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Birleys works with Seal Packaging to improve its sustainability credentials

London-based award-winning sandwich salad bar chain Birleys knows that environmental sustainability issues matter to its loyal customer base. We talk to Managing Director Paul Salter about why working with a specialist packaging supplier guarantees quality and delivers a genuinely sustainable message.

“At Birleys, we’ve spent more than 30 years building a reputation for quality,” says Paul Salter. “During that time, we’ve worked hard at perfecting and evolving our imaginative menus and partnering with carefully selected suppliers to get every element just right.

“Sustainability is high on our agenda and we know that it is extremely important for our increasingly well-informed and discerning clientele. We offer our made-to-order sandwiches, salads, breakfasts and lunch platters for eat-in, takeaway and home and office delivery, so choosing the right packaging is crucial. We’re now working with Seal Packaging to ensure we can present our food in genuinely sustainable, great looking and easy-to-use packaging.

“The fact that Seal’s ethos is ‘Packaging with Integrity’ certainly gives confidence and puts us on the right track as we embark on a process to ensure that Birleys operates as sustainably as possible,” says Paul Salter.

Compostabowl™

The first product Birleys introduced from Seal was Compostabowl™, which combines a high-quality bagasse bowl with an optional high-clarity lid made from 100 per cent recycled and 100 per cent recyclable rPET. Bagasse is an abundantly available, natural and sustainable plant-based material that can be used instead of traditional foodservice packaging materials, and Compostabowl™ is certified to TÜV Austria (S0086) – the highest standard for home compostability.

“With its superb environmental credentials, using Compostabowl™ immediately adds an eco-friendly feel to our food,” says Paul Salter. “It is popular with customers as its ergonomic design makes it both easy to hold for food on the go, while also enhancing the presentation of the food.

“Compostabowl™ is a breath of fresh air for the marketplace and offers the consumer an environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing solution. The consumer appeal and satisfaction are great and they, along with ourselves, are delighted to be doing something positive for the environment.”

Next steps... from Itsnotpaper bags to plastic-free cups

On the next steps of its improved sustainability journey, Birleys is considering adopting Seal Packaging’s innovative Itsnotpaper bags.

“Itsnotpaper bags look, feel and handle like paper, but we’ll be proud to tell our customers that not one tree has been chopped down to make them,” says Paul Salter. “They provide the perfect canvas for both our branding and our sustainability message.”

By using renewable sources such as agri-fibres as a raw material, instead of wood, the production of Itsnotpaper bags have up to 38 per cent less carbon emissions than conventional paper bags.

Itsnotpaper bags contribute to a reduction in deforestation, and the material used has so far saved more than one million trees. The agri-fibres used to make the material for Itsnotpaper bags are abundant and renewable, and by turning what would otherwise be waste into a valuable resource, the product is supporting communities in India by paying farmers for something they previously burnt, causing air and land pollution.

Itsnotpaper bags are made in the UK, and the material used to make them has been through a rigorous Life Cycle Assessment to ensure that it is sustainable, end-to-end. They are certified marine degradable, are 100 per cent recyclable and can be recycled in conventional paper recycling streams. They also have 100 per cent compostable certification, making them a genuine sustainable alternative to traditional paper bags.

Seal has also recently introduced certified plastic-free, home-compostable and recyclable, repulpable paper cups, which have the prestigious Flustix No Plastic certification by Din Certco, and are the only UKCA mark registered paper cups for 10oz and 20oz.

Ends



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Notes for editors

About Birleys

London-based Birleys has been the home of the finest breakfast and lunch sandwiches, platters, buffets, soups and salads since the early 1980s. It currently has 10 outlets located across The City and Canary Wharf.

Birleys has won the British Sandwich Association's Specialist Sandwich Bar Chain of the Year not just once, but four times.

About Seal Packaging

Originally established in 1990, Luton-based Seal Packaging (Seal) was acquired by Kevin Curran, Sally Gabbitas, and Kevin Prosser in 2021 as a vehicle to launch new ranges of sustainable packaging.

With the tag-line 'Packaging with integrity' and a new website – www.sealpackaging.com – Seal is aiming for net zero, ensuring the sustainability of its products' raw materials, usage, and end-of-life, to protect the environment.