

# FRINGE TO CENTRE

## THE ZERO WASTE NETWORK STORY

NOVEMBER 2018



zero  
waste  
NETWORK



Zero Waste Network members at the 2017 hui

“ As a country we can show leadership, invest in innovation and work together to develop a more resourceful approach to providing for our wants and needs. ”

Zero Waste Network:  
<http://zerowaste.co.nz/about-us/>

“ People are sick of wasting stuff. They're sick of plastic in the ocean. I think the last 20 years [of Zero Waste Network activity] has really had an impact on that and it's all coming to fruition right now. ”

Marty Hoffart, Zero Waste Network Chair



Landfill: A result of the 'make-use-dispose' linear economy



The Tipping Point - recycle shop at the Waitakere Transfer Station

“ Moving forward, what we need is business savvy, community led resource recovery enterprises in New Zealand. The future is looking bright. ”

Matthew Luxon, Zero Waste Network Trustee



Rachael Trotman  
[www.weavingchange.nz](http://www.weavingchange.nz)



Funded by Auckland Council



Design by Cab Creative

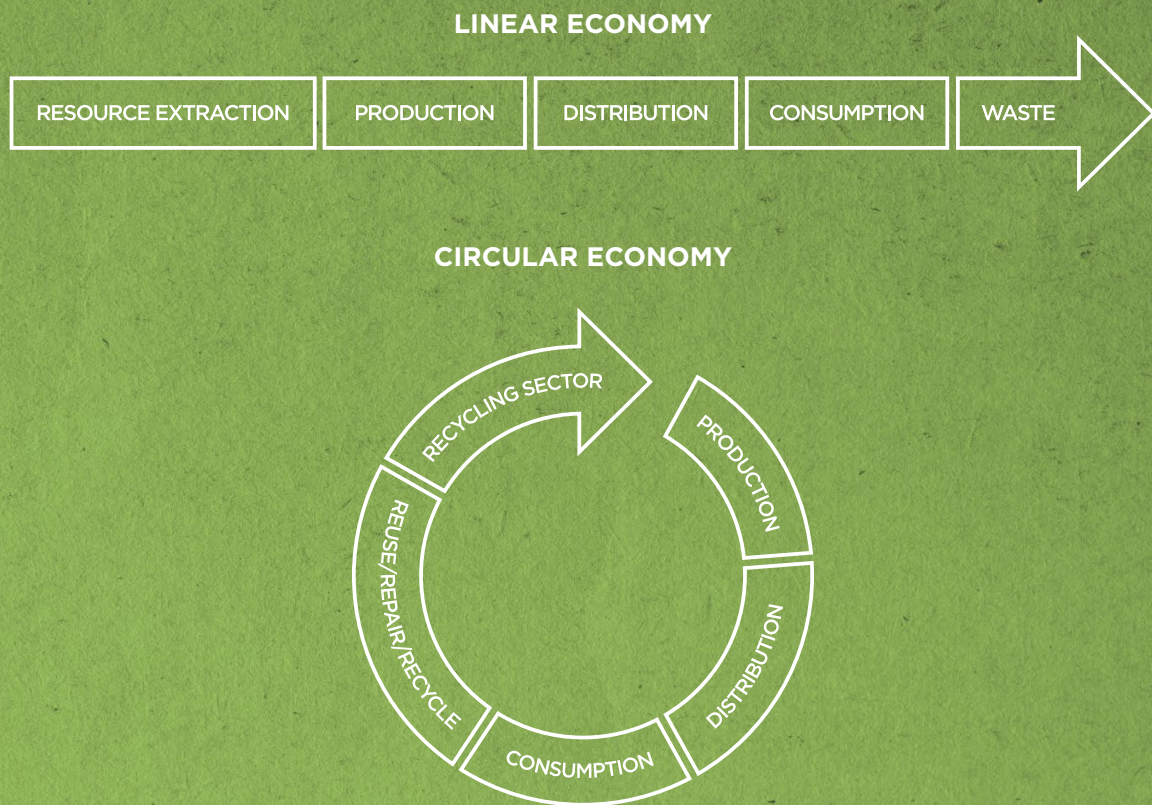
# A Network for Change

For over 20 years in Aotearoa New Zealand, a small group of people have upheld a deeply transformative vision: A zero waste world, where all materials are valued and nothing is wasted.

In this world, human energy and creativity is channelled into making landfills and pollution a thing of the past, and into more conscious, intelligent ways of living:

*Implementing Zero Waste will eliminate all discharges to land, water or air that are a threat to planetary, human, animal or plant health.<sup>1</sup>*

The vision requires moving from a linear economy, where resources are extracted, used and eventually dumped in land or water or burned, to a circular one in which resources are used again and again.



In 2003 in Aotearoa New Zealand, a national network called the Community Recycling Network was formed, which in 2017 was renamed the Zero Waste Network. Since 2006 the Community Enterprise Network Trust (CENT) has provided the legal entity for the network. These pages share the story of this network and what is being learned from it, since the seeds of its creation in the late 1980s.

<sup>1</sup> See <http://zerowaste.co.nz/why-zero-waste/>.



## Heart of the network

**The Zero Waste Network (ZWN) is a collective of individuals, groups and community enterprises across Aotearoa working to make zero waste a reality. The vision has always been big – a truly circular economy, with communities leading the change, through the vehicle of resource recovery, fuelled by community enterprise.**

The Zero Waste Network is the trading name for the Community Enterprise Network Trust (CENT)<sup>2</sup>. CENT founders believe in the power of community networks and community enterprise to create positive change. The resource recovery space has been the core focus for ZWN/CENT but the vision has always been broader than zero waste. Collaboration since 2016 with the [Community Energy Network](https://communityenergy.org.nz/)<sup>3</sup> and [Environment Hubs Aotearoa](http://www.environmenthubs.nz/)<sup>4</sup>, and a partnership with the [Akina Foundation](http://akina.org.nz/)<sup>5</sup> since 2017, are opening wider opportunities.

The ZWN is a membership organisation, providing the backbone for a national zero waste movement. Collectively, ZWN members employ 350+ people, with an annual turnover of \$21 million. A part time Coordinator provides the ‘glue’ for the network.

In 2015 the ZWN became a service delivering community enterprise – winning a four year Auckland Council contract to [redistribute reusable items](#)<sup>6</sup> from Auckland’s inorganic collection.

The ZWN mission is to connect, educate, enable and inspire zero waste enterprises to reach their goals, and to be a unifying voice for progressive change. Core activities of the ZWN are:

- Zero waste information and resources
- Resource recovery training, site visits and study tours
- Peer support for local resource recovery community enterprise
- Supporting collaboration, joint ventures and national initiatives
- Catalysing change towards zero waste through advocacy, education, promotion and leading by example
- Consultancy and advisory services
- Providing opportunities for the network to learn, share, be inspired and connect.

The long game for the ZWN is to make it as easy as possible for people and society to make the shift to zero waste. It is also to support broader social, economic and environmental change via community led and owned enterprise.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://zerowaste.co.nz/about-us/cent/>.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://communityenergy.org.nz/>.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.environmenthubs.nz/>.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://akina.org.nz/>, also <http://zerowaste.co.nz/social-enterprise-sector-development-programme/> and the <https://www.theimpactinitiative.org.nz/>.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://zerowaste.co.nz/auckland-inorganic-reuse-project/>.

## Magic of the network

There is a magic about the ZWN rooted in the fact that it is held by a small group of people who have known each other for a long time, who hold a lot of aroha and care for each other. ZWN Board members are all zero waste practitioners with considerable experience in the field.

The ZWN leadership and membership models these core values:

- Passionate commitment to the zero waste kaupapa
- Generosity, trust, care, kindness, relationship building
- Community led and community centred
- Willing to be courageous and take risks
- Fun and optimism
- Realism and pragmatism
- Sharing and collaboration
- Being inclusive, honest, and open sourcing ideas and information
- Strength in numbers rather than patch protection
- A sense of togetherness, safety and looking out for each other.

“There is something about the way we care about each other that flows out into the network. You feel like someone has got your back. You can take risks – someone is there to help you out.”

“We get a buzz out of being together. It’s really fun and friendly. Not taking it all too seriously.”

*“People make things work. We have strength and vulnerability as well. The Board has a deep industry knowledge. Our day to day roles are running businesses. We are [zero waste] practitioners in strategic roles with lots of life experience.”<sup>7</sup>*



ZWN Board and staff at the October 2018 ZWN hui

<sup>7</sup> All quotes from here are from ZWN Board and network members, unless otherwise stated.

## Community enterprise focus

The ZWN grew from local communities creating community recycling enterprises. Early examples in the late 1980s were in Devonport and CBEC in Kaitiaia. The fortunes of these community enterprises is a big story in itself, as council contracts are won and lost in dynamic local contexts.

The Zero Waste Network supports community enterprises through these journeys. These enterprises take a community development approach to waste, creating major benefits including local jobs, waste diversion, social connection and affordable repurposed goods. Here are some ZWN member community enterprise examples; see also <http://zerowaste.co.nz/case-studies>.

### CBEC KAITAIA

CBEC was created in 1989 in response to major unemployment and social problems arising from New Zealand's 1980s economic reforms. Its goal was to create local jobs through a community owned organization. On the closure of the town's landfill, CBEC persuaded the council to give it a three year community recycling centre contract, based on projected landfill savings.

In 2015, after 24 years of CBEC service the council awarded the local waste and recycling contract to a Whangarei company, based on price. CBEC continues a family of nine businesses serving the local community.

See <http://cbec.co.nz/our-story>



Members of the CBEC crew

### XTREME ZERO WASTE RAGLAN

The Raglan landfill was closed in 1998 and local Educational Trust, Whakamaua-te-Aio, took over greenwaste and paper/cardboard recycling. Xtreme Waste took on Business Collections and Rural pick up, collectively resulting in 2001 in a 74% diversion of solid waste from landfill.

Over time Xtreme Waste has taken on the recycling/transfer station, kerbside recycling, a waste minimisation information service, community group mentoring, eco festivals and food waste collections and composting. It is visited by thousands and has won multiple awards. Waste diversion rates continue to increase.

See <http://xtremezerowaste.org.nz/our-story/>



Xtreme Zero Waste HQ

## WAIHEKE

In 1998 Waiheke Islanders formed the Waste Resource Trust, to grow community responsibility for waste management. In 2001, Clean Stream Waiheke Ltd, a joint venture between WRT and CBEC, was awarded the waste collection and transfer station management contracts.

In 2009, the community-owned organisation lost the tender process, with Auckland City Council awarding the \$22 million contract to Australian multinational Transpacific Industries, on the grounds its tender was \$600,000 lower.

See [www.wrt.org.nz](http://www.wrt.org.nz)



## WASTEBUSTERS WANAKA AND CENTRAL OTAGO

In 1999, the Wanaka and Hawea communities set up Wanaka Wastebusters, as they were sick of all their waste going to landfill. In 2001 the Alexandra community set up Central Otago Wastebusters. In 2015 Wanaka agreed to take over the Central Otago Wastebusters, which was facing financial collapse.

Today, Wastebusters employs 37 people and undertakes business and events recycling, reuse shops, drop-off recycling, education for sustainability, advocacy and waste minimization.

See [www.wastebusters.co.nz/about/history/](http://www.wastebusters.co.nz/about/history/)



# The Zero Waste Network journey

Key phases and events for the ZWN are summarised below. A one page poster of the ZWN journey is at Appendix One and <http://zerowaste.co.nz/about-us/>.

<p><b>LATE 1980S TO 2000</b> Innovative communities set up community recycling enterprises</p>	<p>Communities including Kaitaia, Kaikoura, Wanaka, Waiheke and Raglan start to set up community recycling and reuse enterprises, via Council contracts</p>
<p><b>1997</b> Zero Waste New Zealand Trust formed<sup>8</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ZWNZT is set up to provide funding to zero waste practitioners and run a national zero waste campaign. Major focus on building Council support for zero waste</li> <li>• “<a href="#">Waste Not Consulting</a><sup>9</sup>” is established</li> </ul>
<p><b>1999-2002</b> Events and first New Zealand Waste Strategy create focus and connection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ashburton ‘Kitchen Table’ event 1999</li> <li>• First national zero waste conference Kaitaia 2000</li> <li>• Network cemented via people working together to influence the NZ Waste Strategy 2000-2002</li> <li>• Local interest in community recycling ignites as people visit operating sites and bring the idea back to their communities</li> <li>• Change of management at Zero Waste NZ Trust 2002 and demise of Recycling Operators of NZ, leads to discussions about forming a new peak body</li> </ul>
<p><b>2002-2003</b> Zero Waste Academy Established</p>	<p>Zero Waste Academy established to support training and accreditation in resource recovery. Established in Kaikoura in 2002 then moved to Massey University in 2003<sup>10</sup></p>
<p><b>2003-4</b> Community Recycling Network created as an informal entity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2003 Raglan Conference - decision to create the Community Recycling Network (CRN), an informal network</li> <li>• First draft of waste minimisation legislation discussed at Raglan hui and taken on road by Green Party</li> <li>• 2004 Zero Waste Community Advice network established</li> </ul>
<p><b>2003-2012</b></p>	<p>Working intensely with EXITO (Extractions Industry Training Organisation) to build unit standards, training/assessment and moderation resources for a range of national certificates and diplomas in Resource Recovery. A number of the CRN member organisations and executive become trainer/assessors and many staff become trained</p>

<sup>8</sup> See <http://zerowaste.co.nz/assets/ProfileofaNationalCampaign.pdf> for a report on the zero waste landscape and campaign in New Zealand by the Zero Waste New Zealand Trust (2000).

<sup>9</sup> Waste Not Consulting was set up with funding from the ZWNZT to provide waste minimisation consultancy services and involves ZWN members. See <https://www.wastenot.co.nz/>

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/departments/centres-research/zero-waste-academy/introduction-and-back-ground.cfm> for more on the Zero Waste Academy.



<p><b>2005</b></p> <p><b>Reclaiming Auckland's Resources Report sows seeds for Auckland's Resource Recovery Network</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Envision</a><sup>11</sup> report '<a href="#">Reclaiming Auckland's Resources</a><sup>12</sup>' outlines a Resource Recovery Network vision for Auckland</p>
<p><b>2006-2008</b></p> <p><b>At least eight local community enterprises in place nationally</b></p>	<p>Ashburton, Wanaka, Kaitaia, Raglan, Kaikoura, Thames, Porirua and Waiheke community enterprises in place</p>
<p><b>2007</b></p> <p><b>MOU with ZWNZT</b></p>	<p>Memorandum of Understanding between Zero Waste NZ Trust and CRN established</p>
<p><b>2008</b></p> <p><b>Waste Minimisation Act passed National e-waste collaboration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Party and CRN members key in setting this Act up to hold real potential (eg inclusion of waste levy, product stewardship)</li> <li>• CRN collaborates on nationwide e-waste recycling project funded by the Waste Minimisation Fund, potential not realized as government's promised product stewardship scheme did not eventuate</li> </ul>
<p><b>2009 onwards</b></p> <p><b>Some Council retraction from community recycling contracts</b></p>	<p>Some CRN members lose Council recycling contracts from 2009 onwards</p>
<p><b>2012</b></p> <p><b>Auckland zero waste leadership</b></p>	<p>With communities, CRN influences Auckland Council to adopt a zero waste 2040 vision and implement a Resource Recovery Network across Auckland in 2012</p>
<p><b>2014</b></p> <p><b>MOU with the waste industry peak body WasteMINZ</b></p>	<p>CRN/<a href="#">WasteMINZ</a><sup>13</sup> Memorandum of Understanding 2014</p>
<p><b>2015</b></p> <p><b>ZWN wins Auckland Council contract to redistribute inorganic collection items</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRN awarded four year contract by Auckland Council in 2015 to distribute reusable materials from the inorganic collection</li> <li>• National zero waste hui held in Auckland 2015 and 2016</li> <li>• Zero Waste Guardians Group established in Auckland in 2015</li> </ul>
<p><b>2015</b></p> <p><b>MOU with the waste industry sector via WasteMinz</b></p>	<p>The first Auckland Council/community resource recovery centre established - Waiuku Zero Waste. New procurement process enables Council to purchase not only waste diversion services but quadruple bottom line benefits. Waiuku Zero Waste is a partnership between Xtreme Zero Waste and the Waiuku Community. Each successive Auckland Resource Recovery Centre supports the establishment of the next (Waitakere/Henderson, Helensville, Devonport, Great Barrier).</p>

<sup>11</sup> Envision is a zero waste consultancy involving ZWN members, see <http://www.envision-nz.com/#home>.

<sup>12</sup> Access the report [here](#).

<sup>13</sup> WasteMINZ is a representative body for the country's waste, resource recovery and contaminated land management sectors in Aotearoa, see <https://www.wasteminz.org.nz/about/>.

**2016**

**Community network collaboration begins**

CRN, Environment Hubs Aotearoa and Community Energy Network collaboration blossoms, and the first joint Strengthening Communities hui taking place

**2017**

**Community Recycling Network renamed the Zero Waste Network**

Community Recycling Network trading name changed to Zero Waste Network to reflect the priorities and work of members

**2017**

**ZWN/CENT work in the social enterprise space increases**

Establishment of partnership between Akina and CENT, which includes the Community Energy Network and Environment Hubs Aotearoa, to nurture social and community enterprise

**2018**

**Hopeful times**

- Government ban on single use plastics, planned increase in waste levy, TyreWise project reignited
- “Waste has become more topical in the last 12 months than the past 12 years.”

Community Resources Whakatane Reuse Shop



# The Auckland story

In recent years the ZWN has been strongly impacted by events in Auckland, as outlined below.

*“Auckland Council has been the biggest influence on the zero waste community sector in years. They have been looking for a group like ours [CRN/ZWN] to help lead the way in Auckland and we have been looking for growth in the sector that we could assist with. Councils are coming from across Australasia to Auckland to see what is happening here.”*

*“From a ZWN perspective the Auckland inorganic collection contract has been a game changer. In terms of money and people resources the contract has lifted the profile and capacity of the organisation.”*

Auckland inorganic collection redistribution depot, with ZWN staff and members



When the Auckland supercity was formed in 2010, strong submissions from the community sector ensured that the Resource Recovery Network mooted back in 2005 by ZWN member Envision was part of the new council's 2012 Waste Minimisation and Management Plan. The council also set a 2040 zero waste vision for Auckland.

CRN put in a bid in for the new council inorganic collection service and advocated for splitting the contract into two, with a waste company doing the collections and the community sector auditing, sorting and distributing. Auckland Council split the contract so that Waste Management and the Community Recycling Network worked together: "It probably cost us \$30k to put the tender in for the inorganic collection, but we achieved the 'Triple C' of Council, Community and Corporate."

**“ The community waste sector in Auckland comes together through the Zero Waste Guardians Group. Council staff are accessible, they listen and work with us as partners. ”**



**Key zero waste enablers undertaken by Auckland Council include:**

- Adopting a social procurement process which lowered price weighting and strengthened non-price weighting of tenders, to open the door for community enterprise
- Council contracted Envision to build the capacity of groups to apply and deliver before tenders came out
- Investing in relationships, and in social and environmental outcomes
- Setting up a [Waste Minimisation Innovation Fund](#)<sup>14</sup> to activate and resource community led zero waste activity.

For Auckland Council's community development approach to waste, see [Getting to Zero: Community WasteWise Impact 2016-2017](#).<sup>15</sup> The council's social procurement approach is the subject of national and overseas interest. It holds huge potential for community enterprise and for achieving better outcomes across many council services. ZWN is learning a lot from each tender process and is bringing this knowledge into its community enterprise development work (see next steps).

<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/grants-community-support-housing/grants/regional-grants/Pages/about-waste-minimisation-innovation-fund.aspx>.

<sup>15</sup> See <http://weavingchange.nz/wp-content/uploads/Very-final-Waste-Wise-Report-v3-20-Nov-2017-low-res.pdf>.

## ZWN strengths

As a national vehicle to build critical mass towards zero waste in Aotearoa, key strengths of the network are summarized below.

- A big, broad vision
- Strong values and ethics
- Stability and continuity of key people, giving a depth of knowledge and experience
- High quality management of the network by the Executive Officer
- Strong consistent ZWN leadership (Board structure involves four permanent Trustees)
- Twenty year history, profile and reputation
- A philosophy of sharing knowledge, intellectual property and skills
- Skilled members who are change makers
- Willingness to share, help, coach and partner with groups and communities
- Key role over time of anchor member organisations such as CBEC
- Bringing the commercial, council, government and community sectors together, with their different strengths and capacities
- Sharing stories of success and challenge
- Adoption of community/social enterprise as a valid model
- Grass roots community involvement – this is a community led, ground up network
- Agility, flexibility and ability to respond quickly
- Willingness to take risks
- Inspirational, innovative and persistent
- Influencing and seeding change

“ The ZWN Board is incredible and unusual. There is something about those people... ”

“ The ZWN wants to work with people who are authentic. It’s about the values. The ZWN brand can be trusted and it cannot be bought. ”

ZWN Board and staff at 2017 national hui



## ZWN successes

Major successes linked to the ZWN to date are summarized below.

### DIRECT:

- Keeping a zero waste vision alive
- Annual hui connects the network
- Roadshows, site visits and study tours
- A community enterprise training programme that can be applied nationally
- Waste diversion evidenced
- Significant social, environmental and economic outcomes achieved by members
- Track record of delivery, including the national e-waste project
- ZWN gaining the Auckland Council inorganic collection redistribution contract in 2015
- ZWN represented on the Ministry for the Environment Waste Advisory Panel and Recycling Working Group 2018
- Building alliances - with WasteMinz and the waste industry, government, community sector, councils, Community Energy Network, Environmental Hubs Aotearoa, Akina Foundation

### MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO:

- Waste Minimisation Act 2008 - at the 2003 annual network hui in Raglan the first draft of this Act is created. It is taken on the road by the Green Party, chosen from the Parliament ballot and passed by parliament in 2008<sup>16</sup>
- New Zealand is an early adopter of a zero waste vision
- New community zero waste organisations keep emerging

<sup>16</sup> See <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/waste-minimisation.html>.

“ Without ZWN there would still be recycling, but it would be at a lot lower level in NZ. ”

“ One of our main achievements is that we are a credible source of information and we increasingly get asked for media comment. ”

Board members take the ZWN to Wellington 2013



## Challenges

*“Being an activist has its costs. Challenging Ministers means no funding when you take them to task. Meanwhile packaging and beverage lobby groups are well resourced.”*

*“The last ten years have been dark days for waste minimisation, we have catching up to do.”*

*“Building our financial strength and the resources to match the opportunity is our main issue.”*

The biggest challenge for the ZWN is resourcing and access to capital. There is much to be done nationally and resourcing that work is testing. The ZWN has the equivalent of three full time paid workers, including a part-time Coordinator; the rest is voluntary: “We donate a lot of time for nothing, which makes it difficult at times”.

The central government relationship with the ZWN has ebbed and flowed depending on political philosophies. In 2002 when the first New Zealand Waste Strategy was released central government was reportedly very involved with the network, however: “For the last ten years National has had a free market policy and taken a hands off approach, even if the market is broken. It cut staff in the Ministry for the Environment, and advancing zero waste nationally stalled”.

As noted, over the last ten years some ZWN members have lost council resource recovery contracts to national and multinational waste companies. Community enterprises are highly vulnerable to the loss of these contracts, when competing against the commercial sector. This is compounded by challenges gaining financing for the capital required to run these contracts.

Significant staff churn in councils and central government is an issue, especially when key relationships drive progress. There is however a great deal of continuity of knowledge and experience in the waste industry, the ZWN and the community sector. Succession planning in the ZWN is needed for when longstanding members move on.

Low revenue makes battling strong lobbying from waste producing industries tricky: “Our challenges come from the producers of waste. The beverage sector is a great example. They are very effective lobbyists. The amount of money government has put into voluntary [waste minimisation] schemes has been eye watering and very ineffective.”

Building relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships with the waste industry is an ongoing challenge and aspiration for ZWN. Waste industry culture favours competition over collaboration, though as relationships develop opportunities emerge.

**“ Access to capital is an issue, you cannot sell equity in community enterprises. If you take out the investment option you end up with loans. Hopefully we will see the banks take this on. How do you scale and compete without capital? ”**



## Key insights

Some of the things the ZWN has learned over the years are as follows.

### POWER OF THE FEW AND RESILIENCE

One person or a handful of people can make a huge difference. The ZWN is awash with examples where a small committed group has achieved seemingly impossible things. Also, despite a bleak national policy environment for the last decade and ups and downs with council contracts and support, the ZWN has continued to make gains, grow and develop.

### COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE DELIVERS MORE

The benefits and community outcomes from a community enterprise approach to resource recovery and waste minimization far outweigh those delivered by a commercial approach. Much has been achieved despite modest resources. Clarifying the social, economic and environmental outcomes achieved from a community development approach to waste is needed<sup>17</sup>:

*“We need ways of measuring social outcomes that give them weight and value that is recognised everywhere. We need smart economics to satisfy “Finance””.*

### CENTRAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO STEP UP

Central government holds major keys to change, such as creating disincentives to waste and pollute, bringing in a container deposit scheme, increasing the waste levy, and proactively supporting the move to a circular economy.

### POWER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Numerous local examples and the Auckland Council experience demonstrate the massive role that councils can play to move towards zero waste. The Local Government Act is permissive and enables innovation. The behaviour change focus in the Auckland Council Waste team is reported to have made a huge difference, as well as the council enablers outlined above.

### NEED TO INVEST IN RELATIONSHIPS AND TAKE RISKS

The ZWN is clear that it is people and relationships that make things work or not. Building relationships and trust across sectors to achieve common goals is skillful work, requiring continuity of people. The importance of trust, optimism, connection and making it fun cannot be overstated.

The experience of the ZWN over the years also shows the importance of being unconventional and taking risks to achieve change. Some risks taken haven't worked and there have been plenty of dramas and heavy costs for individuals and collectives along the way. On the whole however, for the ZWN great risk has produced great rewards.

<sup>17</sup> See <http://weavingchange.nz/wp-content/uploads/Very-final-Waste-Wise-Report-v3-20-Nov-2017-low-res.pdf> for one example.



## What next?

*“There is a sense the world is heading for chaos. The Zero Waste Network can drive real change, we have the recipe and we are happy to share. The ZWN is ready for action.”*

Key areas of ZWN opportunity and development include the following.

### GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP

Revitalising its relationship with central government and making connections across Ministries is a priority. Opportunities exist to pursue national initiatives and cornerstone contracts with government, for example around a new container deposit scheme, product stewardship and supporting local community enterprise. The ZWN has a track record of delivery and is an experienced, positive and knowledgeable partner for government.

### COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

In 2017 the ZWN formed an MOU with the Akina Foundation, to explore what can be learned about community enterprise from the waste sector and applied to other sectors. The ZWN brings a practitioner, real world lens to community enterprise development. A national entity to grow community enterprise is just one of many possibilities.

Also, for the last three years the ZWN has been working with the [Community Energy Network](https://communityenergy.org.nz/)<sup>18</sup> and [Environment Hubs Aotearoa](http://www.environmenthubs.nz/)<sup>19</sup>. The power of leveraging multiple networks is being explored.

### COUNCIL RELATIONSHIPS

The message to councils from the ZWN is to give recycling and resource recovery contracts to local community enterprise (along with appropriate capacity building support), to achieve greater community outcomes. This requires councils to form long term, trusting relationships with their communities.

Sharing the Auckland experience and encouraging other councils to follow suit is a major role for the ZWN in the medium term. Seeking longer term council contracts for community resource recovery enterprises will be important, and encouraging councils to pursue social procurement that enables community enterprise and community development approaches to waste.

### WASTE INDUSTRY RELATIONSHIP

The ZWN wants to work with the waste industry for mutual benefit:

*“With industry in the beginning, seeing community come into this space they probably thought that it wouldn’t come to much. They have seen it grow so either we battle each other or work out how we can work together. There are really good opportunities to work cooperatively together and learning to be had from both sides.”*

The Auckland Council inorganic collection is a great example of bringing council, the waste industry and the community sector together to achieve greater outcomes than a traditional commercial approach.

### IMPACT MEASUREMENT

In May 2018 the ZWN Board decided to investigate how ZWN members are measuring their impact in terms of reuse, and to support them with useful tools and processes. This project will help members to identify their social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts, identify and share good practice and develop shared impact measurement around community resource recovery. This project grew out of the expressed needs of ZWN members, see <http://zerowaste.co.nz/projects/shared-impact-measurement/>.

### AUCKLAND, PACIFIC AND GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

The inorganics contract in Auckland is growing, with 100+ community groups now involved. Evolving this over time is exciting for the network. Other opportunities exist on New Zealand’s small islands, in the Pacific Islands, in Australia and elsewhere, via study tours, exchanges, training and relationship building. In all cases the ZWN will be guided by the community concerned.

**The future is looking bright for the Zero Waste Network and the zero waste kaupapa in Aotearoa.**

<sup>18</sup> See <https://communityenergy.org.nz/>.

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.environmenthubs.nz/>.

## Zero Waste Network Journey 1980s to 2018

### KEY NETWORK INFLUENCERS

A BIG, SHARED VISION	PASSIONATE, CONSISTENT PEOPLE	COMMUNITY LED CHANGE AND ENTERPRISE	A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY AND OPENNESS	CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT (OR LACK OF)	COUNCIL SUPPORT AND CONTRACTS (OR LACK OF)	NATIONAL GATHERINGS AND ADVOCACY
----------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--	--	----------------------------------



Late 1980s onwards	Innovative communities set up community recycling enterprises (eg Kaitaia, Kaikoura, Wanaka, Waiheke, Raglan).
1997	Zero Waste New Zealand Trust formed.
1999-2002	Events and first New Zealand Waste Strategy create focus and connection.
2002-2003	Zero Waste Academy formed.
2003	Community Recycling Network created as an informal entity. Annual national hui from this point.
2003-2012	Working with EXITO to build formal certification for resource recovery; many network members become trained.
2005	Reclaiming Auckland's Resources report sows seeds for Auckland's Resource Recovery Network.
2006	Community Recycling Network (CRN) formalises under the Community Enterprise Network Trust (CENT).
2008	Waste Minimisation Act passed. National e-waste collaboration - potential unrealised.
From 2009	Some councils retract from community recycling contracts.
2012	Auckland zero waste leadership emerges.
2015	CRN wins council contract to redistribute Auckland's inorganic collection materials. First Auckland resource recovery centre opens in Waiuku.
2016	Collaboration begins with Community Energy Network and Environment Hubs Aotearoa.
2017	Community Recycling Network renamed the Zero Waste Network.
2018	CENT and Akina Foundation partnership to grow community enterprise nationally. Hopeful times with more central government engagement and community demand for change.



zero  
waste  
NETWORK