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YORKON REDUCES WASTE BY 50 PER CENT IN THREE YEARS

Award-winning off-site construction specialist, **Yorkon**, has announced that as part of the Portakabin Group, it has achieved a 50 per cent reduction in the volume of waste sent to landfill over the last three years.

Research carried out by WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) has stated that UK construction consumes 420m tonnes of materials each year, generating 100m tonnes of waste – but also that off-site construction can produce up to 80 per cent less waste compared to site-based building methods.

Yorkon, as part of Portakabin, recycles 65 per cent of all waste and targets are in place to further improve recycling and waste management. Initiatives include:

- Steel and particle board are supplied to the factory in the precise lengths required for a module size, eliminating the need for disposing of off-cuts
- The building modules incorporate a base that is integral to the system, requiring simplified foundations and less waste sent to landfill or for redistribution on each site
- Suppliers of low value, high volume materials such as adhesives and fixings deliver direct to the production line, eliminating any packaging
- Wood chips generated in the joinery operations are collected and sold
- Changes to the composition of insulation have resulted in a 10 per cent reduction in material consumption with no compromise on quality
- A staff training programme is in place to instil the discipline to recycle and maintain waste streams, and colour coded skips segregate materials for recycling at source
- Investment in advanced CNC cutting machines for the production of steel and timber components ensures accuracy and further reduces waste
- Materials storage is under cover to eliminate damage and deterioration that can happen on a building site that is exposed to the elements.

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Commenting on the drive to reduce waste in construction and manufacturing, David Johnson, Director and General Manager of Yorkon, said, “We have seen huge reductions in waste as a result of our programme to re-use and recycle materials and by engineering waste-generating operations out of the manufacturing process. It is essential that all businesses in the construction industry focus on this issue to improve the sustainability of their operations.”

“Conditions in a purpose-designed manufacturing centre such as ours are significantly better than on a building site. The factory is equipped with extensive lifting facilities so materials can be handled in larger and more appropriate sizes to reduce the need for cutting and trimming, and skilled staff work at a constant temperature. On a building site, operatives can get wet and cold, which decreases dexterity and has a negative impact on material wastage, product damage and segregation for recycling.”

The Yorkon off-site building system is a highly sustainable method of construction. Buildings are more thermally efficient and consistently perform up to 70 per cent better than traditional site-based construction in full-scale tests for air permeability in line with Building Regulations Part L2A.

www.yorkon.info

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Editor’s Notes

1. The Yorkon approach to construction offers a wide range of sustainability benefits and new environmental initiatives, including:
 - up to 67 per cent less energy is required to produce a modular building compared to an equivalent traditionally built project (*source*: Arup Research and Development)
 - the first off-site specialist to commit to working towards the Sustainability Charter introduced by the Major Contractors Group
 - up to 90 per cent fewer vehicle movements to site (*source*: Mtech)

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- the use of the most advanced and comprehensive building simulation software to assess the impact of specification decisions on energy consumption, carbon emissions and running costs, over the life cycle of a building – a modular industry first
 - work with the Carbon Trust to reduce the amount of compressed air and energy used in the manufacturing process.
2. Off-site construction involves the manufacture of steel-framed modules in a controlled factory environment, using production line technology, whilst the foundation works are completed on site. The modules are delivered to site by road where they are craned into position in just a few days ready for fitting out.

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