

## ADEPT awards March 2018

### Category 3: Improving the environment, promoting health

#### **Suffolk Energy from Waste – Improving the Environment, Promoting Health**

Suffolk has consistently been amongst the best performing areas in the country for recycling, with a current recycling rate of over 50%. In partnership with SUEZ recycling and recovery UK and the local community, we have developed a long-term solution to divert waste from landfill, reducing the environmental and financial impact of managing the county's remaining 170,000 tonnes of non-recyclable household waste.

The move away from landfill was sought for 3 reasons: it is the worst environmental option for waste disposal due to greenhouse gas emissions, landfill tax costs were becoming prohibitive alongside a decrease in availability of landfill sites. In 2008 the council sought a new solution to manage the county's non-recyclable household waste to reduce these environmental and financial impacts.

In consultation with residents, the council chose energy from waste as the best way forward to manage Suffolk's non-recyclable household waste as it;

- is a cleaner and greener solution, and is subject to strict environmental controls
- would significantly reduce costs
- would meet the predicted future increases in waste due to Suffolk's population growth (capacity for 269,000 tonnes)
- is a proven and deliverable technology
- would provide local jobs and support local businesses

It was important that the people of Suffolk were on-board with the energy from waste solution, particularly those living nearby. We wanted to be open and honest throughout, to make sure people understood the proposal and to address their concerns on everything from traffic management to health issues. This was achieved through public consultation in a variety of ways including monthly meetings of a Community Liaison Group for local residents, which still continues to meet. The facility has been running at world-class efficiency levels since it opened in December 2014

By working together, we are;

- putting Suffolk's non-recyclable household waste to good use, generating power for the plant itself and exporting enough electricity to the national grid to supply 30,000 homes each year
- saving the equivalent of 75,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year compared to landfill
- saving £350 million of local tax payers' money over the 25-year contract
- providing a solution for Suffolk's business waste
- managing traffic and using delivery vehicles more efficiently to minimise disruption to local community

- educating and inspiring young people and residents through our innovative visitor centre and outreach programme
- providing our residents access to Suez Communities Trust, to fund local projects improving the life of residents and local communities
- providing 47 permanent jobs for local people and 250 temporary jobs during construction
- supporting the local economy, spending £1 million per annum with local suppliers and contractors

In addition:

- Exceptional design by Grimshaw, award-winning architects of the Eden Project
- First industrial building in East Anglia to achieve 'BREEAM outstanding' for highest environmental standards
- Used existing material on site from the old highways depot in the foundations and sustainable materials in the build
- Giant 'plastic pillow' roof as used in the Eden Project, increasing natural light and reducing the need for artificial lighting
- Landscaped using native plants, trees and hedges. Wetland area and extensive meadow to encourage wildlife
- Collected rainwater on site used in the energy from waste process
- Visitor centre by Designmap, creators of the award-winning Cutty Sark visitor centre. Full tours of the facility seeing first-hand how Suffolk's waste is processed to make energy