



Minutes of the 2024 - 25 Annual General Meeting
Open Gardens Canberra Inc
8 September 2025
The Loft, Raiders Club, Weston

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) for 2024-25 of Open Gardens Canberra Inc (OGC) commenced at 5.30 pm and President Len Dowling welcomed members in attendance.

Item 1 – Attendance

Attendees are listed at **Attachment 1**.

Apologies: Tricia Lawrence, Mathew Dowdney, Michelle Haine.

Item 2 – Minutes of the 2023-24 AGM

Len referred to the 10 September 2024 minutes of the 2023-24 AGM and sought agreement to accept them.

Acceptance moved by Martin Wright, *seconded* by Margaret Murphy.

Agreed by members in attendance.

Item 3 – President’s Report (Attachment 2)

Len presented his President’s Report and spoke to it.

Item 4 – Treasurer’s Report (Attachment 3)

Maureen presented the Treasurer’s Report, including the statement for the financial year 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, and spoke to it. The financial records have been independently audited and a copy of the auditor’s report is attached to the Treasurer’s Report.

Maureen invited questions from members, but none were received.

Acceptance moved by Maureen Davenport, *seconded* by Kym Holden.

Agreed by all members in attendance.

Item 6 – Election of Office-bearers and Ordinary Committee Members

Len declared all Committee positions vacant and asked for nominations to fill the vacancies. He then asked Ian Davenport to assume the role of returning officer.

Len called on any members present, who had not already nominated for a position on the Committee, to consider doing so, either now or at any time in the future.

As there was only one nomination for each office bearer position, as designated in OGC Rules, the following members were declared duly elected.

Committee Office Bearers

		Nominator	Second
President	Len Dowling	Martin Wright	Maureen Davenport
Vice President	Lynnette Audsley	Len Dowling	Martin Wright
Treasurer	Maureen Davenport	Martin Wright	Elizabeth Hewson
Secretary	Martin Wright	Pam Coronel	Lynette Audsley

Ordinary Committee Members

Nominations were received from the following members to serve as ordinary committee members and these members were duly elected.

Nominee	Nominator	Second
Lynnette Audsley	Elizabeth Hewson	Pam Coronel
Melanie Benjamin	Len Dowling	Martin Wright
Lynne Bliss	Michelle Haine	Martin Wright
Pam Coronel	Elizabeth Hewson	Lynnette Audsley
Elizabeth Hewson	Lynnette Audsley	Pam Coronel
Kym Holden	Martin Wright	Len Dowling
Margaret Murphy	Maureen Davenport	Martin Wright
Helen Trevean	Martin Wright	Len Dowling
Ian Davenport	Lynnette Audsley	Len Dowling

The Committee also confirmed Ian as Public Officer.

Len then resumed the President's chair and addressed the new Committee, congratulating the newly elected office bearers and welcoming the new office bearer, Lynnette.

Item 7 Meeting Closed at 5.57 pm and refreshments were served in The Loft.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2024-2025

Acceptance Moved

Name Position

(Signature)

Acceptance Seconded

Name Position

(Signature)

Dated:

Annual General Meeting 2024-2025 - Attendees

Lynnette Audsley

Melanie Benjamin

Lynne Bliss

Merryl Bradley

Pam Coronel

Ian Davenport

Maureen Davenport

Len Dowling

Libby Hewson

Kym Holden

Margaret Murphy

Kevin Nixon

Vilma Nixon

Helen Trevean

Gary Trevean

Martin Wright

Sue Wright



President's report for 2025 AGM

Open Gardens Canberra acknowledges the traditional owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Welcome to our Annual General Meeting. I'm pleased to report that our tenth year has been a very successful one. Over the past twelve months we have achieved a lot together. In short, we have:

- held a volunteer thankyou event – and tenth anniversary celebration – at Tuggeranong Homestead
- awarded not one but two horticulture scholarships
- revamped our grants program and delivered a record amount of over \$8,000 in funding
- introduced a flat fee model for garden owner payments
- improved our insurance cover and changed the provider of all our policies
- introduced a “gift membership” service on our website
- registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)
- advised and supported the establishment of the Southern Tablelands Open Gardens scheme
- expanded our publicity efforts
- and refreshed our signage and banners.

Spring 2024 season

The spring 2024 season was a strong program with nine gardens open. It proved to be the best attended spring season in all our history, with a total of 3827 visitors. Notable was Fairview in Reid, which had a unique offer of opening both house and garden; it attracted an amazing 703 visitors. The combined gardens of Narrawong and Beaverlea welcomed 650 visitors, while Hillside attracted 590.

Autumn 2025 season

Autumn 2025 saw a more modest program. Three private gardens – Merryway, Tea Gardens and The Woodbury Garden – all enjoyed perfect weather and well above average attendance. The Woodbury Garden was notable in marking ten years since its first opening with us, and attracting nearly 600 visitors. On the other hand, the windy, cold weather spoiled the weekend for our two “freebies” - the Cook Community Garden and the very exposed Whitlam Climate-wise Garden.

Memberships

In order to overcome long-standing problems arising from the volume of renewals at the garden gate, this year we are running “earlybird” prizes for renewals in July and August. This has been a great success and should greatly ease the pressure on our garden volunteers. Right now, we have over 200 more active members than this time last year.

Flat Fee Model

We made a major effort this year to simplify the paperwork required of garden volunteers. The resultant “flat fee” model was successfully introduced at the autumn gardens. This model means that we pay the garden owner a flat \$800 fee for members attending, regardless of number, plus the usual 50% of ticket sales. This model simplifies administration at all levels and also directs more funds to the garden owners themselves.

Thank you to volunteers

The committee was pleased to hold a successful 'thank you event' at Tuggeranong Homestead late in May, to coincide both with National Volunteers Week and with our incorporation in May 2015. However, we will reconsider this timing for our next event because many people had gone on holiday.

Finances

The Treasurer's report shows that we continued to become stronger financially in 2024-25, with a good level of savings and a significant surplus. The committee has started to set an annual budget each May for the following financial year, with a view to making more funds available for grants or donations.

Grants

Melanie Benjamin as inaugural Grants Officer did a great job of revamping our grants program, with major improvements to the criteria, the application form and the assessment process. Following better marketing, we attracted a record ten applications, of which the committee supported four projects, worth \$8,300 in total and located at Hawker, Macquarie, Aranda and Downer. Details are in our winter newsletter.

Horticulture Scholarship

After zero applicants in 2023, we successfully redesigned our scholarship for 2024. We had many applicants and our recent financial success allowed us to offer two scholarships this year. Both winners - Owen Rawlings and Kirsten Macquet – are mature-age students making career changes into horticulture. The Committee was honoured to meet with both of these impressive students, who have also volunteered at our open gardens.

Insurance

A recommendation from Open Gardens Western Australia has resulted in the Committee moving all its insurance policies to Adelaide-based firm, Local Community Insurance Services. This business specialises in the not-for-profit sector and is underwritten by Zurich. We have now greatly increased our aggregate levels of injury and liability cover but for lower cost. The new policies also offer a wider range of benefits in the event of an incident. Most of the improvements are in our Voluntary Workers Insurance.

The Year Ahead

I expect that the year ahead will see us opening a lot of gardens, expanding publicity, and continuing our emphasis on attracting and supporting our volunteers. The spring program of ten gardens will be a record and autumn 2026 is shaping up very strongly too. Special thanks go to Pam Coronel and the team of selectors for this remarkable achievement.

The committee

On behalf of the members of Open Gardens Canberra I would like to thank all on the committee who have worked so hard over the past year. In particular I would like to thank Ian Davenport, who is stepping down after four years as Vice President, for his fantastic support and wise head. Ian will, however, continue as Membership Officer and Public Officer. Hearty thanks as well to Michelle Haine and Peter Badowski, who are stepping down from the committee after making great contributions.

You can see that the committee has done a lot of terrific work but we really need more members to join the committee and actively contribute so we can keep up the momentum. As there are several vacant committee positions I would encourage all members to consider joining this active, cooperative and friendly group. We'd also love to hear from anyone who'd like to help out but without actually joining the committee at this time.

Len Dowling

President

8 September 2025



Treasurer's Report

Annual General Meeting – 8 September, 2025

Financial Statement

The Financial Statement for the financial year 1 July 24 to 30 June 25 is Attachment B. This statement provides a comparison between income and expenses for this financial year and the previous year.

Michael Simpson has conducted an independent review of the financial records and completed the required Reviewer's Report for Small Associations. The report is Attachment A.

Net Financial Outcome

The association made a profit of \$4,661.72 in 2024-25 compared to \$5,614.06 in the same period the last year.

Income

The total income for this reporting year was \$46,946.36 compared to \$47,561.59 for the same period last year.

Expenditure

Expenditure totalled \$42,284.64, compared to \$41,947.53 for the same period last year.

The main items of expenditure include:

- Payment to garden owners \$17,483.00. Note that in February 2025 payment was changed to a flat payment of \$800 for members attending plus 50% of cash paid by day visitors.
- To maintain Open Gardens Canberra Website and for sundry internet expenses \$3,570.24
- Project funding (grants) \$5,415.54
- Insurance \$1,871.00

The balance of expenditure included:

- Advertising, including advertisements in Canberra Weekly, City News and Garden Clubs magazine.
- Equipment (Banners etc)
- Booking fees (Joinit)
- Volunteers event
- A donation and a loan to the newly formed Sth Tablelands Open Gardens Ass Inc at Goulburn.

Projects (Grants) and Scholarships

These include three projects (Grants) totalling \$5,415.54 and CIT scholarships for \$2000.

Savings

The term deposit has been renewed An interest bearing savings account also provides interest.

Financial Position

As at 30 June 2025, Open Gardens Canberra had bank balances totalling \$59,144.62

Bank Account balances	Operating account	\$5,613.17	
	Debit card account	\$1,071.68	
	Term Deposit	\$52,648.83	
	Savings account	\$6,495.79	\$59,144.62
Cash			\$6.10
Sth Tablelands OG (Goulburn) Ass Inc			\$3,000.00
	Total		\$68,835.57

I recommend the statement provided be formally accepted.

Maureen Davenport, Treasurer. 8 September, 2025



ACT
Government

Chief Minister, Treasury and
Economic Development

Reviewer's Report Small Associations

Associations Incorporation Act 1991

The reviewer can be any person who is not an officer of the association or have prepared or assisted with the preparation of the accounts. They do not need to hold any qualifications.

I, (name) MICHAEL JOHN SIMPSON

have reviewed the accounts of

(name of association) OPEN GARDENS CANBERRA Inc

and confirm that, on the basis of the review, nothing has come to my attention that causes me to believe the accounting records are misleading and that they give a true and fair account of –

- (a) the income and expenditure of the association during the financial year under review; and
- (b) the assets and liabilities of the association at the end of that financial year; and
- (c) any mortgages, charges or other securities of any description affecting any property of the association at the end of that financial year; and
- (d) for each trust of which the association was the trustee during a period in that financial year, being part or all of that financial year –
 - (i) the income and expenditure of the trust during that period;
 - (ii) the assets and liabilities of the trust at the end of that period;
 - (iii) any mortgages, charges or other securities of any description affecting any of the property of the trust during that period; and
- (e) any prescribed matters.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 5th August 2025 Phone: 0400 413 060



OPEN-GARDENS-CANBERRA
Financial Report for AGM held 8 September 2025 at Weston Creek
Current Financial Position as at 30 June 2025
PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT -- THIS FINANCIAL YEAR
For 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 vs 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

ACCOUNT		AMOUNT	COMPARISON AMOUNT
INCOME			
Members → → (via Joint/Direct Debit)		\$19,950.00	\$20,850.00
Day Visitors/Members → (via Cash/Eftpos)		\$24,760.00	\$25,540.00
Donations received		\$1.30	\$17.10
Interest		\$2,235.06	\$1,154.49
TOTAL INCOME		\$46,946.36	\$47,561.59
EXPENSES			
Accounting Fees		\$168.00	\$144.00
Advertising & Promotion		\$1,851.38	\$1,836.00
Bank Charges (incl Eftpos)		\$343.66	\$245.52
Booking fees (Joint)		\$1,068.38	\$1,447.86
Donations Paid (Goulburn)		\$2,000.00	\$500.00
Equipment		\$628.12	\$1,308.00
Insurance -- General		\$963.00	\$902.00
Insurance -- Volunteers		\$908.00	\$807.00
Internet/websites		\$3,570.24	\$2,839.08
Joint Membership program		\$575.95	\$568.86
Meeting Expenses eg Xmas etc event		\$462.00	\$347.00
Membership Fees Refund		\$90.00	-
Open Garden Owner Payment		\$17,483.00	\$19,710.24
Postage, Freight and Courier (PO-Box)		\$181.00	\$174.00
Printing		\$882.17	\$856.70
Project funding (Grants)		\$5,415.54	\$7,090.00
Scholarship		\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00
Stationery		\$489.32	\$736.62
Sundry Expenses (Plaques)		\$623.90	\$160.75
Volunteer Events		\$2,580.98	\$1,273.90
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$42,284.64	\$41,947.53
NET PROFIT		\$4,661.72	\$5,614.06

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

ASSETS

Bank -- Cash	\$6.10
Bank -- Debit Card	\$1,071.68
Bank -- Operating	\$5,613.17
Bank -- Savings	\$6,495.79
Bank -- Term Deposit	\$52,648.83
Float	-
Sth Tablelands OG (Goulburn) Loan	\$3,000.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$68,835.57

EQUITY

Retained Earnings Surplus/Accumulated Profits as at 1/7/24	\$64173.85
Add profit current period (1 July 2024 -- 30 June 2025)	\$4,661.72
TOTAL EQUITY	\$68,835.57