

XPO Logistics Grows Its Northern Ireland Operation

XPO Logistics, as a Top 10 global logistics company, has been around for a long time, serving some of the world's most successful companies, and now its Belfast based operation has quietly become one of Northern Ireland's fastest growing success stories in terms of logistics and recycling.

ith a presence in 34 countries, facilities at over 1,400 locations and employing more than 88,000 people around the world, American headquartered XPO Logistics arrived in Northern Ireland just last year when it acquired Norbert Dentressangle, an iconic brand that was a familiar sight on our roads for many years.

Today, XPO Logistics Northern Ireland is in charge of Tesco's loose equipment fleet and its UK and Ireland estate of 12 recycling service units (RSUs) which manage the supermarket giant's reverse logistics recycling operation.

As one of 195 XPO Logistics sites in the UK and Ireland, the Belfast RSU, based on a 7,200 sq m site at Boucher Crescent, manages the recycling for 55 Tesco stores across the Province, but is now aiming to broaden its customer base still

The Boucher Crescent facility, which includes a 2,252 sq m warehouse equipped with the latest recycling plant, is headed up by Site Manager Derek Payne whose team includes 27 full time

employees and a number of agency workers.

"We operate here on a 24/7 basis, closing only on Christmas Day, handling almost 26,000 incoming vehicle loads of recyclable waste, in addition to nearly 3,000 outgoing lorry movements," he explains. "Annually, we process 9,400 tonnes of card, which ends up in paper mills in China, and 780 tonnes of plastic waste which is sent to Envirogreen in Dungannon.

"We also process food waste and animal by-product from all the Tesco stores, to be converted into animal feed or for use in Anaerobic Digestion plants, in keeping with our main aim at XPO, which is to ensure zero waste to landfill; we source recyclable outlets for every waste stream that comes out of the stores."

PRESONA BALER

With vehicles delivering to the site seven days a week, it's essential that XPO's recycling plant is robust, reliable and easy to operate and maintain; it also needs to be able to withstand rising throughput volumes efficiently, which

is why the Belfast RSU recently installed a new Presona LP 85VH1 Series baler to provide continuous, energy efficient compaction of plastic and cardboard packaging materials. The custom-built baler was designed by the Presona AB team and incorporates a bespoke feeding conveyor, a stand-alone control panel giving online access to production and performance data, and a frequency control system to optimise energy consumption. XPO's new LP Series 85VH1 baler has a motor of 55kW, has a throughput of up to 13t/hr for cardboard and incorporates Presona's prepress technology. When compared to a shear baler, the prepress delivers a significant reduction in energy costs as all of the power goes into the compaction process. And, because the process is more streamlined, the units suffer less wear and tear and emit less noise than their counterparts. The baler also minimises consumable waste. Typically, LP Series balers produce bales with a wire 'pigtail' length of just 50mm, significantly shorter than the norm.

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LOGISTICS & RECYCLING

Annually, we process 9,400 tonnes of card, which ends up in paper mills in China, and 780 tonnes of plastic waste which is sent to Envirogreen in Dungannon.

"The new baler gives us options," says Derek Payne. "There are Presona balers at work in other XPO sites and we know they're reliable and robust. We can trust them to do the job day in and day out with little intervention. That's important for us and will allow us to increase our operation further."

And adds Presona Sales Manager Matt Hawkes: "Tesco and XPO are among our biggest customers; to date we have fitted around a dozen Presona balers across their network in the UK, not least because the machinery, as Derek confirms, is both reliable and energy efficient. "The balers operate very long hours at all of the sites where keeping downtime to an absolute minimum is essential, so reliability is vital to our customers, and that's what they get with Presona.

"Our equipment comes with a comprehensive warranty, and on those rare occasions when problems do arise we have a team of fully qualified onsite engineers to promptly deal with any breakdowns."



OTHER ACTIVITIES

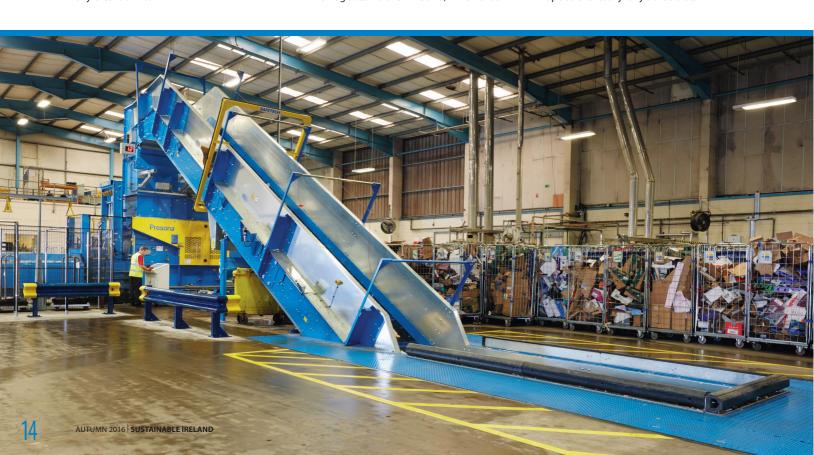
Apart from its recycling activities, XPO Logistics Northern Ireland offers a food tray cleaning/ washing service, handling some 5.5 million trays each year on behalf of Tesco, in addition to maintaining a variety of Merchandisable Units (MUs).

"Our service also extends to maintaining and repairing 'loose equipment', such as roll cages, food trays and merchandise units – last year, for example, we handled around 112,000 pieces, so it is a growing part of our business here in Belfast," says Derek.

XPO Logistics Northern Ireland, which is ISO

9001, 14001 & OHSAS 18001 accredited (and is working to achieve British Retail Consortium accreditation) is now planning to expand its customer base, offering its full range of services to other companies who may require recycling, equipment repairs or tray washing, but does it have the capacity for further growth?

"It certainly does," says Derek. "The twin track tray wash facility here, for example can process up to 2,400 trays an hour – that's 15 millions trays a year – while the baler processes more than 12 tonnes an hour – that's 120 tonnes a day! So we have plenty of capacity here and we hope to eventually fully utilise that."



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