

Unauthorised Encampments – Advice for Landowners

The Government defines unauthorised encampments as 'encampments of caravans and/or other vehicles on land without the landowner or occupier's consent and constituting trespass'. Unauthorised encampments fall into 2 main categories: those on land owned by local authorities (highways, schools, public parks and car parks etc) and those on privately owned land.

Where the unauthorised encampment is on Local Authority land, the Countywide Traveller Unit will be responsible. **On private land, it is the landowner who is primarily responsible (although the Countywide Traveller Unit will offer advice and assistance).** In all cases, the Police are responsible for crime related issues (but not trespass) wherever they are reported. Police do have an emergency power under Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, however this is an emergency power and will only be used under certain circumstances under the discretion of the Traveller Liaison Officer.

Trespass on land is a civil matter with prevention of trespass being the responsibility of the landowner. If you don't want to tolerate encampments for short periods of time you may wish to consider:

- Seeking advice from the Countywide Traveller Unit 01604 366 234 as to whether any physical steps may be taken to prevent access to your land.
- If you or your solicitor can go to a County Court and obtain an order granting you possession of your land: - www.courtservice.gov.uk
- Seeking advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau: - www.nacab.org.uk
- Employ private Bailiffs to evict the trespassers.

Nuisance can be reported to the Local Authority Environmental Health department or the Police. If it is a Police emergency phone 999, otherwise use the Northamptonshire Police non-emergency number 101 or call Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.