

Sustainability Report 2020

Progress | Planet | People

Valpak

a Reconomy Group company

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Introduction

Preparation is hard-wired into Valpak's systems. Throughout 2020, we continued to promote the importance of becoming EPR-ready. More than 2,000 people attended our webinars, while 1,200 signed up to our Industry Updates newsletter. At the same time, our team of expert consultants has been number-crunching and finding ways to put our unrivalled database to use for the greater good.



Some of the tools we've developed are highlighted in this report, from lifecycle analysis that helps brands and retailers meet their own environmental targets, to our intuitive Insight Platform, which now features EPR and Plastic Packaging Tax tabs to help producers begin to log packaging data in greater depth.

The latest – and last – stage of the government consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) has seen producer costs rise from £1.8 billion to £2.7 billion, so producers will become increasingly aware of the need to scrutinise packaging materials. The aim of modulated fees is to change behaviour in an environmentally positive manner, and Valpak is pleased to be able to provide robust metrics to facilitate this.

Our UK reprocessing record is testament to our strong commitment to sound environmental practices and support for the UK economy. Last year, 65% of our PRNs were purchased from UK recyclers, versus a rest of the market average of 48%. And we continue to team up with UK businesses to drive innovation and find new routes for problematic materials.

We cannot talk about 2020 without acknowledging the great human cost of Covid-19 and I would like to reach out to all who have been adversely affected, either directly or through the impact of lockdown. To reflect the challenges many are facing, amongst our charity donations, we chose to support Springfield MIND. We raised over £5,000 in just two months by sponsoring each battery box ordered during October, and we are already planning our campaign for 2021.

> *"Effective compliance calls for cast-iron procedures and the ability to meet deadlines; added to this, we aim to innovate, drive positive change, and act as a trusted source of information for our customers and wider industry.*
>
> **Steve Gough**
> CEO

Preparation has stood us in good stead. With each member of staff already equipped to work from home, we were immediately able to continue as normal. This gave us more scope to provide flexibility to our customers.

As we start to head out of lockdown, and into the final stages of EPR-readiness, I am pleased to report that, despite the adverse circumstances, customer satisfaction stands at an all-time high.




EPR
(Extended
Producer
Responsibility)

Becoming EPR-ready

The new regulations call for increased reporting amid higher compliance costs for retailers and brands. To meet legislative requirements, having the right data will be key. With over 16 years of experience in managing data and using the UK's largest packaging database, Valpak has developed a range of data tools and in-house expertise to support packaging producers on their journey to become EPR-ready.

Our expert policy team will keep you up to date on:

- Extended Producer Responsibility
- Consistent Collections
- Deposit Return Schemes
- Plastic Packaging Tax

Valpak members have free and exclusive access to:

- Webinars and seminars
- Legislation and consultation summaries
- Newsletters
- 1-2-1 clinics

Everyone's journey is different. Our EPR specialists will help to find the most effective solutions for your business.



"New Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation is set to bring the most significant legislative reforms since the Packaging Waste Regulations were introduced in 1997. Rising costs are imminent, but, with Valpak's unique data insights and specialist EPR-ready team, we are here to help.

Kieran Roche
Director of New Business

To bEPRepared, businesses need to:

- **Measure your packaging footprint** – a crucial step to be EPR-ready. Required for reporting when legislation is in place and for making decisions now
- **Identify priorities for change**
- **Assess potential interventions** – Find the most effective options, based on the change you aim to make
- **Assess the consequences** – Understand the wider implications of planned changes
- **Drive change** – Ready to make a change? Let us connect you with suppliers and help bring stakeholders on board
- **Change the landscape** – Make design changes. If changing products and packaging is not an option, look to change the system instead

Valpak's Data Insight and Consulting teams will help you find the most effective solution. To find out more, ask us about a tailored EPR-ready seminar, and get ready to start your journey.

ARE *YOU* READY?

#beprepared



EPR: how data insights help businesses prepare

Conversations with our members show that many are now actively getting prepared for the changes that new EPR legislation will bring. As well as understanding the legislation, collecting and analysing the necessary data is a daunting prospect.

Valpak's Insight Platform was designed to save time and give a deeper insight into data than any other tool available. The new Live Platform is faster than ever and draws on the 33 million SKUs in our EPIC database.

- **100%** of those companies surveyed believe that using the Platform has helped to inform their decisions about packaging
- **100%** of those who responded agree that access to the Platform's data provides the information needed to deliver commitments, or progress actions, against voluntary initiatives such as Plastic Packaging Tax



"In seconds, the Insight Platform can report back on which suppliers generate the greatest volume of unrecyclable packaging, or estimate likely costs under new Plastic Packaging Tax or EPR regulations."

Phil Crum
Head of Data Insights

Lights turn green for Tesco

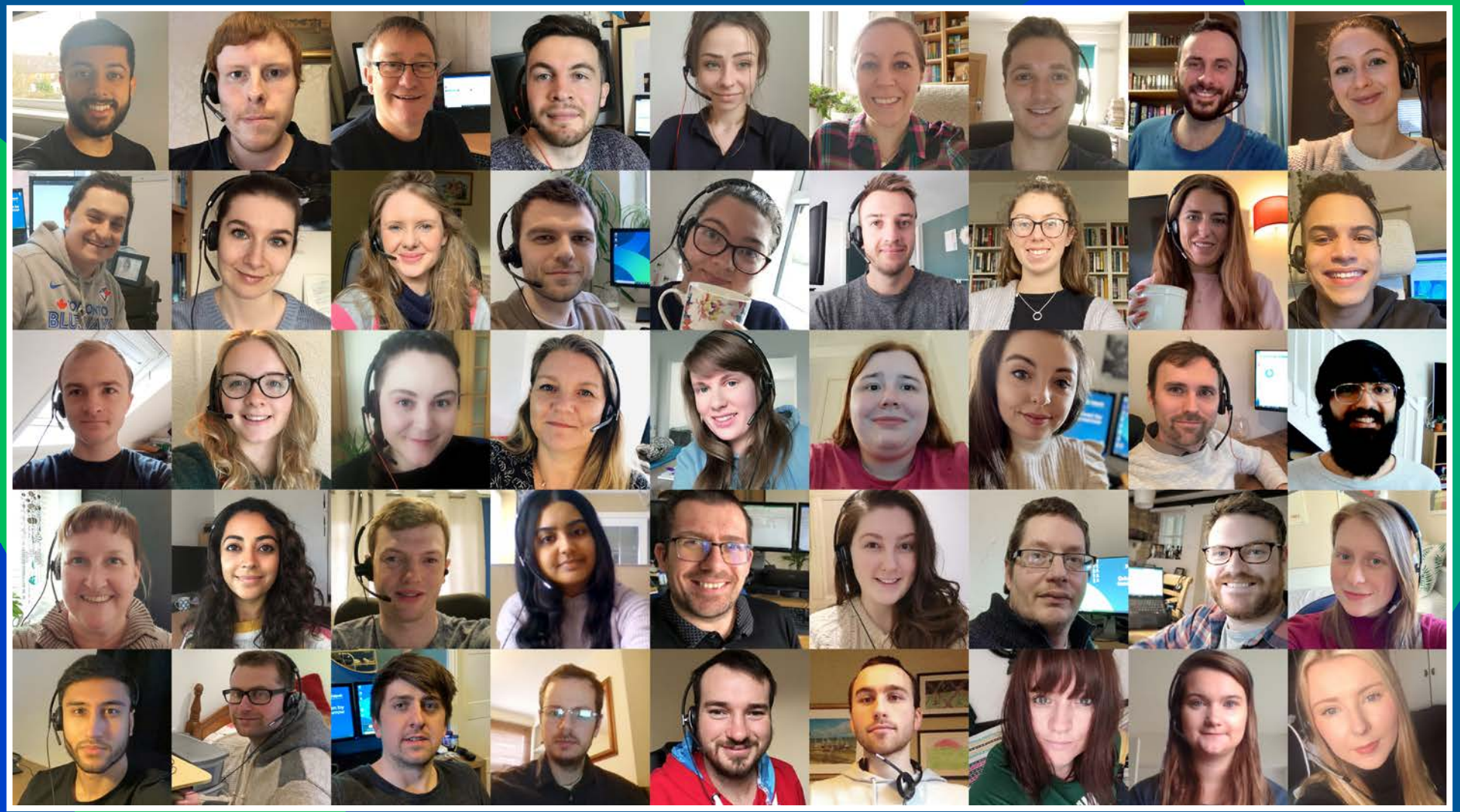
Tesco has helped to pioneer the development of the Insight Platform since the early days.

As a large retailer with hundreds of thousands of products on its shelves, and internal goals to tackle problematic packaging across its own brand products, Tesco needs a responsive tool to provide swift analysis of complex data. The Platform provides detailed reports in under a minute.

Tesco's traffic light system streams packaging product types into green for the most sustainable; amber; and red for hard-to-recycle materials such as polystyrene and PVC. It is working towards eliminating products which are not easily recycled in the UK.

Year-on-year, improvement is clearly visible, with marked decreases in tonnages of hard-to-recycle materials.

meet our data experts





Product Data Hub

Valpak's Product Data Hub increases the quality and quantity of the data collected for compliance and packaging reforms. It has now been expanded to include batteries and WEEE.

Suppliers submit product weights online throughout the year, reducing the need for pre-submission deadline bottlenecks.

Benefits

- The hub is pre-populated with previously provided weights, reducing the need for weights to be re-provided each year. Suppliers need only to update information if changes take place
- Suppliers told us they would like a copy feature that allows them to paste packaging information across multiple products. We added one
- Retailers can track suppliers' submissions and monitor progress

EPR

As we prepare for EPR, reporting and data will become even more important. Our Product Data Hub includes an EPR section to capture information such as recycled content and recyclability.

Valpak already has the largest database of packaging information in the UK. The Product Data Hub will help us to capture even more.

33m
SKUs in the EPIC database

100%
of supplier base can be reached through the Product Data Hub

We anticipate contacting **over**
50,000
suppliers this year

Product Data Hub is a live online submission for suppliers to go in and update as and when they have packaging changes.



"Our data collection team has great experience in working with varied data sets and packaging. They work closely with 1000s of suppliers to help them provide data that is accurate and in an efficient manner, year on year."

Olivia Candy
Supplier Engagement Manager

Boosting our data capacity: outsourced server move gives us more time to focus on customers

Data security and IT performance continue to be top priorities for Valpak. When we replaced our servers, we chose to upgrade capacity while, at the same time, improving efficiency.

"By working with partners to manage our data centres, we can be more focused on what our customers want and need – and make some huge environmental savings too.

Steve Gough
CEO

Data security and IT performance continue to be top priorities for Valpak. To meet the demands of our business, and serve our growing number of customers, we understand the importance of having excellent technology infrastructure.

We have always run a high-end IT function, with individual servers based within our Stratford offices. But in 2020, with our servers coming to the end of their life, we decided to make a change.

Rather than replace the hardware like-for-like, we took the decision to increase capacity to store more data and run things more quickly. Crucially, we are now working with IT expert ITPS, which now runs our data centres in a more efficient and effective way.

Our expanded server capacity supports the way in which we collect and handle data, as our customers demand more information from their suppliers.

Our upgraded IT infrastructure will enable our customers to make better use of Valpak's Insight Platform (see page 07).

As for our old IT equipment, we made sure it could be reused in a secure and controlled way as part of our commitment to Zero Waste to Landfill (see page 15).



"By moving our servers from our office in Stratford-upon-Avon (and associated backup infrastructure) to the Cloud and thereby utilising larger-scale facilities, we are able to access services that can more efficiently manage power capacity, optimise and share cooling, increase server utilisation and more quickly access the most power-efficient equipment available. This is expected to yield up to 70% saving in energy consumption for these critical business operations.

James Skidmore
Head of Consulting


best
for the
environment

Making it easier to recycle: recycle-more continues to engage and educate consumers

UK households throw away more than 26 million tonnes of waste every year. Supporting them to recycle more of their waste is more important than ever.



> *"Sharing data with WRAP makes it efficient for local authorities to provide data. Consumers benefit from having consistent information and easier to find recycling points."*
>
> **Megan Cluley**
> Contact Centre Manager

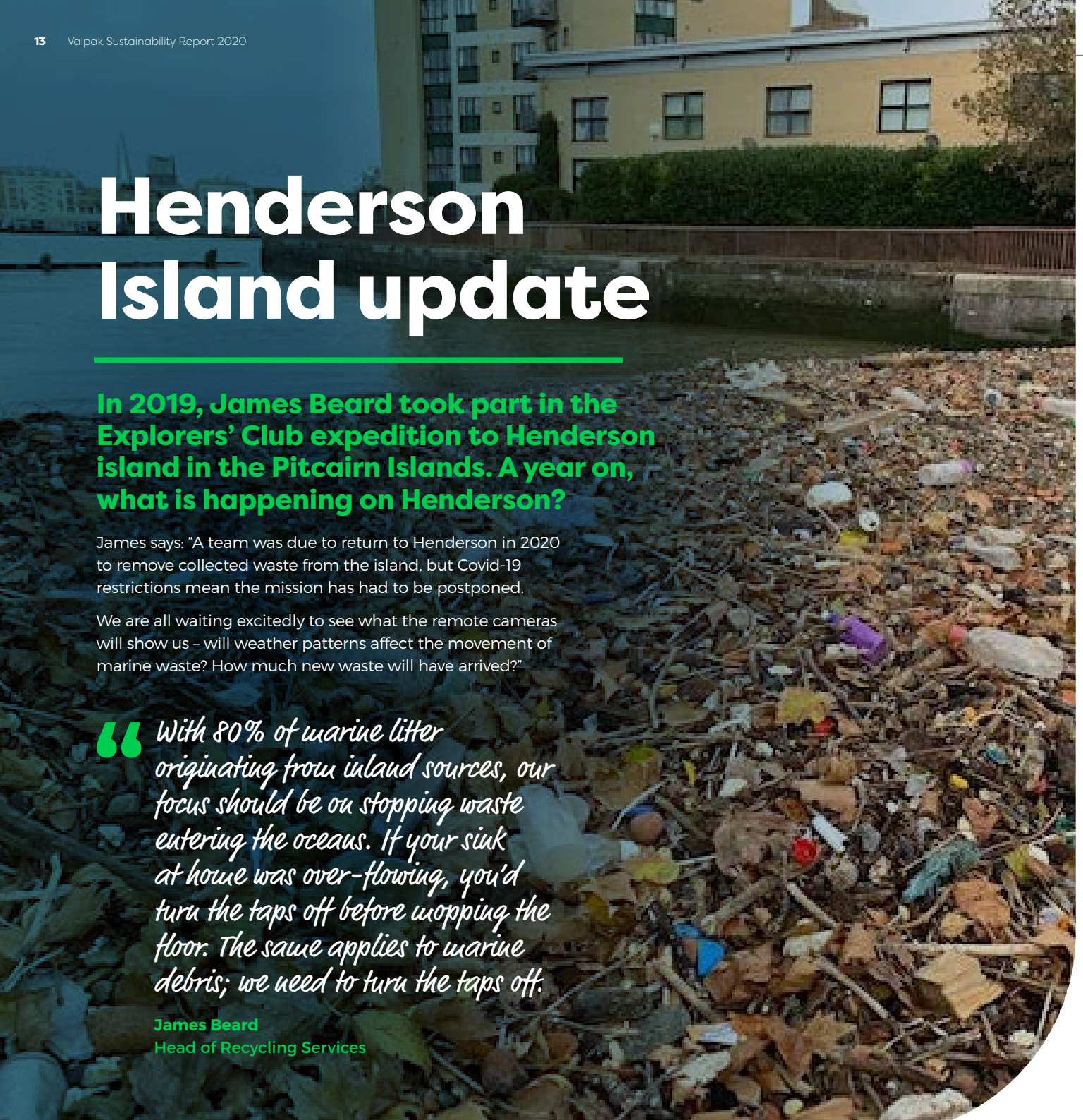
We founded recycle-more in 2000 to help our retail customers give people the right information to make it easier to do the right thing with their waste. The initiative also aims to get people thinking about their impact on the environment to encourage more sustainable behaviour.

We are proud of what the programme has achieved and are committed to maintaining our efforts to engage and educate consumers on the importance of recycling. Our recycle-more brand continues to raise awareness of recycling among consumers, particularly when it comes to dealing with waste electrical and electronic devices and batteries.

Today, recycle-more is one of the most popular recycling information websites in the UK, supporting not only households, but schools and businesses too. The Recycling Bank Locator, which helps users find their nearest recycling facilities, provides details for 36,420 recycling sites. We will soon launch a mobile app to reach an even bigger audience.

11m+
Pageviews of
www.recycle-more.co.uk
in the last 10 years

12.5k
followers
on Twitter



Henderson Island update

In 2019, James Beard took part in the Explorers' Club expedition to Henderson island in the Pitcairn Islands. A year on, what is happening on Henderson?

James says: "A team was due to return to Henderson in 2020 to remove collected waste from the island, but Covid-19 restrictions mean the mission has had to be postponed.

We are all waiting excitedly to see what the remote cameras will show us – will weather patterns affect the movement of marine waste? How much new waste will have arrived?"

> *"With 80% of marine litter originating from inland sources, our focus should be on stopping waste entering the oceans. If your sink at home was over-flowing, you'd turn the taps off before mopping the floor. The same applies to marine debris; we need to turn the taps off.*

James Beard
Head of Recycling Services

Offshore actions

New Year's Honours

Congratulations to Robin Shackle, British Consul General in Aukland and Deputy Governor of the Pitcairn Islands, who was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the Environment, for leading the Henderson Island project.

Art

Award-winning artist Mandy Barker has produced a series of marine plastic photographs with items collected on Henderson Island. Her Lunasea, Shelflife and Crown 2.5L series can be seen at https://www.mandy-barker.com/work

Science

The original aim of the expedition was to study the impact of marine litter on the island's wildlife. One of the major findings was the danger of entrapment, with 61,000 crabs trapped on Henderson - 568 were stuck in a single bottle.

Finalist in the National Recycling Awards 2019

MRW 2019 National Recycling Awards FINALIST

Henderson Island reunited

In October 2020, three members of the Henderson Island team were reunited at London's Millwall Docks to clean up litter which had found its way into the water.

Valpak is always looking for new ways to build networks and tackle the negative impacts of waste. Following world-wide coverage of Henderson Island and the urban litter pick, we continue to draw attention to, and improve, environments blighted with litter.

For 2022, we have set our sights on a national project similar to the Project Upstream litter pick, but on a more ambitious scale. Our mission is collaborative – we welcome innovative ideas and passionate partners, large and small. If you'd like to get involved, then get in touch!

"Urban clean-ups can resonate in a way that remote international projects cannot. The effects of would-be marine litter can be seen by local communities, and the benefits of clear-ups are felt by those who use those spaces. The causes and effects of the problems are also more tangible, and that has got to be a benefit in helping change behaviours.

James Beard
Head of Recycling Services







30kg
of plastic waste was recovered and segregated for recycling

80%
of marine litter comes from land

12.7m
tonnes enter the marine environment each year



Zero Waste to Landfill certification

23
companies

33
sites

Industries range from packaging to food production

Independent Zero Waste to Landfill certification brings:

- **Better management** of waste resources
- Ability to demonstrate your **commitment** to the environment
- **Cost savings**
- **Certification** to a recognised industry standard
- **Marketing** opportunities

Valpak's team will:

- **Advise** on how to achieve Zero Waste to Landfill
- Carry out **site audits**
- **Document** waste processes and reporting procedures
- **Review** evidence to support Zero Waste to Landfill
- Provide **recommendations** to maintain and improve performance

Waddington Europe

Waddington Europe produces thermoformed trays and packaging. It wanted to apply a uniform approach to waste management across the whole company. After obtaining Zero Waste to Landfill certification on 9 July 2020, it aims to use certification to achieve ISO 14001 accreditation.

"A huge amount of work and commitment has gone into making this a reality. We worked with experts and market leaders to review our processes and waste streams to ensure anything that could be recycled was being recycled."

Waddington Europe

JD Sports Fashion

JD Sports Fashion Group has ensured maximum diversion of waste from landfill for many years. In February 2020, the group decided to seek Zero Waste to Landfill certification for its largest distribution centre in Rochdale.

"With Valpak's support and advice, we not only managed to achieve Zero Waste to Landfill certification for 2020, but also identified areas where we can increase our reuse and recycling levels."

JD Sports Fashion

NATIONAL CUP RECYCLING SCHEME

Paper cup recycling: busting myths, building markets

"The National Cup Recycling Scheme is one of the best examples of Valpak's pioneering work to create a waste-free world. Working collaboratively with brands, we developed a viable commercial system that has transformed 159 million cups into high quality products.

Samantha Ward
National Cup Recycling Manager

Myth #1

Paper cups cannot be recycled

It is commonly believed that paper cups used for hot drinks cannot be recycled. In fact, the process for recycling cups is not dissimilar to standard paper recycling.

Myth #2

Cup recycling does not take place in the UK

All five of the reprocessors which partner the National Cup Recycling Scheme are based in the UK.

Myth #3

Paper cups can go in general mixed recycling

False, paper cups need to be collected separately – most scheme members offer cup recycling in-store regardless of brand of cup.

Myth #4

Paper cups can only be recycled once

The fibres from paper cups can be recycled up to seven times. Hallmark has even produced a range of greeting cards made with recycled cup content.

2018

The year the National Cup Recycling Scheme was launched

159m

Number of cups recycled since the scheme was launched

25

Number of waste collectors signed up to the scheme

Changing the landscape

"The scheme brings people together to address a shared issue. It's very noticeable how well these brands, usually competitors, have collaborated to resolve a common challenge."

Samantha Ward
National Cup Recycling Manager



We believe in shaping systems to meet our goals. When people said cups were too difficult to recycle, we brought brands together to create a voluntary scheme that worked.

Paper cups, new life, new purpose

The scheme makes the collection of paper cups commercially attractive to waste collectors by offering an additional financial incentive of £70 per tonne for cups collected. This is funded by the eight member signatories to the scheme, according to market share.

Communication

Providing the infrastructure is one part of the job; communication is just as important.

Valpak keeps in touch with brand members through monthly catch-up sessions and written reports.

The scheme's website (https://www.cuprecyclingscheme.co.uk) busts common myths and shows the public where to take part.





Recycled cup content

We've proved that brands can work together to drive sustainability.

COSTA COFFEE · PRET A MANGER · CAFFÈ NERO · GREGGS · BURGER KING · Pure. · LAVAZZA PROFESSIONAL

Valpak's commitment to the environment

12%
Energy consumed which was generated by our own solar panels since installation



Majority of
food waste
goes through onsite wormeries and compost heaps

159,197 kWh
Since we installed solar panels we have generated enough energy to power Valpak laptops for 7.2 years!

37%
saving by installing 218 energy efficient LED fittings in Valpak offices in 2017

Purchase
carbon offsets
to balance out our carbon footprint

Terracycle & Nespresso Recycling
meaning we can offer staff recycling routes for empty crisp packets and used coffee pods





charity auctions
of old electrical equipment to raise funds for our employee nominated partner



We have
removed litter bins
from under desks



Staff are provided with
reusable coffee cups,
which they can also use out & about

Our fleet of
company vehicles
has a CO_2 below 115g/km.

45%
Approximate electricity reduction in Valpak offices between 2010 & 2020

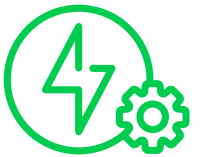
2012
we installed our voltage optimiser



Offer a number of webinars that cover all services, so members and staff can
reduce travel



Provide receptacles to collect
used batteries
and waste electricals / electronics




increasing
recyling

UK reprocessing: supporting SMEs

As the largest compliance scheme, Valpak represents the largest network of members. As well as enjoying long-term relationships with reprocessors to provide a secure source of PRNs, we actively work to support SMEs, innovative start-ups and new businesses.



"Every single PRN counts. Only accredited reprocessors can generate PRNs, which are reinvested into recycling and the green recovery of the UK. Our dedicated team is here to support SMEs and help them grow."

Ben Richardson
Director of Procurement

65% of our PRNs were purchased from **UK recyclers**

Rest of the market average of **48%**

Newer enterprises bring innovation to the industry, but need support to make accreditation commercially viable. Our partnerships build:

- **Resilience** – businesses invest PRN funds to help them grow
- **Security** – guaranteed markets insulate reprocessors against spot market trading and aid forecasting
- **Collaboration** – our partners benefit from waste for recycling produced by our members. Valpak's Recycling Services department and parent company Reconomy also source waste independently
- **Sustainability** – sustainable businesses working together to hand over a better planet to the next generations

Encouraging SMEs into the industry brings:

- Access to additional PRNs
- Increased UK reprocessing, with robust environmental regulation and benefits to the economy
- Long-term relationships and greater collaboration through the supply chain
- Greater dynamic collaboration to overcome challenges

Aylesbury Granulation

In 2020, Valpak and plastic recycling firm Aylesbury Granulation signed a landmark agreement which secures an exclusive supply of PRNs for Valpak members. As well as working together to meet accreditation costs, Aylesbury Granulation will benefit from Valpak's considerable experience and expertise. Aylesbury Granulation is a Buckinghamshire plastic recycler specialising in the recycling of segregated rigid plastic waste, as well as a range of other plastics.

Susan Staff, Commercial Manager for Aylesbury Granulation, said: "The ability to continue to generate PRNs will provide an additional and secure revenue stream, while also helping us to market our services to new and potentially larger customers, many of whom will have obligations under the new Plastic Packaging Tax."

Valpak's Director of Procurement Ben Richardson said: "Businesses like Aylesbury Granulation are regularly responsible for technological innovation and produce a diverse range of high-quality products that are so important to the development of sustainable supply chains and the circular economy."



Award-winning, carbon-free collection powers battery recycling

Valpak's pioneering carbon-free battery collection has powered its way to the top of the 2020 National Recycling Awards and now it's expanding to cover even more of our network!

Our sustainable collection service is a UK first. We use cycle couriers to collect waste batteries free of charge from workplaces in London and Cambridge. The bikes use reverse logistics, picking up batteries after dropping off parcels at offices and retail outlets.

Valpak led the way, working with logistics partner Zedify and battery recycler Ecobat Logistics. On 27 January, the scheme beat 12 other shortlisted companies to win the Partnership Excellence award at the National Recycling Awards, the recycling industry's most prestigious ceremony.

How it works

Valpak supplies battery boxes to businesses to collect household portable batteries such as AA and AAAs. Once the boxes are full, our cycle couriers collect the batteries free of charge while delivering packages.

ZERO CO_2 for every journey



"The judges said they were impressed with the scheme's innovation, which could be replicated at a local level at a number of locations, and was likely to be adopted by others in the future. Being able to offer carbon friendly collection services in large areas, on top of our existing free battery recycling across the entire UK, is a real achievement."

James Nash
Commercial Manager

6.97
tonnes collected by our carbon-free network

348,700
waste batteries collected by our carbon-free network

To find out more about ordering a free battery collection box, visit: https://www.valpak.co.uk/recycling-waste-services/free-battery-box

Waste batteries have the #PowerToDoMore

Used batteries may no longer be able to operate appliances, but they still have the #PowerToDoMore. Valpak donated £5 for every battery collection box ordered, raising over £5,000 for Springfield MIND in just two months. The campaign resulted in more than 1,000 new battery collection points at business sites.



Emily Styles, Fundraiser at Springfield MIND, added: "The need for our services is greater than ever and this is set to grow well into the future due to the legacy of Covid-19; therefore, we are so thankful that Valpak has chosen to donate vital funds to support us."

Valpak was the first to introduce a carbon-free, cycle courier collection service. We have also:

- Developed free tools for local authorities to encourage business customers to segregate waste batteries
- Partnered with North Tyneside Council to launch a consumer campaign around battery disposal
- Invited school pupils in South Tyne and Wear to design a poster highlighting the potential fire hazards of discarded batteries. The winner will be displayed on GAP waste collection vehicles



"In the UK, around 40,000 tonnes of portable batteries are sold each year. However, in 2018, only 8,000 tonnes were recycled. Since our campaign started, over 1,000 battery collection boxes have been ordered; once full, this represents a whopping 15 tonnes – or 750,000 AA batteries – to be collected."

Jon Clement
Head of Procurement

Carbon-free collection

Valpak was the first to launch a zero-carbon battery collection, and last year, despite the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns, we managed to collect over 8,000kg of portable batteries via our carbon-free, cycle courier collection network. This equates to over 400,000 AA batteries!

mrw National Recycling Awards 2020 WINNER

Partnership Excellence: Commercial.

WEEEbox: supporting retailers to take back electrical waste

In 2020, changes to the government's Distributor Take back Scheme (DTS) for dealing with waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) came into force. The changes affect around 600 businesses, with each store having to accept products on a like-for-like basis. Retailers with over 400m² in sales space for electrical goods must also take back very small WEEE without a sale taking place.

To prepare our customers in electrical retail for the changes, we launched a new service to help them efficiently collect and recycle waste electrical items in compliance with the new regulations.

Our WEEEbox service launched in July. It offers retailers two options for collecting WEEE, depending on their needs:

- **A large pallet-size box**
- **A smaller tote box**

When either box is full, they can call us to pick it up, or they can schedule regular pick-ups throughout the year. We then recycle all of the collected WEEE in the UK.

Despite the impact of Covid-19 on the retail sector, we received hundreds of enquiries from businesses across the country to make use of WEEEbox. We also provided guidance to various trade associations about the changes too.



600

Number of businesses the new changes affect

140

people attended online events explaining the WEEEbox service



"Many retailers, while keen to do the right thing, are unsure how to proceed. Valpak's WEEEbox service is flexible enough to meet all in-store take-back requirements."

Matt Luntley
Commercial Account Manager

PackFlow Covid-19 reports

Valpak's PackFlow reports analyse 33 million SKUs in our product database to highlight market trends and material flows.



But what happens when world events turn trends upside down? In 2020, Covid-19 brought seismic changes to the way we live our lives, including our patterns of consumption and the products that we buy. Without reliable projections for the impact on material volumes, the market could have been exposed to spikes in prices and the threat of destabilisation.

We responded to Covid-19 by producing exceptional reports to quantify the effect of lockdown on each of the packaging material flows. Our findings helped us to maintain stability and calm at a time when the most ordinary aspects of life had become uncertain.

What did we find?

Overall findings were encouraging – identifying early on the UK is on track to meet targets.

While Covid-19 brought many unexpected challenges, we have also been able to quantify positive behaviour. Waste management has proved incredibly robust, and consumer participation in recycling rose sharply, in part due to many people having more time on their hands, and partly thanks to a reduction in consumption of packaged on-the-go products.



"Exceptional challenges give rise to outstanding cooperation. Valpak's PackFlow Covid-19 reports brought crucial information on material flows and helped to stabilise potentially fluctuating markets. We couldn't have done it without industry participation, so I would like to thank every organisation which took part.

James Skidmore
Head of Consulting

best for customers



2020 engagement in numbers

65 webinars hosted

2,151 people attended our webinars

Wrote features for the following articles:

- BRC The Retailer "EPR"
- CEO FMCG "The impact of data on sustainable packaging design"
- Plastics in Packaging "EPR"

15 pieces of press coverage:

Held **450** account management meetings

Attended over **150** policy meetings

Over **3,000 people** followed Valpak's Twitter account

2,799 people followed Valpak's LinkedIn company profile

14 consultation summaries for members

Received **14,491** telephone enquiries

1,200 people subscribed to receive Valpak's Industry News Update

25 industry updates

172,481 Valpak website pageviews

Lifecycle analysis: evidencing impact



In the drive to become EPR-ready, all packaging producers will have to scrutinise products for recyclability and recycled content. But, with Valpak's help, some are choosing to go beyond compliance.

Packaging changes need to be based on robust analysis and science – decisions are not straight forward, and digging into the data can bring surprising results.

Reliable lifecycle analysis is essential if decisions are to reflect genuine impact rather than perceived benefits and problems.

Valpak's Consulting team assesses the pros and cons of alternative materials to find the best option – a product that is not just fit for purpose and kindest to the environment, but also EPR-ready.

> *"Each retailer and brand has its own challenges and aims, with many looking to exceed regulations and meet their own environmental goals. Lifecycle analysis ensures that the right decisions are made, based on robust data and sound analysis."*

James Skidmore
Head of Consulting

Cardboard vs plastic

Identifying the best material for your product is not always a clear-cut choice. While the public may prefer cardboard to plastic, plastic often performs better when it comes to climate change. When we looked at the options for wrapping some multipacks, plastic was expected to win out. However, our lifecycle analysis showed that, in this case, cardboard was the most environmentally-friendly option.

Glass vs plastic

In 2020, we showed that, in some cases, such as certain bottles of salad dressings or artisan oils, plastic outperforms glass.

Our lifecycle analysis includes analysis of the impact on:

- CO2e
- Contribution to climate change
- Water use
- Material use
- PRN costs

Satisfied customers

"Our 2020 customer satisfaction results are once again outstanding. Thank you to all our customers for being so open and honest with your feedback. These results are down to the hard work and dedication of all our staff, who work in partnership with our customers to help them with their challenges and support them with their environmental compliance.

Ruth Beckley
Director of Customer Service and Compliance



2020 was a challenging year for all, but our staff have excelled and we are delighted to see this reflected in glowing feedback from customers. Above all, customers have praised our communication – saying that our webinars, website, and overall way of explaining things have improved.

Customer service lies at the heart of what we do, but we are proud to see how every member of staff places customer service to the fore.

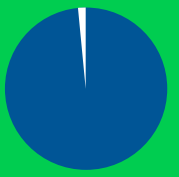
With new regulations on the horizon, it is more important than ever for us to inform and advise customers of their obligations. We are delighted to report that, as well as being the sixth year running that customers have noted improved communication, regulatory expertise is recognised as our greatest strength.

"They have **saved us time and money** on our submission and the staff at Valpak are always helpful."

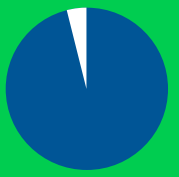
"Training is good and customer support is **knowledgeable and reliable**."

"**Top notch** account manager."

NPS +65

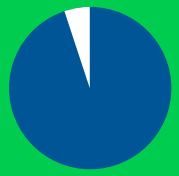


98.8%
of customers are satisfied with our service



97%
of customers would recommend Valpak

Knowledge
of regulations is seen as our greatest strength



93%
of those surveyed described Valpak's level of communication as 'just right'

Credit: Valpak 2020/21 Customer Satisfaction Research. **Carried out by CJM research**

Serving our customers during the pandemic

At Valpak, we've worked hard to ensure we have good contingency planning in place. Over the years, we have run a number of work-from-home test days. Using our internal text messaging service, we can send messages out to all staff informing them not to come into the office and work from home instead.

> *"Since the government asked everybody to work from home, it has been a seamless transition for us and there has been no discernible impact to our customers at all."*

Ruth Beckley
Director of Customer Service and Compliance

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the UK and the government asked businesses to encourage staff to work from home where possible, we were ready. All employees have the right equipment to work remotely, with access to all of the files they need; it's just like being in the office.

Even before Covid-19, we had started working in more environmentally responsible ways. To curb unnecessary travelling, many of our face-to-face meetings had shifted to virtual sessions. We had even started carrying out desktop audits for our customers, instead of visiting sites. As a result, when lockdown happened, our customers experienced very little change to our services.

We have taken the opportunity to change the way we deliver our events. For example, our data workshops would normally be held physically in a conference centre, bringing together groups of customers to learn and share best practice. In 2020, these were shifted online, attracting hundreds more attendees and receiving positive feedback.

"Valpak has always been **extremely helpful** when we have had any questions. Thanks for the webinar today, it has helped."

Whitworths

"Another **good presentation** - good examples - friendly approach"

British Gas

"Thanks again for a **very useful and timely reminder** of how we can ensure compliance with some very complex regulatory requirements."

Teva UK

Our webinars are popular with customers

In 2020, we hosted a number of successful webinars with record attendance numbers.

65
webinars were hosted

2,151
people attended


wellbeing

Focussed on health and wellbeing: looking after our people

If the Covid-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is the importance of protecting one another and keeping people safe. As a business, we are committed to helping to create a sustainable, waste-free world. But we couldn't do it without the dedication and hard work of our people. Helping them to be the best they can be is crucial.

2020 saw many of our employees begin working from home as a result of Covid-19. We supported the transition by building in flexibility to working schedules, ensuring that everybody had completed homeworking safety assessments and that all staff were as comfortable as possible at home.

We also knew it was important to check in with people regularly. our quarterly company meetings switched to half-hour weekly sessions; we conducted employee check-in surveys and informal, virtual team meetings. Quizzes and team-building events were also hosted.

We ran a series of wellbeing-themed seminars during work time, covering everything from eating for great mental health and improving immunity, to resilience and mental fitness training. In November, we encouraged staff to get active by launching a company-wide steps challenge, which also raised money for charity.

Our staff believe we take their wellbeing seriously

In 2020, over 100 employees took our voluntary annual staff survey.

- **99%** said they feel that Valpak looks after their wellbeing
- **98%** said they know where to go for wellbeing support
- **75%** said they are happy at work
- **87%** have adequate support from their line manager
- **79%** feel that their work-life balance is well balanced



Supportive and flexible: we help our people thrive and excel

At Valpak, our first priority is to guarantee a safe working environment, both at our offices and while visiting customer sites. We are accredited to ISO 45001 and provide regular health and safety training to all of our staff.

"Covid-19 meant more of us working from home. We wanted to offer extra flexibility to our staff, especially for those with caring responsibilities. We trust our people to do a great job and we worked hard to accommodate their needs, even at home."

Lisa Regan
Director of HR



Supportive and flexible working

We believe the best way to inspire staff to excel is to offer them a supportive, flexible, and dynamic working environment, be that in the office or remotely.

Our Employee Assistance Programmes and wellbeing initiatives offer a range of health and lifestyle support. We run seminars during work time on topics such as nutrition, sleep, financial wellbeing and exercise.

Managers received training on managing remotely, and 12 employees are trained Mental Health Champions, providing a point of contact for anybody that needs extra support.

Inclusive and engaging

Supporting our staff and valuing all employees as individuals provides an environment, where everyone feels able to participate and reach their potential. Our quarterly newsletters, three weekly company meetings and internal social media platform provide employees with the opportunity to knowledge-share and engage in topics relating to the business, or that they are all passionate about.

Our people stay with us for a long time.

Of our
156
employees

28%
have been at Valpak for 10 years or longer

Creating social value: giving back to communities & charities



Across the Reconomy Group, we love to give back to the communities in which we serve. That's why we're committed to creating social and local economic value that benefit the whole of society as part of our culture at Valpak.

In what has been a difficult year, we still managed to raise a substantial amount of money for local charities – something we've been doing for the past 12 years. We supported several charities in 2020, including **Acorns Children's Hospice**, which provides specialist care for children, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

We supported the mental health charity, **Springfield Mind**, by donating £5 for every battery recycling box ordered during July and October - totalling over £5,000.

We also ran a number of charity quizzes and a steps challenge, and made a number of donations to charities close to the hearts of our people throughout the year. These included: **Farries Ward** at Warwick Hospital, **The Australia Wild Fires**, **Black Lives Matter** and **CALM** (the Campaign Against Living Miserably).

£7,889
Amount raised for charity in 2020

over £57m
Social and Local Economic Value created by Valpak in 2020

£80,167
Pure Social Value created by Valpak in 2020

The Social Value Act (2012) requires public bodies to consider how the services they commission might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

For more information please contact us.

Valpak

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