



East Suffolk Greenprint Forum

Visit to Sita UK's £180million Energy from Waste plant at Great Blakenham

22nd September 2015

Ten members of the forum visited this plant to develop their understanding and pick up key messages to share with their neighbours, friends and groups they belong to.

The process:

Anything that goes in the black bins at our homes in Suffolk Coastal and Waveney is sent to the transfer station at Foxhall and then added to larger vehicles to take to Great Blakenham to be processed. Business waste from Suffolk and household waste from Norfolk is also added, with Suffolk Household waste always taking priority.

The plant is designed for a maximum of 269,000 tonnes of waste a year (there is no room for expansion), about 214,000 tonnes a year coming from Suffolk and Norfolk's waste with around 50,000 coming from elsewhere in the east of England (a planning restriction prevents it coming from London or further afield).

On site vehicles tip it into a 45ft bunker after which the waste is clawed into the incineration process (save a few inappropriate items which have been spotted by operators who sit in the control room and pulled out using a small claw).

An overview of the process can be found on <http://www.suffolkefw.co.uk/the-facility/how-it-works>.

Effort has been put into reducing emissions well below the limits the Environment Agency sets as part of their permit for the site to operate and into utilising as much of the resources produced onsite as possible to limit waste. Rainwater is collected in a pond and used to top up processes if necessary. As residues from the incineration process is sold on for use in road bed, asphalt paving, and concrete products. There are also hopes that plans for greenhouses nearby will progress to build to turn the heat produced into a further saleable commodity.

Key points

- It is vital, at the doorstep, to separate out materials that can be reused, composted, recycled or downcycled because there is no facility on site to do this and it remains better for the environment and more cost effective to follow those routes first.
- The visitor centre can accommodate groups of up to 20 at any one time. If you are interested in attending and haven't had the chance yet contact deborah.wargate@eastsoffolk.gov.uk and when I have at least 10 showing interest I will coordinate a visit. If you have your own group just go to <http://www.suffolkefw.co.uk/community/visitor-centre-and-book/>.