



CASE STUDY

# DISTRIBUTION SOFT SERVICES

## OPTIMISING DISTRIBUTION CENTRE CLEANING

Arcus secured a contract to provide hard and soft services across 10 distribution centres nationwide. As part of the mobilisation process, the Business Improvement team conducted an independent operational review at two pilot locations that best represented the wider portfolio. This review focused on streamlining processes, improving efficiency, and identifying opportunities for cost savings while maintaining high service standards.

By applying proven tools and techniques, Arcus aimed to enhance operational performance, ensuring that best practices were established and scalable across all distribution centres.

### APPROACH

Arcus engaged multiple stakeholders across both internal teams and the customer's operations to gain a full understanding of the Current State, incorporating insights from frontline staff, business operations, and customer requirements. This collaborative approach ensured all viewpoints were considered when designing improvements.

A Future State model was developed through structured engagement, clearly defining roles and responsibilities between Arcus, the customer, and third-party suppliers. The team carried out a dynamic needs analysis to assess building demand and usage patterns, ensuring schedules were optimised to match operational needs.

An equipment review assessed existing machinery's effectiveness and identified improvement opportunities. Real-world observations and data analysis ensured recommendations were fact-based, not assumptions. A playback presentation and report were delivered, outlining key findings, risks, and opportunities. Finally, knowledge transfer sessions were implemented to ensure the sustainability of new processes across all sites.



## FEATURES

The review process included an in-depth operational assessment, covering working hours, cleaning activities, and responsibilities. Value Stream Mapping was used to evaluate current cleaning operations across all shifts, identifying inefficiencies and areas for improvement.

A Future State cleaning solution was developed to standardise procedures. This included the introduction of a Cleaning Charter, as well as Activity and Task Cards detailing cleaning frequencies, durations, and expectations. The use of dynamic needs analysis ensured cleaning schedules aligned with actual site demand and a review of existing equipment helped confirm that the right tools were available for each task, further supporting efficiency.



## OPPORTUNITIES

Arcus identified key opportunities to optimise cleaning operations. A core cleaning model was introduced, standardising processes across all sites for greater consistency.

Warehouse floor cleaning was prioritised, optimising equipment use to improve coverage and reduce recovery times. Trial equipment was tested to enhance performance and mitigate spill-related risks.

A dedicated team now oversees service consistency, while distribution centre task cards define cleaning tasks, durations, and frequencies. Internal and external communication improved with WhatsApp groups, enabling real-time updates, issue resolution, and best practice sharing.

## BENEFITS

Operational productivity increased by 41%, reducing overall labour requirements by 29%. A total of 407.5 cleaning hours were removed per week, equating to savings of approximately £4k per week (£212k annually). In key areas, productivity gains reached 111%, with labour reductions of 44%. This resulted in a further weekly reduction of 187 cleaning hours and additional savings of approximately £1.8k per week (£97k annually).

Combined, these efficiencies delivered total annual savings of £309k, while maintaining high cleaning standards. The structured approach allowed for flexibility within the cleaning model, ensuring tasks could be adjusted according to demand.

## KEY OUTCOMES

Cleaning processes were standardised across all distribution centres, improving efficiency and consistency. Labour hours were reduced, lowering costs without impacting service levels. Stronger communication and collaboration between Arcus teams and customer stakeholders supported seamless operations.

This fact-based approach delivered significant savings while creating a scalable model for the entire distribution network.

