



CASE STUDY - BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT

TO BE PROUD OF EVERY JOURNEY

HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ **12,500,000 passengers** every year.
- ▶ Managing **21 differing waste streams**.
- ▶ **Core streams travel no more than 16 miles** from point of collection to processing facilities.
- ▶ Circa **2,400 tonnes** of materials managed.
- ▶ **55% Recycling, 45% Recovery and Zero-landfill**.
- ▶ More than 1,300 containers collected p.a. with **99.3% on-time service success**.
- ▶ Sustainability Management **Dedicated Resource** based on-site.

TESTIMONIAL

“Our Sustainability Strategy sets out a robust commitment towards a sustainable future for the airport over the next five years, and we have adopted the principle of ‘think global, act local’. “Although we have acted as a responsible business in the past, we cannot become complacent. We don’t have all the answers now and know we can always do more.

This is why we’ve developed this strategy to address changes in our day-to-day activity and in the longer term. “However, we will not work in isolation, as the key to achieving our goals is by working in partnership with local residents, tenants, employees, small businesses, technology companies, industry and government.”

Birmingham Airport - Chief Executive Officer

OVERVIEW

The airport is a key driver in the regional economy, where its current net economic impact is estimated at more than £1.5 billion and a total of 30,900 jobs. Birmingham Airport aims to ensure it remains a responsible neighbour and reduces its environmental impact. Their sustainability strategy has been developed around the theme of Commitment, Investment and Progress and outlines the airport's vision to maximise the economic and social benefits it brings to the region and minimise its impact on neighbours and the global environment.

Waste is generated by staff, on-site partners and passengers using the Airport. In 2016 the airport recycled just 32% of their waste. Since then they've been on a mission to Reuse and Recycle waste and their 2019 environmental performance has been their best ever.

In 2019, we commenced our partnership with Birmingham Airport and their facilities management provider. The relationship was formed on the basis that we need to improve the airports environmental credentials and to make sure that we support local businesses and communities.

Our Strategy

Over recent years, the airport has improved its waste performance, increasing recycling rates from 32% in 2015/16 to 40% in 2017/18 and surpassed their goal of achieving 65% recycling in December 2020, achieving 66% in August 2020. To achieve this, several steps were taken, each focusing on tiers of the waste hierarchy

REDUCE

Free **drinking water hydration stations** have been installed throughout the Airport. This allows passengers to refill their reusable bottles once through security, reducing the amount of single-use plastic being purchased. The airport have also added a "**plastics free clause**" in new commercial contracts.

REUSE

For many differing reasons, airline passengers abandon **buggies, suitcases and clothing** at Birmingham Airport. We reuse instead of recycle these items.

We've entered into partnership with **Newlife, the charity for disabled children**. Suitcases are donated and re-sold through their stores. Profits go towards helping ensure that disabled children have the best chance in life through the provision of essential equipment.



We've also established a partnership with charity Bags of Hope UK to improve the experiences of children and young people in the care system. Abandoned bags are given to young people in order to prevent moves where their belongings are transported in bin liners and shopping bags. The provision of these bags to young people in the care system will play a small part in helping to relieve the anxiety associated with moves.

- ▶ 270 buggies and 3 tonnes of clothing donated to the Salvation Army
- ▶ 4 tonnes of surplus stock deemed unsellable (as a consequence of the corona-virus pandemic) donated to Unite4Homeless
- ▶ Mickey Mouse interactive console refurbished and donated to Birmingham Children's Hospital.

RECYCLE

Birmingham Airport recycles nine key waste streams, ensuring that each plays a recurring role within the circular economy.

In January 2020 we implemented coffee cups and coffee grounds recycling. Birmingham Airport believe that they are the UK's first airport to achieve this.

In the first month, we segregated circa 33,000 cups. At the reprocessing facility 95% of cup waste is converted back in to paper. The remaining 5% is used for energy recovery in the production of recycled paper.

In January 2020 **three tonnes of coffee grounds were segregated and converted into heat logs** which act as a substitute for fossil fuels. The solid biofuels burn 20% hotter and longer than their wood counterparts, averting the carbon heavy footprint associated with fossil fuels. The heat logs are perfect for domestic wood burners and multi-fuel stoves.

RECOVER

We diverted 100% of waste from landfill. We have to accept the reality that we can't recycle every piece of waste that people throw away. So the bin of last resort is always general waste. On average, 44% of the waste from the airport is sent for Energy Recovery at a local facility where it's put to good use in the production of green energy. The plant the material is sent to can power up to 60,000 homes every year.

The transition to a truly inverted waste hierarchy will take businesses several years, if not decades. Business will have to look deep within it's supply chain and new technologies will have to be utilised to help Reduce waste arisings. Creating strategic links with charities and social enterprises gives us the opportunity to Reuse materials and give back to society.

