

Government to give police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments

The government will strengthen police powers and create a new criminal offence to tackle unauthorised encampments, Home Secretary Priti Patel will announce today.

The new offence will target trespassers who intend to reside on any private or public land in vehicles without permission, and where they are causing significant disruption, distress or harm to local communities.

Police will be given powers to seize vehicles and arrest offenders. The measures will target harmful encampments which reflect badly on the wider nomadic community as a whole, the majority of whom are law-abiding.

The measures deliver on a manifesto commitment to tackle unauthorised encampments and will be part of a new major criminal justice bill to be introduced to Parliament imminently.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This new offence will enable the police to fine or arrest those residing without permission on private or public land in vehicles in order to stop significant disruption, distress or harm being caused to the law-abiding majority.

I am delivering on my commitment to give the police the powers they need to tackle these encampments swiftly and effectively.

The criminal offence will be tightly-defined and will only apply in cases where:

- a person is aged 18 or over they are using vehicles to reside on the land – this ensures occasional campers are not affected
- they are residing or intending to reside on land without the consent of the occupier – this will ensure unintentional instances of trespass are not affected, such as ramblers or hikers
- they have caused or are likely to cause significant damage, disruption or distress
- they fail to respond to a request from the occupier or police to leave the land and remove their property or they return to the land within 12 months with an intention to reside with a vehicle, following that request

The new offence will be punishable by a prison sentence of up to 3 months, or a fine of up to £2,500, or both.

The government will also amend the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

(CJPOA). This contains provisions which allow police to direct trespassers away from land.

The amendments will broaden the range of factors which police can consider when enforcing the law, to include interference with access to utilities like water, gas and electricity, and environmental damage such as excessive noise pollution or littering.

New provisions will also mean that people directed away from land must not return for 12 months.

These legislative changes will be brought in following the response to 2 public consultations. The first in 2018 asked whether police powers should be strengthened, with some respondents saying they wanted to see more protection for local communities, and for the police to be given greater powers.

The second public consultation in November 2019 asked how the government should strengthen the police's powers.

Two-thirds of people responding on behalf of local authorities to the 2019 consultation were in favour of a new criminal offence. Around 94% supported one or more of the proposed amendments to extend the powers the police have to direct trespassers to leave land.

The government recognises people's right to a nomadic life, but this must be balanced against the rights of landowners and local communities, who are entitled to live their lives without having to deal with the significant problems which some unauthorised encampments can cause.

As of January 2020, statistics* showed the number of authorised traveller pitches increased by 41% from January 2010. The government will continue its work to provide more authorised sites for travellers to reside upon.

*In the January 2020 Traveller Caravan Count there were 356 transit pitches provided by Local Authorities and Private Registered Providers in England and Wales. This was an increase of 41% from the January 2010 Traveller Caravan Count.

See the [full 2019 consultation response](#).

Tri-Service Reserve Force joins fight against COVID in Greater Manchester

Our Reserve Forces have been providing a valuable contribution to the various strands of assistance to civil authorities since early last year, but this is the first time a formed force of this size, comprised solely of Reservists

has been generated for a bespoke task. Each element is integrated with a Regular Army unit headquarters already supporting delivery of community testing in Greater Manchester.

A total of 82 Reserve personnel have been deployed, with the Army component of 29 soldiers drawn from 4th Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, (4 LANCS), The Queen's Own Yeomanry and 8th Battalion, The Rifles. They will be integrated with C Coy, 1st Battalion The Rifles, which is already on task in Manchester, and will be supporting Oldham Council.

The Royal Air Force Reserves has 41 personnel from 611 Squadron integrated with C Squadron, The Royal Lancers in Salford and the Maritime Reserves element, integrated with Waterloo Company, 4th Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland in Trafford, consists of four Royal Naval Reserves and eight Royal Marines Reserves in Trafford.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I'm proud that Reservists from all three services, many from Manchester itself, have answered the call to step up and support their local community. These soldiers, sailors and air personnel have joined the largest UK Armed Forces homeland deployment in peacetime and will be working alongside Greater Manchester Combined Authority to test at-risk members of the community.

Colonel Russ Miller, OBE, Commander Army Headquarters North West, said:

I am delighted to welcome Reserve components from all three Services to join the ongoing military support to Greater Manchester's Targeted Testing at Scale project. As the military support continues into its second month, the Reserves will play an increasingly important part of the project, both carrying on with the delivery of Asymptomatic Testing, and training each Borough's follow-on workforce to develop testing capability for the longer-term.

Kingsman Michael Bennett, from 4 LANCS, who works for a Top 40 law firm, said:

My manager is extremely proud that I'm a Reservist and contributing to this operation. Everyone wants to get back to normal and anything we can do to speed that up. As soon as the call came in, I was ready to start on task the next day.

Leading Aircraftman Gemma Terrey, based at RAF Woodvale, is currently studying a Masters in psychological wellbeing and clinical practice in Manchester and intends to apply for a traineeship in the NHS next year.

She said:

Everyone has been really inspired by the NHS workers over the last year and it would be nice to be a part of that. It's a great experience as a Reservist to be integrated with the NHS.

Marine Ross Cooney, from the Royal Marines Reserve, Merseyside Detachment, who owns a performance and consultancy business, said:

I was fortunate last year to be part of the mobilisation to help with this and to be able to do it again has been very rewarding. The great thing about the Reserves is that we are able to manage our time really well and bring our experiences outside of the military. It's also great working alongside the regulars.

Lieutenant Kevin Cabra-Netherton, from HMS Ceres, a travel business owner, who was previously a Warfare Officer in the regular Royal Navy, said:

The great thing about the Reserves is that you get people from all walks of life and such broad backgrounds that you have such a broad spectrum of skills and expertise. Any opportunity to work alongside the regular forces is really great for our broader development and it's good to learn about what the other services are doing. On an operation like this, it doesn't matter what background you are from, we are all doing the same job and working towards the same goal.

Cadet awarded First Sea Lord Honour

News story

A Year 11 pupil from King's Leadership Academy Hawthornes; Leo Robinson has been appointed First Sea Lord Cadet (FSLC) 2021, making him one of the top Royal Marine Cadets in the country.



Leo Robinson has been appointed First Sea Lord Cadet (FSLC) 2021. NW RFCA Crown Copyright 2021.

A small number of Cadets are selected nationally from all of the naval cadet forces (SCC, VCC & CCF RN/RM) to act as ambassadors to raise the profile of Naval Cadets, while gaining privileged insight into the higher levels of the Royal Navy. Some of the key events that they are invited to attend include: a vesting day on HMS Victory, an introduction to the Navy Board and visit to No.10 Downing Street. They will also be present at formal parades, ship visits, royal occasions, opening ceremonies, presentations, awards and receptions.

The cadets will serve for a 12-month period from January 2021. During this year, First Sea Lord Cadets will also gain exposure to Navy board members, trustees of parent Cadet organisations, organise and build area forums and provide feedback to their respective headquarters. First Sea Lord cadets play a crucial role in shaping the future of the Corps. It's a chance to have their voices heard, and to inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

Flying Officer Richard Walsh RAFAC, Contingent Commander said:

This is a very significant title to hold as a cadet is selected not only for their professionalism and endeavour but also for their ability to represent the views of Cadets at national level.

Headteacher, Peter Gaul, praised Leo's contribution to the RM Cadet Force, commenting:

This is a remarkable honour for Leo and his family. We are all hugely proud of his achievement at King's Leadership Academy Hawthornes. We are also deeply grateful to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines for their sustained and incredible support for our school.

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Office of Tax Simplification: Board changes

The Chancellor has appointed Paul Aplin OBE to the board of the Office of Tax Simplification (OTS), following the resignation of Dame Teresa Graham DBE as a board member.

In addition, in consultation with the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Kathryn Cearn's OBE, OTS Chair, has appointed Dame Teresa Graham as a board observer in her role as Chair of ABAB.

OTS Chair, Kathryn Cearn's said:

I am hugely grateful to Dame Teresa for her enormously significant contribution to the OTS over the last 10 years and am delighted she will be continuing to share her wisdom and expertise as an observer. I am also delighted to welcome Paul as a member of the board. He brings a wealth of experience and understanding of tax and related technological developments which will broaden and deepen the expertise available to the board.

Further Information

The OTS was established in 2010 to provide advice to the Chancellor on simplifying the UK tax system and was made a permanent, independent office of HM Treasury in July 2015. It was put on a statutory footing in the Finance Act 2016.

Paul Aplin is a member of HMRC's Administrative Burdens Advisory Board and the 2018 President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. He was a highly regarded candidate in the recent OTS Board member recruitment process.

Dame Teresa Graham was a founder member of the OTS board when it was formed in 2010, and Chairs HMRC's Administrative Advisory Board.

The OTS legislation limits the number of independent board members to four, who sit alongside the Chair, Tax Director and HM Treasury and HMRC representatives.

The OTS's [framework document](#) has been updated to reflect the unpaid observer role and to provide for the independent board members to receive remuneration.

The members of the OTS Board, and its observers, are now:

- Kathryn Cearns OBE (Chair)
- Bill Dodwell (Tax Director)
- John Cullinane
- Kathleen Russ
- Professor Judith Freedman CBE
- Paul Aplin OBE
- Beth Russell (HM Treasury)
- Ruth Stanier OBE (HMRC)
- Dame Teresa Graham DBE (Observer)

Press enquiries only please contact Julie Gillespie, OTS Press Officer 03000 585028

[Scottish women entrepreneurs win national award for innovation](#)

Three women innovators from Scotland have been backed by the UK Government, as part of a group of 40 of the UK's most visionary female entrepreneurs, to drive forward their novel innovations and business ideas to help the UK build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and meet its climate change ambitions.

Announced today (Monday 8 March 2021) by UK Government Science Minister Amanda Solloway to mark International Women's Day, the Women in Innovation Award winners will receive a cash injection of £50,000 each to scale up and bring to market their disruptive business ideas, many of which have been born out in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UK Government Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

As we build back better, it's a priority of mine that we continue equipping our brightest female innovators with the tools they need to succeed, while encouraging a new generation of women to come forward and pursue their ambitions.

I'm delighted we are supporting 40 of our most trailblazing female entrepreneurs, helping them to turn their innovative ideas and aspirations into a reality, creating the products and services that will help improve all our lives, while powering up the UK's economic recovery.

Among the winners is Alison Wood, founder of Edinburgh-based sustainable sanitary pad company Lilypads. The company's reusable pads have a carbon footprint 90% lower than disposable equivalents and are among the cheapest reusable pads on the market. Their charitable arm, supported by pad sales,

works to reduce gender inequality and period exploitation around the world.

Alison said:

This programme is providing development funding to further reduce the environmental impact of our period pad. We're delighted to be a part of it and can't wait to meet and learn from other women running sustainable businesses.

Joan D'Arcy, co-founder of Plastic@Bay in Durness, Highland, has also received funding to develop Local Ocean Plastic Recycling Facilities (LOPRF) to convert ocean plastic waste into construction materials at a low cost. This initiative will also provide local employment and training opportunities for young people, with each facility employing at least 3 people to use and maintain the recycling machines.

Joan said:

The aim is to develop a low-tech facility to recycle end-of-life fishing gear and ocean plastic that can be replicated in harbours and communities adversely affected by ocean plastic pollution. Our research and development team will build a low-tech machine capable of making fence posts, planks, and decking, while I develop the plant layout, business model, and marketing strategy.

Jacqueline Morrison, co-founder of Glasgow-based company Cedeco Contractors Ltd, has also received backing for the development of a mechanical alternative to grout that will save time and cut costs for the installation of wind turbines, whilst also reducing carbon emissions.

Jacqueline said:

We know that growing the team and collaborating with industry partners will be our way forward and this funding will help with that. I'm delighted to have won the award and to be able to shine a spotlight on our technology and am looking forward to what promises to be an exciting year.

Today's funding is part of the government's flagship Women in Innovation Awards, delivered by Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), which seeks to boost the number of UK female entrepreneurs, which could deliver £180 billion to the economy.

It forms a key part of the government's ambitious R&D Roadmap, published in July 2020, which committed to supporting the UK's innovators and risk-takers by backing entrepreneurs and start-ups with the funding needed to scale up their innovations.

Emily Nott, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Innovate UK said:

With 2020 proving to be an incredibly difficult year for everyone, and particularly women, continuing to support female entrepreneurs in 2021 has been a real priority for Innovate UK. We have had an enormous response and we can see some positives from the pandemic, with some of our shortlist inspired to start up a business in response to some of the challenges it has brought.

Working alongside the winners, Innovate UK will help them grow further. We can't wait to see what else these inspiring women achieve and how they can be an example to inspire the next generation and to encourage more women-led businesses in this country as we rebuild and recover.