

Metropolitan Local Government
Waste & Resource Recovery Fund



Community resource recovery hubs

Funded through the Metropolitan Local Government Waste and Resource
Recovery Fund

Final report

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METROPOLITAN
WASTE AND
RESOURCE RECOVERY
GROUP



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The Metropolitan Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Fund

The Metropolitan Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Fund (Metro Fund) is a Victorian Government initiative aimed at assisting councils in metropolitan Melbourne implement best practice waste collection and management systems in line with the *2009 Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Strategic Plan* (Strategic Plan).

The Metro Fund is administered by the Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group. For more information please visit www.mwrrg.vic.gov.au.

Executive summary

Yarra's Community Resource Recovery Hubs were set up to optimise source separation and resource recovery of items that can be recycled or reused, but don't go in the home recycling bin, such as clothing and small electrical items. As Yarra's population turns over by 50% every seven years, with a high number of renters in the municipality, there tends to be a heap of these goods which renters are looking to get rid of when they move in, and out, or trade up in standard or fashion. The Hubs were aimed principally at household goods and small electrical items, extending to polystyrene, soft plastics and cardboard if practical. There are now Hubs at five sites across Yarra, each with two bins for household goods and one for small electrical items. The opportunity to recycle unwanted goods is appreciated by the residents, and the bins are working well, except for the Hub outside Officeworks, which has now been removed.

At the beginning of the Christmas holidays, the Hub bins outside the Officeworks carpark were targeted repeatedly with graffiti, and then dumping started. This site has a lot of passing traffic, but is not monitored by locals like the others, being between two businesses. Critically, the bins had a space behind them, which was unfortunately used for anti-social get togethers, which tended to encourage graffiti and damage. The decision was made to remove the Hub bins, re-sticker them with the special signage, and another site will be found for those bins.

To encourage people to use the bins correctly, maximise the amount collected, and discourage dumping of items around the Hubs, the bins were placed in open, clean places, and decorated with graphics that clearly showed the household items which could be put in them. The graphics have a positive retro feel that reflects Yarra's alternative culture. Yarra's Hard Waste Collection phone number is printed on the side of the bin to steer disposal of goods that didn't belong in the Hub bins. Residents were surveyed as they left goods at the site, and said they were delighted to have the opportunity to recycle more of their goods from home, and loved the look of the bins, which blended in with the local culture. The Hub bins were promoted with the new Bright Sparks bins, which collected small electrical items from residents who wanted to repair or recycle these appliances. The Bright Sparks bins were part of a trial across five different local government areas - in Yarra, they were set up inside in a town hall, library and neighbourhood house. With less exposure and foot traffic, the Bright Sparks bins collected less than the outdoor Hub bins, but the response was overwhelmingly positive for the opportunity to recover items through both the Hub and Bright Sparks bins.

The Hub bins have recovered 50.27 tonnes in 10 months - 41.59 tonnes in household goods, 8.68 tonnes in electrical items. The items are being collected by Southern Cross Recycling, with 95% of the goods being re-used, or recycled. The enthusiasm of the residents who were leaving materials at the bins, the amount of items collected for reuse or recycling, and the positive comments on social media show the project was definitely worth it, will continue, and be promoted as part of the Yarra recycling culture.

Project details

The project aimed to encourage great recycling behaviour across Yarra residents, both the renters and homeowners, through a package of easy to use Community Resource Recovery Hub bins, clean sites, good signage and promotion. Bins were sourced by Southern Cross Recycling to be strong, clean and bright, and with a pull down opening that meant people couldn't fossick for goods once they were in the bin. The artwork for the Hub bins was commissioned to fit in with the Yarra culture, encourage people to use the bins, and make the bins look clean and colourful. The sites were chosen to have the bins easily seen by passers-by, and be clear of litter. Hubs were set up at the Collingwood Leisure Centre carpark; Gleadell St carpark, next to an existing cardboard recycling bin, and opposite Richmond Recreation Centre; outside Officeworks carpark in Fitzroy; in Ikea's carpark, outside the entrance and in the Ikea carpark one level above the entrance; and outside an electricity substation behind the Carlton North Library. Each site was cleaned, and made attractive. At the electricity substation, the brickwork was painted by a local artist to stop graffiti, and the ground asphalted on which the bins were to be placed. The site outside Officeworks' carpark, the fence, which had been severely covered in graffiti, was painted by the same artist. Lighting was close by for each site.

Each bin had Reduce Reuse Recycle in large letters on the front, with a 24 hour service number to call, and the number to call for Hard Waste collections on the side; and the whole bin was covered with graffiti resistant signage. Once the bins were in place, Southern Cross Recycling monitored the bins to check how often they should be cleared at each site.

Communication aimed to let residents know the Hubs were a new opportunity to recycle goods that shouldn't go in their recycling and garbage bins, to educate them on what can be recycled, to encourage them to recycle right, and recycle more, and to use the Hard Waste Collections for unwanted goods that didn't go in the Hub bins. The Hub bins were promoted on the website, on twitter, in Yarra News and in letters to Multi Unit Development (MUD) residents, as part of a campaign to improve recycling in MUD's. At the beginning of the Christmas holidays, the Hub bins outside the Officeworks carpark were targeted repeatedly with graffiti, and then dumping started. This site has a lot of passing traffic, but is not monitored by locals like the others, being between two businesses. Critically, the bins had a space behind them, which was unfortunately used for anti-social get togethers, which tended to encourage graffiti and damage. The decision

was made to remove the Hub bins, re-sticker them with the special signage, and another site will be found for those bins.

Now that the bins have been removed from the Gore St site, the Hub bins are being used well, and appreciated as part of what Yarra residents' do to make the most of reusing and recycling.

Project outcomes and findings

The Community Resource Recovery bins are being well used and appreciated by Yarra's residents. The bins recovered 50.27 tonnes in 10 months, 41.59 tonnes in household goods, 8.68 tonnes in electrical items. The Bright Sparks bins trial collected 15 tonnes over the five councils. Promotion of the Hub and Bright Sparks has helped build the awareness among residents that household goods can be recycled, and recycled easily. This is shown in the amount of goods collected, the surveys of people who left goods in the bins, and messages on social media, all of which were unreservedly positive.

The bins were in placed in well-lit areas, that were well-used by residents, with appealing graphics on the bins to encourage people to do the right thing, and discourage graffiti and dumping. No cameras were installed as this would be a continuing cost that the council did not have in their budget. The package of site selection, bin signage and promotion means the bins are working well. There can be minimal dumping of goods after long weekends or during holidays, at the Hub outside the electricity substation, behind the Carlton North Library. Knowing this, cleaning up is rapid, and when we can identify the dumper, our Litter Enforcement Officer follows up.

Negotiations around the new waste and recycling contract in Yarra have left openings for collection of more materials as part of the package of recycling services, whether at the Hub bins, or Town Halls, Libraries and Neighbourhood Houses - considering that the Bright Sparks project has finished, and no viable proposal was received for continuing that project. Collection of polystyrene and plastics at the Hubs were put on hold until a practical bin to collect the materials was found, and a recycler was willing to take them. The Gleadell St site in Richmond already had a cardboard collection bin, and two sites had cardboard collection bins close by.

Residents are delighted with the opportunity to reuse or recycle what they might have put in the garbage bin, or dumped. This gives a good base to promote the Hubs more. A second communication campaign is being planned - which will include a brief video of people using the Hub bins at Ikea - to boost residents' awareness that they can recycle goods great range of recycling options - at home, at the Hubs, at the Recycling Drop Off Point, or through organised Hard Waste collections

In doing this we aim to have residents use all bins the right way, use their Hard Waste Collections, litter less, not dump goods, and celebrate this culture - as they are already doing with positive messages on social media.

Project highlights

The biggest highlight was the delight of residents that they could now recycle unwanted goods that had been taking up room at home, that they can do that easily, and through bins whose look appeals to their local culture. There were positive tweets and comments from residents, staff and councillors.

The Community Resource Recovery bins are being well used and appreciated by Yarra's residents. The bins recovered 50.27 tonnes in 10 months, 41.59 tonnes in household goods, 8.68 tonnes in electrical items. The Bright Sparks bins trial collected 15 tonnes over the five councils. So a total of 65.27 tonnes has potentially been diverted from landfill during this project.

It took time to find the right sites for the bins, clean them up and, where it seemed appropriate, paint murals as a backdrop for the bins. This transformed sites that were targets for graffiti and dumping into brighter spaces, gave a great background for the bins, and the murals have stopped repeated tagging, which would have discouraged use of the bins. The graphics on the bins, informal, colourful and recognisable, have worked in the same way. At the same time as they educate residents about what goes in the bin, they invite them to use the bins, and recycle as much as they can of goods they have stored at home.

The success of the Hub bins in reusing and recycling goods, and reducing dumping, and the occasional dumping of goods, has highlighted both the need and the opportunity to communicate clearly the ease of recycling, how and where to do it, and the benefits. So, a further campaign will be developed

Conclusion and recommendations

The Community Resource Recovery Hubs are a success, both in collecting materials for reuse and recycling, and in building a growing culture across Yarra residents to seek out and use all the services Yarra offers to recycle. A major part of this is promoting Yarra's easy Hard Waste Collections.

The communications used print, letterbox drop, website and social media. A second communication blitz is planned, to boost awareness of what people recycle, and where, and what they can do to not litter, and the great benefits of both. This campaign will include a video clip of the Ikea bins being used. As well as explaining how clean equals clean, and that inevitably one piece of dumped rubbish will attract other dumped rubbish,. This communication will reinforce the range of recycling opportunities and the ease of Hard Waste collections to reduce this this behaviour at the Hubs, and elsewhere.

The Hubs are feasible because of the clear benefit offered to residents, the easy access to the Hub sites, and the size of the operation behind them. When compared with the Bright Sparks bins, they do not offer the benefit of repair or donation to a charity, but they are easily found in outside sites, and appeal to a wide audience who are keen to simply see their goods reused or recycled in some way. This fits in with the broader Yarra culture around recycling and sustainability, and at the same time, boosts and deepens that culture.

The scale of the operation behind the Hubs and their ready adoption by residents leaves an opportunity to add bins that recycle more materials at the Hub sites, or to set up separate sites that handle difficult to recycle materials and promote those while promoting the Hubs. The communication would need to be clear about what materials are collected at the Hubs, so they weren't seen as the ready answer for whatever people thought would be good to leave there to recycle.

There is potential to extend this project within Yarra, and in other municipalities, and Yarra is now exploring more sites, and more materials to recycle.

Supporting documentation

Tables

Weights of materials collected

Month	Suburb	Clothing	Electrical
May-15	Clifton Hill	438	112
Jun-15	Clifton Hill	1,102	60
Jul-15	Clifton Hill	1,123	200
Aug-15	Clifton Hill	1,610	220
Sep-15	Clifton Hill	1,049	240
Oct-15	Clifton Hill	1,178	270
Nov-15	Clifton Hill	1,169	305
Dec-15	Clifton Hill	1,312	235
Jan-16	Clifton Hill	1,605	260
Feb-16	Clifton Hill	1,688	360
Mar-16	Clifton Hill	1,254	315
YTD Total	Clifton Hill	13,528	2,577

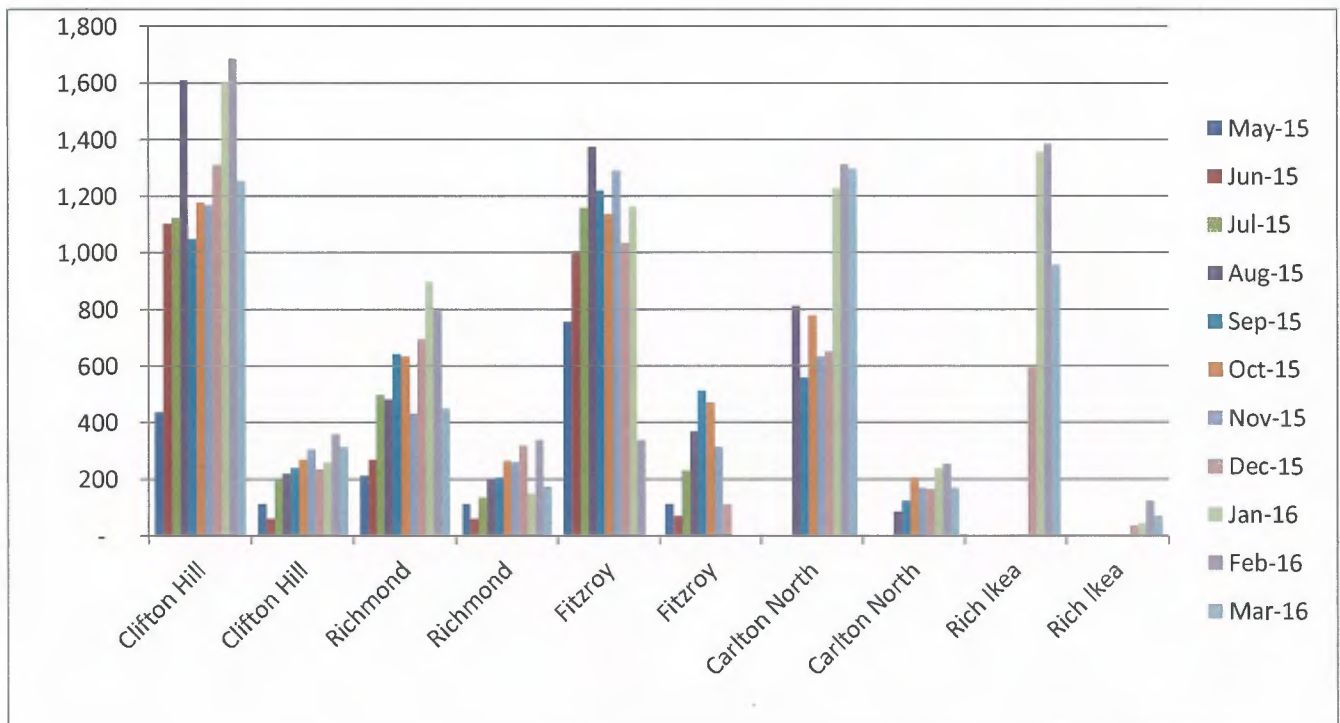
Month	Suburb	Clothing	Electrical
Aug-15	Carlton North	813	85
Sep-15	Carlton North	559	125
Oct-15	Carlton North	778	205
Nov-15	Carlton North	635	170
Dec-15	Carlton North	652	165
Jan-16	Carlton North	1,229	240
Feb-16	Carlton North	1,313	255
Mar-16	Carlton North	1,298	170
YTD Total	Carlton North	7,277	1,415

Tables

The table below shows the amount of goods collected at each site over the project to date. The Ikea Hub was set up in November 2015, late in the project.

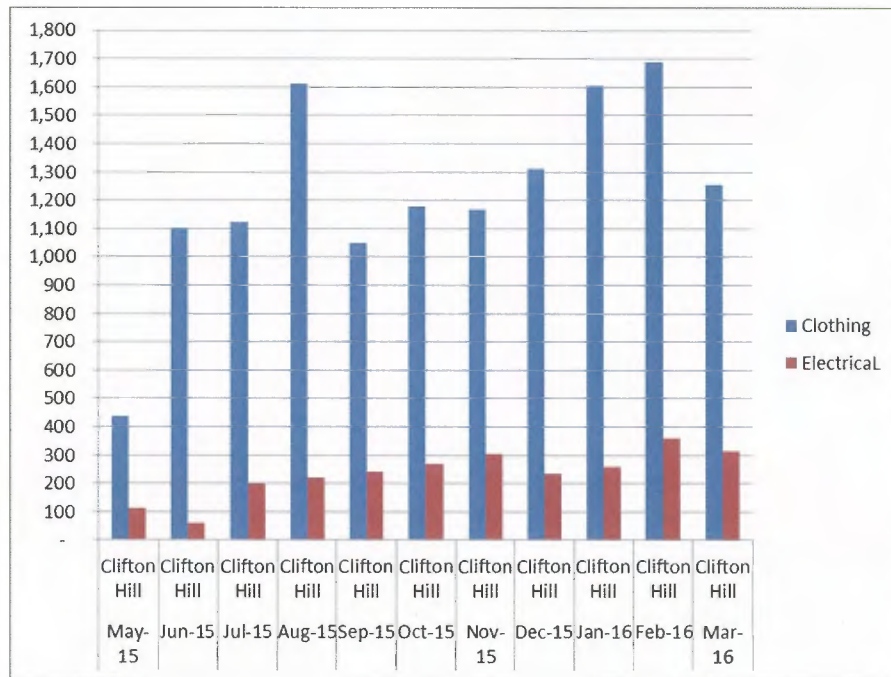
	Suburb	Clothing	Electrical
YTD Total	Clifton Hill	13,528	2,577
YTD Total	Richmond	6,015	2,222
YTD Total	Fitzroy	10,474	2,192
YTD Total	Carlton North	7,277	1,415
YTD Total	Rich Ikea	4,299	275

The graph below shows the household goods – mainly textiles – and electrical items collected from each site. For each suburb, the household goods are on the left, the electrical goods on the right. The Hub bins at Collingwood Leisure Centre carpark continue to collect the most. They are in a tree'd, clean carpark, with a constant stream of family visitors, and exercisers aiming to make things better in general.



Tables

The graph below shows the relative amounts of textiles against electrical goods collected at the Clifton Hill Hub, in the Collingwood Leisure Centre carpark.



Project resources

Bins were sourced by Southern Cross Recycling that were sturdy, easy to use, new and bright.

Targeted graphic art was developed for the bin stickers that suited the local Yarra culture.

Bin stickers were printed that would adhere to the shape of the bin, survive the weather, and had an anti-graffiti coating.

Photos



The bins for the household goods outside the Collingwood Leisure Centre above, and beside the mural on the electricity substation, below.





The colourful mural on the wall of the electricity substation. The mural makes the whole space brighter and discourages tagging and graffiti.

Collateral



Bin stickers were developed to show what goes in the bin, and encourage people to use them.

Media releases

Below is Yarra's Hot Topic section on their website, promoting the Hub's. This was boosted by tweets about the opportunity to recycle at the Hubs, promoted in Yarra Enews and Yarra News.

Give a second life to clothing and electricals

Council is making it easier for you to recycle clothing, homewares, and small electrical appliances.



You can leave the clothing and electrical appliances at our colourful Community Recycling Bins at:

- Ikea carpark, outside Ikea and one level up
- Collingwood Leisure Centre car park (corner of Turnbull Street and Hoddle Street, Clifton Hill)
- Gleadell Street car park (Gleadell Street, opposite the Richmond Recreation Centre)
- Newry Street (corner Rathdowne Street, behind North Carlton Library)

More than 95% of the goods are recovered, with the best of the clothing going to local charities, the rest being reused or recycled.

For items other than clothing, homewares and small electrical items, visit the Depot at 168 Roseneath Street, Clifton Hill. They can recycle a range of other items, including cardboard, polystyrene, light globes, telephones and cameras, metal, batteries, soft and hard plastics and books.

This project has been made possible due to funding from the Metropolitan Local Government Waste and Resource Recovery Fund.

Further information
Council
9205 5555
info@yarracity.vic.gov.au



Glossary

Use this section to define any terms specific to your project

Term	Definition

Final report sign off

The sign off of the final report is required from the project manager and department director/manager prior to submission.

Name	Position	Signature	Date
Kirsty Richards	Waste Education Projects Officer		21/5/16
Lisa Coffa	Waste Minimisation Coordinator		02/5/16