

## CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS' SOCIETY INC. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

Date: 29 March 2026

Time: 2.00 – 3.00pm

Chair: Neil Williams

Location: Crace Community Garden

Attendees: Refer APPENDIX A

Apologies: Susan McMaster, Valerie Pedvin, Myra Escobedo, Mike Smedes

Item	Topic	Outcome	Who	Paper/Attachment
1.	Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country	Chair opened meeting at 2:03, offered an acknowledgement of Country and thanked Crace Garden for hosting.	Neil	
2.	Apologies	Apologies noted. At Appendix 1 is a list of attendees.	Neil	Appendix 1: AGM attendance record
3.	AGM Minutes 2025	Draft AGM 2025 Minutes were available on COGS' website; attendees were provided with a hard copy at the meeting. Minutes were accepted as tabled. Moved: Neil Williams. Second: Shirley Bolton	Neil	B: Draft AGM Minutes 2025
4.	President's Report	Hard copies of the President's report were available for attendees. Membership stable at just over 500 members, waitlist of around 40 through the year. The President's report was accepted as tabled.	Neil	C: President's Report
5.	Treasurer's Report  a. 2025 Financial Statements	Hard copies of the Treasurer's report and the Financial Statement were available for attendees. Members noted the Treasurer's report and accepted the 2025 financial statements. A copy of a 2025 review undertaken by Kim Hanna FIPA was provided as part of the Report.	Casey	D: Treasurer's Report and 2025 Financial Statements

Item	Topic	Outcome	Who	Paper/Attachment
	b. Appointment of auditor	Members agreed to continue using Kim Hanna as auditor for 2026, subject to his availability.		
6.	Proposed constitution change a. Deletion of Rule 16 at Appendix 2	Members unanimously agreed that the entire Rule number 16, "Beehives belonging to a registered beekeeper may be kept in a garden with unanimous agreement of garden members. The hives remain the responsibility of the beekeeper" to be deleted from Appendix 2 to the Constitution. Mover: Neil Williams Seconder: Narelle McLean	Neil	E: Proposed constitution change - Beekeeping in COGS gardens
7.	Election of Office Bearers	Bev McConnell officiated as Returning Officer. Nominations were confirmed as follows: President: Neil Williams Vice President: Peter Weddell Treasurer: Kasey Jordan Secretary: Katie Eberle Membership Secretary: Joanne McMillan Community Gardens Coordinator: Barbara Jesiolowski Magazine Editor and Information Officer: Michael Gisick Ordinary Committee members: Dietlind Sommer Richard Buker Mike Smedes Angela Anchugova	Bev	
8.	New Life Members	The President presented 4 Life Membership Awards for longstanding service and leadership in COGS: Paulene Cairnduff (Holder – presented a week earlier at Holder garden) Mike Avent (Cook) Bev McConnell (O'Connor) John Myska (Crace)	Neil	

Item	Topic	Outcome	Who	Paper/Attachment
9.	Other Business	No other business		
2026 AGM concluded at 2:36pm.				
<i>Afternoon Tea</i>				

ATTACHMENT A: Agenda

ATTACHMENT B: Draft 2025 AGM Minutes

ATTACHMENT C: President's Report 2025

ATTACHMENT D: Treasurer's Report 2025

ATTACHMENT E: Proposed constitution change – Beekeeping in COGS gardens

# APPENDIX 1 AGM attendance record

Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc  
 Annual General Meeting  
 2.00pm, 29 March 2026  
 Crace Community Garden  
**ATTENDANCE**

Name	Full Member? Y/N	Name	Full Member? Y/N
1. NARELLE McLENN	YES	26. Peter Rous	Y
2. MARK HOSKING	Y	27. Liz Dodrwood.	N
3. ANNETTE LOCK	Y	28. Monique Brough	Y
4. Allan Sharp	Y	29. Ange McNeilly	Y
5. Liz Myszka	Y.	30.	
6. Richard Bula	Y	31.	
7. DIDI SOMMER	Y	32.	
8. Neil Williams	Y	33.	
9. Lisa Walkington	Y	34.	
10. Jo McMillan	Y.	35.	
11. Andy Hraef	Y	36.	
12. Michele Banson	Y	37.	
13. Peter Sheehan	Y	38.	

Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc  
 Annual General Meeting  
 2.00pm, 29 March 2026  
 Grace Community Garden

ATTENDANCE

Name	Full Member? Y/N	Name	Full Member? Y/N
1. PETER NEWBIGIN	Y	26. FRANCISCA de la Rocha	Y.
2. JOHN MYZKA	Y	27. Katie Eberle	Y
3. MARK SULLIVAN	Y	28. Aneal Chanda	N.
4. SHIRLEY BOLTON	X	29. MICHAEL AVENT	Y
5. Barbara Jesiotowski	Y	30. DAN SMEG	Y
6. Susan Wood	Y	31. LAUREN CAMPBELL	Y
7. Kim Pollock	Y	32. Kristina Hopkins	Y
8. Kevin Beilertter	N	33. Angela Anchugova	Y
9. Markus Dimberger	Y ✓	34. Ramesh Malik	Y
10. KAREN SMITH	Y	35. Jinglong chen	Y
11. Bev McConnell	Y	36. ALAN TIMMISS	Y
12. Peter Worsell	Y	37.	
13. Jessica Neal	Y	38.	

Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc  
 Annual General Meeting  
 2.00pm, 29 March 2026  
 Crace Community Garden

ATTENDANCE

Name	Full Member? Y/N	Name	Full Member? Y/N
14. BARBETTE FAHEY	Y	39.	
15.		40.	
16.		41.	
17.		42.	
18.		43.	
19.		44.	
20.		45.	
21.		46.	
22.		47.	
23.		48.	
24.		49.	
25.		50.	

# Canberra Organic Growers Society - Annual General Meeting

## President's report

29 March 2026

Thank you for your attendance at this year's Annual General Meeting. Thank you to Crace community garden for hosting us today.

The past year, our 48<sup>th</sup>, was another successful and busy one for COGS.

COGS membership was stable at around 500 members. The waitlist hovered around the 40 mark for most of the year.

### Promoting COGS and organic growing

One of the big achievements for the year was the publishing on our website of 30 new Growing Guides, produced by Fiona Buining. The guides present a wealth of information on each of the crops tailored to Canberra's growing conditions which, as we saw both on the hot and cold side last year, can be harsh. We have commissioned 30 more guides, most of which will replace existing guides, but also include some new ones. These will be finalised in coming months. I was able to promote the new guides and COGS on ABC radio.

We also held stalls at Canberra City Farm and the CIT Plant Sale at Bruce to promote COGS.

### Our Gardens

During the year gardens updated their local rules for endorsement by the COGS Committee. The main changes were to reference compliance with COGS Policies (such as our watering policy) and to clarify what a reasonably maintained plot is – that is “endeavour to maintain throughout the year a productive plot growing organic produce and largely free of weeds”.

We invested in projects at several of our gardens. The two largest projects were a new shelter at Oaks Estate and the re-edging and realignment of 39 garden beds at Mitchell garden. In addition, COGS provided funding for new raised beds at Charnwood, and a new water point here at Crace garden.

Several gardens undertook fundraising to help pay for projects. A big shout out goes to Mitchell garden members who raised over \$8,000 from several Bunnings BBQs to help pay for the re-edging project.

Also, huge credit goes to Kambah garden for its annual Open Day which has become a showcase event on the calendar. The 2025 Open Day raised around \$3,000 and the garden donated \$628 of this to Oz Harvest. Kambah used funds raised from its Open Days in 2024 to build new compost bays with the help of participants from Marymead's Mulch garden.

Dickson garden undertook a major renovation of its jewel in the crown – its huge Glasshouse. The renovations are being put to good use with Dickson garden and Café Stepping Stone striking up a relationship to house seedlings for the Café's new WISE garden, training refugee and migrant women to grow food.

Cook garden held a very successful Open garden in April as part of the Open garden scheme. This raised \$800 for COGS and the garden. Charnwood also recently hosted a similar open day which was very successful.

I raise these examples of Open Days and fundraising to highlight the hard work of all the volunteers that make these events a success. They put a spotlight on the role COGS plays as part of its local community. I would also like to thank all the volunteers that make COGS operate.

### The Executive

The Executive met five times during the year with excellent attendance by committee members as well as some Convenors. COGS met all its regulatory and legal requirements.

### Finance

Our Treasurer, Kasey, will report on our Finances, but it is fair to say that COGS remains in a strong financial position, despite a worryingly high water bill.

### Potential new garden

I noted last year that we actively engaged with the ACT Government and Members of the Legislative Assembly raising the high level of demand for community gardens in the lead up to the 2024 ACT election. Sadly, this did not translate into any action, or so I thought. In September last year we were approached out of the blue by an official from the City and Environment Directorate about an election commitment the Government had made to, *“undertake scoping work with COGS to explore suitable sites for community gardens.”* We subsequently held a productive meeting with the official outlining the issues surrounding the establishment of new large scale community gardens in Canberra – primarily land and funding. This contact then led to COGS being looped into the proposed development of a new community garden at Lawson which is being funded by the Suburban Land Agency. The SLA were involved in the establishment of the garden here at Crace.

Vice President Peter Weddell and I have been to several planning meetings with members of the Lawson community and Naomi Lacey from Community Gardens Australia who is leading the engagement with the community for the SLA. At this stage, it looks like the garden once it is established will become a COGS garden – the first one since the Crace garden in 2013. It will be a very different type of garden with all the garden beds being wicking beds.

### 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Next year will be COGS 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The COGS Committee will consider how best to mark this major milestone. We welcome ideas from our members.

I look forward to a productive 2026. Thank you.

Neil Williams  
President

## Canberra Organic Growers' Society

4 February 2026

### Treasurer's Report – Financial Year 2026

When compared with the Financial Year (FY) performance in 2024, COGS recorded in FY 2025 an overall deficit of \$3,504.00, down from a surplus of \$9,947.00.

COGS' cash at bank at the end of December 2025 was \$188,597.00 compared to the balance at the end of the previous year of \$193,947.00.

Table 1 below provides a summary of our results for the last five years.

**TABLE 1 – FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS**

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Member fee	\$17,156	\$8,888	\$7,966	\$7,684	\$7,269
Plot fee	\$58,838	\$59,595	\$60,114	\$57,767	\$58,195
Total Revenue	\$83,636	\$73,952	\$74,792	\$78,210	\$84,740
Capex	\$19,669	\$40,042	\$10,204	\$21,010	\$25,330
Garden exp	\$12,809	\$16,234	\$11,820	\$14,773	\$14,822
Water Bill	\$16,157	\$9,228	\$12,382	\$17,230	\$28,053
Administration					\$20,039
Total Expenditure					\$88,244
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$20,121	(\$5,461)	\$19,897	\$9,942	(\$3,504)
Cash at bank	\$161,006	151,871	\$184,627	\$193,471	\$188,597
Net Assets	\$171,737	\$166,275	\$186,173	\$193,947	\$190,443

Key things to note from the above and in the financial statements at Attachment B are:

- Garden Expenses (CAPEX and Operating) for FY2025 (\$40,152) increased by \$4,369 with the following key movements:
  - Capital expenditure (Capex) increased by \$4,320 due to edging at Mitchell Garden, establishment of an undercover area at Oaks Estate and paving and Compost Bay projects at Kambah;
  - Slight rise in Administration expenses, influenced by investment in the Growing Guides (\$6,500);
  - General garden expenses remained consistent between FY2024 and FY2025 with a marginal variance of \$49; and
  - Water bills increased \$6,644 in FY2025 compared to FY2024. In FY2024, the water bill increased by \$4,848 from FY2023, which was calculated after deductions.
- For Revenue, minor variances recorded in FY2025 from FY2024 in membership with an increase in plot fees.
- Significant gains in fundraising were made with Mitchell garden achieving \$8,771 through Bunnings BBQs, \$2,817 recorded by Kambah through their Open Day, from which they donated to Oz Harvest of \$628, and Cook Open Day raised \$800.

- Overall, COG recorded a small loss of \$3,504.00 with Net Assets (banking and receivables) decreasing in FY 2024.

Capital investment was undertaken at nine gardens during the year. Key investments undertaken during 2025 included:

- \$12,103 edging at Mitchell Garden, with further fundraising efforts continuing into FY2026;
- \$9,194 for establishing an undercover area at Oaks Estate;
- \$3,380 for excavation and paving works and \$3,380 for new compost bays at Kambah; and
- Minor expenditure on furniture at Dickson, raised from fundraising with Stepping Stone.

Water expenditure in the FY2025 period increased by 35% on FY2024 costs; this excludes the \$2,551 cost for the O'Connor Garden, which was expended in both FY2024 and FY2025. An audit of four gardens using ICON invoices shows water usage increased on average by 40% in FY2025, with one garden increasing by 60%. As additional information, total rainfall in the ACT in 2024 was 567.8 mm (BOM, 2026) and 534 mm in 2025. ICON water charges increased by approximately 8% over the two-year period.

	Total Usage 2024 (kL)	Total Usage 2025 (kL)	Total 2024 Cost (\$)	Total 2025 Cost (\$)
<b>Cook</b>	760	1217	\$ 3,569	\$ 6,176
<b>Holder</b>	501	728	\$ 1,717	\$ 3,423
<b>Kambah</b>	593	728	\$ 4,343	\$ 4,714
<b>Mitchell</b>	1033	1124	\$ 5,854	\$ 6,190

Looking ahead to the COGS budget for the next two years, revenue from membership and plot fees is expected to remain stable, consistent with current trends. Expenditure will likely dip in comparison to FY2025, which acknowledges key projects at Oaks Estate and Mitchell Gardens.

Attachment A to this report is a table and graph summarising expenditure at each Garden for FY2025.

Attachment B to this report contains the audited financial statements for the year 31 December 2025, together with the auditor's report.

**Kasey Jordan**

Treasurer - Canberra Organic Growers Society  
29 March 2026

**Table 1: Expenditure by Garden 2025**

Garden	Water Bills	Capital Expenditure	General Expenses	TOTAL
Betty Cornhill			\$ 1,715	\$ 1,715
Charnwood		\$ 2,314	\$ 691	\$ 3,005
Cook	\$ 6,176		\$ 1,522	\$ 7,698
Crace				\$ -
Dickson	\$ 2,102	\$ 2,314	\$ 2,597	\$ 7,013
Erindale			\$ 812	\$ 812
Holder	\$ 3,423	\$ 150	\$ 1,686	\$ 5,259
Kaleen	\$ 1,280	\$ 280	\$ 2,316	\$ 3,876
Kambah	\$ 4,714	\$ 5,926	\$ 1,024	\$ 11,664
Mitchell	\$ 6,190	\$ 5,150	\$ 1,984	\$ 13,324
Oaks Estate	\$ 1,618	\$ 9,195	\$ 474	\$ 11,287
O'Connor	\$ 2,551			\$ 2,551
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 28,054</b>	<b>\$ 25,329</b>	<b>\$ 14,821</b>	<b>\$ 68,204</b>

**Notes:**

1. Minor variations in garden expenses compared with the Financial Audit due to rounding.

**Figure 1: Expenditure by Garden 2025**

