



**Community  
open day at  
Aylesbury  
treatment  
works.**

# Community open day at Aylesbury sewage treatment works.

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We opened the doors of Aylesbury sewage works in June 2017 to show members of the community what goes on behind the scenes. The open day was held to showcase all the improvements we've made since we were fined £19.75 million for pollution incidents between 2012 and 2014.

## Background.

Aylesbury sewage treatment works is one of six sites in the Thames Valley where pollution incidents have historically occurred. Since the pollution incidents, we've reviewed our processes and invested heavily in improving the reliability of the sewage works, as well as employing more staff in key operational roles.

The open day was held to show the public the progress we've made in preventing further pollution incidents. But there will always be more to do, and we'll continue to challenge ourselves to do even better in the future.

## Tour of the site.

Around 30 residents attended the day for a guided tour of the works, and were given talks on how wastewater is treated before being safely returned to the environment. Visitors were guided through the sewage treatment process from start to finish, with operational staff on hand to explain the equipment and processes involved.

Visitors also got to see one of the machines used to remove fatbergs - large masses of congealed fat, oils and greases, as well as other non-flushable items like wet wipes and nappies - which can block pipes and damaging equipment.



## Working in the community.

It's important for us to be open in the way we work with customers, our regulators and other stakeholders. As well as opening our sites, we've paid £1.5 million into our Community Investment Fund to improve the quality of rivers and the surrounding environment at locations affected by pollutions.

We also provide funding for the River Thames Conservation Trust. We have more than 30 treatment works operating in the River Thames catchment, and they're all very important for the health of the area's rivers. We also host water quality liaison meetings every 6 months. They focus on how our treatment works and networks are functioning and update on any suggested improvements.



Local community visiting the site.

"It has been absolutely fascinating. I didn't realise how big the plant was, and the level of detail that is put into the process, and how natural it all is.

There's no noxious smells, it's all very clean, and I'm really impressed by the education side of it as well, with the 'Bin it – don't block it' campaign. If you can see the mess flushing non-flushable items causes, I think it will make people stop and think."

- Andy Kirkham, resident.

