

Construction - what a waste!

The construction sector is one of the biggest generators of waste in the UK economy. It is conservatively estimated that it generates around 120 million tonnes of material waste each year. Almost a fifth of which goes to non-beneficial landfill sites. On top of that the industry is responsible for a very high proportion of commercial traffic on the UK road network and is one of the biggest contributors of CO² emissions. And that's not the end of it! Other estimates show that 40% of labour time on construction sites is spent in finding materials or in moving materials from one place to another. This is not only costly but it also means that unnecessary vehicle movements are required to move the additional labour to and from site. No wonder then that construction contractors complain of small margins and the difficulty of doing business.

There are many reasons for these problems but most significant of all is the failure of the UK construction sector to understand the benefits that can come from good logistics practice. This is not just about organising the site at the point when construction is to start - its about taking into account at the design stage how materials, people and equipment will be moved and how these movements will be controlled. In most respects once construction starts it is too late. An essential element of any strategy for minimising waste and maximising resources on a construction project is the use of a Materials Logistics Plan (MLP). This will cover every aspect of how the movements of materials and people are to be managed throughout the project. It will include details such as contractual arrangements for logistics planning, management resources, off-site manufacture, supplier arrangements, delivery planning, site storage, the use of specific techniques such as consolidation, processes and procedures to be adopted, reporting requirements and many more. Properly planned and implemented an MLP can be guaranteed to reduce construction costs.

One example of an MLP is given on the WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) website* including gives good practice guidelines. However, if you want to know more about how to develop your own MLP, put it into practice and save construction costs then contact THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS and we will be pleased to give an initial consultation, free of charge.

* www.wrap.org.uk/construction/construction_waste_minimisation_and_management/logistics.html