

Illegal occupation of land

There have been a number of cases recently of people seeking to occupy land against the wishes of the landowner, where there are no suitable facilities for overnight and longer stays.

Parliament has legislated to give powers to landowners and the police to ban illegal occupations, but some Councils are concerned that these powers are not strong enough. I have taken this matter up with Government Ministers and will let readers see their reply.

The powers are under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, Section 61. I have requested the authorities to use the powers available which they have done successfully in some cases. The police can take action in specified circumstances against trespassers. At issue is what should the police have to establish before moving against illegal occupation?