



Longburrow Hall, Park Lane
Stokenchurch, High Wycombe
Bucks HP14 3TQ

Illegal / Unauthorised Encampment Policy

1. Policy Purpose

This policy sets out how **Stokenchurch Parish Council** hereinafter referred to as '**The Council**' will respond to unauthorised encampments on land it owns or manages.

The policy aims to:

- Ensure a consistent, fair, and lawful response to unauthorised encampments.
- Protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents, visitors, and encampment occupants.
- Protect Council-owned land, facilities, and amenities from damage.
- Provide clear guidance for staff, councillors, and local residents.
- Comply with relevant legislation and legal procedures.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all land and property owned or managed by the Council, including:

- Parks and playing fields
- Car parks
- Common land and open spaces
- Council offices and car parks
- Allotments and any buildings or sheds that occupy said land

The policy does not cover private land, but the Council may provide guidance to private landowners upon request.

3. Legal Context

The Council operates under the following legislative framework:

Criminal Law Act 1977

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Highways Act 1980

Relevant Local Government Acts

All actions will be conducted within the law and legal advice will be sought where necessary.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Parish Clerk: Operational responsibility for managing encampments, liaising with authorities.

Committee / Council: Oversight and approval of actions requiring expenditure or legal enforcement.

Councillors: Support communication with residents and provide guidance.

Police and District Council: Support enforcement and legal eviction where required.

5. Response Procedure

5.1 Initial Assessment

Identify the location, size, and risk level of the encampment.

Assess safety, environmental, and public health risks.

5.2 Engagement

Communicate with occupants to explain legal status and provide guidance.

Provide information about authorised traveller sites or local services.

5.3 Decision Making

Determine whether the encampment presents a risk to safety, public order, or Council land.

Decide whether legal enforcement is required.

5.4 Enforcement

Any eviction action will be conducted legally and in coordination with the police.

Document all actions and maintain records of communications and enforcement.

6. Considerations

Before taking action, the Council will consider:

- Health and Safety risks, including access to water and sanitation.
- Environmental impact on grass, trees, and facilities.
- Impact on local residents and visitors.
- Compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.

7. Communication and Reporting

Keep residents informed where appropriate.

Reports of encampments from the public should be logged with the Parish Clerk.

Information shared publicly will respect privacy and community sensitivities.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years or sooner if there are significant legislative changes or operational lessons learned.

9. Definitions

Unauthorised Encampment: Occupation of Council land without prior permission.

Eviction / Enforcement: Legal process to remove unauthorised occupants in accordance with law.

10. Adoption Resolution

It was RESOLVED that Stokenchurch Parish Council's Illegal / Unauthorised Encampment Policy be adopted and reviewed at least every two years.

Min Ref: [xxxx]

Date of policy: 11/03/26

Approving committee: SPC

Policy effective from: 11/03/26

Date of committee meeting: 11/03/26

Date for next review: 11/03/29

— policy ends here —