

Veolia Westminster's behind-the-scenes operation supports historic VE Day parade

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[Veolia](#), in partnership with Westminster City Council, played an integral role in the VE (Victory in Europe) Day 80 parade that took place last week. The parade saw a military procession march from Whitehall to Buckingham Palace, followed by a Red Arrows flypast to honour the 80th anniversary of the end of World War Two.

The procession of 1,300 troops, cadets and horses covered over a mile of ground, with sand deployed at varying points across the route. Eighty bags of sand were spread along the route to ensure the health and safety of participants and spectators by protecting the horses from slippery drain covers, and enabling carriage wheels to turn corners more easily.

Once the procession was over, dedicated Veolia Westminster street cleansing teams were deployed to clear most of the sand from the streets and a medal sweep took place to collect any lost British Army issued service and gallantry medals as well as other belongings from parade participants before mechanical sweepers came in to clear the last of the sand.

As with any big event, a dress rehearsal took place in the early hours of Saturday morning with full military presence to ensure timings for the practice cleanse and sanding were spot on for the actual parade. Operatives then worked around the clock to ensure that the streets were sparkling for the thousands of spectators throughout the day. Following the clean-up, the event route was flushed to clear the remaining grains of sand in time for the roads to open up once again.

Scott Edgell, Divisional Head of Municipal Operations at Veolia Westminster said: "I'm incredibly proud of our contribution to this historic event and it was lovely to see applause from the spectators in recognition

of the team's hard work.

"From deploying and removing sand to protect the horses and carriages, to ensuring pristine streets for thousands of spectators, our operatives worked continuously to ensure the event was successful. This seamless operation, coordinated with Westminster City Council, is a testament to our team's dedication to the City and I am honoured that we could play such a vital role in the parade."

Cllr Max Sullivan, Cabinet Member for Streets said: "This momentous VE Day 80 celebrations were a fitting tribute to those who served in the Second World War and we're proud to have played our part in delivering such a well-organised and dignified event. Our close partnership with Veolia ensured that the route was not only prepared to the highest safety standards but was also left spotless for the public to enjoy. We are especially grateful to the teams who worked through the night and into the day to make this event a success for all participants and spectators."