

# Encore Environment



Sustainable practices



Managing Director Rachel Rowley

**E**ncore Environment are experts in waste management and environmental consultancy with national coverage. Through intelligent use of data, thorough knowledge of the supply chain and a flexible mindset, they help companies engage in more sustainable practices and, at the same time, drive up margins. Their work is a clear example of how the ethical and the profitable can align. Managing Director Rachel Rowley shows the *Review* a few examples of how this is achieved in practice.

## Ethically minded, solutions-focused

We're a legally compliant and ethically minded environmental specialist company with expertise in the area of waste management strategy. In practice, this means we can help our customers reduce construction fit-out waste, reuse existing waste materials, minimise landfill waste and decrease their carbon footprints.

The key to our success is our dedication, adaptability and flexibility. We take every situation as it is, with the intent of offering customised and innovative solutions rather than a generic, one-size-fits-all approach.

Our general approach and manner of operating goes as follows. We:

- » identify and pursue "closed-loop opportunities" through early intervention and auditing;
- » form accurate waste forecasts for clients through early access, producing the best waste management strategies for waste on sites, as well as segregation and reuse advice, before the project commences;
- » use charities, schools and social enterprises to avoid conventional waste routes;

## FACTS ABOUT ENCORE ENVIRONMENT

- » Managing Director: Rachel Rowley
- » Founded in 2011
- » Located in London and Northampton
- » Services: Waste management and environmental consultancy
- » Project Divert could and should be adapted to suit any waste streams or items, not just those from the construction industry – for instance, waste from manufacturing and retail
- » [www.encore-environment.com](http://www.encore-environment.com)

“Our customised IT systems automate the creation of site waste documentation – known as SWMPS – and prepare credible waste forecasts”

- » work in line with the waste hierarchy, diverting waste from ultimately landfill but more often now material recycling facilities. The waste hierarchy follows the methodology of reusing on or offsite first, following through to Take Back Schemes, then reprocessors and then recyclers – the next two down are MRF and, lastly, landfill;
- » comply with BREEAM (a method of assessing, rating and certifying the sustainability credentials of buildings), using it as a standard.

Our customised IT systems automate the creation of site waste documentation – known as SWMPS – and prepare credible waste forecasts through pre-construction environmental audits. The SWMPS were once a legal requirement; however, since these are no longer mandatory, there is often no one single document where all the waste information – which should include the forecast, waste management strategy, ongoing reporting during the project and a final forecast comparison – can sit. This is part of our free value-add proposition, as we seek to help site teams collate and store waste data irrespective of BREEAM, ensuring they are nonetheless compliant to these high standards.

### Close collaboration with clients

We've been working alongside major blue-chip clients, helping them maximise credits. We have in-house

Working closely with clients



BREEAM accredited professionals and assessors. We're able to support all our clients' needs and remove much of the potential "noise" associated with this aspect for site teams.

This is the outcome of the earliest-possible collaboration, thereby proving our consistent ability to get things right regarding social behaviour. Project Divert, an app unique to Encore, ensures successful reuse of site materials and waste by following a structured waste hierarchy, such that it can determine where to utilise waste materials most effectively.

By postcode from a database, it identifies charities, social organisations, universities, schools, reprocessors, recyclers, community projects and other potential receivers of the waste stream, which can include not just standard construction waste but also furniture, white goods and items from hotels and schools, among other things prior to strip-out work. It then compares the cost and carbon of doing this to that of sending the goods and waste to conventional waste suppliers and material recycling facilities, allowing clients to make informed decisions. Through this, we give our clients 100 per cent transparency regarding the destination of their waste and goods and ensure the quality of the material is maximised for reuse or reprocessing.

### Political developments

Theresa May submitted a 25-year environment plan in 2018. One of the key highlights in it was a commitment to reduce all avoidable plastic waste by 2042. Already committed to this goal, we provide dedicated plastic, can, paper and food waste bins to construction sites. We also supply the bins, disposal bags and a dedicated collection service with end-destination transparency. Moreover, we co-ordinate safe removal of all hazardous waste and provide dedicated bins on-site for this purpose.

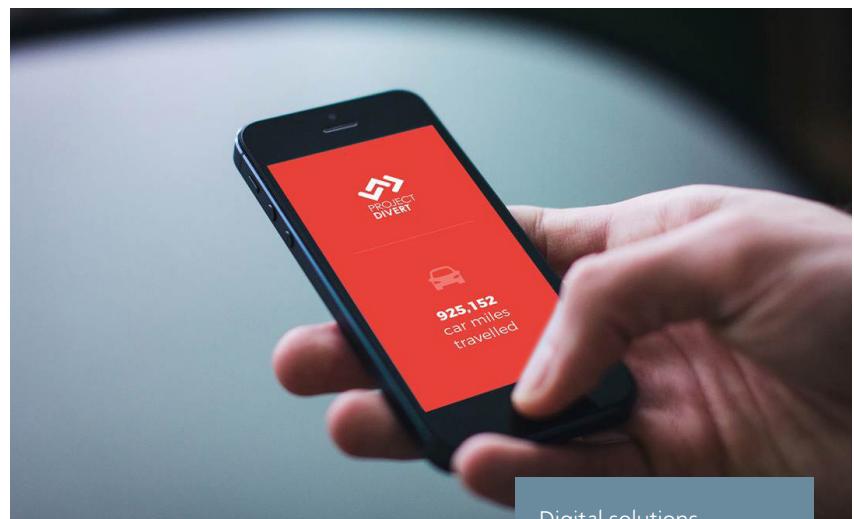
She also spoke about the need to increase resource efficiency and reduce pollution and waste. In this area we've also played a key role. For example, we report monthly on individual sites regarding the waste information. We record the materials coming off the site, the diversion rates and how much carbon is saved.

However, we could improve this further by improving segregation and get 100-per-cent diversion. If accomplished, material quality (and therefore reuse for recycling back into a material) would be vastly improved.

To help us achieve these goals, we're increasingly working with forward-looking businesses that share our aims. Recently, we have appointed a new supplier revolutionising the way waste is disposed of: they are a paint recycling company who collect old paint tins – either full or empty – and turn them into their own range of 30 different colours.

Another collaboration is with a dry-lining company and consists of developing an application to relocate new, oversourced clean plasterboard to other sites for reuse. Plasterboard is a material that requires attention, as the supply chain is currently increasing costs to ensure plasterboard is segregated before being disposed of due to its own commercial agreements.

The strategy also refers to protecting and improving the global environment. Here, too, our efforts work towards this end. For instance, we challenge disposal methods with disruptive innovations in new waste removal schemes. We use different methods of waste removal by minimising the amount sent to landfill, with an average diversion rate of 99.45 per cent. These diversion rates are currently averages from the material recycling facilities. We need to encourage more client responsibility to achieve 100 per cent diversion through working with management companies like ours that can advise and manage logistics without hindering the programme.



Digital solutions

## A better, more sustainable future

In the future, we'd like to see companies think more ethically. The waste aspect of a business is too often carried out without thought. Take, for example, a company we had to work with in the past which was stripping out a multistorey hotel. The building had a large quantity of crockery, white goods, glassware and other reusable items, which the demolition contractor was going to throw in the skip. We saw this as hugely wasteful and decided to intervene. In doing so, we donated many of the items to a women's charity as starter packs for their new homes, where they are now being put to good use.

Investment should be directed to companies like ours that are challenging the topic but also to reprocessors where glass, plasterboard, plastics and paper can be reprocessed back into the same material (requiring less energy) or into something else.

Until companies learn how to utilise opportunities like this on an industrial scale, we will be there to inform and influence. We will do so in a way that increases margins and makes a genuine difference to the world – indeed, that is the central goal of Encore Environment. Currently, we are presenting this topic to schools, as we know young people will play an integral role in this.

“We give our clients 100 per cent transparency regarding the destination of their waste and goods”