

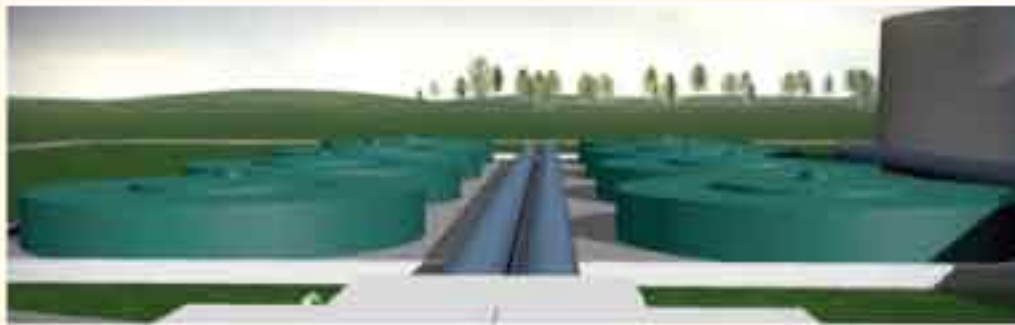


How do we treat the poo?

HOW DO WE TREAT THE POO?

Anglian Water treats the **wastewater** and **sewage** from more than five million customers a day. The **sewage treatment works** are connected by more than 32,000 kilometres of pipework.

Up to the 20th Century, human sewage could be put straight on the fields and gardens. It was called 'night soil' and in some places, the **night soil man** was employed to collect it and deal with it. This was still an improvement from Elizabethan times when the contents of pots were just thrown out of the window onto the street! Now the contents of our toilets and other waste from our homes, schools, farms and factories are sent to the **sewage treatment works** where a lot of work is done to do to clean it up.



1



First...

The **sewage** goes through **screens**. This gets rid of large items like wood, paper, cloth or plastic.

2



The **sewage** goes into **settling tanks** and most of the solids sink to the bottom. Chemicals are added to speed this up. The water is taken from the top leaving **sludge**.



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How is the sludge dealt with?

Bacteria can be added to the tanks in the same way you would add worms to a compost heap. They get to work on the **sludge** and begin to break it down. In the past the **sludge** would have been dumped at sea or in landfill, but now this is illegal. The **sludge** can be dried to produce **biosolids**. More than half is put on agricultural land.



How is this water cleaned further?

This water is still dirty and needs further treatment before it can be returned to rivers. A rotating arm sprays the dirty water over a bed of special stones and other materials. There are millions of tiny living things living on these stones and their favourite food is found in the dirty water! They remove what we are trying to get rid of, leaving the water much cleaner and ready to be returned to the river - all for free!

