

WOMENZSHED



ANNUAL & IMPACT
REPORT 2025-26



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Welcome



Nikki Moss
Founder

This year has brought both significant challenges and exciting new opportunities for WomenzShed. I'm proud of how far we've come and excited by the direction we are now heading. I continue to value, more than anything, that we have now supported over 500 women to develop skills through our workshops in both Auckland | Tāmaki Makaurau and Wellington | Te Whanganui a Tara. Feedback from participants consistently highlights the importance of learning in a women-only environment and reinforces the need for greater access to woodworking education and practical skills development for women across Aotearoa.

This year has also marked an important turning point for WomenzShed. The establishment of a permanent workshop space has created new possibilities for growth, allowing us to expand our programmes, strengthen organisational capability, and explore new pathways.

None of this would be possible without our incredible team, supporters and volunteers, to whom I extend my heartfelt thanks. In particular, I acknowledge the dedication of my fellow Trustees who continue to guide our mission, our teachers who so generously share their time, knowledge and skills with others and our awesome volunteers who quietly keep the workshop ticking over.

I look forward to continuing alongside everyone who is part of the WomenzShed journey and once again share this report as an opportunity to celebrate how far we have come, while looking ahead with optimism to what the future may hold.



About Us

Our Vision

Women building futures through woodworking.

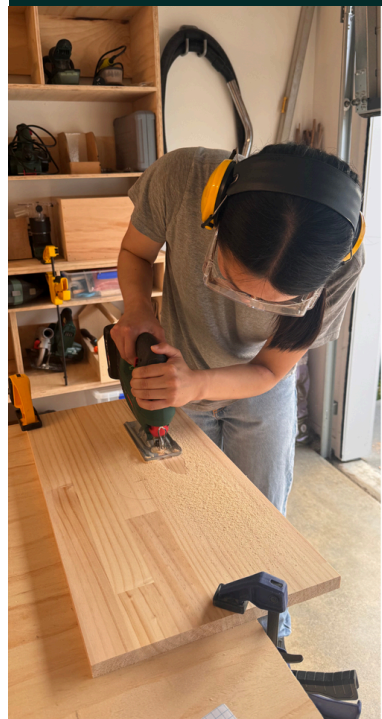
Our Mission

Creating opportunities and pathways for girls and women to explore and develop skills in woodworking crafts and related professions.

Our Pillars | Pou

- Educate - practical, creative and hands-on skill development*
- Empower - building confidence, capability and independence*
- Connect - fostering community, collaboration and mentoring*
- Inspire - opening pathways and possibilities*

WOMENZSHED




WOMENZSHED

WOODWORK FOR WOMEN

EMPOWERING
CONNECTING
INSPIRING





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

Cabinetry for Beginners



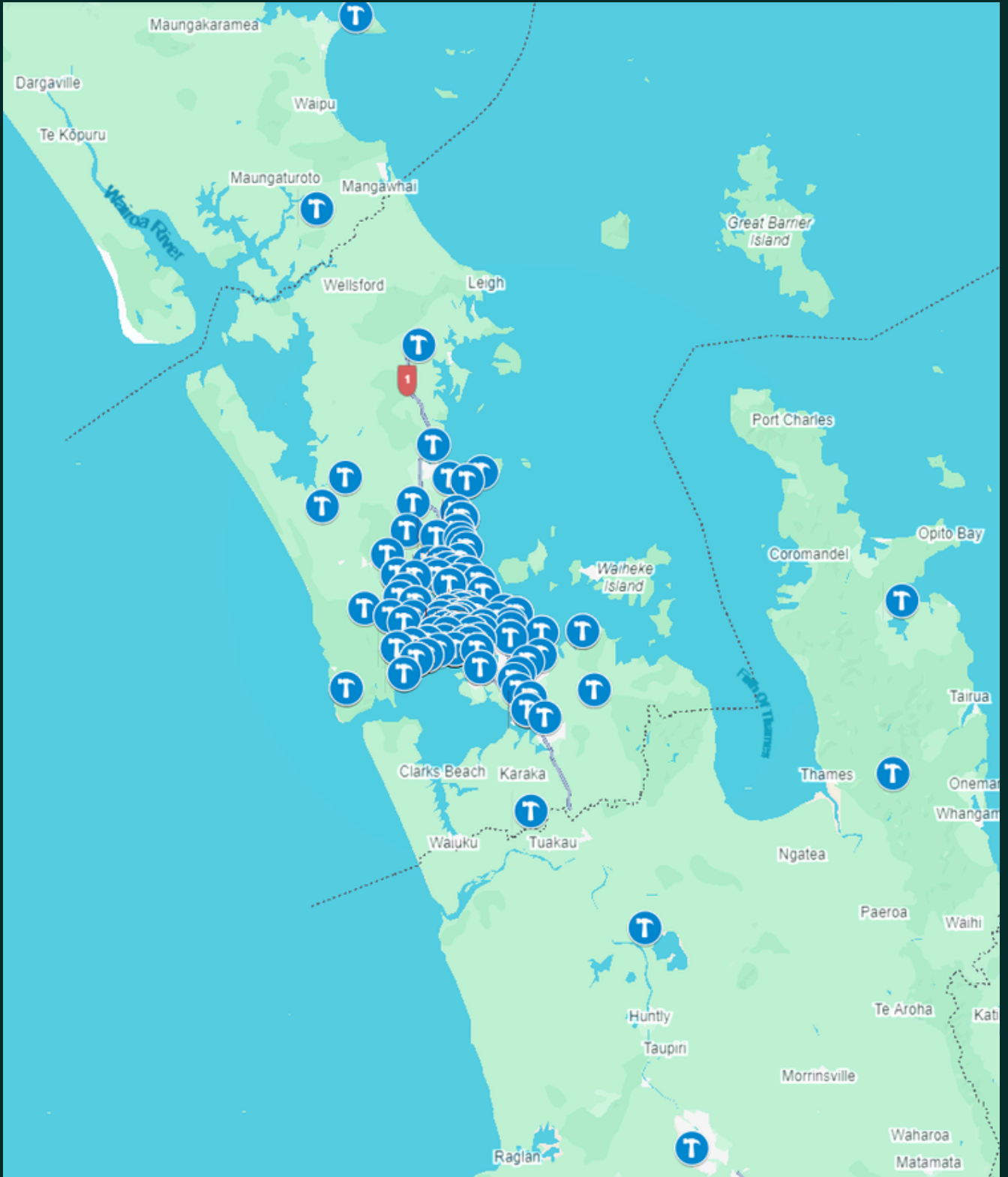
Cabinetry (Level II)

Carpentry for Beginners



'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 unwavering enthusiasm, delight and gratitude from our participants, as well as the distances women are prepared to travel to attend, makes it clear that women-only woodworking workshops are a valued community resource.

Despite the huge gender inequity within traditionally male-dominated field of woodworking, women still face multiple barriers to participation whether as a hobby, creative practice or trade pathway. These barriers can include lack of confidence, limited access to tools and workshop environments, entrenched gender stereotypes, and a lack of visible female role models in the sector.

The result is not only the under-representation of women in woodworking spaces, but also missed opportunities for creativity, confidence-building, wellbeing, practical independence and economic participation. WomenzShed exists to help address this by creating welcoming, supportive opportunities for women and girls to learn, create and connect through woodworking.



Wētā hotels made by our participants can be donated back to us to be sold on with profits going to our Women Empowerment Fund.





The Challenges



Most existing woodworking spaces are predominantly male dominated. Some, like many 'MenzSheds', simply exclude women or don't offer the learning opportunities women need.

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

Woodworking continues to be widely perceived as a male-dominated activity, with men still making up the majority of visible practitioners, tutors and public role models within the sector. This can reinforce the idea that woodworking is not a space where women naturally belong or feel confident participating.

Many Womenshed participants tell us they have always wanted to learn woodworking skills but never felt they had the opportunity,

encouragement or confidence to try. Others describe feeling uncomfortable entering traditional workshop environments or being discouraged from exploring practical skills when they were younger.

The positive response to Womenshed highlights the importance of creating visible, welcoming spaces where women can learn woodworking skills alongside other women, develop confidence, and see female participation in woodworking normalised and encouraged.

Confidence and Participation

Many women arrive at Womenshed with little or no prior woodworking experience and often describe feeling intimidated by tools, workshop environments or the idea of "getting it wrong". Over time, social expectations and lack of exposure to practical skills can affect confidence and willingness to participate, even where interest is strong.

One of the most consistent outcomes we see through our workshops is increased



The Challenges cont...



New Zealand's national wood art competition and exhibition 2026 had a tiny proportion of women entrants

confidence. Participants regularly tell us that learning in a supportive women-only environment helps them feel more comfortable asking questions, trying unfamiliar tools and continuing to develop their skills beyond the workshop itself.

Limited Access to Resources

Tool access and workspaces are critical for learning woodwork but can be unavailable to women. Urban housing designs increasingly exclude sheds or garages, and public alternatives like MenzSheds are largely closed to women. Tool ownership can also be financially out of reach, particularly in the current economic climate.

Whilst some community spaces exist, location or workshop times often don't suit those balancing employment, caregiving or other responsibilities.

Impact on Wellbeing and Personal Growth

Woodworking is widely recognised as supporting mental wellbeing, including increased confidence, social connection and

a sense of accomplishment. Promoting these benefits for men is the primary argument for establishing 'MenzSheds'. While women experience many of the same positive outcomes through creative pursuits and practical skill development, these benefits for women have historically and continue to receive far less visibility and support.

Economic Empowerment

Limited exposure to woodworking and related trades can affect women's awareness of, confidence in, and access to these fields as potential career or income pathways. With fewer opportunities to engage in practical skills from an early stage, women remain underrepresented across many areas of the trades and wider woodworking sector. This contributes to ongoing gender imbalance within skilled industries and limits diversity of participation and experience within these fields.



Our Responses

Systemic Barriers

We continue to advocate for more inclusive access to woodworking spaces by engaging with organisations such as Men's Sheds and encouraging greater openness to women's participation and shared use of existing resources. We are also exploring partnerships with other educational providers to support women-focused initiatives, including opportunities for industry-recognised NZQA micro-credentials within community and trade-based learning environments. This will help expand access to both creative and vocational learning pathways in woodworking.

Gender Norms and Lack of Role Models

We address persistent gender norms by actively recruiting, supporting, and showcasing women teachers within woodworking programmes. Increasing the visibility of women practitioners through workshops, community festivals, trade expos, media, and public events helps shift perceptions of who woodworking is for. We also engage with young people through outreach activities, helping to challenge stereotypes early, and present woodworking as an accessible and inclusive creative and practical pursuit.

Confidence and Perception Gaps

Our workshops are intentionally structured to create supportive, beginner-friendly environments where women can learn at their own pace without judgement. Learning is scaffolded through achievable steps, constructive feedback, and a focus on individual progress, ensuring early success and confidence building. We also share stories of women participants to normalise female participation in woodworking and highlight a wide range of learning journeys.

Limited Access to Resources

We are developing a multi-use workshop space that supports community woodworking classes, professional development opportunities, and potential artist-in-residence



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

activity. This approach allows us to maximise the use of our dedicated facility while creating a flexible environment that supports both skill development and creative practice.

Impact on Wellbeing and Personal Growth

We see woodworking as a hands-on practice that supports wellbeing, confidence, and connection, alongside its value as a creative and practical skill. Through group-based workshops, participants build relationships, learn collaboratively, and develop a sense of belonging within a supportive learning environment. We continue to strengthen connections with community organisations to broaden pathways into skill-based learning and wellbeing-focused programmes for women.

Economic Empowerment

We support pathways for income generation and further training. This includes ways for participants to develop micro-enterprises, undertake freelance or small-scale creative work, or progress into a range of woodworking professions.

25-26 Key Outputs

5 x workshops
funded by
WomensShed
Empowerment
Fund

133 ↑ 13%
workshop participants

231 ↑ 27%
hours of tuition

1314 ↑ 56%
volunteer hours work
contributed

Started running
workshops in
Wellington

19
active partnerships

164 TOTAL
Wētā hotels created

Online shop
range expanded

Inspired hundreds
of girls and women
through local public
events

Developed
Trustee
Capacity

Key Outcomes

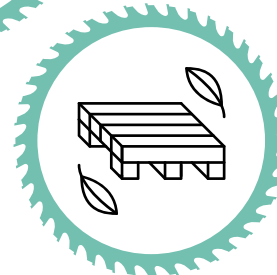
Increased access to resources and participation in woodworking



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





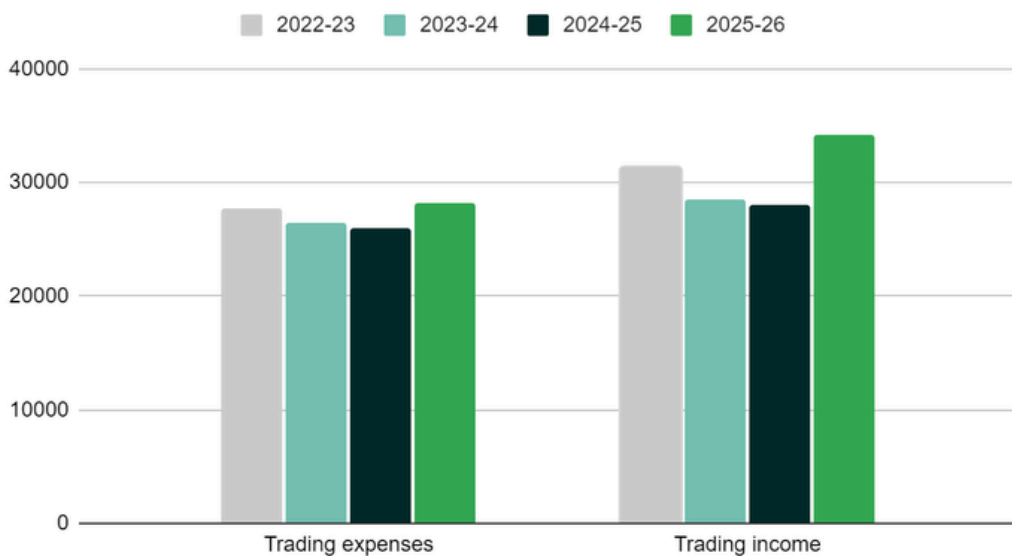
Financials

This financial year represented a period of significant transition for WomensShed following the unexpected loss of our previous workshop space. While this created disruption to normal operations and programme delivery, we were still able to continue delivering a reduced number of workshops throughout the relocation period while working toward a more sustainable long-term solution.

The establishment of our presence in Wellington | Te Whanganui a Tara, and our new permanent workshop space in Auckland | Tāmaki Makaurau marks an important milestone and creates new opportunities for growth, programme development and increased accessibility. As the graph below shows, despite the operational challenges associated with the relocation and transition, we were still able to maintain stable income versus outgoings.

Workshop delivery continues to be our primary source of income. However, the realities of operating a commercial space reinforce the importance of developing additional income streams and long-term financial sustainability.

Financial Report for WomensShed





Workshopper, Amy learning woodworking techniques at our temporary workshop space



Feedback

The WomensShed is a fantastic place and Nikki is a terrific teacher! Even though I already know how to use a few tools, I was impressed with being taught better handling techniques and other very helpful and useful tips with a wide array of hand and power tools. The intro to wood workshop series was such a great learning experience and now I'm eager to do more!

Such a professional and supportive learning environment and teacher. I loved every class I attended and I learned so much

LOVE LOVE LOVE!

I took the intro to the wood workshop class and I enjoyed every moment of it. We got to try so many different tools in a very safe and supportive environment. Everyone was so lovely there. This is a course I'd recommend for any women wanting to try something new or learn how to use the tools safely if you've already had some experience. I'll be signing up for their other classes as well 😊

Totally recommend this course. You get to use power tools. Learn how to use them safely. I learnt how to stand and distribute my weight, how to use the tape measure correctly. And you get to leave with something you made. I was so chuffed with myself. An awesome confidence booster.

Great setup and atmosphere! I am absolute grateful to have Nikki and Sarah to help me with my first ever DIY project. Would recommend to anyone wanting to give woodworking a try.

18 out of 18
Five Star
Reviews
on Google

Range of techniques seen. Also loved seeing my wonky cutting and gaps between forced together by clamps and end up being alright 😂

Community

Since forming in 2022, WomensShed has had the privilege of connecting with a wide range of people through local events, creative projects, and relationships with community organisations and businesses in our former home suburb of Sandringham, Auckland | Tāmaki Makaurau. We leave behind a small legacy there through our work for SPiCE including creating wooden games for events, and the pātaka kai, beautifully decorated by Paul at Pohu Art.

Our move to West Auckland marks an exciting new chapter as we begin building relationships with new neighbours and the wider West Auckland community and while our physical location has changed, the sense of community surrounding WomensShed continues wherever we go including our online community. We are continually grateful for the encouragement, kind messages, shared posts, and ongoing support from our followers who help spread the word about our mission and inspire others to get involved.

As technology continues to reshape the way people connect and learn, we are reminded of both the importance of practical creativity and working with our hands, and the opportunities technology provides to reach and inspire more girls and women to explore woodworking and DIY skills.

This section celebrates a few moments, connections, and community highlights we shared with our followers.

From Left to Right: We were invited onto the RNZ Saturday morning show; our move to Henderson was a WomensShed team effort; an ex workshopper, Rosie, proudly shared their achievement of building a cabinet for their home remarking that without WomensShed. she would have never had to the confidence to give it a go.



Our People



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



Courtney Willan
WomensShed Teacher | Trustee
BA, NZQA (Carpentry)
Builder | Creator



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



Malika Savauguet
WomensShed Teacher
BA, NZCert (Joinery, Furniture)
Cabinetmaker



Our People



Nikki Moss

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



Rahel Stuecker

Treasurer
Dip (Industrial Mngmt)



Siobhan MacCarthy

WomensShed Trustee (Chair)
MA Public Policy



Kyla Bendall

WomensShed Trustee
BA, ICAgile Cert Professional (People
Development)

We would also like to thank our volunteers who kindly offered their time and energy to the WomensShed cause including a special thanks to Paria.



Our Friends

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



Entity Information

Legal Name

WOMENZSHED

Established

2022

Registration Numbers

NZBN: 9429050697175

Charities Services: CC60353

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www.instagram.com/womenzshed/

www.linkedin.com/company/womenzshed