**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 07/03/2022**

**SCHOOL KIDS TO PARTICIPATE IN LARGEST COLLECTION OF E-WASTE IN THE UK**

* **Wastebuster, Currys, Microsoft and Recycle Your Electricals partner for Waste Week 2022**
* **Calling on schools to lead on engaging the largest number of people to participate in the collection of E-Waste in the UK**
* **National Waste Week 2022 is here, this year a focus on Electrical Waste**
* **Waste Week is launching an electrical recycling competition for schools to win £5,000 of tech!**

**Wastebuster**, a leading not for profit environmental education company, has announced the launch of a ***“Hidden Treasure Hunt*”** competition for school kids. **Waste Week 2022** is calling on over 3.8 million students and parents to make this the largest collection of e-waste in the UK. Over 200 schools have already signed up to **Waste Week** and Wastebuster are now calling for more schools to sign up to take part in the ***Hidden Treasure Hunt***.   
  
The competition and its popular annual waste campaign **Waste Week** will be delivered through a new partnership with **Currys**, **Microsoft**, and **Recycle Your Electricals**.

Launched in 2008, **Waste Week** is a hugely popular annual campaign that helps schools and families in Wastebuster’s network of 17,800 schools in the UK, to reduce, reuse, and recycle to unlock social, economic, and environmental benefits for their local communities and the planet.

E-Waste is the fastest growing waste stream both globally and in the UK. For 2022 **Waste Week** is focusing on electrical and tech waste that is often hidden around people’s homes, to help students understand the benefits of choosing more environmental and sustainable solutions for their old and unwanted electricals and tech. According to Material Focus research, 155,000 tonnes of electricals are thrown away, with 527 million items hidden in UK homes.

A wide range of new curriculum-linked, media-rich educational resources will be available for teachers to support student learning and the launch of the competition. This includes an entertaining film, featuring popular children’s characters, exploring how electrical and tech waste is recycled.

**Waste Week** runs from **7th-13th March** **2022** and this year launches a special new schools' competition,the ***Hidden Treasure Hunt*** that runs from**17th March-14th April 2022.**  
The ***Hidden Treasure Hunt*** is inviting schools to help get more of the unwanted electricals and electronics hidden around people’s homes, recycled across the UK, by inspiring students, families and their communities to find any unwanted items and take them into a Currys store. Any unwanted broken or working electricals from hairdryers to tablets, mobile phones, to kitchen appliances can be taken to Currys. Schools that are not in a locality near to a Currys store, are being encouraged to have their school community take their old electricals to their nearest recycling point, which can be found on the Recycle Your Electricals postcode locator (https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/), to promote care for the environment.

There are considerable rewards for schools for encouraging their communities to recycle. £5k of Microsoft tech will be won by the school that gets the most students and families to clear out their old electricals, and tech, £2k for the second place school, £1k for third and fourth placed schools and a £500 prize draw raffle for two schools that have got involved.  
  
Every family that takes their unwanted electrical or tech ‘treasure’ to a **Currys** store during **The Hidden Treasure Hunt** (**17th March – 14th April 2022)** will also receive a £5 ‘Cash for Trash’ discount voucher (which can be redeemed on purchases of £25 and over).  
  
**The Pod, Wastebuster’s award-winning campaign platform** actively encourages young people to consider how they can act more responsibly and sustainably, in their everyday lives. The platform has a member network of over 17,800 schools in the UK, including 40% of UK primary schools and 1 in 3 secondary schools, and engages over 4 million young people.  
  
**Waste Week** **runs** **7-13 March 2022**. Schools need to register with the Pod to join in. It’s quick, free and easy to sign up at [www.jointhepod.org](http://www.jointhepod.org)

For more information on **Waste Week**, please visit https://www.jointhepod.org/campaigns/waste-week-2022 or contact the Pod on Contact\_Us@jointhepod.org.

***Katy Newnham, Founder, Wastebuster,*** *commented:*  
*“Young people are our secret weapons in the fight against waste. If we teach them well, they will take the right messages home to their families. But children need to be empowered with the right information to make the right end-of-life consumer choices.’’*  
  
*“Waste Week this year not only supports school children and families to learn about the environmental benefits of electrical and tech reuse and recycling but encourages and rewards them for taking part. Putting children and their families at the heart of driving and benefiting from circular economy growth’’*

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***Moira Thomas, Group Director of Sustainable Business, Currys,*** *said: “We recognise the growing issue of e-waste and as the UK’s largest electronics retailer, we have a responsibility to do our part to help everyone give their technology longer life through repair, recycling and reuse. Young people are hugely passionate and engaged with environmental matters, so it’s fantastic to be working in partnership with Wastebusters, Microsoft and Material Focus to elevate awareness of end-of-life options for electronics, which have become such a fundamental part of our everyday lives. This partnership will help teach young children the importance of ending electrical waste and adapting to a more circular economy.”****Scott Butler, Executive Director, Material Focus*, said:** *“We are delighted that this year’s Waste Week is focussing on the urgent issue of unwanted electricals and tech, the fastest growing waste stream in the UK. 155,000 tonnes of electricals are needlessly thrown away each year, and 527 million items are hoarded in UK homes, losing forever their hidden treasure of some of the most precious materials on the planet. We can’t wait to see how many of these old electricals are found by school children across the UK, who will be helping to lead the charge by taking action on this vital environmental issue.”*

**Notes to Editors:**

**How the Hidden Treasure Hunt Competition Works**

*Schools sign up to Waste Week via the Pod (*[*https://www.jointhepod.org/campaigns/waste-week-2022*](https://www.jointhepod.org/campaigns/waste-week-2022)*) to receive a Waste Week campaign pack plus ‘Hidden Treasure Hunt’ competition promotional materials including posters, a homework sheet and unique code for their school. Individuals/ families that donate any items in store during the competition, will receive a £5 voucher (that can be redeemed when they spend more than £25) and can ‘nominate’ their school to win by registering their recycling via an online form on the hidden Treasure Hunt website –* [*www.hiddentreasurehunt.org*](http://www.hiddentreasurehunt.org) *(LAUNCHING 14/03/22) where they must enter their email address, school code, which Currys store they donated items to, the date of the donation and what type of electrical items were donated. Each voucher is worth one nomination for their school. One voucher is given per donation, regardless of the number of items donated. An online Hidden Treasure Hunt School Totaliser (on* [*www.hiddentreasurehunt.org*](http://www.hiddentreasurehunt.org)*) will show the number of recycling registrations per school and an electricals items totaliser will show the total number of items donated for recycling. The school with the most recycling registrations will win the top prize of £5,000 worth of Microsoft tech. The second placed school will with £2000 worth of tech, the third placed schools will win £1000 worth of tech and four schools (with any number of nominations) will be selected via a prize drawer to win £500 worth of tech. If there is a draw in any prize-winning category, the schools in that category will need to split the prize fund between them equally. The Hidden Treasure Hunt competition will run from 17th March-14th April 2022 (closing midnight).* **Background on Currys***Currys plc is a leading omnichannel retailer of technology products and services, operating online and through 829 stores in 7 countries. We Help Everyone Enjoy Amazing Technology, however they choose to shop with us.*

*In the UK&I we trade as Currys; in the Nordics under the Elkjøp brand and as Kotsovolos in Greece. In each of these markets we are the market leader, employing 35,000 capable and committed colleagues. Our full range of services and support makes it easy for our customers to discover, choose, afford and enjoy the right technology for them, throughout their lives. The Group’s operations are supported by a sourcing office in Hong Kong, state-of-the-art repair facilities and an extensive distribution network, enabling fast and efficient delivery to stores and homes.*

*Our vision, we help everyone enjoy amazing technology, has a powerful social purpose at its heart. We believe in the power of technology to improve lives, help people stay connected, productive, healthy, and entertained. We’re here to help everyone enjoy those benefits and with our scale and expertise, we are uniquely placed to do so.*

*We’re a leader in giving technology a longer life through repair, recycling and reuse. We’re reducing our impact on the environment in our operations and our wider value chain and we will achieve net zero emissions by 2040. We offer customers products that help them save energy, reduce waste and save water, and we partner with charitable organisations to bring the benefits of amazing technology to those who might otherwise be excluded.* **Background on Recycle Your Electricals**

*Material Focus is a not-for-profit organisation whose goal is to stop the nation throwing away or hoarding all their old small electricals. Material Focus is delivering the UK-wide Recycle Your Electricals campaign. The campaign is revealing the value hidden in electricals and is making it easier for us all to recycle and reuse the small electricals we no longer need by providing more recycling points as well as providing practical information on how households can recycle.*

*The campaign is funded by producers of electrical appliances. The UK government sets annual targets for the recycling of all waste electricals, including small electricals. If producers of electrical appliances don’t meet this target, then they contribute towards a fund (WEEE Fund) which pays for a range of activities, including communications, behaviour change activities, increased recycling projects and research. Ultimately the aim is to support actions that will help the UK increase the levels of reuse and recycling of waste electricals.*

**Background on Wastebuster**

[*Wastebuster*](https://www.wastebuster.co.uk/) *is a not-for-profit environmental education company specialising in entertainment for social change, behaviour change campaigns and recycling reward programmes.* [*The Pod*](http://www.jointhepod.org/) *is Wastebuster’s award-winning education platform that helps educators teach students about energy, waste, biodiversity and climate science through films, curriculum-linked resources, and popular campaigns that provide opportunities for communities to reduce waste, recycle more and save energy and show how we can work together towards Net Zero, such as Switch Off Fortnight, Waste Week, What’s Under your Feet and Recycle to Read.   
  
Wastebuster, now supports over 24,000 schools in 94 countries with free environmental education. In the UK, Wastebuster work with 17,800 schools including over 40% of UK primary schools, 1 in 3 secondary schools and 45% of all schools in Scotland. The Wastebuster/ Pod resources reach more than 62,000 teachers and engage over 5 million young people and their families each year.*

*In alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Wastebuster work with governments, industry associations, businesses, NGOs, and the UN, to develop education programmes and behaviour change campaigns that unlock considerable social, economic, and environmental benefits for the societies in which they operate.*  
  
*85% of Primary school children have said they did things at home to reduce waste after taking part in Pod activities. While 88% of secondary students have said the Pod helped them understand how to adopt more sustainable lifestyle choices.*

**IMAGE ASSETS**

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