

Pas 402 was created in 2009 by the British Standards Institution (BSI) and the (Construction Excellence in Wales (CEW); the success of the framework has meant that it is now a common aspect of many waste management audits throughout the UK.

Each waste management company must report their recovery rates under the scheme including details about what these materials are such as metals, asbestos and plasterboards and where the materials go. Their landfill tonnage is recorded, which increases the motivation for re-use. This has to be verified by an inspector and then the recovery rates are evaluated by the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS).

The benefits for construction firms

To make sure that waste is dealt with in a legal and responsible way, construction firms have a duty of care regarding waste materials and how they are disposed of. Because of PAS 402, each waste contractor is attached with an annual report which details their zero waste ambition targets allowing them to review the recovery rates of the materials they handle. This ensures that performance rates between firms are competitive, allowing construction firms to identify the best waste management solution for their project.

With the Landfill Tax constantly rising, waste is an expensive part of the construction process. From April it increased from £84.40 per tonne to £86.10, with a further rise to £88.95 next year. Pas 402 allows the construction industry to establish their performance, under the sustainability benchmarks BREEAM and WRAP. This will lead to greater efficiencies in relation to the increase in resources.

Wales: Leading the way

Since it was created as a pilot project in 2009, PAS 402 has contributed significantly towards Wales' ambition to achieve zero waste by 2050. More than eighty waste management companies have been independently inspected by UKAS, which resulted in the diversion of more than two million tonnes of waste from landfill. In addition, £17million has been saved by recovering an additional 148,358 tonnes.

The scheme that has been known as Green Compass since 2013, was launched by CEW to tackle the unreliability of waste reporting data, which was minimising the amount of waste that could be recycled. To make sure that the scheme was delivered properly, CEW ensured that the industry was involved in writing the PAS, with 10 'pathfinder' companies invited to take part and provide their input.

The resulting document was practical and one that the industry could support. To stay within the project until completion, all 10 pathfinder companies road-tested the PAS at every stage and evaluated its feasibility. These companies now have a sense of ownership of the PAS and are its strongest advocates.

Conclusion

The success of PAS 402 has increased efficiency rates in the waste firms, and has allowed them to recycle more materials overall, winning the confidence and respect of the construction industry. What this means, is that rather than neglecting waste, the construction industry now considers it as a valued asset.

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