

## New Chairman looks to the future of corrugated

**In mid-March Richard Coward became Chairman of the CPI Corrugated Sector, which represents the UK corrugated packaging industry.**

*As Managing Director of Rigid Containers and with previous experience in a number of positions at Chesapeake, Richard brings a new approach to the sector. Here, he gives us his views on the way corrugated has confirmed its position as the world's favourite packaging medium and looks ahead to future developments.*

It is a privilege to represent such a buoyant and progressive industry as corrugated packaging. Although corrugated has been around for more than 100 years, recent times have seen corrugated going from strength to strength. There are a number of reasons for this.

First, the industry's customers have become more aware than ever of the way that corrugated can take cost and carbon out of their supply chains as well as offering enhanced presence at the point of sale. The phenomenon of retail ready packaging in particular has provided a strong stimulus to corrugated sales.

Second, consistent and heavy investment in new technologies, from print to complex die-cutting, has increased the already fantastic flexibility of corrugated, allowing it to move into new categories and replace less environmentally friendly materials.


Third, corrugated has a record in recycling that is second to none. Over 80% of all used corrugated in the UK is recycled and, on average, 75% of every corrugated box in the UK is made up from recycled fibres. That makes it, in the jargon of today, truly sustainable.

I could go on, but it's the future that's important – not the past.

The Coalition Government has recognised the need to rebalance the Economy by providing support for Manufacturing. In the corrugated industry we are in a good position to comment on British manufacturing. Since we provide products and services to thousands of manufacturers throughout the UK we act as an excellent barometer of the manufacturing economy.

That's why we are working at the highest political levels, to promote policies that will encourage the revival of manufacturing in the UK. We are co-sponsoring a Parliamentary initiative that brings together research which gathers the views of the public, business people and politicians in order to reach a consensus on policy priorities. This research will inform the round table discussions that are taking place in Westminster and at party conferences in the autumn. It culminates, at the end of this year, in specific recommendations to the Secretary of State for Business.

Of course, it takes time to change attitudes and even longer to change laws, but we need to take a long-term view of our industry's interests. While corrugated will continue to enjoy a prime position as an essential packaging medium, growth must ultimately come from a re-invigorated British industry using the latest, and increasingly low carbon, technologies and working practices.



I'm optimistic about the future of corrugated packaging. We have a dynamic and highly skilled industry providing an environmentally sound product that helps our customers achieve many of their business objectives. I look forward to waving the flag for corrugated.

## ENDS

For further information please contact Andrew Barnetson, Corrugated Sector Manager, on 07775 771662 or email [abarnetson@paper.org.uk](mailto:abarnetson@paper.org.uk).

## Notes to Editors

- CPI is the voice of the paper industry in the UK, representing papermakers, tissue manufacturers, corrugated packaging producers and recovered paper merchants.
- CPI represents 72 Member Companies, with a combined annual turnover of £4 billion and 19,600 personnel.
- Over 80% of all corrugated cardboard boxes are recycled, giving the corrugated industry the best UK recycling rate of all packaging materials.
- For additional information on the UK paper industry, in the first instance, please contact Annabel Acton, Communications Coordinator, on 01793 889612 or email [aacton@paper.org.uk](mailto:aacton@paper.org.uk). Alternatively, please visit: <http://www.paper.org.uk>.