Mobile Home Site Licensing

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Summary

- My Background
- Welsh Government Review of Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013
- Challenges
- Cases

Residential Sites in Wales

Anglesey[1]	6
Blaenau Gwent	0
Bridgend	2
Caerphilly[2]	3
Cardiff	0
Carmarthenshire	11
Ceredigion	5
Conwy	10
Denbighshire	2
Flintshire	6
Gwynedd	2
Merthyr Tydfil	1
Monmouthshire	2
Neath Port Talbot[2]	1
Newport	4
Pembrokeshire	12
Powys	18
Rhondda Cynon Taff	5
Swansea	4
Torfaen	1
Vale of Glamorgan	5
Wrexham[2]	2
Total	102

Terms of Reference: Park Homes Stakeholder Group

Purpose / Role of the Group:

The work of the stakeholder group will be instrumental in developing advice for the Minister on what improvements, new ways of working or policy initiatives could be brought forward to address some of the issues affecting the park home sector in Wales.

The Group will convene for the purposes of developing a package of non-legislative and legislative (caveats will be given by the Chair) actions to tackle concerns that have been raised and ensure all park home sites in Wales are managed and run to the highest standard.

- British Holiday and Home Park Association
- National Caravan Council
- Welsh Local Government Association
- National Association for Park Home Residents
- Independent Park Homes Advisory Service
- The Leasehold Advisory Service (LEASE)
- Residential Property Tribunal
- Representation from the Local Authority Park Home Working Group
- Matthew Hall, Head of Private Sector Housing Reform, Welsh Government
- Jane Purnell, Senior Policy Manager, Welsh Government

Policy proposals will be developed in the following areas:

- Identifying ways to improve the use / application of powers under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 to ensure sites are managed appropriately. This includes addressing issues of variation licencing, enforcement and considering best practice.

- Reviewing information relating to the benefits of park home living, buying a park home and the rights of residents. Exploring ways of better communicating this information as part of further promoting the sector in Wales.

- Considering any need for additional advice and support services in the sector, for both existing and potential site owners and residents, along with options for meeting that need at a national and regional level.

- Assessing potential benefits of a single lead site-licensing authority for Wales to (for example) oversee a more streamlined licensing process and hold information about the sector and act as a single point of contact for enquiries.

Challenges

- Vulnerable sector
- Some Rogue operators (minority) / Bad Reputation
- Managing expectations of Residents
- Residents misunderstanding of LA's Role and Powers
- Many complaints are civil matters
- Lack of awareness of where responsibility lies e.g. sometimes recourse is via RPT
- Unaware of sources of advice e.g. LEASE

Case 1

- Residential site 60 caravans
- Old site with dated infrastructure
- Lots of complaints historically
- Gradually improved over years
- Good relationship with Site Owner
- Issues with planning and licence prior to 2013
- Site now good standard
- Since August 2017 numerous complaints from 2 residents

= EMERGENCY TELEPHONE
Property Ke

Complaints from Mr M

Aug 2017 - extensive list of perceived breaches

Sept 2017 – dumping of rubbish in woods /pot holed roads

October 2017 - drainage outside his home

April 2018 –road condition/lighting/notice

June 2018 –Fire Points /condition of entrance gates and dumped empty units at site entrance

July 2018 - Rats at lake

Aug 2018 – Up to date electrical certificate not on display

Sept 2018 – Water pooling on road outside home

Dec 2018 - Storm water running onto his plot muddy driveway etc.

Scheduled to go to RPT in Feb – refused site owner access to plot to repair base (cracked) – Resolved - Agreed sale of home to site owner

Complaints from Mrs M

Oct 2017 – extensive list not all licence conditions

Dec 2017 – Icy roads /no salt

Feb 2018 – tree branches falling / concerned about safety of trees

March 2018 – trees /roads/shrubs being cut back

March 2018 – follow up complaint that issues had still not been dealt with

May 2018 – (via solicitor) roads /drainage / trees

Dec 2018 – electricity bills not on display

Jan 2018 – Request for historical electricity bills – alleged overcharging

Feb 2018 - Heard that rates for electric are going up and that there will be a pitch increase

Feb 2018 – No Water utility bill on display (on PWS)

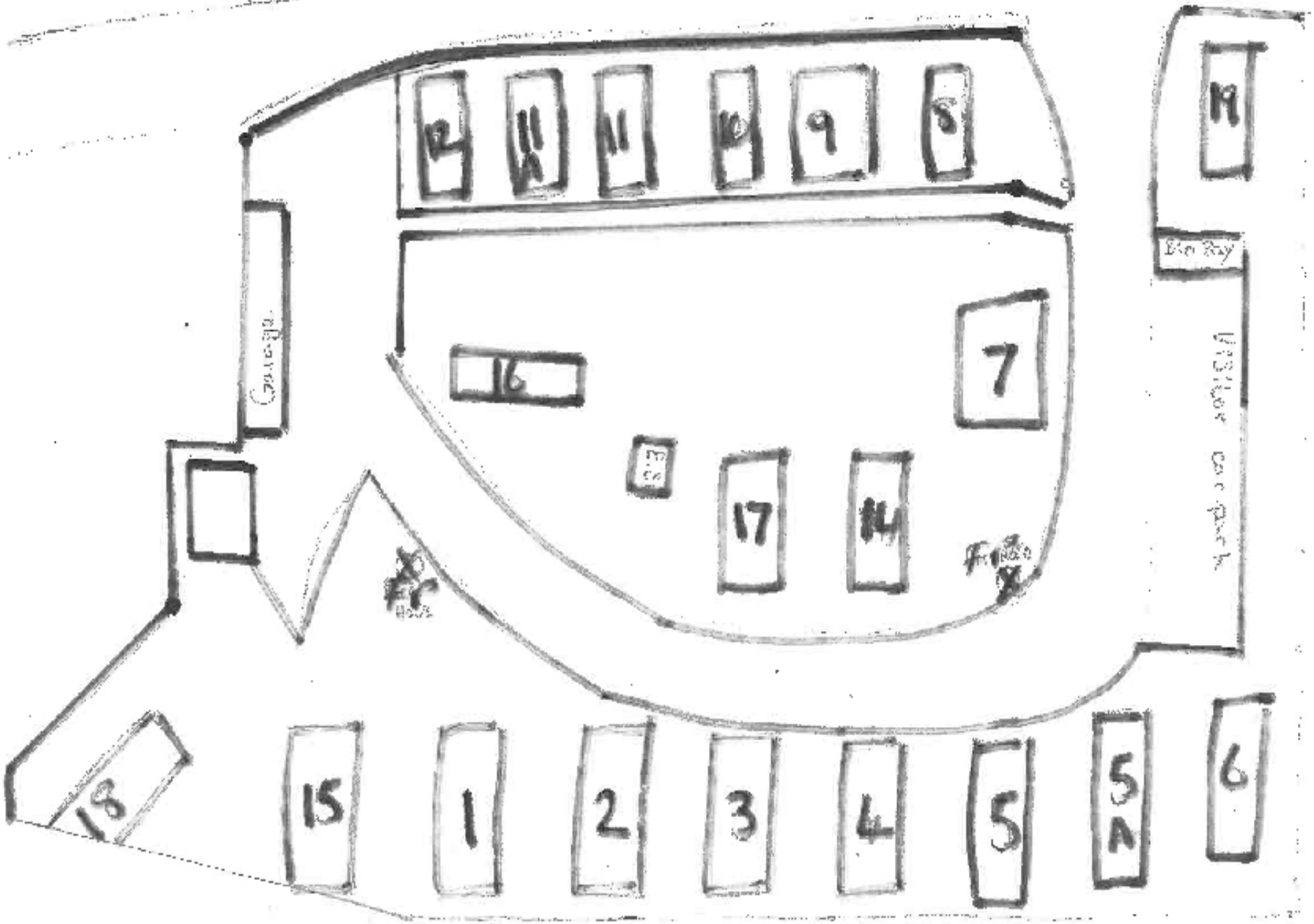
Case 2

- Small residential site 20 caravans
- No relationship /contact with Site owner
- Very run down, over grown, derelict empty units
- Issues with compliance with site licence conditions
- Ignored all requests to licence under 2013 Act

(eventually received licence application March 2016)

- Never any complaints

- 2017 Change of Management, site now licensed, lots of clearing of site undertaken (no consultation/engagement with residents on changes)
- Better compliance with conditions
- Complaints start coming /poor relationship between residents and site owners
- 1 case to RPT (mobile home agreement)
- Site Rules Established
- Local member and local AM in regular correspondence
- Many issues are not covered by site licence, lack of understanding of where recourse lies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11A
11
10
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19
Bin Bay
Garage
16
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14
Visitor car park
18
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5A
6

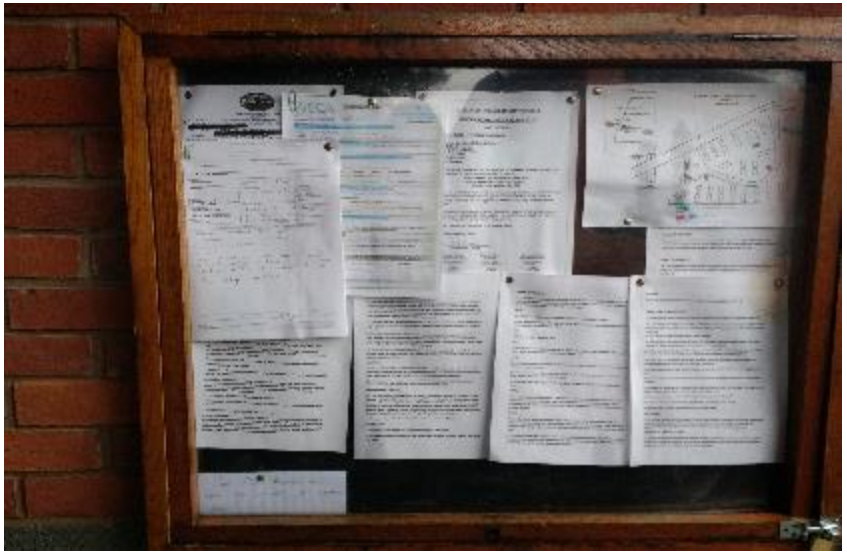
Complaints

- July 2016 resident asked to remove wooden shed (was not in any separation distance)
- Sept 2016 complaint to H&S and Fire – concerns about fire points, no electrical certificate, old units being vandalised, warden smoking in proximity to LPG cylinders
- Jan 2017 complaint via councillor residents asked to pay rent to new persons (not licence holders)
- New Licence issued to new owners
- Jan 2017 – introduced charge for parking in garage

Complaint of inadequate parking

- April 2017 – consultation on site rules, residents responded that unable to comment until all residents had copies of agreements and plans of their pitches (missed opportunity)
- June 2017 complaint via Councillor –resident asked to use car parking space next to home
- June 2017 query vis local AM – proposed pitch fee rise
- June 2017 complaint via local AM to head of service, not satisfied with LA's handling of complaints, poor relationships between site owners and residents, requested that LA intervene. Head of service responded LA remit is restricted to licence conditions

- October 2017 complaint no notice of works being carried out at site, site owners not on land registry, No up to date public liability insurance on display, pitch fee rise above CPI, council tax queries
- April 2018 complaint from local councillor about works commencing for potential new road, no consultation
- April 2018 complaint form resident – advised that the plot he rents is his base only and no curtilage (he has no copy of his agreement) it is an open site
- Sept 2018 one resident went to RPT in relation to dispute about site agreement and discrepancy with plan she has and that provided by new owners
- Dec 2018 complaint from local councillor – light out



Thoughts / Questions?