

Fife Council

Gypsy/Traveller Cooperation Policy

2026

1.0 Aim

1.1 The aim of the Policy is to clearly identify the framework for managing Gypsy/Travellers Roadside Camps in Fife. This Cooperation Policy aims to respect Gypsy/Travellers nomadic lifestyle, promote engagement, and balance this with the needs of the settled community in Fife.

2.0 Background

2.1 Gypsy/Travellers are a recognised ethnic group, but are made up of many different communities, with their own cultures, history and lifestyle.

2.2 The requirement to produce a Co-operation Policy arises from the advice from the Scottish Government that each Local Authority agree procedures with Police Scotland (see 5.4 and 5.5) to deal with Roadside Campsites (previously referred to as Unauthorised Encampments) in a consistent and appropriate manner, which respects the lifestyles of Gypsy/Travellers. This is recognised in Fife's Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027.

3.0 Objectives

3.1 The main objectives of the Policy are: -

- To agree the respective rights and responsibilities of the Council and Gypsy/Travellers, as well as Police Scotland and Safer Communities.
- To ensure that the interaction between the settled and business communities and the Gypsy/Traveller Community is managed proactively through effective partnership working with all appropriate parties.
- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

4.0 Principles

This Policy recognises:

4.1 Gypsy/Traveller Rights

- The right to roam as central to the Gypsy Traveller culture
- The right of Gypsy/Travellers to live a life free from prejudice and discrimination

- The right for Gypsy Travellers to be fully involved/consulted in the development of services provided for them
- To protect the rights of children to obtain settled & temporary accommodation, education and health
- The right to apply for a pitch with Fife Council if there are vacancies on any of our sites

4.2 Gypsy/Traveller Responsibilities

- To respect the provisions of the law in Scotland, particularly in relation to access to land, respecting the integrity of security gates, fences etc., to prevent unauthorised access to public or privately owned land in Fife
- To be respectful of the land in which they are occupying, and adhering to the Good Neighbour Guide
- To work co-operatively with the Council and other public and voluntary organisations
- To move to a more suitable, alternative location, when reasonably requested to do so by the Travelling Persons Site Manager
- Respecting the Council's overarching responsibility to consider the interests of all communities in Fife.

4.3 Fife Council's Responsibilities

- To work cooperatively with Gypsy/Traveller groups
- To ensure policies, procedures and decision making do not discriminate against this protected group by undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)
- To visit a Roadside Campsite within 2 working days of it being reported, wherever possible, and to complete a Roadside Camp Form at the initial visit
- To ensure Gypsy/Travellers are aware of their rights and responsibilities (Good Neighbour Guide)
- Offering services to Gypsy/Travellers e.g. waste disposal options, access to health and education, application for a Pitch or housing and sign posting to any other relevant or requested services.
- Providing a point of contact and responding to reported breaches of the Good Neighbour Guide
- Working with landowners and providing advice when Roadside Camps occur on private land.
- Recouping the cost of legal and/or cleaning and removal services from other Fife Council departments when Roadside Camps are identified on Fife Council land, that is not owned by Housing Services.

4.4 Fife Council's Rights

- Managing Roadside Camps in a manner that is fair and just to all members of the community

- Recording details of every Roadside Camp that is reported to Fife Council, in line with GDPR
- Seeking to evict any groups who are not adhering to the Good Neighbour Guide or are camping on unsuitable land as detailed in **5.3** below.

5.0 Roadside Camp Sites

5.1 Roadside Camps can be reported to the Gypsy/Traveller team online at www.fife.gov.uk or by emailing GypsyTravellerTeam@fife.gov.uk. You will then receive details of how we will manage the site.

5.2 Fife Council Site Managers will endeavour to visit the site within 2 working days and ensure that it meets with all the requirements outlined in the Good Neighbour Guide, as well as health and safety requirements. Site Managers will follow Housing Services internal 'Roadside Camp Procedure'.

5.3 Site Managers cannot unreasonably ask a Gypsy/Traveller group to move on, unless there is evidence which suggests:

- The site poses a risk to the health and safety of the Gypsy/Traveller group or the surrounding settled community e.g. proximity to public roads, railway lines etc.
- The site creates a hazard to road safety, contrary to transportation guidelines, or it impacts the accessibility of emergency services
- The site is an environmental hazard e.g. an area where there is toxic waste, serious ground pollution etc.
- The site is of scientific, environmental or conservational significance
- The behaviours on site pose significant disruption to the wider community or businesses in the area e.g. serious anti-social behaviour, excessive noise, fly-tipping, poor waste disposal, starting fires etc. Such complaints will require corroboration.

5.4 Whilst there is an expectation for Gypsy/Traveller groups to adhere to acceptable standards of behaviour, it is also expected that the settled community behave in an appropriate manner. Any hate crimes against Gypsy/Travellers can and should be reported directly to Police Scotland.

5.5 Police Scotland are responsible for investigating allegations of criminal offences. The Safer Communities Team can assist with allegations of anti-social behaviour by the settled community or by Gypsy/Travellers on roadside camp sites.

5.6 Where there are no issues with the Roadside Camp, the Site Manager will continue to monitor the site, provide assistance, and develop a rapport with the Gypsy/Traveller group. The Site Manager will keep Elected Members up to date with information regarding roadside camps

where it is acceptable under GDPR, such as the time frame in which the camp residents seek to stay.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Fife Council is committed to improving its services for Gypsy/Travellers. Some of the ways in which we intend to do this is by:

- Updating and improving the information on our webpage, in line with Scottish Government Legislation, Data Protection 2018 and Fife Councils processes for managing Gypsy/Traveller sites and Roadside Camps
- Creating an online form where members of the public can report roadside camp sites and receive details on how it will be managed
- Improving access to equalities information and training for Fife Council employees, third sector organisations and other relevant partners

7.0 Consultation Mechanisms

7.1 Fife Council's Gypsy/Traveller Team have committed to consulting with Gypsy/Travellers when making changes to policies or procedures which may impact them. This may be through:

- Direct consultation with Gypsy/Travellers on Fife Council sites
- Consultation through third parties such as MECOPP
- The Tenant Participation Team in Fife Council, Housing Services

7.2 The Gypsy/Traveller Team will ensure that a range of parties are involved in the consultation process to ensure the Gypsy/Traveller lifestyle is respected, whilst balancing the needs of the wider community. This may include:

- Gypsy/Traveller Community
- Fife Constabulary (Police Scotland)
- Safer Communities Team (Fife Council, Housing Services)
- Education Services
- Relevant third Sector organisations in the local community

Revised: March 2026