



CRNI - 2017 Report for the Minister

This document offers some background on the Community Reuse Network Ireland and summarises the network’s main activities from 2017.

The CRNI work plan is formulated in conjunction with the CRNI Board and is based on our five year strategy (2014-2018 inclusive) which envisages CRNI as a significant and influential stakeholder in resource efficiency, waste management, social enterprise and job creation discussions in Ireland.

Promoting Reuse & Communications

Building awareness of member activities and opportunities for reuse was identified as a key priority for our members in 2017. To facilitate this, CRNI engaged an events and communications officer¹. This enabled greater participation in Reuse Month 2017 from the network and its members, including tours of member facilities and hosting a seminar in Cork, with support from the Southern Waste Region to explore opportunities to develop community reuse and recycling enterprise. These events saw CRNI featured in two



Irish Times articles and being flagged as a key contact point for Reuse Month.



To promote reuse more widely, the network participated in the RREUSE network’s European Week of Waste Reduction campaign and ran a pre-Christmas awareness campaign online and through over 440 retail stores, entitled “Reimagine Christmas”.

The network also presented at key national and international conferences including Environment Ireland, the Irish Waste Management Conference and the RREUSE network’s international conference, in addition to regular communication with stakeholders via newsletters, the website and social media.

Supporting Members, Membership Drive

To support members, CRNI hosted regular network meetings, and facilitated training and sharing of best practices. The preparation of metrics to explain our member’s activities continues to be improved upon with a new template and scope of data collected in 2017. Our most up to date 2016 figures are provided across.

To continue to expand the network, our membership policy was agreed and published



32,600 t reused
67,800 t recycled



Supporting 968 jobs
500 training opportunities
7,620 volunteer positions



Over €100 million turnover
Est. €50.7 million employment value

¹ Part time basis & fixed term contract



on our website. This enabled CRNI to welcome **5 new members** including The Upcycling Project, FoodCloud Hubs, WeShare, The BabyMarket and USEL.

Policy

CRNI worked with members and key stakeholders including the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; Department of Social Protection; Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and Department of Rural and Community Development to identify key priorities for the reuse sector which were disseminated through conferences and other events.

The network contributed toward the National Social Enterprise Strategy and the EU Waste Framework Directive text through RREUSE network meetings and working groups. CRNI also took an active participatory role as a member of the National Waste Prevention Committee, National Industrial Symbiosis Working Group and National Mattress working Group.

Research



The major research project embarked on in 2017 was the EPA funded Quality Standard (“Re.Mark”) project, which aims to establish the value of a reuse quality mark for Ireland / Northern Ireland in strengthening consumer confidence in reused goods. This saw 10 members engage in a pilot certification process intended to improve processes and systems, shop design, and customer experience and eventually become accredited. In parallel, customer surveys and broader consumer

research are being conducted to understand consumer engagement with reuse. The project will be widely promoted in 2018 to raise the profile of pilot participants.

CRNI also commenced work on an ERASMUS+ funded project in partnership with the Rediscovery Centre and ReCreate with the goal of engaging youth in an international creative reuse design competition and development of a web documentary.

Networking

2017 saw the network develop a closer relationship with Zero Waste Scotland, who have generously given time to the Quality Mark project. WRAP NI is also involved on the steering group of this project. CRNI also reached out to local community based stakeholders including PPNs, Local Community Development Companies and Local Development Companies.

Finally, in 2017 CRNI appointed three new Directors to the Board, developed a code of conduct for board members and published a new employee handbook.