



## Dual focus at this year's RWM

### Cromwell Polythene will showcase two of its specialist divisions at this year's RWM exhibition.

The recycling division, which recovers post-industrial and post-consumer packaging waste for re-processing and the councils division, which supplies storage and collection products for a wide range of recycling and waste management applications in both the public and private sectors.

The exhibition takes place at the NEC, Birmingham from 13-15 September, 2011.

The recycling division is key to Cromwell's 'closed loop' sustainability strategy (see story, page 3), recovering a wide range of used plastics, which serve as the main feedstock for the production of its refuse and recycling sacks. The division also recovers card and other materials from companies engaged in food manufacture,

agriculture, retail, pharmaceuticals and from the waste management sector.

Of particular interest to the local authority and waste management sectors, for which the company has sole distribution rights in England and Wales, will be the recently launched range of compostable bags made from Ecopond® biodegradable resin. The bags are already proving popular with councils running organic waste recycling schemes. Denbighshire County Council, for example, has provided seven-litre Ecopond® kitchen caddy liners to its local residents, leading to improved participation in its food waste collection scheme, while householders in Southwark are being provided with larger Ecopond® sacks for their garden waste.

#### Biodegradability

"Ecopond® ticks all of the boxes among those for whom biodegradability is of prime importance," says James Lee, Cromwell Polythene's managing director. "The bags are manufactured from starch or lactide acid-based derivatives of plant sources and meet all of the stringent requirements of the European composting

standard, which requires that more than 90 per cent of the plastic mass to be converted into biomass, CO<sub>2</sub> and water, without harmful residue.

"Ecopond® sacks fully decompose within the normal 6-10 week composting cycle and are accredited to meet EN13432," he adds.

Other products for the recycling and waste management sector will also be on show, including Cromwell's exclusive LOWCO<sub>2</sub>T™ range of refuse sacks, bin liners and similar products, which use the latest technology to produce lighter weight materials at lower cost without any loss of performance; the 'Kerby' woven polypropylene sacks for recycling and kerbside waste; paper composting sacks, degradable refuse sacks, all sizes of battery bags, dog waste bags and a full range of clinical waste sacks for the healthcare market.



Ticks all the boxes

recycling & waste management exhibition  
**rwm**  
13-15 September 2011 · NEC Birmingham · [www.rwmexhibition.com](http://www.rwmexhibition.com)

in partnership with  
**The Chartered Institution of Wastes Management**

Visit us on stand **1472**



## Preserve wildlife - 'adopt' a butterfly

Not a plea to pickle a hedgehog, but a gentle encouragement to plant an easy-to-grow blend of plants, specially selected to attract bees and butterflies, our natural pollinators.

As many of our customers have noted, Cromwell Polythene has 'adopted' the common green birdwing butterfly (*Ornithoptera Priamus*) as a symbol of the closed loop sustainability strategy that underpins everything we do. Butterflies are uniquely placed among British terrestrial insects and other invertebrate groups to act as indicators of the state of the environment.

*Ornithoptera Priamus Cromwellus*, as the butterfly has affectionately been re-named within the company, has had its characteristic markings adapted with the addition of the Cromwell logo and now appears on the company's web site and in all sales literature.



In a bid to help conserve the butterfly's natural environment (more than three-quarters of the UK's butterflies have declined over recent decades and half are seriously threatened, according to the charity Butterfly Conservation) we have put together a special pack of seeds, which, when planted, will create a natural haven for bees and butterflies.

Please email [info@cromwellpolythene](mailto:info@cromwellpolythene) if you would like a free pack.



# Wave goodbye to latex

Cromwell Polythene is adding to its extensive range of sacks, bags and speciality products for the storage and collection of waste and recyclables with the launch of a range of latex-free, disposable examination gloves for professional use.

Manufactured under the 'Wave' brand, the gloves will be sold through Cromwell's distributor network and are suitable for janitorial and cleaning applications, as well as the healthcare, food and hygiene, waste management, agricultural and automotive sectors.



The Wave range includes a blue nitrile, non-sterile examination glove – finger textured and with all the barrier properties of latex, at significantly lower cost and two low-budget vinyl products – a clear vinyl glove, which has a smooth internal finish and is suitable for a wide range of low-risk applications and a synthetic vinyl glove for those who prefer a softer, more flexible fit.

All of the gloves are tested to BS EN 455, are powder-free and available in a range of sizes. Packed 100 gloves per dispenser box, the gloves come in outers of 10 boxes.

"The Wave range represents our first serious move in the gloves market, where we'll be adopting the same quality and value-for-money principles that we apply to our bags, sacks and other products," says Cromwell



Polythene's sales director Paul Fleetwood. "Our research shows that there is a sizeable demand for good quality gloves that provide all of the comfort and performance attributes of latex, but at a lower cost and without the allergy issues with which the material is often associated."



## Trio of new starters

Three new staff members have joined the Cromwell team.

Benjamin Hodds has been appointed product manager for Ecopond® compostable products following the company's appointment as sole distributor for this range among local authorities and the waste management sector in England and Wales. Ben joins the company from the green waste and wood recycling sector, where he gained extensive knowledge of contractors and the inner workings of local authorities.



When not spearheading the company's marketing and promotional support for Ecopond® Ben enjoys extreme enduro and trials riding, as well as time in the gym and other physical challenges.

Maureen Lazenby is the company's new compliance officer. Formerly in addictions work in the prison service and NHS, Maureen's previous experience also includes health and safety roles within British Transport Police and Jarvis Rail. A keen outdoors enthusiast, she enjoys walking along the cliffs on the east coast, where she and her husband Alan have recently purchased a caravan.

Completing the trio of new starters is sales account developer Becky Milner, who recently completed an MSc by Research in Psychology and who joins Cromwell's janitorial team from her role as customer services executive for a medical devices company.



## Does what it says on the pack

As the supply chain association for our industry, the Cleaning and Hygiene Suppliers Association (CHSA) sees raising industry standards as one of its key roles.

Cromwell Polythene was a founder member of the CHSA Manufacturing Standard Accreditation Scheme for plastic refuse sacks, formed in recognition of a number of issues facing buyers at the time.

Confusion existed between metric and imperial sizes. Concern was expressed that content claims were not always accurate. Technological advances mean that 'gauge' was not the strength indicator it used to be. And, with no clear brand leader there was no easily comparable benchmark.

Cromwell was one of a small group of leading suppliers of plastic refuse sacks who worked with the CHSA, with additional input from what is now PAFA, the Packaging and Films Association, to develop a standard that addresses these issues.

### Key Information

The CHSA scheme for plastic refuse sacks is intended to give end users assurance that they are getting what they paid for. Like other CHSA schemes "what's on the box is in the box." Pack labels feature key information such as length, width, minimum net weight and the number of sacks in the pack. A "fit for purpose" scale assists the user to buy a sack which is appropriate for their needs.

In the past this was achieved by reference to the thickness or gauge of a sack - the higher the gauge the stronger the sack. But this no longer applies. A "thin" sack made of virgin



polymer can be much stronger than a "thicker" sack made from recycled polymer.

So how do you choose? Simple, buy CHSA accredited sacks and select from the "fit for purpose" scale provided!

Further confidence is provided by the way the scheme is administered. Only suppliers who have been independently assessed to ensure that they can consistently manufacture to the Standard are allowed to use the registered scheme logo. Their products are regularly monitored for compliance by an independent inspector and the scheme is underpinned by regulations, which include a disciplinary process for non-compliance.

The "fit for purpose" claim is also closely monitored. Sacks are regularly tested using the procedure set out in BS 6642 to ensure they will not burst with the loads set out in the Standard.

Customers now have the choice. Buy plastic refuse sacks which carry the CHSA scheme logo from reputable suppliers such as Cromwell Polythene in the knowledge that you are getting exactly what you paid for. Or take a chance.

Your choice.



# Closing the loop

A good deal of Cromwell's growth – contributing to the company's need to relocate to bigger premises at the turn of the year – stems from the rapid expansion of the recycling division, where year-on-year turnover has increased by 40 per cent.

The company has been involved in recycling used packaging for return to the production cycle, principally for the manufacture of polythene bags, for the best part of 30 years.

The recycling division works closely with its business partners to identify recoverable elements in their waste stream.

Depending on volumes, materials are sorted, graded and baled – either on site or at Cromwell's dedicated recycling centre, close to its Leeds H.Q. Where required, advice is given on the most appropriate choice of baling equipment as part of a wide-ranging waste audit.

"Not only does the process save on waste disposal costs and divert many tonnes of material from landfill," says Mark Fuller, Cromwell's recycling director, "but it



provides an incremental revenue stream where, previously, there might have been an operational cost."

Among the materials recovered are polythene film, bags, covers and various types of hard plastic containers, as well as card, large loads of CD's and DVD's and polystyrene, in both briquette form or as rigid mouldings.

"The material comes from distribution operations, packer fillers and processing companies from a wide range of industries, including food and pharmaceuticals, retail and agriculture," says Mark. "The waste management sector accounts for a significant percentage of our tonnage. We are also able to recycle most types of redundant film on the roll, including multi-layered, metallised and printed films, supplying secure destruction certificates for printed reels on request," he adds.

"Taking a long hard look at your waste stream doesn't just make environmental sense. It makes sound commercial sense, too."



Nation-wide collection service

# Maximising your resources

Cromwell Polythene has set up a new Resource Recovery division, specifically to assist those companies who are required by law to recycle a proportion of the packaging waste they produce. The division will service businesses within a 50-75 mile radius of the company's Leeds headquarters.

Managed by Kevin Marshall, formerly sales account developer in the company's industrial and consumer division, the new division builds on Cromwell's 'closed loop' collection scheme, recovering post-industrial packaging waste for use as a raw material in the production of new sacks and bags. "Our new division will service companies whose tonnages may be smaller, but who are no less obligated to recycle," says operations director Garth Imison.



Turning trash to cash

"Using our own transport, we'll work on a 'milk run' basis, calling on warehouse managers and owner operators, who are able to identify the recoverable elements of their waste stream and turn what might otherwise be regarded as a disposal cost into an incremental revenue stream."



# Corporate update

We have recently updated all our corporate and product literature, as well as the company's web site (cromwellpolythene.co.uk), which now contains downloads of product specification sheets, as well as copies of recent press releases and an archive of previous issues of The Cromwellian.

If you would like copies of any sales or corporate brochures, please email [info@cromwellpolythene.co.uk](mailto:info@cromwellpolythene.co.uk), providing your full postal address.



# Back to the Middle Ages?

Long gone, thankfully, are the days when the public would discard their household waste wherever the fancy took them.



Indeed, in medieval times, when only the very wealthy could afford indoor privies, or 'garderobes', as they were then known, even human waste was thrown from the windows of their homes, as chamber pots were emptied with the warning cry: 'Gardez l'eau' (watch out for the water), corrupted to 'gardylloo', from which the modern-day euphemism for the lavatory is said to derive.

So widespread became this practice that the English parliament issued a statute in 1388 to clean things up. A fine of 20 pounds was payable by those 'who do cast and lay all such annoyances, dung, garbage, entrails and other ordure, in ditches, rivers, waters and other places.'

Yet here we are, six centuries later, facing another Government directive, this one from Brussels, targeting zero food waste

within the next 10 years or so. And with so little thought given to the means by which we dispose of it, that we might just as well throw our food slops into the streets for roaming wild animals to scavenge.

Are the EU targets achievable? Not unless there is a serious overhaul of the collection methods we employ to deal with the 8.3 million tonnes of waste food thrown away by UK households every year. Just ask Denbighshire County Council, where participation in its food waste collection scheme improved dramatically when the council provided Ecopond® caddy liners to its local residents.

No slouches when it comes to recycling, the council topped the recycling league table for local authorities in Wales in 2009, only to be nudged out of first place this year by Anglesey who won "by a whisker". Both councils recycle around 57% of their waste and both use caddy liners for their food waste collections.

The very idea of slops being thrown out for the bin man defies belief, and I make no apology for declaring my interest as a bag man. Bags for food waste – specifically compostable caddy liners - are essential if



Only the privileged few could afford indoor privies. Photo courtesy National Trust.

we are to show even a modicum of progress since the Middle Ages.

Without them and the hygienic, more civilised option that they represent – to say nothing of the huge task that remains in persuading the public to participate - we stand little chance of achieving zero waste within the EU timeframe. Without the necessary commitment, without the right tools and without the means by which to process food waste once collected, we might just as well not bother and go for the landfill or incineration options.

Written by James Lee, managing director of Cromwell Polythene, this article first appeared in *Recycling & Waste World*



## Continued growth

**Cromwell's move to new premises earlier this year nearly doubled the size of the existing warehouse and office facilities.**

The 30,000 sq. ft. warehouse houses some 3,000 pallets and is in addition to our 10,000 sq. ft. dedicated recycling plant nearby.

The increased space allows for large stocks of sacks and bags – now available in most size, shape and colour variations and in both virgin and high quality recycled blends, as well as gloves, aprons and a wide choice of other polythene disposables.



The move, the company's third since it was founded nearly 30 years ago, will allow continued expansion across all divisions.

## Competition corner

Congratulations to Campbell Davidson of St. Clement Supplies (CI) Ltd in Jersey for successfully answering the question: Over what period do Cromwell's new Ecopond® sacks decompose? in the last issue. (Answer: 6 to 10 weeks)



There's another £50 worth of M&S gift vouchers to be won in this competition and once again, it couldn't be easier.

Just answer this simple question: What is Cromwell Polythene's stand number at this year's RWM exhibition?

Email your answer, together with your full contact details, to [info@cromwellpolythene.co.uk](mailto:info@cromwellpolythene.co.uk), making sure that we receive your entry no later than the closing date of 30 September, 2011.

**TIP:** You'll find the correct answer in this issue of The Cromwellian.

**Good luck!**

### Cromwell Polythene Ltd

Orion Building, Seafox Court,  
Sherburn Enterprise Park, Sherburn-in-Elmet,  
Leeds, North Yorkshire LS25 6PL



t: 01977 686 868  
f: 01977 686 869  
e: [info@cromwellpolythene.co.uk](mailto:info@cromwellpolythene.co.uk)  
w: [cromwellpolythene.co.uk](http://cromwellpolythene.co.uk)