



Putting Suffolk's waste to good use



Suffolk energy-from-waste facility **Winter 2024 newsletter**

Operational update

We are at the end of the tenth year of our partnership with Suffolk County Council and continue to put Suffolk's non-recyclable waste to good use by using it to generate electricity for the National Grid.

In 2023, the facility **processed 294,607 tonnes of waste** resulting in **185,144 megawatt hours of electricity** being exported to the National Grid, which is enough to **power 52,243 homes**. We also recovered **52,061 tonnes of bottom ash** for use as an aggregate in the construction industry and another **9,552 tonnes of metal for recycling**.

Our annual maintenance shutdown took place in April. Alongside the statutory cleaning and inspection of the boiler and associated pressure parts, we upgraded the software system that monitors and controls many of the processes that take place in the energy-from-waste process. We also inspected the transformers and tap changer and carried out a minor service on the moving grate in the furnace. In addition, we completed a project to upgrade and replace the bearings on the turbine gearbox, enabling us to increase generation by 1.2 megawatt.

This year we built a new contractors' village to replace the portacabins that had to be erected annually on site during the maintenance period. The building provides a permanent welfare facility, with office space, changing rooms and a canteen. It was designed with sustainable practices in mind, is powered by electricity generated on site and has a rainwater harvesting system to be used in the toilets.



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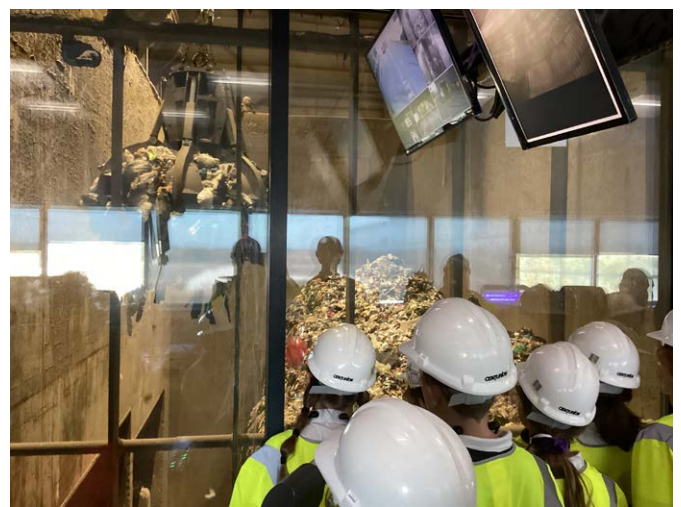
Visitor centre update

Visits to our site remain popular, with people from across Suffolk joining our tours to witness the energy-from-waste process in action, explore our purpose-built visitor centre and learn more about what happens to Suffolk's waste. Over the past year our community liaison manager has hosted 120 tours involving almost 1,000 visitors.

We have continued to focus on providing the best possible educational experience to primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and youth groups such as Brownies and Cubs. We have again been awarded with the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, which recognises our quality learning opportunities and effective risk management which gives schools peace of mind when organising visits to the Suffolk EfW.

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.

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



VISITOR CENTRE REFRESH

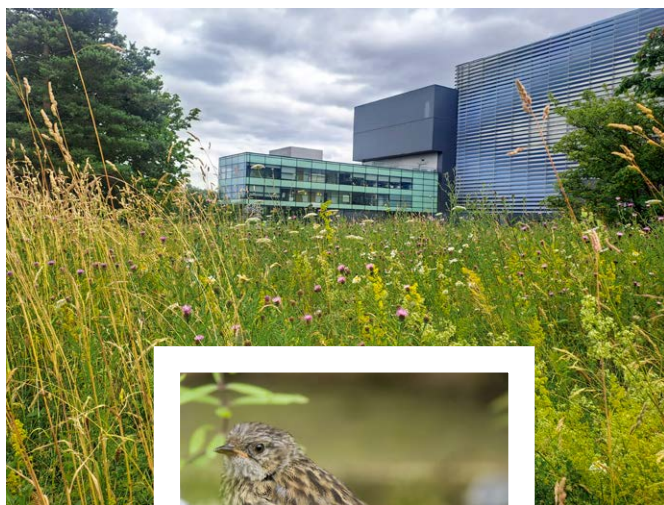
Preparations for our visitor centre refresh are well underway, with the installation planned for the first half of next year. We will celebrate 10 years of welcoming over 12,000 visitors to the site with a new-look centre, designed around the waste hierarchy of reducing waste first, followed by reusing, recycling and recovering energy.

Primarily aimed at our younger visitors, it will include more interactive activities and a large classroom-like feel. In line with the waste hierarchy, we will be using as many reclaimed and reused materials as possible in its construction.

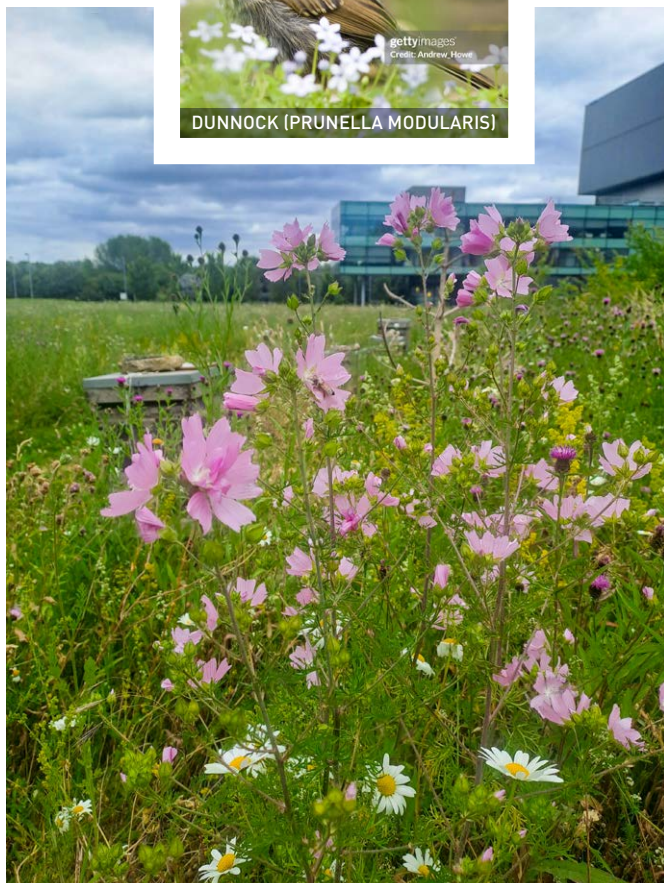
Sustainability

COMMITMENT TO BIODIVERSITY

The Suffolk EfW has continued to actively support SUEZ recycling and recovery UK's commitment to improving biodiversity and sustainable practises on all sites across the country.



DUNNOCK (PRUNELLA MODULARIS)



SUFFOLK WILDLIFE TRUST

This year we engaged with Suffolk Wildlife Trust to conduct a biodiversity survey at our site. Their report detailed the existing conditions and the flora and fauna observed during the assessment. The value to wildlife of the mixed scrub, wildflower meadow, boundary woodland and entrance green areas of the site was noted. These habitats could be utilised by various native species including birds, butterflies, beetles, bats, wild bees and spiders.

The self-seeding wildflower meadow, which was originally sown following construction, was found to have more than forty different species of plant, with “greater than 20% cover of broadleaved herbs”, meaning that the meadow is considered to be in good condition.

A dunnock (*Prunella modularis*) was seen in the mixed scrub at the time of the visit. This bird is currently on the amber list of conservation concern and is known as a priority species. Two species of wild orchids were found in the marginal vegetation at the edge of the scrub. Both of these, the pyramidal orchid and the bee orchid, are slow growing, and are protected species in the UK. We were particularly lucky to see the bee orchid, as it may only flower once in a lifetime!

The report made suggestions for the future management of the various habitats, and actions we can take to increase the biodiversity on the site. Our plans include the creation of a “stumpery” from dead logs to support stag beetles, adding more nest boxes to provide suitable refuge for house sparrows and developing a flower garden near the pond and office entrance to attract butterflies and bumblebees.

BUG HOTEL

A bug hotel, which was built from materials re-purposed from the site for the Suffolk Show, has been placed in the wildflower meadow on the border of the scrub area. It provides hollows for solitary bees and has spaces for other insects.



PEREGRINE FALCONS

The purpose-built box situated on top of the boiler house was once again selected as an ideal nesting spot by a pair of peregrine falcons. Mr Peter Merchant, the Defra registered bird of prey rehabilitation expert who has provided invaluable support and guidance since the falcons first arrived on site, believes that this year the female bird selected a new mate. This would explain why she laid her three eggs in April, which is later than usual. All three eggs hatched in early May but sadly only one of the chicks survived. However, this chick proved to be resilient and determined, and finally set off to establish his own territory in early September. As in previous years, the chick was fitted with identifying rings and registered with the British Trust of Ornithology. This is done to assist with monitoring of the bird's movements and to provide valuable data to conservationists.



STEVE PLUME PHOTOGRAPHY



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Out in the community



OUTREACH PROJECTS

We have continued to be involved with local schools, youth clubs and adult groups across Suffolk.

During 2024, our community liaison manager supported 22 different outreach events, connecting with over 600 people. These included visits to schools, youth clubs and adult groups to deliver talks about reducing waste, what happens to waste in Suffolk, and the energy-from-waste process.

Many Suffolk schools are working hard to improve the sustainability of their day-to-day activities, and we are always happy to support them in any way we can.



SPONSORSHIP

The Suffolk EfW was a bronze sponsor of the Suffolk's Greenest County Awards, which highlight individuals, schools, companies, and community groups that strive to make Suffolk the greenest and most sustainable county.



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Our plant manager presented the Waste Reduction and Recycling award to this year's winners, OBee CIC, a Centre for Environmental Education offering building courses that use natural and traditional methods.

The runners up in the category were Tools With A Mission, a charity organisation that recycles and refurbishes unwanted tools and equipment to send to developing countries in Africa, creating opportunities for self-employment and sustainable livelihoods.



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Out in the community



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

The facility once again participated in the national Heritage Open Days festival. This year's event proved to be very popular and both tours were fully booked by visitors keen to find out more about the energy-from-waste process and the role the facility plays in managing Suffolk's household waste. The visitors were given a presentation about waste and recycling and were able to ask questions of the site's community liaison manager and a member of the waste team from Suffolk County Council, before spending some time in the control room, and having the opportunity to interact with the operatives on duty. They were then taken on a guided tour of the facility, including the boiler house and ash processing facility.

Heritage Open Days received some very positive feedback about this year's event, with one visitor saying "I cannot rate this tour highly enough and must admit it is probably the best all round experience I have had of a Heritage Open Days event. We find most Heritage Open Days events very good but this one was outstanding in all aspects".

For more information about Heritage Open Days, visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk.



SUFFOLK SHOW 2024

At this year's Suffolk Show, SUEZ staff once again teamed up with the Suffolk Waste Partnership on the Suffolk Recycles stand. The theme was "Love Nature", and local schools submitted some impressive, recycled artwork that brightened up the marquee and showed how much the children of Suffolk care about the environment.

SUEZ brought along the grabber game, which had adults and children alike testing their skills in moving bags of "waste" from the bunker into the furnace! This game will be incorporated into our new-look visitor centre, where it will undoubtedly prove to be just as popular.



Out in the community

A DAY A YEAR TO VOLUNTEER

SUEZ's "Day a Year to Volunteer" initiative offers every employee a day's paid leave each year to volunteer for a charitable organisation of their choice.

The Suffolk EfW team once again embraced this opportunity, with various charities benefiting from the support offered, including Suffolk Owl Sanctuary, St Elizabeth Hospice, Orford Ness, Red Gables and the National Museum Arboretum.



Supporting future careers

INTERNSHIP

This year the Suffolk EfW once again provided a paid internship to a young person from the local area.



This was done through our 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. Our engineering intern spent the four weeks of the internship learning about the energy-from-waste process, as well as working closely with the plant's technical engineer to review data and produce accurate equipment schedules. The overall experience gave him a clearer insight into various aspects of the industry and helped to clarify his career goals.

APPRENTICES

Our apprentices are now in the second year of their Level 3 Diploma in Engineering at West Suffolk College, and have now been streamed into the operations, mechanical maintenance, and electrical maintenance departments.

Their manager reports that they are “making good progress, both at college and in the workplace, and have all shown a positive attitude and great potential”.

We are really pleased to report that one of our apprentices received the Rising Star award at SUEZ's recent energy conference!



WORK EXPERIENCE

Work experience is an invaluable way of supporting young people as they move towards the world of work. This year we hosted two Year 10 students for their work experience week, providing them with opportunities to get a taste of being in a professional environment and to spend some time shadowing technical staff in different departments of the energy-from-waste plant.

CAREERS EVENTS

Supporting SUEZ's aim to inspire and develop the next generation of green talent, we have continued to participate in a number of events at local schools and colleges presenting career options to young people. The team took part in the Suffolk Youth Climate Conference and the Green Careers Fair at Suffolk One College and joined Farm4Future in their area at the Suffolk Show. Farm4Future aims to inspire young people to consider working in food and farming and allied industries.

We once again joined in careers events at Claydon High School, supporting the school in their efforts to guide students through the journey of choosing a career and navigating the process of applying for employment.



Charity fund raising

SUEZ has continued the partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support, raising a grand total of £4,855 for the charity this year through various initiatives including the ever-popular Macmillan Coffee Morning. This year we have introduced a second corporate charity partner, British Heart Foundation (BHF).

In addition to supporting our corporate charities, we also participated in fundraising events held by charities in our local area.

ST ELIZABETH HOSPICE

We were enthusiastic supporters of St Elizabeth Hospice's inaugural pig race night, held in the Great Blakenham Village Hall. The site sponsored one of the races and staff members contributed by paying to be a "jockey" or "trainer"! The evening proved to be great fun and raised over £600 for the hospice.

HOME-START IN SUFFOLK

In September a team from the Suffolk EfW took part in the second Home-Start in Suffolk Sports Day. This event has grown since it started last year, with 18 local companies competing in a variety of sports day challenges such as wall climbing, rowing, tennis and cycling, as well as some fun events like the egg & spoon race and three-legged race!

Great fun was had by all and, although our team did not retain their title from last year, **the real winners were Home-Start in Suffolk who raised an incredible £11,112!** The charity will also receive £500 after being selected to benefit through the SCOPE Christmas Fund 2024. This money will help them to continue to provide practical, emotional support and friendship to Suffolk families.





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