

# DRIVING TOWARDS A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

the warehouse









# ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY & ETHICAL SOURCING



The Warehouse Group's teams, leadership and Board are serious about achieving our vision to become New Zealand's most sustainable retailer.

Ongoing initiatives which include supporting team members' wellbeing and diversity, decarbonising energy use, and giving a hand up to the communities in which we operate are detailed in our Integrated Report. During FY21, we added programmes that are making a difference in the lives of our communities and key stakeholders.

#### **Social: Period Equity**

The Warehouse has partnered with The Period Place with the goal of eliminating period inequity in Aotearoa by 2030. The partnership is an evolution of the existing work by The Warehouse to recognise that of around 1.2 million menstruators in New Zealand, an estimated 700,000 experience barriers to accessing period products. As a result of this issue, approximately 8% of students are missing days at school.

In FY20 we started providing a \$1 range of period products, with one pack for every ten sold donated to Women's Refuge and The Period Place to reach those in need. By the end of FY21 more than 99,000 period products were donated.

We have also provided free period products to all bathrooms across the Group's stores, distribution centres and support offices because people can get caught short. Together with The Period Place, we rolled out donation bins across 26 The Warehouse stores where customers can donate period products

which are then distributed to local community groups who support people with barriers to access - such as cost, vulnerable living situations and education.

Alongside the donated products, educational material from The Period Place about period cycles and types of period products available was provided. The Period Place relationship helped us further reduce barriers by getting information to community groups and hosting a podcast series and portal on our The Warehouse website. By promoting understanding that menstruation is a normal biological process we aim to help people manage their period with confidence.

Work in this area will continue into FY22 with further products scheduled to be launched.

#### **Wellbeing: Family Violence is Not OK**

The Warehouse Group has had a Family Violence is Not OK policy in place since 2015. In FY21 the Group updated its policy to reflect users' feedback. Initially developed in conjunction with Women's Refuge, the policy was designed to provide those affected by family violence with ten days paid leave and the perpetrators of violence with five days unpaid leave. The updated policy now offers 15 days of paid leave in addition to three nights' accommodation for those impacted by family violence.

During FY21 training associated with the policy was



digitised allowing our team members to more easily access the material, which is designed to help them understand what family violence is and to provide guidance on where to seek help. It also supports managers with information about what to do if a team member is experiencing family violence.

During the year the Group also supported Women's Refuge by donating \$250,000 from the proceeds of our July toy sale. The funds went to Women's Refuge's Kids in the Middle Programme which supports children impacted by family violence.

**Sustainable attributes: Increasing the sustainability of our product range**

Providing customers the ability to choose more sustainable products gained a significant focus in FY21, with the number of products with a sustainable feature growing to a peak of around 11,500. That number will continue to rise as our efforts in this area continue.

As a business we are prioritising the delivery of product packaging with reduced plastic, improved recyclability and reusability. Traditionally plastic packaging is being replaced by cardboard or fabric. We have also increased our use of certified materials sourced through global sustainability programmes such as the Better Cotton Initiative, the world's largest cotton sustainability programme, and the Forest Stewardship Council, a non-profit organisation that promotes responsible management of the world's forests. Materials sourced from these programmes are prevalent in our home and apparel ranges.

We have been innovating product ranges, including with the introduction of sustainable materials such as recycled polyester, a durable material made from

recycled used plastics which featured in our men's winter puffer jackets and women's winter bathrobe, as well as in a range of pillows.

**Waste reduction: Trialling circularity initiatives**

We are committed to making recycling and waste reduction easier and more accessible for Kiwis. Post-consumer waste was a focus and we expanded the number of stores offering soft plastics recycling bins in store to a total of 29, including our first stores to offer the scheme in the South Island and Hawkes Bay region.

We launched an e-waste collection pilot programme, in partnership with TechCollect NZ, at 16 of our Noel Leeming stores. This programme allows consumers to drop their used electronics into a Noel Leeming store for recycling at no cost. This service is funded by TechCollect NZ's members such as Canon New Zealand, Dell, Dynabook, HP, Microsoft and Toshiba.

The lessons from TechCollect NZ's programme partnership with Noel Leeming will be used to inform the best options for an ongoing regulated e-waste product stewardship system in New Zealand.

We are also trialling the recycling of hard-to-recycle waste at three of our The Warehouse stores. Partnering with recycling company TerraCycle NZ and leading global brands including Colgate, Schwarzkopf, Zuru and NESCAFÉ, the trial offers customers a way to dispose of waste which is not processed through kerbside recycling collections. Examples include toothpaste tubes and caps, toothbrushes, hair colouring packaging (including bottles, tubes and lids), NESCAFÉ Dolce Gusto coffee capsules and Zuru Bunch O' Balloons.