

A few years ago at Muntons Bridlington Site a wholly natural water treatment was installed that utilised the filtration properties of reeds. We already had a water treatment plant in place but at times the volumes of water we needed to discharge coincided with low tides on the nearby blue flag beach. Even though our effluent was treated to acceptable standards we were aware of the possibility of adverse publicity if it was thought that Muntons 'effluent' was seen to flow onto the sand. We therefore wanted to use a lunar discharge (linked to the phases of the moon) which matched the high tides. We could have simply installed storage lagoons but decided to plant reeds in the storage lagoon that would naturally clean the water up even more before discharge.

Natural water processing Waste generating biodiversity



£105K

The total cost of the reed beds was £105K but the benefits were that the local EA were highly impressed with our efforts and did not impose any further restrictions on our effluent consent. Our reed beds are very easy to maintain and simply need cutting back at periodic intervals as in the picture below.

An added benefit of installing a reed bed was an increase in biodiversity by encouraging insects and butterflies which were also beneficial to local bird life on the RSPB Bempton cliffs nearby. Local schools pay us visits to learn how industry can encourage biodiversity and we have been praised by the local RSPB officer for our contribution to protecting a valuable habitat.

Catching them young talking about water treatment and wildlife



Bempton Cliffs, RSPB protected site



Trevor Charlton, site manager at the RSPB's Bempton Cliffs Nature Reserve "The reed bed will support a scarce but valuable habitat, providing a new breeding and food source environment for a range of reedbed birds, plants and insects"