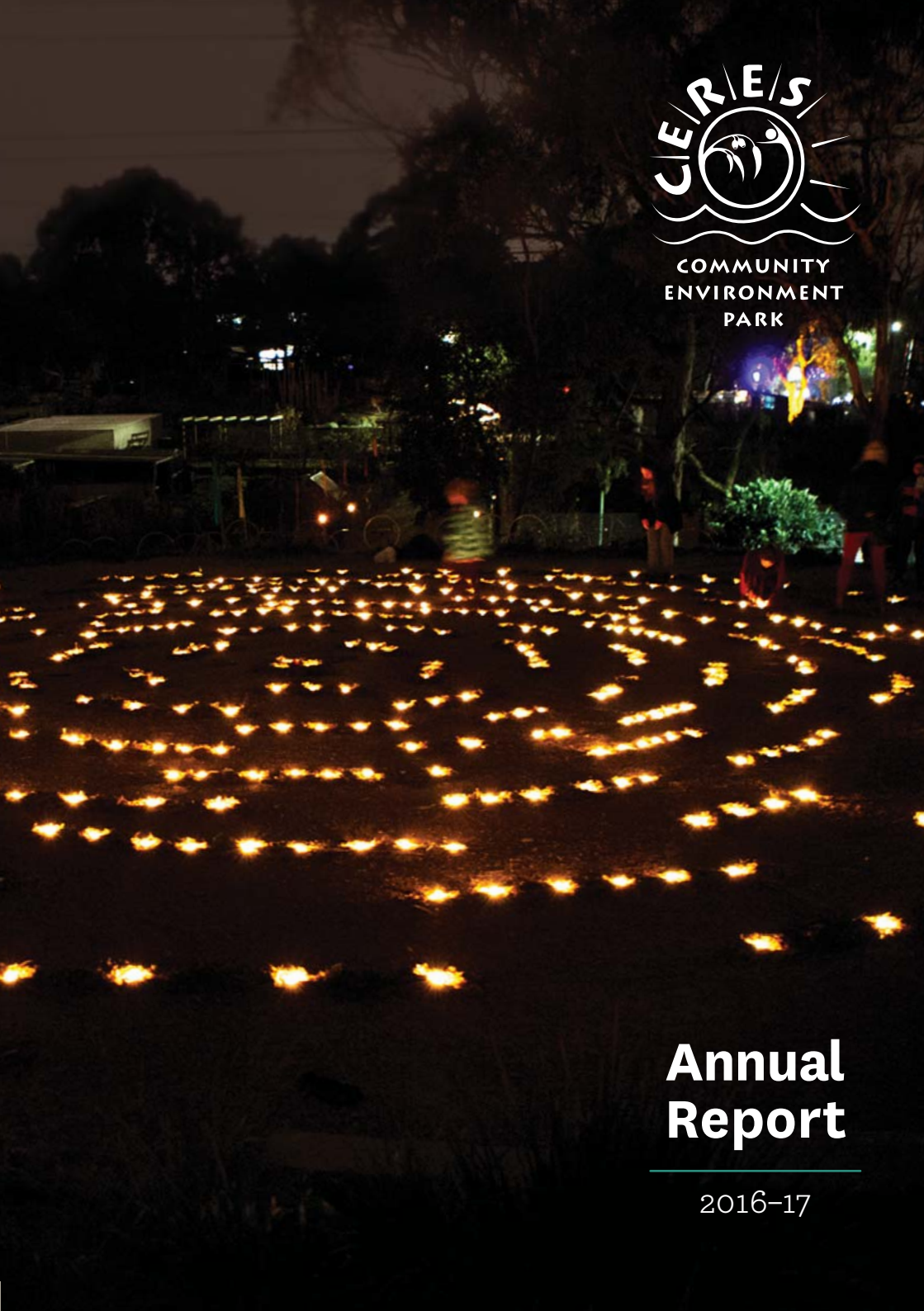




COMMUNITY
ENVIRONMENT
PARK



Annual Report

2016-17

Our Vision

For everyone to fall in love with the Earth again.

CERES is a place for community-based learning and action. We create better ways of living together in five domains:

- Environmental
- Social
- Economic
- Cultural
- Spiritual

.....

In all we do, we aim to reconnect people to each other and the earth.

.....

We would like to acknowledge that CERES is on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people, and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country. We would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people as the custodians of this land and recognise that their culture and heritage is still important today.

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Get Involved

Chairperson

For more than 35 years, CERES has been ‘scaling deep’ to devise community-led solutions to meet the challenges of a sustainable future.

Along the way, we have transformed previously trashed land into an environmentally and socially rich place, now visited by nearly half a million people a year. We have educated several generations of Victorian school children on the exciting possibilities of sustainable ways of living, and demonstrated new and emerging environmental technologies with a focus on what can be done locally, by ordinary people, to create the changes we want to see in the world. CERES is a site of community, of experimentation, of food justice, chooks, bikes and meditation. And all this is powered by our awesome mission-aligned social enterprises, generous contributions from members, donors and friends, support from valued partners including Moreland City Council, and the work of our dedicated staff and volunteers.

CERES has a great deal to be proud of. Yet, threats to environmental and social sustainability are as acute as they have ever been. We have a lot more to do.

At last year’s AGM, CERES’s members resolved to adopt a new set of strategic directions for the Association. These include a continued focus on good governance and financial sustainability because, you know, ‘no money, no mission’. But, they also revitalise many of CERES’s commitments to social, environmental and spiritual wellbeing in pursuit of a more sustainable and just world. Our new strategic directions – see our CEO’s report for details and reflections on these – also emphasise CERES’s role as a partner within a wider

network of people, organisations and institutions, recognising that the change we want to see in the world requires diverse resources, varied knowledge, and collective commitment to action. Finally, these strategic directions seek to make more of CERES’s role as an influencer and key voice in sustainability in Victoria and Australia. With 35 years under our belt, we’ve learned a few things and made a few friends; our current strategic directions are encouraging us to do more with our reputation and relationships.

Over the past year, CERES’s board has been working with the management team to bring some of these strategic actions to reality. We have also been contributing our skills to problem solving and representing the interests of the Association in public forums, government inquiries and local development initiatives. It is a great privilege to work with the board and management team and I thank them all for their palpable commitment to CERES every day.



Jo Barraket,
CERES Chairperson,
2017



CERES is a fantastic model for how we can live in harmony with our Earth habitat.

◆ Brigitte Staples, Google review, June 2017

CEO

Every day CERES inspires me. In these times of planetary turbulence and catastrophe, the love and generosity of all our staff, volunteers, customers and visitors is a light in the darkness, and a testament that when it comes to the human spirit, all is not lost.

In our collective role as stewards of this rustic little place by the creek, the CERES community comes together every day to take care of the honey bees, the chickens, the gardens, the green technologies, the local economy and each other, and in doing so, upholds goodness in the world.

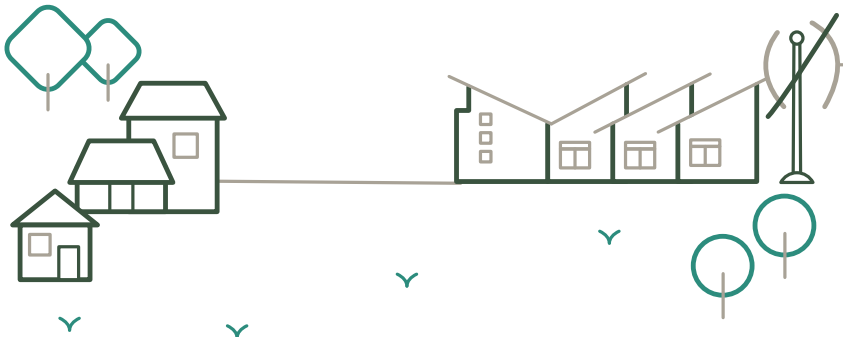
Our Strategic Directions present an exciting opportunity for the CERES community to lead even more strongly for a just and sustainable world. At the 2016 AGM, members prioritised four strategic directions:

Inform and inspire through our stories and actions by documenting and sharing our learnings about our local environment, green technology, social enterprise, and community-driven strengthening of local society, culture and spirit.

Since inception, CERES has been a place for showcasing and practicing ways to live more lightly on the Earth. We have continued to share our learnings by providing sustainability education and training programs, workshops and short courses for both students and adults. This year we have stepped up our storytelling through our social media channels and website, and through involvement in a variety of conferences and forums.

Contribute to leadership in our areas of purpose and experience, through increased partnerships with our communities, complementary groups and across sectors.

CERES is a multifaceted organisation that interacts with the world in a myriad of ways. We partner with more than 200 purposeful organisations who share our vision for environmental and social change. In addition, we partner with 74 wonderful Food Hosts across Melbourne who, through the simple act of making their verandas available for organic food delivery and collection, provide an alternative to the conventional food system and build community in their neighbourhoods.



Contribute to activism for environmentally progressive social change by ‘walking the talk’, and contributing to public debate and local action about climate change, democratic participation, and economic alternatives.

Our Carbon Budget Policy challenges us to walk our talk by eliminating our carbon emissions by 2025. We are working on reducing energy demand and increasing renewable energy generation, and this year we have installed two new solar arrays on the Visitor Centre and EcoHouse roofs.

We have continued to operate an integrated suite of social enterprises that enable our visitors to meet their material needs in a sustainable way, provide employment and build the local economy. As the Victorian social enterprise ecosystem gathers momentum, CERES is increasingly recognised as a pioneer and leader.

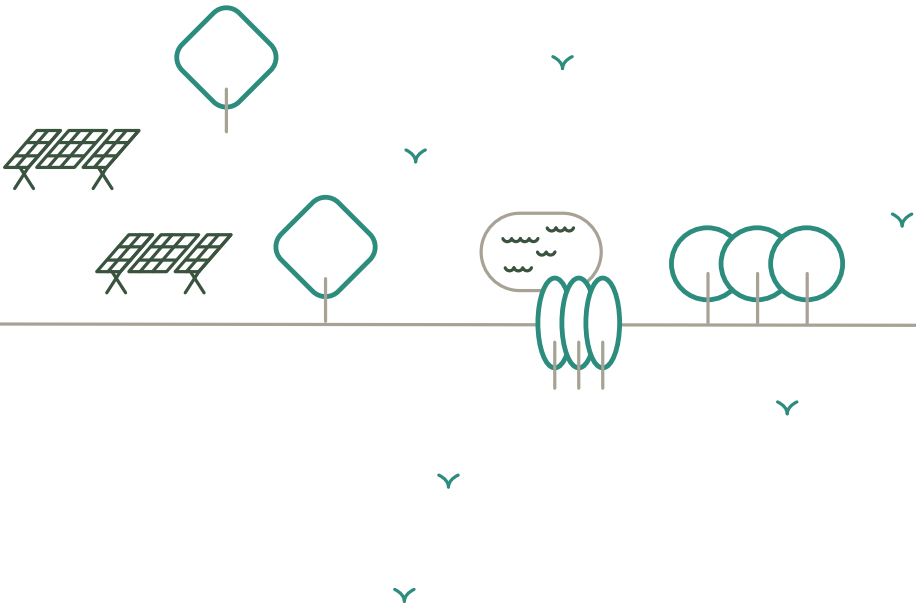
Maintain financial sustainability and effective governance of our organisation

We have now had five years in a row of modest financial surpluses, which have enabled us to recover from old debt. CERES is 95% self-funded through our social enterprises and education programs, which is very unusual in the not-for-profit sector, and gives us the independence to speak out on matters of importance to us.

I am so very proud of our place and our people. Together we are falling in love with the Earth again, and co-creating our future.



Cinnamon Evans,
CEO



Reach

VISITORS



490,000
visits to our park (estimated)

MEMBERS

1,060
bought or renewed their memberships

VOLUNTEERING



3,500+
volunteers
in Honey Lane,
Joe's Garden and
across the park

EDUCATION



Excursions **57,767**
visits by students and adults
for excursions and tours

Incursions **9,255**
students and staff had CERES
attend their school for incursions

Global **177**
participants on our cross-cultural,
educational and friendship building
trips overseas and at home

Outreach **184,338**
staff and students worked
with the Education Outreach team

Training **1,624**
participants in courses and programs

IN THE CYBER WORLD



298,568 visits to our primary website

111,866 follow us on social media channels



8,611 receive our newsletter every month

1,259 used our Chook Guide on their smartphone

NOTE – “visits” and “participants” refer to numbers of contacts, not individual people.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES



55,000

ordered **Fair Food** organic grocery boxes

40,444

ate organic food with their friends
in the **Merri Table**

94,277

visited the **Grocery** to buy organic food

49,251

bought plants from the **Nursery**
to grow at home

6,720

attended **Tamil Feasts** dinners

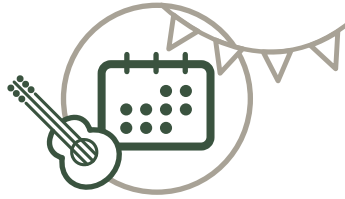
274

groups hired us as a **Venue**

95% of CERES' income is from social enterprises & educational services.

Our reach across all realms (including digital) is approximately 1,066,000 contacts.

EVENTS & FESTIVALS



21,572

came to the park for community events
run by partner organisations

750

attended our Winter Solstice Festival

1,800

attended our Autumn Harvest Festival

355

attended our inaugural Merri Merri
Bush Dance

220,000+

saw or interacted with us at
conferences, festivals and events
outside CERES

ON SITE VISITORS 46% : **490,155**

OFF-SITE REACH 20.7% : **220,334**

VIRTUAL REACH 33.4% : **356,150**



Highlights



Tamil Feasts wins "Refugee Employer Award" at the Refugee & Asylum Seeker Recognition Awards



Education & Training team presents at Public Pedagogies Institute Conference



Food Producer Incubator Graduation Feast at the Merri shares food, stories & student achievement



Education & Training team present on Greening the Apocalypse at RRR



CERES adopts a carbon budget policy with an aim of reducing emissions to 0 by 2025

TAKE 2

CERES becomes founding partner of TAKE2, Sustainability Victoria's climate change pledge program



CEO travels to Canada to present at the Global Social Economy Forum



Farm team is part of the Melbourne Urban Agriculture Forum Open Garden Day.



Outreach & Excursions present at The Education Show



CERES attends Premier's Sustainability Awards ceremony as a finalist in the Education category and wins the People's Choice award



Greentech installs a 15kw solar array on the CERES Visitor Centre roof, thanks to Powershop's "Community Solar" campaign



Honey Lane, Grocery, Nursery and Merri appear on Postcards



First Merri Merri Bush Dance is held with 355 attendees



Habitat team head to India to work on a sustainable housing project



Tamil Feasts hosts first Friday night dinner in the Merri Table, moving to 3 nights a week



Excursions & Incursions host a stall at Science Teachers Association annual conference



Global presents at the Mobility for Social Change forum



Farm team successfully trials beneficial nematodes to address an issue with fungus gnats



Greentech team attends the All Energy Conference

2016



Outreach hosts over 100 early years educators for a full day of professional learning



8 new schools working closely with Outreach on sustainability open their gates for their first intake of students



Honey Lane Hives project is completed and launched at the CERES Harvest Festival. We received a bequest on behalf of Richard Davidson for this project.



CEO Cinnamon celebrates her 25th year at CERES.



Habitat team gets the Red Train back on the tracks by refurbishing it for a new classroom



Farm and Habitat host the Food Forest Working Bee - held on 7th May International Permaculture Day



Excursions & Incursions present at GTAV STEM Primary Teachers conference

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN



The Urban Farmer is published, co-authored by Justin Calverley and CERES



Global head off on their Sustainable Road Trip across Victoria



Winter Solstice event is a success with 750+ attendees.



The Merri hosts Permaculture Drinks as part of the Sustainable Living Festival



Courses & Farm teams host DFAT Fellowship: "Building resilience in agri-food systems in Asia through sustainable and equitable practices".

2017



Education & Training

We are driven by our passion to educate for sustainability, and the need to act now for the planet. We focus on values-based education for sustainability and access for all; lifelong education.

CERES education programs are building resilience, life skills and preparing people for green economy jobs of the future. We aim to empower individuals to make positive changes in their homes, schools and organisations – from the primary school student wanting to start a worm farm at home, to the organisation leader who wants to make sustainability a priority across a sector. We help reconnect people with natural spaces, lighten their footprint and encourage others to get on board.

Our park is a landscape for inspiration, application and immersion in sustainability, allowing learning experiences to be created for a wide range of audiences – from early childhood to seniors, from marginalised groups to individual members of the community. Our suite of skilled educators impart skills and actions in living sustainably, both within and beyond our demonstration site.

Our learning experiences are delivered by four areas:

Excursions & Incursions

School students, both on and off site

Outreach

Professional learning for teachers in schools and early learning centres

Training

Youth and adult programs

Global

Engaging global communities



[left] Merri Creek activity.

[middle] In the energy classroom.

[right] Some of the Excursions team running an activity at Harvest Festival.

Excursions & Incursions

CERES Excursions and Incursions 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 manner.

This year saw a big focus on growing and diversifying our Incursion activities. The most successful development has been the implementation of our gardening incursions, where we can now offer fully designed and built garden beds for schools.

A new partnership was formed with Advanced Resource Recycling to assist in program and space development, as well as site wide e-waste recycling solutions.

The new Kinder programs have proven to be extremely popular. It is an absolute joy for the team to work with future generations at the very beginning of life's journey. Embedding environmental awareness and connections with nature in kinder age children has become a requirement across early childhood education, and CERES is at the forefront of delivering this.

We also continue strong working relationships with Zoos Victoria, EcoLinc, Museums Victoria, RACV, Geography Teachers Association and the Science Teachers Association.

Thank-you so much for this excellent day! The children enthusiastically participated and all took away knowledge and ideas for action in our school and community.

Teacher, Banyan Fields Primary School, 2017



[above] Learning about food systems.

Numbers of students participating in popular programs

Paper Making
10,311



Merri Creek Walk
14,036



Worms and Mini-beasts
13,011



Aboriginal Stories
6,652



Outreach

CERES Education Outreach provides professional learning to teachers in schools to embed sustainability in everything they do. We primarily do this through ResourceSmart Schools - one of the longest running environmental education and behaviour change programs in Australia. Our goal is for schools to have a culture of sustainability – where staff and students practice sustainable behaviours, the school's environmental footprint continues to reduce, and they contribute to a sustainable future for all.

We also deliver a “ResourceSmart in Early Childhood” program because little people love what we do, and sustainable behaviours formed early in life require less behaviour change later on. In 2016–17 we worked with 14 centres and have established partnerships with a number of supporting organisations.



Our Reach

62,604
visits to our Sustainability Hub website

359
schools and early childhood centres

15,998 teachers

168,350 students and children

\$2.16 million
was saved by schools and centres working with CERES - achieved by reducing their energy and water consumption, and waste going to landfill

[top] “The Great Race” at Early Years professional development day.

[middle] Jane Goodall visits CERES.

[bottom] CERES Education Outreach Teacher of the Year award.

In addition to professional learning for schools and early learning centres, we offer workshops to universities, council and businesses.

We also lead a regional business consortium of over 80 partners that support school sustainability programs across metropolitan Melbourne.

2016-17 was a busy year in business partnerships and a highlight was our role as Sustainability Partner in the New Schools Public Private Partnership project, the largest new school building project in Victoria. At the start of 2017, we commenced a 5-year professional learning project including a unique opportunity to provide training in sustainable operations to a facilities manager partner. This partnership brings together teacher professional learning with sustainable facilities management, helping to schools to have an effective, whole-of-school culture of sustainability.



Training

CERES Training provides alternative education pathways for adults and youth in sustainability. This year, we created new courses, workshops and opportunities for community members and marginalised groups. We stand out in the adult community education sector with our focus on applied sustainable living programs, horticulture, permaculture, cultural education, social justice and environmental education.

As well as our regular calendar of courses, through philanthropic support we piloted the Food Producer Incubator for asylum seekers and new migrants to train in hospitality, sustainable food systems, business skills and food product creation. Another new program was Career Pathways for Horticulture and Permaculture, which provided individualised pathway support and lead to training, work experience and employment for people in need.

Our Complete Urban Farmer courses remain popular, and following the publication of The Urban Farmer book, even more people have come to learn how to become a master of backyard food production through our courses.

Programs we deliver include:

- Permaculture Design Courses
- Sustainable Living Workshops
- Garden to Plate Accredited Training Program
- Farm & Food Day Service Program for young adults with a disability
- Food Producer Incubator Program
- Career Pathways Program in Horticulture and Permaculture
- Subsidised courses

Community Kitchen

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 weekend workshops and accredited training as well as external users hiring the space for workshops, community dinners and team building days.



61 provided with Career and Education Pathways support in horticulture and permaculture

1,282 in courses and programs

150 in specially tailored courses

214 youth participants from special development schools & other secondary colleges

[top] Water quality testing on the Environmental Education course.
[bottom] Gourds being entered in the giant veggie competition.

Global

CERES Global engages with issues of global equity and sustainability, and forms the international outreach program of CERES. Over the past 13 years CERES Global has established extensive, long-term friendship and rapport with urban and rural NGOs and communities in Arnhem Land, India, Cuba, China, Timor Leste, Indonesia and Samoa. This year we expanded to Korea, South East Australia and Chile.

To date, we have worked with local partner organisations on environmental education, IT for social impact, sustainable and traditional housing design, environmental education, sustainable agriculture, community energy projects, women's empowerment and community advocacy. In recent years we have grown the program to incorporate a number of University student groups who travel with us on study tour programs.

2016-17 saw another year of growth for Global, developing new trips including connecting with sustainable local communities on our South East Australia road trip, working with Latrobe University Education students in India and a unique trip with a focus on re-imagining the way we approach community development and education, also in India.

Highlights

- 12 trips with 177 participants
- 6 specialised trips with students for university credit
- 4 brand new trips (2 to India, 1 to Korea and 1 to SE Australia)

The 10 days moved me.

I had to sit in spaces that felt uncomfortable, I realised that my frame of reference was very Western and the power imbalance in the way I work with community was apparent. I experienced the joy of being vulnerable, the importance of sharing and starting with the strengths in any situation.

📍 Nalika Peiris, India Trip Jan 2017 traveller and community development worker



[top] Learning together in Udaipur.

[bottom] On the India trip.

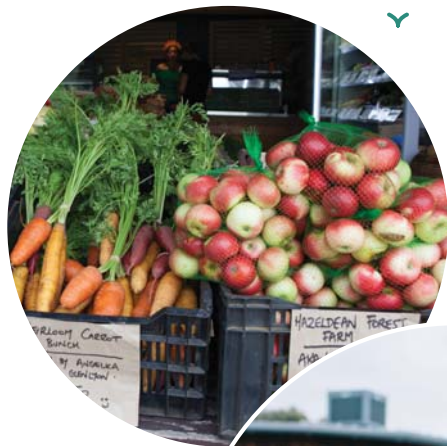
CERES
TAMIL FEASTS

விருந்து



Social Enterprises

Our social enterprises deliver targeted social and community benefits using traditional business principles.



CERES owns and operates an integrated portfolio of social enterprises that help customers meet their material needs in a sustainable way, deliver sustainability outcomes, provide livelihoods for staff and suppliers and generate funds to support the park and its educational purposes.

Our 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] Fresh organic fruit and veg in the Grocery.

[middle] Outside the Merri Table.

[bottom] Members of the Fair Food team.

Fair Food

Now in our seventh year, we are delivering organic food and groceries five days a week across Melbourne, with the option of next day delivery. In June we moved into a new, larger warehouse in Water Road, Preston. At the end of 2017 our new mobile-friendly website will be finally unveiled.

We continue to provide employment for approx 40 people, with about a third of our workers being asylum seekers or new migrants who are filling diverse roles right through our enterprise. Around half our customers collect their groceries from our 74 volunteer Food Hosts (pick-up points), which brings people into contact with their neighbours.

We've worked hard on our range, aligning it ever closer to Fair Food's values, and have increased to around 100, the number of producers local farmers and grocery makers we buy from. We are proud to help new farmers and makers to get their product out there and also to support our own farmers down at Joe's Market Garden and in the CERES Microgreens project.

This year Fair Food's General Manager received a Westpac Social Change Fellowship and travelled to Europe to learn from some of the world's leading ethical food delivery businesses. Over the coming year this knowledge will be digested and integrated into Fair Food's operations.

I've been using Fair Food for close to 5 years and can't shop any other way now. I love opening the box each week to find a huge variety of fresh, beautiful vegies. My go-to is the vege-only box and its the best value organic I have come across.

Facebook review from a Fair Food customer
April 2017

Grocery

We have completed our first full year post-renovation at the Grocery. The extended opening hours and larger range of products have proven to be popular, keeping our long term and regular customers happy and opening the door to new customers every day. Weekends are getting busier, regardless of the weather.

We continue to support local musicians, showcasing live music three mornings a week, and the Makers and Flea Market, is still going strong. Our beloved olive tree rotunda has been upgraded to include a sandpit with toy trucks, buckets and shovels and has kept many a toddler entertained for hours, allowing their parents or grandparents time to relax, shop and enjoy a chai. The market has always provided the community with a space to congregate and we are seeing that it is now utilised more than ever.



[top] New Fair Food warehouse.
[bottom] Radishes in the Grocery.

The Merri Table

The Merri continues to provide seasonal, organic and low food mileage offerings to our customers, whilst also maintaining a selection of choices for people with various dietary requirements. Working closely with Organic Farm team, The Merri Table has weekly specials that include produce grown at Honey Lane Market Garden and Joe's Market Garden.

This year we welcomed a new Lead Chef to the Merri, who has helped to breathe new life and enthusiasm into our team, build a solid kitchen crew, improve operational systems, develop new menus and introduce new local food suppliers. We also launched a new catering menu for room hirers, offering a more diverse and flexible selection of morning and afternoon teas, and lunch options for larger groups.

With assistance from Moreland Energy Foundation, we launched The Merri Table Sustainability Survey. The survey explores the factors and measures that can be used to describe a café's environmental impact. This includes going beyond the energy use and efficiency of appliances and food waste, to explore other factors such as the carbon intensity of different food types, preparation, storage and cooking methods. The results will inform actions taken in the next year as part of the CERES Environmental Management Plan.

250+

organic sausages barbecued
at Solstice Festival



3,120 litres

of vegan pho served
per year



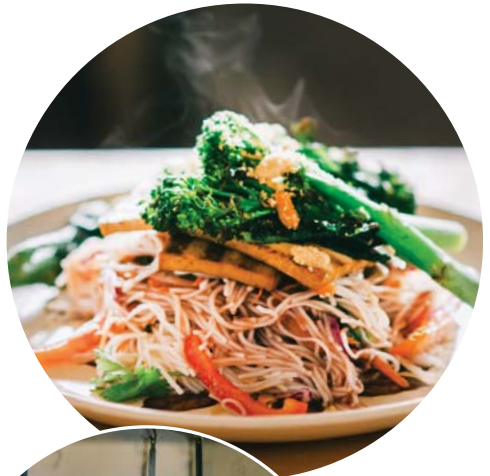
**550 organic
carrots**

peeled, chopped and
sauteed every week



Big things are afoot at the once sleepy Merri Table. Since taking on a new head chef, the kitchen is bursting with flavour. New dishes that incorporate home-grown produce, heirloom varieties and wonderful seasonal tastes are all featured prominently.

📍 Hugo Lamb, Google Review 2017



[top] Steaming plate of deliciousness in the Merri.
[bottom] Working hard in the Merri kitchen.

Tamil Feasts

The Tamil 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, offers them ongoing employment, and raises awareness about Melbourne's asylum seeker community.

Tamil Feasts started the new year with new menu items, a new venue and new consecutive feast nights. The enterprise outgrew the much-loved Community Kitchen space and has now moved to the Merri Table, hosting three weekly dinners serving up traditional Sri Lankan fare. There continues to be a groundswell of support from the community for this project, with most feasts selling out.

Highlights

- First customer at a pop up event for National Refugee Week celebrations was QC, Julian Burnside.
- Featured in a number of online food blogs and social media articles including a podcast with Masterchef host, Gary Mehigan.
- Launched two blends of delicious housemade chai – “friendship” and “welcome” blend.

Such a heartwarming, amazing experience... the food was fantastic, the ambience was great, the side of social justice is so important and needed.

📍 Tamil Feaster, via Facebook, June 2017



6,720

feasted with Tamil Feasts throughout the year



3,120 kilos

of onions used through the year in our delicious bhaji and curries



[left] Traditional Tamil food.

[middle] At a Tamil Feasts dinner.

[right] Tamil Feasts cooks dinner Joe's Market Garden.

Nursery

The Nursery continued to thrive this year with our usual focus on giving great customer service combined with expert horticultural knowledge. The seedling area expansion proved to be of great benefit in spring, allowing us to stock a much larger range of seedlings and herbs as well as improving customer access to the area. It's lovely to see customers browsing easily between the seedling tables with plenty of room for trolleys, prams and chook photography. Our rooster Barry could bring out his own coffee table book, he's been photographed so much!

CERES Propagation continued to provide us with outstanding seedlings and we were able to purchase solely from them for a time during the year, without needing to supplement with external suppliers.

We continued to focus on providing interesting product lines for our customers, stocking things such as hops, wasabi, Wollemi pines, strawberry gums and shiitake logs. The indoor plant boom continued thanks to the ongoing proliferation of apartment living in the immediate area and we developed plans to expand the nursery shop to accommodate this demand.



[top] Indigenous plants display.

[middle] Emphasis on food plants such as this curry tree.

[bottom] Plant education in the nursery.

We sold:

6,872

bags of Certified Organic
Potting Mix



31,154 tubestock



51,444 seedling punnets



Very helpful staff in the plant nursery – so glad we came here instead of a large retailer. Great advice received and I think a little cheaper and better quality than another option we had on the cards.

♥ Caroline E via Trip Advisor, October 2016

A great venue that provided so many opportunities for us use the various spaces and natural environment to support our leadership workshop.

Michael, Vinomofa, October 2016

Venue Hire

Venue Hire coordinates the internal and external hire of all venues at CERES and supports the planning and delivery of CERES festivals and events.

This year we assisted with the successful delivery of three major events on behalf of CERES, saw a 15% increase in the number of organisations or individuals who hired space since last year, and offered further support for CERES internal bookings, with over a third of all space booked used to meet CERES aims.

Growing community partnerships has been an important focus. New relationships have been developed with one organisation, delivering introductory courses in philosophy, and another, providing sustainable energy training using the Eco House as a demonstration venue on a regular basis. Community health and support organisations continue to make up a large percentage of room hirers, with education and independent training organisations also well represented.

Highlights included an innovative Leadership Development Day in July, attended by over 100 participants from registered sustainable businesses, and a large corporate 10th Anniversary celebration with activities held across multiple venues.

38

people celebrated their birthday at CERES



3

couples were married and one family celebrated their son's bar mitzvah



127

community organisations received free or discounted room hire



[top] Van Raay offices and hire spaces.

[middle] Qawwali music event on the Village Green.

[bottom] The Merri Merri Bush Dance.

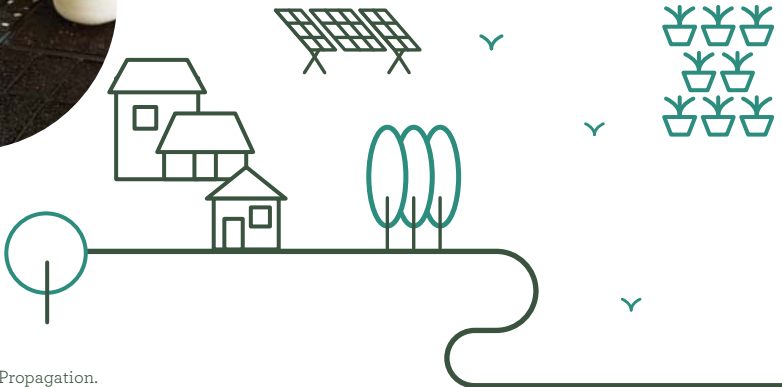
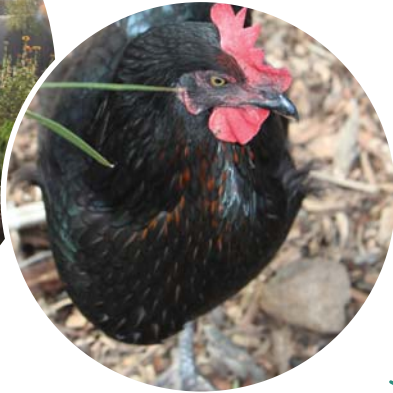


Farm & Habitat

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



[left] Planting seeds in Propagation.
[middle] Honey Lane in the morning.
[right] One of our laying hens.

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
- CERES Joe's Market Garden - 2kms north of CERES
- Seedling Propagation
- Food Forest
- Chooks
- Community Kitchen
- Urban Orchard project (managed by Urban Orchard members)
- Bee Hives (managed by the Bee Group)

It also supports every single one of our social enterprises.



[above] Young seedlings.



During the year we have:

- Completed works for Honey Lane Hives which includes a new entrance and teaching area for school groups with seating, improved fencing and gates in the Food Forest and a new educational beehive display. Works were funded by a generous bequest.
- Held a Food Forest Working Bee as part of International Permaculture Day on 7th May.
- Supplied Honey Lane grown produce to the Merri Table for inclusion on the specials board.
- Introduced a new breed of chicken into our flock. 50 Black Australorps are now cohabitating with our Isa Brown chooks.
- Hosted a tour and talk for international delegates from the Monash Agri-food systems fellowship program.

28,296

organic eggs collected and sold at the Grocery.



7,800

tomato plants grown by Propagation sold through the Nursery



155

VET students worked in Honey Lane Farm to complete accredited and pre-accredited horticulture training



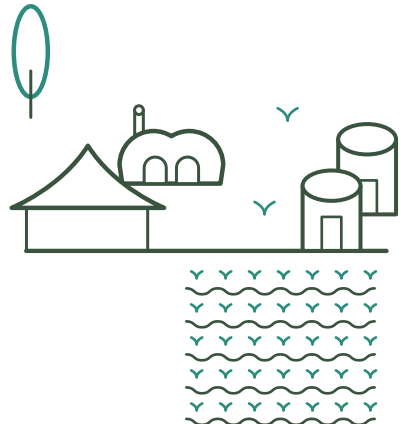


Gardens

A lot has happened in the gardens over the past year - they are an ever-evolving life force. Under guidance from knowledgeable staff, garden volunteer numbers remained steadily high this year. With their assistance, during the year we planted 1700 native indigenous plants, 5 semi-established trees and 3000 vegetable and herb seedlings. Many areas that were planted out last year are now beginning to thrive.

During the year we have:

- Transformed Weeroona garden into a wildlife habitat for indigenous fauna and a new outdoor teaching space
- Installed new garden beds designed by volunteers around the Training Room and Pavilion
- Replanted the beds outside of the Van Raay meeting rooms with a sensory garden to counteract occasional “eau de chook”.
- Given a facelift to the back of the chicken coop
- Achieved full lawn coverage on the Village Green after several years
- Worked alongside Merri Creek Management Committee on revegetation along the Merri Creek



1 to 2 cubic metres
of compost generated
per week



30 volunteers
assist in the garden on
a weekly basis



[top] Part of the flower crop.
[bottom] Entrance to the Honey Lane outdoor classroom



Maintenance & Capital Works

Our Maintenance team maintains the ruggedness and uniqueness of the park while also ensuring the safety and comfort of our visitors. Sustainable technology systems in energy, waste and water, educational demonstrations, buildings, gardens and paths are our focus.

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
- Maintaining all sustainable technology in water, waste, wind and solar

Capital works projects are undertaken to ensure vital upgrades are completed in all areas of CERES.

During the year we have:

- Upgraded the playspace with support from Work for the Dole participants
- Created a more welcoming southern outdoor seating area for the Merri Table
- Finished the new entry for the Multicultural Classroom
- Replaced the Grocery container coolroom doors to improve energy efficiency and ergonomics
- Renovated the train into a single open classroom space with disability access
- Installed pedestrian lighting across the park
- Achieved a new pedestrian entry into our overflow carpark, in collaboration with Moreland Council
- Consolidated and installed new directional signage at the main entry
- Travelled as a team to India to help complete a sustainable house in Jamnya

Green Technology

Technology, efficiency and education are drivers for our strong commitment to resource use reduction. Some of our demonstrations are widely applicable, such as building principles. Other demonstrations are experimental, part of our aim to support cutting edge initiatives.

All projects are designed to be working demonstrations or on-going research projects, and can be viewed on site, during guided tours and via our app - The Chook.

During the year we have:

- Installed two new solar arrays with a total capacity of 19kW
- Installed timers on our two coffee machines which has significantly reduced electricity demand from this source
- Commenced a project to make the EcoHouse 'all electric'
- Hosted over 200 visitors on Sustainable House day in September 2016
- Designed PV arrays



[above] New solar array on the Visitor Centre.



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 the seasons and create community connectedness. In March, we held our **Autumn Harvest Festival** – a celebration of the good earth, our farmers and the cycle of the seasons. This year's festival was attended by over 1800 people. A giant veggie growing competition was added to this year's activities and the response was huge.

In June we held our **Winter Solstice Festival** and it was another great success, selling out four weeks in advance with more than 750 people coming to celebrate the beautiful darkness with us.

We held our first ever **Merri Merri Bush Dance** in October and over 350 people came along to dance up a storm in the CERES Pavilion. The event was a spring celebration and paid homage to the Kingfisher and the change of seasons, along with some good old fashioned bush dancing fun.

In addition to events that we ran ourselves, we also hosted a huge variety of other community events including Holi Festival of Spring, Rainbow Urban Gathering, Sounds of Africa Festival, 3RRR BBQ Day, Stacks On Festival, Afterglow Festival, a new festival market, cultural events, weddings and birthday celebrations.

What a delightful gathering of beautiful people! Thank you to all who came and contributed to this event being so glowing and fun! Had such a nice time painting smiling faces while listening to awesome music!

📍 Winter Solstice. Facebook, June 2017



[top] The Winter Solstice community bonfire.

[left] Lantern making at Winter Solstice.

[right] The Return of the Sacred Kingfisher ritual at the Merri Merri Bush Dance.

Volunteers

All our sustainability infrastructure, buildings, gardens and paths throughout our 4.5 hectare park could not be managed by our paid staff alone. Approximately 3500 volunteers worked with the Habitat team, Farm team and other areas to care for and maintain the park.

Volunteers are involved on a daily basis in practical work such as gardening and maintenance, but they also significantly contribute to design development in architecture, landscape architecture and engineering, and offer specialist skills such as turf maintenance and metal fabrication. This year our skilled volunteers have developed designs for the DIG office (ATA building)

including new volunteer accommodation, Train upgrade and surrounds, and Peace Garden around the Learning Centre. They have also helped to find solutions to structural issues in the CERES Van Raay Centre, researched biogas technology, and supported the development of the CERES Strategic Spatial Framework.

The propagation enterprise has volunteers quietly and carefully sprouting seeds into life. Due to popular demand, this year we increased number of propagation volunteer program days from three to four. Most weeks we are supported by at least one group of corporate volunteers. We are extraordinarily grateful for the contributions of all our volunteers, and we hosted monthly volunteer lunches and a volunteer dinner in their honour.



700 corporate volunteers from six different organisations volunteered at the park and at Joe's Market Garden.

3,500 volunteer days in total

[top] Planting around the dam.
[middle] Giant pumpkin entry at Harvest Festival.
[bottom] Our volunteers in the garden at a local Indigenous Elders service.

Community Groups

Our park is home to eight 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:

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

Other regular groups include:

- Aozora Shokudo Japanese cultural classes
- Chant and Chai Cartel
- Down to Earth Cooperative
- Holistic Education
- Kids First Aid
- Makers & Flea Market
- Melbourne Insight Meditation Group
- Mindful Yoga
- National Electrical and Communications Association
- Rhythm Tree Family Music classes
- School of Philosophy
- Shambhala Meditation
- Yoga Para Todos

Highlights

Bee Group expanded its beekeeping education program with the opening of the Honey Lane Hives education display beehive and new apiary. The Bee Group continues a long standing monthly program of public beekeeping education, and the new apiary is also used by the education team as part of their program.

Bike Shed conducted community consultation and finalised designs for a new building that, once constructed, will improve the group’s ability to assist the large number of visitors who come seeking bike help.

Chook Group added 14 new pure breed chickens to the flock including Welsummers, Barred Plymouth Rocks and Aracaunas.

Melbourne Zen Group, in addition to their regular group meditations, collaborated with Melbourne Eco-Dharma to host two workshops and a public talk with a special emphasis on “Buddhism and the Ecological Challenge” led by International author and Zen teacher David Loy.

SOTEMS ran a total of 71 Sweatlodge Purification Ceremonies which comprised of 670 participants. Of these, 123 people sweated for the first time or were new to CERES.



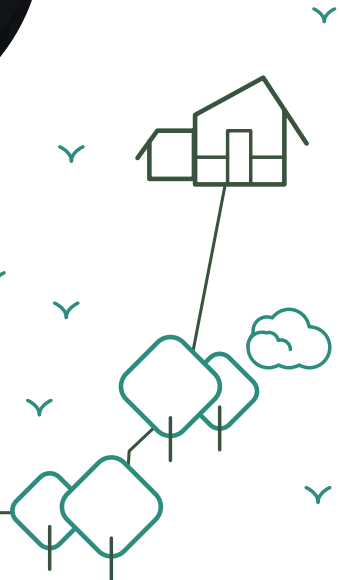
[left] Moreland LETS in the Red Train.
[right] SOTEMS sweat lodge.

Communications

Communications team continued to support the good work of all the different areas of CERES by ensuring the stories that demonstrate our impact are shared with staff, supporters and wider public. The IT department has become increasingly relied upon as much of our work now happens in the digital realm, or requires digital support. This year we ran training in digital storytelling, marketing, developed the capacity of our website and continued to grow our social media presence and engagement. We also worked closely with the Partnerships Manager on fundraising and grant writing efforts, and our first book *The Urban Farmer* was published through ABC Books.



[left] *The Urban Farmer* launch.
 [right] Filming at Permaculture Drinks.



Partnerships

This year we carried out an audit of our partnerships. Our 200+ different partners include individuals, community organisations, all levels of government, corporate organisations and industry. These relationships bring about mutual benefits and vary from in-kind supporters, organisations who pay a fee-for-service for us to deliver corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, program co-deliverers, grant givers and philanthropic trustees.

All of our partners are important and assist us in delivering our mission. In this Annual Report we would like to acknowledge our financial and in kind partners.

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

Partnership highlights include:

Advanced Resource Recycling: Funded a new Excursions e-waste activity and provided onsite e-waste recycling.

Catholic Education Melbourne: Continued as a Strategic Partner to provide teacher professional learning in catholic schools in Metropolitan Melbourne.

FP Consulting: Carried out a study of best environmental practice in hospitality and surveyed our customers.

Moreland Energy Foundation Limited: Provided advice and a valuable sounding board. Provided timer switches for our coffee machines enabling us to save energy.

Sustainability Victoria: Continued our 8 year funding partnership to deliver the ResourceSmart Schools program to over 350 schools.

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

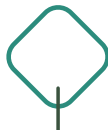
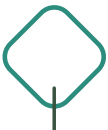
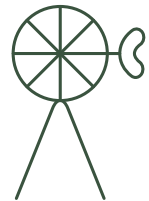
Victorian State Government: Provided funding towards the building of 15 Victorian schools, in which CERES is the Sustainability Partner.

Victorian Local Government: Continued partnerships with over 15 local governments to provide teacher professional learning and sustainable facilities management to schools in each locality.

Other partners and supporters include:

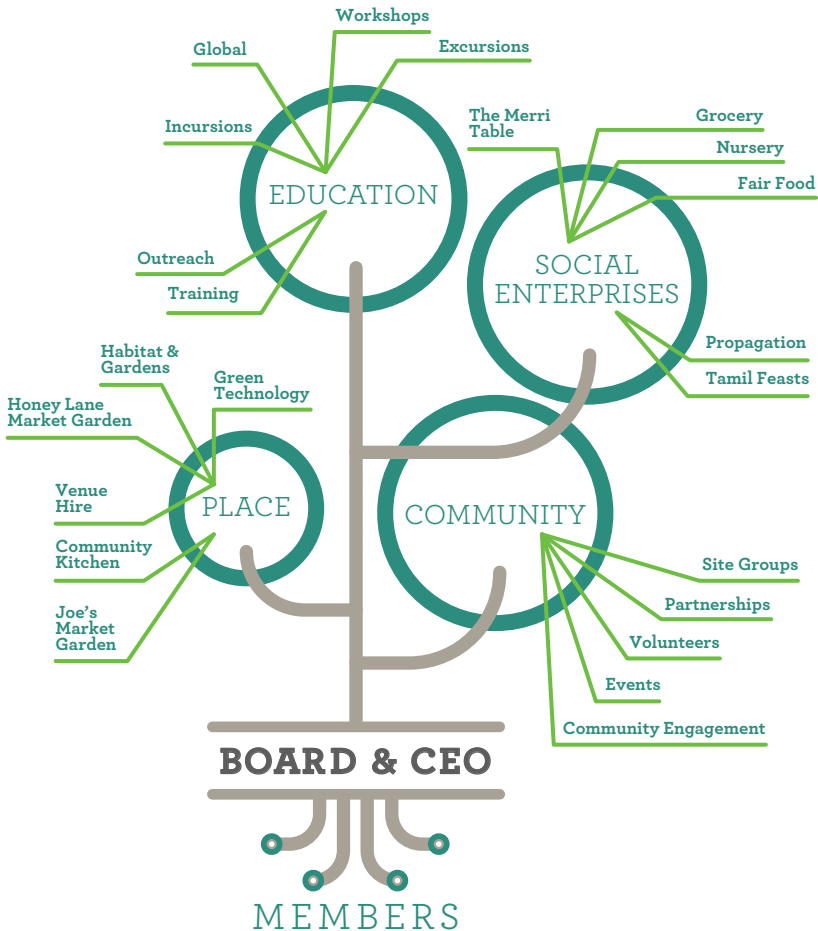
Brunswick Bowls Club, Brunswick Neighbourhood House, City Harvest, Department of Health and Human Services, Fareshare, Festival21, Inner Melbourne Vet Cluster, Inner North Community Foundation, Irene Lawson and Brendan Kissane, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, Permaculture Australia, Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet, YMCA.

We would like to thank everyone who has shown their support to CERES this year, including our regular donors and all those who gave to our Annual Appeal. We couldn't do it without you.



People

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.





Chair

CEO

Group
ManagersBoard
Members

CERES Board

Committee Members (Board of Management) in office during the financial year ended 30 June 2017:

	Position held at 30/06/17 or Resignation	Resigned	Appointed	A	B
Josephine Barraket	Chairperson			10	12
Mark Riley	Deputy Chair			11	12
Josh Floyd	Secretary	Nov 16		5	5
Thomas Dobson	Treasurer			10	12
Cinnamon Evans	CEO			12	12
Meghan Hopper	Moreland City Council Representative	Nov 16		0	5
Greg Dickson	Site Group Representative			12	12
Frank Mitchell	Staff Representative	Nov 16		4	5
Sue Lewis	Community Representative	Nov 16		5	5
Noel Blencowe	Secretary*			10	12
Sarah Houseman	Community Representative			11	12
Rodney Duncan	Community Representative		Nov 16	7	7
Natalie Abboud	Moreland City Council Representative		Nov 16	6	7
Sophie Gaballa	Community Representative		Nov 16	7	7
John Burne	Staff Representative		Nov 16	6	7

[* Appointed Dec '16] A - Number of meetings attended B - Number of meetings held during the time the director held office during the year

Group Managers

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

Area Managers

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

**+83 equivalent
full-time staff**

**+Thousands
of volunteers**

Finance

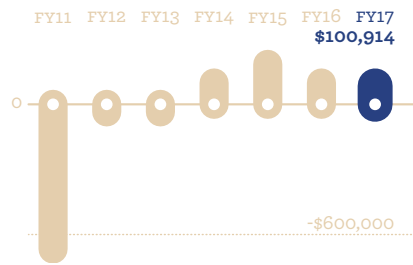
Assets and Liabilities Statement as at 30 June 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	948,316	996,255
Accounts Receivable	342,435	116,080
Inventories	295,008	267,300
Prepayments	81,335	46,253
Total Current Assets	1,667,094	1,425,888
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
Buildings, Plant and Equipment	3,895,619	3,714,134
Total Non Current Assets	3,895,619	3,714,134
TOTAL ASSETS	5,562,713	5,140,022
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable and other Payables	728,664	671,352
Employee Provisions	550,693	454,029
Hire Purchase Commitments	86,862	48,812
Income in Advance	579,499	555,936
Total Current Liabilities	1,945,718	1,730,129
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Employee Provisions	52,845	48,909
Hire Purchase Commitments	200,662	109,510
Total Non Current Liabilities	253,507	158,419
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,199,225	1,888,548
NET ASSETS	3,363,488	3,251,474
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained Surplus	3,363,488	3,251,474
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	3,363,488	3,251,474

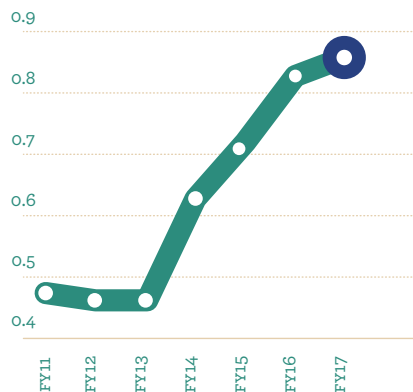
Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Revenue from Ordinary Activities	11,995,728	11,214,342
Expenses from Ordinary Activities before Depreciation	11,703,811	10,909,338
Surplus from Ordinary Activities before Depreciation	291,917	305,004
Depreciation	191,003	200,816
Surplus (Deficit) from Ordinary Activities after Depreciation	100,913	104,188
Grant Funding for Capital Improvements	11,100	69,500
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	112,013	173,688

Surplus (Deficit) from Ordinary Activities after Depreciation



Working Capital Ratio



Treasurer's Report

In FY17 we achieved our fourth consecutive annual Surplus from Ordinary Activities after Depreciation (\$101k) following a long period of deficits. We have also grown our revenue from Ordinary Activities and continued to improve our Working Capital position – all of which support our goal of improved financial sustainability.

From a Finance perspective, we introduced system improvements including a digital invoice capture system which enables our managers to drill down into the detail of expenditure in their areas and also a cloud-based payroll system which gives our managers greater visibility and control over our single largest expense category - Staff Costs.

We remain focused on building a more stable and solid financial foundation for CERES, providing our team with space to innovate so they can deliver the best social and environmental impact possible for the community.

Thank you everyone for your contribution to our improved financial position.

Thomas Dobson, Treasurer &
Nicolas Porter, Finance Manager



[right] Finance Manager and Treasurer hard at work.

Environment

We know that environmental sustainability is important to our community and that our community looks to us for leadership. At this time of increasing climate crisis, it is important to us that we have a clear framework to rapidly improve our organisational climate impacts, and work with community on collective solutions.

CERES' Environmental Management Plan (EMP 2014-2016) provided an initial framework and reporting structure for baselining the environmental impacts of our activities. Although we strive to be efficient in our use of resources, increases in visitation activity have generally led to increases in resource use and waste production.

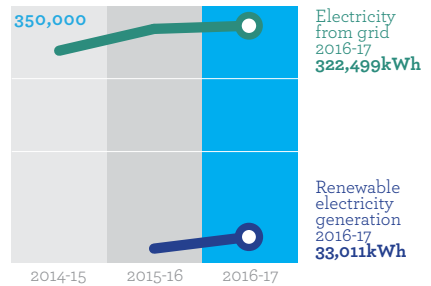
This year, we adopted a carbon budget with the ambitious goal of zero emissions by 2025. This target will be the primary focus of the updated EMP (2017-2020) and will be a challenge to reach as the range and frequency of activities at CERES continues to grow.

Electricity & Gas

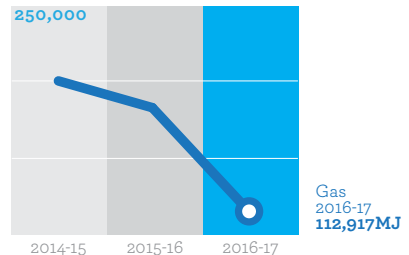
Electricity purchased from the grid increased significantly in 2015-16 with the closure of the gas fuelled café and the all-electric Merri Table in its place. In 2016-17 electricity purchased from the grid rose slightly with removal of further gas appliances, and the increased use of the Community Kitchen and the Merri Table for Tamil Feasts. In addition, Fair Food operated from two locations for a few months.

We are generating more electricity with the installation of two solar arrays. The new 15.5kW system on the Visitor Centre, installed in January 2016, is now the largest array in the park. A 3.3kW system was also installed on the roof of the EcoHouse as part of the project to convert the EcoHouse to all electric.

Electricity Use



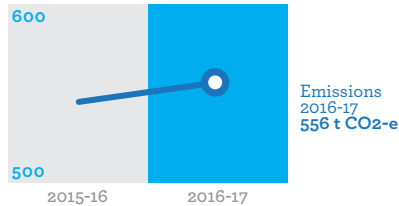
Gas Use



Carbon Emissions

Calculation includes gas, grid-purchased electricity and travel including Global flights, Fair Food deliveries and travel to schools for education program delivery. The increase in emissions this year, despite a decrease in gas use, is due to increased electricity purchased from the grid for activities outlined above, increased air travel and new park lighting.

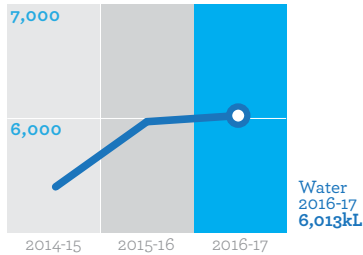
Carbon Emissions



Water

Over the past three years we have been transitioning our metering system from a simple billing meter to meters across the site with the intention of measuring specific area consumption. This has resulted in 7 billing meters and 12 area specific meters. The overall water consumption for 2016-17 is similar to 2015-16, however we are still ironing out issues with the complex metering system so are unable yet to specify where the water is being used most.

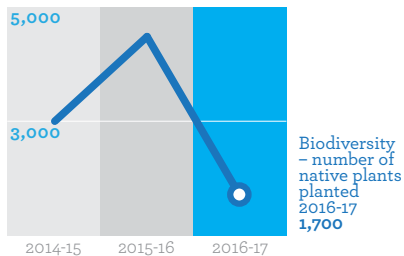
Water Use



Biodiversity

Fewer indigenous varieties were planted this year, as there was a focus on planting food plants. Highlights were the transformation of the Weeroona Garden into a wildlife habitat for indigenous fauna, and a new outdoor teaching space.

Biodiversity

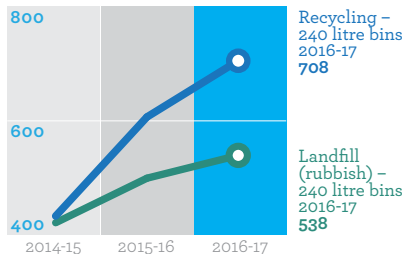


Waste Management

The increase in landfill is attributed to an approximately 30% increase in sales from the Grocery Cafe, while the increase in recycling volume is linked to the inclusion of office paper in the co-mingled recycling bin. Last year it was collected separately.

A new waste initiative is the collection of e-waste in addition to the collection of batteries, phones and printer cartridges.

Recycling & Landfill



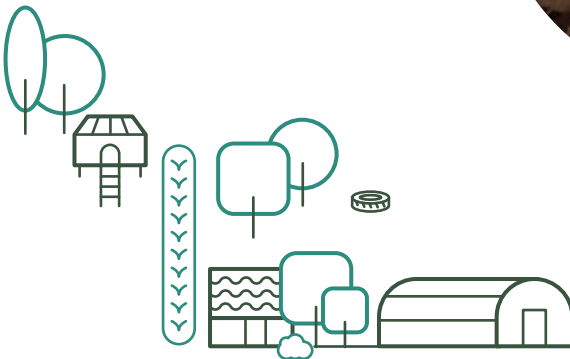
Get Involved

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.

CERES (The Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies), was established in 1982 on a former quarry and rubbish tip. Thanks to the efforts of many groups, staff, volunteers and labour market programs, the site has been transformed into a place of nature and beauty, inhabited by a vibrant and diverse community.

Through education and training, social enterprises, 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.

We attract around 450,000 visits each year and we reach out far beyond our park's borders through our work in schools across Victoria, our organic food delivery service and partnerships with national and international organisations.



There are three key ways you can support CERES:

1. Donate

www.ceres.org.au/donate

2. Become a member

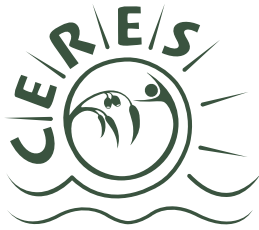
www.ceres.org.au/membership

3. Volunteer

www.ceres.org.au/volunteer

Thank you for your love and support!





COMMUNITY
ENVIRONMENT
PARK

CERES

Community Environment Park

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

phone **+61 3 9389 0100**
email **ceres@ceres.org.au**
web **www.ceres.org.au**

DESIGN BY INDIELADAN.COM

COVER IMAGE BY TIM TURNBALL
WINTER SOLSTICE 2017