

NEWS

Huddersfield leads battle to tackle textile waste

Bill Macbeth, of the Textile Centre of Excellence, is leading the UK part of a European project to clean up the textile industry



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BY HENRYK ZIENTEK08:44, 16 NOV 2016 | **UPDATED** 08:44, 16 NOV 2016

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Bill Macbeth of the Textile Centre of Excellence

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Huddersfield has been chosen as a hub for a new European project to clean up the world's textiles and clothing industry.

The EU-funded RESET project involves partners from Europe's top 10 textile manufacturing regions who will identify the best environmentally-friendly processes

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operating in the industry and integrate them into each of the regions' development plans.

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The UK's RESET operation is being led by Bill Macbeth, managing director of the Textile Centre of Excellence at Red Doles Lane, off Leeds Road, [Deighton](#), who took part in the launch of the project in Prato, Italy.

It is also being backed by [Huddersfield University](#) and the universities of Leeds and Bradford.

Mr Macbeth said; "The textiles and clothing industry is still a massive part of Europe's economy, employing nearly 2m people. UK and European manufacturers produces goods at the very top end of the market and it is the quality of our products that differentiate us from the rest of the world.

"And yet it is reported that ours is the second most polluting industry on the planet after oil and that – for instance it takes 9,700 litres of water to produce just one T-shirt and one pair of jeans.

"When you realise that over 2bn pairs of jeans are produced every year, that 85% of clothing ends up in landfill and that 10% of all garments manufactured around the world are never sold, never worn and go straight into landfill then you start to understand the scale of the challenge we are facing."

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The project will identify the most successful and commercial approaches in a number of key areas, including garment recycling and waste disposal, water consumption and energy saving, reducing the use of chemicals and the use of natural fibres.

Said Mr Macbeth: "This is a tremendously important project. It's not about trying

out new approaches, it's about identifying and sharing the practices that have been shown to be most effective, both environmentally and commercially. That will be crucial for the future of our sector globally.

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“It’s not just about being greener, it’s also about recognising that customers are becoming much more discerning when they choose what they wear. Where things are made and how they are made is becoming more important to consumers.

“We need to identify and implement that best practice if our industry is going to prosper in the future. This important project is going to help us to do that.”

The UK project is being supported by experts from industry, academia, research centres and policy makers.

The UK partners will spread the good practices arising from the project and also identify opportunities for developing the local industry.

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