

### **3.1. RecycleSmart Trial Update**

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**ENDORSED BY:** Peter Massey, Acting Director Open Space and Environmental Services

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the progress of the RecycleSmart trial which commenced July 2022 for an initial period of three months and extended for a further period of three months to 30 December 2022.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

In the Council meeting on 28 March 2022, Council resolved to offer RecycleSmart a three-month trial to enable difficult to recycle items to be collected and transferred to local recycling infrastructure. Council also resolved that an agreement be sought with the Community Recycling Centre (CRC) member Councils, about engaging with King Cotton to provide a textile recycling collection bin at the CRC.

RecycleSmart offers a household pick up service for difficult to recycle items such as soft plastics, textiles and e-waste. Residents can subscribe for free and get up to 2 bags (the size of shopping bags) picked up per month. Additional bags cost the resident \$5 each. Alternatively, the resident can book a single pick up for \$10 for 2 bags.

Materials are delivered to local infrastructure such as Coles and Woolworths Redcycle bins (for soft plastics), charity shops (textiles) and the CRC (e-waste and hazardous household waste).

During the first three months of the trial an average of 295 bags per month was collected. The trial has been extended for a further three months to the end of December 2022 to ascertain whether there will be an increase in the uptake of the program in the lead up to the holiday period.

The cost of the first 3 months of the trial was \$15,000 plus GST for an unlimited number of bags. There is no additional cost for the extended 3-month period, however if the number of bags collected exceeds 1000 per month, then Council will be charged \$7 per bag thereafter. Based on the current data, it is unlikely that more than 1000 bags will be collected per month.

For the three months from 5 July 2022 – 30 September 2022 the results are as follows:

- 421 bookings

- 884 bags collected
- 1,446 kilos collected
- 49% soft plastics, 25% textiles, 16% e-waste, 10% other (batteries, printer cartridges and x-rays etc)

Council has received positive feedback from the local community about the RecycleSmart service. One issue encountered was that some bags have been collected inadvertently as an illegal dumping.

The service is growing and there has been an increase in the uptake, however at this stage the number of bags being collected is below the 1000 bag threshold, which have kept costs to the minimum.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The extension of the trial to December 2022 has been offered at the same rate as the initial trial, at a cost of \$15,000 plus GST for 3 months. However, if more than 1000 bags are collected, each bag over 1000 will be charged at \$7 per bag.

If Council decides to engage RecycleSmart on ongoing basis after the trial period ends, the costs will be as follows:

Bags collected per month	Monthly Cost to Council
0-1000	\$7,000 (base)
1001-3000	\$7.00 per bag
3001-5000	\$6.50 per bag
>5000	\$6.00 per bag

If Council wishes to proceed with a 12-month collection agreement with RecycleSmart, this will be at a minimum cost of \$84,000 plus GST per year. This can be funded from the Domestic Waste Management Budget.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. THAT** the report be received.
- 2. THAT** Council continues to provide the RecycleSmart program for Council residents for an additional twelve months after the trial period ends.

## **LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

1. Our Living Environment
- 1.2 Environmentally sustainable community

## **BACKGROUND**

In the Council meeting on 28 March 2022, Council resolved to offer RecycleSmart a three-month trial to enable difficult to recycle items to be collected and transferred to local recycling infrastructure.

An initial 3-month trial with RecycleSmart commenced on 5 July 2022 and was extended to 31 December 2022.

This trial has provided a collection service to the members of the community who do not have a vehicle or are less mobile and helps divert recyclable resources from landfill and promote sustainability.

## **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

Community engagement is not required.

## **DETAIL**

RecycleSmart is a program that enables problematic recyclables to be collected from residences within the North Sydney LGA. It aims to make recycling more accessible to residents. RecycleSmart drivers' collect the pre-booked materials directly from households and deliver the material to local infrastructure.

Residents can book a pickup via the RecycleSmart App and/or website. Residents can subscribe for free and get up to 2 bags picked up per month. For an additional bag, residents pay \$5 per bag to RecycleSmart. Any grocery shopping bag can be used.

Materials collected by RecycleSmart is dependent on available infrastructure and falls under five major categories, including:

- Soft plastics
- Non-recyclable clothes
- Recyclable clothes and other textiles
- E-waste
- Misfits (for example batteries, printer cartridges and x-rays)

Soft plastics are taken to local Coles or Woolworths Redcycle bins.

RecycleSmart divide textiles into wearable and unwearable categories. Wearable textiles are dropped off at Vinnies, the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Whereas unwearable textiles go to clothing retail outlets such as Zara and H&M.

E-waste and misfits which includes batteries, light globes, printer cartridges and x-rays are taken to the CRC in Artarmon.

E-waste collected by RecycleSmart must be able to fit in a standard shopping bag, therefore only small amounts of e-waste are accepted by RecycleSmart. Oversized items will be rejected for collection.

RecycleSmart collection drivers weigh and assess the contents of each bag and report back to Council monthly.

The report includes:

- Quantity of materials collected
- Number of booked collections
- Number of bags picked up
- Visual volume assessment of each waste type

RecycleSmart offers the RecycleSmart App to book a pickup service. This app informs residents about recycling locations and provides a variety of information on how to correctly dispose over 250 household items. The RecycleSmart App is included at no extra charge.

### **RecycleSmart Trial Costs**

RecycleSmart offered a 3-month trial with a capped cost of \$15,000 plus GST. The initial trial offer was for unlimited bags collected. The app was included for the trial period.

The extension of the trial to December 2022 has been offered at the same rate as the initial trial, at a cost of \$15,000 plus GST for 3 months. However, if pickups increase beyond 1000 bags, Council will be charged \$7 for each additional bag.

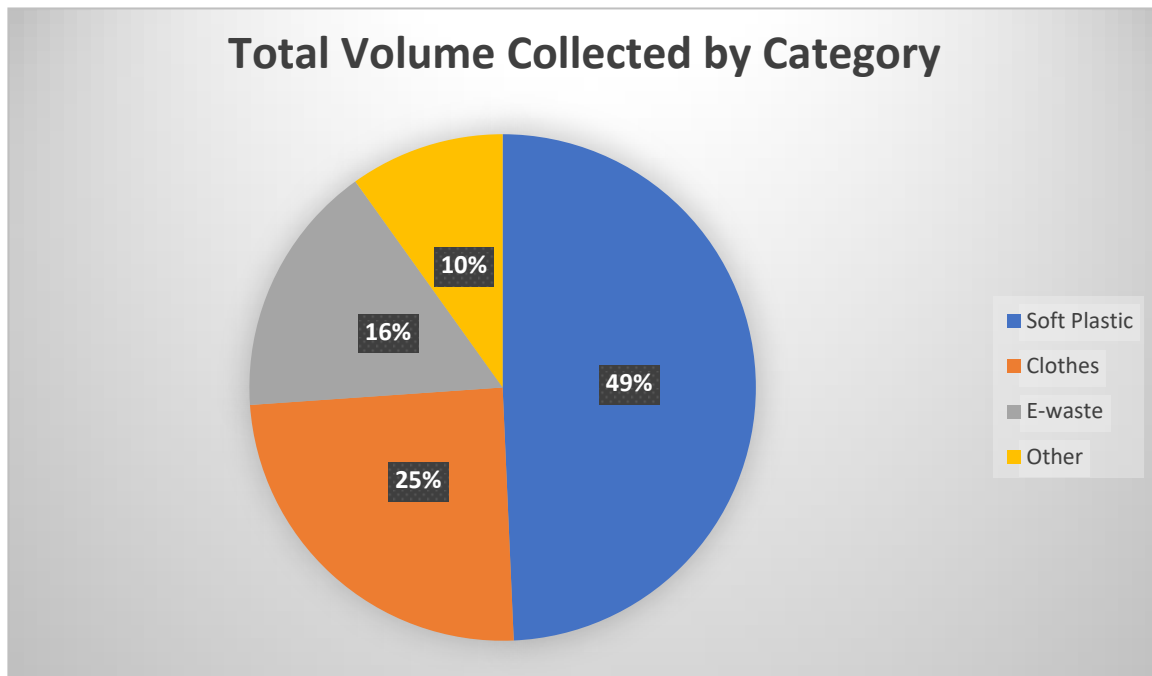
If Council decides to engage RecycleSmart on an ongoing basis after the trial period ends, the costs are as below:

Bags collected per month	Monthly Cost to Council
0-1000	\$7,000
1001-3000	\$7.00 per bag
3001-5000	\$6.50 per bag
>5000	\$6.00 per bag

If Council wishes to proceed with a 12-month collection contract with RecycleSmart this will be at a minimum cost of \$84,000 plus GST per year.

## Interim Trial Results

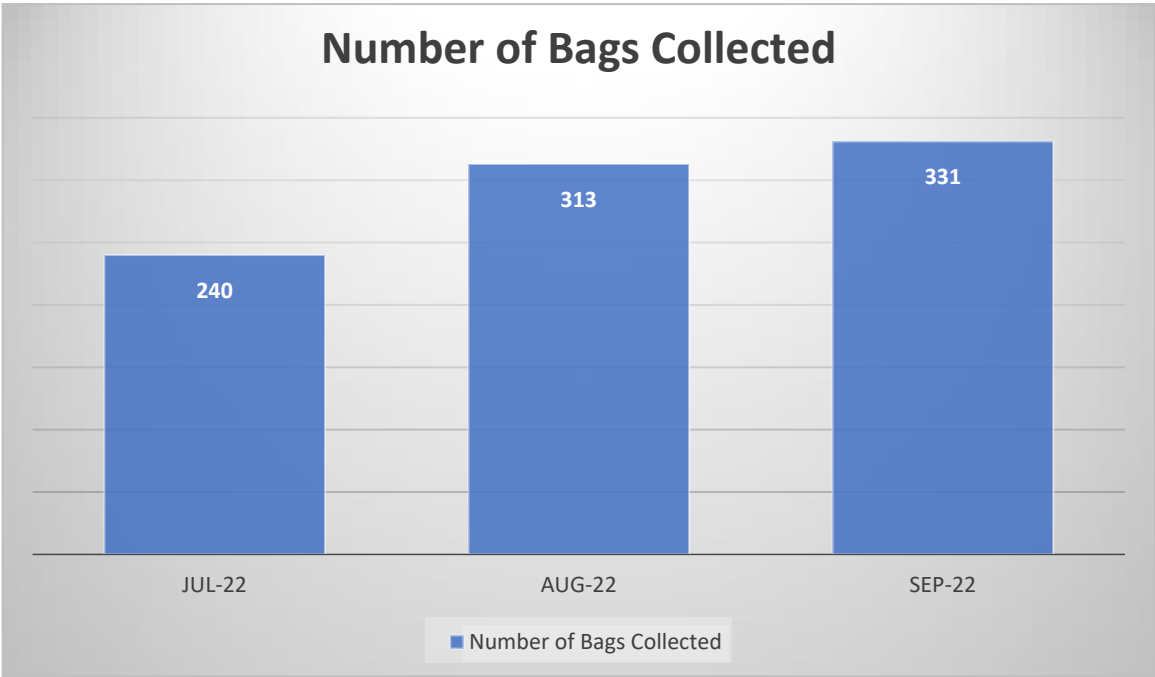
A total of 1748kg was collected between 5 July 2022 and 17 October 2022, and includes items such as soft plastic, clothes, e-waste, and other misfits.



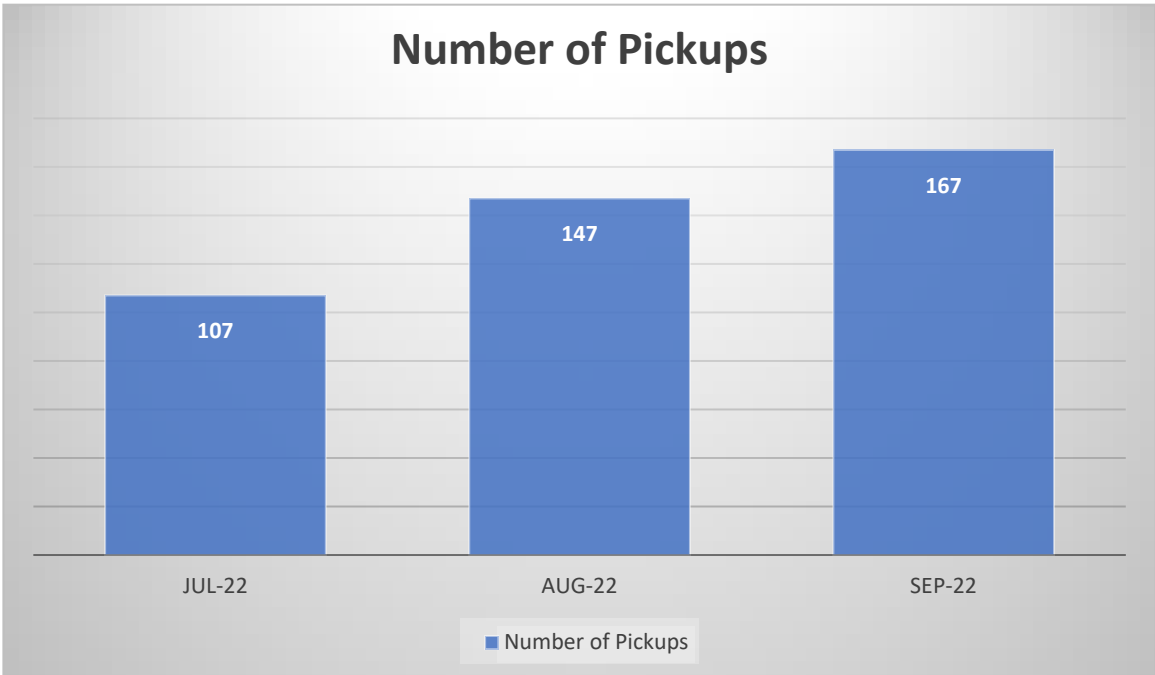
Three quarters of the items collected in North Sydney includes soft plastics and clothing, which makes up 74% of the total items collected. Wearable clothing makes up about 55% of the total clothing collected.

Items taken to the CRC makes up 26% of the total which includes light bulbs, printer cartridges, batteries, e-waste, CDs and DVDs, smoke detectors and x-rays.

Out of 421 bookings and 884 bags collected over three months from July 2022, an average of 295 bags per month were collected.



The number of household bookings increased from 107 when collection commenced in July to 167 in September 2022.



Categorisation by suburb has found that Wollstonecraft, Cremorne, Cammeray and Neutral Bay had the highest number of bookings.

In terms of feedback, Council has received positive feedback about RecycleSmart and the convenience of the service. However, it has been brought to attention that some RecycleSmart bags have been collected inadvertently as illegal dumping.

### **King Cotton- Textile Recycling at the CRC**

The CRC member Councils have engaged King Cotton to provide a textile recycling collection bin at the CRC. The CRC is now accepting wearable textiles as part of a 5-month trial with King Cotton. The trial commenced on 31 October 2022. Residents from the six partner councils will be able to drop off up to 20kg of textiles that are in good condition including clothing, shoes, manchester, accessories such as handbags, belts, scarves, and hats. A review of the service will be undertaken at the end of the trial to determine whether to continue the service and, if so, under what terms and conditions. The trial is expected to end on 31 March 2023. King Cotton have advised the textiles are sold to ethically compliant offshore communities in the South Pacific and Africa where the demand is strong.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the RecycleSmart program has been well received by residents of the North Sydney community as evidenced by the positive comments on social media and phone calls to Council and the uptake is growing.