

WOMENZSHED



ANNUAL & IMPACT REPORT 2024-25



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Welcome



Nikki Moss
Founder

As we finish another financial year, I'm honoured to be leading WomenzShed into its fourth year of operating and take this opportunity to report and reflect not only on our achievements, but what our challenges are, and how we are responding.

What I value more than anything is knowing that we've helped more than 300 women to develop new skills through our workshops, gaining confidence and empowerment by engaging with some of the many diverse forms of woodwork. Feedback from participants consistently shows they value learning in a women-only space and, given the limited opportunities to learn woodworking skills, increasing access plays a key role in encouraging wider participation in the craft.

None of this is possible without our amazing team, our supporters, and our volunteers with whom I share my heartfelt thanks. In particular, thank you for the work and commitment of my fellow Trustees who help guide our mission and our teachers who commit their time and energy to share their precious knowledge and skills.

I look forward to continuing to work alongside everyone taking part in the WomenzShed journey and once again share this report as an opportunity to highlight and celebrate our successes so far and what the future holds.



About Us

Our Mission

"... to educate, empower, connect and inspire women through woodworking, DIY and other trade activities. Whether you're a crafter or DIYer, a hobbyist or thinking about entering the trades, we are here to help."





About Us

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*





Our Workshops

Introduction to the Wood Workshop



Introduction to Woodwork

Introduction to Cabinetry



Introduction to Cabinetry (Level II)

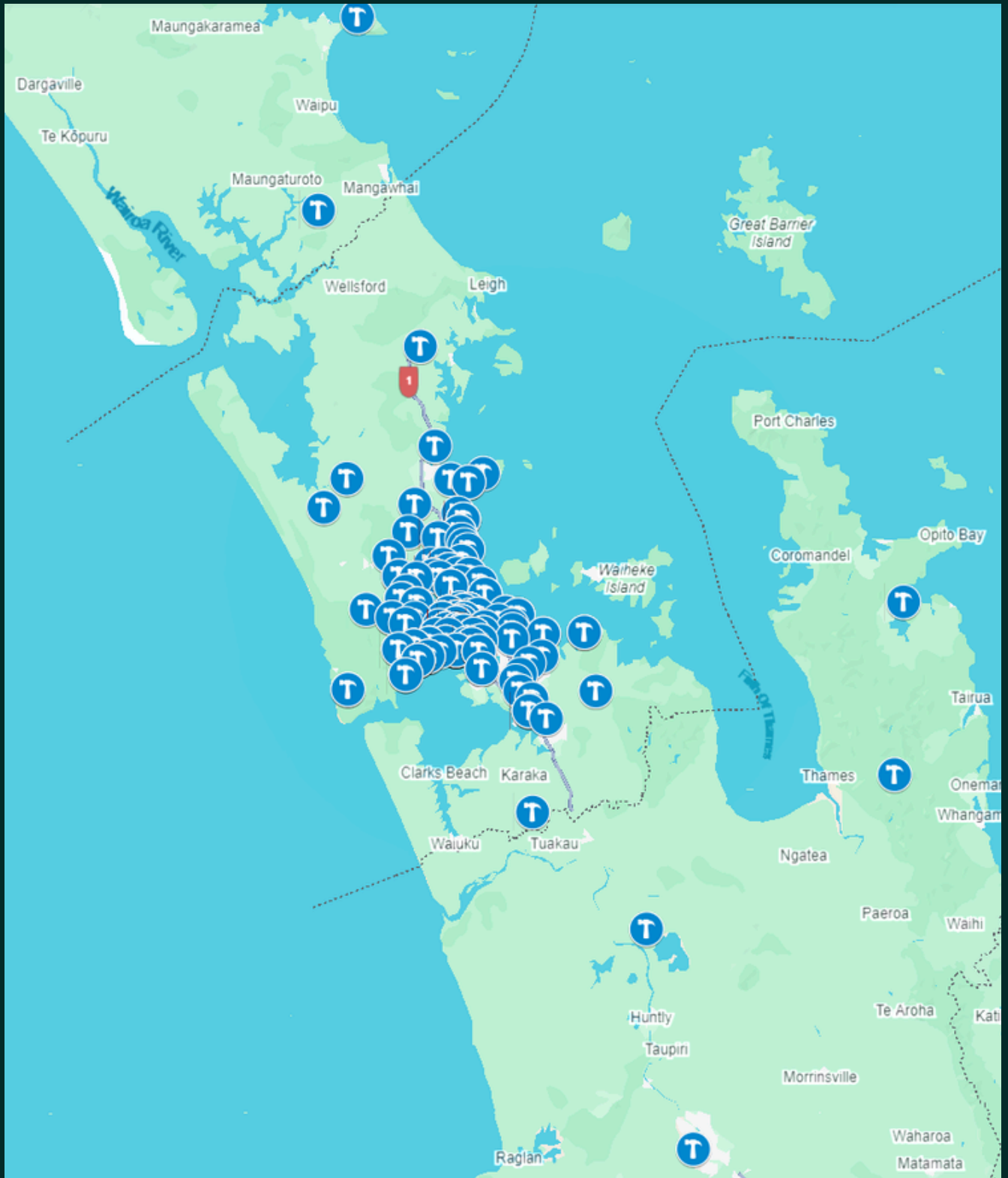
Introduction to Carpentry



'Plantastic' Planter



Geography of Workshop Participants



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



Why WomenzShed?

We started running wood workshops in early 2022 and the continued enthusiasm and exclamations of joy from our participants, as well as the distances some are prepared to travel, makes it clear that women-only workshops are in demand.

Indeed, despite growing awareness of gender inequity in traditionally male-dominated fields such as woodworking (in all its forms), women continue to face multiple barriers to participating whether as a hobby, craft, or trade. These challenges are shaped by systemic exclusion, entrenched gender norms, lack of visible role models, and limited access to tools and learning environments. The result is not only under-representation, but also missed opportunities for personal development, well-being, and economic independence. Addressing these issues requires a deliberate focus on equity, visibility, and support for women practitioners across all levels.



Wētā hotels made by our participants can be donated back to us and sold on with profits going to our Women Empowerment Fund. This one went to a local daycare centre.





The Challenges

Systemic Barriers

Systemic barriers include limited funding and support specifically targeted to women's woodworking initiatives, which can restrict access to resources and spaces. Educational pathways lack meaningful policies that increase inclusivity, contributing to low female enrolment and retention in woodwork related employment. Women who enter the workforce can also face non-inclusive or hostile workplace cultures that impede their participation and advancement.

Gender Norms and Lack of Role Models

Gendered expectations continue to position men as the default practitioners and teachers in woodworking, both at home and in formal training environments. The small number of women in public or leadership roles reinforces the idea that these skills are not for women. Many WomenzShed participants report feeling excluded or actively discouraged from learning these skills, often due to early socialisation and lack of encouragement.

Confidence and Perception Gaps

Social conditioning often leads women to under-estimate their abilities in practical tasks. Despite having equal potential, many lack the confidence to begin or continue learning without support, which inhibits skill development and progression.

Limited Access to Resources

Tool access and workspaces are critical for hands-on learning but are often unavailable to women. Urban housing designs increasingly exclude sheds or garages, and public alternatives like MenzSheds are largely closed to women. These spaces also have workshop times that often don't suit those in employment. Tool ownership is also less common among women, particularly in low-income households, further limiting opportunities to practice independently.



Most 'MenzSheds' exclude women or don't offer the learning opportunities women need

Impact on Wellbeing and Personal Growth

Woodworking is widely associated with improved mental wellbeing, including increased confidence and a sense of accomplishment. Promoting men's health and wellbeing is the central purpose of MenzShed NZ, which uses these benefits to support men in their communities. Similar positive outcomes apply equally to women, yet these benefits for women remain far less publicly acknowledged or supported.

Economic Empowerment

The lack of exposure to woodworking and related trades has a direct impact on women's economic options. With minimal encouragement and limited training access, fewer women pursue careers in these sectors. This reinforces gender segregation in the workforce, contributes to wage inequality, and reduces diversity in skilled trades. Expanding opportunities and ongoing support for women in these areas is essential for both gender equity and broader economic development.



Responses

Systemic Barriers

Advocating for systemic change by directly engaging with organisations such as MenzShed, encouraging them to open their doors to women and adopt inclusive practices promotes the sharing of existing resources to better serve all genders.

Furthermore, by partnering with both private organisations and established educational institutions and ITOs, we can establish women-focused initiatives such as the provision of industry recognised NZQA micro-credentials within existing community and trade spaces.

Gender Norms and Lack of Role Models

Recruiting and supporting women to lead and teach in woodworking programmes addresses persistent gender norms and the lack of visible role models. We can increase the visibility of women practitioners through involvement in media, community festivals, trade expos, and public events; and outreach initiatives engage young girls and other young people, helping to dismantle stereotypes early and present woodworking as an accessible, inclusive pursuit.

Confidence and Perception Gaps

More supportive, beginner-friendly environments enable women to learn at their own pace without fear of judgement. Well designed workshops build confidence through achievable tasks, constructive feedback, and focus on individual progress. Activities are structured to ensure early success and help participants develop trust in their abilities. Sharing stories of women who have taken part in woodworking classes normalises female participation and celebrates their achievements.

Limited Access to Resources

Creating shared spaces within existing community workshops lowers the cost and space barriers to accessing tools. Increased funding for initiatives like the WomenzShed Empowerment Fund, supports participation by women with limited financial resources.



With greater access to resources, more women can gain the confidence to learn woodworking skills

Offering online resources which don't assume prior knowledge will help women to engage in woodworking independently.

Impact on Wellbeing and Personal Growth

Woodworking should be valued not only as a practical skill but also as a tool for supporting well-being, public health, and community development. Through group classes, we foster connections between participants, strengthening the women's woodworking network and by partnering with health and social service providers, we can expand referral pathways into skill-based well-being programs for women.

Economic Empowerment

By developing pathways from hobby to income women can be supported to turn woodworking skills into micro-enterprises, a side income, or trade apprenticeships. Collaborating with training providers to offer entry-level trade qualifications tailored for women helps remove barriers to formal employment. Working alongside organisations that deliver business skills workshops also enables participants to monetise their craft and pursue trade work more sustainably.

Key Outputs

WomensShed
Empowerment
Fund created

367 ↑ 17%
workshop participants

209 ↑ 25%
hours of tuition

840 ↑ 62%
volunteer hours work
contributed

Defined
curriculum
pathways

16 ↑ 63%
active partnerships

78
Wētā hotels created

Online shop
range expanded

Reached hundreds
of women through
local public events

Expanded social
media content and
audience

Key Outcomes

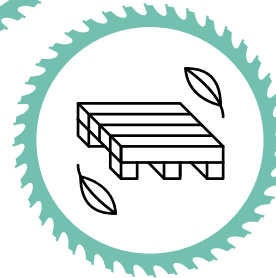
Increased access to resources and participation in woodworking



Boosted confidence through supportive, beginner-focused environments



Fostered a culture of environmental awareness and resource use while supporting biodiversity



Developed curriculum to create learning pathways bridging the gap between hobby and vocational interest



Raised visibility of women in woodworking and public spaces to challenge gender norms and encourage new participation



Supported economic opportunity through skill-building and micro-enterprise



Strengthened community and cross-sector collaboration through a broader network of partnerships



Courtney being filmed for Bunnings promo of Women in Trades

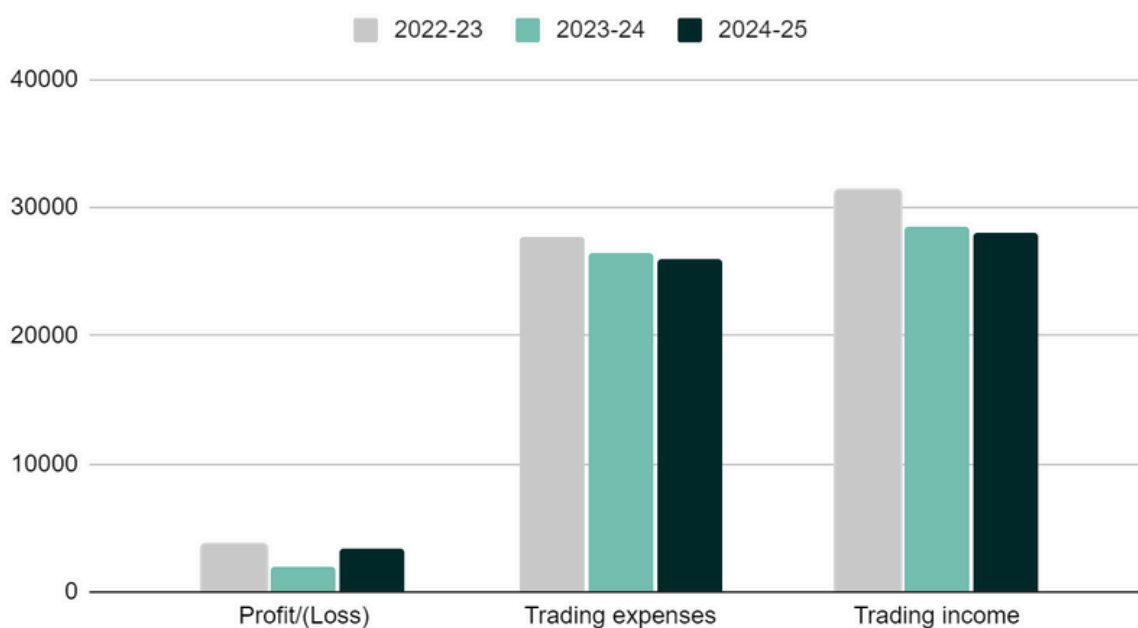


Financials

As the funding landscape becomes increasingly challenging for many non-profit organisations, we've been able to continue our work through a model of financial self-sufficiency, with our workshops remaining our primary source of income. Despite tough economic conditions, many of our participants have generously contributed to the WomenzShed Empowerment Fund, enabling a small number of women to access our workshops at no cost.

As the graph below shows, ongoing improvements to the way we operate whilst maintaining a strong focus on delivering a high quality service have resulted in a stronger financial return relative to our trading income. However, looking ahead, we recognise that additional income streams will be needed to support and sustain our mission.

Financial Report for WomenzShed





Workshopper, Robyn, learnt cabinetry techniques at our workshop space in Sandringham, Auckland



Feedback

Q. What did you enjoy most about your workshop?

Really appreciate the opportunity you have made for us to continue to enhance our woodworking skills.

Learning new skills, gaining confidence, achieving success, friendship and feeling of belonging with the group, great calm instruction and teaching from Mathilde

Meeting other like-minded people; the opportunity to create a piece but still had enough flex to add my own 'flavour' to it

Q. What, if anything, could be improved for next time?

It was fantastic! Have no hesitation in recommending it to other wāhine.
Karawhiua!

Nothing I can think of, except to develop more workshops beyond the beginner level

It was great fun. Nikki and Sophie were amazing.

Community

Over the past year, we've proudly partnered with local organisations and community-led initiatives to extend the impact of our mahi | work beyond our own workshop walls. These collaborations reflect our belief that woodworking can not only produce physical objects, but also foster belonging, capability, and shared purpose. Whether supporting the setup of new community sheds, mentoring emerging creatives, or contributing to public spaces, our projects are grounded in connection and care. Through this work, we're helping to create opportunities where people come together, learn from one another, and walk away with more than just a finished product



The pātaka kai for Sandringham village. Co-designed by with Ellen Schindler (local permaculture gardener). Built by Nikki (WomenzShed) and Sabrina Rashid (MArch student) for SPiCE (Sandringham Project in Community Empowerment). Painted by Paula Green at Pohū Arts

Sandringham's Pātaka Kai

One of the highlights in 2024 was our contribution to the lively, diverse neighbourhood of Sandringham. Commissioned by **SPiCE** (Sandringham Project in Community Empowerment) we co-designed and constructed a pātaka kai | community food pantry that now stands in the village centre, offering a practical solution to food insecurity and fostering the spirit of manaakitanga | kindness and generosity.

As part of this project, we mentored a young Malaysian architecture student seeking hands-on building experience. The collaboration gave her a chance to translate design into reality and the opportunity to develop practical confidence. The pātaka was later beautifully painted by Paula Green at Pohū Arts and a group of her mentees, adding a vibrant visual layer that reflects the community's identity and creativity.

This project not only met a real local need, but also became a vehicle for learning, connection, and collaborative expression.

Community



(Left) Members of Albert-Eden Youth Board preparing Wētā hotel kitsets at WomenzShed's workshop. (Right) Phil from Urban Ark - Manawa Taiao helping the group of young environmentalists put them together

Albert-Eden Youth Board

We also worked closely with the Albert-Eden Youth Board, supporting their drive to engage young people in meaningful community projects. Through a collaboration with Urban Ark - Manawa Taiao, our team developed kit-sets for outdoor installations, enabling more accessible environmental engagement across the area. These kit-sets were designed to be simple enough for youth and volunteers to assemble, building a sense of ownership and hands-on involvement in local restoration efforts.

Another significant undertaking was our hands-on support in helping Blockhouse Bay Community Centre establish their very own Community Shed. Drawing from our own learnings, we provided guidance on operational set-up and safety, and inclusive workshop culture. Donated time, tools, and shared knowledge to help bring this new space to life. It was a full-circle moment—supporting the start of another inclusive, skill-sharing community hub.



Blockhouse Bay Community Shed Inc

Another significant community effort this year was our support in helping the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre establish their own Community Shed. Drawing from our own learnings, we provided guidance on everything from workshop culture and operational set-up to health and safety requirements and inclusive practices. Our support extended well beyond the tools and included logo design, developing systems and processes, and assisting with essential documentation to ensure safe operations.

We also donated tools, shared knowledge, and gave our time to help bring this vision closer to reality. While the Shed is still in development, it's been rewarding to contribute to a project that echoes our values and supports the creation of a new space for community connection, learning, and practical skill-building

Our People



Mathilde Polmard

WomensShed Teacher
B.Des (Hons)
Spatial Designer | Maker



Courtney Willan

WomensShed Teacher
BA, NZQA (Carpentry)
Builder | Creator



Sophie Jack

WomensShed Teacher
Dip, NZQA (Carpentry)
Builder | Tiny House Pro



Kate Campbell

WomensShed Teacher
NZQA (Joinery)
Cabinetmaker



Our People

**Nikki Moss**

Founder | CEO | WomensShed Teacher
BSc (Hons), PGCert Ed, NZCTS (Carpentry)

**Siobhan MacCarthy**

WomensShed Trustee
MA Public Policy
Senior Manager - Impact Measurement,
Assurance & Reporting

**Sarah Murray**

Trustee | Former WomensShed Teacher
Ba (Hons), MA (RCA), NZQA (Carpentry)
Builder | Woodworker

We would also like to thank our volunteers who kindly offered their time and energy to the WomensShed cause including a special thanks to Sabrina Rashid, Andie Emilari, Naomi Cooke and Georgie.



Our Connections

We are very grateful for the partnerships, collaboration, and connections we have with the following:



Auckland Central
Community Shed



URBAN ARK
MANAWA TAI AO
Nature in the city



BOSCH





Looking Ahead

In 2024, we set a direction for some ambitious and long-term organisational goals for WomenzShed. This report outlines our progress so far across those areas. While not all goals have seen equal momentum, this reflects the realities of limited time, resources, and the emergence of new priorities rather than a lack of commitment. What this year has made clear is the growing demand for what we offer, and the need to expand our team and secure further funding to realistically meet that demand and continue moving confidently toward our goals.

Grow our team and locations

We've made early progress toward growing our team and locations. In 2025-26, we'll expand our Board of Trustees to support this goal and build the capacity needed to extend our reach.

Diversify our workshop participants

We focused on increasing cultural equity by exploring ways to make our workshops more accessible to Māori, Pasifika, and migrant communities. The launch of the WomenzShed Empowerment Fund was a key step, providing a platform to support this aim. Next, we'll work on growing the fund and improving how we track and measure progress.

Mentoring

We aimed to formalise our mentoring programme. While informal mentoring did occur, we did not move forward with developing a formal structure. Whether this becomes a priority in the future remains under consideration as we assess where our energy and resources are best placed.

National Body

We began exploring the idea of developing WomenzShed into a national organisation. It's a bold vision that would require significant sponsorship and strengthened leadership. While the idea has momentum, making it a reality will depend on building the right foundations to support sustainable growth.

Zero Waste

We aimed to strengthen our commitment to zero waste and we largely achieved this in practice through thoughtful reuse and recycling. However, we didn't maintain a formal record of our efforts, which is something we aim to improve in the future.

Entity Information

Legal Name

WOMENZSHED

Established

2022

Registration Numbers

NZBN: 9429050697175

Charities Services: CC60353

Contact details

027 375 9662

womenzshed.org@gmail.com

Postal address

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Gribblehirst Park

Sandringham

Auckland

New Zealand

Website

www.womenzshed.org

Social media

www.facebook.com/womenzshed.org

www.instagram.com/womenzshed/

www.linkedin.com/company/womenzshed