

The largest Cannon Hygiene operation is in the UK, making it the obvious home for the first Envirocomp facility outside of New Zealand. OCS/Cannon Hygiene is working with the Environment Agency to find a suitable site.

The first plant is due to open next year and will process around 12,000 tonnes annually. The plan is to build 10 more within the next 5-10-years.

"We want to achieve nationwide cover," says Andy Band, Envirocomp director. "We are looking to establish natural coverage in line with our Cannon Hygiene business. It will depend on scalability and uptake."

In New Zealand, Envirocomp collects waste from households so the UK model is different. But OCS/Cannon Hygiene has not ruled out offering this service to local authorities.

The nappies are first shredded and then composted over 14-16 days using HotRot's in-vessel composting tech-



Left: Dr Nick Smith, minister for the environment, with the Upston family; composting nappies (above)

nology. The plastics are removed from the resulting material and fed into EfW applications. The resulting organic matter is pathogen free and can be used in non-food agricultural and horticultural projects.

So it is developing end markets for this process that will determine the success of the project. "You have to be able to close the loop, do something with the output to make it a beneficial process," says Jeremy Jacobs, manag-

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ing director of the Association for Organics Recycling. "Although, taking anything out of landfill is clearly excellent news because of the environmental impact."

With 600,000 tonnes of AHP waste produced each year in the UK alone, all previously going to landfill, there's more than enough to deal with.

As Band says: "Anything that promotes the environmental agenda is to be welcomed."

Meanwhile, Karen Upston, who continues to work for Envirocomp, finally admits that it has not been an "easy ride" but says the "sleepless nights" have been worth it. ■

Katie Coyne is a freelance journalist

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