

Product Stewardship Scheme

Annual Report FY21

RE:mobile
make your next call - recycle





TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
ABOUT THIS REPORT.....	3
ABOUT RE:MOBILE.....	3
Summary.....	3
Aims.....	3
Participants:.....	3
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND BENEFITS.....	4
Highlights.....	4
TRENDS & THE NEXT 12 MONTHS.....	5
Next 12 months.....	5
SCHEME DETAILS.....	6
Overview.....	6
Members & Participants.....	7
Scheme Operation and Funding.....	7
The Beneficiary – Sustainable Coastlines.....	8
FY21 COLLECTION RESULTS.....	9
Scheme Collection Data.....	9
OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS.....	11
FY21 Target Results.....	11
How we monitor objectives and targets.....	12
CONTACT.....	13
APPENDIX 1: PROMOTION & ACTIVITIES.....	14
Websites & Social Media.....	14
Calendar of events.....	15
TCF Media Release: Telco industry reminds New Zealanders to recycle unwanted mobile phones.....	18
APPENDIX 2: NEWS FROM SUSTAINABLE COASTLINES.....	19
Tree planting events an answer to loneliness and improving our fresh water.....	19

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is the sixth annual report for the accredited RE:MOBILE Product Stewardship Scheme. The report was prepared by the TCF Product Stewardship Working Party according to Ministry for the Environment accreditation requirements.

This report covers activity for the period throughout FY21, 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

ABOUT RE:MOBILE

Summary

RE:MOBILE is an accredited Product Stewardship Scheme created for the purpose of reducing the environmental impact of unwanted mobile handsets. Participants include mobile network operators and local recycling partners.

The Scheme is managed by the New Zealand Telecommunications Forum Incorporated (TCF) on behalf of its members. The Scheme provides an avenue for anyone in New Zealand to donate unwanted mobile handsets and accessories for re-use or recycling. An additional benefit of the scheme is that all of the funding the TCF receives from the scheme is donated to the appointed charity, Sustainable Coastlines.

The TCF is a registered incorporated society established in 2002. The TCF's objective is to foster cooperation among the telecommunications industry's participants, to enable the efficient provision of regulated and non-regulated telecommunications services. The TCF's goal is to promote competition for the long-term benefit of end-users of telecommunications services in New Zealand.

Aims

RE:MOBILE aims to:

- Reduce the environmental impact of unwanted mobile handsets in New Zealand and create a circular economy by re-use of phone or valuable materials that phone contain reuse.
- Increase consumer awareness and change behaviour about mobile phone product stewardship.
- Increase consumer confidence in the industry by establishing appropriate standards of practice that apply consistently across the industry for Product Stewardship.
- Enable a collective industry-wide solution to the responsible management of end-of-life mobile handsets and accessories.

Participants:

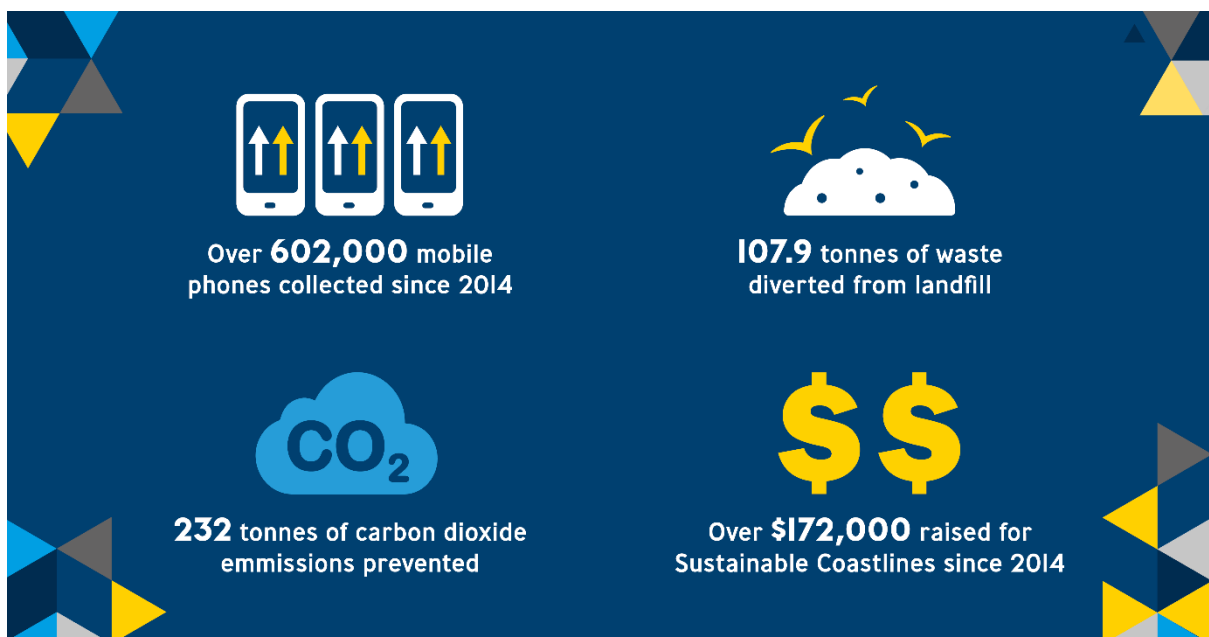


KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND BENEFITS

There were 66,867 phones collected through RE:MOBILE for FY2021. For every phone sent to the RE:MOBILE scheme one or more of the following benefits applied:

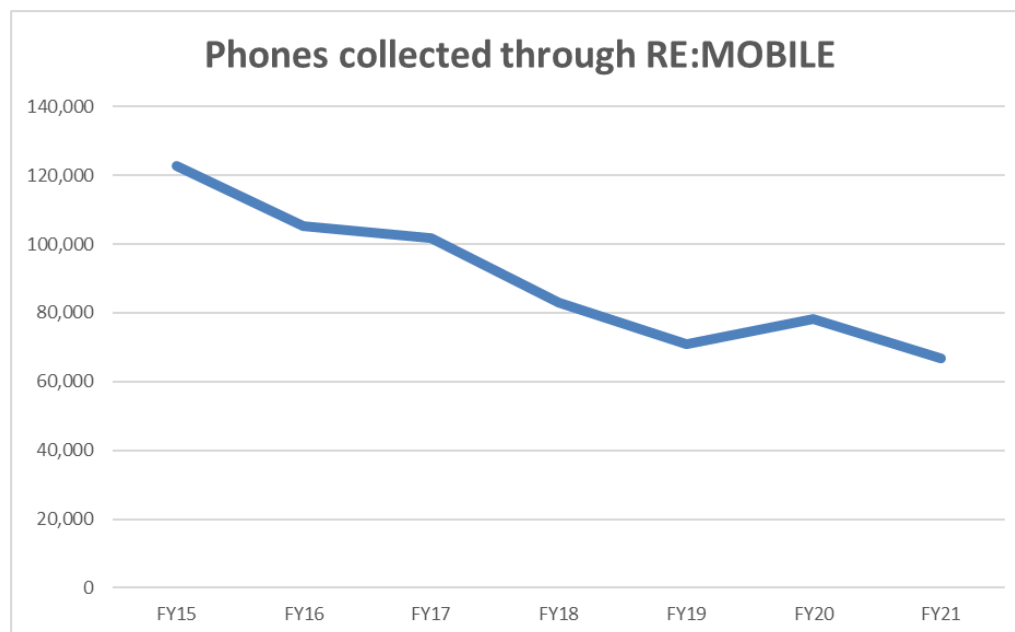
1. Prevented a mobile phone ending up in landfill and the risk that the harmful substances inside them leaching into the surrounding land and waterways or that a battery causes a fire.
2. Allowed valuable resources and precious metals such as gold and silver that can be found in mobile phones to be extracted and reused.
3. Allowed any mobile phone that still works and is in good condition to be refurbished and on-sold to extend the life of the phone. This reduces the demand for new handsets and the associated environmental impact of manufacturing them.
4. Lithium-ion batteries within mobile phones are disposed of safely.
5. For every phone recycled with RE:MOBILE money was donated to the New Zealand charity, Sustainable Coastlines. Sustainable Coastlines deliver coastal clean-up events, educational programmes, public awareness campaigns, and riparian planting projects to restore habitats for native animals, reduce sediment and improve water quality.

Highlights



TRENDS & THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

With the exception of FY20, there has been a downward trend on mobile phones collected through RE:MOBILE year-on-year, as show below:



There has been a general downward trend in number of phones collected by the scheme, with the exception of FY2020. During that year the RE:MOBILE website was refreshed and a promotional campaign was conducted featuring Eliza McCartney as the scheme ambassador. These activities appeared to contribute to a temporary increase in the number of phones being recycled, however in FY 2021 the number decreased even further. This may be partially due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, with fewer people deciding to upgrade their mobile phones or deciding to retain them due to the economic uncertainty.

Generally, it has been difficult to pin-point the reason for the general downward trend in mobile phone recycling over time and as noted in previous Annual Reports, consumers see value in their mobile handsets for various reasons i.e., they can be used without a mobile connection to connect to the internet via WiFi. This may mean that consumers can be reluctant to part with their devices, even after they have been replaced with more recent models.

There were a number of major operational and promotional activities undertaken to raise awareness of mobile phone recycling through the Scheme. More information can be found at Appendix 1.

Next 12 months

The marketing and awareness programme for the next 12 months will be aimed at increasing awareness of the RE:MOBILE scheme. A key event will be to support Recycling Week in October 2021.

RE:MOBILE Product Stewardship Scheme accreditation lapsed in April 2021. The TCF is working closely with MfE to work through the new accreditation process, changes that have been bought in under the amended Waste Minimisation Act. In the meantime, MfE has confirmed that they will continue to support and recognise the Scheme whilst reaccreditation is being worked through, the details of which are still being finalised by MfE.

SCHEME DETAILS

Overview

To understand how the RE:MOBILE scheme works, the diagram below shows how donated mobile phones are collected by scheme members, reused or recycled by recycling partner SwapKit. SwapKit pays the TCF for each handset it receives via the TCF channels, all of which is donated to Sustainable Coastlines.



Figure 1: RE:MOBILE Scheme Overview

Members & Participants

Role	Organisation	Responsibility
Scheme Owner	New Zealand Telecommunications Forum Incorporated (TCF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance and oversight of the Scheme and the Scheme's operation. Managing contractual relationships and agreements with Scheme Members and the Recycling Agent.
Scheme Member	2degrees Mobile Spark New Zealand Vodafone New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme promotion to the general public. Provide consumers with recycling drop-off points for mobile phones. Providing reporting as per Scheme requirements.
Recycling Agent	SwapKit New Zealand Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme Promotion to the general public. Providing collection, reuse and recycling services to the Scheme and reporting on Scheme metrics.
Recycling Partner	Zero Waste New Zealand Ltd Sims Recycling New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide reuse or recycling services and reporting on Scheme metrics.
Beneficiary	Sustainable Coastlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme promotion via available channels and partner relationships Provide consumers with recycling drop-off points for mobile phones.

Scheme Operation and Funding

The Recycling Agent pays the TCF a per unit fee per phone collected; the TCF donates this money to the appointed Scheme beneficiary, Sustainable Coastlines.

Operational costs of the Scheme are funded by SwapKit through the returns it makes from recycling unwanted mobile phones. The cost of Scheme governance and management is funded by the TCF.

The funding arrangements enable the Scheme to remain relatively cost-neutral, and they also simplify and improve the transparency of funds donated to the beneficiary.

The Beneficiary – Sustainable Coastlines

Sustainable Coastlines has been the beneficiary of the RE:MOBILE scheme since April 2016. A multi-award winning New Zealand charity that has an innovative approach to protecting the environment, and this aligns well with our objectives for RE:MOBILE.

Sustainable Coastlines has a long-term vision of beautiful beaches, healthy waters and inspired people. The proceeds from the RE:MOBILE scheme helps it achieve its objectives.

For the FY21 year some fantastic statistics were achieved by Sustainable Coastlines:

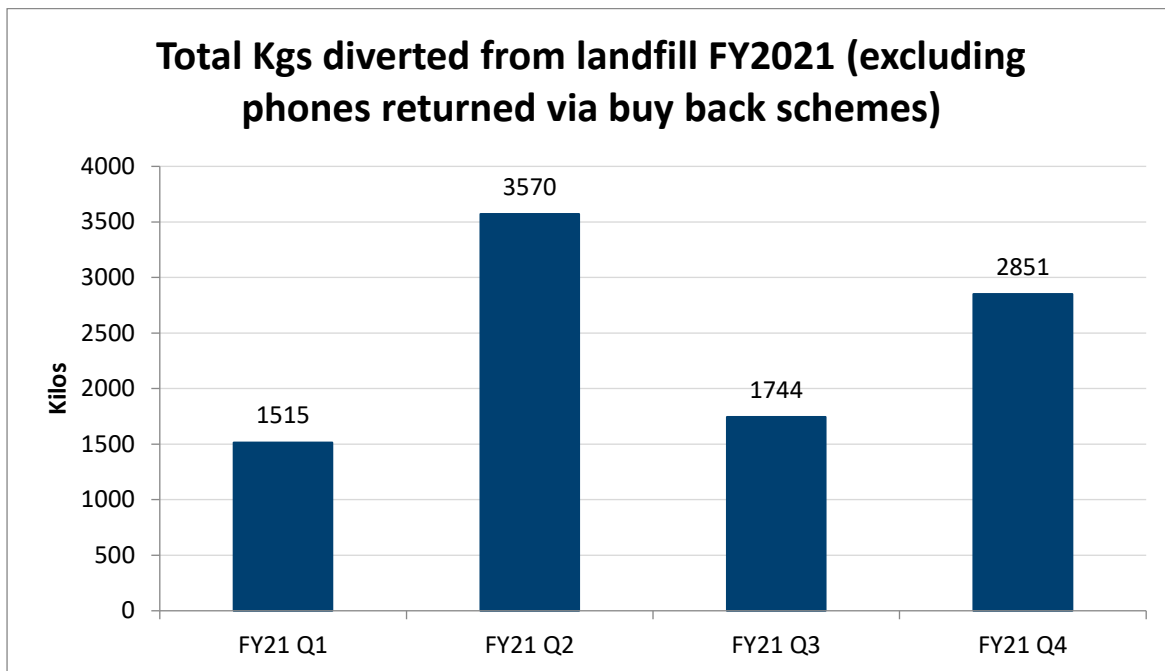
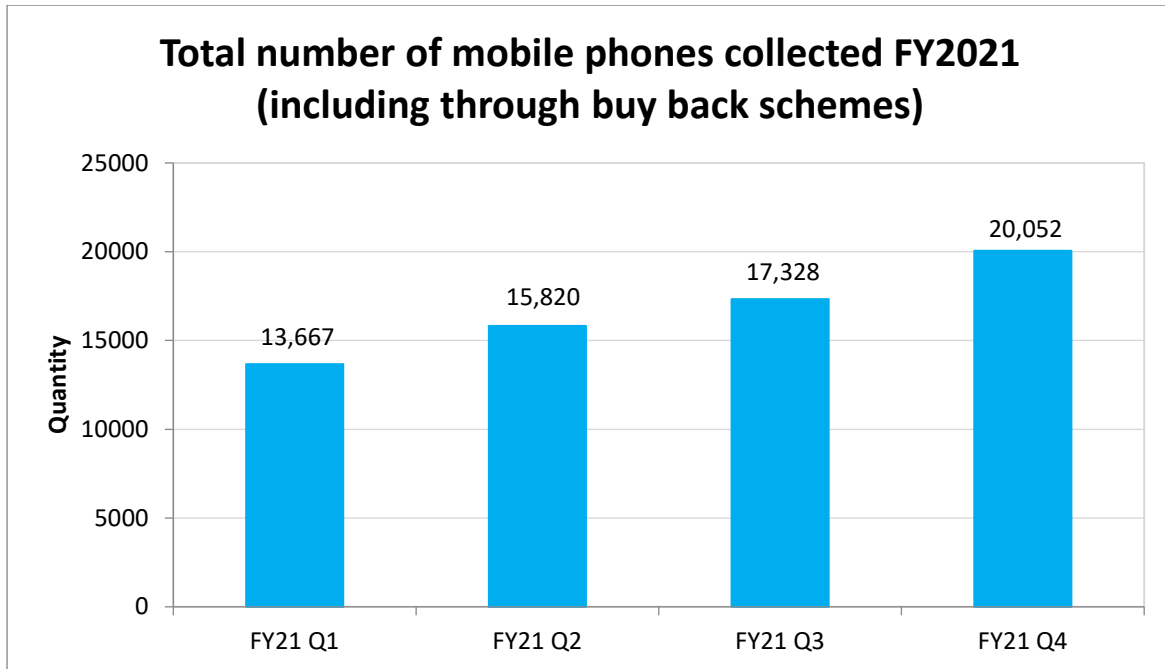
Throughout this period:

- 14,864 litres of litter collected
- 40 beach clean-ups
- 37 planting activities
- 52,598 trees planted
- 10,793 presentation attendees
- 127 educational presentations



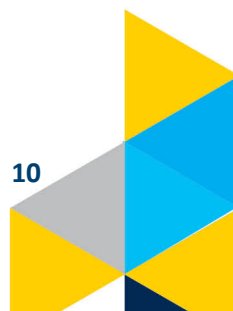
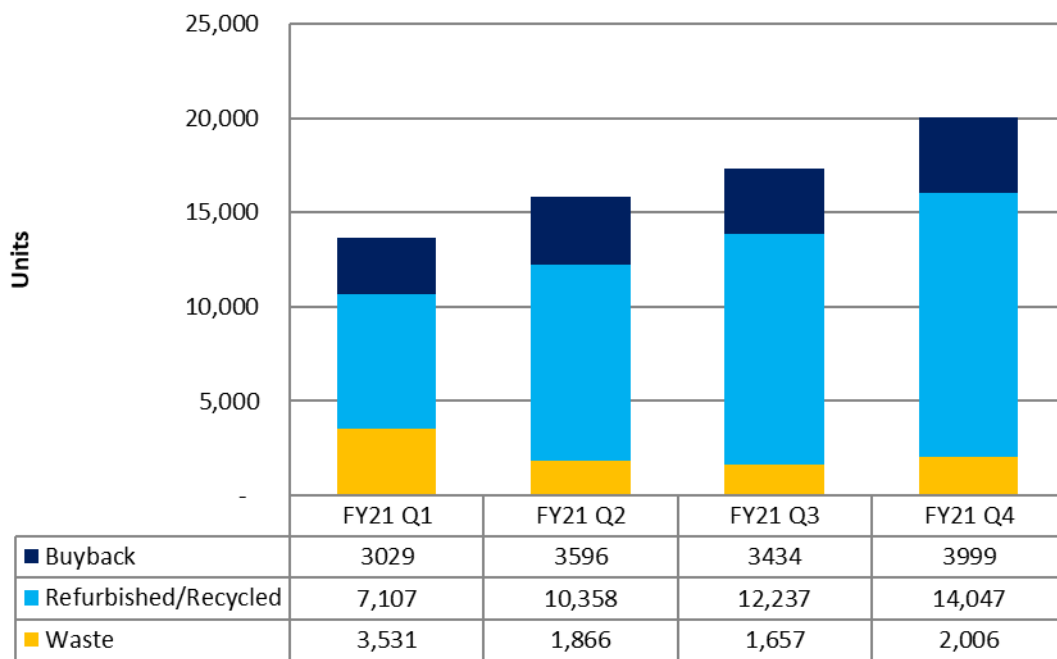
FY21 COLLECTION RESULTS

Scheme Collection Data





Collection Results by Type FY2021



OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

This section summarises the status of progress against targets for the reporting period. Please note that the RE:MOBILE accreditation period spanned from July 2014 to April 2021, so the targets were set to October 2020. RE:MOBILE is currently undertaking processes to become re-accredited, which will involve a new set of objectives and targets being set.

FY21 Target Results

TARGET	Target FY20	FY21	FY20	FY19	FY18	FY17	FY16	FY15	2012
Changes in customer behaviour									
Number of mobiles phones thrown into the bin reduces by 2% by 2020 (from average of 6% in 2012 to average of 4% in 2020).	4%	8%	8%	9%	10%*	8%	10%	7%	6%
Number of mobile phones kept at home unused reduces to an average of 16% by 2020		45%	48%	53%	55%	54%	51%	37%	26%
Kept it just in case, as it was still working		29%	32%	35%	37%	35%	34%	23%	
Kept it, even though it was not working		16%	16%	18%	18%	16%	17%	14%	
Number of mobile phones collected increases to more than 292,000 in 2020 (measured to end of TCF financial year, 31st March)	292,000	66,867	78,348	71,005	82,842	101,630	105,317	122,762	213,031
Public awareness of the scheme									
Public awareness of the Scheme increases to 64% by 2020	64%	30%	30%	35%	37%	35%	42%	50%	50%
Staff awareness of the scheme									
Each Scheme Member implements at least one internal promotion campaign per year		Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	n/a
Recycling performance									
End of life phones and accessories broken down with at least 95% of all materials by weight recovered for reuse in other products increasing to 98% by 2020	95%	95%	95%	95%	97%	96.5%	95%	95%	n/a

* Until FY2019 this question asked you to select all that have applied to previous mobiles if you have had more than one previous mobile. In FY2019 this question was changed to asked what you did with "your old" i.e., last mobile phone. This has meant that it tracks changes over the previous 12 months.



How we monitor objectives and targets

TCF

The TCF has a Product Stewardship Operations Working Group in place comprising the Scheme Manager, Scheme Members and Recycling Agent & Recycling Partner representatives.

This Working Group provides an ongoing forum to monitor the Scheme's effectiveness, address ideas and concerns around the Scheme, manage any changes, and suggest initiatives to improve and/or promote the Scheme.

The Working Group meets approximately six times a year.

Data

- SwapKit provides monthly and quarterly reporting on recycling performance.
- Scheme Members provide quarterly reports on buy-back numbers.
- The TCF publishes quarterly summary reports at www.remobile.org.nz.

Surveys

Consumer surveys to monitor and assess changes in consumer behaviour are undertaken to measure and report on Objective 1 on an annual basis.

Reports

Scheme Members provide annual reports self-certifying their compliance with the Scheme requirements (refer section G of the Product Stewardship Scheme Code available on the TCF website) to enable us to monitor Objectives 2 and 3, along with market data for Objective 7.

Scheme Members also provide quarterly reports on their Buy Back volumes for Objective 5.

The Recycling Agent provides monthly and quarterly reports containing data from all recyclers who participate in the Scheme. These reports include information about product exports, the number of phones collected, recycled and reused, copies of certificates (e.g., ISO14001, Basel permits etc.) and other details to enable us to monitor Objectives 4 and 6.



CONTACT

This report was prepared by the TCF.

For any queries please contact:

RE:MOBILE

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APPENDIX 1: PROMOTION & ACTIVITIES

Websites & Social Media

Mobile phone recycling information is available on several local websites increasing the reach of RE:MOBILE to our target audience:

- www.remobile.org.nz
- www.2degreesmobile.co.nz/company/remobile-mobile-phone-recycling-scheme/
- <https://www.sparknz.co.nz/sustainability/environment/>
- www.vodafone.co.nz/environment/mobile-recycling/
- www.SwapKit.co.nz/environment.html
- www.sustainablecoastlines.org/donate/recycle-mobile/

Sustainable Coastlines and the TCF also promote RE:MOBILE via Facebook and Twitter throughout the year:

- www.facebook.com/letstalktelco/
- www.facebook.com/sustainablecoastlines/
- <https://twitter.com/TCFNZ>

Calendar of events

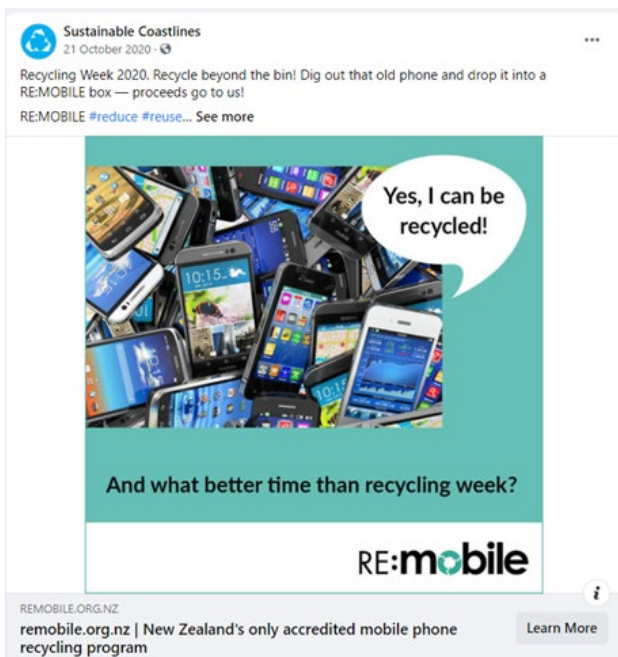
There are a number of major operational and promotional activities undertaken to raise awareness of mobile phone recycling through the Scheme. A calendar of events is below.

Month	Activity
FY ending 31 March 2021	
April 2020 – March 2021	Sustainable Coastlines – promotion of the scheme via regular newsletters (8x per year) Social media posts, info page on sustainablecoastlines.org website, reminder to bring old phones for recycling in all event listings, collection box at The Flagship Education Centre
April 2020	SwapKit activity: Contact all existing B2Bs
May 2020	SwapKit activity: Contact existing schools Bring a Phone to Work (BAPTW) letters out for registrations
June 2020	SwapKit activity: Contact kindergartens to update status/contacts BAPTW campaign Event: World Environment Day 5 June
July 2020	SwapKit activity: Mitre 10 campaign Contact existing schools DHBs update and introduction to those not involved Contact Auckland Hospital for collection packs or envelope packs
August 2020	SwapKit activity: Contact non-registered schools Resene update and new collection packs refreshed Contact existing Councils and follow up those not involved
August 2020	Spark's mobile phone recycling commitment and partnership with RE:MOBILE included and reported in 'Our Environment' section of Spark's FY20 Annual Report
September 2020	SwapKit activity: Email Community Centres and follow up Update NZ Police

October 2020	<p>Vodafone – addition of envelopes to invoices to return phones purchased during Christmas period</p> <p>Vodafone – sessions with Enterprise teams to support device trade-in</p>
October 2020	<p>SwapKit activity:</p> <p>BAPTW Campaign for those who the earlier date didn't suit</p> <p>Contact and update Hospice organisations</p>
October 2020	<p>TCF Recycling Week activity:</p> <p>Media release - Telco industry reminds New Zealanders to recycle unwanted mobile phones</p> <p>Social media posts</p>
October 2020	<p>Spark shared RE:MOBILE Recycling Week posts on Facebook and Twitter</p>
November 2020	<p>SwapKit activity:</p> <p>Schools/kindergarten round up and thank you promo to collect in all phones</p> <p>Contact bus and transport companies for support for the campaign – targeting lost and found department</p>
December 2020	<p>Spark bill insert included RE:MOBILE recycling envelope for customers to be able to return any old unwanted handsets. Went to all mobile customers (approximately 72,000).</p>
December 2020	<p>SwapKit activity:</p> <p>Merry Christmas mail out</p> <p>Thank you mail out to all businesses</p>
January 2021	<p>SwapKit activity:</p> <p>Contact storage companies offering options of collection bins or envelope packs</p>
February 2021	<p>SwapKit activity:</p> <p>Welcome back email to schools and kindergartens</p> <p>Welcome back email B2B</p> <p>Contact RSC</p>
March 2021	<p>SwapKit activity:</p> <p>Email out to nationwide libraries</p> <p>Email medical practices and dental practices</p>
March 2021	<p>Spark retail stores host 91 RE:MOBILE product receptacles</p>

March 2021	<p>2degrees – assessment and order of SwapKit envelopes for customers – 6,000 units at distribution warehouse</p> <p>Introducing 2degrees business customer to SwapKit to add their HQ as collection point for RE:MOBILE</p>
March 2021	Vodafone retail stores host 65 RE:MOBILE product receptacles
April 2020 to March 2021	<p>Sustainable Coastlines Events for the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 14,864 litres of litter collected ▪ 40 beach clean-ups ▪ 37 planting activities ▪ 52,598 trees planted ▪ 10,793 presentation attendees ▪ 127 educational presentations

Examples of promotion activities are below:



TCF Media Release: Telco industry reminds New Zealanders to recycle unwanted mobile phones

Published Monday 19 Oct 2020



Recycling Week NZ is about much more than just bottles, cans, plastic and paper - the New Zealand Telecommunications Forum (TCF) is encouraging New Zealanders to rummage through their household drawers and recycle their old mobile phones.

The TCF manages the nationwide not-for-profit mobile phone recycling scheme [RE:MOBILE](#) that is supported by 2degrees, Spark and Vodafone.

“While most of us are in the habit of recycling our bottles, cans, plastic and paper, when it comes to other less conventional waste streams (and in particular e-waste), people may still be unaware that there are environmentally responsible disposal options available to them,” said Geoff Thorn, TCF CEO.

“There’s no reason these days mobile phones should end up in landfill (where they pose environmental risks). RE:MOBILE is accessible to all New Zealanders and we urge Kiwis to take the time out in Recycling Week to do a spring clean out of your drawers ... it’s likely you’ll find an old unwanted phone or two.”

Thorn suspects there may be hundreds of thousands of discarded mobile phones sitting around in people’s homes: “It’s all too easy to shove an old phone into a drawer to keep as a ‘just in case’ spare, but often it will never be used again.”

RE:MOBILE works alongside its charity partner Sustainable Coastlines. More than 548,000 mobile phones have been donated since the RE:MOBILE scheme was accredited in 2014.

For every phone that is received today, money is donated to Sustainable Coastlines - a charity which works to protect New Zealand’s waterways and coastlines. The scheme has donated over \$152,000 to Sustainable Coastlines since we established this relationship in 2016.

“The funding that we have received to date has enabled us to plant over 14,600 trees in waterway regeneration projects across New Zealand. These plants act as a buffer zone for the surrounding land, helping to soak up pollution, provide the necessary habitats for native animals, prevent excessive nutrient runoff and sequester carbon,” said Stephanie Vercoe, Sustainable Coastlines Strategic Partnerships Director.

The RE:MOBILE scheme is free of charge, easy for consumers to access and will take any mobile phone, regardless of condition. Consumers can take their unwanted phones to any 2degrees, Spark, Vodafone or Noel Leeming retail stores along with other [drop off locations](#). If preferred, there is also the option to post to a freepost address.

Phones collected by RE:MOBILE are completely cleaned of any data and either refurbished and on-sold (extending the life of the phone) or are dismantled and recycled for parts. Over 95 percent of the materials in the phone are able to be recycled.

To find out more about RE:MOBILE and mobile phone recycling (including how to [remove your data](#)) go to [remobile.org.nz](#)

Source of article: <https://www.tcf.org.nz/industry/news/media-releases/2020-10-19-telco-industry-reminds-new-zealanders-to-recycle-unwanted-mobile-phones/>

APPENDIX 2: NEWS FROM SUSTAINABLE COASTLINES

Tree planting events an answer to loneliness and improving our fresh water



Volunteers planting at Puhinui Reserve in Auckland as part of Sustainable Coastlines' Love Your Water tour on 13 June 2020.

We have just kicked off our winter tree planting tour, providing critical support for freshwater quality while helping to solve some of the loneliness and isolation brought to light by the Covid lock-down.

The recent [Helen Clark Foundation report Alone Together](#) highlights the impact loneliness is having on New Zealanders. Two of the report's recommendations are to strengthen communities and to create friendly streets and neighbourhoods.

Through bringing people together with a shared purpose and engaging community at a grass-roots level, Sustainable Coastlines' tree planting events are already helping to alleviate the problem.

"We're excited to be back working with local communities, connecting people for a common cause and reducing the loneliness that a lot of us have faced over lock-down," says Sustainable Coastlines co-founder Camden Howitt.

"Planting trees alongside our waterways provides a lot of tangible impacts like reducing erosion and sedimentation, increasing biodiversity, capturing carbon and filtering excess nutrients. But our events also connect people with nature, allowing them to work collectively to tackle environmental challenges in their own backyard. Our volunteers continually feedback to us that they've felt an increased connection through this shared experience, giving them a sense of belonging and purpose."

The tree planting tour, dubbed 'Love Your Water 2020', is running at a time when New Zealanders continue to unite against Covid-19. In collaboration with key supporters ANZ, Vector and Pitstop, the charity already has planting events planned throughout July and August, and volunteers are invited to register on the [Sustainable Coastlines events page](#). More dates are to be added soon.

As well as tackling loneliness, planting trees enables people to be part of a solution to what may seem an insurmountable problem. Of New Zealanders surveyed, [76% said they were extremely or very concerned about the pollution of lakes and rivers](#). These concerns are not unfounded, with the Ministry for the Environment Report, [Our freshwater 2020](#) painting a picture of declining water quality and habitat for native fish in many of the country's freshwater systems.

We want to get as many people as possible involved in this positive solution both for their own health and the health of our waterways.

Source of article: <https://sustainablecoastlines.org/tree-planting-answer-to-loneliness/>