Bolton House Road Newsletter – October 2026

Hello,

Following our previous newsletter, we wanted to provide you with the latest updates on activity around the Bolton House Road illegal waste site and invite you to **meet the contractor on Monday 9 November** to hear how they'll manage the clearance and minimise disruption.

Last month, the council announced that **Acumen Waste Services Limited** was chosen as its preferred contractor to clear the illegal waste site at Bolton House Road, subject to contract.

Contracts have now been **officially signed** after a compulsory standstill and Acumen have **started preparatory works** on site to remove the illegal deposited waste.

Procurement and waste clearance:

After a robust process to pick a supplier led by the council, Acumen is now in the process of **bringing in equipment and clearing vegetation** to allow waste to start to be removed in the coming weeks.

You may have seen activity on site but their main entrance and exit is through Smiths Lane and the track through Diggle Flash to the rear of the illegal waste site, rather than Bolton House Road.

Acumen has **expertise in clearing sites like this**, having cleared many similar sites, most recently working with DEFRA and the Environment Agency at Kidlington in Oxfordshire and at Hoad's Wood in Kent.

Waste removal information:

Following recent mobilisation, Acumen will be setting up measures to **manage traffic** at the exit onto Smiths Lane to safely manage trucks leaving site. Traffic lights will operate only when trucks are leaving site but it will stop traffic on Smiths Lane.

Clearance works are expected to commence in November 2026 and run into spring 2027. To ensure the clearance works are completed as efficiently and quickly as possible, Acumen expects to remove up to 25 loads of waste per day.

All drivers will be inducted into the site specific rules, including what is expected of them once they leave the site, and will also try to **minimise congestion** around key rush hour times as much as possible.

Removal of waste will generally be undertaken between 07:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday. There is no routine waste removal work planned for weekends or Bank Holidays.

It is expected that there will be some odour experienced as the waste is removed. Alongside good operational practices including **sealing up of the waste and sheeting of all lorries**, Acumen will install deodorisers to reduce these impacts as much as possible.

Despite these mitigation measures, it is advisable for residents to keep windows closed where possible whilst removal works are ongoing. Further information on odour and public health can be found on our Bolton House Road FAQ page online.

No rodent activity is currently observed at the site but the Environmental Clerk of Works will **routinely monitor for signs of infestation**, including sightings, burrows, droppings, and runs. If evidence of significant rodent activity is identified, the council will engage pest control to implement appropriate control measures.

Fire risk is being actively managed, with 20 temperature probes currently installed at the site to provide real-time information on conditions across the waste stockpiles. The probes are monitored by both Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) and Acumen, with trigger alarms set to warn of potential hot spots.

GMFRS and Acumen have worked closely to ensure the potential for fire is managed through good operational practices, including holding 80,000 litres of water on site. **There is also a 24/7 emergency response plan should an emergency situation arise.**

This is now an active construction site and brings with it all the **safety hazards that can be expected** on such works. These include moving vehicles, heavy plant and excavations. The site is securely fenced, with signage provided to warn of these hazards. Please work with us to ensure that trespass does not occur at the site.

Throughout the process of waste removal, Acumen and sub-contractors will continue to **sample the waste and use licenced routes out of the site**, ensuring safety is at the heart of everything they do.

‘Meet the contractor’ residents meeting

We’d like to invite residents to St James and St Elizabeth church, 635 Bickershaw Ln, Wigan WN2 4AE at 6PM on Monday 9 November.

The contractor will be there to talk to residents about how they’ll safely remove waste from site and answer any questions.

We also want to continue engaging with local residents about how we can ensure **a cleaner, safer future for the area** once waste is completely removed from the site.

Criminal investigation and ongoing monitoring:

The Environment Agency continues to lead a **complex investigation** into who is responsible for the illegal waste dumping at Bolton House Road, with **five arrests made in** connection with the site, **on suspicion of environmental, fraud and money laundering offences.**

There is also a **full-time security presence** across the site, including guards, CCTV, sensor lighting and perimeter alarms.

Health and Wellbeing Support

We understand that living close to the illegal waste site and seeing clearance work may be worrying for you and may affect your wellbeing.

To support residents affected by the site, a community health support event will take place on **Thursday 5 November from 9am - 12 noon**. This is the first step in **providing ongoing support**. This is a drop in session that any resident can attend, even just for a chat. Further help will be available as we learn more about what local residents need.

Local Primary Care Networks (PCN's), Health First and GP Alliance are working together to run the event. You will be able to access health and wellbeing services at consultation units on or near Bolton House Road.

The services available will include:

- NHS Health Checks
- Mini Health Checks
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Outstanding Annual Reviews
- Asthma Reviews
- Low-level Mental Health & Wellbeing Support
- Social & Community support and signposting

Your GP practice or local primary care network will contact you to invite you to book an appointment the wellbeing event. There is no pressure to book an appointment but at

the event, you **can speak to a healthcare professional about any concerns** you have about your physical or emotional wellbeing, and find out what support is available.

We will also be knocking on doors to share information, **hear your views** and help you complete a health and wellbeing survey. Your feedback will help us understand your experiences and provide support that meets your needs.

We are working with partners to **provide more wellbeing support for residents.** This includes a 12-week programme of free gym, swimming and exercise classes. We are also developing a community wellbeing walking programme to help you stay active, meet other people and look after your mental wellbeing.

You can also meet the **Community Link Worker** at **Abram Community Centre** for a **drop-in every Monday from 11.30am to 12.30pm**. They can offer practical advice, wellbeing support, and help residents connect with relevant health, community and support services.

Angela remains your main contact for Bolton House Road. You can contact her for wellbeing support, general advice, or information about the illegal waste site, and to complete odour monitoring logs. Angela can be contacted at Angela.Addis@wigan.gov.uk.

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 online. Immediate danger can be reported to the police by calling **999.**

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 also contact Angela for any further questions you may have.