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Worn Again Equip Eurostar Staff With Upcycled Bags Made From Their Old Uniforms

by Leonora Oppenheim, London, UK on 06. 9.11

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All images via Worn Again

Good news today as another sustainable design concept becomes reality. Upcycling company **Worn Again** have equipped 250 **Eurostar** train managers with some rather smart bags made from old staff uniforms. It's been a long journey to design and make these bespoke bags using the upcycling process, says Worn Again's strategic director Jamie Burdett, but everyone is delighted with the high quality result. It looks like Worn Again's efforts to create a new upcycling industry in the UK are bearing fruit, despite all those who said it wasn't possible. Now, is it possible for them to create a fully closed loop system?

Collaborative Design Process

Created by artist/designer **Benjamin Shine**, with input from the Eurostar staff who will be using them, these bags are made from 39 different pattern pieces taken from old Eurostar jackets, raincoats, and train head cushions. The bag's design, manufactured by Barrow & Gale, a traditional bags manufacturer in Woolwich with royal warrant, has been through several developments since it was first seen as a **prototype in the Design Museum** last year.



From Prototype to Reality

Peter Bragg, head of environment & energy for **Eurostar**, says of the project, "Our work with Worn Again is part of our commitment to reduce our impact on the environment. We do not just talk about policies and practices, we do everything we can to bring them to life."

Jamie Burdett describes the journey from prototype to real product as challenging. Worn Again's plans to create a more sustainable corporatewear market through a new upcycling industry in the UK has been met with several hurdles, especially in the manufacturing process. He says they are working towards a scale solution in UK with upcycling as the first stage. "We are making the most of materials in the highest value way, and this is a stepping stone to closed-loop."



Remanufacturing in the UK

He goes on to say, "People say we can't do UK manufacturing to scale, but we are going to make it work. Sustainability is all about moving from nice ideas to systemic change. The pressures for one planet living meaning we need to be bolder, more collaborative and lose our fear of the impossible." A large part of the Worn Again's bold vision is to build a high-tech remanufacturing plant to turn 10,000 tonnes of corporate wear into closed-loop resource efficiency products.

Happily **Eurostar** aren't the only big business to see the sense in this grand plan. There are other high profile brands getting on board the UK upcycling train which will surely boost Worn Again's aim to extend the life of materials, while creating wealth and jobs along the way. The challenge is to go beyond upcycling and develop a truly **closed loop process**. But this needs a whole new system design which, as Burdett says, exists in parts, but is not fully connected yet.



How to close the loop

Burdett explains, "These Eurostar bags will be recycled through Eurostar's current downcycling routes at the end of their life. But it won't be closed loop because the materials have not been designed from the outset to be reused continuously. The closed-loop process takes into account: materials, processing into recyclate, new manufacturing techniques, proper system-based collection, maximum resources recaptured, multiple reuse through the 'loop', close to zero waste as possible."

Making the change from our current linear system to a cyclical manufacturing process means taking inspiration from nature's ecosystems, using the biomimicry design process, and working with the attitude that sustainability transformation is a series of steps, in which you learn and fail as fast as possible in order to reach the big goal of **zero-waste**.

It's good to see that Jamie Burdett and Worn Again's chief executive Cyndi Rhoades are forging the path ahead with big business on their side to make sustainable innovation happen. Watch this space to see which brands are about to embark on their own upcycling adventure with Worn Again.

More on Worn Again

- [Red Hot + Stylish - Worn Again Teams Up With Virgin + Eurostar](#)
- [Virgin Atlantic Recycle Seat Covers into Worn Again Bags](#)
- [Worn Again - More Than Just Funky Footwear](#)

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