

How waste disposal specialists at Bakers Environmental are helping prisoners get back on the right track

A skip hire, recycling and shredding specialist is helping ex-cons to get back on the straight and narrow.

Bakers Environmental Solutions is working with prisoners at HMP Five Wells, in Northamptonshire, to help them rehabilitate and find work within the prison and upon their release.

Bakers, which is based in Leicester, has opened a dedicated workspace in the prison – the UK's first purpose-built resettlement prison – offering training programmes and qualifications to offenders to increase their employability.

A recycling workshop sees prisoners separate materials and give them a second life to stop them going to landfill – and gives them experience of tools and machinery such as compactors and balers. Any money made goes back into the prison to fund further training programmes.

The prison, which is operated by GS4 and opened in February last year, is fitted with 16 classrooms and 24 workshops where offenders can learn new skills and gain qualifications.

Prison business enterprise & community manager Paul Cunningham said: "We are committed to helping the men in our care to be work ready when they are released from custody.

"Working with Bakers ensures that the men have the required skills and understanding of an industry that is very much in

demand and is likely to continue to grow as people are now becoming more aware of the need to recycle.”

Bakers managing director and founder Paul Baker said: “The Bakers Inside Out Academy has been devised to kick-start a new socially responsible era for prisons and businesses alike.

“Through mentorship, education, scholarship, and a collective people-first approach, local and national business communities can offer the support our prison systems need.

“Together, we can enhance our economy by creating employment opportunities, building personal development programmes, and reducing our carbon footprint.”

One ex-offender and Bakers employee, who asked not to give his name, said: “Having something to look forward to can change your perspective and motivate you to change your life.”

Bakers clients include Leicester City FC, Weetabix, Flogas and Steaming Billy Brewing Company.

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