

# Blossoming savings for Millbrook Garden Company

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| CLIENT:          | Millbrook Garden Company   |
| SECTOR:          | Landscaping  |
| COST CATEGORIES: | Stationery, IT Consumables, Waste, Cash Handling, Insurance, Facilities Management |

Expense Reduction Analysts (ERA) were engaged to review a number of different areas of expenditure and assist the company in achieving effective procurement.

## THE CLIENT

The Millbrook Garden Company is a family-run, independent company founded in 1979 with two centres, one in East Sussex and another in Kent. Millbrook stocks a large range of quality plants, shrubs and trees, as well as all kinds of gardening apparatus. The company also has its own nursery, green cafés at both centres and an award-winning design and landscaping team.

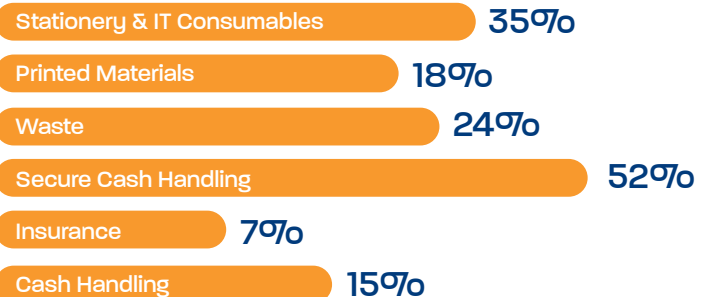
## THE CHALLENGE

Following a referral from another garden centre and nursery client of ERA, Ben Woodhouse, Director, Millbrook had an initial meeting with Robert Stearn, Business Development Manager. Following the presentation of a cost reduction and control proposal and the introduction of David Keating as Client Relationship Manager, ERA were engaged to review a number of different areas of expenditure and assist the company in achieving effective procurement.

Expert in office supplies and print, Nigel Richards was appointed to review Millbrook's spends in the stationery and IT consumables category. Nigel conducted a thorough review of Millbrook's ordering patterns and found an alternative supplier that could provide all of the required products for a lower price. This supplier was implemented smoothly and the client is happy with the service they are receiving. In the print category, Nigel worked with Millbrook's Marketing Manager to evaluate their requirements for marketing and business print. Nigel sourced a supplier that could fulfil Millbrook's printing needs at a lower cost and took the Marketing Manager to visit the potential supplier to ensure she was satisfied with their printing systems.

The client is delighted with the savings and the service they are receiving from their new supplier.

## SUMMARY OF SAVINGS



"ERA utilise their industry experts for each project and this allowed us to make immediate and significant savings on our waste while we were midcontract with our supplier. When ERA recommended we changed suppliers in print and stationery, not only did we make savings and gain great new relationships with excellent new suppliers, but also the process was made easy for us through ERA's management."

**BEN WOODHOUSE**  
DIRECTOR, MILBROOK GARDEN COMPANY

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When considering the waste category, the consultants conducted an expenditure review within Millbrook's contract with their existing supplier. Although Millbrook were satisfied with the service they were receiving from their existing supplier, there were a few areas where the service could be improved. The consultants worked with Millbrook and the incumbent supplier to redefine the service criteria and negotiate a saving. This project resulted in a considerable saving and an improvement in service for the client whilst retaining the incumbent supplier.

Insurance expert Chris Coomber of ERA, was engaged to review Millbrook's insurance programme, casting an independent eye over their existing programme and seeking economies where possible. Working with the Millbrook team, Chris gathered the necessary information regarding Millbrook's procedures and insurance demands and needs. By engaging a second discreet facility, Chris was able to demonstrate Millbrook's attractive risk profile to the market and negotiate further improvements in the insurance programme cost base whilst maintaining equivalent levels of cover.

Due to Millbrook's incumbent renewal negotiations, claims management processes and adherence to their Health and Safety policies they enjoyed a saving with their incumbent broker at renewal.

As in many cases ERA's clients have excellent relationships with their incumbent brokers and this helped Chris to negotiate a further reduction in their incumbents proposal thus retaining the existing relationship at a reduced cost.

Expert in banking and finance, Paul Davidson was enlisted to review Millbrook's arrangements for secure cash handling. Paul found that by negotiating with Millbrook's incumbent suppliers, he was able to reduce cash handling costs by rearranging the collection patterns. Paul worked with the client to identify a collection schedule that was more suited to their needs, and arranged this with the cash collector resulting in a reduced collection charge. Paul also ensured that when the collection schedule was interrupted (due to Christmas for example), the collection charge was altered accordingly. Paul worked with Millbrook to assess their transaction method for paying money into their bank account. Paul identified that the way in which Millbrook presented their cash when making payments could reduce the cost. Counting cash can be a time consuming, manual process but in this case Millbrook was already organising their cash, separating it by denomination when they went to pay it in to their bank account. As this meant minimal work for the bank, Paul was able to negotiate reduced transactional charges.

Millbrook have also engaged ERA to review their facilities management costs and this category is currently under review.