



SMARTER GROWTH CONSULTING

From Inefficiency to Impact with The Hive Foundations

Within 6 months of applying The Hive Foundations, a £1.3m-a-week supermarket cut known stock loss by £650k, boosted productivity by 11%, lifted colleague satisfaction by 1.5%, and freed up £80k in working capital – all while creating a scalable model for continuous improvement.

The Challenge They Faced

A multi-billion-pound food retailer wanted to test Lean principles in-store, starting with warehouse operations. But challenges were everywhere:

- Wasted steps and poor warehouse layout slowing replenishment
- Stock loss eating into margins
- Broken equipment, clutter and no visual controls
- Colleagues frustrated, with limited voice in how work was organised
- Management unsure how to shift entrenched habits

Our Solution

The Hive Foundations provided a proof-of-concept that simplified operations, cut waste and created a CI mindset. Together, we:

- Ran a TIMWOODS analysis to identify inefficiencies
- Introduced feedback boards so 24/7 teams could share ideas
- Delivered Lean Six Sigma White Belt training to the management team
- Redesigned the warehouse layout around frequency and proximity
- Applied 5S principles: clearing clutter, fixing equipment, and adding visual management
- Trialled new equipment to speed replenishment and stock rotation

Hurdles We Worked Through

- Overcoming old habits and “this is how we’ve always done it.”
- Building confidence when tweaks didn’t work first time
- Bringing both management and frontline colleagues on the journey together

Through coaching and advocacy, the Deputy Manager became the Lean champion, ensuring consistency, challenging lapses and embedding new ways of working.

The Difference It Made

- £650k reduction in known stock loss
- 11% productivity increase across the warehouse operation
- 1% uplift in on-shelf availability
- 1.5% improvement in colleague satisfaction
- £80k reduction in working capital

Keeping the Momentum

The success was so clear that the Regional Manager rolled it out across the region before central approval. Once signed off, the Deputy Manager played a key role in rolling the approach out to all 600+ stores nationwide, embedding a culture of smarter growth.

Client Details - Multi-billion-pound UK food retailer, supermarket format (£1.3m weekly sales).