winners of crowdfunding campaign.

 **Village Pavilion** is completed and opened.

 **Chooks** get a new floor.

 **Water projects** are completed & launched with a great "Magical Mystery Tour" celebration with staff & members.

 **Work for the Dole** team completes a 10 metre worm in the Playspace.

 **Jida Gulpilil** completes the mural of Bunjil the Eagle in the Namalata Willam (aboriginal learning space).

2015

2016

# Education & Training

The strength of CERES Education and Training lies in its unique collection of programs, resources, audiences, and integrity in delivering programs in sustainable actions and living.

Education is built deep into CERES's reason for being. We are open to innovation and evolution, resulting in a diversity of programs that link to environmental, cultural, economic and spiritual themes.

Our park is a landscape for inspiration, application and immersion in sustainability allowing the creation of learning experiences for a wide range of audiences: from early childhood to seniors, marginalised groups to individual members of the community. But we reach further than the bounds of our park, and our people with passion, expertise and purpose reach out across Victoria, Australia and the world.

Our learning experiences are delivered by four areas:

### Excursions & Incursions

School students, both on and off site

### Outreach

Education for teachers in schools and early learning centres

### Training

Youth and Adult programs

### Global

Engaging global communities



[left] Training program participants in Honey Lane.  
 [middle] Cultural Professional Development day.  
 [right] New Bunjil mural at the Namalata Willem.

## Excursions & Incursions

Our Excursions and Incursions programs have strong environmental messages that connect to the aims of the organisation as a whole. The wide range of programs and activities are designed to connect students to the natural world with an emphasis on do-able solutions to problems. The teaching is hands-on, varied and delivered in an approachable, non-didactic manner.

This was a year of development, diversification and solidification as we focused on bringing all our activities in line with the new 2017 Victorian Curriculum. The new curriculum holds many exciting opportunities for us, as it has re-focused on learning areas that link directly to our aims and values. Incursion activities are being redesigned to directly support the ResourceSmart modules of Land, Waste, Water and Energy.

**CERES was an eye-opening and fun experience. We learnt a lot about how we can save energy in our lives and had a great time there.**

Student from Year 9/10 Physics Excursion



[top] School students on an Excursion program.

The RACV Environment Community Partnership concluded in April. This was an outstanding partnership that allowed us to develop and deliver environmental leadership programs to students in both rural and urban areas of Victoria. The Mobile Energy Classroom and the Chook Interpretive App are two legacies of the partnership. We will continue to work with the RACV at the Energy Breakthrough and with a sustainable transport Incursion that is currently being trialled.

The Indigenous Education programs have been a highlight this year with the mural of Bunjil the Eagle completed and installed in the Namalata Willam, a number beautiful smoking ceremonies conducted around the park and cultural communication professional development for staff.

### Numbers of students in the most popular Excursions programs



**30 to 50 casual teachers** employed by Excursions (seasonal variation)



## Outreach

CERES Education Outreach team takes CERES knowledge and skills directly to schools and the wider community, primarily through ResourceSmart Schools – one of the longest running environmental education programs in Australia. We also lead a regional consortium of over 80 partners that support school sustainability programs across metropolitan Melbourne. We deliver dynamic and engaging professional learning to schools, centres, universities, and council workshops on topics including behaviour change, grant writing, embedding sustainability into the curriculum, green purchasing and Education for Sustainability in Early Childhood.

Our delivery of ResourceSmart Schools to Early Childhood programs is growing every year, a result of the success of the Sustainability Victoria Early Childhood pilot and our investment into business development for early years education. In 2015-16 we delivered the program in 14 centres and have established partnerships with a number of supporting organisations.



**291** schools and early childhood centres had the ResourceSmart program delivered by CERES

**14,555** teachers were reached by the ResourceSmart Program

**\$1.7 million** was saved by schools on the program – achieved by reducing their energy & water consumption, and waste going to landfill

[top] Pedal powered cocktails at the New Schools PPP Project welcome event.  
[bottom] Outreach Area Manager Jane Burns with Minister for Education James Merlino.

In August we announced our involvement as Sustainability Partner in the New Schools Public Private Partnership project, the largest new school building project in Victoria. The team will build sustainability into 15 new schools from the beginning and run environmental education programs for the schools and communities. Each school will receive a customised ResourceSmart School education program and development and implementation of a School Environment Management Plan (SEMP) over five years. This project duration will enable CERES to embed sustainability education over a significant period and see a tangible impact on the whole school, including the wider school community.

## Training

Our programs are aimed at youth and adults and are designed to be accessible to all. We specialise in tailored programs for marginalised groups such as people with a disability, asylum seekers, new migrants, youth at risk and the under and unemployed. We aim to build resilience and skills in participants to navigate the future with a sustainable tool kit and to tread lightly on the natural world.

Our educators are passionate experts in their fields. Programs that shone this year were permaculture design, environmental education, urban farming, sustainable gardening, cooking, bread baking, beekeeping, natural dyeing and basket weaving. These were so well attended that additional workshops needed to be added to satisfy demand.

### Community Kitchen

The Community Kitchen provides a space where people can come together to learn, teach, connect and inspire through the celebration of food and our community food system. Kitchen use has grown in the last year with many different user groups accessing the space. It has become a hive of activity for CERES-run programs – weekend workshops and accredited training as well as external users hiring the space for workshops, community dinners and team building days.



## Highlights

- Created the Food Producer Incubator Program to give new arrivals and asylum seekers alternative education and employment pathways in food production and small business. The program provided skills and training in food safety, OHS, commercial kitchen operations, sustainable food systems, small business, creating food products, taking products to market and retail.
- Coordinated a sustainability network of 17 Adult Community Education Centres (Learn Local providers) and provided workshops, resources and connections.
- Worked with 15 schools delivering accredited training in Cert II Kitchen Operation and Horticulture.
- Delivered three Permaculture Design Courses to 62 people.
- Established a new home base for our Day Service Program for young adults with a disability, and had 2 new participants join our program.
- Delivered our second Environmental Education Course to a group of educators.



**1,072** people in workshops & short courses

**118** people in Horticulture & Hospitality training courses

[left] VET Hospitality training programs using the Community Kitchen.  
[right] VET Hospitality training visit to the market.

## Global

CERES Global engages with issues of global equity and sustainability internationally. Over the past 12 years CERES Global has cultivated relationships with urban and rural NGOs and communities in Arnhem Land, India, Cuba, China, Timor Leste, Indonesia and Samoa. Our aim is to support their work, to learn from them and to engage with grassroots organisations in implementing sustainable practices.

To date, we have worked with local partner organisations on environmental education, IT for social impact, sustainable and traditional housing design, environmental education, organic agriculture, sustainable community energy projects, social enterprise development, women's empowerment, and tribal, minority, and remote community advocacy.



[top] Food forest walk in Timor Leste.

[bottom] Sustainable housing project in India.

Since 2013 we have been partnering with universities in Melbourne with an aim to educate students through real life global experiences that challenge and motivate. Through these experiences we expand students' world views through genuine work and participation with other cultures and communities.

2015–16 was another year of growth for Global, welcoming a new staff member and for the first time since its conception in 2006 expanding the management team from one person to two.

### Highlights

- 10 trips with 147 participants; an increase of 43.5% from last year
- 6 specialised trips with students for university credit
- 5 brand new trips (1 to Samoa, 3 to Timor, 1 to China)
- Fundraised for and delivered 10 water filters to remote villages in Timor Leste providing clean water access to over 1800 people.
- Fundraised for and delivered beekeeping and honey extraction equipment to the Poutasi community in Samoa

The best thing about travelling with CERES Global was knowing that there is someone to support and facilitate the trip for you in a sustainable and friendly way. Its given me a new perspective on how fortunate my life is and how grateful I am to be born into this chance.

📍 Swinburne University student, June 2016

# Social Enterprises

Social enterprises deliver targeted social or community benefits using traditional business principles.

CERES owns and operates an integrated portfolio of social enterprises that deliver sustainability outcomes, provide livelihoods for staff and suppliers and generate funds to support the park and its educational purposes.

CERES social enterprises also contribute to the 'new economy', a movement that seeks an economy that is increasingly green and socially responsible, and one that is based on rethinking the nature of ownership and the growth paradigm that guides conventional policies.



[top] One of our Tamil Feasts chefs hard at work.

[middle] Traditional Tamil food.

[bottom] The coffee machine in The Merri that turned 600 kilograms of beans into delicious hot coffee.

## Tamil Feasts

Our newest social enterprise, Tamil Feasts, is now hosting three weekly dinners serving up traditional Sri Lankan fare. The feasts are lovingly cooked by four Tamil men currently seeking asylum in Australia and are supported by a coordinator and a team of dedicated volunteers. The project provides an opportunity for the men to share their cultural food heritage with the wider community, ongoing employment, and raises awareness about Melbourne's asylum seeker community. We celebrated our one year anniversary this year.

### Highlights

- Created a new family of volunteers and staff
- Published with a feature in Smudge Eats "Flavours of Urban Melbourne" 2nd Edition
- Featured in a number of online food blogs and social media articles
- Won the "Refugee Employer Award" category at the Refugee & Asylum seeker Recognition Awards 2016

The food was unreal. I've never experienced Sri Lankan Tamil food and it was so so delicious! I just had round two for dinner this evening in my take away container - what a treat. The atmosphere last night left us feeling so privileged to be a part of something so moving (and life changing).

📍 Jess, Tamil Feaster, via Facebook, June 2016

### Grocery

It was a big year for the CERES Market, Shop and Coffee stall, now renamed the CERES Grocery.

The latter half of 2015 was spent drawing up designs, securing funding support from Moreland City Council, engaging architects and builders and ensuring that everything was ready for the big change. We closed the Market area at the end of December and ran a Pop Up Shop for two months out of two converted shipping containers by the main entrance to the park. This was a very successful venture, keeping our customers engaged and our staff employed whilst we renovated the Grocery.

The renovation began in January and we were ready to re-open on the 20th of February with the new opening hours of 9am to 5pm, 7 days a week. It has been a great evolution of the business, streamlining the customer's shopping experience, offering one point of sale and bring the fresh fruit and vegetables out of the weather. The Grocery now holds around 1700 lines of stock and the feedback from customers continues to be extremely positive.



**33,600**  
eggs scrambled,  
fried or poached



**600 kilograms**  
of coffee beans ground  
and brewed per year



**1,248**  
local musicians performed at  
the Grocery in all weather



[left] Grocery opening day after renovations.  
[right] Moreland Food Business Network event  
in The Merri Table.

### The Merri Table

This year the Merri Table was clearly established as a place enjoyed by both long term CERES supporters and the cafe-loving general public, reflected in an overall increase in trade.

We continued to make improvements to the restaurant space in order to make the customer experience more enjoyable, and the kitchen team regularly trialled new specials and menu items to ensure seasonality and a broad range of vegan and gluten free options were available.

The menu features locally grown produce and we take pride in the relationships that we have established with local farmers and trust in their products and processes. Our partnerships with farmers and producers support a local food system that gives back to those who care for the earth, their produce and animals.

There were some challenges this year with maintaining a strong core team, with staff returning to studies, changing roles or moving away from hospitality, and the Head Chef resigning. However we continued to focus on our strengths, offering a unique, all-organic menu, engaging service, and strong ethical stance as a social enterprise.

### Fair Food

Fair Food has continued to grow from a simple veggie box scheme into a complete online organic supermarket. As our customer base grows and our offering becomes more complex we have focussed on improving our webshop and logistics. Later this year we will increase delivery days from three to five days a week with the option of next day delivery, and introduce our long awaited new website.

Fair Food also continues to support over 60 local farmers and grocery makers from the largest established organic market gardens to the newest start-up fudge makers. We also continue to provide employment for locals as well as giving first jobs to asylum seekers - who are now taking on more and more diverse roles in our enterprise. The way we use food hosts to deliver groceries also fostered friendships and increased social capital by helping people meet their neighbours.



**Just received my organic food box and cannot rave enough. Delivered safely by a friendly driver and you can tell it is 100% organic, fresh and handled with care. Thank you.**

Facebook review from a Fair Food customer May 2016

**55,000**  
orders delivered across Melbourne



**70**  
volunteer local Food Hosts  
(grocery pick up points)  
across Melbourne,



**13 tonnes**  
Amount of organic food delivered  
by Fair Food each week



[top] Delivering food boxes.  
[middle] In the warehouse.  
[bottom] What's in the box?



### Nursery

Spring 2015 saw the Nursery busier than ever with record sales. We continued to focus our seedling purchasing on CERES Propagation, which sets us apart from other retail nurseries, and we are proud to be a destination nursery for those seeking organic seedlings. The Nursery site has been expanded to increase the seedling display area and this has greatly increased the number of seedlings we can stock as well as providing an improved space for customers.

On most days we greet regular customers and share the joy of gardening with them, discuss plants, growing techniques and witness the incredible depth of meaning that gardening has for some of our more vulnerable or isolated customers. One customer in particular said that often she is motivated to keep going in life because she can come to our Nursery and it is such a rich and rewarding experience for her. This means a great deal to us and epitomises the profound joy of gardening, engaging with the natural world and the importance of being part of a community. That the Nursery can play a role like this in our community is immensely satisfying. The Nursery continues to be CERES most financially successful social enterprise, consistently delivering the most significant financial contribution to the organisation.

I returned to CERES seeking inspiration for expansion of our food garden. No shortage of ideas here! For anyone interested in appropriate technology, urban food production or seeking organic produce and seedlings, this is the place.

Mark C, via Trip Advisor. July 2016



**2,362**  
citrus trees sold

[top] Dappled light in the Nursery.  
[middle] Bare rooted fruit trees.  
[bottom] Climbers in flower over the arbor.

We used the Learning Centre for my husbands 50th birthday celebration. It was a perfect relaxed space to share the celebration with friends. The beautiful natural surrounds added to the joy and relaxation of the guests.

Anastasia Morritt, March 2016



### Venue Hire

Venue Hire team manages the hire of meeting rooms and outdoor spaces to external groups, as well as supporting the delivery of CERES events and workshops.

In anticipation of the continued growth of Venue Hire as a social enterprise, the department was restructured in March 2016 and now employs a total of three staff over 7 working days each week. The increased capacity within the Venue Hire team will help us to better support the many and varied groups using space at CERES to achieve their aims, to build stronger relationships with existing users, to reach more people within the community and to engage with them through targeted marketing campaigns.

One of our goals is to both drive and meet the growing demand for sustainable meeting venues. A large percentage of room hire continues to be by community health and support organisations, as well as environmental protection and advocacy groups, and personal development facilitators such as Les Robinson, author of Enabling Change.

The redevelopment of the old cafe site into the Village Pavilion this year has provided a fantastic new space at CERES for the community to meet and connect. Since its completion in February this venue has been host to numerous events including weddings, birthday parties, community consultation sessions, staff and volunteer gatherings and CERES festivals and events.

**Fraser, Henry, Oscar & Tarquin** had their very first birthdays here



**7 couples** were married on site & one couple celebrated their engagement here



[top] Wedding photographs with chooks were popular.  
[middle] Live music on the Village Green at Harvest Festival.  
[bottom] Planning in day in the meeting rooms.

# Farm & Habitat

The CERES park is an oasis of difference in inner city Melbourne.

We aim to demonstrate food systems, innovative landscape design, emerging ideas, ecological building practice and green technology for community learning. Our Farm team propagates, plants, grows, harvests and sells locally grown organic produce.

Our Habitat management team utilises specialist skills in gardening, building, maintaining services and green technology to support a diverse collection of park uses.



[top] Broad bean crop at Honey Lane.  
[middle] Broadbeans before they got big.  
[bottom] Coriander seedlings in Propagation.

## Organic Farm

Our community food system is one of the key features of the park. Covering around a quarter of the park's footprint, we aim to demonstrate how an urban city farm can anchor such a system and contribute to the local economy by providing an ethical marketplace, employment and opportunities for farmers, producers, teachers and food workers in an environment where we can celebrate the harvest.

Our community food system consists of:

- Honey Lane Market Garden
- Merri Creek Market Garden – 2kms north of CERES
- Seedling Propagation
- Food Forest
- Chooks
- Community Kitchen
- Urban Orchard project (managed by Urban Orchard members)
- Aquaponics system (managed by Aquaponics Group)
- Bee Hives (managed by the Bee Group)

It also supports every single one of our social enterprises.

## During the year we have:

- Completed a new entrance and teaching area for school groups with seating in the Food Forest, funded by a generous bequest.
- Commenced works on a new educational beehive display in the Food Forest area.
- Installed a new polytunnel for Propagation.
- Grown gorgeous sunflowers and zinnias over summer in Honey Lane Market Garden that were then available to buy from Grocery and Nursery.
- Continued to teach and work with school kids, workshop participants and other groups.



**26,370**  
punnets of vegetable seedlings grown by Propagation were sold through the Nursery



**61**  
VET students worked in Honey Lane Farm to complete accredited and non accredited horticulture training





## Gardens

Our gardens are looking beautiful thanks to the hard work of hundreds of volunteers, under the guidance of knowledgeable staff. This planting season over 3000 seedlings were put in the ground, vegetables were planted outside the community kitchen and the train, and the dry area on Africa Hill started its transition to a succulent garden.

### During the year we have:

- Been supported by up to 30 horticulture volunteers two days a week
- Reclaimed some roadway along Lee Street and reduced the main carpark in some areas for more garden beds.
- Repurposed both the old cafe cool store and energy park inverter shed for tool storage.

The team has managed two Work for the Dole programs this year focussed on giving our children's playspace a lift. Works included building a 20m earthworm, beautiful woven nests, a sea creature, repainting the red train and assisting with weeding, planting and landscaping.

## Maintenance & Capital Works

Our Maintenance Team maintains the 'ruggedness' and uniqueness of the park while also ensuring the safety and comfort of our visitors. Capital works projects are undertaken throughout the year to ensure vital upgrades are completed in all areas of CERES.

Ongoing maintenance tasks undertaken by Habitat team and volunteers include:

- Managing waste
- Repairing and maintaining all infrastructure
- Maintaining all hard landscaping
- Mowing, whipper-snipping, pruning and chipping
- Cleaning gutters and filters

### During the year we have:

- Transformed the old cafe into the CERES Pavilion
- Vastly improved disability access to the Multicultural Classroom, Energy Classroom and Training Room
- Given significant facelifts to the Training Room and Multicultural Classroom
- Extended the nursery's outdoor retail space
- Weather proofed the Honey Lane Outdoor Classroom
- Neared completion of the pedestrian lighting system
- Installed a CERES-wide public address system to support community safety
- Introduced various traffic control measures across the park

- Comprehensively restored the water wheel and southern cross windmill in the Energy Park
- Installed a gearbox and tracker for the Scheffler solar dish.

Early in the year we had an unfortunate run of thefts and vandalism that we felt was a pattern that required intervention. In some areas where repeated incidents occurred we have installed CCTV and many of our buildings now have alarms.



[top] Sunflowers in the summer.  
[bottom] Hardenbergia (Happy Wanderer) in the Grocery.

[top] Lighting 80 candles to celebrate the birthday of our longest running volunteer  
[bottom] Kiss the composter

# Environmental Management Plan Report

We aim to improve our demonstration value and encourage community practice in sustainability. Our EMP provides a framework and reporting structure for reduction of environmental impacts of our activities.

Generally, the range and frequency of activities at CERES continues to grow year on year. Although we aim to be efficient in our use of resources, increases in activity have generally led to increases in resource use, and waste production.

## Electricity from the grid

Electricity is purchased from Powershop. While Powershop's purchase of UN Clean Development Mechanism offsets allows the electricity it supplies to be certified as "carbon neutral" in Australia, this is an accounting convention and does not reduce the actual climate impact of the emissions from CERES' electricity use.

The largest single factor for increase in electricity use was closing the old CERES Cafe which cooked with gas, and commissioning in May 2014 the all-electric kitchen at Merri Table, followed shortly by the all-electric Community Kitchen. Use has also been affected by the Grocery moving to 7 days a week operation in Feb 2016.

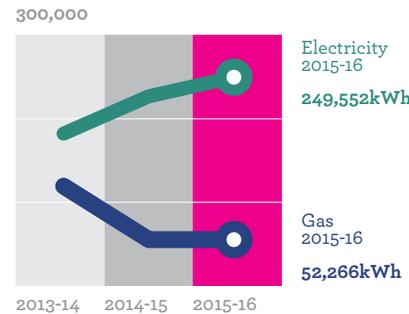
## Electricity generated onsite

In 2015/2016 we were able to measure our renewable electricity generation for the first time.

We are working to acquire the resources to install more on-site renewable electricity production capacity and will develop targets and scheduling to build up our capacity.

Our kitchens are electricity-only because unlike gas, electricity can potentially be generated from renewable sources.

## Utilities



**325 tonnes** of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions resulted from electricity (approx.)

**10 tonnes** of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions resulted from gas (approx.)

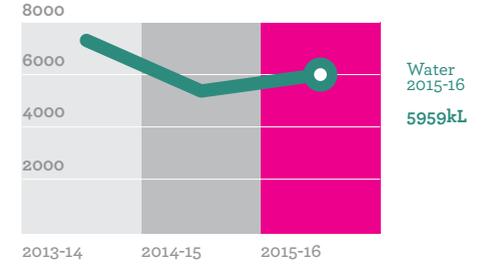


**16,940 kWh** (approx 6.4% of our electricity use) was generated by wind and solar power in 2015-16

## Water

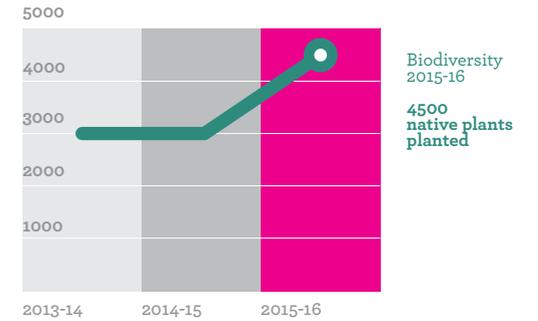
Leaks and weather have been the greatest source of variability. The higher use in 2013/2014 was due to at least two significant leaks. With installation of new water lines, operational from January 2015, we believe water loss from leaks is now zero.

**60 to 80%** of our water goes on our gardens.



## Biodiversity

In order to preserve and enhance the ecological performance of the site, ornamental and shade plantings are restricted to native plants.



## Waste Management

We believe the increase in recycling is primarily due to improvements in the labelling of bins, which mean more visitors and staff are choosing to dispose of their waste in the recycling waste stream.

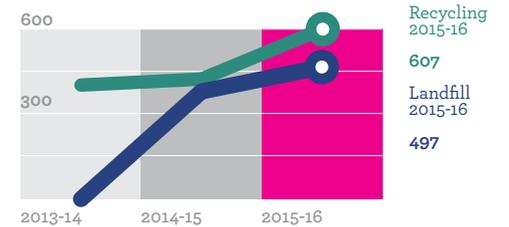
Landfill and recycling bins are removed by contractors recommended by Moreland City Council.

The Bike Shed volunteers repair and refurbish discarded bikes for community use and spare parts. Scrap metal and scrap rubber are removed by trailer to appropriate recyclers by the volunteers.

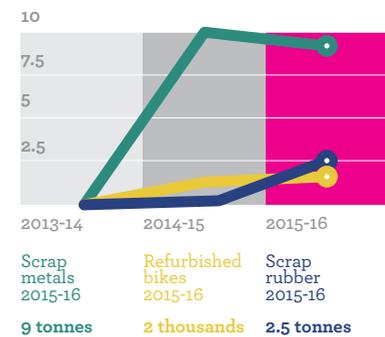


Organic material from student & staff lunches, and from the cafe is processed in worm farms or compost piles, and ends up being used on our gardens.

## Waste (240L bins)



## Other Recycling



## Green Technology

The primary role of “greentech” at CERES is to provide a platform for emerging and proven technologies that either help to address the causes of climate change, or help to adapt to the effects of climate change. Greentech activities also enable us to deliver on our Environmental Management Plan targets. The technologies and systems we demonstrate provide tangible educational resources that assist with the transferability of these technologies into other settings.

### During the year we have:

- Completed the Whole of Water Cycle Management and Behaviour Change Project. The various water management systems installed were commissioned and have been tested and adjusted throughout the year. The dam looks beautiful which is evidence of how well storm water is being collected. The mains water metering is providing useful feedback for water users.
- Planned for future projects. This included attending conferences for networking and learning, and consulting with our partners.
- Two staff from the Habitat team visited the CERES Global project in India, meeting with locals and researching what greentech we can consider assisting this village with in the near future.



[left] Celebrating the completion of the Water Project.  
 [middle] Water wheel in the Energy Park.  
 [right] Measuring the heat at the focal point of the Scheffler Dish.

# Community

CERES is built on community. Ever since a small group of people came together with a beautiful vision of transforming and reclaiming a degraded piece of land, we have realised the power of our community.

## Festivals

Festivals are a great way for us to celebrate and connect with our community. Each autumn, we hold our Harvest Festival - a celebration of the good earth, our farmers and the cycle of the seasons. This year's festival was attended by over 1400 people who enjoyed food stalls, live music and performances, free workshops, a cake baking competition and craft market.

In June we also held a Winter Solstice Festival for the community and it was a great success, selling out two weeks in advance. More than 500 people came to celebrate the beautiful darkness with us and we hope this becomes another annual CERES event.

In addition to events that we ran ourselves, we also hosted a huge variety of other community events throughout the year including Holi Festival of Spring, Brunswick Music Festival, Rainbow Urban Gathering, dog markets, vegan bakesales and other food events, cultural events, weddings and birthday celebrations.



## 70 groups

of corporate volunteers at CERES & Joe's Garden.



[right] Winter Solstice Festival.  
 [middle] Seed mandala at Harvest Festival.  
 [left] Qawwali music event on the Village Green.

## Volunteers

Volunteering with CERES builds community connectedness, which is the foundation of CERES. Our volunteers are extensively involved in caring for and maintaining the park - more than 2000 volunteers annually work with the Habitat team, Farm team and other areas. There are some weeks at CERES where it seems as though the park is full of volunteers all working and contributing to the beautification and functioning of the park.

### During the year we have:

- Celebrated the 80th birthday of Vittorio (Vic) Cardamone, our longest serving volunteer.
- Hosted a monthly volunteer lunch, engaging all volunteer groups including community, corporate, design development, horticulture, maintenance and Work for the Dole groups
- Increased number of Propagation volunteer program days from three to four.
- Developed designs for the Nursery retail extension, pedestrian lighting, disability access into the Energy Classroom, Peace Garden near the Learning Centre, outdoor kitchen at the Village Pavilion, new volunteer accommodation, Cultural Village Masterplan and more.

CERES is extraordinarily grateful for the contributions of all our volunteers.



**The day got us closer to nature, empowered us to create & introduced us to a community at the forefront of sustainable enterprise. CERES is a great volunteer activity, a good escape from daily routine.**

📍 NAB Corporate volunteer

[top] Telstra volunteers in the Visitor Centre.

[middle] NABvolunteers at Joe's Garden.

[bottom] Work for the Dole participants carving a worm head in the play space.

## Community Groups

Our park is home to nine different community groups ("site groups") and many other groups that use spaces regularly throughout the year. These organisations and regular gatherings all add to the diversity and complexity of the park, offering classes, community connections, up-skilling and resource sharing.

Some of our official site groups have been with us for more than 30 years and they include:

- Aquaponics Group
- Bee Group
- Bike Shed
- Chook Group
- Community Garden Group
- Melbourne Zen Group
- Moreland LETS
- Sophia's Spring
- SOTEMS

We were sorry to say farewell to the Synergy Gallery site group, and thank the members of the group for their contributions over the last few years.

Other regular groups include:

- Amayoga
- Aozora Shokudo Japanese cultural classes
- Chant and Chai Cartel
- Down to Earth Cooperative
- Holistic Education College massage training
- Insight Meditation
- Rhythm Tree Family Music classes
- Shambhala Meditation

### 2000

bikes either refurbished and put back on the road, or used for parts



### 18

chicks of the Barnevelder & Lavender Araucana breeds raised in a new flock



### 250 hours

of group meditation were undertaken by the Melbourne Zen Group



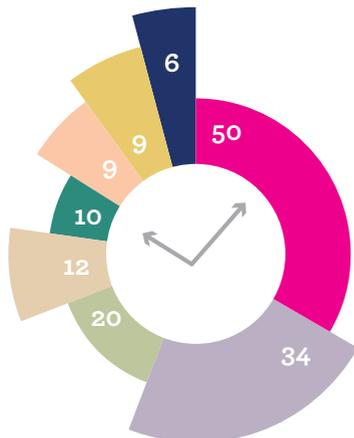
[right] Midsumma cake by Sophia's Spring.

## Communications

After several years of no resourcing for a CERES-wide communications approach, in 2013 we appointed a Communications Manager to oversee and tie together our messaging, and ensure our staff and supporters are kept up to date on our developments. This year we rolled out a new website, developed a new visitor experience app and continued to grow our social media presence and engagement. We also work closely with the IT Manager, Partnerships Manager and other staff with communications roles across CERES.

The Chook App hosts information about greentech around the park and also provides new visitors with general information about CERES.

This chart shows the comparative amount of time spent at the eight most popular stops on the app



EcoHouse Appliances	Swift Wind Turbine
Scheffler Dish Solar Thermal	Weather Rock
Art Discovery	Compost Hill
Welcome	Biodigester

## Partnerships

CERES is the recipient of much goodwill and recognition from individuals, community organisations and our Government and corporate partners. Partners bring enthusiasm and respect for CERES and it is our pleasure to facilitate these connections for mutual benefit.

Partnership highlights this year include:

**Moreland City Council:** Continued to be our most significant partner and supporter, providing our land and funding for capital works.

**Catholic Education Office:** Provided financial support for the Aboriginal and Indonesian cultural education programs.

**Engineers Without Borders:** In conjunction with a private donor allowed us to test and develop a small biogas plant.



[top] Cinnamon Evans speaking at the Moreland Business Network event in July. Photo by Rebecca Newman.

[bottom] Our new smartphone app for visitors, "The Chook".

**Moreland Energy Foundation Limited (MEFL):** provided advice and a valuable sounding board.

**RACV Community Environment Partnership** came to it's conclusion in April 2016. This partnership provided financial support for environmental education including the Mobile Energy Classroom, the Do More With Less conferences and the Chook App.

**Sustainability Victoria** - continued our funding partnership to deliver the ResourceSmart Schools program to over 280 schools.

**Victorian Government Department of Education and Training:** Commenced a partnership to deliver energy education.

**Victorian Government Water Grant:** 10 major whole of water cycle management projects with linked educational initiatives were completed at the beginning of this financial year.

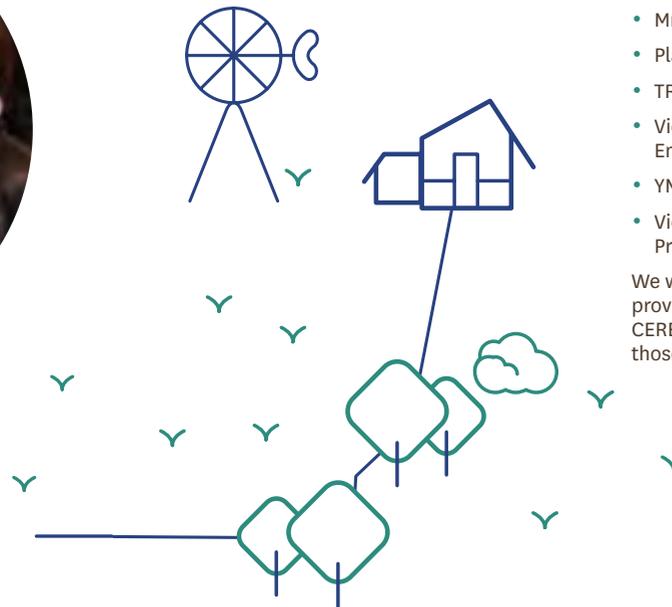
**Victorian State Government** - provided funding towards the building of 15 Victorian schools, in which CERES is a community partner.

NAB, Telstra, AMP and six other organisations brought the incredible benefit of corporate volunteers.

Other partners and supporters include:

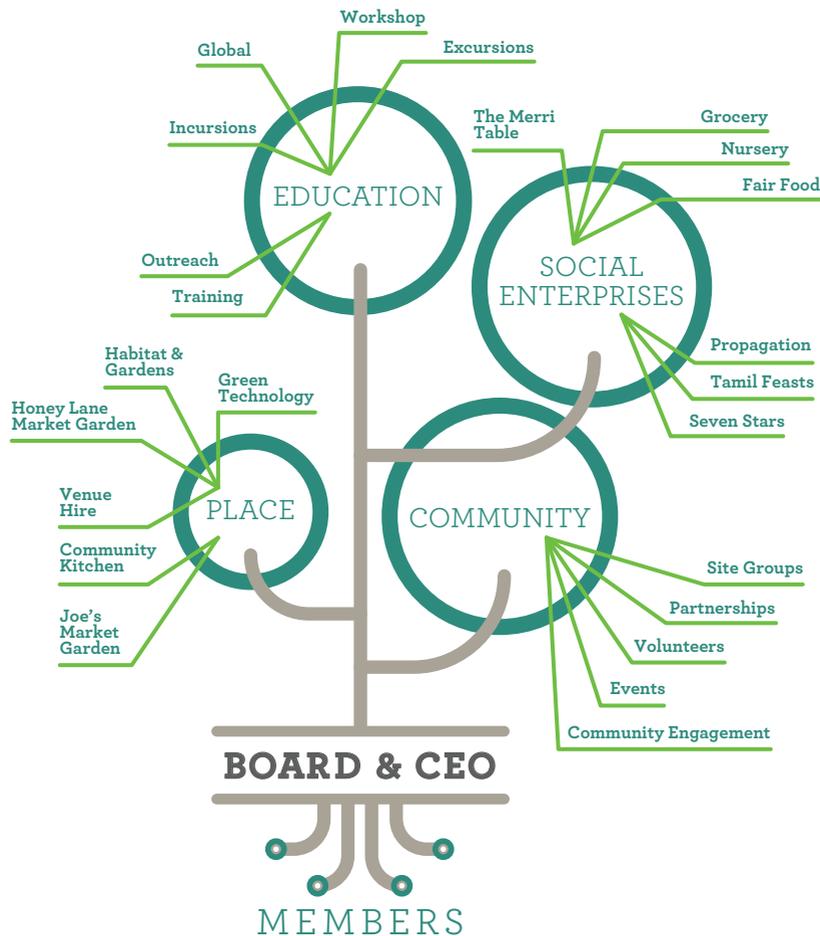
- 3RRR
- Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE)
- City of Whitehorse
- ClarkeHopkinsClarke
- Darebin City Council
- Energy Breakthrough
- Festival21
- Frankston City Council
- Glen Eira City Council
- Hume City Council
- Inner North Community Foundation
- Knox City Council
- Little Sprouts
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund
- Manningham City Council
- Mr Tea
- Planet Savers
- TRY Australia
- Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- YMCA
- Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet

We would like to thank all partners who have provided financial and in-kind support to CERES, including our regular donors and all those who gave to our Annual Appeal.



# Governance

CERES is a not-for-profit organisation and is managed by a voluntary Board with representatives elected from the membership. The Board appoints a CEO to oversee the activities of the organisation. CERES activities are divided into portfolios, each with a senior Group Manager. Each portfolio includes a number of enterprises and projects, many of which are overseen by an Area Manager.



## Our People

### CERES Board

Committee Members (Board of Management) in office at any time during the financial year ended 30 June 2016:

	Position held at 30/06/16 or Resignation	Resigned	Appointed	A	B
Josephine Barraket	Chairperson			11	12
Mark Riley	Deputy Chair			9	12
Josh Floyd	Secretary			12	12
Thomas Dobson	Treasurer		Nov-15 *	10	12
Cinnamon Evans	CEO			12	12
Meghan Hopper	Moreland City Council Council Representative			8	12
Greg Dickson	Site Group Representative			10	12
Frank Mitchell	Staff Representative		Nov-15	5	7
Ben Walta	Staff Representative	Nov-15		5	5
Sue Lewis	General Member			10	12
Noel Blencowe	General Member			12	12
Sarah Houseman	General Member		Nov-15	6	7
Paul Adams	General Member	Nov-15		4	5

[\* Re-appointed]    **A** - Number of meetings attended    **B** - Number of meetings held during the time the director held office during the year

### Senior Managers

- Cinnamon Evans
- Sieta Beckwith
- Nick Curmi
- Chris Ennis
- Judy Glick
- Melissa Lawson
- Lorna Pettifer
- Nicolas Porter

### Area Managers

- Luisa Brown
- John Burne
- Jane Burns
- Laurel Coad
- Shane French
- Sally Kennedy
- Beck Morley
- Adrian Richardson
- Meg Stewart
- Ben Walta
- Emily Wilson

+83 equivalent full-time staff

+Thousands of volunteers



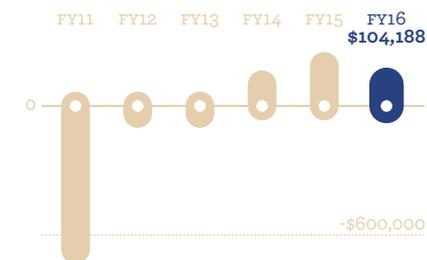
## Assets and Liabilities Statement as at 30 June 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	996,255	833,398
Accounts Receivable	116,080	67,134
Inventories	267,300	266,400
Prepayments	46,253	42,653
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>1,425,888</b>	<b>1,209,585</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Buildings, Plant and Equipment	3,714,134	3,637,639
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>3,714,134</b>	<b>3,637,639</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>5,140,022</b>	<b>4,847,224</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts Payable and other Payables	671,352	613,484
Employee Provisions	454,029	389,500
Hire Purchase Commitments	48,812	32,790
Income in Advance	555,936	614,361
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1,730,129</b>	<b>1,650,135</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Employee Provisions	48,909	37,700
Hire Purchase Commitments	109,510	81,603
<b>Total Non Current Liabilities</b>	<b>158,419</b>	<b>119,303</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,888,548</b>	<b>1,769,438</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>3,251,474</b>	<b>3,077,786</b>
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>		
Retained Surplus	3,251,474	3,077,786
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>	<b>3,251,474</b>	<b>3,077,786</b>

## Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2016

	2016 \$	2015 \$
Revenue from Ordinary Activities	11,214,342	10,103,986
Expenses from Ordinary Activities before Depreciation	10,909,338	9,778,473
Surplus from Ordinary Activities before Depreciation	305,004	325,513
Depreciation	200,816	151,452
Surplus (Deficit) from Ordinary Activities after Depreciation	104,188	174,061
Grant Funding for Capital Improvements	69,500	298,278
<b>SURPLUS FOR YEAR</b>	<b>173,688</b>	<b>472,339</b>

### Surplus (Deficit) from Ordinary Activities after Depreciation



### Working Capital Ratio



## Treasurer's Report

We have a lot of be proud of in the past year. Our enterprise revenue increased again, we improved our working capital position further and achieved our third consecutive "in the black" result. Our surplus from Operating Activities after depreciation is \$104k.

From a Finance perspective, we looked towards the future as shown by the completed renovation of our new Grocery and implementation of a new point-of-sale system across all on-site enterprises.

We are aiming to close our working capital gap in the next 18 months. Our recent audit report demonstrates that we are in a more solid financial position than we have been in years and this enables our team to deliver the best social and environmental impact possible for the community.

**Thomas Dobson**, Treasurer &  
**Nicolas Porter**, Finance Manager

# About CERES

CERES is a place where people come together to share ideas about living well together, and directly participate in meeting their social and material needs in a sustainable way.

Through social enterprises, education and training, employment and community engagement, CERES provides the means by which people can build awareness of current local and global issues, and join in the movement for economic, social and environmental sustainability.

For thousands of years the Wurundjeri people lived on the land where CERES now stands. The Merri Creek was a focus of their lifestyle, a place to swim and play and a vital source of food. Following the European invasion, the Victorian gold rush and the growth of Melbourne city, the site was quarried for bluestone then turned into a landfill site... As industry moved in the water became polluted and the trees and wildlife disappeared.

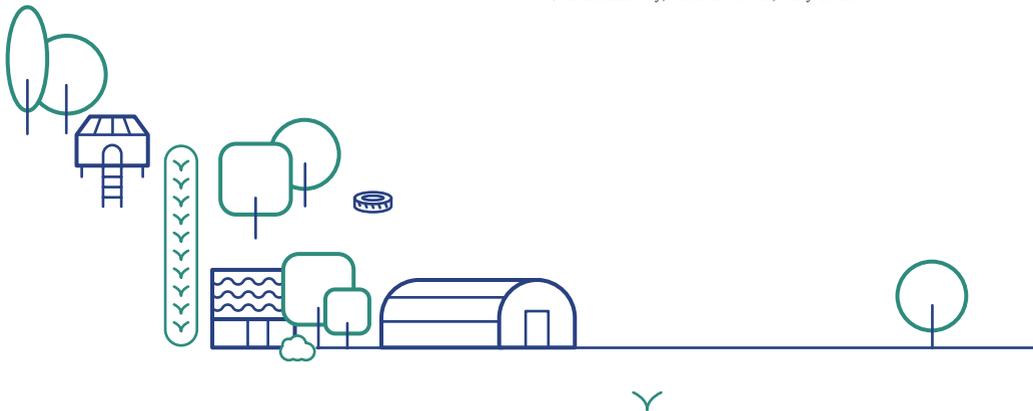
Since CERES was established in 1982, the efforts of many groups, staff, volunteers and labour market programs have transformed the site. Once a desolate wasteland, today CERES is a place of nature and beauty, inhabited by a vibrant and diverse community.

We attract around 400,000 visits each year through our on-site education and training programs, Nursery, Organic Market & Grocery and the Merri Table. CERES continues to provide opportunities for the community to come together in community groups or as volunteers, through community programs, venue hire and events.

We reach out to over 200,000 people through our work in schools across metropolitan Melbourne, and regional and rural Victoria. We have a growing following on social media, which further widens our audience and reach. CERES Fair Food delivers organic food and the sustainable food message across metropolitan Melbourne. CERES also partners with a wide variety of organisations to bring about mutually beneficial outcomes, and reaches across the planet with CERES Global taking groups to India, Indonesia, Cuba, Timor, China, Samoa and Australian Aboriginal communities.

**CERES is one of Melbourne's most magical spaces... I absolutely love the place and am proud to be a local.**

• Tan Allaway, via Facebook, May 2016



# Get Involved

Although we are very proud of the contribution our social enterprises make to the economic sustainability of CERES, we need your help! In order to continue our work in environmental education, building community, providing research and practical solutions for climate change and regenerating our land, we rely on the support of our community.

**There are three key ways you can support CERES:**

**1. Donate**

[www.ceres.org.au/donate](http://www.ceres.org.au/donate)

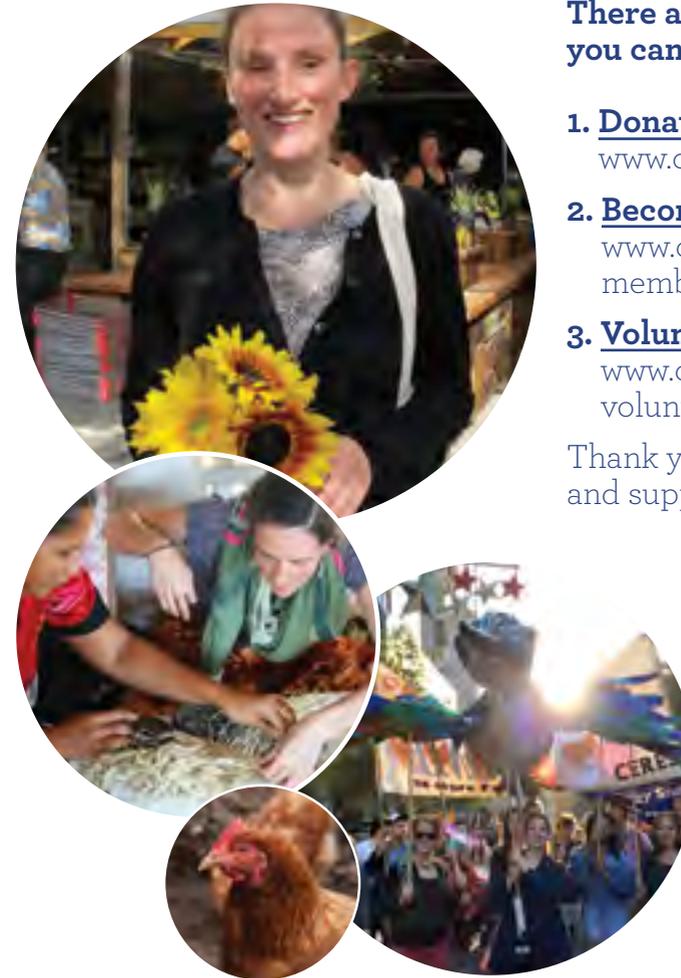
**2. Become a member**

[www.ceres.org.au/membership](http://www.ceres.org.au/membership)

**3. Volunteer**

[www.ceres.org.au/volunteer](http://www.ceres.org.au/volunteer)

Thank you for your love and support!





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## **CERES**

### **Community Environment Park**

Corner of Roberts & Stewart Streets,  
Brunswick East, VIC 3057

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phone **+61 3 9389 0100**  
email **[ceres@ceres.org.au](mailto:ceres@ceres.org.au)**  
web **[www.ceres.org.au](http://www.ceres.org.au)**