

gypsy and travellers scheme

The scheme

We have designed our Gypsy & Travellers Scheme to provide easily accessible and cost-effective legal support. At Invicta Law we understand the issues that all public bodies, managers of travellers sites and council officers face and we have considerable expertise in the specialist area of gypsy and travellers law. Our scheme is designed to provide you with access to lawyers who are experts in their field and have extensive experience of dealing with the complex legal issues associated with gypsies and travellers.

We are focused on achieving positive outcomes for all involved and helping everyone find the best possible solutions. We understand the nuances of unauthorised encampments and have the necessary resources and expertise to be able to handle these matters sensitively and speedily.

What does it cost?

An annual membership fee of just **£500** entitles members to receive the following:

- ♥ **Legal Helpline** - unlimited calls to our Legal Helpline for up to 30 minutes free advice in relation to each matter.
- ♥ **Training Sessions** - two training sessions per year covering the key legal issues that affect the gypsy and traveller sector.
- ♥ **Annual Review** - of your policies and procedures at your offices.
- ♥ **Guidance Notes and Updates** - updating you on any developments, changes in the law and helpful tips for reviewing performance and reducing risk throughout the year.

For those members who require specific advice and assistance relating to unauthorised encampments we provide a competitive fixed price service.

Fixed rates:

£1,100 for Unauthorised Encampment (UE) matter concerning 1 caravan.
£1,800 for UE matter concerning 2 to 5 caravans.
£2,500 for UE matter concerning more than 5 caravans.

What's included?

Assisting with preparation of evidence pack, drafting and issuing information, summons, order and complaint, preparation for hearing and attendance at first hearing. The scheme is priced taking into account the items of work included in a typical complex unauthorised encampment matter.

What's not included

Payments to third parties (i.e. courts, experts, barristers, etc). However, we will advise you of the likely costs and support you in negotiating discounted rates.

Case study one

We acted for a County Council on a matter concerning unauthorised encampment of over 20 caravans on a very busy public site. We were initially instructed on a Thursday and acted promptly to obtain a hearing the following day. Usually it would take at least two working days for a hearing to be listed but on this occasion, given the obvious urgency and the risk of additional unauthorised encampments and damage to the site over the weekend, we were able to use our experience to persuade court staff to advance the matter to a legal advisor within an hour of submitting our application.

Pending the return of the signed documents from the court, we were advised that a further two caravans had joined the group.

Normally, these additional encampments would require a new application for a hearing to be listed at the court, but on this occasion, we were able to use our practical experience and close working relationship with employees at the court to register the additional encampments via email on to the court's records so that they could be taken into account at the previously listed hearing.

The court subsequently ordered the immediate removal of all of the unauthorised encampments, the majority of which had already left the site on receipt of the court documents.

Within a few days the site was cleared and back to normal operation. The rapid intervention by our experienced team resulted in:

- ♥ Reduced cost to the taxpayer
- ♥ Reduced negative impact on the public and the environment
- ♥ Reduced reputational damage to the client.

Case study two

We acted for a County Council on a matter concerning a family of travellers who for the last 20 years were causing trouble on the site and various serious breaches of their Licence/Pitch Agreement.

The County Council served a Notice of the breaches on the residents who failed to remedy them. As a result, we commenced a claim for possession of the pitch.

This involved collating all of the historical evidence dating back to almost 10 years demonstrating the magnitude of the breaches including the various serious criminal activities which members of the family carried out.

With the joint working arrangements amongst different agencies such as the Police, RSPCA, the Fire Services, the Environmental Agency we managed to corroborate all of the

evidence to make good the case that a Possession Order would be justified in the circumstances obviating the Judge from making a Suspended Possession Order.

We were successful in:

- ♦ Obtaining the Possession Order;
- ♦ Carrying out a very successful eviction through joint working between the different agencies.

Case study three

We acted for a private land owner whose land had been encroached by a community of travellers.

It comprised of approximately 30 vehicles, as well as numerous people and pets. The group caused severe damage, through fly tipping, human waste and the depositing of harmful material.

The site on which the encampment took place was hazardous, including warehouses and factories which handled and stored certain chemical and explosive substances.

We made an urgent application to the High Court on the detailed evidence we collated over the weekend of receiving the instructions and immediately appointed a firm of Bailiffs with the client's consent.

We managed to obtain an Order for Possession within 48 hours of receiving the instructions. We were successful in:

- ♦ An eviction of all of the occupiers of the land within 12 hours of receiving the Order;
- ♦ Securing the land by arranging security guards, guard dogs and temporary patrolling of the site.

To join the scheme or for further assistance please contact:

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Our legal expertise, your peace of mind