



Press Release

13 December 2011

Shanks opens new MBT waste plant in Carlisle

The start of a revolution in the way Cumbria deals with its household waste is marked today with the official opening of the new Northern Resource Park mechanical biological treatment (MBT) plant at Hespian Wood in Carlisle.

The new plant, a linchpin of the 25-year, £700m waste disposal contract agreed between Cumbria County Council and Shanks in 2009, will transform the way household waste is dealt with in North Cumbria.

Opening over three months ahead of schedule, the MBT plant will drastically reduce the volume of waste sent to landfill by a massive 80 per cent - leading to a major reduction in the amount of methane the county produces and will save Cumbria shelling out millions of pounds in landfill tax.

It is the first of two plants designed to deal with Cumbria's future waste disposal needs, with a second MBT plant currently under construction at Sowerby Woods Business Park in Barrow set to be up and running by April 2013.

Each year the county council deals with around 250,000 tonnes of household waste. Each MBT plant has the capacity to process 75,000 tonnes a year - meaning up to 150,000 tonnes of waste could be processed through the new plants. Just 12.5% of the waste that arrives on the MBT site ends up in landfill as a by-product of the process. Some waste, such as bulky non-recyclable items collected at Household Waste Recycling Centres, will still be landfilled directly but the total amount of Cumbrian waste going to landfill will reduce from around 150,000 tonnes down to around 30,000. A further 100,000 tonnes of waste will still be recycled directly by households via kerbside collections or recycling drop-off points.

Shanks

Making more from waste

Cllr Tim Knowles, Cumbria County Council's cabinet member for environment, said:

"It's a massive step forward for Cumbria. This new MBT plant will revolutionise the way we deal with waste in the north of the county and ensure we have a greener, more cost-effective system of managing rubbish for years to come. Sending large amounts of waste to landfill is quite simply no longer a viable option economically or environmentally.

"While excellent progress has been made in reducing, reusing and recycling waste in Cumbria, this diversion of waste from landfill via the MBT plant will not only have major environmental benefits by reducing methane emissions but will also ensure Cumbria meets Government recycling targets and avoids millions of pounds of the additional costs of landfilling."

Ian Goodfellow, Shanks' UK Managing Director, said:

"Shanks takes great pride in delivering a sustainable solution to Cumbria's waste ahead of schedule. We are pleased that Cumbria County Council and its residents can now share the benefits of making more from waste, diverting more material from expensive and harmful landfill to increased recycling and fuel production."

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