

Illegal encampments

I have been asked to look into the law allowing landlords or the public authorities to ask people to move who are living in caravans and other temporary accommodation on land without permission. There is a current case in Arborfield that is worrying some residents.

There are two main legal routes to sort these out. The first is the landowner has a right to go to court to get a court order to ask the people to move off the land. This is usually granted and is enforceable. In the Arborfield case the land is owned by the MOD who assure me they are taking this action when I followed up at the request of a constituent.

The second is a provision in the criminal law under the 1994 Criminal Justice Act. This allows the police to act quickly to move people on where there is evidence that they are causing nuisance. Residents who think they are should provide the evidence to the police.

The issues in this case seem to be one ones about speed of enforcement, as the law allows action to be taken.