



# Alresford and District Neighbourhood Watch Association



## **AGM NOTICE**

The AGM of Alresford & District Neighbourhood Watch Association will be held at Alresford Golf Club from 19.30 on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The speaker will be our local Sergeant, Bethan Wood and there will also be a presentation on Scams and Fraud from the Police and Trading Standards. All are welcome.

## **TRAVELLERS & UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS**

Over the past few months there have been a number of reported cases where travellers/gypsies have set up unauthorised camping on local land and car parks. This has led to a number of calls and queries regarding what can be done about these unauthorised camps and who is responsible?

The situation does not appear to be improving, as many believe Travellers have a marginalised and reviled position in today's society and evictions such as the Dale Farm site in Essex, force families back on the road and moving onto the next place of contention.

There is a history and tradition for some people to live in caravans or move around the country, however encamping on someone's land without their consent is unlawful and can be a breach of civil as well as criminal law. On top of this one only had to walk across Bramdean Common recently to see the damage, rubbish and general filth left by the latest encampment which bizarrely included an old damaged caravan!

### ***So what can be done?***

1. *Does the Council or Police have a duty to move travellers camped without the landowner's permission* – The powers given to local authorities and the police are discretionary and can only be used when certain conditions exist. Trespass on land itself is not a crime; it is a civil matter, so police will deal with crime committed by travellers when there is a complaint and evidence to support it.
2. *When can the Police move them on* – The Police may activate their powers under Section 61 of the Criminal Justice Act and are able to do this where they are satisfied that two or more people are trespassing on the land and the landowner has taken reasonable steps to make them leave. In addition, one of the following has to apply:
  - Damage has been caused to land or property
  - Threatening/Abusive/Insulting behaviour has been used against the occupier
  - The trespassers have 6 or more vehicles
3. *When can the Council move them on* – If Council land is camped on, without consent, then they can recover the land through a County Court Order. However, before this the Council must complete the following:
  - Show that the Travellers are there without consent
  - Make enquiries regarding the general health and welfare & children's education
  - Ensure that the Human Rights Act (1998) has been complied with

### ***What can the general public do?***

As you can see from the above, removing travellers illegally camped can be a long and difficult process and many attempts have failed due to one of the above actions not being completed correctly.

If an encampment occurs on your land, firstly talk to the travellers and see if a leaving date can be agreed. If that fails, you or your solicitor can obtain an Order from the County Court. If you do not own the land and spot an unauthorised encampment then the Council's Environmental Health Service is the first point of contact for complaints. Web Site Address - <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/environment/>

**Alresford and District Neighbourhood Watch  
Association website-**  
[www.neighbourhood.watch.alresford.org](http://www.neighbourhood.watch.alresford.org)  
e-mail – [contact.adnwa@gmail.com](mailto:contact.adnwa@gmail.com)

**CRIME IN PROGRESS – 999  
NON URGENT – 101  
CRIMESTOPPERS – 0800 555 111**