



Protecting land and property from unauthorised use for raves, squatting or travellers' sites.

Site in South Wales occupied by travellers soon after being sold: deployment of VPS Eviction, Security and Site Protection services

One in six travellers' caravans were sited on unauthorised properties in 2016, according to the latest government count, an increase of 11% on 2015.

Land and properties which fall vacant need to be secured from the moment they become vacant to the point at which they are re-let or sold. VPS have developed a range of integrated solutions specifically designed to help landowners reduce the risk of illegal use, or the establishment of unauthorised traveller site on land not designated for that purpose.

Unprotected land and property that attracts unauthorised use by raves, squatters, travellers or trespassers can be expensive to rectify, not only the cost of removal but also the cleaning and clearing of sites after their departure. Sometimes costs have run into six figure sums or higher. If appropriate measures have not been taken to maintain a secure site, insurance policies may not cover these costs.

In this instance, a vacant building in South Wales, a former public house, had been fully secured with steel and alarms. However, travellers moved on to site's unprotected car park, jeopardising the sale of the property. VPS immediately deployed same day security guarding to monitor the site and protect the land and the pub buildings.

The VPS traveller eviction service was then utilised and a 48hr eviction sought. This was implemented with the travellers' removal, and concrete bollards deployed to car park entrances. This quick action allowed the sale to be completed.

SERVICES UTILISED:

- Steel Security
- SmartAlarms
- Guarding
- Concrete barriers
- Traveller eviction

OVERVIEW

SECTOR	Public Houses
CUSTOMER	Enterprise Inns
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travellers moved on to site's unprotected car park, jeopardising the sale of the property
SOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VPS Guards • VPS Traveller Eviction Service





BACKGROUND DATA

Squatting in a residential building in England and Wales became a criminal offence under section 144 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing & Punishment Act 2012. As a result, many more commercial premises have been targeted since the law was passed, with an estimated doubling of legal proceedings against squats taking place. Thousands of squats and illegal raves are reported annually.

Proper protection will also guard against the high incidences of arson and vandalism. About 60 fires a day occur in the UK in or next to empty properties.

There are around 300,000 travellers living in the UK, and contrary to popular belief, most live in housing. However, approximately a 100,000 are thought to be living on the road or at sites. The government estimates there are about 20,000 travellers' caravans in the UK and Northern Ireland.

The solutions available are numerous from appropriate fencing through to the JCB Smart Tower CCTV, security shutters, specialist alarms with round-the-clock remote monitoring, and an emergency call out service. To deter specific threats such as traveller occupation, VPS offer perimeter protection using high quality palisade fencing as well as concrete barriers.

If your land is currently being occupied by travellers VPS offer a traveller removal service, and then provide you with various options for perimeter protection, allowing you to choose the most suitable option for your needs.

Remember: - the cost of moving travellers from your site will far outweigh the cost of preventing initial entry.

“Shortly after exchanging contracts to sell the vacant property we received notification that travellers had moved onto the site. This took place on a Friday afternoon, and no company representatives were available to attend the property to assess the situation.

VPS were instructed to attend site and carry out this assessment. Following a site visit they reported the situation to the local authorities, and appointed a security guard to provide 24/7 cover at the site.

VPS immediately commenced proceedings to evict the travellers, and then re-secured the site including the deployment of concrete bollards at the entrance points. We received regular updates from VPS throughout the proceedings, and we were able to complete the sale on time.”

Brian McNiven
Asset Manager Enterprise Inns

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