

TO: JOINT WASTE DISPOSAL BOARD
15th June 2023

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT
Report of the re3 Project Director

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief the re3 Joint Waste Disposal Board on the Partnership's communications activities, since the last meeting.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

2.2 That Members approve the recommendation, as described at point. 5.19, to commission and adopt Scripp as the partnership App.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None for this report.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The purpose of the recommendation is to brief Members in relation to progress in delivery of communications activities.

5 PROGRESS IN RELATION TO COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

Recycling Centres inclusion campaign

5.1 A press release informing the public that the online booking system webform has been enhanced by integrating translation services for over 130 languages was issued to the local press.

5.2 The new feature aims at improving accessibility and clarity for residents whose first language is not English.

5.3 The accessibility of the Recycling Centre has been advertised via targeted social media campaign aimed at multicultural audiences (non - English speakers) living locally. Within the month of the campaign the adverts (see Appendix 1a) reached 48,800 accounts. Social media adverts will be optimised and run until the end of June.

5.4 An advert promoting the availability of the booking form in different languages, as well as presenting some inclusive services such as Paint Reuse and the Reuse Area, was placed in the "Your Reading" magazine, which has been distributed to residents across Reading, as shown in Appendix 1b. Advertising space in the Summer issue of the Town & Country (Bracknell magazine) has been booked.

5.5 To further promote recycling to residents whose first language is not English, re3 has also published recycling leaflets with advice on its website in the following languages: Arabic, Polish, and Urdu (Appendix 1c)

- 5.6 The leaflets, along with prepared adverts and key information about the Recycling Centre, were shared with New Beginnings College and Reading Community Learning Centre, and displayed on their notice boards, digital screens and shared via their direct communications with students attending the English language classes.
- 5.7 re3 contacted some local organisations that support ethnic communities living locally with a query to help distribute relevant materials. Contacted organisations include ACRE Reading, Al Majid Centre, Sudanese Community Group and Reading Refugee Support Group. re3 is consulting listed organisations individually to tailor communications materials and form of their delivery. As a next step, re3 Officer will also work with colleagues to identify equivalent groups across two other councils.

Recycling App

- 5.8 The re3 partnership has been using a bespoke app called re3cyclopedia (Appendix 2.a) since 2018. The app enables residents to look-up common items, to check their recyclability. In addition, residents can use the app to access the councils' and re3's websites, to access services and check information.
- 5.9 The recycling app has been well-used by residents and plays an important role in tackling contamination as well as providing an access point to services.
- 5.10 Accessibility of the information and addressing the contamination of recycling is critical to ensure that our recycling is of high quality and service runs efficiently. The contamination level across the partnership continues to be approximately 17.3%. The incorrect disposal of waste costs re3 councils approximately £487k per year. Therefore, we recommend keeping the recycling app in the re3 portfolio.
- 5.11 Earlier this year, re3 Officers undertook a review of the contract with the current provider. It was identified that, the app performs well, however its technological capacity is limited, making it difficult to stay relevant and engaging.
- 5.12 Officers undertook some research into available alternative recycling apps. This led us to identify a new platform called [Scrapp](#), that offers significantly more functionality.
- 5.13 The Scrapp mobile app allows residents to scan any product to see the local recycling rules, in real-time. The Scrapp barcode database currently lists 37k products vs 5k within the re3cyclopedia; however, thanks to the artificial intelligence (AI) technology used, there will be 34m products available for resident searches, by September 2023.
- 5.14 In addition, the users can search for items manually, using the A-Z waste search which includes a wide catalogue of products including items that do not have barcodes ie furniture.
- 5.15 Scrapp also has a wider range of features than re3cyclopedia including:
- Bin day reminders and a much more user-friendly interface.
 - Tailored notifications to residents allowing for a new way of engagement, about any relevant service changes
 - Searches for the nearest bottle bank, plastic bag and wrapping recycling points, or Terracycle drop-off points.
 - Carbon emissions insights,
 - Notifications and gamification, helping to engage within residents and neighbourhoods. (Appendix 2.b)

- 5.16 In addition, the council will receive an access to the detailed dashboard with a breakdown of the searched for items as well as related aggregate CO2 impacts. These insights are of particular interest when building communications messages to residents (Appendix 2.c).
- 5.17 The app has international coverage, currently covering 100% of the UK, USA, and Canada.
- 5.18 It's worth noting, that the developers of the app have been engaging with a variety of stakeholders to deliver options for the possible mobile solutions of the Deposit Return System (DRS). This could be of particular interest to the councils in supporting residents who wish to continue using their council, kerbside, recycling system even after a DRS in England has commenced.
- 5.19 Officer's recommend that the re3 partnership should not renew the contract for the re3cyclopedia app, and instead engage Scropp to provide this service for the council partnership.
- 5.20 The app is available for residents to use at no cost. However, the yearly subscription cost for using the app is 25% higher compared to the fees charged by the current provider. Despite this increase, it is important to note that the higher cost is justified as more significant features are offered. The additional expense will be fully covered by the existing budget.
- 5.21 The suggested timeline will allow for successful onboarding to the new platform and an effective communications plan, providing a two-month transition period.

re3Grow Community Compost scheme

- 5.22 The re3 Community re3grow Scheme was relaunched in early March 2023.
- 5.23 The initiative was launched to promote recycling and community activities within the re3 area. To deliver this project, the re3 Partnership allocated 5,000 re3grow compost bags which are available to the local groups and organisations free of charge to support their green projects.
- 5.24 In the first year of the project, over 1,600 bags of compost were provided to 69 organisations, allowing for the use of 64,000 litres of compost, benefiting local communities and promoting recycling.
- 5.25 By the end of April 2023, further 79 organisations including 40 schools have benefited from re3grow compost bags. In total 1,340 bags were assigned to the local groups this year.
- 5.26 The initiatives and collaborative spirit demonstrated by the involved organisations and schools have been impressive. Supported projects include planting Miyawaki forest on the school grounds, growing fruits and vegetables for local food banks, nourishing local community allotments, enhancing sensory gardens at local schools, assisting less fortunate individuals in growing their own food, providing social and therapeutic horticulture sessions, and simply improving general well-being by creating more inviting outdoor spaces.
- 5.27 An infographic with the most recent summary is shown in the Appendix 3.a
- 5.28 Continuous advertising and promotion of the scheme runs on re3 channels throughout the project. This includes a bi-weekly social media update of the groups which

benefited from the re3grow compost. The sample of updates can be seen in the Appendix 3.b.

- 5.29 Simultaneously, feedback and photos received are gathered and shared publicly to increase awareness of the scheme.
- 5.30 re3grow compost has been a successful staple in the re3 circular economy initiatives since 2018. The compost is made from recycled garden waste deposited by residents and conforms to BSI PAS 100 and the Compost Quality Protocol. Before being bagged, it undergoes a 12-week composting process using open windrows, during which the garden waste is screened, shredded, and matured. One of the stages involves sanitisation, where a high temperature between 65–80°C is maintained for a minimum of 7 consecutive days to eliminate weeds, seeds, and pathogens. The re3grow compost is available for purchase by the residents at the recycling centres.

Virtual Tours - Recycling Facilities (HWRC) and Material Recycling Facility (MRF)

- 5.31 During the previous Board Meeting, the Members has expressed interested into proposed virtual tours of the re3 facilities: two Recycling Centres and Material Recycling Facility.
- 5.32 The virtual tours will enable residents to familiarise themselves with the facilities, creating a better experience when visiting and offering an educational angle to help visitors understand their waste journey.
- 5.33 Tours will include a selection of panoramic, 360-degree photos enhanced with hot spots, text, and videos that add interactivity and provide information.
- 5.34 By adding virtual tours to the website, we can offer a new way of interacting with residents.
- 5.35 The virtual tool should also be shared with the community groups and schools. We believe that it will also play a key educational role, especially for individuals under 18 years old, as we are unable to allow minors to visit the facility.
- 5.36 The results of the project will be reported during the next Board meeting.
- 5.37 Tours of the Material Recycling Facility are being offered to the members of local organisations. re3 hosted two groups since the last Board Meeting.
- 5.38 Proposed dates to visit the Material Recycling Facility will be shared with the Members, allowing to gain insights into the recycling process.

General comms activities

- 5.39 Ongoing communications activities are run on the re3 social media, and key messages are also communicated via re3 newsletter on a regular basis. Following topics were included in the recent comms: Easter recycling tips, tips on how to organise a sustainable event (during the run up to the Coronation weekend); advice how to reduce plastic contamination within the garden waste; glass recycling tips and bottle banks map and promoting Repair Café events.
- 5.40 Two articles ([Reading Today](#), [Reading Today](#)) were published in the local media, and re3 has not received any press inquiries since the last Board Meeting.
- 5.41 re3 was asked to be featured in the Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM)

project showcase videos, which highlight top waste management projects in recent years. The project that caught their interest was the installation of an AI-driven robotic waste picker. The video will be presented during the President's Inauguration event later this year.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY

Head of Legal Services

6.1 None for this report.

Corporate Finance Business Partner

6.2 None for this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 None.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 None

Climate Impact Assessment

6.5 None.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Principal Groups Consulted

Not applicable.

7.2 Method of Consultation

Not applicable.

7.3 Representations Received

Not applicable.

Background Papers

None for this report

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Appendix One

A)

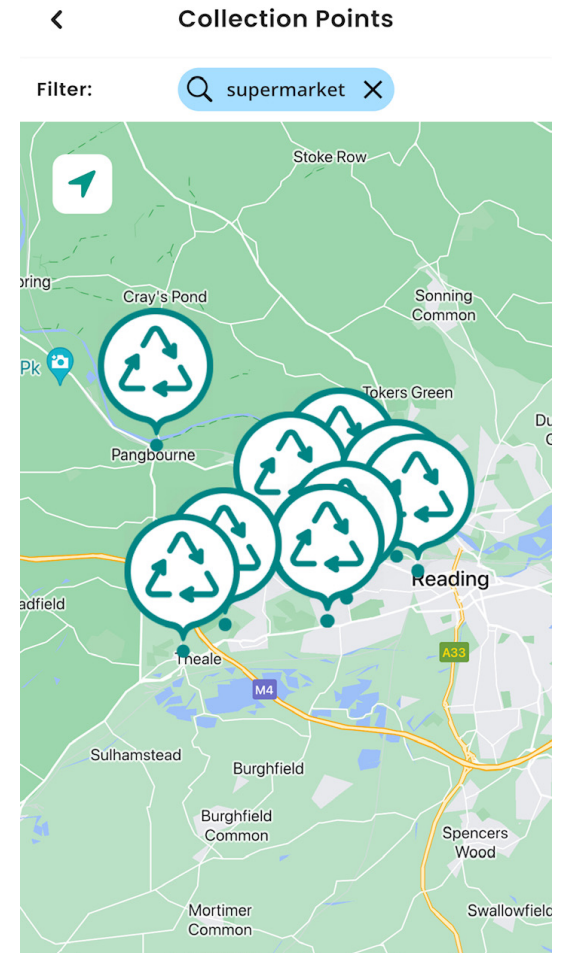
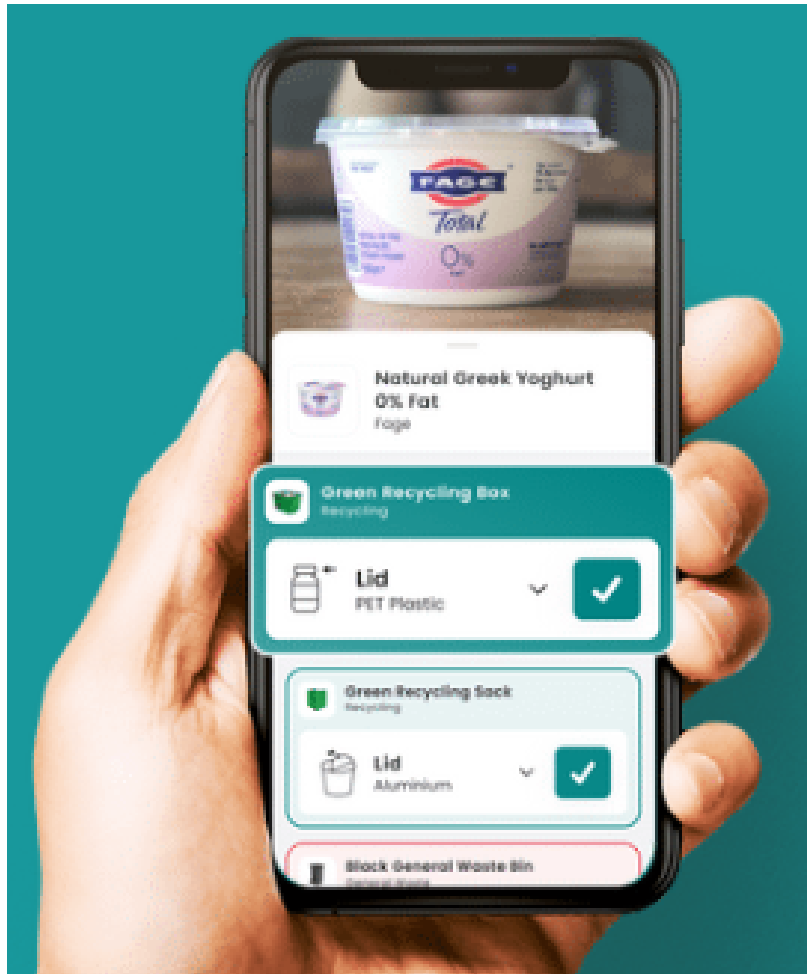


Appendix Two

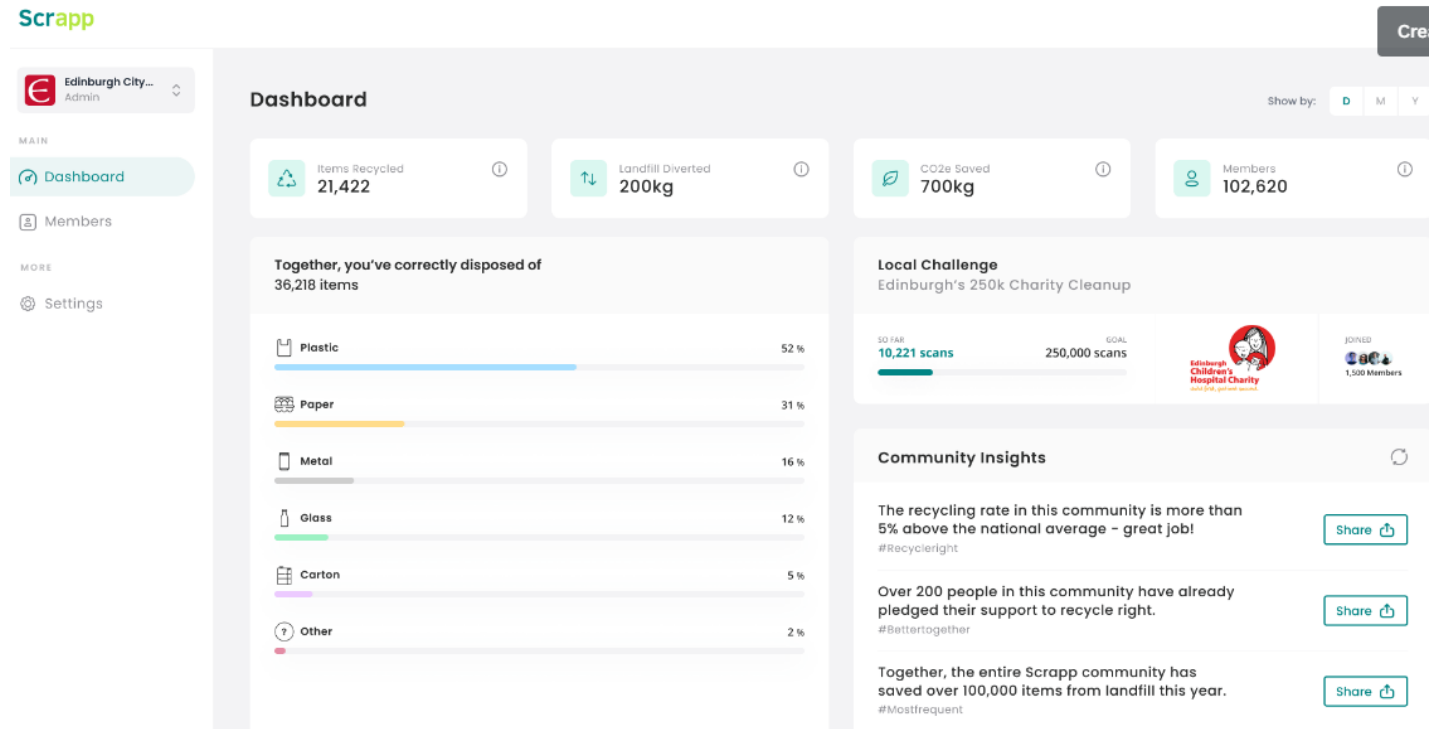
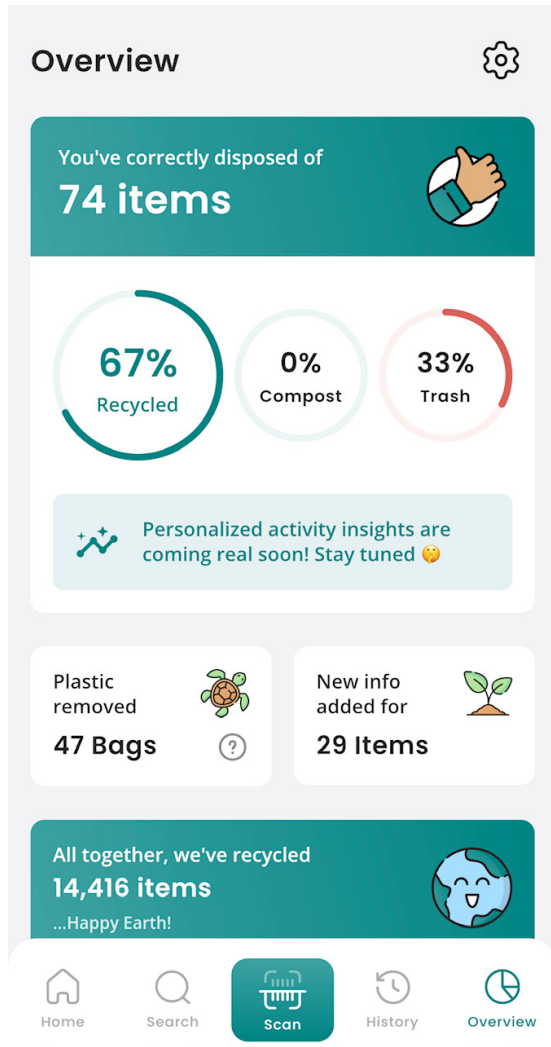
A)



B)



c)



Appendix Three

A)

re3grow Community Scheme
April 2023 - update

| Local Authority | Compost bags approved in 2023 | Organisations (including schools) | Remaining bags | Total no of bags assigned/distributed |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Bracknell Forest Council | 275 | 23 organisations including 16 schools | 1,017 | 649 |
| Reading Borough Council | 643 | 29 organisations including 10 schools | 462 | 1,204 |
| Wokingham Borough Council | 422 (March) | 27 organisations including 14 schools | 0 | 1,666 |

re3grow COMPOST logo and 'zeroing in on waste' slogan.

B)

re3grow Community Scheme
Let's grow our communities together

APPLY NOW FOR FREE COMPOST
Applications are now open to local community groups and schools.

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Community groups featured: Weller Centre, Freely Fruity, 4th Bracknell Scout Group.

re3grow COMPOST logo and 'zeroing in on waste' slogan.