

## Meeting record

Subject	Eco Park Community Liaison Group
Date	Monday 20 October 2025
Location	Eco Park, 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor
Recorder	Will Hamill

## Present

Name	Initials	Organisation	Title / Role
Ken Snaith	KS		Resident, CLG Chair
Jason Benfield	JB	SUEZ	Plant Manager
Richard Watkins	RW	SUEZ	Environment and Industrial Risk Manager
Howard Tee	HT	Environment Agency	Installations Regulatory Officer
Derek Ferguson	DF	CVRA	Chair
Gareth Swain	GS	SUEZ	Regional Manager
Will Hamill	WH	SUEZ	Regional Communications Manager
Carl Phillips	CP	Shepperton RA	Chair
Andrea Koskela	AK		Resident
Jodi Johnston	JJ	Surrey County Council	Contract Performance Manager

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and apologies</b>	
	<p>KS welcomed members to the meeting and thanked those who joined the pre-meeting walk of Footpath 86, which is now officially open.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Sandra Dunn, Nigel Spooner, Richard Parkinson (RP) and Karen Howkins (via AK).</p> <p>Malcolm Robertson, having taken part in the footpath walk, withdrew for the CLG meeting itself.</p>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Approval of minutes from previous meeting and matters arising</b>	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 23 <sup>rd</sup> June were approved.	
<b>2.1</b>	<p><u>Footpath 86</u></p> <p>KS noted the completion of the action from the previous meeting with Footpath 86 officially open to the Public</p>	
<b>2.2</b>	<p><u>Fire alarms</u></p> <p>JB provided an update on fire alarms. There have been 17 activations since the 23<sup>rd</sup> June. SUEZ are reviewing the system regularly to minimise off-site disruption, while maintaining the highest safety standards.</p>	
<b>2.3</b>	<p><u>Permits for trade waste at Surrey CRCs</u></p> <p>RP confirmed the relevant guidance in the last meeting which has also been minuted; no further action required.</p>	
<b>2.4</b>	<p><u>Tree maintenance</u></p> <p>GS confirmed tree maintenance plans are being developed for implementation next year.</p>	
<b>2.5</b>	<p><u>Surrey/SUEZ contract</u></p> <p>AK raised when Surrey County Council's contract with SUEZ ends alongside the implications under any future unitary council structure.</p> <p>KS noted this was not an official action but was covered at the last meeting. Cllr Maureen Attewell had agreed to take this forward as a Surrey County Council matter.</p>	
<b>2.6</b>	<p><u>Revive Community Fund</u></p> <p>DF thanked SUEZ for the £4,000 grant from the Revive Community Fund, which has significantly improved Charlton Village Playpark.</p>	
<b>2.7</b>	<p><u>Introduction of Environment Agency representative</u></p> <p>GS introduced Howard Tee (HT), Installations Regulatory Officer for the Environment Agency. HT outlined his role covering gasification and AD regulation at the site, as well as broader work across incineration and combustion facilities in the region.</p> <p>CLG members introduced themselves for HT's benefit</p>	

3.0

Operational update

3.1

Gasification

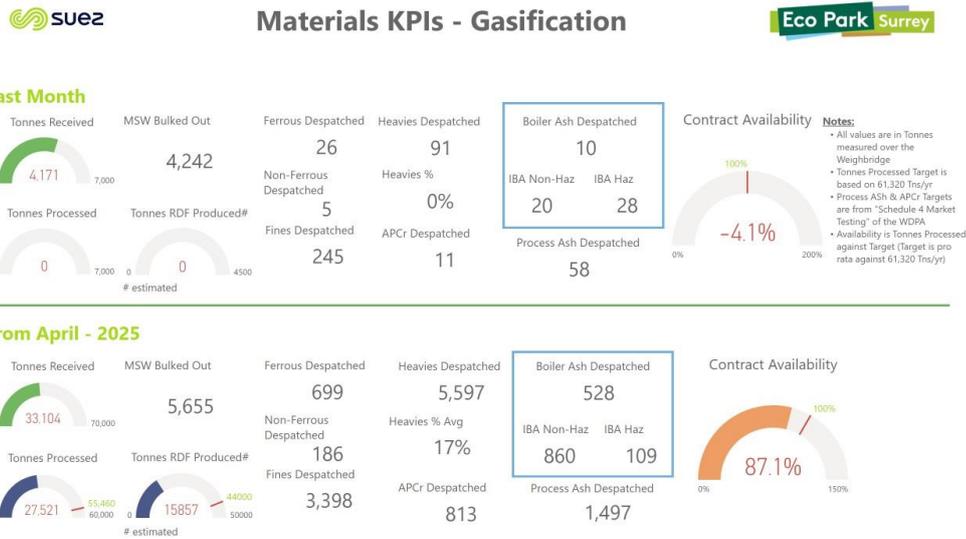


Figure 1

JB reported that the gasifier is performing well. However, some minor issues with dampers led to an earlier-than-planned shutdown in September by 4-5 days.

To date, 27,000 tonnes of residual waste have been processed in the gasifier for the first 5 months of the 2025/26 contract year, tracking positively against annual targets.

Emissions

RW confirmed emissions performance remains within permit limits. There were no emissions to report on for September due to the planned outage.

AK noticed a previous spike in Carbon Monoxide, which RW confirmed occurred in October 2024, and was within permitted levels, and had since stabilised.

GS referenced a discussion previously to a prior upward trend in particulate levels, originally raised by DF; RW advised that the levels had remained within compliance and the additional works completed during the March 2025 outage successfully returned performance to normal and reduced this trend.

Fire alarms

KS asked for clarification on the nature of recent alarms. JB explained how some alarms were triggered by power fluctuations and system resets, with the system being maintained by Ryttec.

KS noted that residents can be disturbed by alarms, particularly during night-time incidents. RW and JB confirmed that all but one have occurred during daytime, with one evening event, which was caused by a fire in the bulking bay of the RBF.

HT added that this issue appears unique to the Eco Park among comparable national facilities, likely due to proximity to local housing.

GS stated that the system's sensitivity and complexity have contributed to the issue but improvements continue to be made.

3.2

Anaerobic digestion

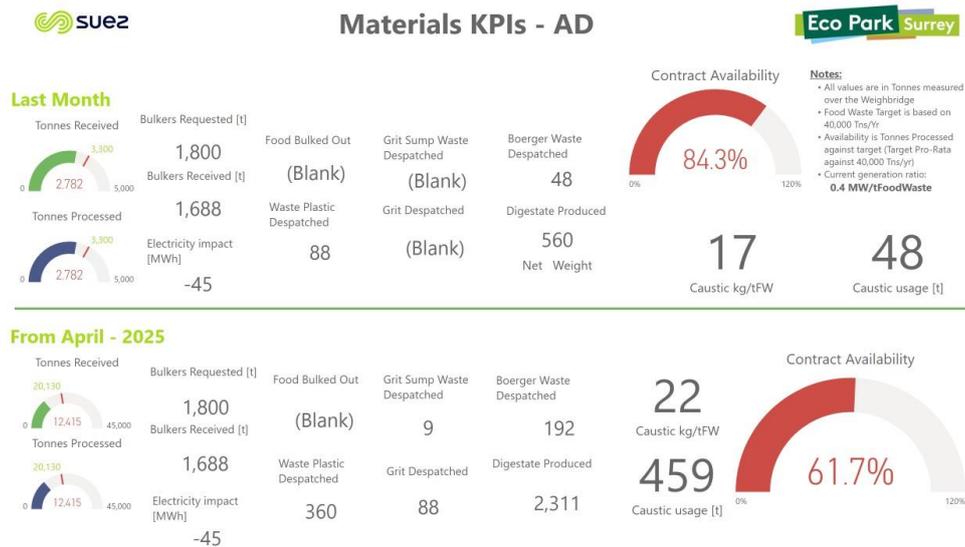


Figure 2

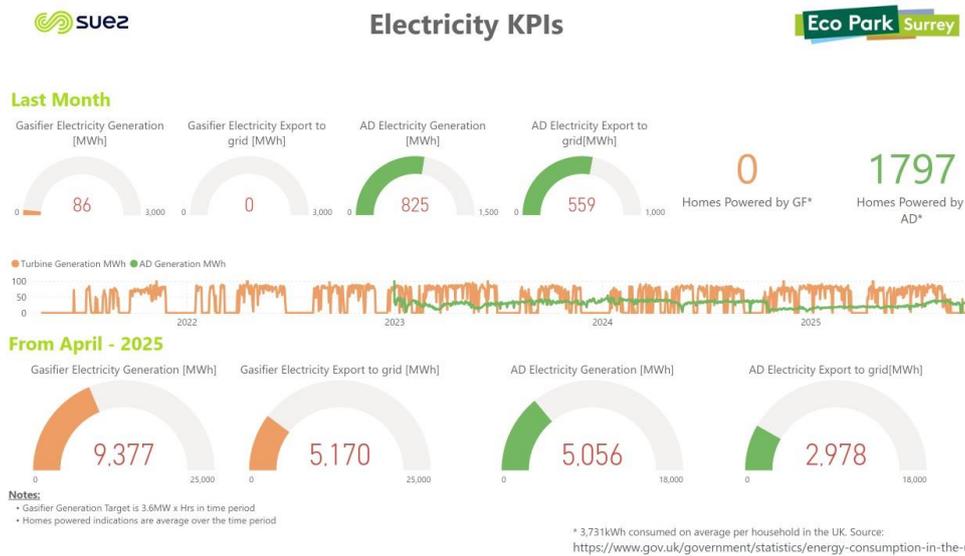


Figure 3

JB confirmed both digestion tanks have been operating at full capacity since July.

GS noted all of Surrey’s kerbside food waste is now processed at the Charlton lane facility.

KS queried contingency arrangements should the site experience downtime.

GS confirmed that the AD facility at Chertsey and other contracted facilities act as contingent outlets, maintaining operational resilience.

JB highlighted strong electricity generation figures for both facilities.

Complaints

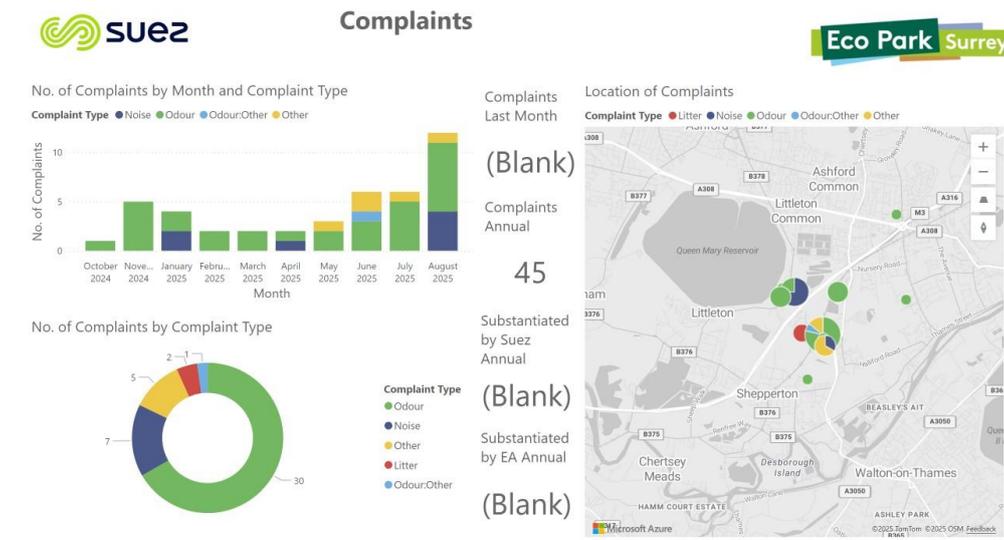


Figure 4

Odour and flies

RW reported a mixed picture for complaints in August but confirmed overall levels are lower than in previous years. Two fly complaints were received, with proactive on-site fogging and supplementary monitoring counts showing low fly numbers.

DF asked whether a change in fogging frequency had been made. RW confirmed that while the approach was similar to last year, treatments began earlier due to warmer spring weather.

GS said lessons had been learned from last year, adjusting the regime in line with seasonal patterns as opposed to strict calendar schedules, which has proved to be very effective.

Noise and odour verification

RW noted around six odour complaints this period, none substantiated following site and off-site checks.

Complaint response process

HT explained that all complaints are logged through the Environment Agency’s national system and investigated locally as appropriate. The Eco Park continues to present low complaint levels relative to comparable sites.

DF asked for clarification on how complaint investigations are managed. HT confirmed all are formally recorded, investigated by SUEZ, and closed off with documented responses to the Environment Agency.

GS agreed to include an example of a complaint and response process in the minutes as an illustrative reference. An example can be found below.

GS

*Request to investigate from the Environment Agency:*

Hi [REDACTED],

*I have two fly complaints (different people) as follows:*

	<p>Noticed: 17/05/2025 16:43 "Flies are inside the property Flies first happened 3 years ago." Postcode [REDACTED] NIRs 2388940</p> <p>Noticed: 18/05/2025 17:05 "hundreds of green bottles flies throughout the house and forced to keep windows and doors closed Caller first noticed it getting bad in the last 2hrs, is a reoccurring incident and occurred yesterday" postcode [REDACTED]</p> <p>So I think that is the first significant complaint this year on flies. Please can you investigate according to your Dec2024 PMP including 4.2. Monitoring Sector and specifically what your two weekly trends on numbers on-site looks like.</p> <p>Response from SUEZ to NIRs 2388940 and NIRs 2389150:</p> <p>Hi [REDACTED]</p> <p>My last visit to the site was Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May and while fly activity was noticeable, I wasn't concerned about the number of flies present given that the pest control contractor is now carrying out fly fogging at weekly intervals.</p> <p>The last fly count was completed on the 7<sup>th</sup> May and the last fogging visit was completed on the 18<sup>th</sup> May as per the attached reports from the contractor.</p> <p>The flies that were observed during the pest control contractors visit on 7<sup>th</sup> May were largely cluster flies, and the species that are observed most regularly on the count visits are Common House Flies, Lesser House Flies and Cluster flies. We don't generally see many Blue Bottle / Green Bottle flies.</p> <p>I've attached the location plan and windrose which shows that over the entire weekend of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May the wind direction was predominantly north easterly so this is unlikely to have assisted the spread of flies offsite towards receptors along the south eastern end of Charlton Lane.</p> <p>In respect of the complainants comments "hundreds of green bottle flies in the house" this would seem likely to be an exaggeration in the absence of other complaints, and if it were correct it would point to an alternative localised source given the wind direction and the absence of this species on our site.</p> <p>On the basis of the fly activity levels on site, the control regime in place and the wind direction at the time of the complaints, we consider the complaints unlikely to be associated with our activities on site.</p>	
4.0	<b>RBF and CRC Operations</b>	
4.1	<p><u>We Refuse Abuse</u></p> <p>GS discussed the increasing issue of public aggression toward site staff, noting a national campaign by SUEZ has been launched in response, gaining significant media attention; We Refuse Abuse.</p> <p>National data shows that assaults – verbal and physical – occur almost every week across SUEZ recycling centres. Locally, GS reported several verbal and physical incidents that had to be addressed in the Surrey contracted portfolio of sites.</p> <p>AK asked whether this trend has worsened; GS and JJ agreed that while most site users are respectful, the minority of aggressive behaviour has grown.</p> <p>Body-worn cameras have now been introduced for supervisors and gate staff.</p>	
4.2	<p><u>Medical incident</u></p> <p>GS shared the sad news that a fatal medical incident occurred on-site in September</p>	

	<p>for a member of the public. Staff followed all correct emergency protocols and the team was commended for professionalism during a traumatic event.</p> <p>GS reaffirmed that the staff have to deal with a wide range of issues on the site and that he was extremely grateful for the excellent way in which the trained staff responded to such a sad situation.</p> <p>GS reiterated the site's commitment to maintaining trained first aiders and defibrillators at all times.</p>	
<b>4.3</b>	<p><u>Reuse/OPAL</u></p> <p>GS highlighted recent operational team support for Leatherhead Trinity School benefiting from reuse shop items as part of their Outdoor Play and Learning initiative, since gaining platinum award status.</p>	
<b>4.4</b>	<p><u>Fire incidents</u></p> <p>GS confirmed two fires occurred in August. The first fire was contained within an RBF bay and extinguished quickly. The second involved a lithium-ion battery in a WEEE container and required temporary site closure. Both scenarios were managed swiftly and safely by on-site teams.</p> <p>KS queried fire hydrant coverage on site. RW confirmed multiple hydrants are fed by a dedicated water tank on site. RW also noted a Fire Prevention Plan is being finalised and shared with the Environment Agency.</p>	
<b>5.0</b>	<p><b>Communications</b></p>	
<b>5.1</b>	<p>RW reported a successful joint visit from the UK Health Security Agency and Environment Agency in September, which was well received.</p> <p>WH provided an update on the latest round of the Revive Community Fund, with a total of £17,500 available for distribution to local community projects across Surrey.</p> <p>Noting that more than £100,000 has now been awarded to charities since the scheme started, WH encouraged members to share details with local groups that may benefit from funding.</p> <p>WH shared recent BBC Radio Surrey and BBC Online coverage featuring SUEZ's reuse partnership with HMP Feltham, supporting the refurbishment of medical equipment for donation to the NHS and Ukraine.</p> <p>Further coverage is expected later in the year, showcasing wider ongoing partnerships with the prison service, which continue to demonstrate the social and environmental impact of reuse and repair activity across Surrey.</p> <p>WH also outlined SUEZ's continued involvement in employability programmes across the county showcasing opportunities within the waste and resources sector, alongside recent school visits to the Eco Park.</p>	
<b>6.0</b>	<p><b>Questions</b></p>	
<b>6.1</b>	<p>No questions were submitted ahead of the meeting.</p>	
<b>7.0</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p>	
<b>7.1</b>	<p><u>Freedom of Information (FOI) requests</u></p> <p>HT raised the volume of duplicate FOI requests being received across the waste sector, noting this consumes significant time and resource.</p> <p>GS emphasised the need for more efficient information sharing and public understanding that the Eco Park operates within strict regulatory controls.</p>	

7.2	<p>HT advised that compliance and performance reports will soon be made publicly available online, helping to reduce unnecessary duplication.</p> <p>HT also mentioned the Environment Agency's digital complaints and information platform, designed to streamline the process. WH agreed to put a link in the minutes, which can be found here: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/report-environmental-problem">https://www.gov.uk/report-environmental-problem</a></p> <p>GS confirmed to the group that WH is leaving SUEZ to a new challenge and wanted to thank him on behalf of the group for his excellent work and wish him good luck in his next venture.</p>	WH
8.0	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	A date of 23rd February 2026 at 2pm has been agreed for the next meeting.	