



Managing Your Sustainability

Source planning in waste

Chris Murphy:

I'm Chris Murphy. I'm the Deputy Chief Executive at the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management. We are a professional institution representing about 7,000 professional waste and resources managers throughout the UK. Although we have overseas members as well.

If you'd asked me 20 years ago, 'What is waste management, or the waste industry?' it would have been fairly easy to have contextualised. But it's changed so much in the last 20 years to the extent that it's no longer just a waste industry it's a waste resources industry. So we're not just talking about disposing or treating waste we're talking about treating it as a resource, getting the energy value out of it, recycling as much as possible.

If we look upon the average domestic dustbin. It will contain various proportions of organic food wastes, paper and card, plastics, metals and, and other. All of those materials I mentioned, 75% of the contents of that bin could be recycled

Public and business and commerce: their whole philosophy about the use of resources. While resources were cheap and available we would be profligate in their use. So that covers everything like energy and water and many of the minerals and, and resources we used. Now they aren't so cheap any more. And also we have Landfill Tax and other penalties so the whole thinking is starting to change. 'Do I want to make this product and produce this amount of waste? No I don't because it's a waste of resource and also I'll have to pay to dispose of that amount of waste'. So, the thinking is starting to change.

We try and encourage as much forward thinking in terms of resource planning as we can. I don't think there's quite as much as we could undertake in this country. I think we need to future plan for this. We need to be looking at more investment in research and development; newer technologies and we need to be encouraging those.

We need to plan into the future about clever things like smarter packaging and use of materials which could then go back into the recycling chain. So we have in effect a closed loop of materials.

There are a number of risk areas. There are political risks, genuine scarcity of materials, climate change is a risk and also the economics and the market. So, looking at the political

risks, there are some rare materials and some not so rare materials are in politically sensitive areas. And access to those resources in the future could become difficult.