

Take action against textile waste with Re-Action

Ever thought about what happens to a uniform once it has done its duty on the front line?

In New Zealand alone, approximately 220,800 tonnes of textile waste are produced annually. An estimated 2,177 tonnes of this waste is made up of branded company uniforms.

When companies rebrand, garments with the outdated logo are no longer appropriate for staff, or others in the community, to wear. This is a problem that Wastebusters has been concerned about for a long time, as they find it hard to find new homes for company branded uniforms through their reuse store.

That's where Re-Action comes in – to repurpose new and pre-loved uniforms and give them a new life of adventures.

In collaboration with Re-Action, a collective in the French alps with the mission of keeping outdoor gear out of landfill, and RealNZ who donated 200 garments for the pilot, Wastebusters brought the 'Re-Action' uniform repurposing project to life, thanks in part to a grant from QLDC's Waste Minimisation Community Fund.

"The mission of the Re-Action project is to keep outdoor gear out of landfill and add to the circular economy," said Sophie Ward, Wastebusters Project Manager.

Through the talented creative efforts of Wastebusters staff and friends, old uniforms are redesigned and given a second life with experienced local sewers covering up old branding using patches and sewing techniques. The clothes are then sold in-person and online, where staff proudly share the unique background story of each garment with customers, adding value and meaning to its second life.

Garments have been rebranded using reclaimed fabric.



“All of the 200 garments have been rebranded using reclaimed fabric from old jackets and tents and waste fabric donated to Wastebusters and from New Zealand clothing manufacturers,” said Sophie.

Beyond reducing waste, Re-Action raises awareness about textile waste, encouraging conversations around an issue that often goes unnoticed, but needs urgent attention and innovative solutions.

The sustainable business model is about more than just recycling – it’s about reviving obsolete items and fostering sustainable choices in the corporate world. Sophie Ward from Wastebusters hopes this can inspire more businesses to think of sustainable options when rebranding their companies.

Re-Action has proven effective at reducing the volume of textile waste while providing affordable, sustainable garments to the community.

Wastebusters’s transformative Re-Action project is made possible through the support of 16 organisations and QLDC’s Waste Minimisation Community Fund.

