

GREEN GLÖBE
Winner 2016
Community Leadership Award &
Premier's Award for Environmental Excellence



2019 Annual Report



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The Auditor's Financial Report can be downloaded from The Bower website via the listed documents for this year's AGM: <http://bower.org.au/annual-report/>

1. The Bower Board of Directors

1.1 Chairperson's Report

21 YEARS

Last year we turned 20, this year we are entering our prime.

“Highlighted under ‘Progress’ and in the Co-operative Manager’s Report below, the diversity of offerings from The Bower is amazing. Holistic and centred around delivering alternative options (to waste), the breadth of programs, and the continuing growth in exposure to a widening community auger well for both the community in general and The Bower.

Outlined in the treasurers report the organisation also improved its bottom line and ended up with a surplus. A tremendous result given the temporary eviction in November last year. The financial position places us in good stead for the road ahead and will no doubt improve with exposure relating to our program delivery and media attention. A great direction as we ‘come of age’. Please refer to our Treasurer’s Report for detail.

The organisation can now focus on future planning and its role in the community as our society transitions to the Circular Economy. This societal transition, essential not only for sustainability but for planetary livelihood, is gathering momentum. The Bower has been at the forefront of opportunity to assist communities along the Circular Economy path since The Bower’s ‘birth’ in 1998. “

Economic Transition. Image credit: European Commission



Bower supporters and followers over its history are aware of the challenges we face as a society and will no doubt be keen to continue to support change and promote The Bower as a willing vehicle for such change. We warmly thank our local and wider community for the very significant support in the form of petitions, crowdfunding, and on the ground help over our coming of age!

THE BOWER PROGRESS

Over the previous twelve months The Bower has achieved significant milestones, and great media coverage as a result. The following have been some of the highlights:

- **‘The Banga Community Shed’**, Green Square – Opening in March was performed by Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore who is an enthusiastic supporter of The Bower. Banga means ‘make’ in the Gadigal language, a fitting name for a great venture.

- **'Art From Trash'**, Makerspace Marrickville – held from 3-11 August featuring 55 amazing pieces made from 'waste' by 32 creative artists. The Peoples Choice Award from the exhibition was won by Mia Sabel with a lampshade made from 300 'single use' bags!
- **'Right-to-Repair Campaign'** mentioned in Parliament in October with an address by Julie Owens, Federal Labour MP for Parramatta – the campaign is gathering momentum with media across many platforms, and a petition (to enshrine Right to Repair in legislation) to Federal Treasurer Frydenburg has 1400 signatures at time of this report.
- **'Tiny House'** – on the back of the previous Tiny House Course success, a new course is scheduled for February next year. This is a wonderful example combining reuse with training.
- **'Workshops'**, Redfern, Paramatta and Sydney Community College – featuring a diverse range of workshops building skills in reuse and repair.
- **'ParraPickers'**, The Bower in Hunter St Parramatta – a quarterly 'flea-market' showcasing "second hand, vintage items and buyers who share the sentiment for second hand and reuse..."
- **'Parramatta Women's Shed'** – This initiative commenced in 2019 at The Bower again at Hunter Street Parramatta with a "creative social group of women of all ages sharing their individual skills.....". A great program diversifying the tried and tested Men's Shed model.

Please refer to the Co-operative Manager's Report for more detail on other Bower continuing initiatives not mentioned here such as Collection and Rehoming, House to Home and the wide outreach with the Repair Café program.

REFLECTION

Last year I talked about Sustainable Economies and the 'overworking' of sustainability. In just one short year, thanks to heightened awareness from issues of climate change and resource/species degradation in general media, we all would have noticed an increasing willingness for society in general to listen, and take action. For example, in my local Southern Highlands community just last Sunday, over 500 people turned up at a Forum to encourage the local Council to adopt a Climate Emergency Declaration. A few years ago, this would not have been supported, on Sunday, the Forum unanimously resolved to approach Council to indeed declare a Climate Emergency.

The sort of work that The Bower does is also gaining popularity and our mantra of 'A Bower in every town' and 'the new normal' (referring to the top of the 'waste' hierarchy so often neglected) is more achievable than ever.

A recent 'hierarchy' just discovered – Source unknown but acknowledged...

We cannot however rest, the work needs to continue at pace. I refer readers to The Bower [website](#) and [Facebook](#) which provides snapshots of the breadth of services under the Bower 'sustainability' banner. It is tremendous to see this depth and diversity which reaches out to many thousands of community members.

ON THE MOVE



I mentioned in opening that the new Bower Board has a challenge in determining future location(s) and operating

model. With Marrickville lease certainty, this task will be much easier. In terms of the current headquarters site, there have been some physical changes at The Bower recently in response to council requirements to conform with planning, structural and WHS obligations. Now that we have reached a 'settlement' with our 'landlord', ARCCO, the door is open to finalise issues that brought the dispute with ARCCO to the fore. We are already working toward a speedy resolution of requirements so watch this space in terms of change. In the interim however, it will be 'business as usual' so we ask that our loyal (and new) members/customers/partners continue their support of our services and activities along the journey of change.

THANK YOU

My official part in the Bower journey concludes at the AGM, however, I will continue to be an active member and supporter as I make way for fresh blood and enthusiasm from new Board Members. I thank Bower staff, volunteers and all those I have worked with (and those behind the scenes) that have kept The Bower alive over recent times. Thanks also to departing Board Members Terry O'Donnell – our current Treasurer who has diligently served The Bower over many years, and Marcelle Psaila who has provided very useful industry and government insight during her term over the last two years. Welcome to new Board Members I wish you all well and indeed look forward to a Bower in every town....

Sincerely, outgoing Board Chairperson



Miles Lochhead

1.2 Board Details

The Bower Board of Directors is elected by the membership to oversee the direction of The Bower Reuse & Repair Centre. The board is comprised of five member directors and two independent non-member directors, with each director normally serving a two-year term.

Directors are unpaid for their board attendance and participation. They give their time and effort throughout their elected term because they wish to contribute their skills to the development and governance of the organisation. Thanks to all board members for their ongoing work and support.

In FY 2018-19 the Bower held 6 board meetings

Director	Status	Office
Marcella Psaila	Independent	
Tony Turri	Independent	
Terry O'Donnell	Member	Treasurer
Margy Vary	Member	Secretary
Michelle Sheather	Member	
Miles Lochhead	Member	Chairperson

1.3 Treasurer's Report 2015-2016

After 6 years on the Board I have reached the end of my final term and will be stepping down at the AGM.

It has been a privilege to serve on the Board of an organisation that is a pioneer in reducing waste and shaping new attitudes towards reuse and repair.

My time on the Board has been rewarding and at times challenging. I trust my contributions have been broader than my domain specialty of financial management and corporate governance and have enhanced the performance, current standing and future prospects of the Bower.

This last year the Bower has been particularly challenging as a result of the uncertainty surrounding the lease.

Our sales revenue of \$544,225 (2018 \$528,416) is up on last year though were curtailed through loss of access to the premise and thereafter regaining access took time to recover.



Overall income of \$927,284 (2018 \$877,485) grew over the year as a result of receiving large value grants and donations.

Expenditure of \$907,019 (\$925,563) is marginally less than the previous year having been intentionally constrained over the year in response to risks associated with the lease dispute and pull back of investments applied to strategic initiatives in the previous year that failed to materialise.

We posted a surplus this year of \$20,265 (2018 deficit \$48,078) having originally approved a breakeven budget.

The surplus adds a welcomed additional resilience to our modest reserves amounting to \$86,912 (2018 \$66,647).

In closing I wish to acknowledge my fellow Directors past and present, the Bower's external accountant for his consistency and diligence and Guido, for his vision, tireless energy and enthusiasm that he conducts himself in leading the Bower.

Terry O'Donnell
Director and Treasurer.

2. Co-operative Manager's Report

2.1 Let's not waste the waste crisis

The year 2018-19 has been in many ways a door opener for the Bower.

Not only did we secure our Marrickville premise we also opened a new electronic workshop in Zetland. We renewed contracts for our wood workshop in Redfern and our Parramatta store. We signed new service agreements with 21 Councils for the introduction of two on line tools, one for the collection of goods and one to share our database with 1000 reuse and repair organisations.

We extended our partnerships with Sydney Community College to offer 16 different workshops and with 10 Humanitarian organisations to support Refugees and Survivors of Domestic Violence via our House to Home program. We successfully launched new initiatives including Art from Trash Exhibition, Women Shed in Parramatta and the collection of clothing. And we embarked on two advocacy campaigns "Don't Dump Think Reuse" and "The Right to Repair"

Last but not least many corporates, universities, banks, politicians, media and thousands of supporters and donors opened their doors for The Bower's message of reuse and repair. The tide is indeed turning and although the road is still long and bumpy our message and programs to give reuse and repair a fair go are gaining momentum. On a daily basis an average of 750 people visit our website, 150 visit one of our stores, 100 book a collection or consult our on line reuse database and 10 attend daily either a workshop or a repair café. We also noticed a growing interest for the production of bespoke furniture with reclaimed timber and for repair of electronic appliances.



The Bower's Social Impact Report	FY 18-19
Kg diverted from landfill	173635
Residents donated goods	3108
Residents consulting online database	16273
Electronic items repaired	2449
Furniture repaired	220
Bikes repaired	101
Workshops organised	211
Workshop Participants	2110
Repair Cafes organised	144
Repair café visitors	1152
Sales transactions	28550
Permanent Jobs created	18
Casual jobs/consignors	29
Regular Volunteers	38
Regular CSO, WFD and NDIS staff	34

Local governments also see the benefits of our pioneering programs and their social impact but are understandably looking for leadership from state and federal government and more specifically for financial support from NSW Government. The NSW EPA is preparing, by 2021, a circular economy policy which will hopefully recommend investment in reuse and repair.

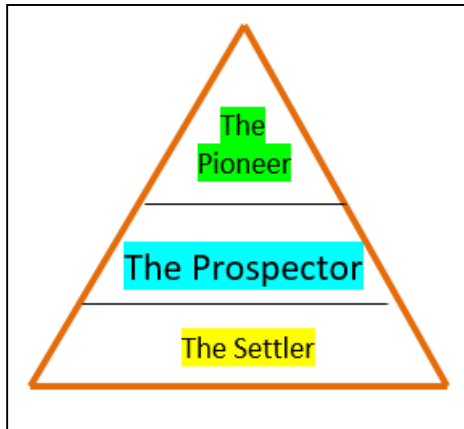
Unfortunately, the political will at federal level to support reuse and repair is still lacking and we therefore call on politicians from all colours to support the introduction of legislative incentives for reuse and repair and to remove red tape to avoid 'wasting a waste crisis'.

Indeed, since China closed its borders for import of Australian plastic waste our country is having a waste crisis due to lack of onshore waste processing facilities. The government is currently considering a range of options. However, many ideas to enable

repairing goods which have been tried successfully overseas are not yet considered. In France businesses have to state how long spare parts will be available for. In Sweden you can claim the cost of a repair as a tax deduction.

Our Right to Repair petition addressed to Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenburg, brought our message to establish a consumer right to repair enshrined in legislation to Canberra Parliament thanks to Federal MP for Parramatta Julie Owens; to Consumers Affairs Forum, thanks to ACT Consumer Affairs Minister Shane Rattenbury; and on Sky News thanks to Alan Jones.

But there is also a task for us and for everybody who support reuse and repair of goods to change the current behaviour about buying second hand. We see large numbers of people engaging in diverting waste from going to landfill however we don't see the same numbers of people engaging in buying second-hand. This leads to an imbalanced market situation where the supply is much greater than the demand for second-hand goods which in turn means that we have to reject many goods donated to us with good intentions.



We therefore call on the reuse sector and the government to launch a nationwide initiative to promote the buying of second hand which will give the sector an enormous boost and the confidence to invest in expansion and capacity building.

The objective of a sector wide marketing campaign should be to extend our reach beyond the pioneers, the committed and disadvantage groups to the prospectors. Where 'pioneers' are driven by a strong desire for fairness, justice and equality 'the prospectors' are driven by following trends and leaders whilst 'settlers' will always opt for comfortable and routine situations. Prospectors are early adopters rather than innovators.

Despite that prospectors are a key group to drive change and are generally not reached by Not for Profit organisations. However, attracting their support, will be essential for a behaviour change and to ultimately making 'buying second-hand the new normal'.

So, let's not waste the waste crisis.

Let's instead use this crisis to further drive change and to bring reuse and repair within reach of every household. This will be a win for the environment and a win for the communities.

The above will set the Bower's agenda for the coming years:

- Further expand our services and programs
- Engage in marketing and comms campaign
- Seek funding to cover operational costs
- Invest in additional infrastructure

I would like to thank the Board, staff, members, volunteers, councils, customers and workshop participants for their support and ongoing commitment to the Bower's objectives.



Guido Verbist
Co-operative Manager

2.2 Membership

We had 69 Active members for the 2018-19 financial year.

Membership includes loyalty card and access to our consignor program.



Get a Loyalty Card

Become a consignor



access to tool library

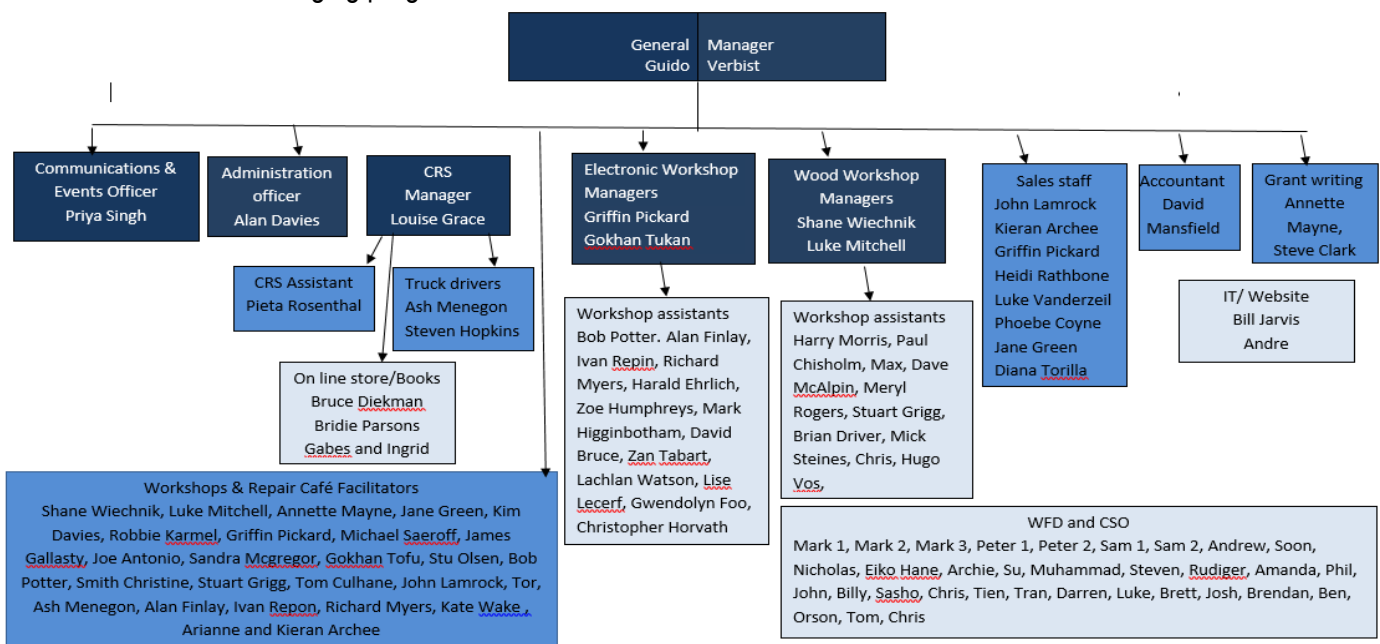
2.3 Staff

The Bower through the diligent service of its volunteers and staff, The Bower management and Board would like to thank the staff and volunteers for their commitment and ongoing interest in and pursuit of its aims and objectives. Many new faces joint the organisations. We welcomed Alan, Luke, Priya, Pieta, Steven, Ash. And some old faces returned we welcomed back Shane and Gokhan. And we said goodbye to Sabdy, Dan and Caroline.



We now have 18 staff working part time or full time plus a pool of 25 workshop and repair café facilitators. But without an additional contingent of contractors for grant writing, bookkeeping and IT upgrading (10) and 25 volunteers to assist with the Board, online store, website and software development plus 34 people working with us in a CSO (Corrective Service Order), NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme and WFD (Work For the Dole) program, we wouldn't be able to survive.

This brings the total headcount to an astonishing 120 people who participate on weekly basis in the delivery of the Bowers wide ranging programs.



2.4 The Bowerbirds

Bowerbirds are the creative capital of the Bower. With programs such as consignment, workshops and Men's Shed we try to cater for their interests and requirements to share their expertise with us.



Bowerbird Steve Swann is our longest serving consignor, By trade he is a nurse but he has been involved with the Bower from day one and till today his creative work continues to inspire us .



Bowerbird Luke takes discarded materials to construct new furniture. With a background in landscape design and construction, he creates quality, imaginative and practical items solely from locally sourced reclaimed materials.



Bowerbird Smith is The Bower's very talented Furniture Painting workshop facilitator and a long-time consignor to the store.



Bowerbird Kate brings a wealth of experience in clothing repair, screen-printing and banner making. She helped us establishing our repair café for clothing.



Bowerbird Shane was instrumental in developing our woodwork department, designing furniture repair workshops and establishing in-house furniture restoration expertise



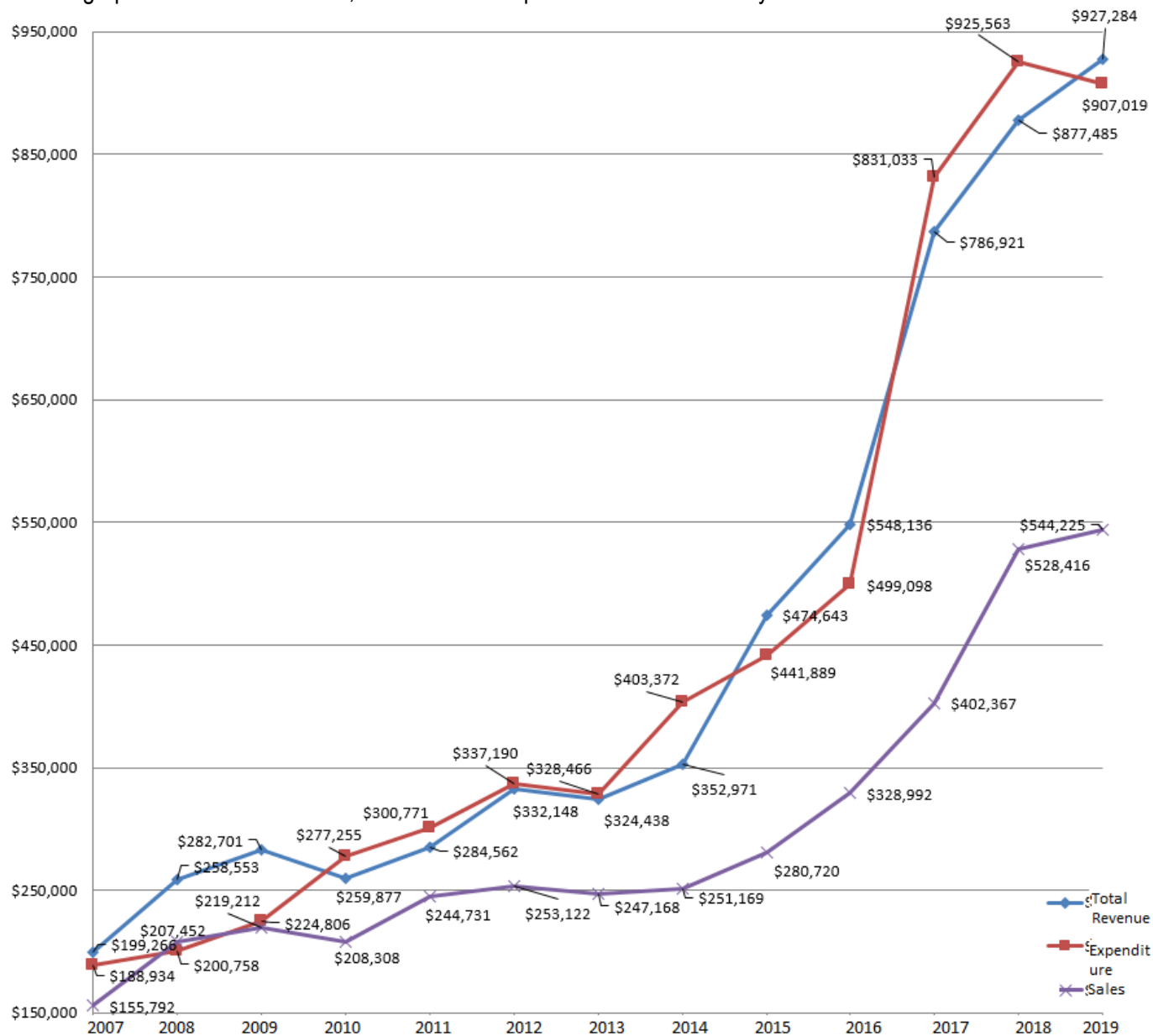
Bowerbird Bob has been around in many capacities and roles and it was always about sharing his technical skills. He is now helping with repairing electronic appliances.

2.5 Sales

Sales and total revenue continued to increase in 2019 whereas expenses went down resulting in a healthy financial result. A 2% reduction in expenditure was the result of an internal restructuring of the communication and administration departments and was only possible because of the help of volunteers.

Sales and total revenue growth was less steep than previous years i.e. respectively 3% and 5.6%.

The graphic below shows Sales, Revenue and Expenditure trends for the years 2007-2019.



The revenue streams continue to diversify and to be less dependent on sales. Grants, donations and workshops continue to play a bigger role whereas the council support has shown a declining trend.

Revenue streams	FY 18-19	FY 17-18	FY 16-17	FY 15-16	FY 14-15	FY 13-14
Sales	58.7%	60.2%	51.1%	60%	59.1%	71.1%
Grants	16.7%	13%	16%	7.2%	15.4%	6.2%
Service to councils	7.8%	12.1%	12.9%	11.3%	10%	11.2%
Workshops	5.1%	4%	6%	4.6%	5.3%	1.2%
Donations	3.8%	3.2%	0.6%	3%	0.5%	0.5%
Other	7.9%	7.5%	13.4%	13.9%	9.7%	9.8%

2.6 The Collection and Rehoming Service

Our Collection and Rehoming Service remains one of the '3 Pillars' – besides 'education' and 'sales' – of our business model. Since its inception, the number of councils joining the service has gradually expanded. We currently partner with 21 Councils and serve 1 million dwellings and 2.5m residents.

However, the China's National Sword Policy, which was introduced in January 2018 and required councils to find alternative and more expensive solutions for their waste, has resulted in a reduced financial contribution to our Collection and Rehoming Service which in turn has led to an overhaul of the service and a need to automate the service. In consultation with the participating councils we successfully introduced two new digital tools:

1. An [on line collection tool](#) has been developed and is the exclusive way for residents from participating councils to book a collections of household goods.
2. An [on line reuse database](#) has been created and is available for residents from participating councils. The database covers currently 1094 organisations of which 803 are reuse organisations with the remaining being recycling organisations. This sets our database apart from other existing databases which focus primarily on recycling and have only a limited amount of options available.



The revised Collection and Rehoming Service reported to Councils for FY 2018-19 shows a total of 173,635 kg being diverted from landfill. 3108 residents used our Collection and Rehoming Service.

The below table shows the quarterly results including the truck collections and in store donations.

FY 2018/2019	Truck Collections		In-Store Donations		Total	
	Household	kg	Individuals	kg	Residents	kg
01 Jul – 30 Sep 2018	264	31,992.50	567	15,855.60	831	47,848.10
01 Oct – 31 Dec 2018	173	25,994.50	502	14,792.85	675	40,985.35
01 Jan – 31 Mar 2019	195	24,351.00	531	17,042.50	727	41,435.50
01 Apr – 30 Jun 2019	187	21,871.00	688	21,496.60	875	43,367.60

In previous years we were able to also report the goods we had successfully referred to other organisations – an annual average of 200 tonnes.

Now that the referral service is replaced by free access to our online reuse database we can only report the number of people consulting the database and for what categories of goods.

In the first year that we introduced the online reuse database an impressive 16,273 people consulted the database. This means on a monthly basis 1,356 people and on a daily basis 44 people.

Furniture was by far the most popular category followed by electrical goods, mattresses, Books and records, building materials and white goods.

A survey amongst 576 users of the on line reuse database tells us that:

- 73 % gave it a 4 or 5 rating (5 being the highest).
- 36% said they will use the database again
- 19% would normally put goods on the kerbside
- 53% contact the council

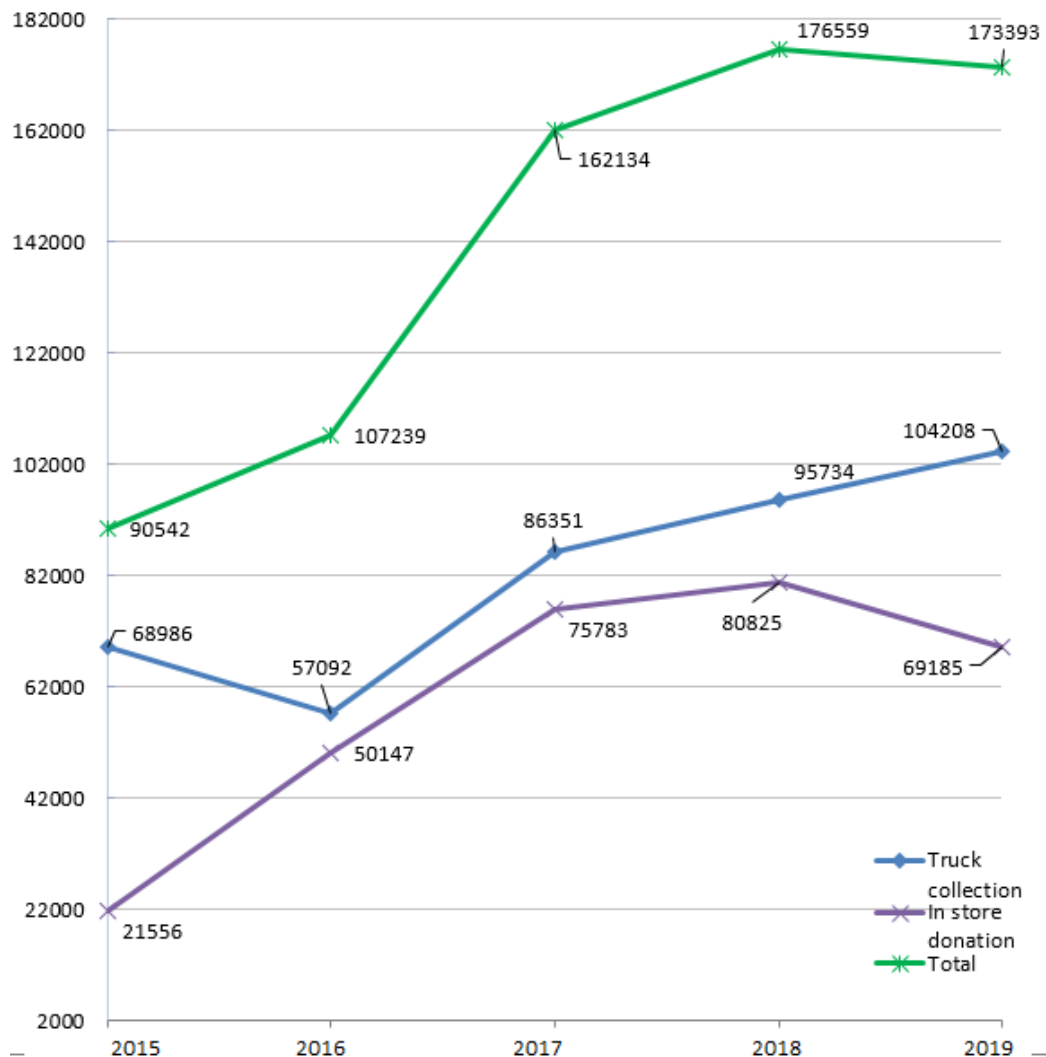
Rating	%	Usage	%
5	44%	Kerbside	19%
4	29%	council	53%
3	18%	Not sure	61%
2	4%	Yes	36%
1	5%	No	1%

Consultation of online Reuse Database 6/11/2018 - 3/11/2019

Category	Total	16273
Furniture	4957	
Electrical Goods	1735	
Mattresses	1223	
Books and Records	918	
Building Materials	828	
Whitegoods	798	
Clothing	644	
Bikes and Bike Parts	605	
Computers	575	
Homewares	463	
Other	454	
Nursery, Toys and kids	421	
Textile, Fabric and Carpet	393	
Office Furniture	357	
Audio and Video games	348	
Metals, Ferrous and non-Ferrous	286	
Musical Instruments	221	
Hardware	220	
Charitable Organisation	191	
Sports and Leisure Goods	170	
Waste service	150	
Paper and Cardboard	142	
Removals & Vehicles for removal	81	



The below table provides a breakdown of total Kgs of goods diverted from landfill from 2015 till 2019 either via collection with our truck or in store donations. 2018-19 is the first year we have seen a levelling



2.7 EPA project



In consultation and with financial support from NSW EPA in early 2019 we launched the campaign “DON’T DUMP! THINK REUSE”

Objective was to promote our online reuse database as an alternative for illegal dumping of goods. The campaign was centered around a [video clip](#) – viewed by 33,060 people - and a range of [social media posts](#).

The general public was very receptive for our message:
 2.9% click-through Facebook rate - [industry average](#) is 0.9%
 2.8% click-through Instagram rate - [industry average](#) is 0.52%
 22.17% click-through Google rate - [industry average](#) is 1.91%

2.8 House to Home

Our flagship program "From House to Home" furnishes homes for refugees and asylum seekers and survivors of domestic violence, according to individual needs and preferences by facilitating the re-homing of household goods, furniture and appliances, and help turn a 'house' into a 'home'.

The Bower partners with humanitarian service organisations in identifying the needs of refugees and survivors of domestic violence for household items. Caseworkers from these organisations refer asylum seekers and survivors of domestic violence to the Bower stores with a "gift certificate" to select and collect at no cost the items that suit their individual needs and preferences.

Since its inception in September 2016, and thanks to financial support from foundations and our supporters, the Bower has been able to help 325 families and gave away goods to the value of \$96,000 which translate in an average saving of \$350 per family.

The Bower has established partnerships with the following organisations



The House to Home program is a win for the environment, a win for the community and a cost saving for the Government.

The Bower furnishes an entire house for a family of 4 (2 adults/2children) for \$1,000



Subsidised Goods Fund

In addition to the partnerships with humanitarian organisations the Bower has also established a 'Subsidised Goods Program' whereby the Bower covers the entire cost to assist individuals who are neither a refugee nor a survivor of domestic violence but still need access to household goods.

The Bower established an annual fund of \$10,000 to support individuals. In 2018-19 we received 4 requests from individuals and we provided goods to the value of \$1,260.

2.9 Art from Trash

In 2019 The Bower brought the ART FROM TRASH exhibition to Sydney with the objective to encourage the reuse of discarded materials in the production of amazing visual art. ART FROM TRASH is a registered trademark of [Resource Work Cooperative](#) which has become an iconic and much loved exposé of creativity and thought-provoking works of art.

Our motivation in running this event was to demonstrate the potential value of what we throw away, within an artistic context.



ART FROM TRASH has the potential to grow into a regional and traveling exhibition. In addition to the Inner West Council, with whom we partnered this year, the City of Ryde is also interested in partnering with us.

The inaugural ART FROM TRASH exhibition was a tremendous success:

- 33 artists presented 63 pieces of art work.
- 300 people attended the opening night and 700 visited the exhibition.
- We sold ~20% of the works which were for sale.
- 339 people voted for the lampshade made of 300 single use plastic bags as the People Choice Award.



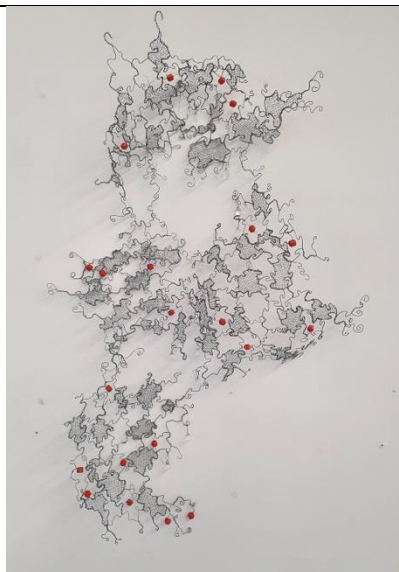
Kindly donated by,
Jo Haylen, MP State Member for Summer Hill

Presented by
INNER WEST COUNCIL

edge
Creative Trails



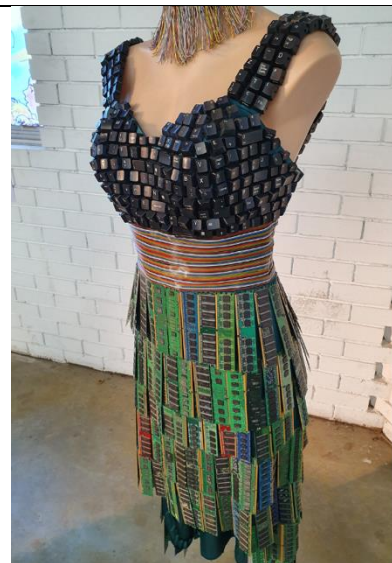
Art from Trash is a registered trademark of Resource Work Co-operative



2019
**INNER WEST COUNCIL
JUDGE'S AWARD
Winner**
FRACTAL COSMOS by
KATHERINE HAINES

Presented by
INNER WEST COUNCIL **edge** Creative Trails **Bower** Foundation

Art from Trash is a registered trademark of Resource Work Co-operative






2019
**INNER WEST COUNCIL
JUDGE'S AWARD
Winner**
OBSOLETE.COM by
Stephanie Powell

Presented by
INNER WEST COUNCIL **edge** Creative Trails **Bower** Foundation

Art from Trash is a registered trademark of Resource Work Co-operative

2.10 Community Initiatives

Community work has and will continue to be essential in our organization and business model. The below overview provides a snapshot of the type of community projects we supported last year.

2.10.1 Unwaste	2.10.2. Defy
	
<p>Unwaste is an organisation whose objective is to engage communities in advancing understanding around landfill and environmental sustainability.</p> <p>The Bower auspiced this organisation allowing them to receive a grant to finance their activities.</p>	<p>Defy Plastic Waste is a pilot project that focuses on education by crafting functional objects from plastic waste with small scale DIY recycling machines in a portable micro-factory. The Bower auspiced this organisation allowing them to receive a grant to finance their pilot project.</p>
.	
2.10.3 UTS Seminars	2.10.4 ACU Social work
	
<p>The Bower partnered with UTS Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building for the organisation of 3 seminars about Design and Repair.</p> <p>The objective was to open up informed, realistic and meaningful public discussion about repair practices, capacities and limitations in an Australian context. This research reframes repair as a design practice, and in doing so openly acknowledges design's culpability in environmental degradation and waste.</p>	<p>The Bower gladly accepted the invitation from the social work students from the ACU Strathfield Campus to support them with their Community Development course. A number of projects were presented to them and one group chose to assist us with our campaign to promote buying second hand goods. They choose to refurbish an old school desk and turn it into a sleek colourful modern piece of furniture</p>

2.11 Bespoke furniture and electronic repairs

After many years of investment and developing in-house expertise in repair of electronic goods and furniture The Bower has established a highly regarded and trustworthy service to build bespoke furniture with reclaimed timber, to refurbish a vintage piece of furniture or to have your electronic goods repaired.

In the coming years The Bower will build on its positive reputation and further expand this service.

Custom made Table from reclaimed building material



Bar build with reclaimed building material



Chopping board and spice rack made from reclaimed material



Antique storage box restored in old glory with lock and handles included



Vintage mixer repaired



Vintage piece of furniture before and after it being refurbished



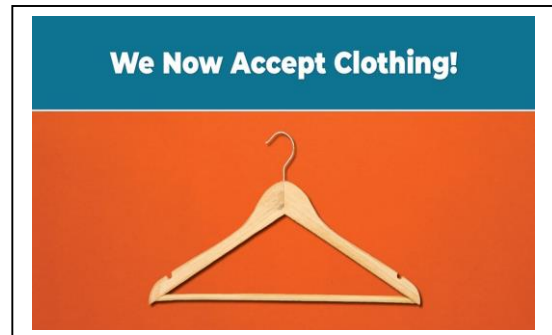
Repaired microwave



2.12 Clothing collection

In 2019 The Bower started with collecting wearable clothing, shoes, accessories and manchester with the objective to divert it from landfill. Australians dump 500 million kg clothing every year. This amounts to 23 kg per Australian or 6 tonnes every 10 minutes.

Because the Australian second-hand market for clothing is saturated we decided to partner with an organisation who rehomes 95% of these clothes to Africa, where they are worn by people who can't afford buying new. In the absence of a sustainable clothing industry in Africa 90% of clothes worn are 2nd-hand.



2.13 Right to Repair



The Bower engaged in an advocacy campaign to demand from the federal government legislative changes to make repair of goods doable and affordable. Similar initiatives in Europe and US have resulted in making it mandatory for manufacturers to provide spare parts for new products and to provide tax breaks for repairs.

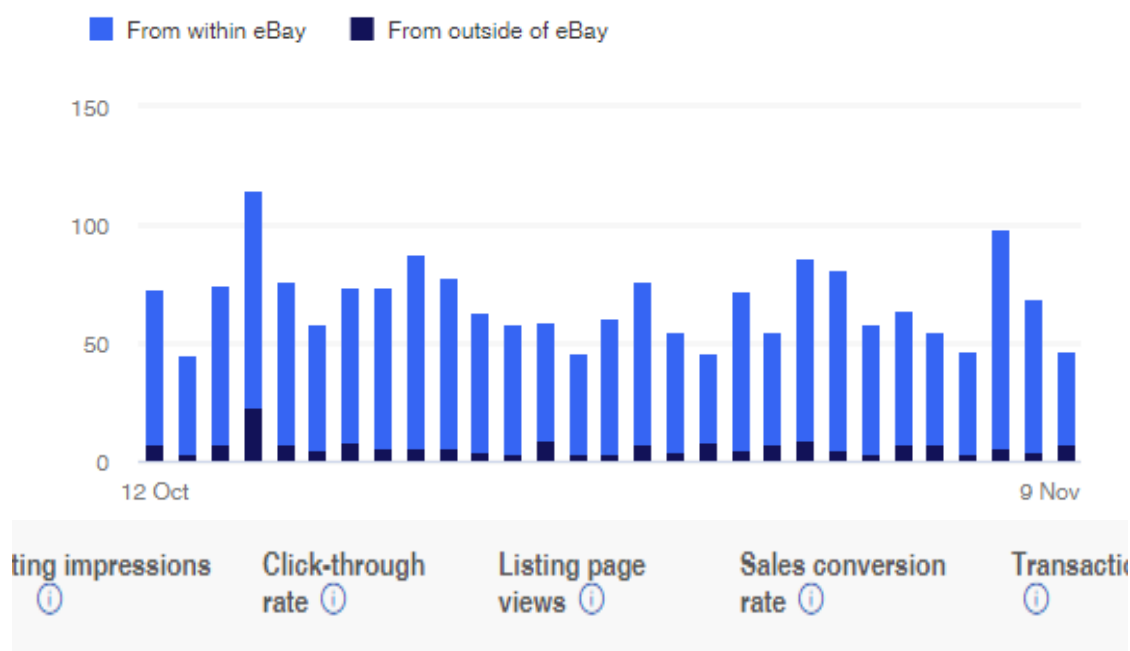
Since we launched our campaign, we have received positive feedback from politicians and media including an address by MP Julie Owens in Federal Parliament and interviews on Sky News, Channel 10 and 7 and ABC.

2.14 On Line Store

The Bower launched, with the financial support from SSROC, an Online Store in May 2017. We sell primarily vintage electronic items, books and hardware. Average income amounts to \$1500 per month.

Our current sales conversion is 1% which suggest that there is still room for growth – average on eBay is 5 %

The below data gives an idea of impressions, clicks, conversations and transactions in 30 days (12/10 – 9/11):



2.15 Fundraising

AUCTION

In financial year 2018-19 the Bower has successfully stepped up its fundraising efforts.

Our annual auction generated an income of \$40,385 thanks to the auctioning of two Tiny Houses and some unique vintage and art deco items we had collected throughout the year.

We will continue to develop the annual fundraiser combining selling goods with entertainment and food



150 people attended the auction. We sold 52 of the 76 lots resulting in an excellent 68% clearance rate



CROWDFUNDING

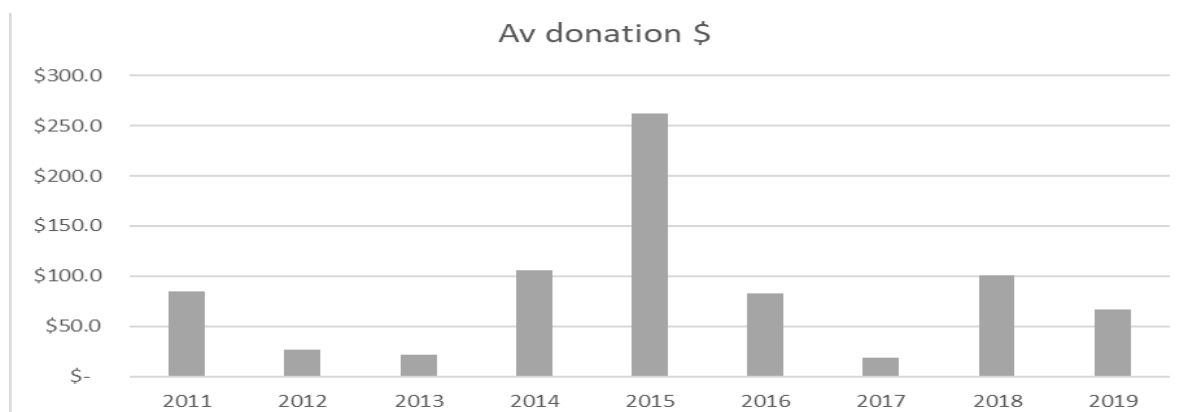
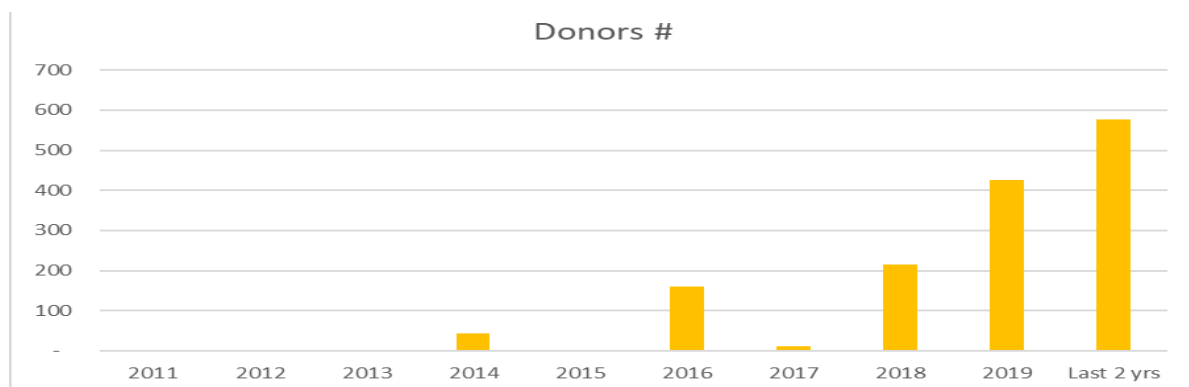
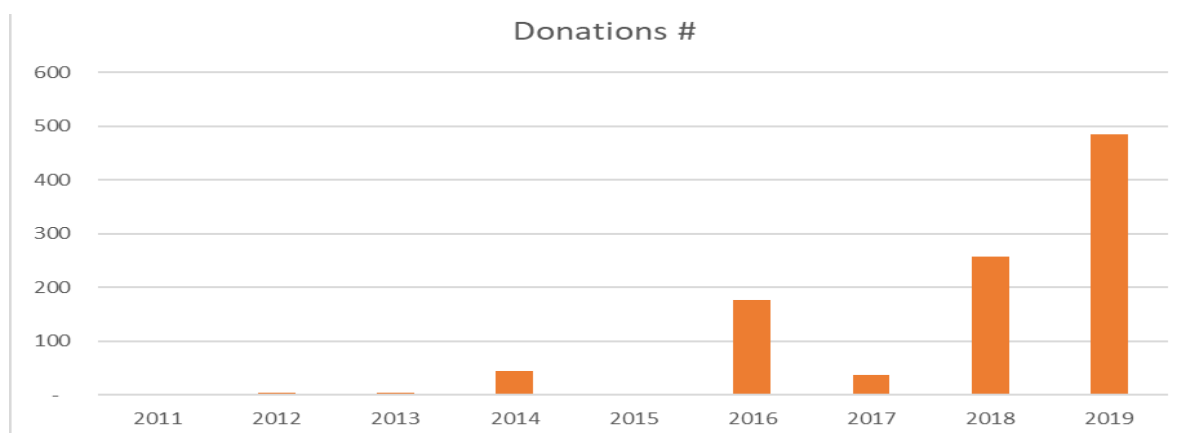
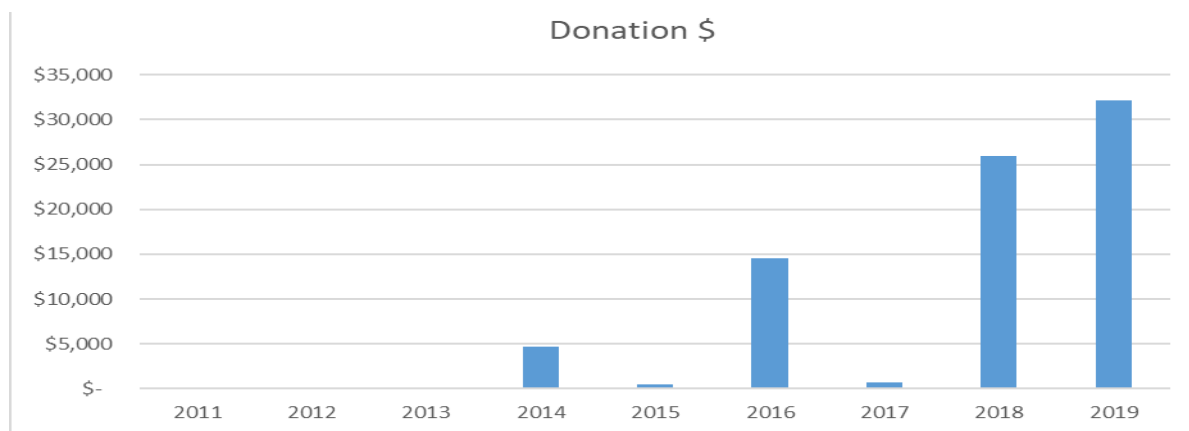
We also invested further in our crowdfunding programs resulting in an - although still modest - income of \$32,000 for 2019 it was nevertheless the best result since we embarked on this program in 2014.

The below analysis of our crowdfunding campaigns between 2014 and 2019 demonstrates that we established a foundation for further growth and importantly knowhow on raising money successfully for our popular programs.

Since 2011, the Bower has received **1008** donations (from **729** individuals) totalling **\$78,226**

The vast majority of these donations have come in the past 2 years: **741** donations for a total of **\$58,070**

As can be seen from these graphs, the donation income increased by around 20% from 2018 to 2019, the number of donations and individual donors has almost doubled in the same period, while average gifts declined.



2.16 Communication

The benefit of introducing a Marketing and Communication function in our organisation has been instrumental for the further growth and promotion of our services and for reaching out to other communities.

Besides a steady increase of our Newsletter receivers to 10,500 we saw primarily a growth of our website visitors and Facebook fans.

13,437 Facebook fans

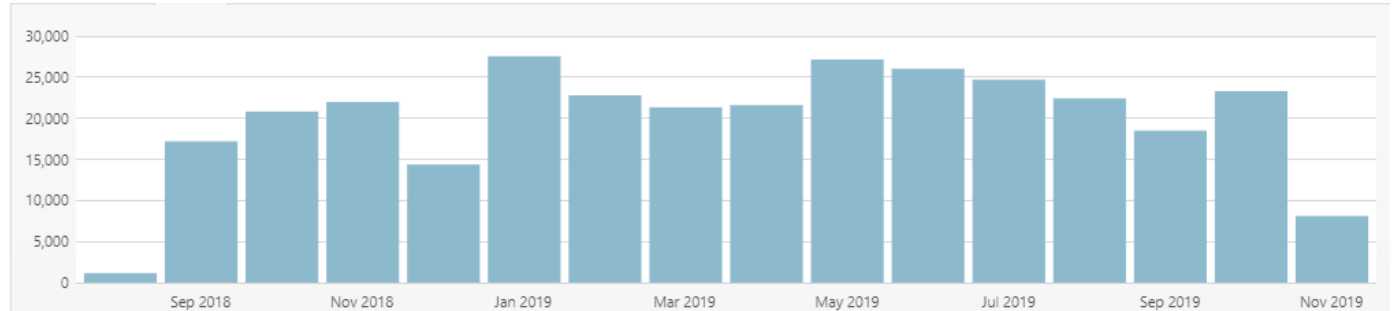
2120 Instagram followers

10,500 Newsletter subscribers

27.2% open rate & 3.2% click rate

771 daily website visitors

Website



Months and Years

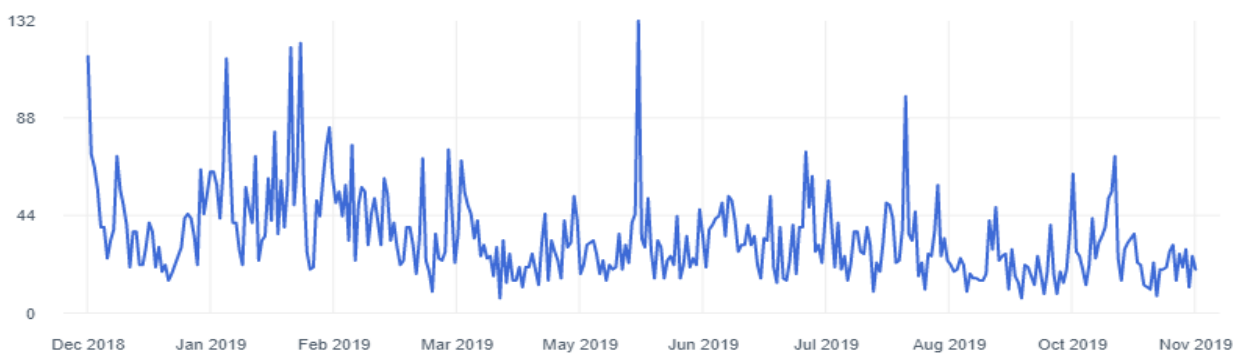
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2018								1,136	17,178	20,811	21,977	14,365	75,467
2019	27,537	22,780	21,324	21,582	27,142	26,020	24,696	22,408	18,488	23,301	8,101		243,379

Average per Day

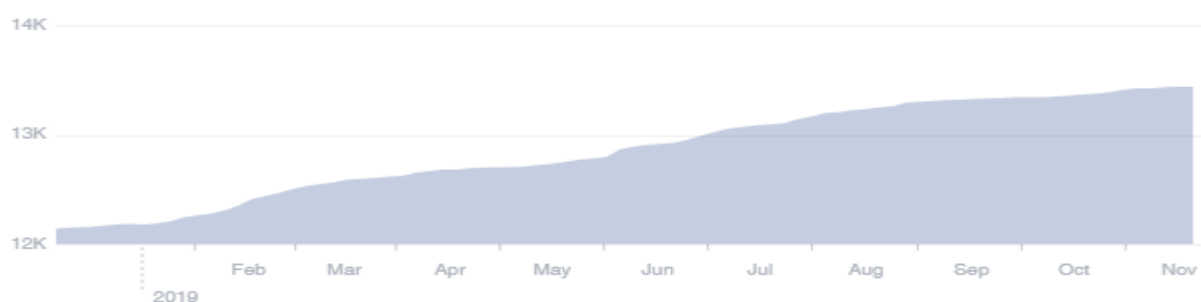
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Overall
2018								568	573	671	733	463	609
2019	888	814	688	719	876	867	797	723	616	752	695		771

Facebook

Total Views



Total Page Likes



Media coverage was very positive and covered all aspects of our organisations. The most popular topic remains the Repair Café and our Right to Repair Campaign. The organisation also attracted significant media coverage following our eviction from the Addison Road site in November.

Main media articles for FY 2018 - 19 included articles in major media outlets such as SMH, Guardian and on TV with live broadcast sessions on Channel 10 and 7 and ABC

- **Fight for Your Right to Repair – Tabled in Parliament**
YouTube Video *Julie Owens* 20-10-2019

- **Tinker tailors: the grassroots movement reclaiming the right to repair**
The Guardian *Caroline Baum* 18-10-2019

- **Australians could soon have the ‘right to repair’ their broken phones**

Canberra Times *Katie Burgess* 30-08-2019

- **‘Right to repair’ laws for fixable electronics pushed forward after agreement at consumer affairs meeting** ABC News *Tom Lowrey* 30-08-2019

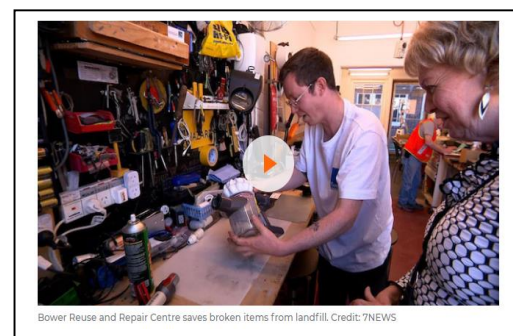
- **Don’t bin it, fix it: the new movement to repair broken goods**
Sunrise – Seven News *Sunrise Digital Staff* 29-07-2019

- **The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre**
Studio Ten – Channel 10 29-07-2019

- **The international movement fixing objects and ‘repairing community’**
The Sydney Morning Herald *Caitlin Fitzsimmons* 14-07-2019

- **Add personality with pre-loved**
The Daily Telegraph *Kirsten Craze* 18-03-2019

- **See Trash Transformed into Art**
Inner West Times 07/2019



- **‘Right to repair’ regulation necessary, say small businesses and environmentalists**
ABC News *Jemima Burt* 03-03-2019

- **The Bower to reopen in Marrickville but flashpoints remain**
The Sydney Morning Herald *Caitlin Fitzsimmons* 02-12-2018

- **‘Conflict of interest’: what’s behind Marrickville stoush over The Bower**
The Sydney Morning Herald *Caitlin Fitzsimmons* 25-11-2018

- **ARCCO bows to The Bower, for now**
City Hub *Mitch Hitch* 15-12-2018

- **The Bower’s Eviction Has Been Overturned**
Broadsheet *Sarah Norris* 30-11-2018

- **Locked Out: The Bower Has Been Evicted From Its Home**
Broadsheet *Yvonne C Lam* 20-11-2018

- **Another Major Reuse Centre At Risk**
The Daily Telegraph [Subscription needed to view](#)

- **Shock as The Bower is Evicted from Marrickville**
The Daily Telegraph [Subscription needed to view](#)

- **Bower Eviction Heads to NSW Supreme Court**
Inner West Courier *Kate Bastians* 27-11-2018

- **Outrage over eviction of The Bower from Marrickville building**
News.com *Charis Chang* 21-11-2018

2.17 The Bower Locations

Thanks to an accommodation grant from City of Sydney in November 2018 The Bower took ownership of a new premises in Zetland where we based on our Electronic repair services.

The Bower now manage 4 premises in the Sydney Metropolitan Area. 2 via an accommodation grant from City of Sydney in Redfern and Zetland, one from City of Parramatta and our own building in Marrickville – see history.



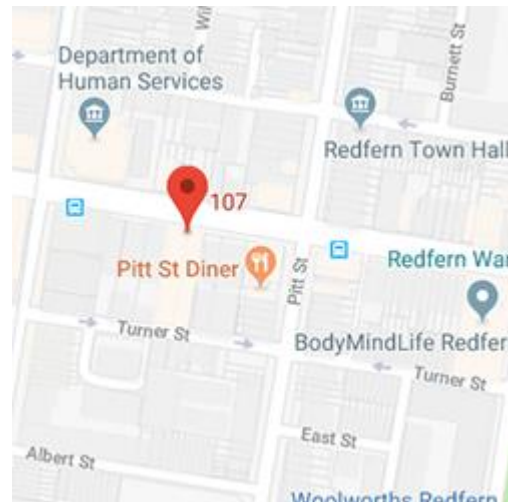
Marrickville store and office
34/142 Addison Road Marrickville



Parramatta Store and Workshop
1/10 Hunter Street Parramatta



Zetland Electronic workshop
3 Younton Avenue Zetland



Wood workshop
107 Redfern Street Redfern

Marrickville

The Marrickville location is where it all started and where we will continue to operate for the foreseeable future

The below images tell the story of the transformation of the Marrickville location over the last 50-year period.



The original military barrack – built on our block of land - burnt down in 1976 – fire was caused by vandals. It is remembered as “the most attractive building” on site. It was the only 2 storey building in the centre occupied by the 14th field Brigade.



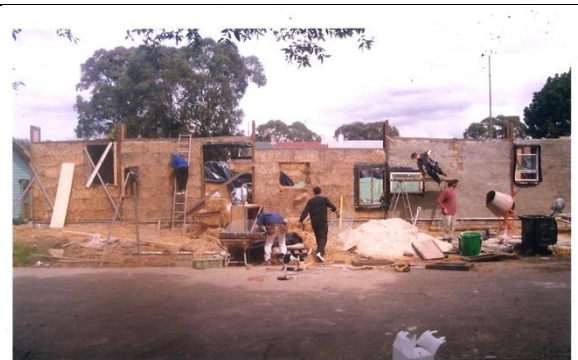
The ground floor was used for repair of horse carriages hence the grooves in the floor. The top floor was office and space for dance parties. The picture with the polo match in front of the old the Bower building is from 17 September 1934



The land remained vacant from 1976 till 1998 until Milos - the architect - and his mates decided to build the Bower with reclaimed building material.



Thanks to a \$100,000 EPA grant and 6 months of volunteering with 20 people and a series of working bees they were able to build the Bower building



It was the First Straw bale building in Sydney



Current look and well known destination for many Sydney-siders

Parramatta

In 2016 we saw the opening of the first store outside the Marrickville hub which was a major milestone in the further growth of the organization. The Parramatta Council support has been essential to establish our presence in the west.

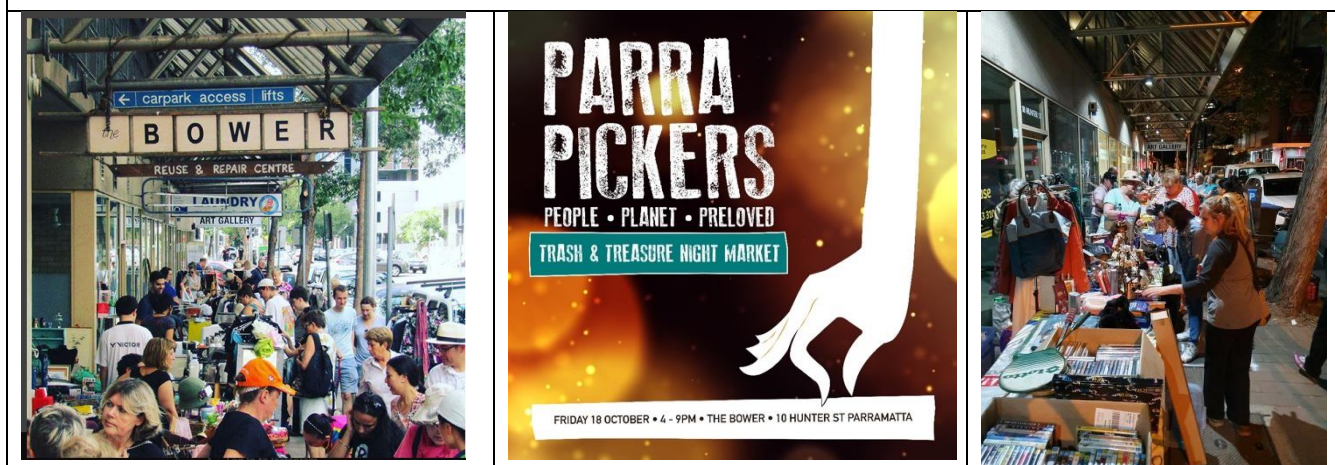
We expect the store to be self-sufficient in 2 years. Our presence allows us to engage with new and different communities and cultures than in the inner west which gives us invaluable know how for our future expansion.



The Parramatta store is a retail outlet with an emphasis on household goods. Knowing that the demographics and culture is different from the Inner West the art of visual merchandising is actively applied in this store.

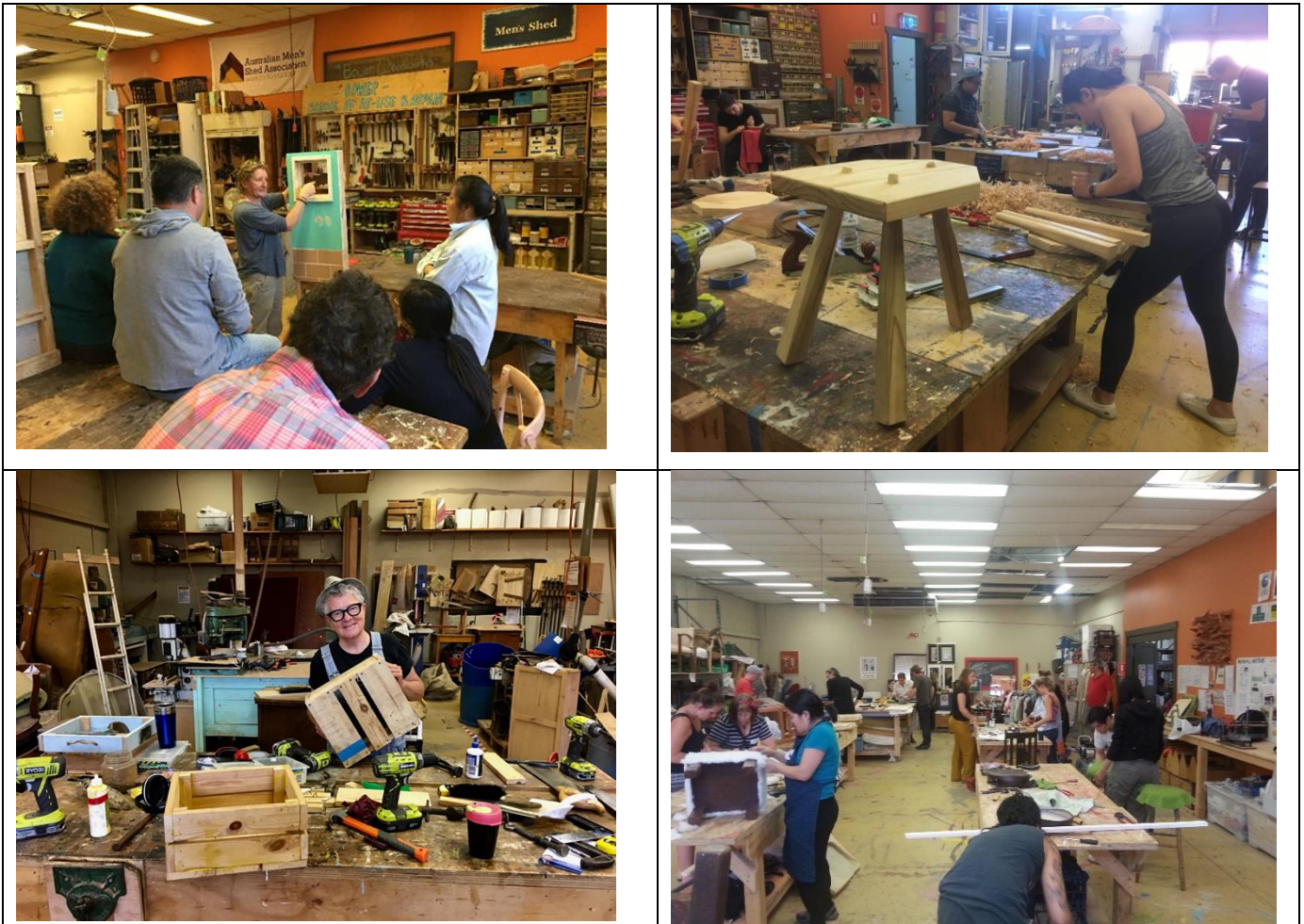


A section of the space has been converted into a workshop and repair café allowing us to continue our tradition to share our expertise and skills with the local community. This workshop is also home to a Women's Shed.



To draw attention to our presence in Parramatta we launched 2 years ago Parrapickers - a quarterly trash and treasure market in front of the store. Local social enterprises are invited to fundraise and promote their work.

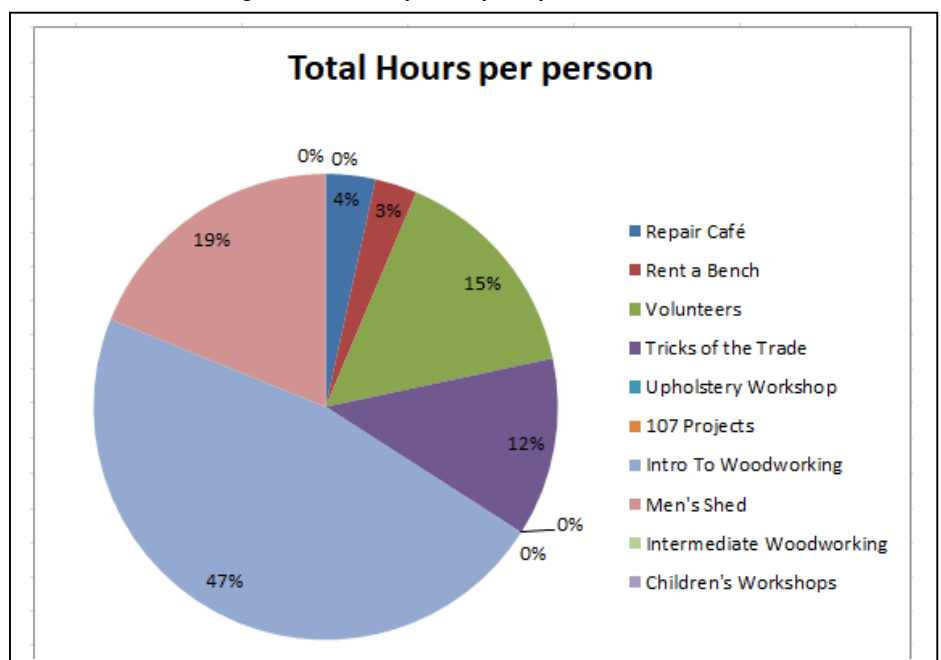
Wood Workshop in Redfern



The Bower signed a new 5-year lease/accommodation grant with City of Sydney for the use of the 200m² workshop space in Redfern. This has given us the opportunity to establish a long-term strategy for our own woodwork repair and refurbishment program and to invest in our bespoke furniture service.

It also allows us to offer a wide range of workshops and logistical supports to individuals and community groups in the Sydney Metropolitan Area with the objective to demonstrate the benefits and to share skills to use recycled timber and building material.

The Redfern workshop space is also home to the Marrickville Men's Shed. The table provides a summary of the programs we run in Redfern and the community groups that use our woodwork shop.



Electronics Workshop in Zetland - Green Square

Thanks to an accommodation grant from City of Sydney we were able to open on March 2 - in presence of Clover Moore, Mayor for City of Sydney - a new space dedicated to electronic repairs.

We not only test, repair and tag all electronics goods we sell in our stores in this new space but we also run here weekly repair cafes for members of the community to repair their own broken electronic appliances.



Clover Moore opened our electronic workshop



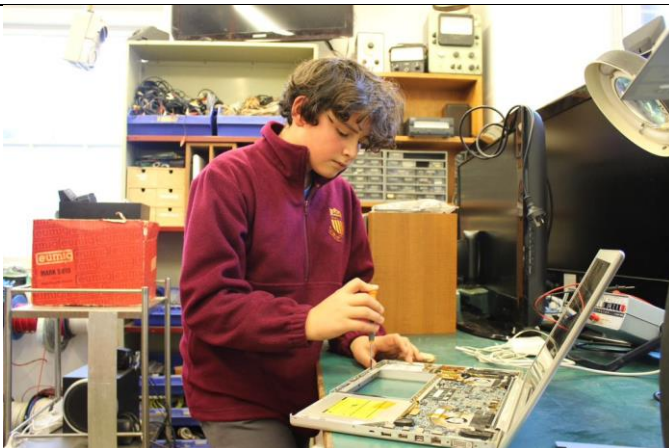
Our electronic repair café volunteers are gentlemen and will always go the extra mile to help people with the repair of their broken electrical appliances



Our workshop is fully equipped with all tools to operate safely and to repair responsibly electronic appliances



The door is always open for the members of the community. People can meet, learn and share experiences about repairing electronic appliances.



Lachlan our youngest repairer (11 year) is specialised in computer repair.



Alan is one of our most experienced repairers. Every Wednesday during our Repair Café he will assist people with their repairs

In 2020 we will expand our programs in our zetland space with new initiatives and services for the community.



We will introduce a test and tag service for electronic appliances.

Despite it being a requirement to test and tag appliances on a regular basis people don't do it because its not easy to find such a service.



We will open a Tool Library for electronic appliances in Zetland – free access for all The Bower members.



Two new workshops will be introduced in 2020 with the objective to give people the basis skills to enage in repair of electronic appliances. We will run a “multi meter” and a “soldering” workshop in Zetland.

2.18 Educational programs

As one of our 3 Pillars, our educational programs continue to play a major role in our organisation. It is all about sharing skills and expertise in reuse and repair of goods with members of the communities with the ultimate objective to divert as many goods as possible from land fill.

It starts with the youngest for whom we run workshops in recycled art, mosaics and making music instruments all with the objective to introduce early on the concept. skills and the experience to reuse and repair.



It continues with a wide range of wood and furniture related workshops which we run in partnership with Sydney Community College.

The below overview gives you an idea of the 16 courses we will organise next year for SCC. Some of them will also be offered in our Parramatta workshop

[HOME](#)
[ARTS](#)
[BUSINESS](#)
[LANGUAGES](#)
[LIFESTYLE](#)

[More search options -](#)

Woodwork - Beginners

Learn Woodwork for Beginners in Sydney. This Woodwork course provides the foundations for woodwork projects with a Re-DIY focus – the reuse of timber to create a functional toolbox. You will learn

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Woodwork - Intermediate

Learn how to build your own wood side table in Sydney. This Woodwork course is a follow up to the Woodwork for Beginners course. Continuing with the principles learned in the Beginner

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Woodwork - Stool Workshop

Learn how to build your own wood stool in this Woodwork class in Sydney. This is a DIY workshop demonstrating basic traditional chair making and timber shaping knowledge and skill. Participants

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Woodwork - DIY Planter Box

Learn how to build your own planter box in this Woodwork class in Sydney. In this workshop you will design and create your own planter box with The Bower while gaining the knowledge and hands

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Woodwork - DIY Native Bee Hive

Learn how to build a native bee hive in this Woodwork class in Sydney. Bees – both native and introduced – play an important role in our food supply, and for our entire ecosystem to function. Sadly, bee

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Introduction to Power Tools Workshop

Introduction to power tools workshop in Sydney. This weekend workshop, is part of our Woodwork program, and is designed to give a basic first hand introduction to carpentry and woodworking

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Basic Carpentry Course Sydney

Learn basic carpentry and Woodwork in Sydney. "People love chopping wood. In this activity one immediately sees results." Albert Einstein. You are a wood lover? Then come along to this weekend DIY

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Furniture Repair and Restoration Workshop

Furniture Repair and Restoration Workshop and other woodwork classes in Sydney. Learn how to repair joints and replace worn out or missing parts of your favorite furniture pieces. Our experienced

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Furniture Restoration - Shabby Chic

Learn how to upcycle vintage furniture to shabby chic style at this Woodwork course in Sydney. Discover how easy and affordable it is to restore pieces needing a little TLC and achieve this popular

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Furniture Restoration

Learn how to restore furniture in Sydney. Learn how to restore furniture for fun and profit in this Woodwork class. Restore Nana's old chair and learn techniques that may be applied to larger

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Upholstery Introduction Workshop

Learn the basic skills of upholstery in Sydney. This is a hands-on weekend DIY course to learn the basics for upholstering a flat surface (e.g. a dining chair, a bed-head) by creating a milk-crate

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Home DIY Workshop

Learn DIY home maintenance in Sydney. Don't call Dan! Don't call Daisy! Do it yourself! In this 2 day hands-on workshop you will learn how to safely and economically undertake some of the many

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Picture Framing Essentials

Learn the essentials of picture framing in this Woodwork class in Sydney. This two-day workshop is a comprehensive introduction to the world of picture framing. Whether you are looking to work

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Upholstery course for Beginners - Ottoman

Learn Upholstery by building your own Ottoman in Woodwork class in Sydney. This fun course combines extreme basics of carpentry with the extreme basics of upholstery to create a simply but

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Furniture Painting Workshop

Furniture Painting Workshop and other woodwork classes in Sydney. Learn how to restore wooden furniture pieces to recreate your own favourite circa look, be it shabby chic, French provincial, refin

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

Learn how to make a bird feeder (Birdhouse)

DIY bird feeder (birdhouse) workshop in Sydney. Build a homemade birdhouse in this one-day workshop and learn basic carpentry knowledge and skills to construct a simple nest box for

[VIEW DETAILS](#)

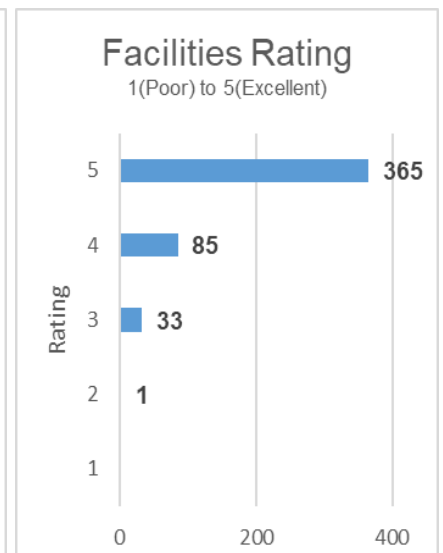
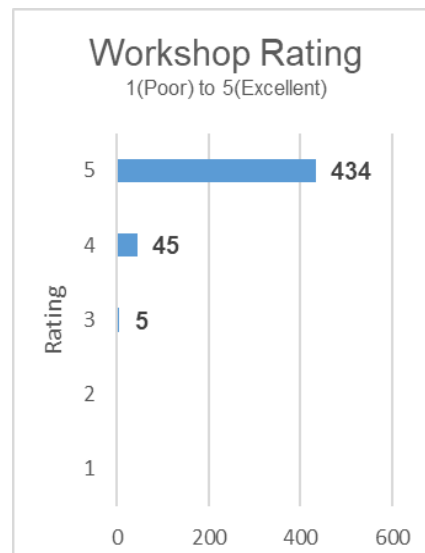
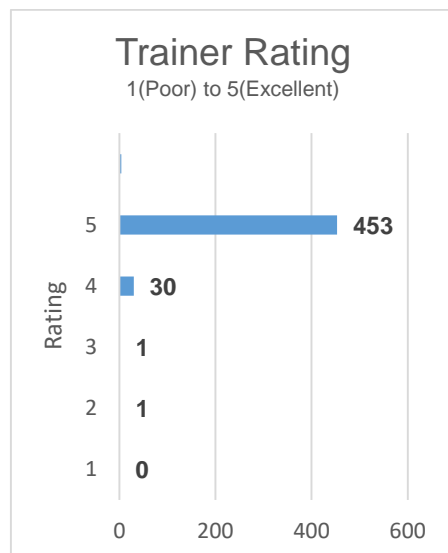
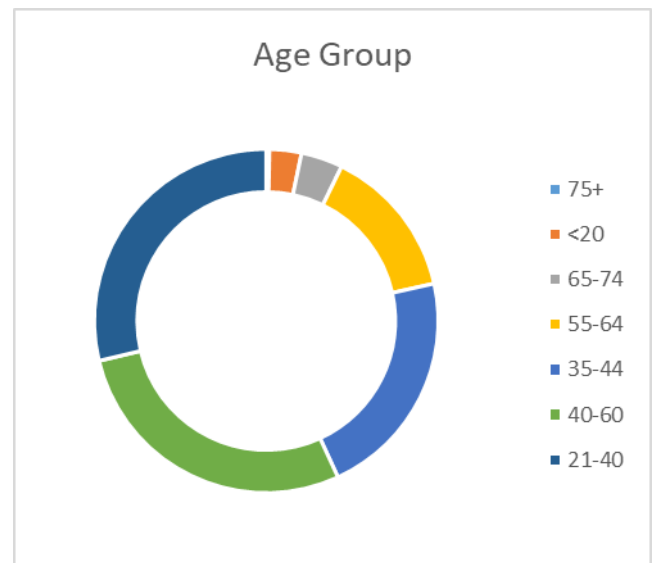
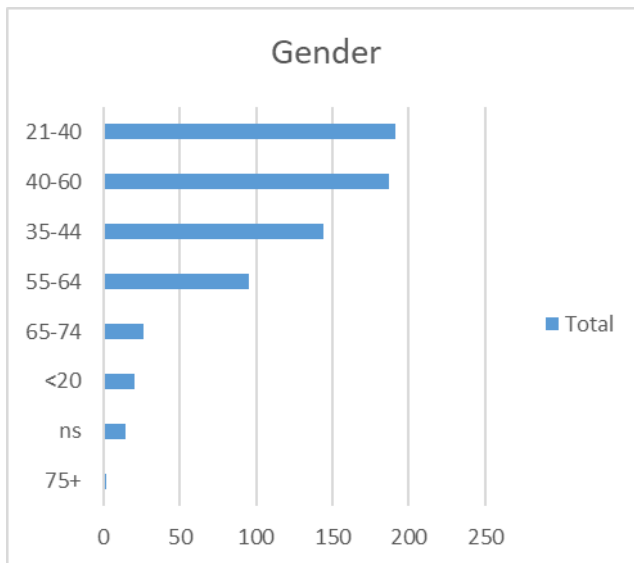
Feedback workshops

The below feedback provides an insight in gender and age groups of our workshop participants.

The feedback suggest that participants enjoy our workshops, our trainers and our facilities.

Whilst this overview is based on feedback from participants who attended our own workshop, we know that a similar feedback has been received from students who attended our Sydney Community College workshops.

In calendar year 2018-19 we estimate that we have welcomed 650 students on any of our workshops

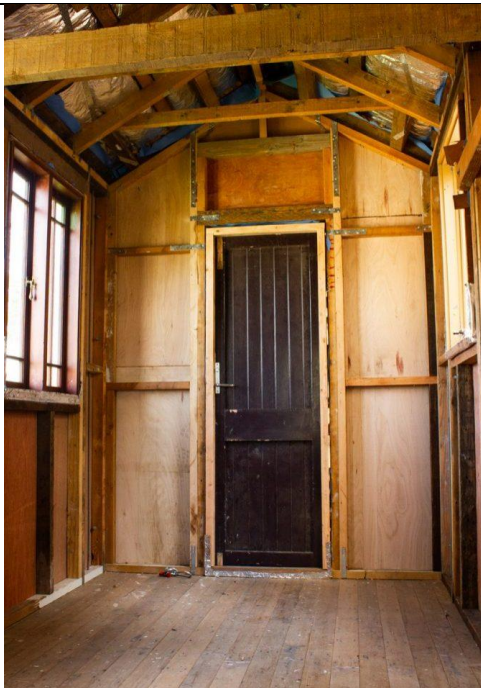


Tiny House workshop

We will also continue to offer our Tiny House Course.

We've been promoting the benefits of Tiny Houses since 2014 and have tailored the only intensive hands-on tiny house building course in Australia using recycled and reclaimed materials. Covering not just theory and design principles, but also the necessary practical skills people need to build their very own tiny house,

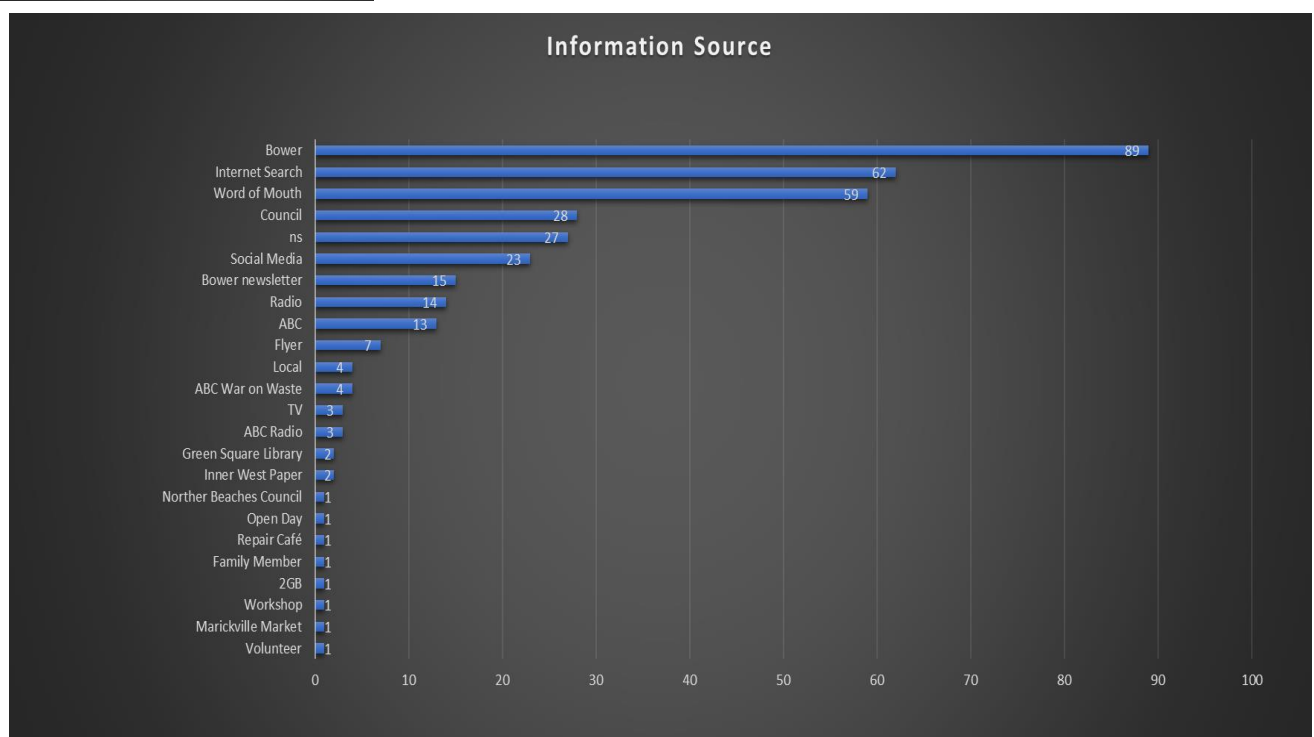
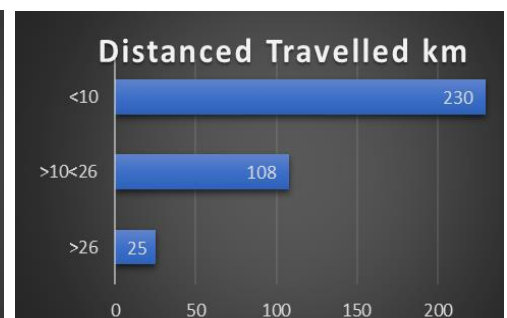
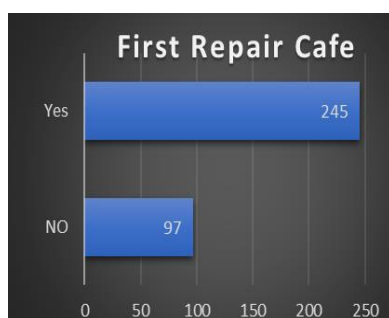
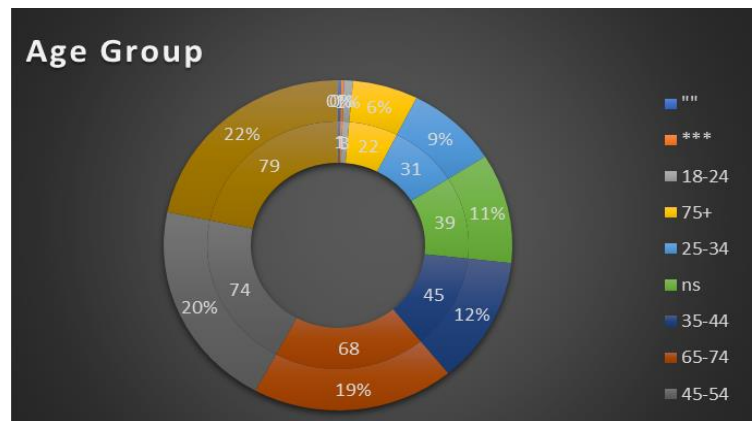
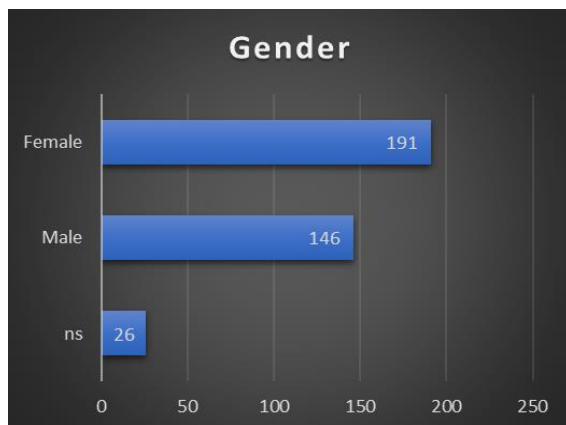
We build tiny houses to lock up stage allowing any potential buyer to finish the interior as per their own preferences and interests. The tiny houses are completely secure, insulated and water proof. Space and design allow for a loft. They are built on a 3-tonne car trailer allowing any buyer to take them to any destination of their choice.



2.19 Repair Café

Repair Cafes remain one of our most popular programs. We currently run on average 4 repair cafes per week or 200 per year welcoming 2000 visitors per year. We recently launched new programs in Zetland, Redfern and Parramatta and extended our service from furniture and electronic repairs to bikes, clothing and phones.

The below stats from Jan till Oct 2019 for the Wednesday Zetland Repair Café show that the vast majority of visitors are women, between 35 and 65, traveling less than 10 km and had not visited the stores nor a repair café before. Majority of visitors are either helped with their repair or given an advice that will put them on a pathway for a repair. People find us via Internet search, social media, councils, word of mouth or the Bower.



2.20 Sheds

The Bower supports sheds in all shapes and forms because they apply similar philosophy as the Bower i.e. sharing skills and helping each other with practical solutions in a self-managed and welcoming environment.

The Bower is happy to accommodate sheds in its premises and share with them our mission and objective to divert goods from landfill by reusing and repairing them. We currently host 3 sheds

Men and Women Shed



The **Mensheddies** in their workshop in Marrickville. In early 2019 they moved their activities to our Redfern wood workshop and help refurbishing and repairing donated furniture.



Womensheddies enjoying a workshop session to build a crate with reclaimed timber. They meet monthly in our Parramatta workshop.

Community Shed



The Zetland workshop recently launched a Community Shed program in partnership with Bicycle Garden and The Reconnct project to provide monthly repair cafés for clothing, bikes, phones and electrical appliances.











2.21 Our Partners

The Bower enjoys the support from a wide range of corporates, small businesses, banks, universities, local and state governments, foundations, lawyers and politicians.

The below list covers all entities who either gave us in kind, financial, promotional or pro bono support in FY 2018-19

100 WOMEN	The Upcyclist	Site Studio Architecture & Art
 <p>Jamie Parker NSW MP for Balmain has helped with mediation when our landlord evicted us</p>	 <p>Justin Doyle is a barrister who successfully provided us pro bono assistance during our supreme court legal procedure.</p>	 <p>Darcy Byrne. Mayor for Inner West Council. has repeatedly expressed his support for a Reuse centre in the Inner West to home the Bower for a long term</p>
 <p>Julie Owens Federal MP for Parramatta promoted our Right to Repair Campaign in Federal parliament</p>	<div data-bbox="804 801 1485 987">  <p>Jo Haylen 10 June · 🌐</p> <p>Proud to acknowledge THE BOWER Reuse & Repair Centre and Mums 4 Refugees for their wonderful "From House to Home" campaign and the Addison Road Community Centre's monthly night markets. The inner west at its best.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="804 999 1485 1303">  <p>02/06/16 10:05 AM Labor</p> <p>3. Particularly acknowledge the Bower and Reuse Repair Centre and Mums 4 Refugees, who have</p> </div>	
 <p>ABC TV Icons Costa - Gardening Australia and Craig Reucassel - War on Waste are the best ambassadors we can dream off.</p>	 <p>Clover Moore Mayor for City of Sydney will drop by in our Zetland community space whenever she is in the neighbourhood. Both Zetland and Redfern spaces are city of sydney premises.</p>	

