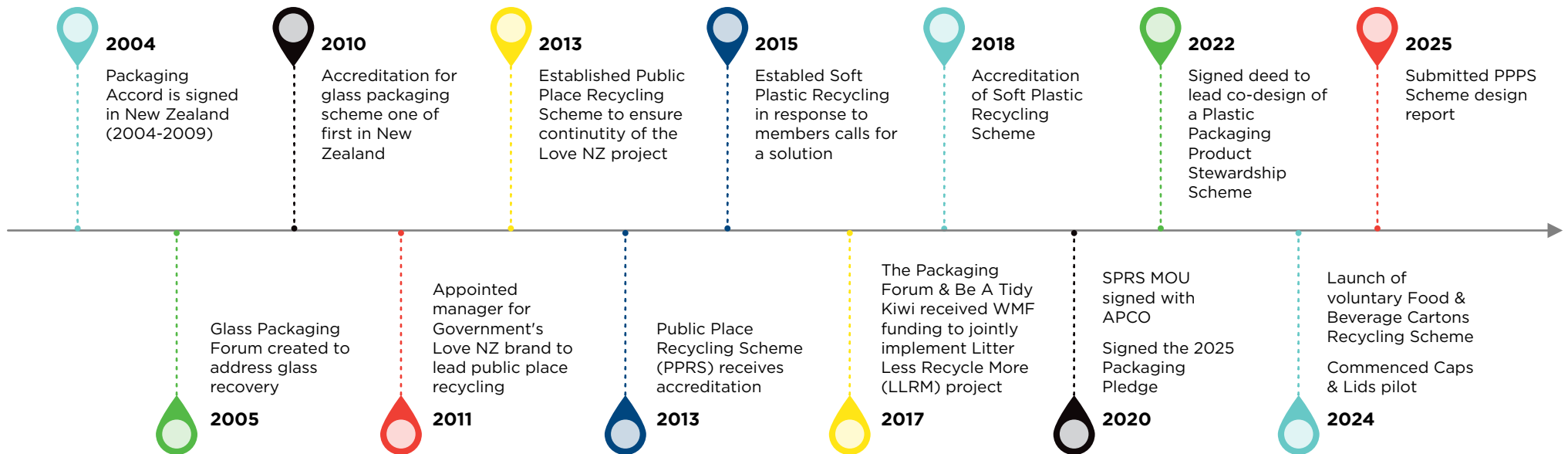


# **BUSINESS FUNDING WASTE REDUCTION & RESOURCE RECOVERY SOLUTIONS**

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## **REPORT 2024-2025**

## THE PACKAGING FORUM: **OUR PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP JOURNEY**



# background - our history

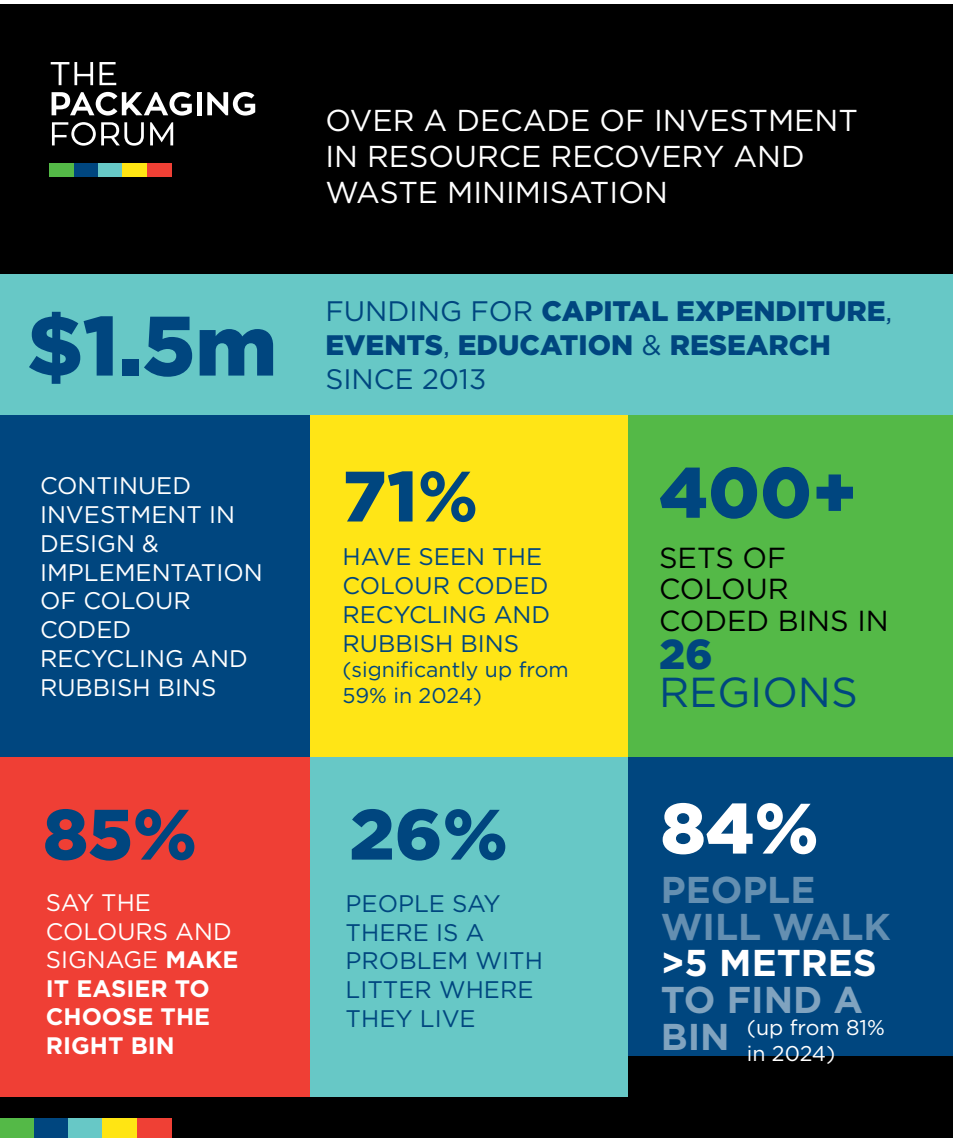
The Packaging Forum has been working on improving access to public place recycling and reducing litter since 2010, starting with the Love NZ Public Place Recycling project initiated before the 2011 Rugby World Cup with funding from the Waste Minimisation Fund. The Public Place Recycling Scheme was launched as an industry-funded initiative to enhance recycling efforts and minimise litter, receiving voluntary product stewardship accreditation under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 in 2014. This scheme operated until 2021.

From 2017 to 2020, the Packaging Forum and Be a Tidy Kiwi managed the Litter Less Recycle More campaign, which established a standardised national network of colour-coded recycling bins. Be a Tidy Kiwi continues to be The Packaging Forum's community partner, and The Packaging Forum still promotes and supports standardised recycling bin infrastructure.

For over ten years, the Packaging Forum collected public place recycling and waste data from funding recipients and scheme partners. In 2024, the decision was made to gather data only from projects funded in the past three years. Due to a decrease in the number of councils providing public place recycling bins, capturing reliable data had become increasingly challenging.

## what we do

The Packaging Forum provides funding to support organisations in implementing solutions aimed at reducing waste creation through reuse and refill infrastructure. It also seeks to increase public access to recycling and rubbish disposal infrastructure for communities and events. Funding applications show a trend away from resource recovery projects towards reduction initiatives.



# what we have funded

## reduce and reuse investment

Since 2013, The Packaging Forum has allocated around **\$1.5 million** to support projects which increase the availability of public place recycling and rubbish facilities, and to education and research programmes. The trends we are seeing in the availability and efficiency of public place recycling, has been reflected in a change to criteria for funding.

In 2024/25 **\$129,664** was allocated to projects that encourage reuse, increase resource recovery in public places and events, and fund education and awareness.

Funding applications show a shift from resource recovery to reduce and reuse projects. The funded projects show investment across the motu and include initiatives to reduce packaging through reuse systems, promote resource recovery and support community events.

2024 INVESTMENT	\$	%
Reduce/reuse capex	33,220	25
Resource recovery/recycling capex	21,679	17
Events	22,264	17
Education	5,000	4
Litter research & audits	47,500	37
	129,664	

## reduce packaging with reuse systems

### Recircle

Recircle received funding to support the purchase of smart bin technology so that consumers can return used household and personal care plastic containers to be washed at Will and Able’s wash system and refilled for resale. Smart bins have been placed at several locations across Auckland with expansion throughout 2025 planned and data captured and analysed to support development of the reuse sector.

### Aotea/Great Barrier Island cafés do not have single use coffee cups

In 2023, The Packaging Forum provided funding to Anamata Resource Recovery on Aotea to purchase keep cups to create mug libraries at local cafés. The initiative aimed to make Aotea single use cup free.

Cafés around Aotea are embracing sustainability with several reusable cup options. You can: Bring your own reusable mug to be filled; pay a deposit for a takeaway cup that’s refundable upon return; borrow a mug from the

community mug library; swap your “chunky” mug for a new one.

Keep in mind: depending on the material, a reusable cup needs to be used between 20 and 100 times to offset the environmental impact of its production.

### reuse: rinse & repeat — wash against waste

Effective reuse systems at events require efficient wash systems. Since 2022, funding has been allocated for wash trucks in New Plymouth, Marlborough, Far North, and Wellington to help replace single-use cups and dishes with reusables.

The Sustainable Trust trailer in Wellington was used for nine events over the summer ranging from school fairs to street festivals, Round the Bays, Pride Parade and Waitangi Day Porirua. Over the course of the events FillGood reused over 80,000 items and avoided over two tonnes of waste being generated.

This year, The Packaging Forum supported Waste No More, Nelson in refurbishing their wash trailer

and funded Envirohub Marlborough Charitable Trust to use the wash truck at five schools or community events to showcase the cost-effectiveness and ease of using reusables.

Investment in wash trucks requires time to yield results, but the advantages of providing wash systems for easier implementation of reuse systems at events are now becoming evident.

### **recycle: championing resource recovery**

The Central Otago District Council received funding to install two sets of 3-way bins for glass, cans, and waste at Alexandra Riverside Park to improve the Alexandra CBD.

Xtreme Zero Waste Raglan was granted funds to install moveable bins to enhance waste diversion at the busy Raglan site during the summer months. The cardboard bin is recovering around 30 tonnes per month since its installation,

Sport Northland obtained funding for wasteless bin stations for use at their events, including the Whangārei half marathon. This initiative builds on

regional funding provided to Creative Northland and CBEC.

### **education**

The Packaging Forum first funded Treadlightly in 2017 and over a three year period helped support Treadlightly's Auckland school programme for 5-12-year-olds. In 2024, The Packaging Forum renewed its relationship with Treadlightly with a commitment to fund \$16,000 with the first tranche paid in the 24/25 financial year. Treadlightly visited 27 primary schools throughout Auckland with their educational caravan and interactive classroom experience.

### **supporting community events for over a decade – long term partnerships**

#### **AIMS Games**

AIMS Games celebrated its 21 years anniversary with more athletes participating than at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games and with eight schools representing the Cook Islands and Fiji. We first started supporting this event in 2013 and this year we supported not just the recycling programme but a reusable packaging







initiative with the event's first boomerang mug library.

### **Savour in the Park, Picton – showcasing local food and drink**

In November 2024, 1300 individuals attended Savour in the Park, enjoying culinary offerings from over 12 food vendors and six beverage stalls, while diverting cardboard, plastic, and glass containers from landfill. Event organisers observed that wineries and food vendors managed their own recycling of cardboard and glass. However, they expressed frustration with contamination in the event's bins, despite employing volunteers to guide attendees on proper recycling methods. Having the Marlborough dish wash truck available in 2025 will help reduce waste through reuse.

### **Rotorua Crankworx**

The Crankworx World Tour received funding for the fourth year as a major international event which puts Rotorua and the Bay of Plenty on the map. All soft plastic including race tape was recycled at Future Post. This year 1300 kgs of waste was diverted from landfill.

### **A&P Show Whangārei**

The Packaging Forum supported the A&P show for the first time. The event achieved 61% waste diversion with 215 kg of packaging and food waste diverted from landfill. Event organisers commented that single use cups generated a lot of waste and vendors were still giving out plastic bottles. They also identified balloons, small plastic toys and other giveaway items created litter.

### **Whangārei Light and Lantern Parade**

More than 4500 people attended the inaugural Light and Lantern Parade for Matariki in June 2024, diverting over 34 kg of waste from landfill and achieving an 84% diversion rate with funding support from The Packaging Forum.





# research & audits

## Horizon Research

Horizon Research surveyed 1045 people in June 2025<sup>1</sup>. Results were compared with similar surveys since 2011.

**51%** say they have public place recycling bins in their area.

**71%** of respondents have seen colour-coded recycling bins, up from 59% in 2024.

**85%** said that the colours and signage made the bins easier to use, up from 81%.

**44%** reported little or no litter problem.

**26%** noted a litter issue, with higher reports in Northland and Gisborne/Hawke’s Bay.

The number who will make an extra effort to walk to bins has seen some changes.

**31%** would walk up to 10 metres, a significant decrease from 37% in 2024.

Respondents were told that the government is consulting on reforms to the waste and litter legislation making it discretionary rather than mandatory for councils to provide public place litter bins. **59% (2,284,000 adults)** disagreed with the proposed reforms.

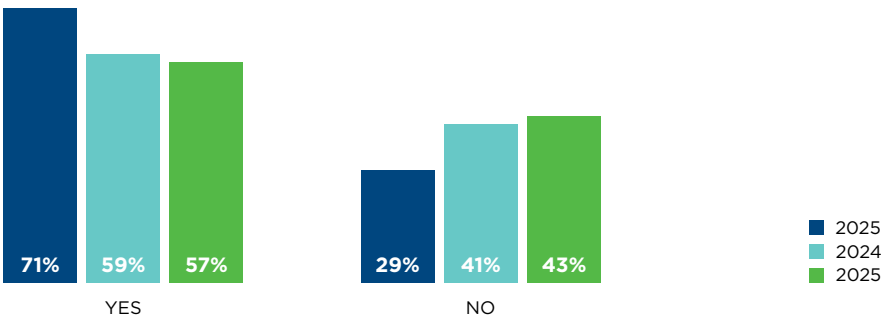
## litter research

Be a Tidy Kiwi were again contracted to complete a series of public place bin audits in different geographic areas to continue work commenced in 2018 and repeated in 2023.

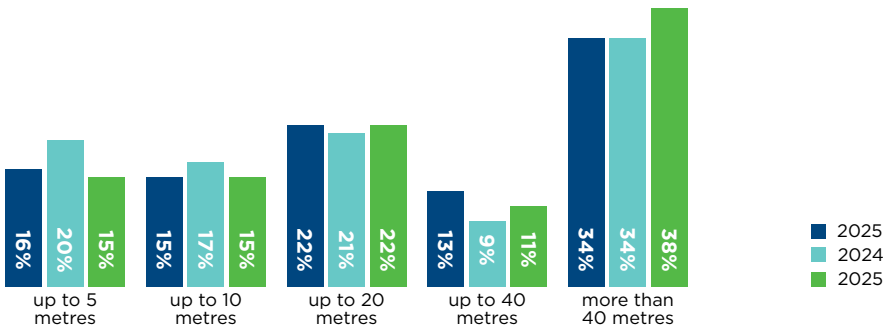
The litter audits were undertaken by Sunshine Yates Consulting in Tauranga, Rotorua, Wellington and Dunedin. The aim is to:

**Measure how efficiently** the public are using the different bins, including: levels of contamination in recycling and glass bottle bins.

## HAVE YOU SEEN THESE COLOUR CODED RECYCLING AND RUBBISH BINS?



## HOW FAR WOULD YOU WALK TO FIND A RUBBISH BIN OR A RECYCLING BIN?



<sup>1</sup> Survey link



**Quantity of recyclable** materials in rubbish bins.

**Measure the types** of packaging materials disposed of to litter bins.

With the caveat that the audits can only provide a snapshot of the composition of a particular set of bins at a particular moment in time.

The audits in Rotorua and Wellington were of rubbish litter bins whereas in Tauranga the audit included commingled recycling bins and in Dunedin included commingled recycling bins and a separate glass bin.

Packaging material constituted between 13.5% and 39.2% of the contents of litter bins, by weight. In locations without recycling bins, litter bins contained a significantly higher amount of food and beverage packaging. Where recycling bins were available, packaging materials made up a larger proportion (between 62% and 85%) of the materials in recycling bins compared to litter bins.

However, considering the definition of recyclable materials for kerbside collections, the actual amount of recyclable material is much lower, with contamination levels exceeding 50%.

Audits indicate that, similar to kerbside collection, educating consumers on recyclable materials and proper presentation for recycling is essential. Providing appropriate infrastructure, or “binrastructure,” is also crucial.

The Packaging Forum supports the practice of source-separating materials through its funding allocations. This involves providing separate recycling bins for glass bottles, cans, and plastic bottles alongside at least one rubbish bin. Research suggests that utilising colour-coded, standardised bins with clear signage and segregation significantly reduces contamination.



## PHOTOS

### PAGE 5

Recircle's Smart Bin; AIMS Games acknowledges The Packaging Forum's support; Waste No More's Wash Against Waste

### PAGE 6

Sustainable Trust Wellington wash truck; Xero Waste Raglan

### PAGE 7

Whangārei Light and Lantern Parade; Central Otago recycling bins at Lake Tekapo will soon be installed in Alexandra; The AIMS team

### PAGE 9

Learning about waste at Ahutoetoe School, Wainui