

David Jenkins

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Our ref: ENQ2026/26208

Your ref:

Date: 2 July 2026

Dear Cllr Jenkins

RE: Enquiry: ENQ2026/26208

Thank you for your enquiry Hills Waste Solutions - Northacre Resource Recovery Centre, which we received on 29 May 2026.

Apologies for the delay in responding.

Following our previous update regarding the over-watering incident that we believe contributed to the increase in odour, the operator undertook remediation works, including loosening and aerating the compacted biofilter media. This resulted in an immediate improvement, with increased airflow through the biofilter and better odour control.

Unfortunately, the newly installed water dosing unit subsequently malfunctioned, resulting in a further over-application of water to the biofilter media. Due to the additional monitoring measures that had been put in place following the first incident, this issue was identified much more quickly. While the biofilter media again became excessively wet, the prompt intervention appears to have limited the impact on site performance and odour control compared with the previous incident.

Contractors attended site to investigate the cause of the failure and identify any further improvements required to prevent a recurrence and restore the biofilter to optimal operating conditions.

This week the cranes at the Hills Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility in Westbury failed. Subsequently, Hills have taken the decision to temporarily stop accepting new household waste at the site while repairs are undertaken. Further information on the issue and Hills' response can be found here: <https://www.hills-waste.co.uk/news/update-on-northacre-mbt-and-lower-compton-landfill>

To maintain household waste collections, Hills has implemented contingency arrangements which involve redirecting waste that would normally be processed at Westbury to the Hills facility at Compton Bassett, near Calne.

We continue to work closely with Hills, Wiltshire Council and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to minimise impacts on local communities. Our officers continue to undertake regular monitoring in the surrounding area. While odour levels in residential locations remain generally low in intensity, we have observed an increase in the frequency and persistence of odour since the biofilter issues occurred. As a result, we are not currently in a position to approve the site's Odour Management Plan, as we consider that further measures are required to demonstrate effective and consistent odour control.

We will continue to engage with the operator to ensure appropriate corrective actions are implemented and sustained.

To keep up to date with the latest actions being taken at regulated sites, including the MBT facility at Westbury, please visit our engagement page:

<https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/wessex-regulated-industry-sites>

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us.

To report environmental problems please visit www.gov.uk/report-environmental-problem or call the incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60

Yours sincerely

Corinne Moyse
WSX Area Customers and Engagement Team