



Shovel-it Yourself Day, Felixstowe

10 May 2024



In celebration of [Compost Awareness Week 2024](#), residents were invited to bring a bag and a shovel and help themselves to free compost at this Shovel it Yourself event organised by East Suffolk Council with the support of the [Suffolk Waste Partnership](#).

10 tonnes of soil improver were donated by ESC's garden waste contractor, Envar. It was held in the ESC car park at The Grove in Felixstowe, close to the allotment gardens at Cowpasture off Candlet Road nearby facilitating access by allotmenters.



In addition to the team from East Suffolk Council, the event was supported by three volunteer [Master Composters](#) who engaged with a great many people about composting, bringing added value to the event.

The huge pile of compost began the day as tall as a family car and as long as the widths of 3 car parking spaces. But this did not deter anyone, with every last piece of compost getting taken away to be used in resident's gardens and allotments.

Some of the product was also taken for use by the new community gardening project Edible Felixstowe, which has been launched recently in the town by a voluntary community interest group aspiring to develop a network of community growing areas in the town. To find out more about Edible Felixstowe and how to get involved visit the pages on social media:

[Edible Felixstowe | Facebook](#)

[Edible Felixstowe \(@ediblefelix\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)



The event was promoted via a [press release](#) issued by ESC on 7 May and a [flyer](#) produced by the Greenprint Forum. Posts were circulated on social media by the Greenprint Forum and by East Suffolk Council, and many of the visitors told us they had found out about the event via these posts having been shared on local community pages and local gardeners' groups on Facebook. It was also promoted by Suffolk Recycling as part of their [webpage](#) to promote local activities and initiatives during Compost Awareness Week.



The soil improver was made from the garden waste that residents of the district place in their domestic garden waste bins, thus completing the circle from garden, to bin, to process, and back to the garden once more.

Envar process our garden waste via [open windrow composting](#) at their site at Lackford in west Suffolk. This process is essentially like a giant garden compost heap, where the material is able to compost naturally in the presence of oxygen – an aerobic process resulting in a compost product that meets the industry standards for compost [BSI PAS 100](#), certified by the [British Standards Institute](#). As the process takes place in the open, it is not licenced to accept any food wastes or animal by products. The usual end destination for the majority of the end product that Envar produce from our garden waste is for local agricultural and landscaping use.

The day was a resounding success, with the sun in full show the conditions were inviting to all, reflected in the fantastic turnout of people who came along. The team welcomed over 200 people helping themselves over the day, with a peak of 20 people enthusiastically filling bags, trailers, and wheelbarrows all at the same time!

As well as being an ideal opportunity to say thank you to residents for recycling, in the form of free soil improver, the event also presented us with an opportunity to engage with residents on the topic of composting and in particular promote home composting, which is after all the most environmentally sustainable way of dealing with compostable waste as it takes place at source without any need for transportation – with the added bonus to the gardener that they know exactly what went in.

Get into the composting habit !

Residents of Suffolk can get their green fingers on any one of a range of subsidised home composting systems ranging from ordinary compost bins for garden waste and fruit and vegetable waste, as well as other systems that can help deal with some cooked food waste too.

To find out more, visit:

[Home composting - Suffolk Recycling](#)

