



Report of the Police and Crime Panel

Report title: Unauthorised Encampments

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Purpose of the report: At the request of the PCP

Recommendations: Information only

Executive Summary

This paper contains a briefing on Force and LPA Unauthorised Encampment Performance data, training, and our response to Unauthorised Encampments (UE) in Thames Valley Police. It also contains an overview of how we are working with Local Authorities in the Thames Valley to provide a consistent response to Unauthorised Encampments.

Data

It is difficult for us to understand the true demand of Unauthorised Encampments or to monitor the effectiveness of our response without reliable data collection.

Following the implementation of CMP (Contact Management Platform - 15 October 2020) reports of Unauthorised Encampments result in an automatic recording of Non-Crime Occurrence in Niche, therefore multiple reports results in multiple occurrences (duplicates). This can make it difficult to understand the scale of demand or to monitor how effective we are in our response.

In order to address this data quality issue we have explored a number of options.

- Short Term - All Local Police Areas have been reviewing their Unauthorised Encampment Year to date figures. LPA Deputy Commander have been asked to review all duplicates and submit them for re-classification to miscellaneous incidents where appropriate. This resulted in a dramatic reduction in our 2021 end of year totals and we anticipate that this will be the same on the 2022 data.
- Long Term - A dashboard has been created within CMP, which will capture UE reports. CMP operators are briefed to check this dashboard before creating a UE occurrence to see if one has already been created at that location. If it has then they will not record another but they can add the information to the existing occurrence. If one has not been recorded then they will create a new one.
- The CMP project team are trying to develop a fix to prevent duplicate incidents being created.

Table 1 Shows all recorded reports for unauthorised encampments in TVP area by month (Mar 2016-Dec 2022)



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	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
January		9	21	33	3	11	3
February		7	27	30	14	25	22
March	4	18	41	58	11	37	20
April	3	19	43	32	15	43	29
May	7	37	79	23	34	35	36
June	9	52	81	32	63	48	47
July	8	44	60	39	55	38	70
August	11	43	80	71	50	24	71
September	21	20	57	59	21	28	45
October	19	15	34	32	34	16	23
November	16	21	26	21	19	25	15
December	11	13	19	18	12	9	5
Total	109	298	568	448	331	339	386

Please note, that within the total number of reports for 2022, a number of duplicate reports have been identified, which will be rectified by the next performance review.

Table 2 shows reported use of sec 61 powers 2019-2022 (See Annex for description of powers)

	Section 61 Used	Section 61 Used	Section 61 Used	Section 61 Used
	2019	2020	2021	2022
February			3	
March			2	
April		1	5	3
May		1	2	4
June	1	1	1	2
July		1	7	3
August		1	2	3
September	1		2	
October		1	2	1
November		1	3	
Total	2	7	29	16

Table 3 shows use of sect 60c since introduction (28th June 2022)



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	Section 60C Used
	2022
Milton Keynes	1
Oxford	1
Reading	9
South Buckinghamshire	1
South and Vale	2
West Berkshire	4
Thames Valley	18

The above data suggests that Officers are utilising the Section 60C powers far more frequently (18 times in 6 months) than the existing Section 61 Powers (16 times in 12 months).

“Use” of section 60C means a notice to leave land was issued. In 15 out of the 16 occasions, the occupants have left the land voluntarily. On one occasion (Milton Keynes LPA), the notice was not adhered to and additional powers were used to remove the Unauthorised Encampment.

The figures above are consistent with Regional (South-East) and National responses by Police Forces, as reported by the NPCC Unauthorised Encampment Working Group.

- **Training and Organisational Learning**

A mandatory Unauthorised Encampment Training video was created for all Operational Inspectors to complete ahead of the new legislation being enacted. The training is a 7-minute video containing an engaging question and answer style briefing, covering a number of scenarios in which the criteria for the new Section 60C criteria could be met. It also covers Human Rights considerations and welfare and wellbeing considerations.

A briefing slide (including the training video) was delivered to all operational Incident and Crime Response (ICR) officers in June ahead of the new legislation. The updated operational guidance has also been widely communicated and publicised.

The completion rate for this mandatory training for Inspectors was initially 100%. Due to the turnover of work force, this mandatory training will continue to be required of all operational Inspectors as they move into post.

There is also a SNAP guide on the Force SNAP (smart phone) application.

Following the enactment in June 2022, and a review of Thames Valley Police’s response to a report of an Unauthorised Encampment in the Milton Keynes LPA area, the force held



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a number of organisational Learning events. These events addressed learning identified since the enactment of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

• **Response to Unauthorised Encampments**

In order to achieve a consistent operational response to reports of Unauthorised Encampments a number of processes have been put in place;

- The Operational Guidance has been re-written and updated in line with the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 Home Office and NPCC Guidance to Police Forces.
- Our response to UE will continue to be monitored and reviewed through the local Daily Management Meeting process for consistency and promptness when the criteria is met. Community Tensions is a standing agenda item on the Force Daily Management Meeting and therefore our response to Unauthorised Encampments should be raised here if it is having a significant impact on the community.
- The Unauthorised Encampment Strategic Working Group will meet quarterly to review data collection, compliance with use of closure templates, consistency in our response and any learning to be captured and reviewed.

• **Working together with Local Authorities**

In 2018, a joint working protocol in relation to unauthorised encampments was established between TVP and local authorities. The protocol sets out the aim and general principles for police and local authorities when responding to and dealing with unauthorised encampments. The protocol also includes the actions required to be taken and describes how the police and partners will communicate with each other in relation to unauthorised encampments. An annual review also takes place as part of the protocol agreement. This was held in March 2022.

In 2022 a full review of the protocol was commenced. Consultations and working groups were held with all local authorities in March, July and August 2022, which resulted in a new Join Working Protocol being produced. The consultation was deliberately held at a tactical level, as previous feedback was that the practitioners were not consulted.

The protocol is intended to be a guideline. It is recognise that there might be minor localised differences depending on the local police / authority area but the ethos of the guidelines remains the same – we want to work together to provide a consistent response to Unauthorised Encampment in the Thames Valley.

This waits ratification from Chief Executives at the Local Authorities.

Next Steps / recommendations

Ratification of updated TVP and Local Authority unauthorised encampments protocol



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23/1/23 Chief Inspector James Sullivan takes role as Force Tactical lead for unauthorised encampments.

Conclusion

New and updated legislation for dealing with unauthorised encampments was introduced in June 2022. The first 6 months of data shows that TVP and local authority partners have used the legislation to apply a consistent and improved response to unauthorised encampments. There will need to be a consistent drive to keep the training relevant, keep a focus on performance and our response to reports of Unauthorised Encampments and maintain vital relationships with local authorities.

Annex A - comparison table showing key points of sec 60c and sec 61

Sec 61	Sect 60c
Two or more persons present	One or more
Trespassing on land with intent to reside	Residing or intends to reside without consent
	A person aged 18 or over
Reasonable steps taken by occupier/rep to ask them to leave and one of following:-	At least one vehicle
Trespassers have caused damage disruption or distress	Has caused, or is likely to cause significant damage, disruption distress
or six or more vehicles on land	Requested to leave by landowner/rep or Police