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CONSTRUCTION COMPANY USES COFFEE WASTE TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

 SUSTAINABILITY

Colombia-based Woodpecker WPC is using waste coffee husks to build affordable and eco-friendly housing for low-income communities

Spotted: Many construction companies are now looking at ways to make their work more sustainable, and a Colombia-based construction company is one of the latest. Woodpecker WPC is using waste coffee husks to build affordable, eco-friendly housing for local communities. Coffee is widely available in Colombia, which is the world's third-largest coffee producer, inspiring the company to use coffee husks for its strong and dry properties. During the coffee roasting process, the dried skin on a coffee bean, known as the husk, falls off and is usually dumped in landfill, which releases methane.

Woodpecker has now taken that waste from the coffee production process and recycled it into lightweight composite blocks that can be used for construction. These blocks can be easily assembled without the need for any specialised training or tools, making the building process a quick one. Made solely from coffee husk and plastic-based boards and steel frames, the prefabricated buildings can be easily transported to rural and difficult-to-access areas, with a construction time that takes less than a week.

With this technique, Woodpecker WPC has built around 3,000 houses and 20 schools to date. One recent project saw over 680 adaptable homes built in the Upper Guajira region of Colombia for the indigenous Wayuu community, which is a region that has been battling the effects of climate change.

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Takeaway:

Over the course of a year, the UK produces up to 500,000 tonnes of waste from coffee production, which gets sent to landfill and produces 1.8 million tonnes of carbon emissions. Woodpecker WPC's process of recycling coffee husks means that the amount of waste being sent to landfill from the coffee production process is cut down, ultimately reducing carbon emissions. Furthermore, this fast and lightweight construction system makes it possible for low-income communities to access safe and affordable housing.