Bolton House Road Newsletter – April 2026

Hello,

Following our previous newsletter sent last month, we wanted to provide you with the latest updates on activity around the Bolton House Road illegal waste site.

Key multi-agency updates:

- Government's Waste Crime Action Plan commits to clearing illegal waste site in Bickershaw
- Letter written to Secretary of State for Environment to understand next steps to clearance
- Wigan Council secures closure order to Bolton House Road waste site, preventing access to anyone apart from certain agencies.

Commitment to remove waste:

As I'm sure you're aware, there has been a significant update in recent weeks, with the government announcing that it will clear the Bolton House Road site after identifying it as one of the three worst illegal waste dumps in the country.

The announcement came as part of the government's new Waste Crime Action Plan last month, which aims to crack down on illegal waste dumping after increasing reports across the country.

As we said in our previous newsletter, a contractor had been appointed to clear the waste that was placed onto council-owned land at Diggle Flash. However, as there is now a commitment to clear the entire site, covering a much larger area, we are waiting on further information about the funding from government before any works commence.

The multi-agency group would prefer for one contractor to be appointed to clear the whole site so the work can be co-ordinated to best minimise any impact on the nearby community.

Unfortunately, we have not had any further details about the next steps to remove the waste following the government update. This is why on Friday 27th March, the Leader of Wigan Council, Councillor David Molyneux MBE, wrote to Emma Reynolds MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to emphasise the need for further information to allow us to remove the waste as quickly as possible.

Not only is this imperative as we get closer to the summer months, we are also acutely aware of the length of time that neighbouring residents, the local primary school, and wider community have had to endure the detrimental impacts of this waste site.

We asked the Secretary of State that information about next steps be provided as a priority to the council or via the Environment Agency. As soon as we know any more, you will be the first to know.

Wigan Council has been working as part of a multi-agency partnership group to minimise the impact of the waste site on the public and the surrounding environment, and to make sure that we were always ready to move quickly should funding be made available.

For example, part of the work that has taken place has been to sample the waste so that we know its volume, make-up and approximate weight. Licensed disposal routes have also been identified to ensure the waste can be safely disposed at the appropriate facilities.

Closure order secured:

Following the government's announcement on Friday 20 March, Wigan Council returned to Wigan and Leigh Magistrates Court the following week to secure another closure order for the Bickershaw waste site.

The closure order goes further than the previous one secured by the council - this order prevents access to anyone apart from the Council, Environment Agency (EA) and other named agencies. No other landowners can gain access as the preparations to remove the waste get underway.



The (EA) also secured a six-month restriction order to prevent access at the neighbouring 'Old Cricket Ground' in February, following reports of scrap metal being moved onto the site.

Breaching either of these orders is a criminal offence. More information about how to report breaches can be found below.

Continuing work:

While the government's commitment to clear the waste has been very welcome, the multi-agency partnership will continue to work together on Bolton House Road until the waste is fully removed and the site is made safe and secure.

The multi-agency group will carry on its weekly meetings as part of the recovery operation, and the site will continue to be monitored following the closure order. As mentioned previously, breaching this order is a criminal offence.

The site will continue to be monitored for illegal activity, safety concerns, vermin reports, and environmental impacts, which will also carry on when the waste is being removed.

The EA is continuing with its significant criminal investigation into waste deposits at the site. Multiple lines of enquiry have been followed in their investigation to hold those responsible for this situation to account and the EA has interviewed individuals under caution who are potentially involved in this illegal activity.

We want to ensure you that we remain committed to the site being cleared as soon as it practically can, and with the help of our multi-agency partnership, we intend to bring those responsible to justice. Thank you for your continued patience.

Further information:

The EA continues to gather evidence and members of the public who have information about the waste deposited on the site are encouraged to report any information on its incident hotline on **0800 80 70 60.**

Alternatively, if you want to report a crime or illegal activity anonymously you can ring Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111.** You can report suspicious activity to the police via 101 or the live chat function here: Contact us | Greater Manchester Police. Immediate danger can be reported to the police by calling **999.**

Residents can report odours via the council's statutory nuisance reporting process here.

Completed odour monitoring logs can also be submitted to Angela Addis, the single point of contact (SPOC), at Angela.Addis@wigan.gov.uk

Contact NHS **111** or your GP if you have concerns about your individual circumstances and require health advice.

We will keep you updated via our Newsletter, and you can access further information on our Frequently Asked Questions page on the council's website.

You can contact Angela as your Neighbourhood Manager representative at Angela.Addis@wigan.gov.uk

How to report breaches of the closure and restriction order:

If you see anyone **breaching the closure order at the Bolton House Road waste site**, please contact the **police via 101 or the live chat function** here: Contact us | Greater Manchester Police.

On the live chat function, we suggest saying something similar to the below:

"I am a resident of Bolton House Road, Bickershaw, Wigan, WN2 4AB, which is the location of an illegal waste facility. There is someone currently on the site, potentially moving waste. I have previously been told by the Environment Agency to alert you as soon as I witness activity of this this nature. *[We suggest you put in here more detail of what you have seen]*. I will also now call the Environment Agency to report it to them".

You may say something similar to the above when reporting to the Environment Agency. If you see someone breaching the restriction order at the neighbouring Old Cricket Ground, you may say something similar to the below:

"I'd like to report illegal waste activity at the Old Cricket Ground, next to the site at Bolton House Road in Bickershaw, Wigan. This is an illegal waste site being dealt with by the Environment Agency, and local officers have asked me to report incidents to this hotline. I have the National Grid Reference: SD6286401587".

Please note that calls to the EA will be picked up by the call handler who will record your information and pass it to the Duty Officer, who will decide what action the local team will take. You can say *"the local team are already aware of this information"* if the call handler asks questions that do not seem relevant to the situation.