

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Unauthorised Encampment and Traveller Policy

**This policy was formally adopted by the Town
Council at the Town Council meeting held on 18
January 2018**

.....

Cllr Sarah Conboy

TOWN MAYOR

Introduction

When Travellers move their caravans onto a piece of land they do not own, without permission of the landowner, this is called an unauthorised encampment. This is a civil matter of trespass between landowner and the travellers, and is the responsibility of the landowner to deal with the encampment.

If the land is privately owned by a company or individual, the landowner needs to take advice from their solicitor about obtaining a Possession Order through the County Court.

If the land is owned by a Local Authority, it may still apply for a Possession Order through the County Court or evict the Travellers using common law, but Government policy recommends that the organisation must first show that they have taken the housing, health, welfare and education needs of the Travellers into consideration before making the decision to take legal action. This generally involves a visit to the encampment by a County Council Liaison Officer (LO).

Anti-social or Criminal Behaviour – A minority of travellers may be involved in behaviour which causes a nuisance or fear and intimidation to people living near to an encampment. Incidents of this nature should be reported to the Police.

Action Plan:

Unauthorised encampment on private land (not owned by the Town Council)

- a. Town Councillors should not approach the encampment
- b. Inform the landowner they have an encampment, inform the Police and LO.
- c. To be informed of progress so that updates can be put on the Council website

Unauthorised encampment on Town Council land

The policy of the Town Council is to evict unauthorised vehicles as promptly as practical. The cost of removal shall be met by the Town Council and payment authorised at the monthly meetings in the normal manner. The procedure for removal of the encampment can be authorised by the Town Clerk in conjunction with any two Town Councillors, or in the Town Clerks absence the Deputy Clerk along with any two Councillors.

Town Councillors should not approach the encampment.

In the event of an unauthorised encampment the following procedure should be initiated:

1. Notify the Town Clerk and/or Mayor to begin the process of authorising further action.
2. At least two Councillors to visit the site and assess the number of people/vehicles
3. Report the encampment to the police
4. If the police take no action, the Town Council will take immediate action to evict the travellers as soon as possible, but will first take advice from the police and the District Council as to whether a welfare check is necessary

5. Once welfare checks have been completed and assuming there are no reasons why the travellers cannot be moved on the Town Clerk will contact a legal representative (bailiff) and place instructions for notice to be served for immediate eviction
6. Post on Town Council website and Godmanchester Living
7. Press directed to Town Office – no individual Councillors to give their personal views
8. Update Councillors on all decisions taken and the next steps
9. Inform the Schools and request a parent mail be sent out
10. Liaise with District Council street cleansing team

Useful Contacts:

Bailiffs: Brian le Coche Tel. 01234 824570 / 07803 402160 (24 hours)

Lattenbury Farm: Chris Tel: 07776 184394

CCC Enforcement Officer: George Hay: 07827 234451

HDC Street Cleansing 01480 388388

Amendment History:

Paragraph	Detail	Approval Date
Original	Initial Version	January 2018
Review	Review and Re-adopted	January 2019
Review	Review and Re-adopted	03 March 2020
Review Due		March 2023