Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park
Creating greener waste solutions for Milton Keynes

February 2016

Construction work is nearing completion

It’s taken 21 months of construction and over 800,000 man hours on site, but Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park (MKWRP) is now nearing completion.

We started work back in June 2014 with demolition of the existing warehouse building on Dickens Road.

Now the finishing touches are being made to the newly-built MKWRP buildings, while inside we are making the final installations of the technology.

Amey’s team has already moved in to the office space and will now be overseeing the commissioning of the new technology.

This will include starting to take waste in to the site for testing from this spring, prior to commencing full operations in the autumn.

You can find out more about each of the technologies and when we will be beginning to test them over the page.

During the commissioning phases we will put the technology through various tests to check it works correctly. We don’t envisage this will create any disturbance to our neighbours but there may be some one-off noises or smells created. If we expect this to happen, we will aim to notify our nearest neighbours in advance.

Amey is working in partnership with Milton Keynes Council to build and operate MKWRP and we expect the council’s waste management team will move into their offices within the new facility in the next few months.

The aim is that MKWRP will then be fully operational from September. This means all black bag waste from homes in Milton Keynes will start coming to MKWRP instead of going to landfill – allowing us to recycle more and create energy from both organic waste and rubbish which cannot be recycled.

Overall, this will help us ensure less than 5% of Milton Keynes’ household waste will go to landfill in the future – a sustainable solution for everyone.

MKWRP in numbers

Over 1,300 metres of conveyor belts will transfer rubbish around the mechanical treatment hall.

Nine huge fermenters will hold organic waste for 28 days.

A one-way route will be used by vehicles around the site, making it safer and easy to access.

The mechanical treatment technology will be able to handle between 120,000 and 132,000 tonnes of waste per year.

The anaerobic digestion and advanced thermal treatment technologies will generate enough energy to power the equivalent of around 11,000 homes.

We expect to pull out at least 9% of rubbish from black sacks which can be recycled.

Taking a proactive approach to traffic

Milton Keynes’ waste collection lorries are cleverly divided – with one part taking black bag waste and the other taking pink sacks containing recyclables.

The pink sacks are already taken to the Materials Recycling Factory in Wolverton, which is just behind MKWRP.

This means the lorries will only be making an additional short trip, at the same time, over to MKWRP to leave the black sack waste.

In addition, the vehicle storage depot is on Colts Holm Road, which will also help to minimise traffic movements.

We will aim for refuse collection vehicles to use routes away from Wolverton residential areas where possible but - depending on the routes being undertaken and locations of the households they are collecting from - they may sometimes need to travel through the residential areas.

However, in line with our aim to be a good neighbour, our proposed routing for any HGVs arriving and leaving MKWRP is away from the main Wolverton residential area.

HGVs will be expected to turn left out of the site and follow Old Wolverton Road to the Haversham Roundabout junction before using the V6 along Grafton Street.
What happens next with testing?

Between now and September – when MKWRP becomes fully operational – we’ll be going through some rigorous testing phases.

These are the timescales for testing in each of the three different waste treatment areas:

1. Mechanical treatment

When black bag waste arrives at Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park it will enter our mechanical treatment hall. It will first go through a machine to open the bags and then into a trommel (which you can see at the back of this image as a yellow cylinder, with blue squares). Three trommels separate the waste by size, after which it goes along a series of conveyor belts and through various separating machines to make sure we extract recyclable and organic waste, such as food.

We expect to begin testing the mechanical treatment equipment in February. Then, from April, we will bring in waste in to the mechanical treatment hall for more thorough testing.

2. Anaerobic digestion

The new facility includes fully enclosed, anaerobic digestion technology. Nine fermenters will hold organic waste for 28 days. As the waste breaks down in the fermenters it produces a biogas, which is used as a source of renewable energy. Each fermenter can hold approximately 500 tonnes of waste. We’ll start putting waste in to the anaerobic digestion facility from March, which is earlier than when we will be introducing waste to the mechanical treatment and advanced thermal treatment areas. This is because the anaerobic digestion process requires time for the microscopic bugs (which help break down the waste) to start growing. We expect to begin generating power from the anaerobic digestion process in May.

3. Advanced thermal treatment

Any waste which is not recyclable or compostable will be used as a fuel in MKWRP’s advanced thermal treatment (ATT) plant. The ATT process produces a gas from the waste, which in turn is combusted to generate high temperature steam which creates renewable electricity in a turbine. We anticipate introducing waste to – and generating power from – the ATT plant in June.

Taking a look behind the scenes

Since we began building MKWRP we have run a Community Liaison Group (CLG), which gives interested residents and businesses an opportunity to meet the project team and ask questions.

We recently opened our doors to give members of the CLG a sneak peek at how the construction works are progressing.

The members donned high visibility and protective gear for a tour around the site, led by Amey Project Manager Peter Waller and members of Milton Keynes Council’s waste management team.

The visit took in all areas of the site, including a behind the scenes look at the state-of-the-art technology areas and the control room.

If you want to know more about the CLG or see the minutes from previous meetings, then check out the Community section at www.mkwasterecovery.com

Contact Us

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If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.