# Residents face ongoing issues with the Whitlingham whiff in Norwich



Residents in and around Norwich have been experiencing a persistent and growing issue with unpleasant odours, widely attributed to the Whitlingham Water Recycling Centre located in Trowse, on the outskirts of the city. The stench, colloquially referred to as the “Whitlingham Whiff,” has become a notable concern for local communities, with reports of the smell spreading further across the city, particularly due to recent warm weather and changing wind patterns.

The Whitlingham Water Recycling Centre, managed by Anglian Water, processes tens of thousands of litres of sewage daily. Its operation, including some recent maintenance work which has now been completed, is believed to be linked to the increase in odour problems. A spokeswoman for Anglian Water stated, “Our Whitlingham Water Recycling Centre receives tens of thousands of litres of sewage every day, so keeping odours to a minimum is something we take seriously. Recently, we have had to complete some annual maintenance work at Whitlingham which may cause a spike in odours. The work has now been completed and, due to the nature of the site and the job it’s there to do, there will inevitably be some smells from time to time.”

The issue has been longstanding, especially impacting residents of Thorpe St Andrew, a nearby community. Ian Mackie, the county councillor for Thorpe St Andrew, who has coined the term “Whitlingham Whiff,” commented on the situation, highlighting the impact on residents' quality of life. “This has been a longstanding issue for residents, particularly in some parts of Thorpe St Andrew, who have encountered these quite potent smells on a regular basis, which does impact on quality of life. We are continuing to call for Anglian Water to do all they can to mitigate these smells.” He also noted that shifting wind directions often exacerbate the problem, and that attempts to mask the odours using chemicals can sometimes intensify the smell rather than alleviate it.

An odour specialist from Exeon, a clean air solutions company, offered further insights into the nature of the odour problems. The specialist explained that bad smells typically originate from the decomposition of organic matter in the sewage processing infrastructure, including inlet works, channels, and tanks, especially where water is disturbed. The recent warm weather has accelerated these processes, making odours like hydrogen sulphide more volatile and noticeable. “Hot weather speeds up decomposition and increases the volatility of gases, making odours like hydrogen sulphide more noticeable in surrounding areas,” the specialist said.

Anglian Water encourages residents to report any spikes in odour to assist in managing and addressing the issue. Customers can contact Anglian Water through their Facebook page or by calling the customer services number, 03457 145 145.

The ongoing situation with the Whitlingham Water Recycling Centre and its effects on local communities continues to draw attention, with residents and officials monitoring the impact of weather conditions and operational practices on the frequency and intensity of the odours experienced around Norwich.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cq821xkyky7o> - This article discusses residents in Thorpe, Norwich, experiencing unpleasant odours attributed to the Whitlingham Water Recycling Centre, leading to complaints and intervention by local MP Alice Macdonald.
2. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/22381917.norwich-mps-call-action-sewage-works-odour-problem/> - This report highlights Norwich North MP Chloe Smith's call for Anglian Water to resolve the persistent odour issues from the Whitlingham Sewage Treatment Works affecting Thorpe St Andrew residents.
3. <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/23650986.norwich-folk-complain-foul-smell-anglian-water-site/> - This article details complaints from Thorpe St Andrew residents about the 'disgusting' smell from Anglian Water's Whitlingham Sewage Treatment Works, with locals avoiding outdoor activities due to the odour.
4. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/24549868.norwich-mp-intervenes-amid-complaints-horrendous-smell/> - This piece covers MP Alice Macdonald's intervention amid complaints of a 'horrendous' smell from the Whitlingham sewage treatment plant, with residents describing the odour as 'insufferable' during recent months.
5. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/20726913.anglian-water-asked-step-caister-pong-returns/> - This article reports on residents in Caister-on-Sea experiencing a return of unpleasant odours from the Anglian Water Sewage Treatment Works, prompting calls for action from local authorities.
6. <https://faq.anglianwater.co.uk/article/qed94899_node779150/report-a-bad-smell> - This page provides information on how residents can report unpleasant smells they believe are coming from Anglian Water's sewer network, including contact details and reporting procedures.
7. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25123646.the-whitlingham-whiff-returned-norwich/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data