LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL
Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Council Housing Services

Mellishaw Park Travellers Site

Site Handbook

Managed by
Lancaster City Council
on behalf of
Lancashire County Council

This information can be made available in large print, braille, audio and other languages.
For further details please contact us on (01524) 582929.

www.lancaster.gov.uk

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MELLISHAW PARK

Welcome to Mellishaw Park

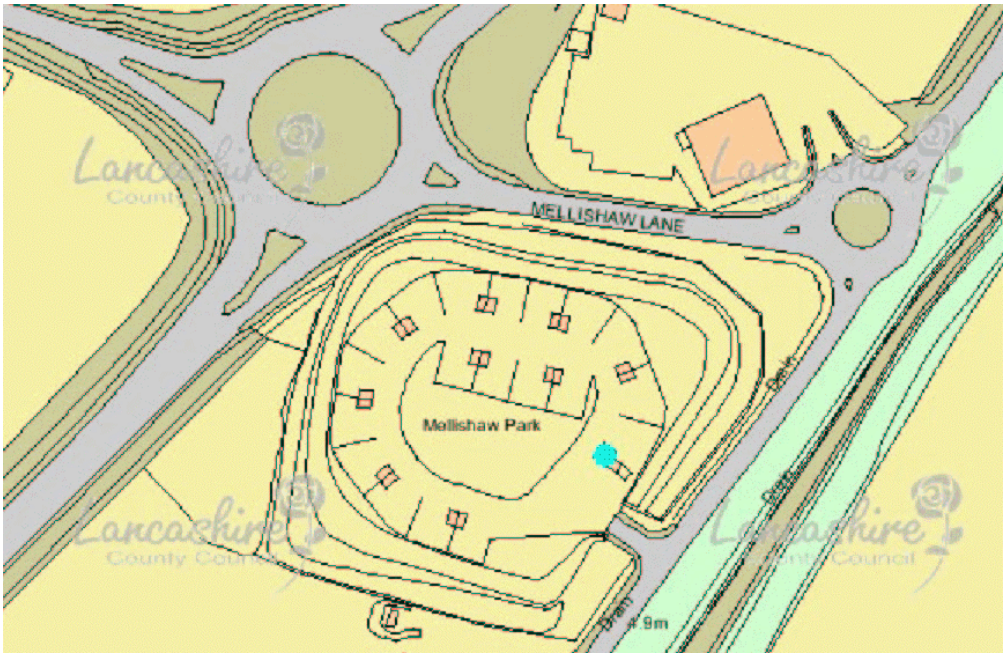
Dear resident,

I would like to welcome you to Mellishaw Park Travellers Site on behalf of Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council.

The site is situated at junction of Mellishaw Lane and Lancaster Road in Heaton with Oxcliffe near Lancaster.

Mellishaw Park is one of a network of sites provided by Lancashire County Council, and provides a purpose built caravan park for use by Travellers. The site is managed by Lancaster City Council.

Head of Council Housing Services



Your postal address is:

Plot:
Mellishaw Park Travellers Site
Mellishaw Lane,
Heaton with Oxcliffe,
Morecambe LA3 3FB

All residents have a right to live and work free from harassment, and have their privacy respected.

FACILITIES

The site has eighteen pitches let on a weekly letting agreement.

Each pitch has:

- it's own hardstanding for parking a caravan and motor vehicle. (The number of caravans allowed on the pitch is dependent upon the size of the caravans.)
- Hook up facilities to provide electricity to your caravan; and
- an amenity block with a shower room, toilet, kitchen, hot and cold water, and storage.

SITE WARDEN

There is a Site Warden and a Deputy Site Warden who live on site. Their hours of work are:

- Site Warden – Monday to Friday (daytime only)
- Deputy Site Warden - Saturday and Sunday (daytime only)

The Site Warden and Deputy Site Warden are responsible for the day to day control of the site including:

- Ensuring the site is kept in a clean and tidy condition, inspecting the site and reporting repairs
- Advising residents on the Conditions of Licence and to report any breach of licence to the Neighbourhood Housing Manager.
- Dealing with unauthorised entry to the site
- The sale of cards for electricity meters
- Providing assistance to residents with written documents and forms
- Dealing with complaints from residents about site issues.
- Consultation with residents

YOUR LETTING AGREEMENT

Lancaster City Council manages Mellishaw Park on behalf of the County Council.

The letting agreement is between you and Lancashire County Council, and you will be a licensee of Lancashire County Council.

The letting agreement sets out a number of site rules. We will explain the site rules and what you are expected to do and what we are responsible for providing at th e time you sign your letting agreement.

The site rules are there to ensure you can enjoy the benefits of living on the site.

Your rights and responsibilities

As a licensee you have rights and responsibilities.

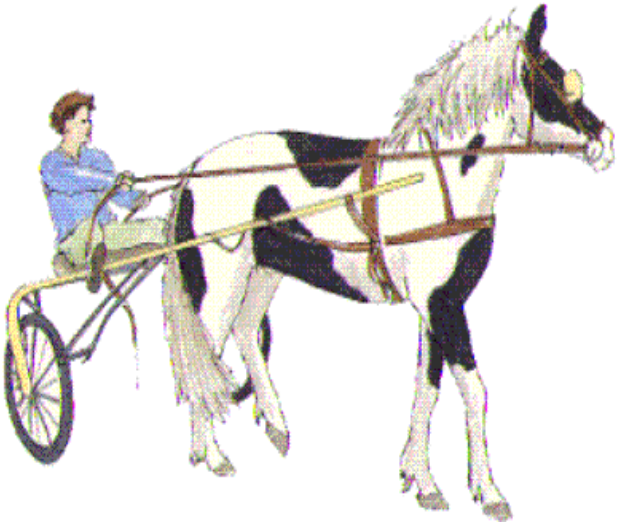
Your rights as stated in the letting agreement include the following:

- A copy of the letting agreement to be read (if requested) to the head of the family with the conditions explained.
- For the pitch/site to be kept in good repairs (with the exception of wilful damage or misuse).
- For all grassed areas, trees and shrubs within the site to be maintained.
- To have household refuse bins and that they are regularly emptied.
- For the site to have a warden for enforcement of site rules and for advice and assistance to licensees.

General conditions

The letting agreement for residents contains conditions including the following:

- Number and condition of caravans
- Maximum occupancy of caravans
- Residency and sub-letting
- Use of amenity blocks and erection of other structures
- Cleanliness of and access to pitches
- Care of animals/stabling of horses
- Rubbish removal and damage to site
- Fire Precautions
- Trade or business
- Electricity supply
- Vehicles
- Return of items



If you have a query about your letting agreement, then you can ask the Site Warden for help and assistance.

You can also contact the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Please don't hesitate to ask!

SITE FEE

The level of the Site Fee is set by Lancashire County Council, and covers some of the costs of running and maintaining the site.

The Site Fee is payable one week in advance and due on Monday in each week. After you sign up for the pitch, we will arrange for a Site Fee swipe card to be sent to you.

If you temporarily leave the site the Site Fee will also be payable in advance for any period during which a pitch is reserved with the consent of the Council.

We will give you 28 days' notice in writing of any increase in the site fee or any service charge.

Paying your site fee

The Site Fee can be paid:

- at any Post Office in the Lancaster City Council area
- by standing order through your bank or building society
- by touchtone phone: 0845 6017297 (24 hour service)
- online at lancaster.gov.uk

We will send you an account statement every three months.

Remember the Site Fee is always payable in advance.

If you have any difficulties please contact the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

What will happen if the Site Fee is not paid?

If your Site Fee is not paid we will:

- Contact you following the first missed payment asking you to clear your account and invite you to discuss the matter.
- Check to see if you are receiving all your welfare benefit entitlements and arrange a meeting with a specialist Welfare Rights Officer if necessary.
- Make an arrangement with you for you to clear the arrears based on your individual circumstances and ability to pay.

If you still continue to not pay your Site Fee, Lancaster City Council will apply for a Possession Order in the County Court. This may result in you being evicted and losing your pitch. You should be aware that if you are evicted the Council may not provide you with another pitch.

Never ignore arrears, it is easier to tackle debt if you act straight away rather than let the problem build up.

Can I get help to pay the Site Fee?

The Council's Revenue Services administers Housing Benefit. If you think you should be getting Housing Benefit you should make a claim. Even if you are not sure whether you qualify you should claim.

Housing Benefit claim forms are available from all Council Offices.

COUNCIL TAX

Make sure you tell the Council Tax section the date that you moved out of your old home and into the new one. If you have overpaid any Council Tax this will be transferred to your new account or you may request a refund.

If you need help to pay, Council Tax benefit can be claimed using the same form (HB4) as you fill in for Housing Benefit.

They will be assessed at the same time and notification of entitlement will be sent by post.

SITE MANAGEMENT

How do I get a pitch?

We aim to allocate the pitches on the site to people in the greatest housing need, in a fair and accountable way.

All enquiries about the letting of pitches and to register your interest should be made to the main Council housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Spacing of caravans

To ensure the safety of everyone on the site the number of caravans and vehicles allowed on each pitch is regulated.

- a 6 metre distance is required between caravans on neighbouring plots
- a 3 metre distance is required between the caravans on the same plots

The majority of the pitches on the site are only suitable for one caravan.

The Site Warden will regularly inspect the site to ensure that the standard set out above is complied with.

The Council will ask you re-site a caravan or other vehicle if the standard is breached.

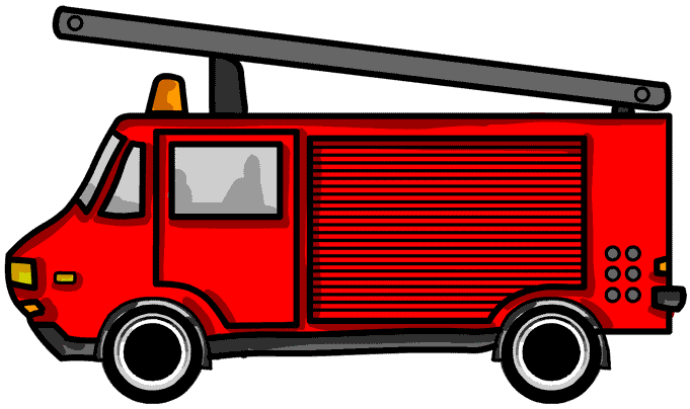
Fire safety

Fire safety is very important. On your arrival on site the Site Warden will make you aware of the location of the nearest Fire Hose Reel Point and also give you advice on the action that should be taken in the event of a fire.

All alarm and fire equipment on the site is tested and maintained in working order once every 12 months. A record of such tests and remedial action is kept and is available for inspection in the Site Office.

On discovering a fire:

- Ensure that the caravan or site building is evacuated
- Raise the alarm
- Call the Fire Brigade **Phone 999** (the nearest telephone is situated in the Warden's Office)
- Attack the fire using the fire fighting equipment, if it is safe to do so



Fire Hose Reels are provided on the site and are clearly marked. The hose reels should only be used in the event of a fire and for no other purpose.

Under the terms of your letting agreement you are required to provide an approved fire extinguisher for your caravan and to properly maintain it.

Fires are not permitted on the site outside the caravans.

No petrol or other inflammable material should be stored on the site except in the vehicle storage tanks.

Gas installations and the storing of LPG

You are responsible for your own gas appliances, and you should have them regularly checked. You are also responsible for ensuring empty LPG bottles are securely stored.

Empty LPG Bottles must be stored in the storage cage provided at the site entrance.

If the storage cage is full, please report this to the Site Warden or the Council's Maintenance Inspector.

If the cage is locked, contact the Site Warden.

Electricity

Each pitch has an individual electricity supply and hook up point.

The cost of the electricity is regulated by **ofgem,** the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets, who set the rules on how the maximum price at which gas or electricity may be resold.

Each pitch has an individual meter which is operated by purchasing cards of £5 or £10 from the Warden.

Getting your electricity meter cards:

- electricity meter cards are purchased from the Site Warden.
- the sale of the card is recorded on an 'issue sheet'.
- the Site Warden will issue a receipt.

Water

Each pitch has a mains drinking water supply. The water supply complies with appropriate Water Bylaws and statutory quality standards.

The mains drinking water supply is checked on an annual basis and the results will be displayed in the site notice board.

Storage: garages/sheds

A shed or covered storage space will be permitted between units only if it is of a non-combustible construction and sufficient space is maintained around each unit to allow for escape in the event of fire. Windows in these structures should not face towards the units on either side.

Carports and covered walkways are not permissible even if non-combustible.

Insurance

The Council insures the actual fabric of the site, but you need to insure your own van, caravan/vehicle, furniture, contents and insure against accidental damage.

Refuse collection

Each pitch shares a large refuse bin with the adjoining pitch. The bins are emptied once a week on Friday. NB: Please note these bins are for domestic rubbish only i.e. not trade.

Special collections – a free service

The City Council offers a service to remove bulky items e.g. fridges, sofas, wardrobes etc. This is an appointment only service.

Please telephone City Contract Services: 01524 582491

Site cleaning

The site perimeter road is swept every six months. The perimeter embankment will be cleared on a regular basis and when necessary.

Grass cutting

The grass on the central green area is cut monthly during the growing season.

Pest control

Each pitch has a tray which contains poison to reduce the number of vermin on site. The trays are checked and baited every three months.

If anyone sees vermin, they should request a visit from the maintenance inspector by telephoning 01524 582929.

SITE INSPECTION

The site is inspected on a daily basis by the Site Warden, and a Weekly Site Inspection Report is completed and returned to the housing office.

The site is also inspected on a monthly basis by a Maintenance Officer.

Residents are also invited to take part in Site Walkabouts with council officers and local representatives. The purpose of the walkabouts are to identify any environmental problems. The dates and times of these inspections will be notified in advance.

REPAIRS

Reporting repairs

All repairs in relation to the site and the amenity blocks should be reported to the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

If the repair is very straightforward, or an emergency, an order for the repair will be directly raised. All requests for a repair will be acknowledged in writing, and we will notify you in writing of all repairs that are ordered including a target date for the completion of the repair.

There will be occasions when an Inspector will have to call to assess the nature and extent of the repair required. For non-emergency repairs the Inspector will call within 10 workings days. If you are not in, an appointment card will be left to enable you to arrange a suitable time for the Inspector to call back.

The time taken to carry out repairs depends on the sort of repair you need. There are four different categories ranging from emergencies where there could be danger to life, to non-urgent repairs like cleaning out gutters.

Emergency – e.g. Electricity supply failure - within 24 hours

Urgent – e.g. Minor plumbing works - within 7 days

Normal – e.g. Plastering walls/easing windows - within 6 weeks

Planned Maintenance – e.g. site improvements - ask to see the proposed programme

OUT OF OFFICE HOURS EMERGENCY REPAIRS TELEPHONE : 01524 67099

If there is a danger to life or limb or serious damage to property, emergency work will be carried out within 24 hours.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council believe that everyone should be able to enjoy a peaceful life in their home. To this end we will protect your community and site.

If you experience anti-social behaviour you can report it to the site warden or Council Housing Services. We will investigate any report of anti-social behaviour and tell you what action we will take.

Licensees are responsible for the behaviour of every person (including children) living in or visiting their homes. They are responsible for them in their homes, on surrounding land, in communal areas and in the neighbourhoods around their homes.

If someone tells us that you (the licencee) or your visitors been acting in an anti-social way, we will investigate the complaint thoroughly – collecting evidence, interviewing witnesses and talking to the police. If this shows that the complaint is justified we will take action.

If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour, please contact the Site Warden or the Housing Office at 38 Cable Street, Lancaster.

☎ 01524 582929 or @ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

ENDING YOUR LETTING AGREEMENT

To end your letting agreement you or your representative must provide at least four week's written notice to Council Housing Services. Forms are available on request.

On receipt of notice to terminate a lettings agreement we will make an appointment to inspect the property prior to you leaving.

We will notify you in writing of any repairs that are your responsibility, and of any that may be recharged to you. Please ensure that all your belongings are removed before you leave. If anything is left behind the Council will dispose of it and charge you for the cost of doing so.

If we want to end your letting agreement (because of non-payment of rent, or nuisance to neighbours for example) we will first inform you in writing that we will be taking legal action against you by serving a Notice to Quit to terminate your letting agreement.

Depending on what happens after the notice is served, the Council will make a decision whether or not to take the matter to Court. The licensee (you) will have a chance to tell your side of the story in Court. It will then be up to the judge to decide whether or not the licensee (you) should be evicted.

If we have to take action like this, you can get advice from a Citizens' Advice Bureau, law centre, housing advice centre or a solicitor.

CUSTOMER CARE

Getting involved

Residents of the site are encouraged to get involved in commenting on and developing the services provided on the site.

Regular site walkabouts are carried out and residents are welcome to take part in these site inspections. You will be advised in advance both verbally and in writing of the dates and times of these inspections. They will also be publicised on the Site Notice Board.

COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Council Housing Services is determined to provide the best possible service. To do this successfully, we need your help. We need to know what you think about the quality of services. You can help us to provide a well-run site by telling us about your views.

Full details of how we handle compliments, comments and complaints are contained in our Service Leaflet "Compliments, Comments, and Complaints" which can be obtained from the Site Warden or the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

and on the Council's web site (www.lancaster.gov.uk).

Handling complaints

Our standards for handling complaints are:

- We will write to you within two working days of receipt to let you know that we have received your complaint.
- We will send a full written reply within five working dates. If we cannot send you a full written reply within five days, we will write to you to let you know the reason why this has not been done, and the date when a full reply will be given.

If you are not happy with our reply to your complaint or if you do not think we dealt with your complaint properly, then you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Head of Council Housing Services.

- The Head of Council Housing Services will carry out a further investigation, and will reply to you within 10 working days of your request for a review.

If you are still not satisfied and wish to appeal then you can take the complaint to the Housing Complaints Panel.

- The Panel should meet within 28 days of receipt of your decision to appeal.

For more information contact the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Equality policy

Council Housing Services aims to ensure that all people attending its services and staff are treated with respect for their diversity and for their rights as individuals.

We aim to provide a secure environment and a customer care-orientated service for everyone, regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, disability, sexuality, gender, age and nationality.

Council Housing Services recognises that racial harassment causes problems for tenants and residents and that many people can have their quality of life severely damaged by it. Council Housing Services will not tolerate any kind of racist behaviour or racist activities on or near Council estates.

Oppressive and discriminatory behaviour will not be accepted.

Further help

Your Site Warden can give you any further advice you need or put you in touch with the relevant agency.

You can also contact the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Please don't hesitate to ask!

SITE MANAGEMEMT AT A GLANCE

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
are the owners of Mellishaw Park Travellers Site

⇩

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL
manages Mellishaw Park Travellers Site
on behalf of Lancashire County Council

⇩

COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES
is the service within Lancaster City Council
with the day to day responsibility
for running Mellishaw Park Travellers Site

⇩

MELLISHAW PARK TRAVELLERS SITE
has a resident Site Warden
who looks after the site on a day to day basis

⇩

THE SITE WARDEN
reports to the
the Neighbourhood Housing Manager
who is based at:
38 Cable Street, Lancaster

☎ ***01524 582929***

USEFUL CONTACTS

Travellers' services

Travellers Education Service
Lancashire County Council
8 East Cliff
Preston
PR1 3JE

01772 533826

Sure Start – Family Liaison Officer
Sure Start Lancaster
Ryelands House
Ryelands Park
Lancaster
LA1 2LN

01524 382818

Sure Start is a Government funded programme that works to improve the quality of life for children from birth through to 4 years of age and their families, including Traveller families.

The Gypsy Council,
European and UK office
8 Hall Road
Aveley
Essex.
RM15 4HD

01708 868 986

Friends, Families and Travellers
Community Base
113 Queens Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 3XG

01273 234 777

Fax:01273 234 778

email: fft@gypsy-traveller.org

The Gypsy & Traveller Law Reform Coalition
Banderway House
156-162 Kilburn High Road
London
NW6 4JD

020 7625 2255

Your local councillors

County Councillor **Jean Yates** 11 The Cliffs Heysham Lancs LA3 1NY	**01524 859005** **0788 7831698** jean.yates@cc.lancscc.gov.uk www.councillor.info/lancashire/jyates

Lancaster City Council services

Repairs	**01524 582929**
Emergency Repairs	**01524 67099**
Maintenance Inspector	**01524 582929**
Refuse Collection	**01524 582491**
Cleansing Services Special Collections	**01524 582491**
Pest Control Services	**01524 582935**
Street Cleaning	**01524 582491**
Housing Benefit	**01524 582962**
Environmental Health	**01524 582935**
Dog Warden	**01524 582757**
Fly tipping	**01524 582491**

Public Services

Emergencies – Police, Fire and Ambulance	**999**
Police Station (Lancaster and Morecambe)	**01524 63333**
Fire Station (Fire Safety)	**01524 32311**
Social Services	**01524 66246**
Department of Work and Pensions	**01524 598000**
Norweb Energi (emergencies)	**0800 1954141**
Transco (gas emergencies)	**0800 111999**
United Utilities (water)	**08456 020406**
Local Doctors Surgery **Westgate Medical Practice**	**01524 832888**
Lancaster Infirmary	**01524 65944**
Queen Victoria Hospital	**01524 405700**
Nearest Primary School **Morecambe and Heysham Grosvenor Park Primary School**	**01524 845708**
Local Secondary School **Heysham High School**	**01524 416830**

Other Services

Preston & Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council Town Hall Annex PO Box 10 Birley Street PRESTON PR1 2RL	**01772 906422**
Racial harassment reporting hotline **Lancaster City Council**	**01524 67099**
MAPfED Race& Ethnicity Task Group (Multi Agency Partnership for the Elimination of discrimination)	**mapfed@lancaster.gov.uk** (Please address to RETG) Race & Ethnicity Task Group contact: Pat England 01524 851191

CONTACT INFORMATION

Council Housing Services

38 Cable Street
LANCASTER
LA1 1HH

☎ 01524 582929

@ councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Our office hours are 9.00 am to 5.00 pm weekdays
(10.00 am to 5.00 pm Wednesdays)

In an emergency ring the Council's Central Control Centre,
which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The number to call is ☎ 01524 67099

Calls may be recorded
to help improve our standard of service and accuracy of information