



LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL
Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Health and 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

INDEX

ALLOCATION OF PITCHES	Page 5
FACILITIES	Page 6
CARETAKER AND ESTATE MANAGER	Page 6
YOUR LICENCE AGREEMENT	Page 7
SITE FEES	Page 9
COUNCIL TAX	Page 10
SITE MANAGEMENT	Page 11
SITE INSPECTION	Page 14
REPAIRS	Page 15
ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	Page 16
ENDING YOUR LETTING AGREEMENT	Page 16
CUSTOMER CARE	Page 17
SITE MANAGEMENT AT A GLANCE	Page 19
USEFUL CONTACTS	Page 20

MELLISHAW PARK

Welcome to Mellishaw Park

Dear resident,

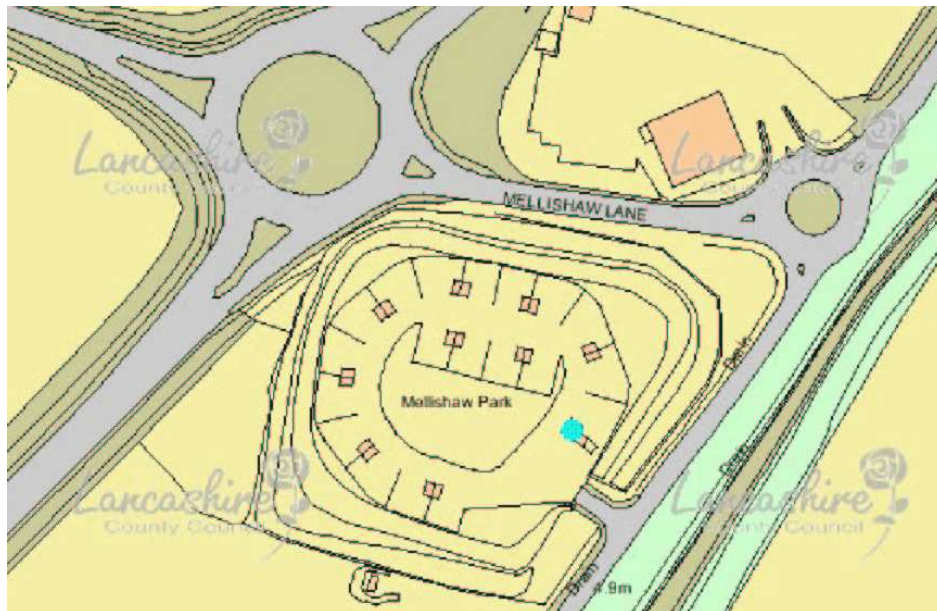
I would like to welcome you to Mellishaw Park Travellers Site on behalf of Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council.

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.

HOW WE ALLOCATE PITCHES

Allocations of vacant pitches are processed via the Housing Needs Section. A Housing Application form is completed and then the pitches are allocated according to the following criteria:-

- First priority is given to those living in caravans who are subject to enforcement proceedings and are, or will be Homeless and in Priority Need. Environmental Health Services notify Housing of those who fit this criteria.
- All other applicants are considered in date order
- Transfers of existing licencees have to be approved by the Neighbourhood Management Officer or Principal Management Officer

FACILITIES

The site has nineteen 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 area plumbed for washing machine, hot and cold water, and storage.

CARETAKER AND ESTATE MANAGER

There is a **Caretaker** who works part time on the site. The caretakers hours of work are Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm. The caretaker has the following duties:

- To ensure the site is kept in a clean and tidy condition
- Report repairs
- Keep central green neat and tidy and free of litter
- Inform residents if they break the terms of their licence agreement

The **Estate Manager** for the site is based at the Cable Street office (contact details at the back of this handbook). The Estate Managers hours of work are Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. The Estate Manager has the following duties:

- Advising residents on the Conditions of Licence and taking appropriate action where the licence has been breached

- Reporting any breach of licence to the Neighbourhood Housing Manager.
- Dealing with unauthorised entry to the site
- Providing assistance to residents with written documents and forms
- Dealing with complaints from residents about site issues.
- Consultation with residents
- All other general site issues

YOUR LICENCE AGREEMENT

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

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

The licence 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 the time you sign your licence 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.

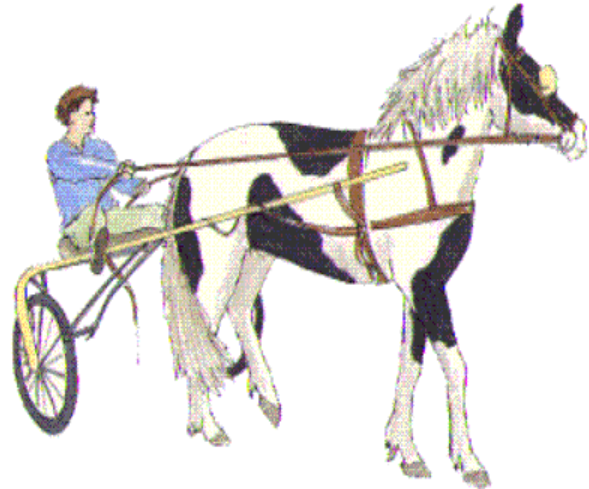
Your rights as stated in the letting agreement include the following:

- A copy of the letting agreement to be read (if requested) to the head of the family with the conditions explained.
- For the pitch and shed (amenity block) to be kept in good repair (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 and cleaned.
- For the site to have a Caretaker and Estate Manager for enforcement of site rules and for advice and assistance to licensees.

General conditions

The licence 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 licence agreement, then you can ask the Estate Manager for help and assistance.

The Estate Manager can be contacted at the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster, LA1 1HH.

 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/Direct Debit through your bank or building society
- by touchtone phone: 0845 6017297 (24 hour service)
This call will cost you 5 pence per minute plus your phone company's access charge.
- online at lancaster.gov.uk
- Anywhere with a Payzone sign




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, LA1 1HH

 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 do 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 submit a claim form which will be assessed.

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. See page five for details of the allocations policy.

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 LA1 1HH

 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 (approx. 18 feet) distance is required between caravans on neighbouring plots
- ❑ a 3 metre (approx. 9 feet) 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 Estate Manager 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.

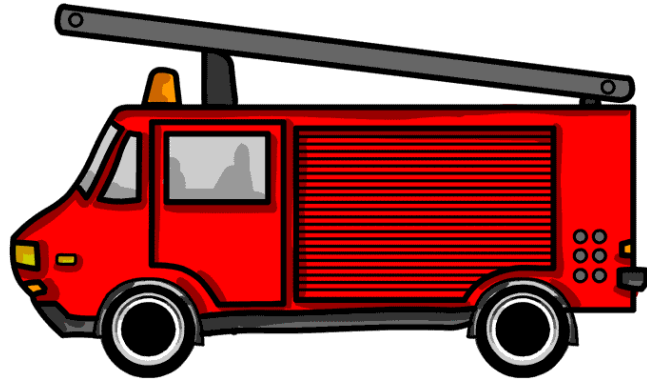
Fire safety

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 Estate Manager or the Council's Maintenance Inspector.

If the cage is locked, contact the Caretaker or Estate Manager.

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.

Getting your electricity meter cards:

- ❑ Electricity meter cards are purchased from Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, Doris Henderson Way, Salt Ayre Lane, Lancaster, LA1 5JS
- ❑ The leisure centre is open 7 days a week.
- ❑ The Officer will issue you with 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

Sheds have been provided on each pitch for the storage of non-combustible and non dangerous items.

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 Customer Services on: 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

A pest control officer visits the site every 6 to 8 weeks and checks/replenishes the 'bait trays' which are strategically placed around the site near to where pests may make their home or nest.

SITE INSPECTION

The site is inspected on a daily basis by the Caretaker who will report any issues to the housing office.

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

Residents can also request a Site Walkabouts with council officers and local representatives. The purpose of the walkabouts are to identify any environmental problems. Contact the Estate Manager if you would like a Site Walkabout.





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, LA1 1HH

 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 working 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. The emergency number is **01524 - 67099**.

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 Estate Manager or Health and 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 licensee) 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 Estate Manager or the housing office at 38 Cable Street, Lancaster, LA1 1HH.

 01524 582929 or e.mail: councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

ENDING YOUR LICENCE AGREEMENT

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

On receipt of notice to terminate a licence 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 licence 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 licence 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. Contact the Cable Street office to find out what opportunities are available.


COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Health and 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 Caretaker or the housing office at:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster, LA1 1HH

 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

Health and 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.

Health and 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. We 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 Estate Manager 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, LA1 1HH

 01524 582929

 councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk



Please don't hesitate to ask!

SITE MANAGEMENT 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 Caretaker
who looks after cleanliness and tidiness of the site on a day to day
basis



THE ESTATE MANAGER
is responsible for the day to day supervision of the site and is
based at:
38 Cable Street, Lancaster

 **01524 582929**

USEFUL CONTACTS

Travellers' services

**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
Achievement Service**

Lancashire County Council
8 East Cliff
Preston
PR1 3JE
E.mail:
traveller.education@ed.lancsc.gov.uk

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 ward is – Overton Ward
Your local councillor is:

Councillor Keith Sowden
2 Stephens Gove
Overton
Morecambe
LA3 3HX

01524 – 858011
ksowden@lancaster.gov.uk

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** **01772 906422**
Town Hall Annex
PO Box 10
Birley Street
PRESTON PR1 2RL

Racial harassment reporting hotline **01524 67099**
Lancaster City Council

**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

Health and 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