

Ballarat **PERMACULTURE** Guild

Annual Report 2026



Vision

Our vision is to have a resilient, creative, strongly-connected local community.

Purpose

We build personal and community capacity through sharing permaculture knowledge and sustainable lifestyle skills in our workshops, skill shares, community working bees and annual Permaculture Design Course. We connect people through diverse social activities, including farm & garden tours, public talks, book clubs and informal gatherings at local pubs & markets.

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This report covers the period from 17th November 2025 to 30th June 2026.

The Ballarat Permaculture Guild Incorporated (BPG) Committee, at the time of the report, comprises:

President:	Barry Gibson (from May 2026)
Vice President:	Steve Burns
Treasurer:	Sally Smart
Secretary:	Karen Goodwin (from May 2026)
Ordinary Members:	René de Jong, Ellen Burns, Denica Layton, Stella Leonida

The Committee would like to acknowledge the contributions of Committee throughout this past year; We would like to extend our immense thanks to Alison O’Meara (President Nov 2024 – May 2026), and Sharon Desmond (Secretary Aug 2024 – May 2026) for their time, energy and commitment to BPG, we would also like to thank René de Jong who is stepping down from the committee at this AGM.

President's Report

Prepared by Barry Gibson

Welcome to our 2026 AGM!

Being new to the role of President, I am extremely grateful for the work of those who came before me and would like to thank both Alison and Sharon for the amazing work they put in prior to their resignations in May 2026.

Last year the committee decided that it would be advantageous for the AGM to be held in August or September, as this would enable the committee cycle to be more aligned with the seasons, and also the end of the financial year. This means that the period of this report is shorter than usual, however the change will establish a better schedule in the future.

Since the last AGM in November, BPG has continued to provide educational and skill sharing events as well as Permablitzes, social events, and attendance at markets and the Buninyong Sustainability Festival to promote permaculture. Planning also commenced for the Backyard Bounty program, which aims to build community resilience by encouraging and developing skills in local food production and sharing. This program will run from July 2026 – June 2027, allowing events to be held across all seasons. As at the date of this report, some skill-shares and workshops have already been held, including a grafting workshop, seed raising workshop, and pruning skill - share. Many more events are to come, which will be exciting for the guild and participants.

The Community Orchard Project is starting to gain some momentum after lengthy delays. We will hopefully obtain a final site licence to sign in the near future, and then be able to start implementing the onsite works including the shed to house BPG and Hidden Orchard assets, an anti-aviary, as well as planting out the area and hosting events! Due to the lengthy delays, there have been some changes to the grant arrangements, which are detailed further on in this report.

I am extremely grateful to the many volunteers who have assisted during the year in all of our areas and programs, including the BPG Committee, the Hidden Orchard, the Community Orchard project, BPG events, Backyard Bounty, permablitzes, Permies at the Pub, and our social media moderators. With so much going on, we are always looking for more people to help even in a small way!

Ballarat Permaculture Guild Inc.

Financial Report 2026

Balance Sheet

For year ending 30 June 2026

	Notes		30-Jun-25	30-Jun-26
Current Assets				
<u>Bank</u>		ASPDG	\$10,585.90	\$4,766.55
		Membership Account	\$9,068.24	\$9,487.25
		New General Account	\$303.14	\$757.00
		The Hidden Orchard Account	\$7,256.09	\$8,317.20
		Total Bank	\$27,213.37	\$23,328.00
<u>Investment Accounts</u>		General Acc - Term Deposit	\$44,655.39	\$46,084.58
		Membership Acc - Term Deposit	\$5,326.38	\$5,514.17
		ASPDG - Term Deposit	\$10,615.78	\$10,918.89
		Total Investments	\$60,597.55	\$62,517.64
<u>Grants</u>	1	Orchard Project No 2 - Vic Health	\$31,597.82	\$30,761.39
	2	Orchard Project No 1 - City of Ball	\$44,200.56	\$45,462.61
		Total Grants	\$75,798.38	\$76,224.00
<u>Petty Cash</u>		BPG Petty Cash	\$353.70	\$150.00
		THO Petty Cash		\$170.00
		Total Petty Cash	\$353.70	\$320.00
		Total Current Assets	\$163,963.00	\$162,389.64
Non Current Assets				
	3	Trailer	\$0.00	\$0.00
		Trailer Contents	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
		Library Books	\$6,936.64	\$6,936.64
		Books on hand for sale	\$1,112.21	\$1,068.21
		T-Shirts on hand for sale	\$680.00	\$605.00
	4	THO Assets	\$3,178.00	\$5,709.00
		THO Enviro Bags on hand for sale	\$2,000.00	\$1,285.00
	5	Lap top depreciate 25%	\$900.00	\$450.00
		Total Non Current Assets	\$15,806.85	\$17,053.85
TOTAL ASSETS			\$179,769.85	\$179,443.49

Ballarat Permaculture Guild Inc.

Financial Report 2026

Current Liability

<u>Unspent Grant Funds</u>	Orchard Project No 2 - Vic Health	\$30,437.50
	Orchard Project No 1 - City of Ballarat	\$43,440.00
6	TOTAL LIABILITES	\$73,877.50

NET ASSETS	\$105,565.99
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Ballarat Permaculture Guild Inc.

Financial Report 2026

Income Statement

For year ending 30 June 2026

Profit and Loss

Notes		2026	
<u>INCOME</u>			
	7	Sales	\$1,496.70
		Blueberry Deposits	\$1,900.00
	8	Donations	\$158.50
	9	Grant Income	\$4,784.00
	10	Interest Income	\$3,408.21
		Membership	\$2,419.01
	11	Events & Programs	\$1,235.00
		TOTAL INCOME	\$15,401.42
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
BPG Admin	12	ASIC	\$244.00
		Bank Fees	\$11.61
		CAV Return	\$49.00
		Registration -Vic Roads Trailer	\$68.66
	13	Gratitude Payments	\$850.75
		PO Box Renewal	\$165.00
		Computer Subscriptions	\$204.09
		Insurance -Adroit Trailer	\$310.00
		Telephone	\$30.00
		AGM Food	\$372.35
	14	Committee Education Training	\$990.00
PDC		Admin, Bookings and Payments	\$500.00
		Catering	\$816.41
		Printing	\$96.94
		Presenter Fees	\$4,400.00
Other		Blueberry Purchases	\$1,780.00
		Calendars	\$598.50
Grant Expenditure	15	THO -Ballarat Foundation Grant	\$4,391.27
		- Minor Tools, Equipment + Stationery	
		TOTAL EXPENSES	\$15,878.58
		NET LOSS	-\$477.16

Ballarat Permaculture Guild Inc.

Financial Report 2026

Notes

For year ending 30 June 2026

1 Orchard Project No2 - Vic Health

Opening Balance - 30/06/2025	\$31,597.82
Interest	\$226.07
Grant Payment	\$5,000.00
Project Co-ordinator Fees	-\$6,062.50
Closing Balance 30/06/2026	\$30,761.39

2 Orchard Project No1 - City of Ballarat

Opening Balance - 30/06/2025	\$44,200.56
Interest	\$1,262.05
Closing Balance - 30/06/2026	\$45,462.61

3 Trailer

The value of the trailer is assessed at \$0 as it is fully depreciated, however for insurance (replacement) purposes it is valued at \$1000.00

4 The Hidden Orchard Assets

The change in THO assets is due to depreciation of assets purchased in the last financial plus the purchase of minor tools and equipment from the Ballarat Foundation Grant this financial year.

5 Laptop Depreciation

25% depreciation this financial Year - laptops will be fully depreciated next FY

6 Total Liabilities

Unspent grant funds have been recorded as a liability in the 2025-2026 financial report

The totals are exclusive of interest recieved and reflect the grant balances less any expenses.

Ballarat Permaculture Guild Inc.

Financial Report 2026

Notes

For year ending 30 June 2026

7 Sales

Bag Sales	\$715.00
Books	\$44.00
Calendar	\$287.00
T-shirts	\$75.00
Magazines	\$42.00
Petty Cash Historical Sales	\$203.70
Rootstock & Trees	\$130.00
Total Sales	\$1,496.70

8 Donations

Tomra Collection	\$53.50
Donations	\$105.00
	\$158.50

9 Grant Income

The Hidden Orchard received a grant from the Ballarat Foundation for minor tools, equipment and stationery

10 Interest Income

Term Deposits	\$1,920.09
Grant Interest - Orchard Project No2 - Vic Health	\$226.07
Grant Interest - Orchard Project No1 - City of Ballarat	\$1,262.05
	\$3,408.21

11 Events & Programs

Includes - Introduction to Permaculture, Yard to Yield, Backyard Chickens and Growing Nutrient Dense Food

12 ASIC

The Hidden Orchard was registered twice due to a change in secretary

13 Gratitude Payments

Includes: gratitude payments to President, Secretary and Treasurer and gifts for outgoing President and Secretary

14 Committee Education & Training

Secretary and Treasurer training with the Institute of Community Directors Australia

Ballarat Permaculture Guild Inc.

Financial Report 2026

Notes

For year ending 30 June 2026

15 Grant Expenditure

The Ballarat Foundation grant was acquitted in June 2026. The remaining funds have been approved for use towards an olive press. The expenditure has been recorded inclusive of GST, the acquittal was completed on an ex GST basis

Summary

Ballarat Permaculture guild remains in a strong financial position with over \$80,000.00 in bank accounts. The reported loss for the period reflects the carry over of expenses from the Permaculture Design Course from the previous financial year.

Membership

As of 30 June 2026, BPG had 126 members (household memberships are counted as 2 members), with many of those being couples or family memberships. This is a decrease from last year's 136 members. It is anticipated that memberships will increase with the exposure and member discounts associated with the Backyard Bounty program.

People are able to join, renew and pay online via the website. Renewal notices are sent to members shortly before their membership expires.

Member benefits include:

- support from the permaculture group
- access to the Permaculture Design Course and other courses/events at a reduced cost.
- access to BPG's extensive permaculture book library
- access to significant discounts on bulk purchase items when available.

Education

Permaculture Design Course 2026

The Permaculture Design Course was unable to run in 2026 due to insufficient enrolments. However, planning has commenced for the 2027 course, as there seems to be perennial interest in this amazing long form PDC in the local area.

Permablitz

Since the previous AGM only one permablitz has been held. This is due in part to the permablitz coordinator Barry taking on the President's role in May, and also the shortened time between AGMs, and the time of year.

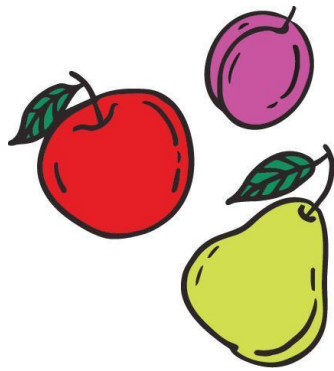
As part of the Backyard Bounty program, BPG intend to run a number of blitzes and currently have 8 expressions of interest to host blitzes. This is a really positive sign as a lack of hosting opportunities has been a bottleneck in the past.

BPG are actively looking for volunteers to assist with coordination of the blitz program. If this is something you would be interested in contributing to, please contact us via email info@ballaratpermaculturguild.org

Other Activities

As one of our regular scheduled events, Permies at the Pub has continued to be well subscribed. BPG has also attended the Ballarat farmers market, and the Buninyong Sustainability Festival with the Hidden Orchard team to promote permaculture in general as well as the work of the Hidden Orchard program. BPG has also received requests for public talks on permaculture for the Friends of the Botanical Garden as well as Small Blocks, Big Dreams.

The Retrosuburbia book club is running again in 2026, with the first session being held on the 14th of September.



The Hidden Orchard

ANNUAL REPORT 2026

Prepared by Ellen Burns

The Hidden Orchard (THO) harvests fruit from backyard or public land fruit trees and distributes the harvest one third to the homeowner, one third to the pickers and one third to charity.

Committee members: Ellen Burns, Karen Elford, Marianne Hubbard, Marg Watkins, Alana Logan

Non-committee admin volunteers: Ruth Varenica (Inbox Manager)

Harvest Leaders: Belinda Ventrella, Carlos Geurrero, Carmel Clark, Geraldine Lee, Jayne Barclay, Laine Taylor, Marg Watkins, Michelle Marshall, Stella Leonida, Tracy Kelly

2025-2026 stats:

Fruit harvested: 1206kgs (15,352kg total since forming in 2017)

Harvests: 19

Harvest volunteers: 579 (156 attendees at harvests)

Properties: 213 (+13 this year)

Recipients: 22



We had a great season of stone fruit and citrus this year!
We have a brilliant group of hardworking Harvest Leaders at the moment,
though we are in need of a few more for the upcoming season.

We thank Ballarat Foundation for the grant of \$4784 used to purchase new equipment. Our volunteers are loving our new lightweight picking bags, trollies, scoops, rakes, car magnets and PPE.

Marianne Hubbard resigned as Volunteer Coordinator in March but has rejoined the committee recently - we welcome her back with very enthusiastic open arms!
We also welcome Lana Logan, who has joined as our new Volunteer Coordinator.

We also thank and farewell Amy Nussbaumer who has been our social media manager since 2024. Amy has been an invaluable member of our committee, both professionally and socially, and we wish her all the best in her new job which requires commuting to Melbourne three times a week.



Amy, Karen, Ellen, Marianne and Caspian at our 2025 Christmas party.

Thank you to all of our volunteers, you are so appreciated!

If you would like to get involved with The Hidden Orchard, please sign up via our website
hiddenorchard.org or email thehiddenorchard@gmail.com



Community Orchard Project



The much-anticipated Community Orchard project has been stalled for some time, however the City of Ballarat has now completed an environmental management plan for the site, which fortunately did not contain any adverse results. The BPG committee has recently received a final draft licence (lease) to use the site from the City of Ballarat, and we anticipate being able to sign the licence in the near future.

Due to the lengthy delays in obtaining the licence and uncertainty over the project, an extension and variation was obtained for the VicHealth grant in May, enabling some of the project management funds to go towards the Backyard Bounty project (reported on below) and other minor projects. For the same reason, the Committee made a decision to terminate the project coordinator role and re-consider the requirements of the project once a license is signed and the project is able to forge ahead.

As the funding for the Community Orchard infrastructure is through the City of Ballarat Grant, BPG are still expecting to deliver the benefits of the Community Orchard project, including a shed for housing both BPG and Hidden Orchard assets, as well as the orchard itself including an anti-aviary, and shared perennial gardens.



Illustration by Emma Nestor

Backyard Bounty

Backyard Bounty is a year-long project aimed at building community resilience through local food production and sharing. The project will run from July 2026 – June 2027 allowing us to run events focussing on all seasons.

There will be three main areas to encourage local food production in local backyards:

- Low-cost workshops in specialist skill areas that are important to successful home and local food production (e.g. introduction to vegetable gardening, setting up a home orchard, growing food on small plots, grafting, pruning, compost making, keeping chickens)
- Food garden open days by local experts to show the diversity of ideas for food production in a backyard context; these will focus on growing healthy nutrient dense food
- Permacultures to facilitate community working bees to 'make over' home gardens for maximum food production based on permaculture design principles

We have already run a number of events as part of the Backyard Bounty program and are excited to have many more scheduled and being planned. We look forward to seeing many members and non-members enjoying the events on offer. All events with a cost associated will have a member discount available so be sure to take advantage of these great offers.

Due to the size of the project, we would welcome volunteers to help out with all areas of organising no matter how small your contribution.