

# Suffolk energy-from-waste facility

## Winter 2023 newsletter



Putting Suffolk's waste to good use

### Operational update

As we approach the end of our ninth year of partnership with Suffolk County Council, we continue to put Suffolk's non-recyclable waste to good use by using it to generate electricity for the national grid.

In 2022, the facility **processed 283,038 tonnes of waste** resulting in **177,090 megawatt hours of electricity** being exported to the national grid, enough to **power 45,762 homes**. We also recovered **48,055 tonnes of bottom ash** for use as an aggregate in the construction industry and another **9,463 tonnes of metal** for recycling.

This year the site continued with the single shutdown approach. During our 5-week spring shutdown, we completed extensive work inside the boiler including pendant riser replacements and modifications to the refractory. We also carried out an annual inspection on the turbine and generator unit and all 2,040 baghouse filter bags were replaced, alongside the general cleaning and maintenance that is carried out each shutdown.

## Visitor centre update

The site continues to receive lots of interest for tours with our community liaison manager hosting over 100 site tours since the last issue, involving more than 1,600 people.

We have always been proud of our education offering for primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and youth groups such as Brownies and Cubs. This year we were once again awarded with the Learning Outside the Classroom quality badge, demonstrating our commitment to sustaining high quality learning on site.

Visitors can witness the energy-from-waste process in action, and experience our purpose-built visitor centre, which features information and interactive activities on the topics of waste, energy, and the environment.

Tours of the site are free of charge to all visiting groups. If you know of any educational or adult groups, or local residents who would be interested in visiting the site, please contact us at [suffolkefw.uk@suez.com](mailto:suffolkefw.uk@suez.com).

Alternatively, groups of less than five people can book onto one of our upcoming open days at: [suffolkefwopenday.eventbrite.co.uk](https://suffolkefwopenday.eventbrite.co.uk)



### VISITOR CENTRE REFRESH

As we approach 10 years of welcoming over 11,000 visitors to the site, we are looking at how we could improve the visitors' experience. The new look will be designed around the waste hierarchy with a large classroom-like feel. If you have visited site and have any suggestions on what you would like to see in our visitor centre we would love to hear from you.

We are interested in hearing your ideas of what you'd like to see in our new design. Please email: [suffolkefw.uk@suez.com](mailto:suffolkefw.uk@suez.com) with your ideas.



## Sustainability

### OUR COMMITMENT TO BIODIVERSITY

In 2020, SUEZ committed to improving biodiversity and sustainable practises on every SUEZ site across the country, and the Suffolk site continued to actively support this ambition throughout 2023.

In Spring, our site team erected two swift boxes on the side of the building and installed a caller on the roof. Our sustainability champion also created kits for colleagues to turn old pallets into bird boxes for placement around the site or local area. This year we also looked to improve the water quality in our pond by adding aerators to try and reduce the weed.

Our resident pair of adult peregrines continue to call the site home and this year successfully hatched 3 eggs in their purpose-built nesting box on top of the boiler house. In April, we were joined by an ITV camera crew for the annual ringing and registering of the new chicks.

You can watch the story at [www.itv.com/news/anglia/2023-05-08/falcon-chicks-born-on-top-of-busy-waste-plant](http://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2023-05-08/falcon-chicks-born-on-top-of-busy-waste-plant)



### ELECTRIC VANS

This year we have taken a step towards smarter travelling and invested in two new electric vans. In July we received our new crew cab van which can transport up to six people, as well as goods, cutting down on vehicles and emissions from non-EV vehicles. Since its delivery we have been using this van to transport staff to training, to visit other sites and to attend outreach events.

### REDUCING PAPER

To improve our efficiency and data accuracy this year we have moved many of our processes onto digital platforms, cutting down the site's paper usage. We have uploaded all our procedures onto SharePoint where we can use an electronic sign-off to ensure all staff are aware of the current status. We have also started recording and saving our monthly safety inspections, safety in mind conversations and permit to work documents on digital platforms.





## Out in the community

### OUTREACH PROJECTS

Across 2023, our community liaison manager has been busy with over 30 different outreach projects including visiting schools, youth clubs and adult groups to lead sessions about energy from waste, what happens to waste in Suffolk and how to reduce, reuse and recycle it before it enters the rubbish bin.

Particular attention has been given to delivering outreach support to groups who are unable to visit site. During National Science Week in March, three days were spent at Sidegate Primary school supporting their Early Years and Key Stage One classes; learners who are too young to visit the site. Bespoke, age-appropriate activities on waste in Suffolk were delivered finishing with a session making bird feeders using recycling.

Due to its physically demanding nature, the tour is also not suitable for those with additional mobility requirements. To overcome this, our community liaison manager has been visiting groups such as stroke survivors, probus clubs, WI's and U3A's to help spread the word about the facility and sustainable waste management. In October she also led a session for the International Women's network at the Suffolk Refugee Support group.





## Out in the community



### SUFFOLK SHOW

A sunny few days were spent at the Suffolk Show in May and June this year. For 2023, SUEZ showcased their new energy-generating bike made from a reused bicycle. Visitors were invited to use their own pedal power to light up a set of fairy lights. By repurposing a bike into an energy-generating device, the team showcased the potential for everyday objects to contribute to energy production in the same way that the EfW generates energy from Suffolk's household waste. Since the show, the bike has been taken to many different outreach events including Suffolk's first Youth Climate Conference and to the Go Wild, Go Green event in Stowmarket.

### LATITUDE FESTIVAL

In July our community liaison manager joined the Suffolk Waste Partnership at Latitude festival where they engaged with over 550 festival goers over the three-day event. The team lead interactive sessions making a variety of recycled crafts, including making 'poi' using old socks filled with corn with the addition of long strips of scrap fabrics for tails. Poi is a moari word – and describes the weighted objects with colourful tails which are spun in rhythm to music and combined with dance, and now very popular with festival goers. This innovative use of discarded textiles helped to reinforce the important reuse message.



### HERITAGE OPEN DAY



In September, the facility took part in the national Heritage Open Days festival for the fifth year running. 44 visitors watched a presentation about the facility and its role in managing household waste in Suffolk, enjoyed a tour of the control room, boiler house and ash processing facility and participated in a question-and-answer session led by our Community Liaison Manager and a member of the waste team from Suffolk County Council.



## Out in the community

### A DAY A YEAR TO VOLUNTEER

This SUEZ volunteering initiative offers every employee one day's paid leave every year to volunteer for a charitable organisation of their choice. This opportunity has again been embraced by the site team with over 30 colleagues taking up the opportunity. A vast array of charities and good causes benefited from the support of our site team including Growing Places, The Suffolk Owl Sanctuary, The Suffolk Wildlife Trust and St Elizabeth Hospice.

The site sponsored a replacement Forest Schools shed for Somersham Primary after their previous hut was destroyed by strong winds. In September a small team from the site used their volunteer day to erect the new shed.

Miss Crush, Forest Schools Lead, said:

**"We couldn't be happier with our new Forest School shed and how quickly it was put up! It's going to make all the difference to our sessions and the independence of our children. We cannot thank SUEZ enough for their incredibly kind donation of time and money."**





## Supporting future careers

### INTERN

This year the Suffolk EfW continued its partnership with Career Ready, a national social mobility charity that works with employers and educators to support young people, regardless of background, to kickstart a rewarding future. Via the charity, we offered our first paid internship to a local young person working on data collection and analytics. Across the 4-week internship the intern was able to spend time working in all the departments on site as well as completing a data project.

### APPRENTICES

Supporting SUEZ's aim to inspire and develop the next generation of green talent, the site welcomed three new apprentices in September. Over their first year the apprentices will work alongside the operations and maintenance team to gain a full understanding of site processes. They have also been enrolled at West Suffolk College to undertake a Level 3 Diploma in engineering.

### CAREERS FAIRS

The team have been involved in number of different careers days for local schools, showcasing green career options to young people. Most notably the team took part in the Suffolk Skills and Careers event at Trinity Park and the Sustainable Careers event at West Suffolk college. This year two of our maintenance team took on the challenge to build new interactives that could be taken to these events. Our maintenance team created some mock boiler tubes to practise thickness testing using an ultrasonic tool. A previous site apprentice created a rig that demonstrates how processes such as filling and emptying containers can be electrically controlled on site.





## Charity fund raising

### MACMILLAN

To celebrate 10 years of partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, SUEZ UK embarked on an ambitious target to raise £101,010 for the charity throughout 2023. With over 3 million people in the UK diagnosed with cancer every year, the charity's purpose is 'to do whatever it takes to support people living with cancer'. From reuse shops to sponsored events and cake sales, the company has been keen to support this worthwhile charity.

This year the site got involved in the fundraising in many creative ways including a Rugby World Cup sweepstake, fantasy league and inter-site distance competition. A team of five went to North Norfolk and took part in a 120km sponsored walk and bike ride in some very challenging weather. The site's main fundraising initiative happened in the form of an 'indoor league' competition where colleagues competed in singles and doubles at table football, pool, darts, and table tennis. The finals will be played in December with a celebratory afternoon including a bake sale.



### HELP FOR HEROES

In June, Paul Kinnaird, Assistant Maintenance Manager, took part in the 350-mile Big Battlefield Bike Ride in aid of Help for Heroes for the second time. Paul and three other riders from the SUEZ veterans' network participated in the five-day event along with 100 other cyclists. As both a veteran and a keen cyclist, Paul decided to take on the meaningful challenge to retrace some of the route taken by the British Expeditionary Force in the retreat to Dunkirk. During their challenge the group visited many different cemeteries and memorials carrying out services of remembrance.

Paul raised an amazing £3,050, adding to the SUEZ team total of over £11,000.



## Charity fund raising

### HOME START IN SUFFOLK

In September, a team from site competed in the Home-Start in Suffolk Sports Day.

**The event raised £4,862.85 for the charity** which provides practical and emotional support and friendship to Suffolk families. This was the first time the event had been run and it was a great success. The team competed against 11 other companies in traditional sports day races alongside numerous sporting challenges, a team building challenge and a rounders competition. At the end of the afternoon the team were crowned overall event winners of the competition. They are already planning to defend their title next year.

As well as supporting the Sports day event, the site also held their own 'Sports Shirts' Day where colleagues were encouraged to wear their favourite team's shirt for the day, raising additional funds for the charity. In December 2022, the charity was also awarded with £500 as part of SUEZ's People and Planet Christmas Fund in recognition of their tangible impact on people and communities over the Christmas period.







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Telephone: 01473 839149    Email: [suffolkefw.uk@suez.com](mailto:suffolkefw.uk@suez.com)

Website: [www.suffolkefw.co.uk](http://www.suffolkefw.co.uk)    Twitter: @SuffolkEfw