

Householder

Date: 04 April 2013
Ref:
Tel: 0116 305 5428

Dear Resident

I am writing regarding the use of land owned by the County Council at Wood Road, Battram. The County Council was made aware at the end of March that a group of travellers had moved onto the land.

As landowners, we are responsible for the site. Careful consideration was given to the effect of the occupation on the local community and, not least because the Council is required to consider welfare of the occupants, whether it was reasonable to require the occupants to vacate immediately. I confirm that it was decided by the Council to require the occupants to leave the site as soon as lawfully permissible.

Working with our partners in the Multi Agency Travellers Unit, we attended the site on 28th March to serve a Direction to Leave Notice on the occupants of the site. This notice required all occupants to remove caravans and possessions from the land no later than 6.00pm on Monday 1st April.

We became aware that 17 additional vehicles arrived over the Easter weekend and this has made it necessary for us to re-serve the notice on Wednesday 3rd April to ensure that we are able to take legal action on the whole site – including the additional vehicles.

Should the occupants remain on the site when after 6pm on Thursday 4th April we will apply to the Magistrates Court for a removal order on Friday 5th April. Solicitors from the Council will attend at the earliest available hearing at the Leicester Magistrates Court to secure an order to require the occupants to vacate the site.

Corporate Resources Department
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It takes a number of days for the court to process the summonses and for sufficient notice to be given of the hearing date. However, we would expect to be heard by mid next week. Assuming the Magistrates are content to grant an order for removal, an eviction will, if necessary, take place 24 hours from the service of the order.

Unless the case is adjourned by the Courts, the Council would be reasonably confident of being able to enforce an order before the end of next week (*i.e. week ending 12 April*).

Orders under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 can authorise the Council to take such steps as is reasonably necessary to secure the removal of the vehicles. Effectively, this means that the Council will, if necessary, forcibly remove the vehicles occupying the site should there be a failure to comply with an order from the Magistrates Court.

In addition, we are aware of some concerns that the land at Wood Road was intended for sale at auction. We have withdrawn the land from the sale, and will review options in due course.

The Council acknowledges that it is problematic for concerned stakeholders when an occupation of either public or private land occurs without requisite consent. In the interests of the local community the Council is doing all it can to resolve the current position as quickly as possible.

For further information regarding this matter please contact the Multi Agency Travellers Unit at Leicestershire County Council on 0116 305 8156.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Roberts', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Roberts
Director, Corporate Resources

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