



TASMANIAN REUSE IMPACT STUDY

Executive Report - March 2025





This project is an initiative of Charitable Reuse Australia and the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board. This report was prepared by Rawtec.

Rawtec (2025), Tasmanian Reuse Impact Study: Executive Report, Charitable Reuse Australia and Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board. 13 March 2025.

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their deep cultural and spiritual connections to the land, sea, and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and recognise their enduring cultures and traditions.

Recognition and thanks to project contributors

We extend our sincere gratitude to the individuals and organisations who contributed to this study, as listed in the Introduction section of this report. Your support has helped make this significant project possible.

Important notes

This document has been prepared by Rawtec Pty Ltd (Rawtec) for *Charitable Reuse Australia* and the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board. Rawtec has compiled this report in good faith, exercising due care and attention. The information contained within this document is based upon sources, experimentation and methodology which at the time of preparing this document were believed to be reasonably reliable and the accuracy of this information subsequent to this date may not necessarily be valid.

No representation is made about the accuracy, completeness or suitability of the information in this publication for any particular purpose. Rawtec shall not be liable for any damage which may occur to any person or organisation taking action on the basis of this publication. Readers should seek appropriate advice when applying the information to their specific needs.

This document, parts thereof or the information contained therein must not be used in a misleading, deceptive, defamatory or inaccurate manner or in any way that may otherwise be prejudicial to Rawtec, including without limitation, in order to imply that Rawtec has endorsed a particular product or service.





Foreword

Omer Soker, CEO, Charitable Reuse Australia

Charitable Reuse Australia commends the Tasmanian Waste & Resource Recovery Board for its Circular Economy leadership and vision to fund this important data study to quantify the triple bottom line impact of reuse (and repair) in the state.

Tasmania has a long history and culture of reuse, with Tasmanians already known as Australia's most generous donors of preloved items to charity, reflecting the state's well-known stewardship of the environment with its commitment to society in helping those in need.

Reuse is second only to reducing consumption for environmental benefits. Accelerating reuse is the second-best thing that all Australian Governments can do to drive environmental impact.

It is heartwarming to see Tasmania take this leadership role and become the second Australian Government after New South Wales to step up and embrace the challenge and opportunity of accelerating reuse at the top of the Waste Hierarchy. These two governments are setting the tone for the rest of Australia to follow.

A Circular Economy is essential for the sustainability of our environment, our society and our economy. However, no one can create it alone, because the road to circularity is founded in collaboration and collective actions that are framed by the Waste Hierarchy.

The Tasmanian Reuse Impact Study embodies all these values of circularity in action, as a world-leading Australian initiative

to accelerate the transition to a Circular Economy through higher order priorities. This is the first time that the environmental, economic and social benefits of reuse have been comprehensively measured in the state. The foundation of this study are the National Reuse Measurement Guidelines developed in partnership with Monash University, supported by world leading environmental conversion factors, that define a standardised approach to collecting, interpreting and reporting on reuse impact data.

The datasets from the Tasmanian Reuse Impact Study outlined in this report are as inspiring as they are powerful. Used effectively, they can inform the development of Circular Economy policy in Australia, as well as providing essential insights into the size, structure and unique characteristics of reuse in Tasmania. They also provide a credible evidence base demonstrating the importance of higher order interventions like reuse. In short, these datasets prove what the Waste Hierarchy has known all along – that the most effective interventions are prioritised at the top.

These datasets also drive the Tasmanian Reuse Impact Calculator that enable reuse organisations and councils to easily assess, quantify and demonstrate the environmental, economic and social impact generated through their reuse activities.

It has been a delight working with the Waste & Resource Recovery Board in this collaborative study.



Foreword

Pam Allan, Chair, Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board (WRRB)

The Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board is pleased to have partnered on this important project.

Understanding the scale and impact of reuse and repair across Tasmania is essential for strategic planning and identifying opportunities to support the sector. Reuse sits high in the waste hierarchy, helping to extend the life of products and materials within the economy. This aligns with the Vision of the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-26.

Tasmania - a place where
nothing is wasted

Tasmanians have long embraced the principles of reuse, recycling, and waste reduction, even if the term “circular economy” is relatively new. The Board is committed to strengthening Tasmania’s circular economy—reducing waste and emissions while enhancing sustainability and liveability. Recognising the value in materials that might otherwise go to landfill is key to this approach, and we support further investment in programs that boost recovery and reuse.

The Tasmanian Reuse Impact Study highlights where reuse and repair are an essential part of the life of Tasmanians. The Board looks forward to reviewing its findings and identifying ways to enhance reuse efforts for the benefit of all Tasmanians and the environment.

Executive Summary

About the Project

Tasmanians take pride in their strong reuse culture, rehoming millions of secondhand goods each year. Charitable Reuse Australia, in partnership with the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board (WRRB), undertook this project to measure reuse activity and its impacts using Monash University's National Reuse Measurement Guidelines. Rawtec conducted the research, with support from an industry reference group representing several Tasmanian reuse organisations. The study showcases how the sector delivers significant benefits, including job creation, consumer savings, carbon emission reductions, and more.

Reuse generates
**34 times
more jobs**
in TAS than recycling per tonne



Reuse and resale saves the community
\$147 million
in TAS every year



Reuse in TAS saves
**70,000
tonnes**
of CO₂ emissions every year

Executive Summary

Key Findings

The study covered reuse activity across charity shops, not-for-profit reuse organisations, secondhand clothing shops, rent-a-racks, tip shops, and commercial reuse collectors/exporters. 172 reuse shops operate in Tasmania, representing 30 shops per 100,000 people. In 2023-24, these organisations:

Volume of Reuse
Reused an estimated
13.9 million
secondhand items.



Economic Value
Sold or donated secondhand goods that are reused valued at approximately
\$54 million
in 2023-24.



Contributions to Social and Environmental Purposes

Raised an estimated
\$8.3 million
in funds that was reinvested into social and community programs and initiatives.

Cost of Living Relief
Saved the Tasmanian community an estimated
\$147 million
through selling and providing secondhand goods, compared to buying new items.



Employment Impact

Paid Employment
Generated approximately
414 full-time
equivalents (FTEs), including 192 FTEs for individuals facing barriers to employment.

Paid Employment Compared to Recycling
Generated
34 times more jobs
than recycling (on a per tonne basis).

Volunteers
Employed
615
full-time equivalent (FTE) volunteers across TAS.



Executive Summary

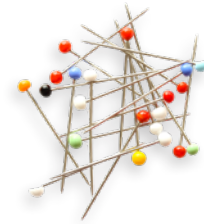


Training and Skill Development

Provided an estimated

30,000 hours

of training to their paid staff and volunteers.



Repair

An estimated

100 tonnes

of secondhand items were repaired both onshore and internationally

Community Engagement

Facilitated an estimated

3.4 million

transactions between the public and reuse shops.



Environmental Impact



Waste Diversion

Diverted an estimated

11,000 tonnes

of products from landfill to reuse.



CO₂-e Emissions

Saved an estimated

70,000 tonnes

of CO₂-e, equivalent to removing **30,000** passenger vehicles from the road.



Water Savings

Saved approximately

2,700 megalitres

(ML) of water, equivalent to the volume of **1,100** Olympic-sized swimming pools.



Land Use

Saved about

37,000 hectares

of land, equivalent to the size of **51,000** soccer pitches.

Virgin Materials

Avoided the direct consumption of an estimated

5,300 tonnes

of virgin materials contained in displaced products.¹



These estimates are based on an Environmental Conversion Factors study by Lifecycles, examining the environmental impacts of products displaced by reuse.

¹ Secondhand products do not displace new products on a one for one basis. This estimate accounts for displacement rates and only includes the avoided virgin materials in the displaced end products. Secondhand displacement rates at which consumers displace new items for new, are assumed at 35% for Clothing and Footwear, 54% for furniture, and 50% for all other items. Additional volumes of virgin materials are avoided upstream (e.g. offcuts from producing textiles) but were not quantified in this study.

Executive Summary

Challenges

Tasmanian reuse shops face significant challenges, including volunteer shortages, a greater reliance on paid staff, limited storage and challenges managing dumping of unusable items. Fast fashion has lowered donation quality, while rising rent, wages, and waste fees add financial pressures. Large travel distances increase the costs of doing business. Poor public awareness of what items are suitable for donation add to costs and inefficiencies. There is a critical need for increased support in managing the lifecycle of products.

Opportunities

Reuse organisations identified key opportunities for support across several areas. Expanding volunteer recruitment through partnerships and government programs, along with investing in staff training, can strengthen workforce capacity. Establishing local textile recycling and improved repair capacity would provide a solution for items unsuitable for reuse. Financial sustainability can be improved by securing long-term funding, negotiating better lease terms, and reducing costs. Advocacy for infrastructure funding, supportive policies, and national schemes can enhance sustainability. Marketing efforts, including digital platforms and promotional campaigns, can increase customer outreach. Strengthening collaboration within the sector and engaging the community through targeted donation drives and government-supported behaviour change campaigns will further support reuse initiatives. Beyond these opportunities, implementing effective product stewardship schemes is a key initiative for expanding reuse through ensuring responsible design, collection, and redistribution of products.

Closing remarks

Tasmania's reuse sector punches above its weight, facilitating large reuse volumes despite a small population and high transport costs. It plays a vital role in sustainable development by creating jobs, generating economic value, supporting community programs, and delivering significant environmental benefits. These findings highlight the need to strengthen and expand reuse initiatives to maximise their impact and provide valuable insights for shaping policies that support reuse and accelerate Tasmania's transition to a circular economy.



Introduction

About the Project

Tasmanians take pride in their strong reuse culture, rehoming millions of secondhand goods each year. This study estimates reuse activity and impacts in Tasmania in 2023-24. The project demonstrates the immense benefits that the sector delivers, including employment, consumer savings, raising funds for charitable programs, carbon emission reductions and more.

Who is behind this study?

This project is an initiative of Charitable Reuse Australia in partnership with the Tasmanian WRRB. Rawtec was engaged to lead research for the project with support from the industry reference group (listed below).

Project partners	Charitable Reuse Australia and the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board (WRRB)
Lead researcher	Rawtec
Project team and members of industry reference group	Omer Soker, Salma Ghoraba (Charitable Reuse Australia), Taryn Townsend (Hobart City Mission), Peter Freak (Launceston City Mission), Alasdair Wells, Clare Lond-Caulk (Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania), Kat Heinrich, Lucas De Garis (Rawtec), Tom Crawford (Resource Work Co-operative), Sam Brough (St Vincent de Paul Society), Susannah Slatter (Uniting Vic/Tas), Hugh Christie, and Pam Allan (Tasmanian WRRB).
Organisations that participated in research	ADRA Australia, Australian Red Cross, Beaconsfield Neighbourhood House, Dress for Success Tasmania, Garage Sale Trail, Glenorchy Tipshop, Huonville Reuse Shops, Hobart City Mission, JustWaste, Kingborough Waste Services, Launceston City Mission, Lifeline Tasmania, Longford Rotary Community Shop, Recycle Care Australia, Recycled Recreation, Redress Hub, Resource Work Cooperative, Rollin' Preowned & Thrift, Salvos Stores, SCR Group, Self Help Workplace, St Marys Op Shop, St Vincent De Paul Society, Statewide Australia, Swan's Moonah Bookshop, Tassie Twos Vintage, That Preloved Place in Sorell, The Finders, The Hub Op Shop, and Vincent Industries.

How was data collected and reported?

The project adopted the National Reuse Measurement Guidelines (Monash University) to quantify reuse activity across Tasmania and estimate triple bottom line impacts. Data on reuse volumes was collected via a survey with Tasmanian reuse using point-of-sales data wherever possible. In addition, a subset of data was collected on repair prior to reuse.

What reuse activity is covered in this report?

This project estimates reuse activity across Tasmanian reuse organisation types listed in Table 1. This includes charity reuse/op shops, other not-for-profits², secondhand clothing shops, rent-a-racks, and tip shops. These organisations are referred to throughout the report as 'reuse organisations'.

Reuse activities not captured in this study include pawnshops, salvage yards, auction houses, commercial secondhand furniture shops, reclaimed timber shops³ and online marketplaces. The project survey could be expanded in future years to capture these additional volumes of reuse activity.

Pre-consumer items are new items sold/donated from retailers and manufacturers to organisations for resale. These items were excluded from the project analysis because they have not previously been worn or used, and therefore are not technically counted as 'reuse'.

Table 1: Reuse organisation types included, separately reported, and not captured in study

Reuse Organisation Types Included	Not Captured
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Charity reuse / op shops● Other not-for-profit reuse shop²● Secondhand clothing shops (commercial)● Secondhand bookshops (commercial)● Rent-a-racks and consignment shops● Commercial reuse collectors/exporters● Tip shops (both council and third-party run)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pawnshops● Auction houses● Commercial secondhand furniture shops and salvage yards● Online marketplaces● Reclaimed timber shops³

² includes other not-for-profit reuse organisations that don't identify as traditional charities, with their focus on enterprise to help society.

³ reclaimed timber was captured, but not from organisations that handle timber exclusively.



Reuse Shops

We identified a total of 172 reuse shops in Tasmania across the scope of organisations included in the project (Table 2). This is equivalent to 30 reuse shops per 100,000 people. Most reuse shops are either part of large organisations with multiple shops (7 or more), or are small, independent organisations with one shop.



In Tasmania there are
30 reuse shops
 per 100,000 people

Table 2: Distribution of reuse shops amongst size of organisation across Tasmania

	Number of shops	Proportion of shops
Large Organisations (7+ shops each)	79	46%
Medium Organisations (2-6 shops each)	23	13%
Small Organisations (1 shop each)	70	41%
Total	172	100%

Table 3 provides a breakdown of types of reuse shop by region. We identified:

- **81** reuse shops in in South Tasmania, **50** reuse shops North Tasmania, and **41** reuse shops in North West Tasmania, or
- **128** Charity/ NFP reuse shops⁴, **20** tip shops, and **24** commercial reuse shops⁵.

Table 3: Distribution of reuse organisations across Tasmania

	Charity/ NFP reuse shops ⁴	Tip Shops	Commercial reuse shops ⁵	Total
South Tasmania	56	7	18	81
North Tasmania	40	6	4	50
North West Tasmania	32	7	2	41
Total	128	20	24	172

⁴ includes Neighbourhood Houses/Community Centres with op shops.

⁵ includes Rent-a-racks/Consignment shops, and commercial secondhand bookshops.

Items Reused

In 2023-24, an estimated 13.9 million secondhand items were rehomed through Tasmanian charity shops, other not-for-profits, secondhand clothing shops, rent-a-racks, commercial reuse collectors/exporters and tip shops. This equates to 24 items per person, and 11,000 tonnes or 19.3 kilograms per person. Of these items, 10.8 million were resold in Tasmania. Additionally, 77,000 were donated to welfare recipients. The remaining 3 million items were reused overseas (Table 4).

Table 4: Estimated number of items reused by reuse organisations in Tasmania, 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

	Items (#/yr)	Weight (t/yr)
Resold in Tasmania	10,750,000	10,000
Donated to Tasmanian welfare recipients	77,000	<100
Sold for overseas export and reuse	3,070,000	1,000
Total	13,890,000	11,000
Per Tasmanian	24 items/person	19.3kg/person

Table 5 provides a further breakdown of items locally reused (resold or donated) by region. An estimated:

- **4.7 million** items weighing 4,200 tonnes are reused in South Tasmania
- **3.2 million** items weighing 3,000 tonnes are reused in North Tasmania, and
- **2.9 million** items weighing 2,900 tonnes are reused in North West Tasmania

Table 5: Estimated number and weight of locally reused items by region in Tasmania, 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

	Items reused (#/yr)	Weight reused (t/yr)
South Tasmania	4,710,000	4,200
North Tasmania	3,190,000	3,000
North West Tasmania	2,920,000	2,900
Total resold and donated in Tasmania	10,820,000	10,000

Table 6 provides a further breakdown of items reused by product category. Of the 13.9 million items:

- **7.8 million** items (or 2,400 tonnes) were clothing
- **700,000** items (or 400 tonnes) were other textiles
- **230,000** items (or 4,700 tonnes) were furniture and large appliances
- **4.7 million** items (or 1,600 tonnes) were smaller household items, and
- **490,000** items (or 1,900 tonnes) were building and hardware items (such as wood and timber products).

Table 6: Further breakdown of data from Table 4 showing the estimated number of items reused and weight (tonnes) per product category, 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding. Note that these categories are based on the National Reuse Measurement Guidelines, which are drawn from the ABS charter of national accounts.

	Items reused (#/yr)	Weight reused (t/yr)
Clothing & textiles	8,520,000	2,900
Clothing	7,830,000	2,400
Clothing (knitwear)	240,000	100
Clothing (other than knitwear)	4,140,000	1,200
Clothing (not specified)	3,080,000	900
Footwear	370,000	200
Textiles	700,000	400
Raw textiles and fabrics	55,000	<100
Products and carpet	320,000	300
Handbags and suitcases	210,000	100
Other Textiles (not specified)	120,000	<100
Household and homewares, toys and games	4,880,000	6,300
Furniture and large appliances	230,000	4,700
Indoor furniture	350,000	2,300
Whitegoods and large appliances	75,000	2,400
Smaller items	4,650,000	1,600
Cushions and furnishings	90,000	<100
Glassware	300,000	100
Ceramics and pottery	460,000	200
Metal homewares, cutlery and cookware	470,000	100
Toys, sports, games, art supplies and bric a brac	630,000	200
Books, magazines, software and video games	1,030,000	300
Music and videos	320,000	100
Computers, peripherals and home electronics	170,000	100
Homewares/ bric a brac / electronics (not specified)	1,180,000	600
Building and hardware	490,000	1,900
Wood and timber products	180,000	300
Outdoor tools and machinery	66,000	300
Wood and timber products	19,000	200
Plastic products	20,000	<100
Rubber products	<100	<100
Ferrous metal	4,900	<100
Non-ferrous metal	<100	<100
Other (not specified)	200,000	1,100
Total	13,890,000	11,000

Economic Impact

Employment

Reuse organisations generated paid employment for an estimated **414 full time equivalents (FTEs)** in 2023-24. This includes **192 FTEs facing barriers to employment**, such as people with a disability and the long-term unemployed. Further, an estimated **615 FTEs volunteer** their time across reuse organisations.

Reuse provides more jobs on a per tonne basis than recycling and landfill:

- The estimated direct FTE employment per 10,000 tonnes of waste is 9.2 for recycling and 2.8 for landfill disposal.⁶
- This compares to 311 paid FTEs per 10,000 tonnes of material handled for reuse (Table 7).

In other words:



Reuse generates
34 times
more jobs than recycling
(on a per tonne basis).



Reuse generates
111 times
more jobs than landfill
(on a per tonne basis).

Table 7: Estimated employment by reuse organisations in Tasmania, 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

	Paid (FTEs)	Volunteer (FTEs)	Total (FTEs)
Open employment	222	210	432
Barriers to employment	192	405	597
Total	414	615	1,028
FTEs per 10,000 tonnes handled⁷	311	463	774

⁶ Access Economics (2009), Employment in waste management and recycling.

⁷ Denominator used accounts for the fact that material is handled twice in some instances across multiple organisations. E.g. material donated to a charity may be then sent to a commercial reuse collector/exporter. Total tonnes handled for reuse = 13,300 t/yr, whereas total tonnes reused = 11,000 t/yr.

Table 8 provides a breakdown employment by region. An estimated:

- **188** paid FTEs and **271** volunteer FTEs in South Tasmania
- **117** paid FTEs and **184** volunteer FTEs in North Tasmania
- **109** paid FTEs and **160** volunteer FTEs in North West Tasmania

Table 8 Estimated number of FTEs by region in Tasmania, 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding

	Paid (FTEs)	Volunteer (FTEs)
South Tasmania	188	271
North Tasmania	117	184
North West Tasmania	109	160
Total	414	615

Value of secondhand items sold or donated

Secondhand items sold or donated were valued at an estimated at **\$54 million** in 2023-24. This includes:

- **\$53 million** of items resold in Tasmania (e.g. through vintage and op shops)
- **\$630,000** of items donated to Tasmanian welfare recipients, and
- **\$400,000** of items exported overseas and reused (Table 9).

Table 9: Estimated value of secondhand items sold or donates by Tasmanian reuse organisations and are reused, 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

	Value (\$)
Resold in Tasmania	\$52,800,000
Donated to Tasmanian welfare recipients	\$630,000
Sold for overseas export and reuse	\$400,000
Total	\$53,800,000



Social Impact

Cost-of-living relief

Australia is facing a cost-of-living crisis. Reuse organisations provided an estimated **\$147 million** in community savings in 2023-24, or about \$600 of savings per household. This represents the savings to the community from buying or receiving secondhand goods compared to buying new.



Reuse organisations help to relieve cost of living pressures, saving Tasmanian residents **\$600** per household each year

Reinvestment of surplus into social and community programs and initiatives

Reuse organisations provide an important source of revenue to help fund social and community programs. In Tasmania, an estimated **\$8.3 million** was reinvested by reuse organisations into social and community programs in 2023-24. This includes support for people facing homelessness, people with a disability, youth, elderly people, families, and other social and community support.



Reuse organisations reinvested **\$8.3 million** in social and community programs and initiatives.

Hours of training provided per year

Reuse organisations provided an estimated **30,000 hours** of training to their paid staff and volunteers in Tasmania in 2023-24. This included work-readiness training, life skills, case management support and professional development (Table 10).

Table 10: Training provided to paid staff and volunteers across Tasmanian reuse organisations (estimated hrs/year), 2023-24. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

	Total Training Provided (hrs/yr)
Formal work-readiness training	2,600
Informal work-readiness training	15,000
Life skills (e.g. personal presentation, communication, etc)	1,000
Case-management support	6,600
Professional development (including training)	5,300
Total	30,000

Community engagement

Reuse shops provide opportunities for the public to participate in reuse activities. We estimate that the public undertook **3.4 million transactions** across Tasmania in 2023-24.

Intangible benefits

Reuse organisations also provide invaluable social benefits that extend beyond measurable outcomes.

For both paid and volunteer staff, these benefits include:

- Fostering social connections and a sense of belonging
- Providing purpose, routine, and meaningful engagement
- Boosting confidence, self-esteem, and personal fulfillment
- Facilitating intergenerational learning, skill-sharing, and personal growth
- Offering pathways to employment and skills development, particularly for those facing barriers to work

For the broader Tasmanian community, these benefits include:

- Instilling a sense of pride and collective responsibility for reducing environmental impacts of consumption
- Strengthening local networks and community resilience
- Creating opportunities for education and awareness around sustainable living
- Encouraging positive behavioural change by demonstrating the value of reuse

These social impacts reinforce the critical role reuse organisations play in not only reducing waste but also enriching the lives of individuals and communities across Tasmania.

Environmental Savings

Landfill diverted

Reuse organisations diverted an estimated **11,000 tonnes** of products from landfill to reuse in 2023-24.

Avoided consumption of virgin materials

Buying secondhand reduces the need for consumers to buy new products. This, in turn, avoids consumption of virgin materials that would otherwise have been used to make the new products. The direct consumption of about **5,300 tonnes** of virgin materials was avoided through reuse activity by Tasmanian reuse organisations.⁸



Reuse activities in Tasmania provides substantial savings of greenhouse gas emissions, water, and land.

Carbon, water, and land savings

Extracting virgin materials and manufacturing them into them into new products generates greenhouse gas emissions, uses land, and consumes water. Using secondhand items avoids environmental impacts of making new products. Reuse activity saved an estimated⁹:

- **70,000 tonnes of Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e)**, equivalent to taking 30,000 passenger vehicles off the road
- **2,700 megalitres (ML) of water**, equivalent to the water volume of 1,100 Olympic-sized swimming pools, and
- **37,000 hectares (ha) of land**, equivalent to the size of 51,000 soccer pitches.

Table 11: Estimated environmental savings of reuse activity through Tasmanian reuse organisations, 2023-24.

Landfill diversion to reuse (tonnes)	11,000
Avoided consumption of virgin materials (tonnes)	5,300
Carbon emission savings (tonnes CO ₂ -e)	70,000
> equivalent number of passenger vehicles taken off the road	30,000
Water savings (ML)	2,700
> equivalent number of Olympic size swimming pools	1,100
Land savings (ha)	37,000
> equivalent number of soccer pitches	51,000

⁸ Secondhand products do not displace new products on a one for one basis. This estimate considers rates at which consumers displace new items for new, assumed at 35% for Clothing and Footwear, 54% for furniture, and 50% for all other items.

⁹ These estimates represent the environmental savings of avoiding making new products (through displacing them with secondhand items) and were estimated using Environmental Conversion Factors developed by Lifecycles (Bontinck, P.A., Grant, T.F. (2024), Environmental impact factors for products displaced from reuse, Lifecycles, Melbourne, Australia). Additional environmental savings are achieved by diverting items from landfill (and hence preventing materials breaking down anaerobically), however these were not quantified since the savings are minimal compared to the upstream environmental savings from preventing new products being made. In addition, the estimates do not account for environmental impacts of running reuse operations (e.g. collection of secondhand items, running reuse shops, etc), however, again, these impacts are negligible compared to the environmental savings from avoiding making new products.

Repair

Reuse organisations repair less than **1% of all reused items**. Most repair occurs offshore. Of items that are exported from Australia, up to an estimated 100 tonnes are repaired internationally. Locally, it is estimated that <50 tonnes of items are repaired.

Table 12: Estimated number of items repaired locally and internationally prior to reuse. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

	Locally Repaired (t/yr)	Internationally Repaired (t/yr)	Total (t/yr)
Clothing and textiles	<50	100	100
Household and homewares, toys and games	<50	-	<50
Building and hardware	-	-	-
Total	<50	100	100
% of total reuse			1%



Challenges

Tasmanian reuse organisations face several challenges, including:

Paid staff and volunteers:

- Shortage of volunteers, resulting in greater reliance on paid staff.
- The shortage of volunteers requires shop managers to juggle multiple roles, creating significant time constraints.
- Additionally, some reuse shops reported difficulties in retaining op-shop managers, as these roles often experience high staff turnover

Donations/stock:

- Strong competition from online fast-fashion and low-cost disposable clothing, which decreases the quality of donations.
- Circularity of products, such as repairability and longevity, is rarely considered in product design and there is limited opportunity to provide feedback to manufacturers on these aspects.
- Limited storage space for donations
- Challenges managing dumping of unusable items.
- Some items received at tip shops are challenging to recover, such as e-waste and construction materials.

Financial:

- Rising costs (rent, utilities, rates, wages) and commercial lease expenses that outpace revenue growth.
- Challenges in securing long-term, diversified funding needed to scale operations.
- Waste collection costs.

Logistics:

- Geographic isolation resulting in high transport costs.

Recycling:

- Lack of local textile recycling solutions to manage products that are unsuitable for reuse.

Regulatory:

- Limited national schemes for resource recovery and repair initiatives, and lack of local government support.

Other:

- Limited community education on what can be donated and reused.

Challenges

Reuse organisations identified several opportunities for support, including:

Paid staff and volunteers:

- Expand volunteer recruitment by partnering with employment service providers and leveraging government programs.
- Invest in training programs to build skills for volunteers and paid staff.

Recycling/repair:

- Local recycling initiatives that add value by selling recycled textiles.
- Improved repair capacity.

Financial support:

- Seek sustainable, long-term, and diversified funding sources.
- Negotiate more favourable lease terms and explore ways to reduce operational costs.

Marketing:

- Develop digital platforms and participate in local secondhand markets to widen customer outreach.
- Promotional campaigns to boost shop visibility and attract customers.
- Government-supported behaviour change campaigns that educate the public on what is suitable for donation and highlight the positive impacts of the reuse sector.

Regulatory:

- Campaign for infrastructure funding and supportive policies to manage challenging materials and enhance overall sustainability.
- Campaign for national schemes and development of circular economy policies.

Collaboration:

- Continue to develop and support existing initiatives that share resources and expertise within the reuse sector.
- Enhance community engagement through targeted clothing and textile donation drives.

Closing Remarks

This project is the first time that the impact of Tasmania's reuse sector has been quantified. Tasmania's reuse sector punches above its weight, facilitating large reuse volumes despite a small population and high transport costs. It plays a vital role in sustainable development by creating jobs, generating economic value, supporting community programs, and delivering significant environmental benefits.

Despite the sector's successes, challenges remain, including declining donation quality, volunteer shortages and financial pressures. Overcoming these obstacles requires coordinated action from policymakers, industry stakeholders, and the community to strengthen and sustain Tasmania's reuse sector.

