Recycle IT – Community Electrical Recycling

Recycle IT is an award-winning community based recycling organisation offering recycling services for waste electrical, electronic equipment (WEEE) in Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare. Recycle IT was established as a community initiative in 2002 to create employment and reduce environmental harm created by the dumping of old household appliances on brown and greenfield sites. With support from South Dublin County Council, South Dublin County Partnership and WEEE Ireland the organisation has developed and now employs over 20 people. Recycle IT is governed by a voluntary board or directors and is committed to the standards outlined in the Governance Code Principles for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland.

Recycle IT as a social enterprise is driven by six community, social, economic and environmental principles which are core of the organisations work. They are

1. Supporting training, work experience, and employment so local people can work.
2. Helping protect the environment through licensed recycling.
3. Community engagement and outreach through learning workshops and event participation.
4. Assisted friendly collections which really help people to recycle who otherwise may not.
5. Promote recycling through flyers, events, newsletters, social media, website blog & education.
6. Acting ethically to ensure waste materials are managed though an approved supply chain.

Project Description

Recycle IT offer free WEEE collections to over 100,000 homes annually. Services include free and age friendly assisted collections, from homes across Dublin and from community groups, schools and charities, free drop off services and cost effective personal and business recycling collections. During 2016 and up to June 2017 Recycle IT has recycled **972 tons** of waste materials or the equivalent **of 972,000 electrical kettles**. Over 70% of door to door community collections take place in disadvantaged areas where access to transport, financial security, age profile, health, wellbeing or employment status can limit opportunities to recycle large and small household appliances.

Recycle IT as a community based waste management organisation have a strong sense of giving back and acting for the common good. The organisation works with the community in various ways including:

1. **Community Greening**

A: Community activities include offering recycled planters, workshops on reuse and greening advice to local community groups including North Clondalkin, and Clondalkin Tidy Towns, Moorefield Environmental Group, Balgaddy Community Garden, Lindasfarne Allotments & Palmerstown Pinks Ladies Environmental Group.

Figure 1 Children - Balgaddy Community Garden

B: Recycle IT run free competitions yearly where schools and community gardeners can access garden planters recovered from old washing machines and tumble dryers. The competition encourages schools and gardeners needing help to enter. It also helps build lasting relationships with people in the community.

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C: Recycle IT have sponsored North Clondalkin Tidy Towns in 2016/2017 with a combination of time, advice, planting equipment and plants. Drums are painted by volunteers, planted and placed in the local community as part of the greening activities carried out by the group. The efforts can be seen in Neilstown and surrounding areas. These activities get children, families and older people involved in eco-friendly community centered greening.

Figure 2 Competition Winners

2. Community Collections

During 2016 and up to June 2017 Recycle IT has worked on 14,849 community collections with 144,700 collection cards delivered and separately our team have contacted 75 resident associations supporting 38% of those with planned collection events in Dublin and Wicklow. The Recycle IT team work in collaboration with each resident's committee to plan and coordinate community recycling days. This helps build trust and delivers higher rates of recycling. Over 1 ton of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is collected directly from homes or gardens each day with assistance, and help is always on hand to lift or remove items. Residents groups have delivered approx. 10,000 cards as part of our partnership approach to collections.

Figure 3 & 4 Electrical Appliances for Collections

Table 1 - Collections by Sector

Year	Description	No. of Collection	Average Weight Collected per visit
2016 / 2017	Community Collections (Homes)	14849	36.5KG
2016 / 2017	School Collections	196	316KG
2016 /2017	Charity Collections	269	228KG
2016 / 2017	Personal Collections	541	183KG
2016 / 2017	Assisted Collections*	4149	-

*   The Recycle IT team are trained, insured, carry name badges, and remove items safely from homes on request.

3. Community Employment

Training and employment are central to what we do in our community and our aim is to build confidence and skills which can lead people to secure sustainable employment opportunities internally and externally. Over the period 2016/2017 Recycle IT have supported 5 community employment programmes with 5 people progressing into employment.

Figure 4 – 5 – 6   Student Work Experience and Staff Training 2016 / 2017

In June 2017, the organisation was successful in receiving Dormant Account Funding to increase the size of the recycling area and install recovery areas to support further training and employment opportunities. This project is underway and will be completed during 2018.

Recycle IT continually work with South Dublin County Partnership and Pobal to provide training and employment opportunities to disadvantaged groups. Table 2, below provides an overview.

Table 2 – Recycle IT - Community Employment Programme Engagement 2016/2017

Programme Name	Community Service (CSP)	Community Employment	Jobs Initiative	TUS	Work Experience
No. of Positions	9	3	1	6	4
Progressed	0	1	0	2	2

4. Community Contact

Collaboration through listening, meeting, visiting and sharing information with people is critical to the work of Recycle IT. We continually update our website and have posted over 50 blogsite articles promoting recycling over the 18 months to June. During the same period, the number of website visits has grown and now averages well over 1400 per month. Recycle IT has 2500 Twitter follower and approx. 900 Facebook likes as of June 2017 while also delivering over 140,000 recycling cards to promoted collections and remind people about recycling.

A: Schools - Following the successful pilot of the 'How WEEE Works' Initiative with local schools, the workshop was made available for **Reuse Month 2016 and Eco Week 2017**. Schools taking part include St. Damien's NS, Walkinstown, D12, Divine Mercy Senior School, Balgaddy, Dublin 22, St Andrews NS, Lucan and Gaelscoil na Giúise, Ballycullen Drive, Dublin 24. Over 120 children engaged in these free workshop.   In June 2017, South Dublin County Council approached Recycle IT to design and deliver a Reuse Workshop for community based organisations. Design is underway.

Figure 6 Community Collection Card

B: Colleges – From Feb – April 2017 Recycle IT worked with Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) on their 'Student Learning with Communities Programme'. Students from DIT Aungier Street, collaborated with Recycle IT as community partners to develop real-life projects for mutual benefit. In April 2017 over 25 students undertaking a Master's programme presented academic research as part of this collaborative project. Students received course credits for their work and Recycle IT accessed some innovate thinking.

5. **Community Events – Community Awareness**
   In 2016/2017, Recycle IT participated in a range of activities including
- Entering awards and receiving recognition from Age Friendly Ireland, Repak, JCI, The Green Awards & Chambers Ireland.
- Shared recycling information with an estimated 1000 people attending the South Dublin Bealtaine Festival and Tallafest.
- Information stands at 4 Public Participation Network Events (PPN) across Dublin engaging with approx. 300 PPN members directly at events, via telephone or email.
- Information sharing events with Etsy, PWC, South Dublin County Council, Waste Not – Want Not and EU visitors.
- WEEE display at Clondalkin, Lucan, Ballyroan and Tallaght libraries for Reuse Month 2016.
- Invited to speak at South Dublin Social Enterprise Symposium (June 2017) and Community Reuse Network Conference (Oct 2016).
- Participated in Eco Week and Reuse Month events with South Dublin County Council, including WEEE to Work, education and business events.
- Registered with the Eastern-Midlands Regional Waste office to deliver reuse workshops in 2017.
- Promoted competitions to schools and community gardens to encourage reduce, reuse, recycle & community greening.

Figure 7 Waste Not / Want Not Event 2016

Figure 8 Tidy Towns Group with Reused Planters

Finally

Recycle IT encourages communities to recycle rather than store items over a long number of years (reducing the need for virgin raw materials). Our assisted collection service reduces the environment impacts of CO_2 emissions through a centralised door to door recycling service. With approx. 100,000 flyers delivered each year over 10 years we reinforce a message of recycle old electrical and electronic items responsibly. In 2017 Recycle IT will formally implement **ISO 14001 Environmental Management System** to further enhance operations, service delivery, environmental performance and help secure jobs. Recycle IT aim to enhance our trust with all stakeholders, focuses further on community engagement and encourage environmental wellbeing, not only as part of work goals but because our organisation is driven by community needs.