

Park Home Sites: Historic Breaches of Licence Conditions

Introduction

The council is aware that on some Park Home sites there have been breaches of the licence conditions or planning regulations, or both. This fact sheet has been put together to explain the council's approach should such historic breaches be identified. The rules about the development of Park Home sites are fairly complex and confusing and in a number of cases the landowners have allowed development on their sites which do not conform to the site licence and/or do not have planning permission. Of particular concern are breaches of the licence that would increase the risk of fire spread. In addition, some development may have happened which would not have received planning permission. Please note that this fact sheet applies only to Park Home sites covered by the Mobile Home Act 1983 (as amended).

Combustible sheds

Sheds and combustible outbuilding have been shown to act as a fire bridge between homes in the event of fire increasing the risk to occupiers. Where the location of timber, plastic sheds or other types of combustible outbuilding are within the 6 metre separation distance between homes then the sheds must be removed to a more suitable location or replaced with a non combustible type. If a shed or outbuilding is identified by the council during an inspection, then it will need to be removed or replaced within a period of six months (or a shorter period if deemed a particular risk). The removal of the shed within six months would ensure that the risk is managed in a reasonable and definable period and at a convenient time. It would be expected that the landowner ensures that such breaches do not occur and are rectified prior to an inspection by the council.

Porches, extensions and other additions

Any porch, extension, or other addition to a park home that is in breach of the licence conditions should ideally be removed or altered to rectify the breach before it is sold or transferred. The most common example is where a porch has been constructed in the 6 metre fire separation zone so that it is less than 5 metres from a neighbouring home. This timescale would allow the home owners to undertake the work at a convenient time whilst minimizing the upheaval. Extensions which breach the licence condition and have been constructed since the last inspection or in the last four years will be required to be removed within the following six months in order to avoid formal action being considered.

To mitigate the fire risk presented by incorrectly positioned extensions and porches the council may require that additional precautions are put in place such as linking early warning of fire. Any method to mitigate the risk would need to be approved by the council and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service before installed. It would be expected that the site licence holder ensures that such breaches do not occur.

Breaches of separation distances

In some cases, a Park Home will have been positioned so that the 6 metre fire separation distance between homes has been compromised. Ideally the homes should be re-spaced to meet this requirement; however, it is acknowledged that this will not always be possible due either to insufficient space or the fact that structural damage would result if the home was moved. Should it be possible to re-space the Park Home reasonably then the views and opinions of the home owner will be taken into account if the re-spacing is contrary to their wishes. If it is reasonably possible to reposition the home and the home owner is in agreement then the council would seek that the landowner makes this arrangement.

In cases where homes are to remain in position then alternative measures should be put in place to mitigate the fire-spread risk. An option would be to install linked detection between the homes that are too close together to provide early warning in the event of fire. Any method to mitigate risk would need to be approved by the council in consultation with Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Cases where the Park Home has been positioned too close to the boundary will be considered on an individual basis dependent on the use of the adjoining area and in consultation with the Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service.

The council may also require the landlord to provide independent professional advice.

If you require confirmation of the requirements in your particular circumstance you would be welcome to contact Private Sector Housing with a plan of your existing home, including all dimensions and the distances from other homes and boundaries etc.

Contact details

Contact Wiltshire Council Customer Services on **0300 456 0100** and ask for Private Sector Housing.
email: HousingRenewal@wiltshire.gov.uk

For an on-line enquiry form: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/housinggrantenquiryform.htm>