

# Northumberland County Council

## Public Protection

### Licensing

## Part 1 – Permanent Residential Mobile Home Parks (Park Homes)



Approved Standards for Camping and Caravan Parks 1992

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**Northumberland County Council – Approved Standards Part 1**  
**Permanent Residential Mobile Home Sites (Park Homes)**

**1. Introduction**

The following standards will be applied to any Mobile Home Park by attaching conditions to the site Licence issued by the Council under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. When applying conditions to achieve the standards regard will be had to the existing characteristics of each Park and the justification for any variation in the standard, be it more lenient or more strict covering additional factors.

A Mobile Home Park is essentially an area of land used for pitching caravans or mobile homes which are available for use throughout the whole year, and mayor may not provide a sole and permanent place of residence for the occupier(s).

Caravan Parks not used in this way, other than touring only sites, are defined as Holiday Caravan Parks and the particular standards for these parks are detailed in Part 2, caravan sites for touring caravans only and campsites(tents only) are dealt with in Part 3.

**2. Site Boundaries**

The boundaries of the site should be clearly marked, for example by fences or hedges. In addition, the park owner or occupier must give the Council a plan of its layout showing the position of all caravan or mobile home pitches, external toilet facilities, water standpipes, fire points and roadways. It is recommended that a three metre wide area is kept clear around the inside of all boundaries. This may be reduced to one metre where the boundary consists of a two metre high brick wall or similar fire resisting structure.

**3. Density and Space between Caravans**

The number of caravans on the park at anyone time must not exceed 50 units to the hectare or such lower figure as may be necessary to ensure compliance with

the spacing and other requirements contained in the site licensing conditions. The maximum number of caravans which can be sited may be specified in the planning permission for the land.

Subject to the following variations, every caravan or park home should be not less than 6 metres from any other caravan or park home which is occupied separately, and not less than 2 metres from a road. The point of measurement for porches, etc. is the exterior cladding of the caravan or park home.

- Porches may protrude 1 metre into the six metres separation space and should be of the open type, having no sides made of combustible material.
- The use of an awning attached to a residential caravan or park home will not be permitted.
- Eaves, drainpipes and bay windows may extend into the six metres separation space provided the total distance between the extremities of two adjacent units is not less than 5.25 metres.
- Where there are ramps for the disabled, verandas and stairs extending from the unit, there should be 4.5 metres clear space between them and the nearest unit. Two such items must not face each other in any separation space. If they are enclosed, they may need to be considered as part of the unit and, as such, should not intrude into the 6 metre separation space.
- A garage, a shed or a covered storage space can be permitted between units only if it is of non combustible construction (including non combustible roof), and sufficient space is maintained around each unit so as not to prejudice means of escape in case of fire. Windows in such structures must not face towards the units on either side. Carports and covered walkways must in no circumstances be allowed within the 6 metre separation space.

#### **4. Roads, Gateways and Footpaths**

Roads and footpaths must be designed to provide adequate access for fire appliances, delivery and refuse vehicles. Roads of suitable material must be provided so that no caravan or park home standing is more than 50 metres from a road.

Where the approach to the caravan or park home is across ground that may become difficult or dangerous to negotiate in wet weather, each standing must be connected to a carriageway by a footpath with a hard surface.

Roads and footpaths can be of compacted hard core, concrete, tarmac or other weatherproof material.

Roads must not be less than 3.7 metres wide, or, if they form part of a clearly marked one way traffic system 3 metres wide. Gateways must be a minimum of 3.1 metres wide and have a minimum height clearance of 3.7 metres. The main entrance to the park must be at least 4.5 metres wide and have a minimum height clearance of 4 metres. Footpaths for communal use must not be less than 0.75 metres wide, other footpaths should be not less than 0.6 metres wide (nominal dimensions).

Roads should have no overhead cable less than 4.5 metres above the ground. Roads and footpaths should be suitably lit where appropriate, and emergency vehicle routes within the site must be kept clear of obstructions at all times.

## **5. Hard-Standings**

Every caravan or park home should stand on a hard standing of concrete or other similar material having similar fire retardant qualities. The hard standing should extend over the whole area occupied by the caravan or park home and should project a sufficient distance outwards from its entrance or entrances to enable occupants to enter and leave safely.

Each caravan or park home must be securely supported on the hard standing, with at least a proper foundation base at each wheel or jacking leg. Non-combustible materials only must be used.

## **6. Fire Fighting**

### **First Aid Fire Fighting Equipment**

Any person providing accommodation in a caravan for rental on a temporary or permanent basis must provide a conveniently accessible first aid fire extinguisher

(AFFF type to 8S5423 minimum 1.75 litre capacity) and a fire blanket inside each unit. (Provision of this equipment cannot be required by a Site Licence condition but failure to provide it may result in a breach of duty under the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974 or other legislation.)

It is strongly recommended that the above is provided by the owner of the unit in the case of those occupied on a owner/occupied basis.

### **Fire Points**

A network of fire points must be provided so that no caravan or site building is more than 30 metres from a fire point.

At each fire point fire fighting equipment must be provided as follows:-

- i) The recommended equipment is 2 x 9 litre water extinguishers (to 8S5423).
- ii) As an alternative to (i) a suitable 30 metre hose on a reel complying with 8S5306 and fitted with a suitable nozzle can be used, provided it is permanently fixed to a suitable water supply capable of projecting an adequate jet of water at least 5 metres from the end of the hose when fully unwound.
- iii) Suitable fire beaters of "Forestry Commission" type should be available if there is a possibility of a vegetation fire spreading towards caravans or park homes.
- iv) Any other form of fire fighting equipment must be approved by the Council after consultation with the Fire Brigade.

A ring main and fire hydrant system may be required at a large caravan park.

### **Fire Warning**

A means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire must be provided at each fire point. This can be by means of a manually operated sounder, eg a metal triangle with a striker, gong or hand operated siren.

## Maintenance and Protection

All alarm and fire fighting equipment at a fire point must be installed, tested and maintained in working order by a competent person and be available for inspection by or on behalf of the Council. A log book should be kept to record all tests and any remedial action.

All fire fighting equipment will be susceptible to damage by frost and must be suitably protected. Fire fighting equipment, with the exception of fire beaters, at a fire point must be housed in a weather proof structure which is easily accessible at all times and clearly and conspicuously marked "fire point". All water-type fire extinguishers available for use at a fire point between the months of November and March (inclusive), and not kept within a site building must contain water to which a 'freezing point depressant' (anti-freeze) has been added.

Any hoses connected to the water supply must be drained down and kept empty between the months of November and March (inclusive) to avoid freezing up unless installed within a heated site building.

## Fire Notices

A clearly written and conspicuous notice must be provided and kept at each fire point to indicate the action to be taken in case of fire and the location of the nearest telephone. This notice should be protected from weather and direct sunlight and should include the following information:-

"On discovering a fire

- i) Ensure the \*caravan or site building involved is evacuated.
- i) ii} Raise the alarm and evacuate adjacent \*caravans.
- ii) iii} Call the Fire Brigade (the nearest telephone is sited ).
- iii) iv} Attack the fire using the fire fighting equipment provided, only if it is safe to do so.

It is in the interest of all occupiers of this caravan park to be familiar with the above routine and the method of operating the fire alarm and fire fighting equipment." An additional notice inside each caravan is also recommended.

\*as appropriate

## **Fire Hazards**

Long grass and vegetation must be cut at frequent and regular intervals where necessary to prevent it becoming a fire hazard to caravans, buildings or other installations on the site. Any such cuttings must be removed from the vicinity of caravans. The space beneath and between caravans must not be used for the storage of combustible materials under any circumstances. (Refer to Appendix 2 regarding LPG storage at a unit.)

## **Smoke Alarms**

The fitting of smoke alarms to any caravan or mobile home is advisable to give early warning of fire. Some smoke alarms currently available can be 'desensitised' for short periods, eg when cooking, to avoid triggering the alarm unnecessarily, which will prevent 'false alarms'. The maintenance of batteries and regular testing of smoke alarms is very important and manufacturer's instructions on siting and maintenance of alarms should be closely followed.

The fitting of smoke alarms is not required by these Standards, but their installation is advisable to give early warning of fire.

## **7. Telephone**

An immediately accessible telephone must be available for calling the emergency services. Where a caravan park warden is permanently at the caravan park the designated telephone should normally be at the warden's office or residence. If the nearest telephone is not sited at the park a telephone must be available within ½ mile. A notice by the telephone should include the address of the park.

## **8. The Storage and Use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)**

The storage of LPG, whether in cartridges, cylinders or bulk tanks, must comply with the guidance notes produced by the Health and Safety Executive (see



Appendix 1). An exposed gas bottle or cylinder connected to a caravan must not normally be kept within the fire separation distance required above at (3).

LPG installations within caravans and elsewhere on the park must comply with British Standard 5482 Part 2 (see Appendix 2). Where provided for rental on a temporary or permanent basis, or for any other business use, responsibility for ensuring compliance with BS 5482 will normally lie with the Site Licencee.

## **9. Electrical Installations**

NOTE:

THE SITE LICENCEE IS NORMALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION BETWEEN THE SUPPLY COMPANY'S EQUIPMENT AND THE CONNECTION POINT TO THE INDIVIDUAL CARAVAN OR MOBILE HOME (OR HOOK-UP POINT). FROM THIS CONNECTION INTO AND WITHIN A UNIT, RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM NORMALLY LIES WITH THE OWNER OCCUPIER. IN THE CASE OF A CARAVAN OR MOBILE HOME PROVIDED BY THE LICENCEE FOR RENTAL ON A TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT BASIS THE LICENCEE IS NORMALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WHOLE OF THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM INCLUDING THE CONNECTION TO AND WIRING ETC. WITHIN THE UNIT.

Where an electricity supply is provided at the park, the electrical installation must be installed, tested and maintained in accordance with the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) Regulations in force at the time of installation, and where appropriate, to the standard required by any overhead electrical lines Regulations.

Work on electrical installations, systems and appliances must be carried out only by competent persons such as the manufacturers appointed agent, the electricity supplier, a professionally qualified electrical engineer, a member of the Electrical Contractors Association, a contractor approved by the National Inspection

Council for Electrical Installation Contracting, or a qualified person acting on behalf of one of the above.

The installations must be inspected periodically under the IEE Regulations, at least every year or such longer period (not exceeding 3 years) as is considered appropriate in each case. When an installation is inspected it must be judged against the Regulations in force at that time.

The Inspector should, within one month of the inspection, issue an Inspection Certificate in the form prescribed in the IEE Wiring Regulations which must be retained by the park operator. A copy of the electrical Inspection Certificate must be forwarded to the Council.

If an inspection reveals that an installation no longer complies with the Regulations in force at the time it was first installed, any deficiencies must be remedied. Any major alterations and extensions to an installation and all parts of the existing installation effected by them, must comply with the latest version of the IEE Wiring Regulations.

Where there are overhead lines on the park suitable warning notices must be displayed at the entrance to the park and on the supports for the lines. Where appropriate, particular attention should be drawn to the danger of masts of yachts or dinghies contacting the lines.

All electrical outlets, lighting systems or equipment accessible to the park residents or members of the public must be protected by an effective Residual Current Device (RCD) having a tripping current of no more than 30m Amps.

Where permanent electricity supplies are made to any caravan or standing the position of any underground cable runs must be recorded and marked to prevent accidental damage. This must be done for all new installations and as far as is possible for existing installations. This information need only be shown on a map or plan of the park, as long as it is readily accessible. In some limited circumstances cable positions may need to be physically marked on the ground.

It is advisable that any electrical system within a unit is inspected in accordance with the IEE Wiring Regulations by a competent person as indicated above, and a test certificate issued. Responsibility for the electrical system within a unit will normally lie with the owner or occupier, unless the accommodation is provided for rental. (Please refer to the note at the beginning of this Section).

## **10. Water Supply**

An adequate wholesome supply of drinking water must be provided at the caravan park. The water supply must comply with standards laid down under The Water Industry Act 1991 which applies to both public and private water supplies.

The Council has a duty to sample both public and private water supplies to check the wholesomeness of the water. The frequency of sampling is laid down in Regulations made under The Act. In the case of private water supplies the sampling costs incurred by the Council can be recovered from the person providing or responsible for the water supply. Further details on water sampling can be found in Appendix 3.

Individual caravans should preferably be plumbed into a water supply and drainage system. Where individual caravans are not plumbed-in drinking water points must be provided within 50 metres of any caravan. Each drinking water point must have a hard-standing around the supply tap with an apron beneath, which is drained to a suitable and adequate soak away or piped drain via a trapped gully.

## **11. Drainage, Sanitation and Washing Facilities**

Satisfactory provision must be made for foul drainage, either by connection to a public sewer or sewage treatment works, or by discharge to a properly constructed septic tank or cesspool approved by the Council and where appropriate the National Rivers Authority

Each caravan or park home available for occupation throughout the year must have its own water supply, kitchen sink and water closet. Each caravan or park

home standing should be provided with a connection to the foul drainage system, the connection should be capable of being made air tight when not in use.

Every park and every hard standing should be provided with an adequate drainage system for the complete and hygienic disposal of all foul, rain and surface water from the park, buildings, caravans, park homes, roads and footpaths.

## **12. Refuse Disposal**

Every caravan should have an adequate number of suitable refuse bins with close fitting lids. Arrangements must be made for the bins to be emptied regularly. Where communal refuse bins are provided these should be of sound construction fitted with lids, and, where appropriate, housed within a properly constructed and rodent proof bin store.

## **13. Car Parking**

One car only may be parked in the fire separation space between adjoining caravans provided that the door to the unit is not obstructed. Suitably surfaced parking spaces should be provided where necessary to meet the additional requirements of the occupants and their visitors. Plastic or wooden boats must not be parked between units.

## **14. Recreation Space**

Where children live at the park, space equivalent to about 1/10 of the total area should be allocated for children's games and or other recreational purposes. This provision will normally be necessary because of the limited space available around the caravans or park homes, but may be omitted where there are suitable alternative and available recreational facilities near at hand.

Where play equipment is provided it must be inspected periodically to ensure it is safe to use and does not become dangerous through neglect, weathering or vandalism. Outdoor play equipment should be installed to comply with British Standard 5696, which gives specific guidance on the spacing between items of

equipment and the use of impact absorbing surfaces, which are required beneath any equipment where the free fall height is greater than 600mm.

## **15. Notices**

A suitable sign must be prominently displayed at the park entrance indicating the name of the park.

A suitable notice must be prominently displayed giving details of where a copy of the site licence with its conditions can be inspected. The notice must at all times be legible and the licence copy freely accessible to park residents and others.

Suitable notices including a plan where appropriate, should be displayed on the park setting out the action to be taken in the event of emergency. The notices should show where the police, fire brigade, ambulance and local doctors can be contacted, and the location of the nearest emergency telephone and First Aid Kit. The notices should also give the name and location/telephone number of the site licence holder or his/her accredited representative. At parks subject to flood risk, warning notices should be displayed giving advice about the operation of the flood warning system.

## **APPENDIX 1: Storage and Use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)**

LPG is used at virtually all caravan and mobile home parks and touring caravan and camping sites. It provides a useful fuel and is safe to use providing the dangers arising from leakage or fire near a storage cylinder are understood and precautions taken.

The main risks are:-

- Cylinders or cartridges hold gas under pressure, between 2 and 7 bar (28-100psi).
- The gas is 1 ½ times heavier than air and does not disperse easily. If a leak occurs gas will sink to the lowest possible level and may build up in cellars, pits, drains or other depressions.
- LPG forms a flammable mixture with air in concentrations between 2% and 10% by volume. The gas can be detected by smell at about 0.4% concentration. A fire or explosion could occur if
- LPG escapes and is ignited, particularly in a confined space. If an LPG container is involved in a fire or is close to a fire, it will over-heat and may rupture violently sending shrapnel like pieces of the cylinder a considerable distance from the fire.

It can be appreciated that the greatest potential danger will occur when cylinders or other containers are stored together.

In general terms a safe storage area for LPG will be as follows (note that empty or partly used cylinders are regarded as "full" cylinders as they still give rise to a considerable risk):-

- i) LPG cylinders must be stored in a well-ventilated place, preferably in the open air.
- ii) The storage area should have a concrete, paved or well compacted level surface.
- iii) The cylinders should be kept in a secure compound for example, be surrounded by a 1.8 metre wire mesh fence or similar non combustible and well ventilated structure. The door to the compound must only open outwards to assist escape in case of emergency. A clear space of at least 1.5 metres must be maintained between compound fence and the nearest cylinder.

- iv) A suitable separation distance (typically 4 metres) must be maintained between any gas cylinder and a property boundary, building, source of ignition (electric points, motor vehicles etc.), pit, drain or cellar etc.
- v) Smoking must not be permitted near the storage compound.
- vi) Suitable warning notices must be fixed to the outside of the compound fence stating
  - "LPG FLAMMABLE
  - No Smoking
  - In case of fire, sound the alarm at and call the fire brigade."

Detailed advice on keeping LPG in cylinders, cartridges and bulk tanks is provided by the Health and Safety Executive. The relevant documents are listed below and may be obtained from HMSO outlets.

- Guidance Note CS4 - the keeping of LPG in cylinders and similar containers.
- Guidance Note CS8 - small scale storage and display of LPG at retail premises (shop displays).
- Health & Safety Booklet *HS/G34* -the storage of LPG at fixed installations (bulk storage).

Northumberland County Council is responsible for enforcing The Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974 at all types of caravan parks and LPG at each park or campsite will be expected to be kept to the standards required by the above guidance.

## **APPENDIX 2: B55482 - Code of Practice for Domestic Butane and Propane Gas Burning Installations**

### **Part 2 1977 - Installations In Caravans and Non Permanent Dwellings**

This British standard gives detailed advice on the suitability of materials, components and appliances for use with LPG in caravans, park homes and mobile vehicles. It also gives design information on gas systems, the selection of appliances, space heating and water heating.

A brief summary of the safety points raised in the standard is as follows:-

- i) Gas cylinders should be located outside and provided with a firm dry standing with reasonable protection from accidental damage or interference eg from persons, animals or vehicles.
- ii) Outside cylinders must be positioned so that there is easy access for changing or removal in case of emergency.
- iii) Any gas cylinder should be secured in the upright position with the valve uppermost.
- iv) Any gas cylinder must be stored at or above ground level and never below ground or near drains, pits or cellars which might allow gas to accumulate.
- v) Any cylinder must not be placed in a position subject to extremes of temperature, near corrosive or combustible substances, or near sources of ignition in the event of gas leakage, such as an electrical outlet or motor vehicle.
- vi) No cylinder should be located immediately next to a flue or ventilation opening. No cylinder should obstruct any doorway or emergency exit.
- vii) Any cylinder not kept outside whilst connected to any appliance or gas system must be kept in a suitable housing ventilated directly to the outside air. A suitable housing must only be accessible from outside and must be designed so that it is easy to remove or change a cylinder. The housing must have a fire resistance of at least 20 minutes and be of an adequate size to allow easy access to connections and regulating devices and enable the replacement of cylinders with a minimum of disturbance to the installation and ancillary equipment. Adequate vents must be provided direct to the outside air at both high and low level, each vent being as large as is practicable and not less than 100th of the floor area of the enclosure. The high level vent can only be omitted if the low level vent is



increased to at least 1/25 of the floor area of the enclosure. The housing must display a suitable notice on the access door making it clear that the housing contains LPG.

- viii) The gas system should only use copper or steel tube suitable for carrying LPG. Aluminium, brass, lead or plastic tube is not suitable and must not be used for the connections between the gas cylinder and the individual appliances.
- ix) Any flexible tubing used to connect a movable appliance to rigid gas pipe work must not be longer than 2 metres and should have a shut-off device on the rigid pipe work at the point of connection to the flexible tube. The flexible tubing must be readily accessible for inspection and not exposed to high temperatures ie above 50°C.
- x) Fixed ventilation must be provided to the caravan or park home at high and low level. Vents must be accessible for cleaning, rodent proof, and an equal number provided at high and low levels.
- xi) The gas installation (cylinder connections, distribution pipe work, flexible tubing and appliances) should be checked by a competent person at least once a year.

### **APPENDIX 3: Water Supply; The Water Industry Act 1991**

The Water Industry Act 1991, amongst other things, placed duties on water undertakers, normally the local water company, to supply wholesome water to the premises within its area which are connected to the water mains. Regulations made under The Act (The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 1989) define the acceptable quality standards for water intended for human consumption, and The Private Water Supplies Regulations 1991 concern the quality and sampling frequency of private water supplies. How often a supply is to be sampled and the parameter for analysis depend on the quantity of water provided, Le. they are related to the maximum number of people potentially served by the supply on any day in the year.

The requirements for sampling private water supplies at caravan parks and campsites are basically as follows:-

- i) Private water supplies to caravan parks, touring sites, camping sites etc. will typically supply under 100 people. The Regulations require that these supplies are sampled twice a year in cases where the park is open throughout the year, and once a year if the park or campsite is open for six months or less.
- ii) If a water sample fails to meet the required quality standards re-sampling will be required, and if necessary more frequent sampling may be appropriate.
- iii) Where a caravan park or campsite etc. is only open for six months or less of the year the appropriate time to sample the water supply will be within the month prior to the opening of the park or campsite.
- iv) The parameters for analyses will be as follows:-

Total Coliforms	Nitrate
Faecal Coliforms	Odour (qualitative)
pH (acidity)	Taste (qualitative)
Conductivity	Turbidity
Lead	

Other parameters may be added if appropriate.

- v) The Regulations require the Council to take water samples from private water supplies. In doing so the Regulations allow the Council to regain any costs incurred from the analysis of the water, and the costs resulting from actually taking the sample. These costs can be charged to the person providing or responsible for the supply.
- vi) Where a supply fails to meet the quality standards remedial work, which may vary from the cleaning down of a storage tank to the installation of filters or treatment equipment, will be required and in the interim period an alternative supply, or adequate warning to persons consuming the water may be required. This could take the form of providing an alternative supply, for instance of bottled water or issuing a "notice to boil" requiring all drinking water to be boiled before use.