SUBMISSION FROM DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL

In Dumfries and Galloway we provide two sites for Gypsy Travellers, both have been in place for more than 15 years. If travellers are absent for e.g. summer travel, the pitch will be retained for them when possible. We no longer have site managers at either site, but the remit for the sites currently sits with our temporary accommodation officers within the Homeless team.

There are no private sites in Dumfries and Galloway that provide for Gypsy Travellers. We have no plans to develop any more sites.

**Thistle Grove, Collin, near Dumfries**

Situated 2 miles from the town of Dumfries, within the village of Collin. The site is opposite a Primary and Nursery school. The nearest High School is in Dumfries. The local public Health Nurse visits the site fortnightly. On this site there are 18 pitches, all have toilet, shower and kitchen sink. One of the units is adapted for wheelchair use. Our liaison officer attends the site twice per week. Rental for each site is £62.50 per week which includes council tax.

**Barlockhart, Glenluce, near Stranraer**

Situated 1.5 miles from the village of Glenluce, near Stranraer. In the village is a primary school, post office and GP surgery. The site has 14 pitches, one of which is adapted for wheelchair use. Our liaison officer visits once per week. Again the rent is £65.20 including council tax.

The use of these sites has reduced in recent years, their use and appropriateness is reviewed through the Social Work Estate Management Group which meets monthly. There is also a “Gypsy Travellers Liaison Group” which is a multi-agency group that meets every two months. Any complaints are recorded through the Council’s complaint procedure.

We do not provide temporary or halting sites. Unauthorised sites are deemed to occur when an encampment is not authorised on council or private property. We have a procedure that involves the temporary accommodation officer, generally, visiting with local police officers to ascertain reasons for stay and proposed length of stay. If travellers do not move on after a few days we would hold a multi-agency tactical group to consider likely actions etc.

Gypsy travellers are included in our diversity training for elected members and staff.

Geoff Dean
Senior Social Work Manager
Dumfries and Galloway Council
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