

Industrial Symbiosis

Improving productivity through efficient resource management

How Redundant Packaging Provides Cost Savings

Packaging is an essential component of an efficient supply chain. Once used it is often treated as general waste and not as a potential resource. However, this creates additional costs to business as well as having a detrimental impact on the environment. Industrial Symbiosis or IS, is a concept that when harnessed to its full potential, can be a strategic element of the supply chain and achieves top levels of The Waste Hierarchy.

Achievements: Construction Industry

Cost Savings: £10,525

CO₂ Reduction: 157t

Landfill Diversion: 62t

A practitioner provided a site assessment for a construction company. Significant volumes of cardboard boxes and packing from one of the company's suppliers were identified as a resource stream but was being disposed of in skips.

Using their knowledge of the materials and the solutions available, they provided the company with a clear opportunity to apply Industrial Symbiosis.

Next they introduced the company to a range of solution providers. Initially the company purchased and installed a baler from a solution provider with the expertise of manufacturing balers, compactors and specialist bespoke recycling machinery. This allowed them to segregate the cardboard for recycling.

The company then selected another solution provider who collected the materials for recycling and repurposing, which reduced waste disposal costs.

These solutions demonstrate the benefits of redundant materials having significant value as well as reducing the company's environmental impact.

It has also provided an opportunity to evaluate resources across the company's other locations for ongoing IS to be applied in their supply chain.

Collaborating with local companies ensures mutually exclusive benefits are kept within the economy.