



Waste Free Welly is an open and collaborative group of individuals and organisations working to progress the vision of zero waste in the Wellington Region. Our group includes enterprises, advocates, educators, researchers, NGOs, and consultants who all share the same vision of a zero waste city.

RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRE NETWORK FOR PŌNEKE (ORIGINALLY PREPARED DECEMBER 2020)

Wellington City Council (WCC) has set a target of reducing waste to landfill 30% by 2026. To achieve this we are all going to have to try some new things. WCC aims to be a leader in waste reduction and is exploring options for resilient waste systems, shared services, new technologies, circular economy initiatives.

Nine methods for achieving this target are identified in the 2017 WMMP. Item B: Investigate and, if feasible, develop a region-wide resource recovery network is a practical tool that would enable WCC to achieve the 30% target as well as the three key WMMP goals: waste free, working together and benefiting communities. A Resource recovery Network has the power to bring WCCs bold vision to life enabling the achievement of its WMMP goals.

Council can draw on work already being done by mana whenua, community enterprises and SMEs, local organisations, industry, households and the Government to shift Wellington towards a low waste, low carbon circular economy. Pōneke has a thriving zero waste ecosystem that can be fostered and developed. Councils, organisations and enterprises around Aotearoa are willing to share their learnings.

What would a Resource Recovery Network for Pōneke look like?

A network of independently operated sites, would work collaboratively under a common brand to provide communities with a 'one stop shop' for reuse, recycling, repair, upcycling and retail activities. Each site would deliver a range of similar services tailored to best fit the local community and environment. They would all focus on delivering a high quality user experience for households and businesses.

They would: Accept and sell good quality second hand goods and materials. Receive recycling including beverage containers returned through a container return scheme. Take back end of life products like E waste and appliances. Provide workshop space for repair



and refurbishment, including tool libraries. Link in with community composting hubs and community gardens. Include washing and sterilisation systems for the emerging reuse economy. Run behaviour change and community engagement programmes.

Models in action

Auckland Council prioritised development of its RRN as a transformational project. 9 Community Recovery Centres (CRC's) are operational, 3 are in development and the medium term goal is to establish 21 plus two larger resource recovery parks. These 23 sites will form part of Auckland's RRN which will also include commercial, social and community enterprises working towards zero waste by 2040. The long term goal is 64 CRCs 1:25,000 pop.

Zero Waste Network - 30 Community Recovery Centres across NZ collectively handle 30,000 tonnes of materials, employ 707 people, feed \$30m each year back into their local economies. Reaching diversion rates as high as 75%. Greater Wellington - existing community and council sites. Trash Palace, Second Treasures, Earthlink.

How to roll out a resource recovery network

Commit to strategic direction and RRN feasibility study for WCC / Greater Wellington.

Partner with mana whenua, community and enterprise. Start with three CRC sites for WCC 1:70,000 pop. Build up to 14 1:15,000 pop.

- **Build on the existing network capacity**, scale up and replicate local success stories Eg Sustainability Trust, Newtown Tool Library, Kaicycle. Establish two new CRCs and relocate and/or expand Second Treasures.. Use social procurement to ensure enterprises resourced to work in the RRN provide multiple benefits for their local communities.
- **Sites and infrastructure:** Land - affordable access to sites, rates rebates, peppercorn rentals. Buildings - Capex to develop sites. AKL council working on approx \$2m per site long term, has secured \$13m in WMF and shovel ready funding. Most CRCs started with minimal capital works and gradual improvements are planned. Best case is to start up on a fully developed site with warehouse space, office and staff facilities, tarseal, services.
- **Operating expenses CRCs** - Contract for services. \$200-300k p/a start up phase. \$100-150k p/a once fully operational. May be lower if Container Return Scheme and other product stewardship schemes come on stream and cover recycling costs.
- **Capacity building** - \$20 to \$60k/pa mentoring and capacity building across the network. Higher investment, faster progress.

Changes that will help enable RRN development

- **Covid 19** recovery prioritising development of infrastructure that will take NZ into a low carbon, low waste future. Many jobs lost are in service sector, skills are transferable to resource recovery and behaviour change activities
- **Container return scheme** if implemented would underpin the operations of CRCs that become take back depots by paying handling fees. This could provide a platform for other resource recovery activities.



- **Waste levy** increase (from \$10/tonne to \$60/tonne by 2025). Will encourage diversion. Will also increase pool of funds available to Councils and other organisations able to show they are committed to and making progress towards zero waste goals (from \$30m to \$270m by 2025)

Broader outcomes and benefits

- **Zero waste by 2040** - estimate RRN could divert 70% of Southern landfill waste. Support behaviour change shift to reuse systems and closed loop recycling, circular economy.
- **Carbon neutrality by 2030** - reduce emissions from landfill and keep products in circulation longer to reduce the upstream emissions associated with production and consumption.
- **Working together** - Practical opportunity to partner with Mana Whenua and communities to achieve shared goals, build trust and confidence, Greater Wellington collaboration.
- **Benefit communities** - Job creation, local jobs and training eg Christchurch: 32 staff across 4 sites, Auckland: 80 staff across 9 sites. cZero Waste Network NZ: 707 staff across 30 sites.. Enable and empower change through Community hubs: sustainability, cohesion and resilience. Access to goods and resources for those in need.