

Scaling Reuse, Repair and Share to Reduce Waste: Lessons from Wellington

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Credit: Te Aro Zero Waste

Outline

- In February 2026 Reuse Aotearoa released a report looking into the current state of Reuse, Repair and Share (RRS) activities in Wellington and the potential for future growth in these areas to reduce waste.
- The research was commissioned by WCC in 2025.

This presentation will cover:

- Why WCC commissioned this research
- What the research looked at
- Some key findings and proposed interventions
- WCC's next steps

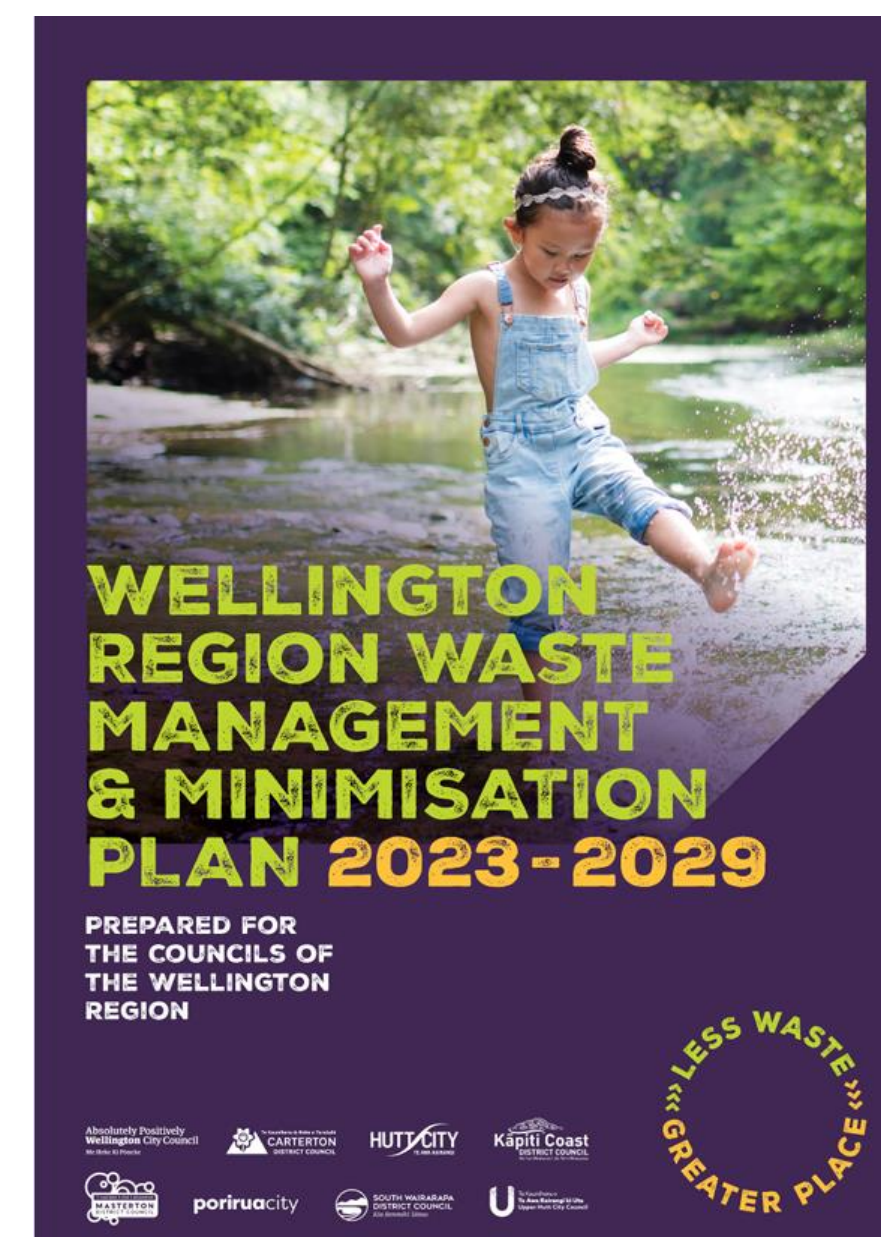


Reuse, repair and share project

Project purpose: Assess the current state of reuse, repair and share activities in Wellington, identify actions Council can take to support their growth and implement priority initiatives.

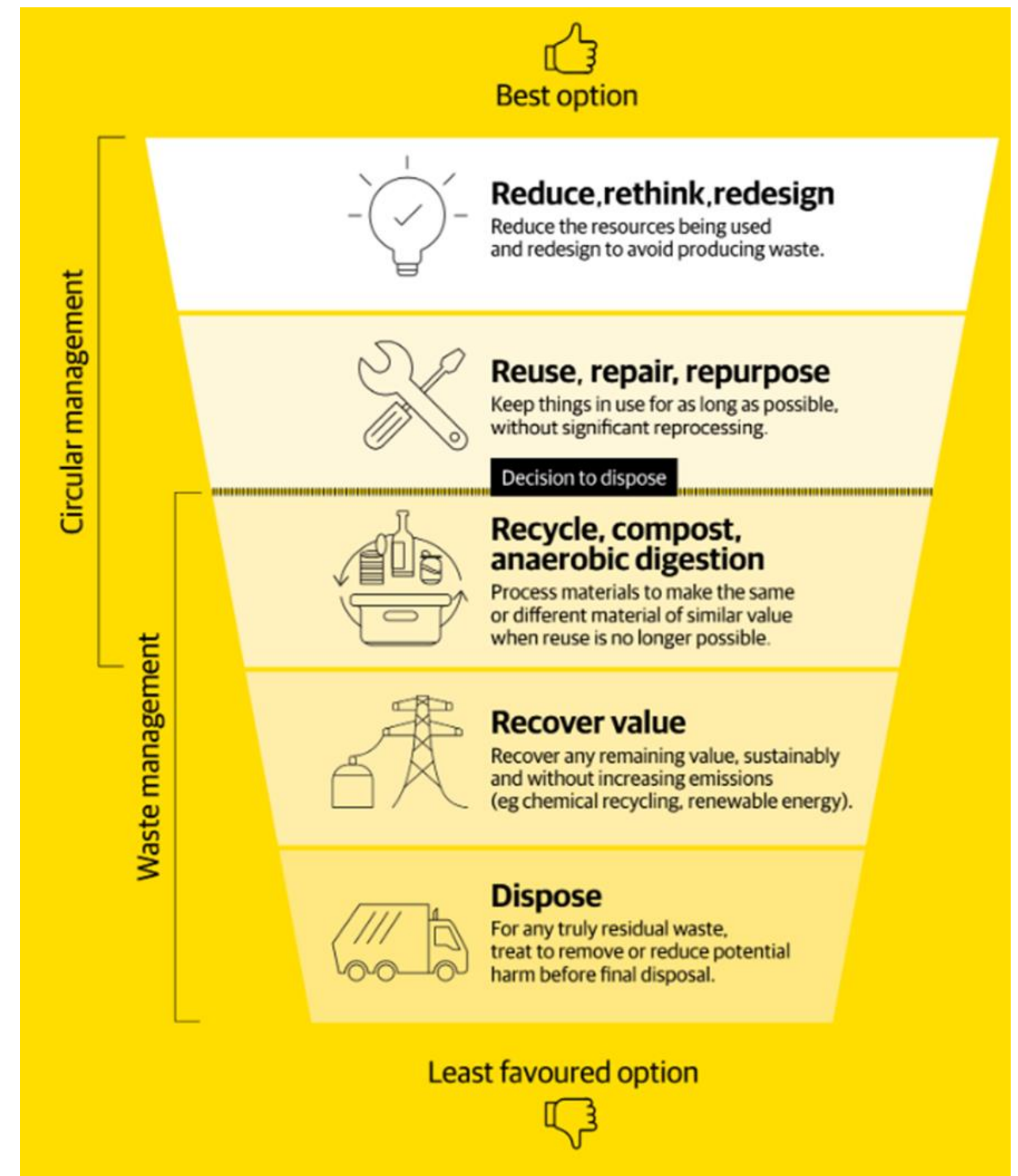
Phase one – Reuse Aotearoa research:

- Stocktake – what's happening already
- Gap analysis – the barriers and opportunities for more reuse, repair and share (RRS) activity
- Intervention options – some evidence-based ideas of practical actions Wellington City Council (WCC) could take to grow RRS in Wellington City.



Why reuse, repair and share?

- RRS are top-of-the-waste hierarchy activities recognised as most effective for reducing waste
- RRS activities are fundamental to the key principles and objectives in the Regional Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP) and WCC's Zero Waste Strategy
- The role of local government in this area is still uncertain and underexplored. We need evidence to help us make sound decisions, and guide our work programme and investment in the RRS sector



What we did: Stocktake

- A desktop study of publicly available sources using keyword searches, existing directories and listings, and the prior knowledge of the Reuse Aotearoa research team (3/4 of whom live in Wellington City).
- Sought to identify and describe all existing RRS initiatives within the WCC, Hutt City Council (HCC) and Porirua City Council (PCC) territorial boundaries.
- All initiatives were entered into a spreadsheet (Supporting document 1).



Credit: FillGood



Credit: WCC



What we did: Gap analysis

1. Analysed trends in stocktake results.
2. Interviewed representatives from 13 organisations who operate RRS initiatives and/or zero waste and resource recovery programmes. Interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed.

Focused on five thematic areas that were derived from WCC policy documents:

- **Accessibility** (availability, convenience, affordability, employment/work)
- **Attractiveness** (awareness of existing initiatives, factors that do or do not attract organisations or potential users to adopt or access RRS initiatives)
- **Waste reduction and other impacts**
- **Resilience** (financial and infrastructural)
- **Collaboration and partnership**



Credit: WCC Public Library



Credit: Bikespace



What we did: Potential intervention options

We designed 30 evidence-based intervention options tailored to the Wellington context. This process drew on:

1. The gaps and opportunities highlighted in the stocktake and gap analysis, which were summarised into a coded Gaps Index and Opportunities Index.
2. A desktop review of (~400) examples of actual interventions implemented by city and local government authorities to support RRS, or interventions that have been suggested in the literature.

All actual and suggested interventions were entered into a spreadsheet and organised by themes. The same spreadsheet also sets out the 30 Potential Intervention Options for WCC. (Supporting document 2)



Credit: Spinfresh Karori Laundromat and Laundry Service



Stocktake: what we found

- **600** discrete RRS initiatives across Wellington City, Porirua and Lower Hutt.
- **456** of these initiatives are available to residents and businesses in Wellington City. Of these:

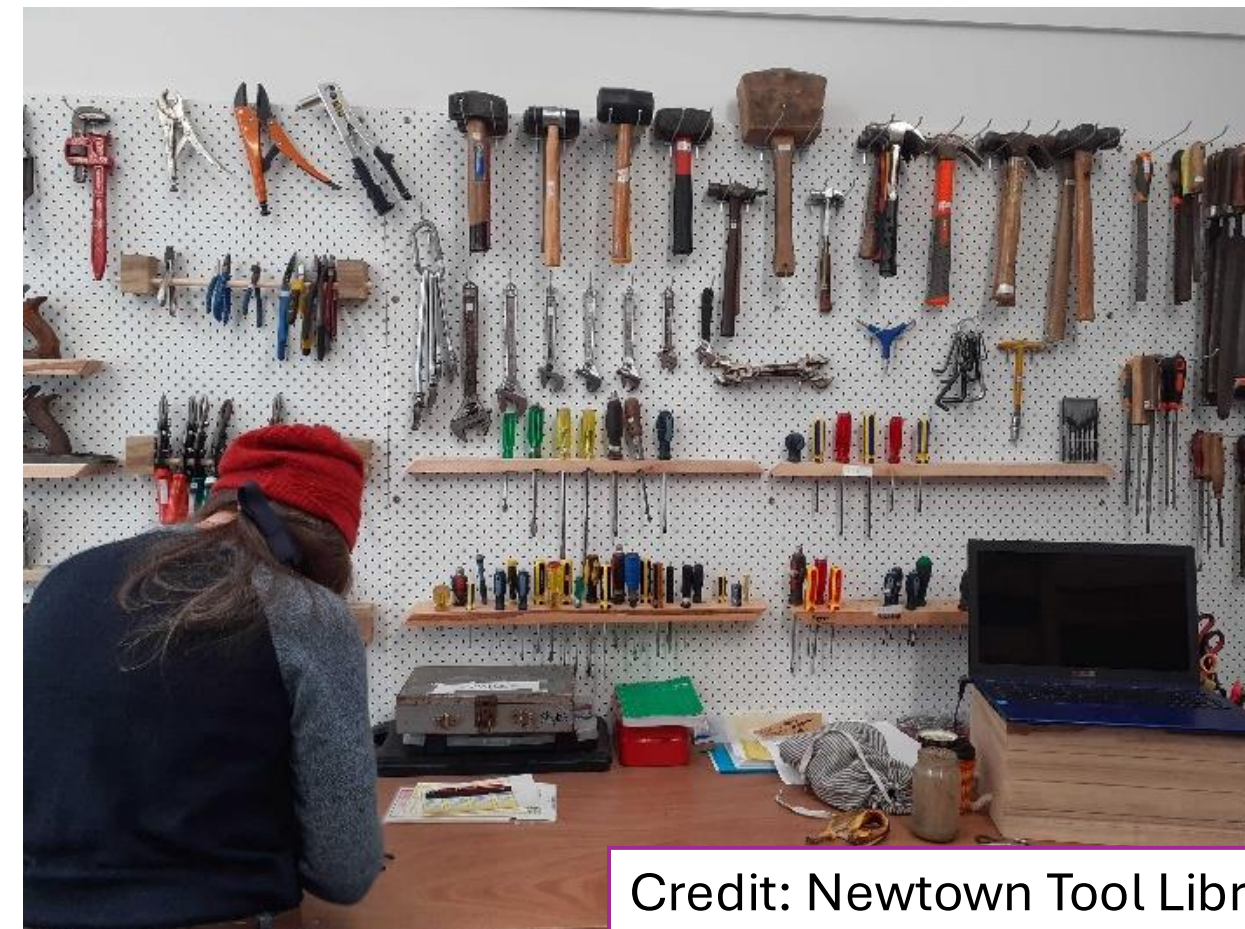
186 (41%) are reuse initiatives

157 (34%) are share initiatives

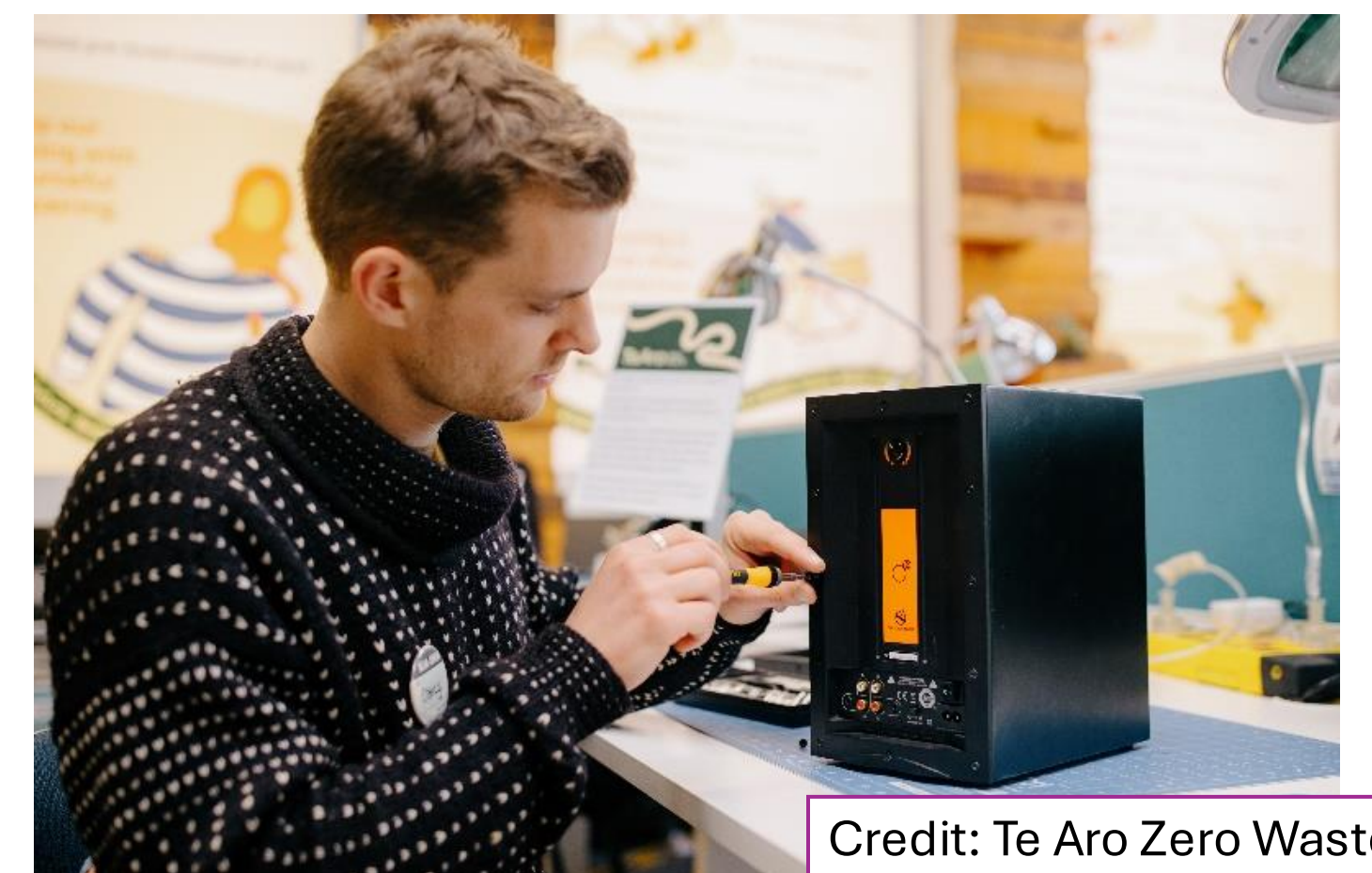
113 (25%) are repair initiatives



Credit: The Tip Shop



Credit: Newtown Tool Library



Credit: Te Aro Zero Waste

Varied activities, including: secondhand stores, reusable packaging systems, commercial repair services, community repair activities (repair cafes), hire/rental companies, libraries of books or things, spaces with shared equipment, e.g. metal/woodworking workshops, gyms, computer hubs etc.

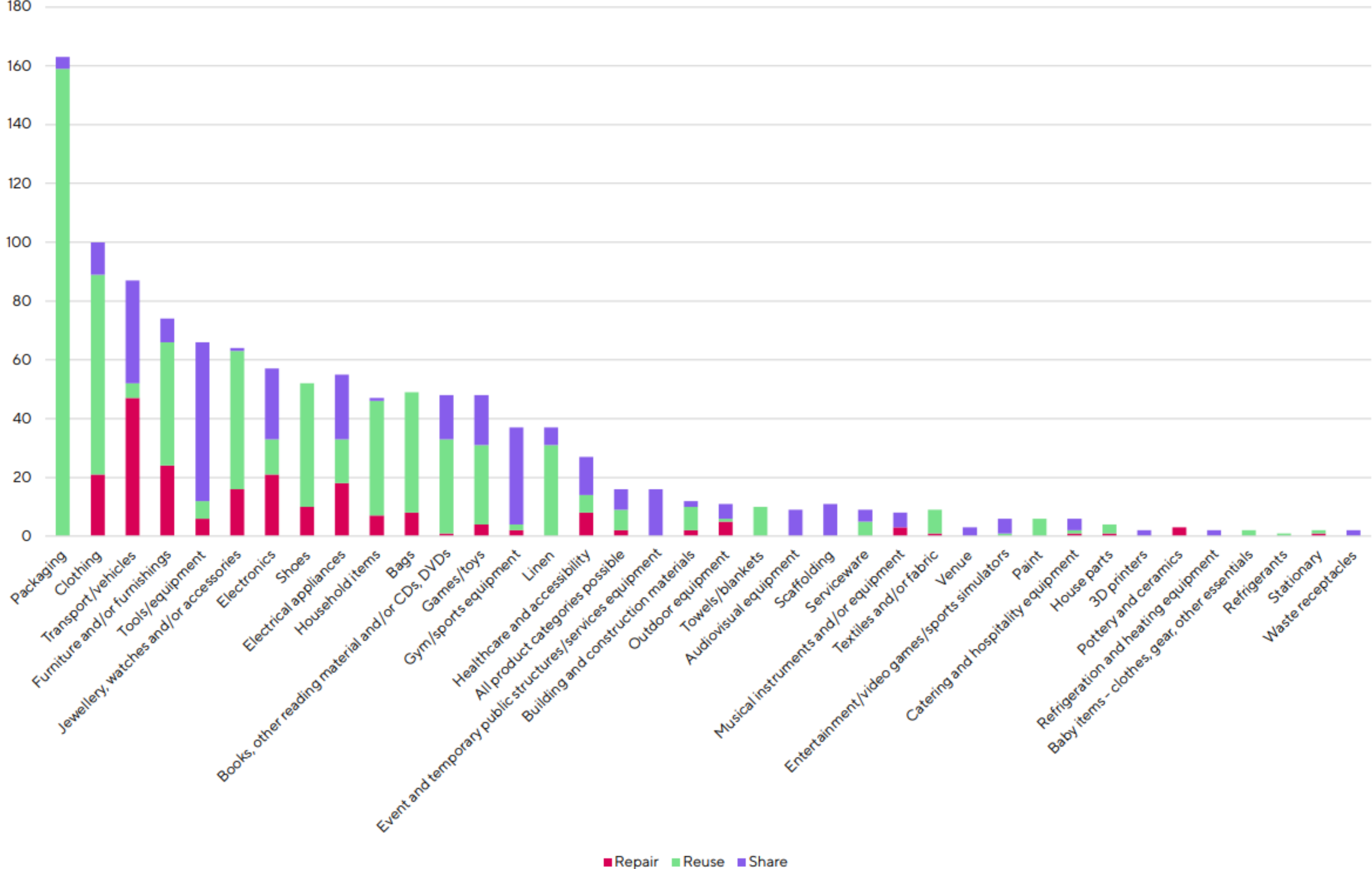
Products involved include: clothing, textiles, shoes, furniture, electronics, bikes, books, tools, toys, heavy machinery, event gear, packaging, gym and recreation equipment.



Stocktake: what we found

Services are unevenly spread between different types of RRS activities and product types.

Figure 3: Opportunities to access RRS initiatives in Wellington City according to product categories



Stocktake: what we found

There is disparity in the types of organisations that run RRS initiatives in Wellington City.

350 (78%) run by commercial organisations

83 (18%) run by non-profits

23 (5%) run by public/council organisations

Of these...

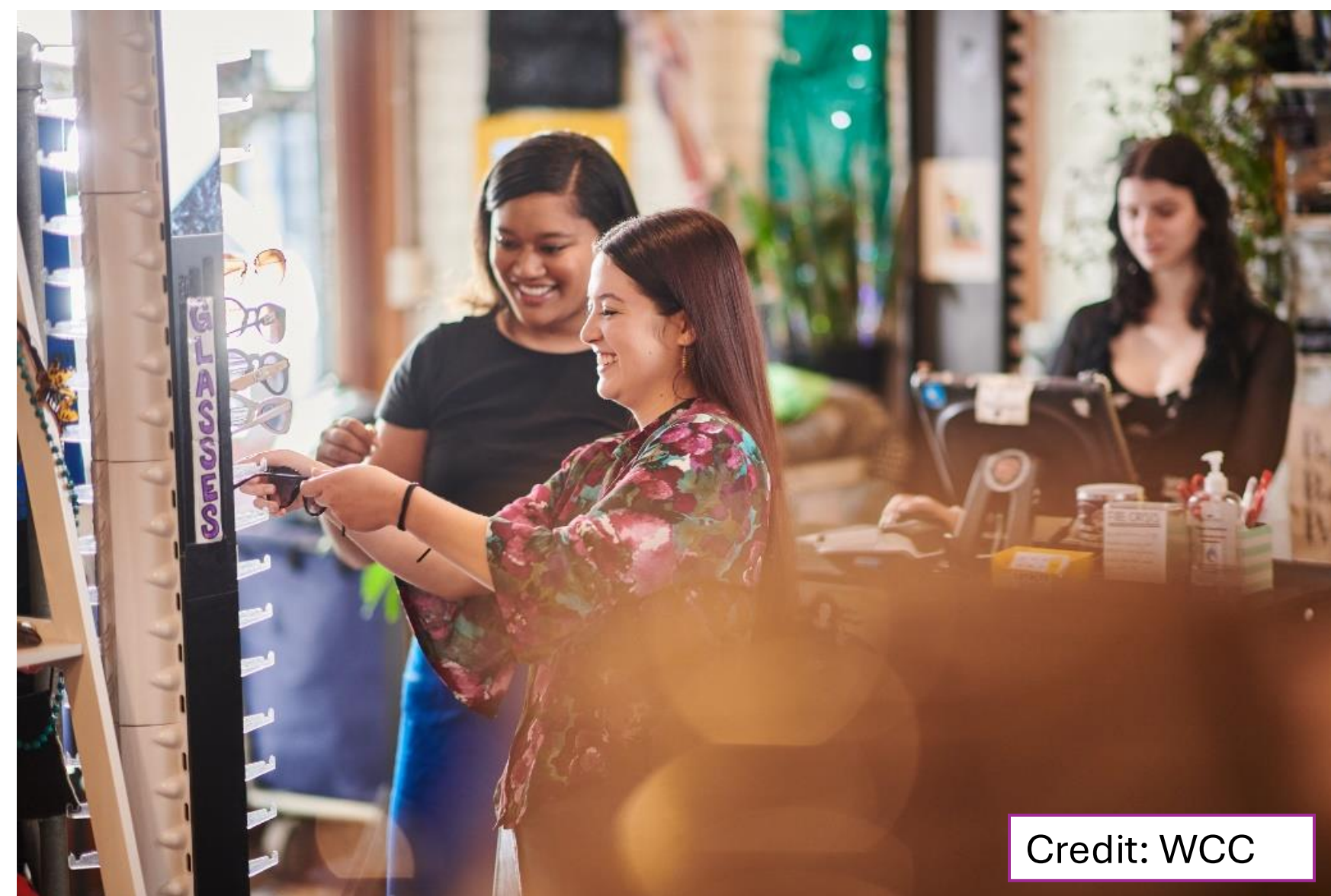
16 (3.5%) are resource recovery organisations

8 (<2%) are Māori-led organisations



Gap analysis: what we found

- Existing initiatives are well-utilised, demonstrating public demand for RRS services. Some product types or RRS subcategory activities have reasonable levels of provision
→ e.g. good utilisation of library models for books, op-shops (i.e. secondhand sale) for clothing, and diverse commercial, community and council repair options for bikes.
- However, the uneven spread of different RRS activities, product types covered, and the disproportionately small participation of certain types of organisations in delivering RRS services creates gaps in provision that undermines the overall availability, convenience and affordability of many RRS services or their attractiveness vis-à-vis simply buying new items
→ e.g. shortage of commercial repair services for consumer goods or library systems for items other than books.



Gap analysis: what we found

- The key barriers driving these gaps and making it hard to establish and grow resilient, affordable and convenient RRS initiatives are:
 - Lack of financial viability for RRS models
 - Limited access to appropriate spaces, premises & wider infrastructure for back-of-house & public-facing RRS operations.
- The barriers are particularly significant for:
 - Repair services generally
 - Non-profit share and repair initiatives
 - Any initiatives involving handling of larger items that require space for retail, storage and logistics
 - Commercial initiatives that rely on reverse logistics (e.g. product reuse systems)
- These barriers have flow-on impacts for:
 - The capacity and resilience of initiatives
 - Their affordability for users
 - The ability to train and employ staff and offer secure, well-paid work as well as career pathways in the RRS sector
 - The provision of convenient services situated in central, accessible locations with extensive opening hours and attractive facilities.



Credit: Te Aro Zero Waste



Gap analysis: what we found

- Other barriers included:
 - Shortage of professional bodies and formalised vocational programmes for the RRS sector, as well as shortage of appropriately skilled and qualified jobseekers for some RRS work.
 - Lack of culturally appropriate industry training programmes and RRS initiatives (may compound existing Māori underrepresentation in the RRS sector).
 - Not much evidence of internal collaboration in WCC to rationalise the disparate approach to RRS across various teams (e.g. climate, transport, library and recreation and community services teams all involved in some way in delivering or supporting RRS initiatives).
 - Limited organised collaboration, partnerships or peer support networks in relation to RRS amongst and between different commercial and non-profit RRS operations, councils, mana whenua, and Māori groups.
 - Insufficient resourcing for individual organisations to promote their RRS initiatives or to connect these initiatives to waste reduction and climate mitigation, and this connection is also only made in general, high-level terms in Council's current waste comms.
 - No coordinated and consistent data capture or agreed methodology to help quantify the impact of current and future RRS initiatives and demonstrate their contribution to WCC's strategic waste minimisation climate, and economic and social wellbeing goals.



Potential intervention options: Gaps/Opps Indexes

Table 21: Gaps Index

Main gaps/potential issues

Gaps in availability of RRS initiatives

1. Commercial repair services for consumer goods
2. Libraries of things/resource hire
3. Secondhand sale for construction materials
4. Māori-led initiatives
5. Commercial product reuse or product takeback for reuse
6. Furniture repair (non-profit & commercial)
7. Not many clusters of RRS initiatives in single spaces/facilities (non-profit, council or commercial)
8. Initiatives making spare parts available (non-profit, council or commercial)
9. Resource recovery centres or operators to run RRS initiatives

Issues that contribute to inconvenience of RRS initiatives

10. Limited availability of certain RRS initiatives
11. Restricted opening hours or infrequent events
12. No public-facing site for many initiatives
13. When sites not located centrally or unconnected to public, private and active transport routes and infrastructure
14. Lack of reverse logistics/returns infrastructure
15. Delay or uncertainty in service's fulfilment of user needs

Gaps in affordability of RRS initiatives

16. Commercial hire/rental often not affordable.
17. Commercial repair services often not affordable.

Gaps relating to employment, skills and community participation

18. Not enough qualified and skilled workers to repair electrical and electronic products.
19. Insufficient vocational training opportunities or formal qualifications for the repair sector.
20. Insufficient budget to pay all workers and reduce reliance on volunteers, especially for non-profit initiatives.
21. Insufficient budget to ensure fair wages and maintain adequate staffing levels, especially for non-profit initiatives.

Gaps in promotion of existing RRS initiatives

22. Inadequate resourcing for professional marketing and communications support.

Table 22: Opportunities Index

Opportunities/potential areas of focus

Supporting current and future clusters of RRS initiatives within individual sites, centres or facilities

1. Support, partner with and/or invest in community and council facilities already offering clusters of RRS initiatives to ensure they have what they need to maintain and optimise current services (i.e. for accessibility, attractiveness, data capture and impact measurement, and resilience), and be in a position to expand and build on these over time.
2. Ensure RRS services are an established and growing part of all resource recovery sites and activities, including Council facilitating/leading development and implementation of shared reverse logistics services and infrastructure for circular business models.
3. Work with organisations offering options that are more available (e.g. libraries, secondhand sale) to expand their initiatives to a broader product range, particularly products that are underprovided for.
4. Support community and council facilities not already doing so to adopt RRS initiatives.
5. Invest in/partner to support RRS incubation hubs for new commercial, community and Māori-led initiatives.
6. Invest in/partner to support establishment of new community and council centres/facilities in return for guaranteed provision of some RRS initiatives.
7. Invest in/partner to deliver a RRS shopping centre complex or precinct in the CBD with reserved retail spaces for existing initiatives.

Optimising existing RRS initiatives

8. Support, partner with and/or invest in existing RRS initiatives to ensure they have secure, long-term financial support to guarantee the viability of their current services, increase operational or capital capacity, and to increase staff wages and undertake any necessary site upgrades.
9. Funding to support existing initiatives to increase cultural competence and/or invest in a cultural advisor to ensure spaces and initiatives are culturally appropriate, welcoming and reflective of Te Ao Māori.
10. Support and enable RRS initiatives to run the professional development courses they see fit, for both paid staff and volunteers.
11. Grants, funding or other in-kind promotional support to existing services for marketing and communication.
12. Broker relationships between WINZ and other community providers with non-profits operating secondhand sale to increase accessibility of goods to those with most need.

Priority areas for new or increased activities

13. Māori or Māori-led businesses, as well as Māori-led and kaupapa-led support programmes for organisations innovating in these areas.
14. Increase grants and other support for more repair cafes, shared workshop facilities, libraries of things, and spare parts warehousing to occur across the city and in suburbs with limited provision.
15. Initiatives to increase commercial repair services for consumer goods.
16. Reuse, repair and share initiatives that are designed for communities with the highest and greatest financial need, run out of well-utilised or well-loved facilities.
17. Increase RRS events, mobile facilities, or hub-and-spoke services that can occur in different suburbs around the city. For example, mobile libraries of things, regular scheduled repair cafes or clothes swaps that can roam across the city and be held in different suburbs each week/fortnight/month, inorganic collections, or increased drop-off points for product takeback systems, broken items for repair or donated reusable items.
18. Invest in/partner with others to support larger, one-off RRS events/festivals/fairs/showcases.

Incentivising use and adoption of RRS initiatives

19. Subsidise residents to access commercial repair services and commercial hire/rental services.
20. Initiatives to increase potential cost savings and revenue generation potential of RRS initiatives. For example, subsidies to organisations offering RRS initiatives, such as rates rebates, waived landfill fees for unavoidable waste arising from these activities (or increased landfill costs for other businesses to incentivise diversion activities).
21. Include RRS expectations in Council procurement policies, contracts and tenders, and in advice to local businesses for their own procurement policies.
22. Incentives, advice or other support for businesses to procure RRS products and services.

Networking, knowledge-sharing, collaboration

23. Fund or otherwise enable and empower current community, council and commercial providers to offer guidance and peer support to new initiatives, including provision of advisory services and/or development of resources, e.g. case studies about current RRS initiatives, and 'how to' guides for setting-up RRS initiatives.
24. Budget for Council to contract existing community expertise in the development and delivery of further RRS initiatives.
25. Community participation: Co-design expanded or new RRS initiatives.

Potential intervention options: desktop review

Potential intervention options and interventions literature review for Reuse Aotearoa Reuse, Repair, Share WCC Research Report (2026)

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1	f	Actual interventions				Suggested interventions in secondary literature			
2	Theme	Where	Description of the intervention	Relates to reuse, repair, share?	Source(s)	Suggested intervention (quote)	Relates to reuse, repair, share?	Source	
			the milestone of over 2.1 million of public spending on re-use furniture with social enterprise [18]."						
96	Events, mobile facilities or hub-and-spoke services (swap events)	Squamish (Vancouver, Canada)	The Squamish District Council contracts Squamish Climate Action Network (CAN) to run several swap events a year for clothing, books and toys and provides in-kind support, such as venue, traffic control, waste handling and promotion. The municipality provides the venue, traffic control, waste handling and promotion. They also waive landfill tipping fees and \$20,000 annually for outreach and education	Reuse	Share Reuse Repair Initiative (2025). Share Reuse Repair Action Guide (Undertaken in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, April 2025), p.21; Squamish Climate Action Network (n.d.) " Annual Squamish ReUse it Fair ".	"Are there already swap events for goods or clothing in your community? IF YES, Particularly if affordability is a key concern, consider: Providing light support for existing swaps - grants, promotion, free community space ; Partnering with community organizations and providing funding or helping with event logistics. IF NO Consider initiating a swap with community partners"	Reuse	Share Reuse Repair Initiative (2025). Share Reuse Repair Action Guide (Undertaken in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, April 2025), p.13	
97		Whitehorse (Yukon, Canada)	Local government partners with Raven ReCentre (a non-profit reuse centre with a depot and secondhand store) to run reuse days, fairs, indoor community garage sales, and clothing swaps and repair workshops.	Reuse, Repair	Share Reuse Repair Initiative (2025). Share Reuse Repair Action Guide (Undertaken in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, April 2025), p.37				
98		City of Toronto (Canada)	The City of Toronto local government provides space and permitting for the St Lawrence Neighbourhood Association "REmarket" events. These are community events hosted for a couple of days every few months where the community can drop-off and swap unwanted and usable post-consumer goods for reuse or repair (as well as recycling). The event also includes a repair cafe where people can bring items to be fixed, as well as a partner organisation offering bike repairs. Donations/items left over at the end of the FreeMarket swap event are redistributed to partner organisations for rehoming or recycling, such as The Salvation Army.	Reuse, repair, share	Share Reuse Repair Initiative (2025). Share Reuse Repair Action Guide (Undertaken in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, April 2025), p.21; St.Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (n.d.) " The REmarket ".				
99	Events, mobile facilities or hub-and-spoke services (touring repair cafes or mobile repair facilities)	York (Ontario, Canada)	York Region partners with community group NewMakelt to run repair cafes in public libraries and community spaces.	Repair	The Regional Municipality of York Ontario, Canada (n.d.) " Repair Cafe ", York Region.	"Enablement, which is the process of increasing means or reducing barriers, is another key intervention. Policy makers should consider supporting repair hubs in multiple locations and spaces (such as at marae, schools)... policy makers should support repair hubs and repair cafes in multiple and accessible locations including mobile options. " (18-19) "Policy makers: support non-profit repair hubs (e.g., repair cafés, maker spaces) in multiple locations and spaces (such as at marae, schools etc). Policy makers: Provide multiple opportunities for imparting skills and knowledge in the community... Policy makers: support non-profit repair hubs (e.g., repair café) in multiple and accessible locations including mobile options. " (p.20)	Repair	Ozanne LK, Prayag G & Sistic B (2025) Understanding Repair in Aotearoa New Zealand: Attitudes, Experiences, and the Right to Repair (University of Canterbury and Repair Network Aotearoa, February 2025), pp.18-19, 20.	
100		Province of Barcelona (Spain)	A free public service financed by a grant from a public waste agency supports social enterprise Solidança Treball to operate a mobile self-repair service that gives citizens the opportunity to learn how to fix and modify their things. Funding also covers communication aspects of the initiative. The primary objective is to make people repair their products themselves. The truck has regular 3 hour sessions in different places in Barcelona based on a fixed schedule. The advantage of the mobile service is that it can also reach small municipalities on the periphery of Barcelona and participate in public fairs to reach a wider audience. This is the third mobile service to be introduced following two other successful mobile units: the Reparatruck (for bicycles, small appliances and IT equipment) and the "Didaltruck" for textiles	Repair, Reuse	McQuibban J, Zurkova J & Rama M (2021) Putting second-hand first to create local jobs: Guidance for municipalities to develop local re-use strategies (Zero Waste Cities & RREUSE), p.21	"Support services that foster the adoption of a repair culture. A successful example in this regard is the initiative developed by the work integration enterprise Solidança with the support of the Waste Agency of Catalonia, which teaches citizens how to repair and reuse objects through two mobile units: the Reparatruck (for bicycles, small appliances and IT equipment) and the "Didaltruck" for textiles."	Repair	Interreg Europe (2022) Reuse and Repair in a Circular and Social Economy (A Policy Brief from the Policy Learning Platform on Environment and Resource Efficiency, December 2022), p.15.	
		Aarhus (Denmark)	The public utility company, Kreslob, created the Rolling Repair Van - a repurposed van stocked with tools and staffed by volunteers that travels to markets and festivals offering free repairs/mobile repair cafes	Repair	Interreg (2025) " How Aarhus and Copenhagen are using repair and reuse to cut waste and reshape public services ". 18 August 2025.	"Increase the availability and accessibility of repair services for durables (including electronics, furniture, textiles etc.)... Supporting regular repair cafes in the city, with Council facilitation this by having the repairs for	Repair	Waste Free Welly (2021) A Zero Waste Plan For Welly (Working Draft v.1, 14 October 2021), p.34.	

Potential intervention options for WCC

Potential intervention options and interventions literature review for Reuse Aotearoa Reuse, Repair, Share WCC Research Report (2026)

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	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Intervention options	Description	Some selected examples from desktop review	# of gaps addressed	# of opportunities addressed	Reference examples of actual and suggested interventions (citing relevant rows in the interventions literature review examples tab)
2	Cross-cutting activities					
3	Cross-Cutting Activity 1: Systemically prioritise Māori-led RRS initiatives	<p>Continue to invest and prioritise waste minimisation funding towards RRS initiatives led by mana whenua and hapori Māori in alignment with the Tūpiki Ora strategy (as per the 2025 round of the Waste Minimisation Fund that signalled a focus on mana whenua or Māori-led projects). As part of this focus, work to strengthen requirements to evidence social outcomes across all contestable fund applications, and to weight social outcomes when prioritising applications.</p> <p>Work closely with mana whenua or hapori Māori-led projects that emerge from the current and future rounds of the WCC contestable fund, including exploring the possibility of future partnerships. This will help council understand the priorities of Māori in relation to RRS, tailor RRS opportunities accordingly, and identify opportunities for future RRS initiatives and partnerships.</p>	<p>Wellington City Council has already begun by setting investment signals for the Waste Minimisation Fund that prioritises applications for projects that are mana whenua or Māori-led and/or aligned with the top two tiers of the waste hierarchy.</p> <p>Auckland Council co-funded and partnered with Synergy Project trust to establish NZ's first Māori / Pasifika led Community Resource Recovery Centre, Onehunga Zero Waste.</p>	8 (G4, G10, G29, G31, G37, G43, G45, G51)	5 (O5, O13, O16, O37, O41)	Rows 90-95, 135-138
4	Cross-Cutting Activity 2: Internal rationalisation of WCC approach to RRS across teams and departments, and a commitment to continue, build on, and work to replicate Council's existing actions and interventions that support RRS, within a shared Council-wide strategic approach	<p>Wellington City Council has already begun investing in, operating and supporting various RRS initiatives through different interventions across Council teams. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocating grants to RRS projects from various funds (including the Waste Minimisation Fund, the Social and Recreation Fund, the Climate Fund etc.). - Signalling that the top two tiers of the waste hierarchy are priority areas for the 2025 round of contestable Waste Minimisation Fund applications. - Working across Council and public agencies to provide or broker space for RRS initiatives, such as BikeSpace and BenchSpace. - Delivering RRS initiatives as part of Council service, e.g. BikeSpace, The Tip Shop, public libraries. - Partnering with community organisations to deliver RRS initiatives and support the long-term resilience of those initiatives, e.g. the partnership with Sustainability Trust to run Te Aro Zero Waste. - Offering co-funding to an RRS initiative in order to unlock larger funding, e.g. FillGood. - Participating in collaborative, multi-stakeholder working groups for an RRS initiative, e.g. FillGood. <p>Wellington City Council has also already committed to RRS-related actions in existing strategic documents, particularly 18 actions focused on the top two tiers of the waste hierarchy in WCC's action plan in the WMMP (pp.59-62), and 11 Priority Actions and Additional Actions for achieving "Outcome 2: Transitioning to a zero carbon circular economy" in the EWS (p.68).</p>	<p>ReLondon is a partnership of the Mayor of London and London's 32 boroughs to improve waste and resource management in the city and accelerate the transition to a circular economy, including the increase of RRS initiatives. ReLondon supports all 32 boroughs of London to develop waste reduction and recycling plans and other circular economy strategies, and to embed circular economy in their procurement and local plans. It also supports economic development and regeneration teams to design and deliver small business support, circular neighbourhoods/communities and circular infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Various city councils have created internal structures and processes to coordinate their circular economy initiatives. For example, the city of Toronto, Canada has a Cross-Divisional Circular Economy Working Group that comprises 11 city divisions (Solid Waste Management Services, Purchasing and Materials Management, Environment and Energy, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City Planning, Economic Development and Culture, Corporate Real Estate Management, Toronto Public Health, Transportation Services, Toronto Water, and Engineering and Construction Services). The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, Spain, created a "Roundtable for the circular economy" (Mesa de economía circular) where the city and the metropolitan area coordinate actions. The city of Rotterdam, Netherlands, co-created its four-year-long programme on the circular economy, involving all the departments concerned with circularity in the municipality.</p>	6 (O23, O24, O29, O32, O52, O56)	10 (O2, O3, O4, O21, O28, O31, O33, O38, O43, O45)	Rows 157-159 and 164-175

Implementation

- 1. Expanded reuse, repair and share directory** (Project 9: Build upon existing maps and lists to create and/or host a live online directory of Wellington RRS initiatives)
- 2. Understanding Māori-led reuse, repair and share** (Project 6: Resource Māori-led research, training and collaboration into RRS opportunities in Te Ao Māori)
- 3. Library of things – WCC collaborative project** (Project 2: Utilise internal council relationships to deliver RRS initiatives through other council facilities)
- 4. Marketing and Comms – Profiling waste minimisation fund projects** (Project 11: Offer or facilitate grants and in-kind support to RRS initiatives for marketing communications, promotion and positive, place-based storytelling)
- 5. Expanded landfill audits** (Project 20: Expand waste-to-landfill audits and work towards monitoring RRS activity in Wellington City as part of Council's waste minimisation data capture and reporting)
- 6. Reuse, repair and share criteria in council procurement** (Project 16: RRS criteria in Council procurement policies, tenders and contracts).





**Reuse, Repair
& Share in
Wellington
City:**
analysis of current
initiatives, gaps and
opportunities

FEBRUARY 2026

**Check out the full report and the two supporting documents for all the findings and intervention options!
reuseaotearoa.org.nz**

