Bolton House Road Newsletter – September 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.

On Friday 18 September, the **council announced that it has appointed Acumen Waste Services Limited** to clear the illegal waste site at Bolton House Road, subject to contract with **work to get underway on-site next month.**

The Environment Agency also announced in August that they had made **four arrests** in connection with illegal waste dumping at Bolton House Road.

Procurement process:

As previously explained, **Wigan Council has been leading the procurement process** to find a suitable contractor to clear the waste at Bolton House Road.

Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey from the last newsletter which asked questions about how you wanted the clearance to operate (days of the week, hours etc). We fed your responses into what we asked from the contractor.

Following a robust tender process, **Acumen Waste Services Limited has been chosen as the preferred contractor.** There will now be a compulsory standstill period with the contract expected to be signed in early October, and **on-site work to remove the waste planned to start in October.**

The decision for the council to lead this process, rather than the EA or DEFRA, was made by the multi-agency group to ensure that the **community was at the heart of the decision making**.

Those bidding were asked to explain how they would **safely remove the waste** and manage traffic and odour impacts as the waste is cleared, with the aim of minimising disruption to the community as much as possible.

Although we would have liked to have started waste removal shortly after the government announcement in March, a project of this magnitude is incredibly complex and has needed the help of many partners to ensure that **appropriate funds are delivered**, the **most suitable contractor is appointed,** and we are **fully prepared** to move ahead with safe waste removal.

Our tender approach has ensured **transparency, value for money, and legal compliance**. It also reduces the risk of legal challenge which could delay the project even further.

Once the clearance is complete, this is not the end. We want to continue engaging with local residents about how we can ensure **a cleaner, saferfuture for the area .**

Criminal investigation and ongoing monitoring:

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

This follows the previous arrest of a 58-year-old man from the Birmingham area who was arrested in connection with illegal dumping at sites across England, including Bolton House Road. He has also **arrested on suspicion of environmental, fraud, and money laundering offences, and later** released under investigation.

Meanwhile, **a closure order and a restriction order remain in place** at Bolton House Road and the neighbouring Old Cricket Ground respectively, to prevent access. The site will continue to be monitored for **illegal activity, safety issues, vermin and environmental impacts**, including during the clearance work.

Multi-agency work:

As stated in previous newsletters, the council has been working with the Environment Agency (EA), the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), as well as other partners such as United Utilities (UU), Greater Manchester Police (GMP), and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMRS) to **manage this illegal site, protect residents, and minimise the impact on the public and the environment.**

As part of the multi-agency work to prepare for safe waste removal, independent qualified organisations have visited the site over the past year to **sample the waste, water, and odour**.

Other work has involved **identifying licenced disposal risks** and ensure that all agencies are pulling in the same direction as we prepare for safe waste removal.

Meanwhile, the fire and rescue service and the council have worked together to help to **manage any potential fire risks** at the site during the warmer weather. Part of this work has involved GMFRS flying drones over the site to look for any ‘hotspots’ in the waste

and probes have been inserted into the waste at various points to remotely monitor temperature levels.

Water tanks have been put in place around the site to enable the fire and rescue service to act quickly and **prevent the spread of any fire,** with contracts also in place to bring diggers to the site and urgently move waste in case of a fire. **Security** is now on site 24/7, giving the multi-agency group an extra pair of eyes with support to spot any emerging fire risks.

Waste clearance consultation:

As explained in our previous newsletter, a consultation was launched to hear feedback about on how the waste removal works should be carried out.

This survey has now ended. Your responses have been reviewed and will **help to inform decisions** on topics such as working hours, traffic management, vehicle routes, and how residents are kept updated throughout the project.

The feedback has also been a major consideration for the successful contractor, ensuring **local concerns and preferences are considered** wherever possible.

Health and Wellbeing Support

While the multi-agency group's assessment remains that the illegal waste site presents a low risk to public health, we recognise that the presence of the site and the uncertainty surrounding its resolution continue to affect some residents' wellbeing.

To help support those affected, we are continuing to strengthen the health and wellbeing support available to the local community. This includes **access to a dedicated Community Link Worker**, who can provide practical advice, wellbeing support, and help residents connect with relevant health, community and support services.

Where additional support is needed, **residents will be supported to access appropriate health and wellbeing services**, including mental health support, through local healthcare providers and community services.

We are also exploring opportunities to **expand the wellbeing offer** available to residents, including access to local leisure, wellbeing and community activities.

We will **continue to engage with residents** through outreach sessions, surveys and community events to ensure the support provided reflects local needs and remains under regular review. We will also **continue to work closely with health partners to**

understand any emerging community needs and ensure residents receive updates through our regular newsletters and community communications.

You can continue to contact Angela, our single point of contact for Bolton House Road, about 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.

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 online.

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. There is an illegal waste site which is covered by a closure order enforced by GMP. There is someone currently on the site. I have been told to alert you as soon as I witness activity of this nature as this is an illegal offence. [We suggest you put in here more detail of what you have seen] ".

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.