



Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils

GUIDANCE & SUPPORT

Date: 22 June 2023
Version: V1.0
Topic: Unauthorised encampments and Dorset Transit sites
Distribution: Clerks – Dorset Council Area Only

Background:

Across the Summer months the traveller community will often revisit familiar sites or land and in some cases find new locations to establish a temporary base. As a parish or town council you may not have experience in dealing with such matters at short notice. The following note will help you know what to do if such an event takes place. This note has been produced with the help of Dorset Council and Weymouth Town Council.

Options:

One possible option when dealing with unauthorised traveller encampments would be for your council to contact the Dorset Police and for them to serve a Section 62 under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. This notice requires that all vehicles leave Dorset completely or go to a Transit Site within the county. Currently, Dorset has one permanent Transit Site at Piddlehinton in Dorset open between April 1st and August 31st.

The process:

The first step in the process is to contact Dorset Police and Dorset Council.
Email the following contacts and mark the email as Urgent.

- Temp Insp Samuel Goom Samuel.Goom@Dorset.PNN.Police.uk
- Giles Nicholson giles.nicholson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
- Paula Clover paula.clover@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
- and also copy in 101@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Information that is required by the Dorset Police and Dorset Council includes:

- **Where is the encampment.** Include site name and address and postcode and what3words location (if known). Also include a description of the location.
- **How access was gained.** Include details of where access was gained e.g. via gate on xxx road and also times and dates of entry to the site.
- **How many vehicles are there.**
- **Detail any anti-social actions** and specifically include details on the impact on the local community, businesses, events, sport groups etc. A Section 62 rests on community impact so you will have to be able to demonstrate that.
- Include a **request that a Section 62 be served** as soon as possible.
- Request that Paula Glover, the Dorset Council Gypsy and Travellers Liaison Officer **carry out a welfare assessment** of the encampment.
- The **cost of the Police issuing a Section 62 is £600** paid to Dorset Council. Acknowledge that the parish or town council or parish meeting knows that there is a fee for the service and that it is willing to make the payment.

Individual parish or town council or parish meeting staff are not required to attend encampments to serve notices alone. Dorset Council and Dorset Police are there to support your council. The Clerk may be required to attend the serving of the notice if the council owns the land where the encampment has set up.

In summary:

If an unauthorised gypsy or traveller encampment sets up within your parish or town council or parish meeting area, ensure that you contact Dorset Police and Dorset Council as shown in the process above.

Ensure that your council has agreed that this is the process to follow through a resolution at a council meeting and that the Clerk has authority to agree to the payment of £600 to Dorset Council for the service if it's required and agreed upon as the right course of action.

Remember there are other options for managing unauthorised encampments. These are:

- Toleration, especially if there is no significant community impact. The PC/TC to negotiate a leaving date with travellers. No cost involved. Alternatively, the Gypsy and Traveller Team can assist - £150 for two visits.
- Section 77/78, Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 – seek legal advice.

Key contacts:

Contact	
Dorset Police	Samuel.Goom@Dorset.PNN.Police.uk
Dorset Council	Service Manager for Coast and Greenspace • Place Services giles.nicholson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Dorset Council	Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer paula.clover@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk william.smith@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Other useful links:

Source	
Dorset Council website	Gypsy & Traveller information
Dorset Council website	What happens if Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople enter land illegally - Dorset Council
Section 62A Legislation	Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (legislation.gov.uk)