

Housing

Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site: Allocations

Key Contacts:

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Key Points:

- Horsdean Transit Site provides temporary accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers who are in transit through Brighton & Hove.
- The maximum length of stay allowable on a transit site is 12 weeks.
- Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments can be directed to move to Horsdean Transit Site
- Brighton & Hove City Council can use Horsdean as part of a strategy for controlling the number and size of unauthorised encampments.

1. Introduction:

This policy sets out the process for application for a pitch at the transit site.

Pitches may also be allocated as part of a section 62a process, please see *Managing Unauthorised Encampments : Joint Enforcement Protocol Paragraph 5.7.*

2. Legal Position:

This policy has been written with due regard to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Mobile Homes Act 2013, Housing Act 2004 and the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

3. Criteria

Save in exceptional circumstances, pitch allocations will be limited to those with a provable ethnic Traveller status.

Pitches will usually only be allocated to those defined as 'in transit through the city'. That means that anyone who has an authorised stopping place or accommodation available for them to occupy within Brighton and Hove will not be eligible

Applicants must be able to provide photographic ID for every adult member of the household.

Applications will not be accepted from those who owe rent or court costs to the council and applicants must pay one week's licence fee in advance.

4. Management considerations

Brighton & Hove City Council will take into account evidence of previous behaviour that indicates the potential to affect the good management of the site and/or adversely impact on the site or its occupiers.

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If we have evidence (which includes any reasonably held belief) as to incidents, especially within the previous three years, of violence, damage to site facilities or property elsewhere or nuisance or antisocial behaviour, then this will be a factor in deciding on whether to allow a pitch to be allocated.

5. Duration of pitch allocation

Pitches will be available for occupation for fixed term periods of up to 12 weeks. Applicants will initially be granted a 7 day licence agreement. Provided there is no breach of the terms and conditions of the licence agreement or of the site rules and provided no rent arrears have accrued the licence will be renewed for a further 7 days.

This will be repeated for up to 12 weeks and after this time the household will be required to leave the site. A licence will not normally be granted to return to the site and occupy a pitch within the next three months.

6. Extensions to licences

Extensions to licences may be granted in exceptional circumstances. A licensee can apply for an extension beyond the 12 week deadline, for a short period of time, only where there are serious acute medical or welfare needs which would require additional short term respite. For example if time is required for treatment. Applications for an extension should be made to the Traveller Liaison Team

Traveller Liaison Team

1st Floor, Bartholomew House, Bartholomew Square, Brighton, BN1 1JP

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Consideration for extending a licence can only be given where proper evidence of health and welfare needs has been provided. Routine health issues such as immunisations or ongoing treatment of long-term conditions are not usually, on their own, sufficient to justify an extension to a licence. Generally there will need to be an immediate need for medical intervention.

There may be instances where a licensee would usually meet the criteria for extension on health or welfare grounds but an extension cannot be granted due to site-management issues.

If an extension to the licence is granted, it will be for a fixed period. The licensee will be informed of this verbally and in a letter.

If an extension is not granted the licensee will be informed of this verbally and in writing outlining the reasons for refusal.

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7. **Payment**

The weekly rental and utilities charges will be outlined in the terms of the Licence Agreement and are subject to annual review.

Applicants will need to pay the first week's payment before they move on to the site. Arrangements can be made for a convenient time to pay this with a member of the Traveller Liaison Team.

8. **Process for allocating pitches**

Pitches will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. A request for a pitch can be made by contacting the Traveller Liaison Team.

If a pitch is available an applicant will be asked to complete an application form. If there is no pitch available it will not be necessary to complete an application form, as a waiting list is not operated for this site.

If the criteria as stated above are met and there are no concerns regarding the good management of the site an applicant will be made an offer of a pitch and they will be required to sign a licence agreement stating that they will abide by all site rules. The licence conditions and site rules will be explained to the applicant and help can be given to complete the form.

The pitch will need to be taken up and the applicant move onto the site within 48 hours of an offer unless there are exceptional circumstances and an alternative arrangement is made in advance. After this time the offer will be withdrawn and the pitch can be allocated to someone else.

If an application is not accepted this decision will be put in writing stating the reasons why a pitch cannot be offered.

This Allocation Policy is subject to review and may be amended as required from time to time.

9. **Exclusions**

There may be circumstances in which an applicant is excluded from the Horsdean Site. Examples of behaviour which may result in exclusions include but are not limited to; breaches of the site rules, rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, failure to leave on expiry of the licence agreement.

During any period of exclusion applicants will not be allocated a pitch. Exclusions from the site will be reviewed after a specified period of time and/or may be conditional upon meeting certain criteria.

A conditional exclusion may be given in certain circumstances, for example an applicant may be excluded from the site until they have paid off rent arrears. As far as is practical, applicants will be informed of any conditional exclusion both verbally and in writing.

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They will be given the reason for exclusion and details of the conditions that need to be met in order to lift it.

As far as is practical, applicants will be informed of any temporary exclusion both verbally and in writing. They will be given details of the reason for and length of time of any exclusion. Once the exclusion is lifted they may apply for a pitch in the normal way.

10. Appeals and Complaints

The Council aims to treat all applicants and applications fairly. Any complaints regarding pitch allocations, exclusions or extensions can be handled via Brighton & Hove City Council's Complaints procedure. Information about this can be obtained from the Traveller Liaison Team or from the Council's Standards and Complaints Service.

Contact details

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