

Spotlight on RefillNZ

We celebrate another recipient of our Waste Minimisation Community Fund, RefillNZ, a nationwide initiative that Sustainable Queenstown and QLDC are helping to roll out across the Queenstown Lakes District.



Smiths: Matt Ward, from RefillNZ supporters Smiths Craft Beer House, points to the Refill NZ logo at the bar



The Exchange: Liam Wright stands outside RefillNZ supporters The Exchange café in Queenstown

Here we chat with Jess Larmont from Sustainable Queenstown about how the project is progressing locally.

Q. Let us know what RefillNZ is all about and what you have set out to achieve in the Queenstown Lakes District?

RefillNZ is an awesome nationwide initiative that focuses on three main issues: reducing single-use plastic, saving money on buying bottled water and promoting Aotearoa's drinkable water to locals and visitors (when they come back!).

Q. Well done on receiving a grant through the QLDC Waste Minimisation Community Fund for 2020! How has this grant helped roll out the project?

Thanks, we're thrilled to have received support from QLDC. This grant has enabled us to grow the number of RefillNZ water stations in the district far more quickly than if we'd been doing it as a side project. It's also allowed me the time to deliver the stickers and posters in person and, consequently, have great conversations with cafés, bars, restaurants and tourist attractions about their sustainability practices.

Q. It's great to hear local businesses are getting behind this sustainability initiative, tell us how

others can take part and the benefits of doing so?

So far we've contacted more than 60 businesses across the district, inviting them to join the #Refillution (as it's called!) and there's always room for more! For a \$20 sign-up fee, anywhere in Queenstown Lakes with a water station or water fountain can be added to the RefillNZ map and app and become visible to everyone looking for a place to fill up their own water bottle.

Q. I'm sure there are people out there that are keen to chip in and support the RefillNZ cause, do you have any tips for how can they make a difference?

Download the RefillNZ app on Apple or the Rankers Camping app on Android and whip it out the next time you're out of water; no doubt there will be a refill station nearby. QLDC has even signed up all the water fountains so you can find your nearest water location easily!

Q. What's your takeaway message to the local community?

One choice from one person really does make a difference. Keep a water bottle on you when you're out and about and get rid of the need to buy plastic bottles. Sustainability can actually save you money and buying a reusable bottle now will save you buying endless plastic bottles of water over time.