

'Reed' All About It - Fields Of Green Will Help Treat Hulland Ward's Sewage

Thursday 13 March, 2014

Fields of green reeds will help us to treat sewage from Hulland Ward, a small Derbyshire village. The sewage treatment method - called vertical reed beds - has been introduced from France and will be used in the UK water industry for the first time. It is perfect because it blends in with the rural environment, provides a natural habitat for wildlife and is safer for workers.?

Before work begins in May, plans to improve Hulland Ward's sewage treatment works were unveiled to the local community. Feedback has been positive because - as well as blending in with the environment - there won't be a lot of disruption while improvements are carried out by our contract partner, MWH.

The work is part of wider plans to improve the land and water environment of the Ecclesbourne Valley and the reed beds will bring benefits to the area. When the system is established, they'll produce an environment that allows micro-organisms to digest sewage meaning that sludge only has to be removed once every decade, rather than on a monthly basis. This helps to prevent pollution, save money and lessen road noise for residents. As well as reducing the carbon footprint of the treatment processes.

Severn Trent Water's senior programme engineer, Daniel Cunliffe, explains:

"We have been planning the improvements to Hulland Ward's sewage treatment works for a couple of years. We went to France to see the reed beds working over there. They are the perfect solution to allow us to treat sewage for a small community in an environmentally friendly way. They save money in operational costs too.

"We don't expect the local community will notice a lot of noise or disruption while the improvements are made to the sewage treatment works. When the reed beds are established they'll blend into the landscape and will help to reduce odour. We also save power because gravity moves the sewage through the majority of the process. When they're working, we expect to demolish parts of the old sewage treatment works and we hope it'll eventually look like a field of crops."

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