# Birmingham's bin strike sparks rat surge and public health fears amid mounting rubbish



In Birmingham, the ongoing bin collection strike has plunged parts of the city into a state reminiscent of a disaster zone, sparking a growing public health crisis. Residents and pest control experts alike lament the sight of streets littered with mountains of rubbish that, over nearly 12 weeks, have accumulated into "diabolical" piles. William Timms, who has become known as the "Rat Man of Birmingham," has been vocal about the worsening conditions. He recently filmed the chaos unfolding on Clarence Avenue in the Handsworth District, where discarded garbage has transformed the area into an impassable obstacle, teeming with increasingly larger rats.

Timms, who leads a pest control company, described the scene as "a joke" and attributed the alarming rise in rodent sizes to an abundance of protein-rich waste such as gym supplements and food items lying unfettered in refuse bags. He noted, “It’s excellent for a rat,” underscoring how the mishandled waste provides an ideal environment for uncontrolled rodent growth.

The bin strike, initiated on March 11, has seen Birmingham City Council grappling with a staggering 17,000 tonnes of uncollected rubbish. This situation forced the council to declare a major incident, yet ongoing negotiations with the striking workers have yet to yield meaningful results. Despite expectations of fresh proposals from the union representing the binmen, delays have plagued discussions, leaving the sanitation crisis unresolved.

As the strike grinds on, pest control firms have reported an alarming surge in rat populations, with some experiencing a 60-70% increase in call-outs. Experts warn that the bins overflowing with waste have created perfect conditions for the rodents, significantly heightening public health risks. The British Pest Control Association has outlined potential dangers that come with this burgeoning problem, such as the spread of diseases like Leptospirosis and Salmonella, which can be transmitted through rat droppings and urine. They advise residents to keep rubbish stored in sealed containers and seek professional pest control assistance if necessary.

Local businesses and residents have voiced their frustrations as rubbish piles continue to grow, leading to a range of health hazards. Criticism has mounted against the city council, with claims that the ongoing situation has worsened amid increasing council tax rates and cuts to vital services. Reports indicate that in some neighbourhoods, residents have seen little to no change in sanitation conditions, amplifying calls for immediate action.

While Birmingham valiantly seeks solutions, the looming question remains: how long can the city endure before it confronts the consequences of its waste management crisis, exacerbated by ongoing industrial action? As the strike remains in anticipation of resolution, the streets of Birmingham continue to testify to a pressing need for effective waste management and public health measures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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