



Circular Hepburn Toolkit for Business and Beyond

VERSION 0.0

DECEMBER 2023

Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL



The Circular Hepburn Toolkit

for Business and Beyond

Version 0.0

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Many thanks to the local business owners, community members and all those who contributed to the development of this toolkit. This is Version 0.0 of the Circular Hepburn Toolkit for Business and Beyond, a simple Beta version that over time will be expanded upon and improved together with the community to reflect local context, content and business value.

We invite all local organisations, businesses, circular economy experts and other Councils to comment, collaborate and contribute further to this growing body of knowledge.

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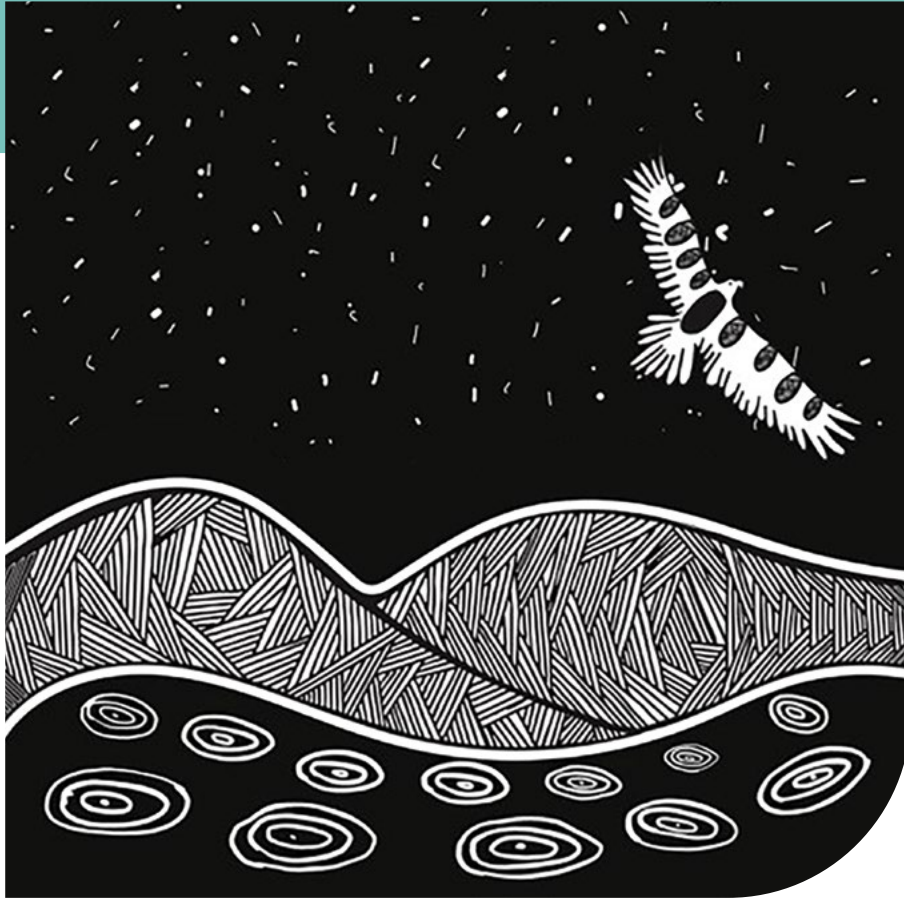
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Acknowledgement of Country

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

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Welcome to the Circular Hepburn Toolkit

Many aspects of the circular economy are already well established in our region. Practices like backlogging (picking up goods for someone else with your empty truck on your return journey), repurposing, sharing (tools and equipment), refurbishing and repairing, are put to use because it's what regional communities do well, and quite simply, it's common sense.

The circular economy tackles climate change and other global challenges like biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution, by disconnecting economic activity from the consumption of finite resources, and reconnecting humans to each other and the natural systems that sustain us. The result is an economy, community and environment that are healthier, stronger and more resilient.

The Circular Hepburn Toolkit is designed for businesses of any size or sector. Our aim in creating it is to help you understand more about what the circular economy is, and learn how your business and value chain partners can benefit from becoming more 'circular'.



What's Inside?

There are three parts to the toolkit: this booklet, a set of 14 circular economy strategy cards, and the Hepburn Shire circular economy webpage. Together they comprise a resource pack that businesses can use as a conversation starter, a tool for running workshops, or simply as inspiration for reflection, experimentation and innovation.

Our intention is for this toolkit to support and develop a circular economy community of practice in Hepburn Shire. You are currently reading version 0.0. We encourage you to share your feedback and examples of circularity in your business. These will help shape the webpage and future versions of the cards and booklet with local content, thereby strengthening the toolkit's ability to nurture circularity in Hepburn Shire.

This Booklet provides a brief introduction to circular economy concepts with some case study examples and a selection of creative commons open-source business innovation tools.

The Card Deck part of the toolkit illustrates 14 circular economy strategies and their benefits to business. Over time this card deck will expand to include local examples.

The Circular Economy Webpage includes forms for feedback and submitting your circularity case studies, and a link to sign up to e-news, upcoming events and digital resources - including all future updates to Circular Hepburn and the CE Business Toolkit.

Visit the circular economy webpage:
www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/circular-economy



Hepburn Shire Council is committed to “developing and promoting the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals”, a priority statement of the Council Plan (2021-2025).

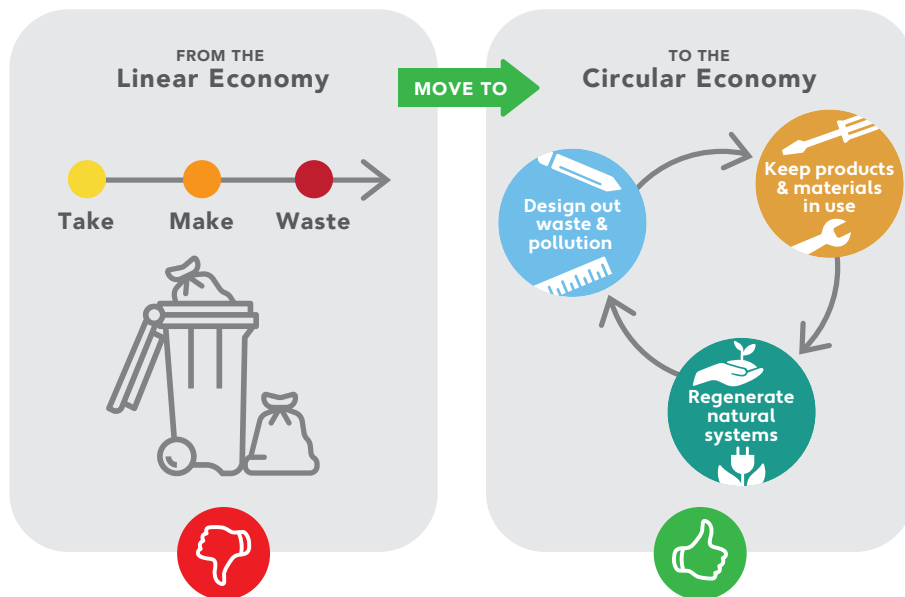
The Sustainable Hepburn Strategy (2022-2026), co-designed with the community, identifies priority actions to “transition the shire to a circular economy”. Supported by a dedicated Circular Economy Officer, these actions include:

- Integrating circular economy principles across Council operations, such as in waste management, procurement and works (we will be using this Toolkit internally, to walk the talk).
- Working with local and regional stakeholders to deliver circular economy outcomes (e.g. through partnership projects with businesses, organisations and residents).

More detail on our goals and actions is provided in the Circular Economy Framework and Roadmap (to be released in early 2024).

Visit the circular economy webpage: www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/circular-economy

What is the Circular Economy?



In our current economy we take materials from the Earth, make products from them, and eventually throw them away as waste – the process is linear.

In a circular economy products and systems are designed to reduce waste, materials are kept in circulation, and natural systems are regenerated.

The 14 Circular Economy Strategies

The 14 strategies of the Hepburn Circularity Toolkit range through the three core principles of circular economy:

- Design out waste and pollution
- Keep products and materials in use
- Regenerate natural systems

Short, Medium & Long Loops

The first 9 strategies sit on a scale of highest to lowest impact. 'Refuse' is the most immediately impactful strategy. Subsequent strategies require an increasing amount of energy and resources to implement. This scale is further divided into loops. Short, Medium and Long Loop strategies involve increasing investments of time, labour, transportation and other resources.

Foundational strategies

The remaining strategies involve waking up to a new understanding of ourselves in relation with the world around us. They are foundational in the sense that they guide us toward 'living and breathing' circularity!

	Design out waste & pollution	Keep products & materials in use	Regenerate natural systems
Short loops	1 Refuse 2 Rethink 3 Reduce	4 Re-use 5 Repair 6 Refurbish 7 Repurpose	8 Recycle 9 Recover
Medium loops			10 Regenerate 11 Relocalise 12 Reconnect 13 Renewable 14 Recognition
Long loops			
Foundational Strategies			

Each of the 14 strategies can be implemented at three different levels:

- at the level of a product or service
- at the level of the business
- at the level of an ecosystem

Take the Repair strategy as an example:

- a product can be designed so that the parts can be easily replaced if they break
- the business developing this product could offer a repair service to customers
- a group of businesses could band together with community – building on the repair café model - and run a collective repair centre that services many items, as well as educating and facilitating community members to repair their own items.

At the ecosystem level circular 'nodes' bring multiple stakeholders together in collaboration to meet shared needs and aspirations. A shared processing facility is an example of a circular node that unlocks resource efficiencies and savings for a number of businesses.

One exciting new node in Hepburn Shire is the ASPIRE platform which enables "waste" from one business to become a valuable input for another (e.g. a restaurant's food waste becomes food for pigs at a local farm).

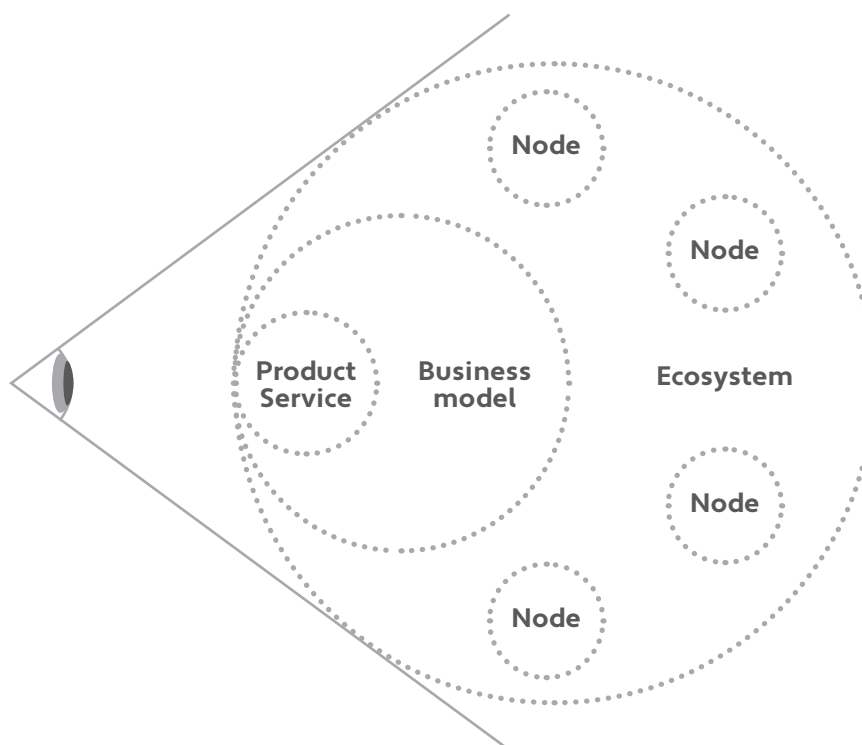


Diagram adapted from Konietzko, J et al (2020) A Tool to Analyze, Ideate and Develop Circular Innovation Ecosystems, Sustainability, 12(1), 417

Circular Economy Strategy Cards

Introducing our 14 strategies



01 Refuse
Circular Strategy
Principle: Design out waste and pollution

02 Rethink
Circular Strategy
Principle: Design out waste and pollution

03 Reduce
Circular Strategy
Principle: Design out waste and pollution



04 Re-use
Circular Strategy
Principle: Extend the lifespan of materials

05 Repair
Circular Strategy
Principle: Extend the lifespan of materials

06 Refurbish
Circular Strategy
Principle: Extend the lifespan of materials

07 Repurpose
Circular Strategy
Principle: Extend the lifespan of materials

08 Recycle
Circular Strategy
Principle: Extend the lifespan of materials

09 Recover
Circular Strategy
Principle: Extend the lifespan of materials



10 Regenerate
Circular Strategy
Principle: Regenerate natural systems

11 Relocalise
Circular Strategy
Principle: Regenerate natural systems

13 Renewable energy
Circular Strategy
Principle: Regenerate natural systems

14 Recognition
Circular Strategy
Principle: Regenerate natural systems

The reverse of each of these cards gives an overview of the strategy, clarifies its particular business and economic benefits, and poses questions for reflection. If you do not have the cards you can download a PDF version from www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/circular-economy or request a hard copy of the deck by emailing: jnewcombe@hepburn.vic.gov.au.

Case studies - Honest Eggs

Local Circular Economy Leader

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Honest Eggs Co. was started by the Righetti and Garsed families who live in Yandoit near Daylesford.

At the heart of their values are family and community. They want to use the business to improve yields for farming families, enable local farmers to diversify their produce and provide income for local farming communities.

“Regenerative farming is good for the land and a good value proposition for small regional farmers. A stacked enterprise model makes it viable: 1,000 chooks, 50 cows, and a few sheep and pigs, and you’re adding value to your land and farm.

Relocalise: The Honest Eggs crew are genuinely open to local collaboration to enable more circular business practices such as employing local businesses to grow chicken feed and sharing transport/ product distribution opportunities (to better use their empty trucks that drive long distances regionally to collect eggs).

Reconnect: Honest Eggs currently must travel to the other side of Melbourne to pasteurise their bulk liquid eggs (for making pasta etc). A ‘circular node’ opportunity was identified for a regional pasteurising hub that could process local eggs and dairy products and benefit local businesses like Honest Eggs.

Case studies - Hepburn Distillery

Local Circular Economy Leader

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The people at Hepburn Distillery value place and wanted to utilise what grows abundantly locally: potatoes. For their international award-winning vodka and gin, they source as many of the raw materials as they can 'locally, organically and seasonally'.

“ Surrounded by forest in cold, spud country, we were inspired to make a product that grew locally, was free of chemicals and low in food miles.

Reduce: The Hepburn Distillery's packaging and labels are made from recycled and FSC approved paper.

Regenerate: For unavoidable carbon emissions they partner with Fifteen Trees to plant a tree for every litre they sell to ensure their business is climate positive.

Reconnect: Hepburn Distillery's process waste is returned to farms as pig food. Pork from the pigs is served with Hepburn Distillery vodka by a local wedding provider. The circular processes and the stories they tell add value and create memorable visitor experiences.

Relocalise: Hepburn Distillery are keen to see a local social enterprise develop that could collect, wash and refill bottles from all local producers using a return incentive scheme.

Case studies - Captain's Creek

Local Circular Economy Leader

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Four generations of the May family have run the 80 hectare farm for more than 100 years. The organic farm produces grapes and produce for the cellar door and café. Certified as an organic producer in the early 1980s, Captain's Creek operates on the mantra that 'everything is recycled, nature takes its course'. A wide variety of crop types and local produce allows for experimentation and increases the farm's resilience.

“ We are already seeing more extreme weather more often on the farm. Let's collectively diversify and be open to trialling foods that can adapt to climate change.

Regenerate: The May family are actively regenerating native plant species on the boundaries of their property as well as fencing off protected conservation areas to bring back some of the local wildlife. Shelter belt plantations of native trees have offered a huge positive transformation for the farm with many ecosystem benefits.

Reconnect: Captain's Creek would like to see affordable housing placed on large parcels of land to help ease rental price pressure on hospitality and other skilled worker shortages in the region. On farms these would also offer a dual purpose by providing for WWOOFing workers.



Business Benefits

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Reduced Consumption: Commodity prices are on the rise due to market volatility and the growing scarcity of many natural resources. Businesses can thus benefit from reducing their reliance on inputs made from new materials and their dependence upon the continued extraction of natural resources. Reused, recycled or remanufactured materials can not only cost less, they are often sourced from shorter, more reliable supply chains.

Resource efficiency: Using fewer resources, such as materials, energy and water, reduces costs. Even small upgrades in efficiency can create significant cost savings over time. A 2017 report* by the International Resource Panel forecasts that "resource efficiency and ambitious climate policies and initiatives could deliver annual economic benefits of more than US\$2 trillion globally in 2050."

Waste reduction: Costs can also be reduced in a circular economy because of a reduction in the amount of waste - both in materials and energy - that a business produces. Designing out waste is a key principle of circularity, and reduced waste means reduced disposal fees and energy bills.

Revenue opportunities: Circular economy innovations can help businesses tap into new markets, represent themselves as circularity leaders, and gain competitive edge. According to a report by Accenture**, "the circular economy could generate \$4.5 trillion of additional economic output by 2030 through new circular business models and revenue generating opportunities."

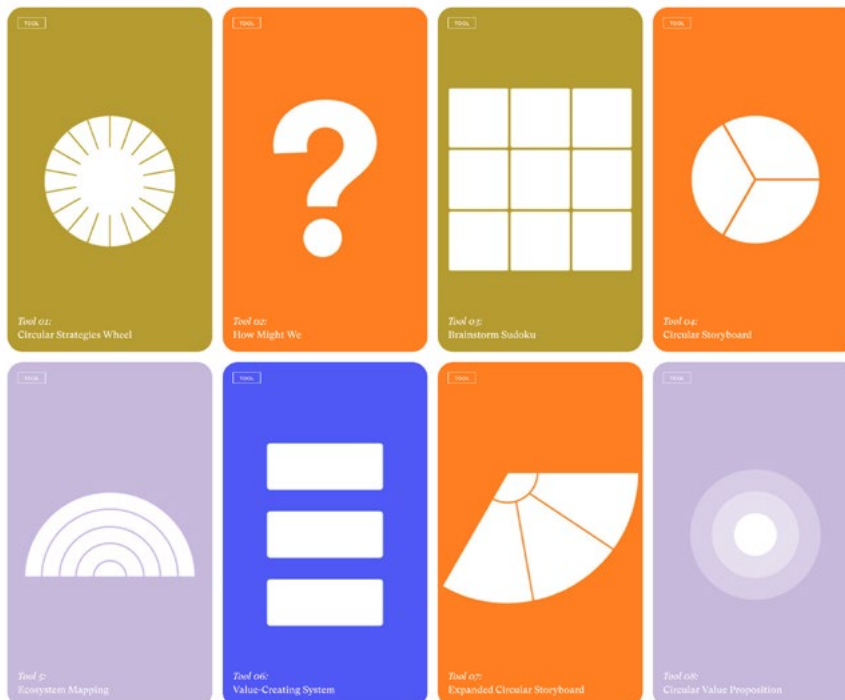
Increased revenue also results from decreased risks which can be a by-product of localisation, through shorter supply chains, as the global pandemic taught us.

*<https://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/resource-efficiency>

**<https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/consumer-goods-services/circular-economy>

Tools - Business Innovation

Global Circular Economy Creative Commons Toolkits



Tools - Business innovation

In the creation of the Circular Hepburn Toolkit & Card Deck we researched other circular economy resources from around the world. It has been really exciting to discover so many inspiring and eye-opening tools, and to sense how momentum for circularity is growing worldwide. Each toolkit takes a slightly different approach and thus offers its own valuable insights. Here are some of our favourites, we thoroughly recommend that you try them out for yourselves.

Circularity Deck

Sharpen your circular economy thinking.
circularitydeck.com

Danish Design Centre

One toolkit. 8 tools. Kickstart your circular transition.
ddc.dk/tools/designing-your-circular-transition

Zero Waste Scotland

Business toolkit & 30 ideas to kickstart circularity.
www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/circular-economy-business-support

Plant Chicago

Circular economy toolkit for small business.
www.plantchicago.org/download-toolkit

You can also download these from the Circular Hepburn webpage:
www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/circular-economy

Closing the Loop in Hepburn Shire

The ASPIRE online marketplace for materials



ASPIRE is an online marketplace which acts like a matchmaking service for businesses wanting to go circular.

The platform cleverly connects one organisation's material inputs with another's outputs thus facilitating opportunities for reuse, recycling and remanufacturing. One person's trash is another person's treasure!

ASPIRE is available to any Hepburn Shire ABN holder and is free to organisations with less than 20 staff. This platform helps to divert resources from landfill, save on disposal costs and develop innovative solutions for troublesome materials.

The more visibility we have around the types of resources entering and leaving business operations, the more connections we can make for a local, circular economy. Register your business at aspimesme.com in minutes to start exchanging "waste" today.

Join the Circular Economy

Circular Hepburn Community of Practice

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This Toolkit has been designed to kick-start momentum towards a circular economy in Hepburn Shire. Has it inspired you? Your feedback will help us develop Version 1.0, making this a more representative and useful tool for our community.

There are many ways to join the journey to 'go circular'. You can:

- **Stay informed** - Sign up to our Circular Economy e-news or follow our webpage for the latest CE events and workshops.
- **Get engaged** - Trial the Circular Hepburn Card Deck and let us know what works via the feedback form. Sign up to the ASPIRE platform.

- **Be a Circular Economy Champion** - Contact the Shire's Circular Economy Officer to be the subject of a case study. Host a visit to your premises. Host an event.
- **Be a Circular Hepburn Partner** - Be part of co-designing Circular Hepburn's future. Deliver a circular node project. Sponsor a circular economy prize for local businesses.

To take your next steps, please visit www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/circular-economy. You can also email Hepburn Shire's Circular Economy Officer, Jodi Newcombe with any questions: jnewcombe@hepburn.vic.gov.au.



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