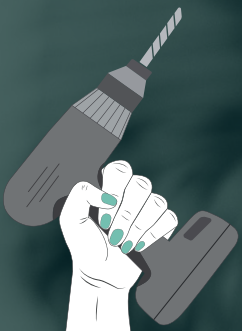


WOMENZSHED



Annual Report & Impact Review

2023-2024

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Our Kaupapa

A place for women | wāhine to learn and share knowledge and skills

To connect socially and work cooperatively

In a supportive and positive environment

To promote empowerment, health and well-being...
and have a shed load of fun along the way





From The Founder

Nikki Moss

Founder & CEO
WomenzShed

The past 12 months have been a dynamic time for WomenzShed which I feel can only be reflected upon with a brief consideration of what came before. From behind the office desk at a Community Shed, the lack of women in the wood workshop and why this was so, soon became apparent. Too many lacked the skills and confidence to participate. Through a chance encounter with a local woman builder, however, we started running workshops in early 2022. From the enthusiasm and exclamations of joy from our participants as well as the distances some were prepared to travel, it became clear that women-only workshops were in demand.

We are forever grateful for the support of our community partners including Auckland Central Community Shed who took a leap of faith by giving us the time and space to run workshops from their established wood shed, and Urban Ark – Manawa Taiao for giving us projects to support their own objectives, fulfilling a personal interest in biodiversity as well as our principle aim of equality.

Highlights of the last 12 months include the completion of a deck and shed building project for local charity BirdCare Aotearoa, hosting a local Brownie group whose young participants' appetite for woodwork was a real delight to witness. But of course the best outcome we've achieved is empowering and inspiring a multitude of girls and women to pick up tools and do something they've not felt able to do before.

As expected, there were challenges too. Juggling parenting, divorce and the wonders of peri-menopause are things some of our 'workshoppers' can relate to (or look forward to!); we were also disappointed when our approach to another 'mens shed' space to expand our workshop opportunities was rebuffed; and finding ways to make our workshops more accessible to more women whilst maintaining our service quality remains a priority.

On behalf of the WomenzShed team and volunteers who've made everything possible, I am proud to share this report as an opportunity to highlight and celebrate our successes so far.

Our People



Mathilde Polmard

B.Des (Hons)
WomensShed Teacher



Sarah Murray

BA (Hons), MA (RCA)
NZQA Carpentry
Chairperson and Trustee
(former teacher)



Courtney Willan

BA, NZCTS (Carpentry/Apprentice)
WomensShed Teacher
2024 Winner of ITM Auckland
Apprentice of the Year Award
Bunnings Future Leader Award



Siobhan McCarthy

MSc Public Policy
Treasurer and Trustee



Nikki Moss

BSc (Hons), PGCert Ed,
NZCTS (Carpentry)
Founder and CEO

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Andie Emirali, Sheila Jefferson and Mary Hay to the BirdCare Aotearoa project. Their commitment and support was a testament to their dedication to our causes, and exemplified the spirit of community and collaboration. Thank you.

Our Workshops



Introduction to the wood workshop

Hand Tools



Pantastic Planter

Introduction to DIY



Building Shelf-Esteem

Cool Stool



Despite strides in gender equality, women continue to encounter hurdles in accessing skill development and economic empowerment, especially in male-dominated sectors like woodworking, DIY and trades such as carpentry. This stems from systemic, social, and economic factors that limit women's participation and advancement.

Pt I – Identifying Challenges

Systemic Barriers

Put “carpentry” into an internet search engine and it’s very clear that working with wood is still androcentric, with limited recognition of women’s involvement or contributions.¹ It is a similar story in DIY building and in the construction industry, the latter being discussed in depth in a 2021 report by Scarlatti² (funded by Ako Aotearoa) highlighting the continued sparsity of women in trades. This lack of visibility in all these areas discourages multiple generations of girls and women from pursuing woodworking hobbies and careers, perpetuating underrepresentation and further emphasizing the gender gap.

Gender Norms and Stereotypes

Gender norms have traditionally positioned men as the primary do-it-yourselfers responsible for tasks involving creation and repair within the home environment and they are also usually the teachers in most publicly available woodworking/ trades classes. WomenzShed workshop participants frequently voice feelings of exclusion or being discouraged from pursuing these roles due to these patriarchal traditions.

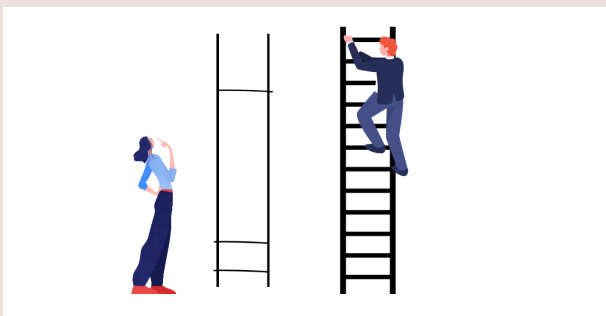


Figure 1

Limited opportunities to learn skills hinder progress in traditionally patriarchal fields.



Figure 2

Men have traditionally been the primary do-it-yourselfers in the home environment.

¹Sorzano, Rigel. 'Out of the woodwork', Auckland War Memorial Museum - Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Published: 11 11 2019.

²Women in Trades - Characteristics of an effective learning journey (Ako Aotearoa is a government-funded organisation committed to supporting the country's tertiary sector teachers, trainers and educators).

Limited Access to Resources

As new urban housing developments move away from including garage and garden spaces for traditional workshops, there are fewer opportunities to use tools. Consequently, men's sheds have grown in popularity. There are currently 124 around New Zealand, usually supported by public funding, yet most of them still don't/won't offer membership to women. Limiting access to learning, mentorship and role models contributes to the widespread shortage of women's skill development in woodworking, DIY building, and trades.

Impact on Personal Growth

Numerous sources on the internet highlight the positive health benefits associated with woodwork, suggesting that individuals who engage in these activities often experience a boost in self-esteem and confidence. Notably, promoting men's health is a central objective of MenzShed NZ.³

Economic Empowerment

The limited exposure of women to woodwork and other trades significantly impacts their career choices and economic prospects. Without encouragement or access to training in these fields, women feel less inclined to pursue such paths. Consequently, there is a gender imbalance in these industries, depriving women of job opportunities and economic empowerment. This imbalance also hampers diversity and innovation within the trades, while perpetuating gender wage gaps and broader economic inequalities. Addressing this lack of exposure and opportunities for women is crucial for fostering gender equality and maximising economic growth.



Figure 3

The majority of Men Shed members are retired male pākehā who already have woodworking skills.



Figure 4

In the 1980s there were actually a handful of women-only training courses including a vocational carpentry course at Carrington Polytechnic in Auckland and research showed that despite 28% of participants going on to employment in the building industry, these courses ended in 1990.⁴

³ Home page of <https://menzshed.org.nz/> website

⁴ All Rights Reserved © Deborah Radford Source: <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/crafting-aotearoa/out-of-the-woodwork>

Pt 2 – Our Response to Challenges

Removing Systemic Barriers and Gender Norms

To combat the historical gender disparities, our wood workshops for women are designed to provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive space. By actively challenging traditional gender norms and providing opportunities for women to learn and participate in woodworking and related activities, we aim to break down systemic barriers and encourage a more diverse and representative community within these pursuits and spaces.

Creating Access to Resources

Recognising the lack of access to training and mentorship opportunities for women, our workshops offer access to a large range of woodworking tools and machinery, comprehensive hands-on training and mentorship options. By providing these essential resources in an inclusive environment, we aim to empower women with the skills and confidence needed to pursue creative past-times, DIY capabilities and careers in woodworking and related trades.

Providing Personal Growth and Economic Empowerment

Understanding the positive impact of woodworking on personal growth and well-being, particularly in boosting self-esteem and confidence, our workshop prioritises the holistic development of participants. By fostering a supportive community and providing opportunities for personal and skill development, we aim to empower women not only in woodworking but also in their broader personal and professional lives, thereby promoting economic empowerment and closing the gender gap in these industries.

In summary, our response to the challenges involves creating an inclusive and supportive environment that actively addresses systemic barriers, provides access to essential resources and training, and prioritises the holistic development and empowerment of women in woodworking and related trades.



Figure 5

Successfully applying a newly learnt skill is incredibly empowering.



Figure 6

Workshops enable access to unfamiliar machinery.

Pt III – The Results...so far

WomensShed has educated, empowered, connected and inspired hundreds of girls and women from diverse backgrounds through our comprehensive approach to achieving our mission.

Primarily, we offer access to well-equipped wood and metal workshop spaces, enabling participants to develop invaluable practical skills. The achievements are palpable. Through our workshops, we have facilitated numerous success stories, ranging from women carrying out DIY for themselves and/or families, to professionals seeking hands-on experience. Architects have embraced our platform to enrich their skill sets, recognizing the invaluable insights gained from direct woodwork involvement.

WomensShed has also provided opportunities for women considering career changes, offering a welcoming introduction to the world of carpentry. For these individuals, WomensShed represents not just a workshop but a gateway to unexplored career paths.

We also empower women from the building-related industries to become instructors and role models, fostering a supportive environment where they can share their expertise and inspire fellow women. Additionally, we are actively extending mentorship opportunities for women seeking to enhance their proficiency in carpentry and cabinetry skills. Our vision extends beyond an immediate impact, encompassing a commitment to fostering gender equality and empowerment in the long term. By equipping women with valuable skills and celebrating their achievements through social media, we aim to inspire and empower future generations.

Over 250 women have attended our wood workshops

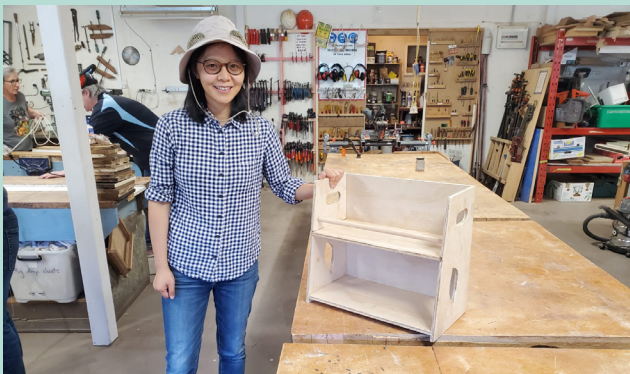


Figure 7

Liwei was so inspired by her experiences with WomensShed, she has now applied to become a carpentry apprentice.



Figure 8

Instructors with real industry experience share their expertise (photo, Jamie Christian Desplaces for Verve Magazine article June 2023).

Highlights

211

211 hours of **workshops**

520+

Over 520 hours of **volunteer work** contributed

150+

150 **pest trap boxes** provided to Urban Ark

36

36 **Wētā hotels** made

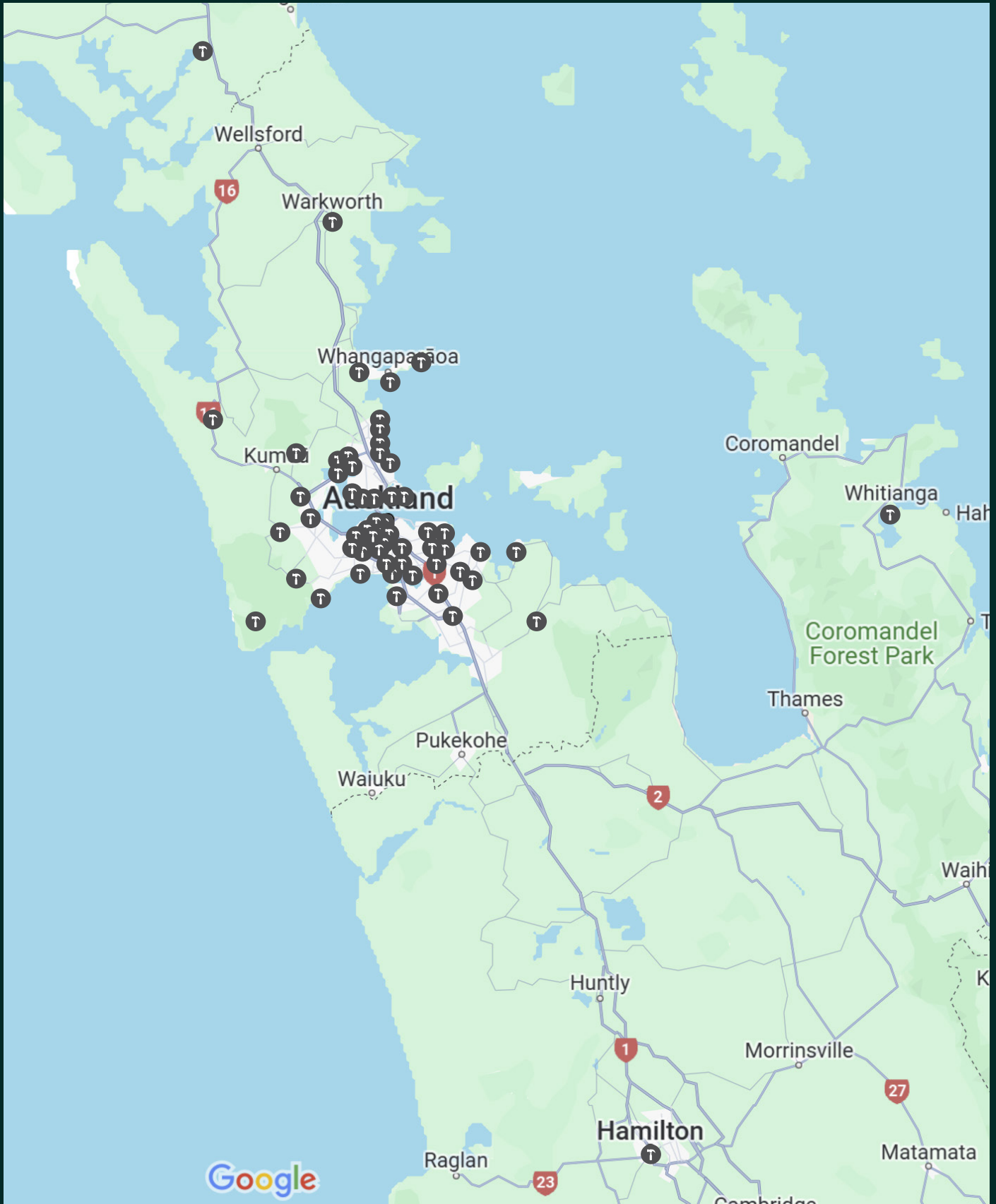






Geography of our Participants

Whilst most women travel from around Auckland to undertake our workshops, some women have travelled from as far away as Northland, Waikato and the Coromandel



Community Connections

*BirdCare
Aotearoa*



We built a deck and Shed with both workshop participants and volunteers



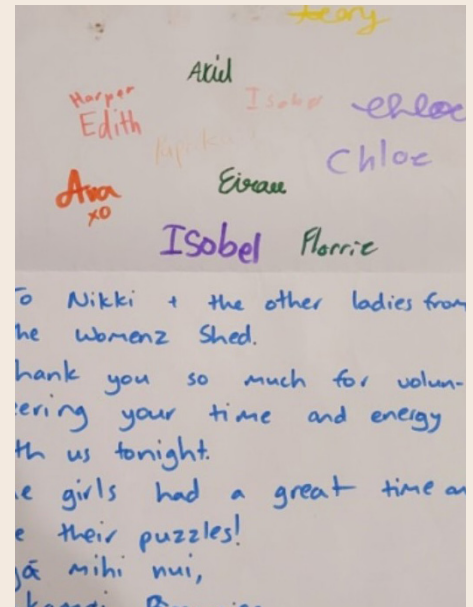
Nikki receiving thank you on behalf of WomenzShed building team from BirdCare (presented by Governor General The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro).



Shed in the making (Andie and Sheila)

Community Connections

Kakamai Brownies



We hosted local group, Kakamai Brownies for an evening of woodwork.

Community Connections

*Sandringham Street Festival &
Sandringham Project in
Community Empowerment
(SPiCE)*



We took part in the annual Sandringham Street Festival event enabling young girls to experience power tools

We made a giant jenga set and some gutterboards for the local Sandringham community

We hosted women from North Shore Wood Turners to share their skills with members of the community

Community Connections

Urban
Ark



Our workshops have provided Urban Ark - Manawa Taiao over 150 safety boxes for their pest trapping work

Community Contributions



Workshop participants are now building wētā hotels to support local conservation



We have built items for local groups including help with Waterview's pātaka kai and a butterfly 'castle' for a local conservation volunteer



Testimonials



Dear Nikki,
I just wanted to give you an update on a DIY project I did at home. I made some shelves for our hallway cupboard! I'm ridiculously chuffed and you guys gave me the confidence to do it myself.
Thank you, Emma

"This workshop delivered everything I hoped for, thanks to the energetic, supportive, fun and knowledgeable crew. It was delivered in a very down to earth way, with something for everyone. The small group learning was a perfect way to pick up skills and get to know people. I left every session smiling!"



Picture by Liwei of her shelf she made during her workshop.

_liwei_fang Made this shelf from sketch during @womenshshd tutorials. Now it is on duty... more
womenshshd we're so proud of you Liwei. What a great shelf idea. It looks fantastic. Well done 🥳 you'll go into our @womenshshd prize draw! Hope you had a great bbq too 🍷



"Hi Nikki

I have a meeting I can't miss this morning sadly so I won't make it to today's class. But, I do want to say yesterday I put together a kit set bed by myself for my son.

I would never have attempted it if it wasn't for the course but felt so proud I knew how to use the drill and had the confidence to do it myself - so, thank you! Louise (left in photo)



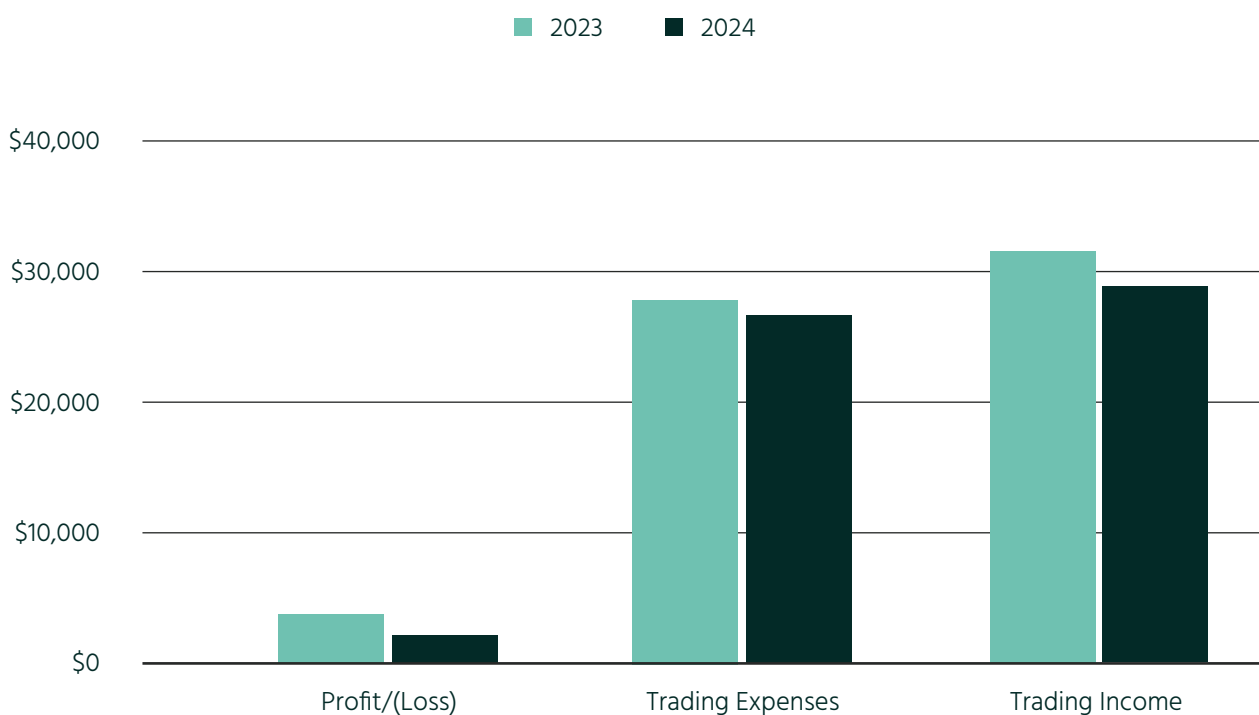
"Absolutely loved it. The course has helped me to gain confidence with the tools and some basic woodwork/building knowledge. I cannot wait to start the next course and start making everyday items for my home." Kitki T

"I found this course absolutely brilliant. I have always been interested in carpentry, but had no idea how to go about it, or which tools to use when. I have gained so much knowledge in just 5 weeks, and given me confidence to give things a go. Being able to use all the different machines and tools was fantastic, and the tutors were brilliant in starting from basics for us. Thanks so much Nikki and the team, this is the best thing I have done in years."

"I bought tools with the intention of having my dad teach me how to use them but he passed away before we had the opportunity. I was looking around at courses I could take and when I saw there was a women's course it just was perfect."

Financial Information

Financial Report for WomenzShed



Our 2024 financial position remained similar to 2023. The slight downward trend was due to limited instructor availability. We funded most of our work through workshop income and received tools from both Bosch and Ryobi.

Looking to the Future

Grow our team and locations

Expand our range of woodworking workshops both in number, progression opportunities and geographic location.

Diversify

Focus on cultural equity - investigate how to make our workshops more accessible to Māori, Pasifika and migrant groups.

Mentoring

Formalise our mentoring programme.

National Body

Become the national organisation for WomenzShed.

Zero Waste

We will continue to look at ways to repurpose our waste by reusing, repurposing and recycling as much as possible.

Our Partners and Supporters



SANDRINGHAM PROJECT
IN COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

SPICE

LEE
HOWELL



Entity Information

Registered Charity: CC60353

Contact details:

027 375 9662

womenzshed.org@gmail.com

Physical address:

5 Cabbage Tree Swamp Drive,
Gribblehirst Park,
Sandringham, Auckland

Social media:

www.facebook.com/womenzshed.org

www.instagram.com/womenzshed/

www.linkedin.com/company/womenzshed

