

CaSSOA Guide to Secure Caravan Storage

Overview

This guide has been prepared for the use of both existing and new caravan storage sites. A successful storage site will be founded on the following broad principles:

- 1) Robust physical perimeter protection.
- 2) Technical detection systems that supplement the physical protection.
- 3) An effective site management system.
- 4) An effective administrative system.
- 5) *All coordinated to provide all round protection.*

For the new site it will act as a comprehensive guide to secure storage, for the established site it will act as a source of reference.

The world of security products and general security principles can be, and is very often, a minefield of technical terms and sales rhetoric. To the consumer any advice needs to be concise, accurate and practical; otherwise the likelihood of it being acted upon is remote.

The advice contained within this document is presented to cover all threats that may be associated with the storage of caravans. The main threat undoubtedly comes from theft; therefore it has been examined in greater detail. From the outset any security scheme should be; ***economical, effective, and workable***; this trinity is paramount and should not give way to textbook theory.

1.0) Identifying the Threat

The principles of security are to identify the threat to the caravans, followed by an assessment of its likelihood for harm; and finally the implementation of a strategy to eliminate or control any potential risk.

1.1 The threat to stored caravans will come from:

- Theft: Either theft of, or from, the caravans.
- Criminal Damage: Primarily caused in the process of theft.
- Fire: Either accidental or deliberate.
- Flood: Either by location (flood plain), or very heavy rainfall.
- Falling Trees: Where trees surround the storage area.
- Storm Damage: From insecure structures, and discarded material.
- Vermin: An inherent feature of storage areas, especially on farms.

1.2 Assessing the Threat

- **Theft:** Although the number of thefts has been reduced over the years in whatever form it is still too high, with urban storage areas more at risk than those in rural areas.
- **Criminal Damage:** Again a higher risk in the urban areas.
- **Fire:** The threat of fire is always there, and is aggravated when combustible material is stored in quantity nearby.
- **Flood:** There is always a danger of flooding in low-lying areas, and sites that are bounded by waterways.

- **Falling Trees:** An ever-present danger in exposed wooded rural areas.
- **Storm Damage:** A potential threat from insecure buildings.
- **Vermin:** Vermin are attracted to locations where there may be waste food and or shelter.

1.3 Eliminating the Threat

The opportunities to eliminate the threat will be rare.

- **Theft:** The threat cannot be completely eliminated.
- **Criminal Damage:** The threat cannot be completely eliminated.
- **Fire:** The threat cannot be eliminated.
- **Flood:** Flood defences can eliminate the threat.
- **Falling Trees:** Trees can be felled in extreme cases or cut back where felling is prohibited.
- **Storm Damage:** Insecure dilapidated buildings can be removed, or repaired.
- **Vermin:** Realistically all types of vermin with the capability to infest or cause damage are difficult to eliminate.

1.4 Protecting Against the Threat

This is the time to apply the principle of protection.

- **Theft:** The best way to prevent theft is to deny potential intruders access to the target.
- **Criminal Damage:** Greater use of damage resistant material and early repairs to any damage, as this can often attract more damage
- **Fire:** Remove any sources of ignition, combustible material, and provide the correct fire-fighting equipment.
- **Flood:** Familiarise staff with Environment Agency Flood Plan. In periods of heavy rain check adjoining water levels for obstructions.
- **Trees:** Keep them well trimmed back so they do not overhang the caravans.
- **Storm Damage:** Repair any damaged buildings, and carry out regular checks for damage.
- **Vermin:** Install a recognised vermin control regime.

2.0 In-Depth Security

In-depth security is simply a combination of physical security supplemented by electronic detection measures. The combination denies or delays access to any intruder arriving at the target and increases the likelihood of detection. The casual thief would not breach this level of protection. Even the determined thief with the right tools would have difficulty and would need time - a commodity he does not have.

2.1 Perimeter Protection

The first line of defence in any security scheme designed to protect against property loss is the perimeter fence.

There are divided opinions on which type of fence provides the best protection. The two most common types are described below with a very brief summary of their respective assessments. For example, one of the most secure fences is Palisade but it is expensive and often not acceptable to planning authorities particularly in rural areas.

- For general purpose use the height can vary from 1.5 to 2.4 metres above ground.
- For security use the recommended height varies from 3 to 3.6metres

Palisade Fencing & Welded Mesh Fencing

Palisade

For: A robust fence that affords a high level of protection when erected to the correct standard (see above)

Against: The cost of installation can be high, the individual Palings can be forced off, if not secured correctly. The horizontal bars are prone to being cut with a burning torch. There could be Planning Problems in particular in rural areas.



Palisade Fencing

Welded Mesh

For: This type of fencing offers a high level of protection - the thicker the diameter of the mesh the more robust it will be. In the more vulnerable areas it is often supplemented by Armco Barrier.

Against: Once again cost will be high. The panels are fitted to the metal posts by using Aln type security bolts secured using a unique tool. These tools can be obtained and therefore the panels removed. For a much better performance the panels should be fitted to the inside of the posts so that they are not accessible from the outside.



Welded Mesh Fencing

Whenever a proprietary type fence is to be erected, ideally it should be at least 2.4 metres high, and certainly no lower than 2 metres. If possible the fence posts to be set at 2 metre intervals to prevent a caravan passing between the posts. This may be difficult as fencing horizontal parts are normally pre-cut to length, and it will add to the cost. As an additional measure interior posts can be installed off set to the main posts.

It is not uncommon to see fences where the angled posts are set incorrectly.

The following basic comments indicate the correct settings:

- To keep people out of a private area the posts should be angled *out* over
- To keep people in a private area the posts should angled *in* over
- To keep people *in and out* Y shaped posts should be used
- When a fence adjoins a building ensure that the building cannot be used as a climbing aid. This is best done by fitting an arc of anti-climb spikes onto the top of the fence, and the side of the building.
- When erecting boundary/perimeter fencing if possible avoid creating right angles as they can be used to bridge the fence.

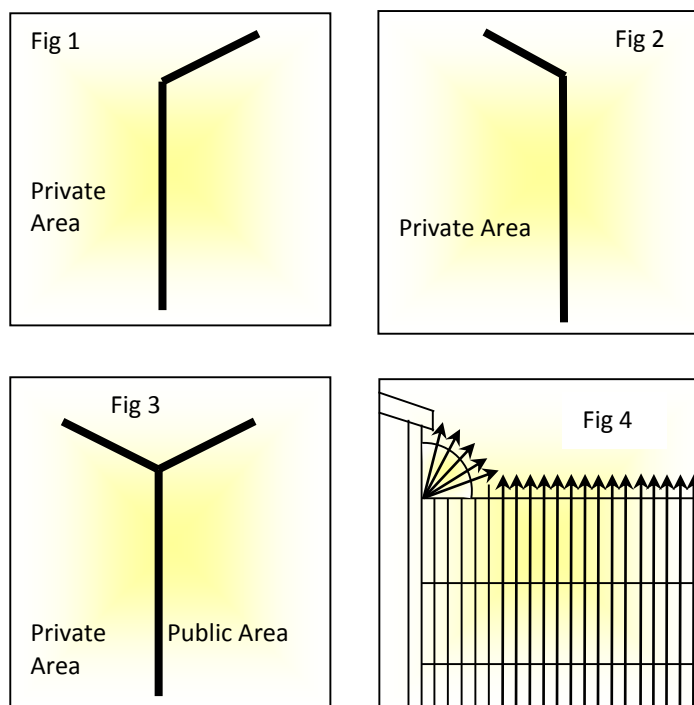


Figure 5 shows a plan view of the outside perimeter of a rectangular shaped compound showing two of the recommended angles. As an alternative to proprietary fencing, mounds and ditches can be created. They form an effective barrier to prevent theft of caravans, but they are not so effective to prevent theft from caravans. The mound needs to be at least 1.5 metres high with a 3 metres base. Any redundant material can be recycled into the mound to add to its purpose of denying access to an intruder. An enquiry should always be made with the planning authority as a security mound may require planning permission as it could be classed as Operational Development.

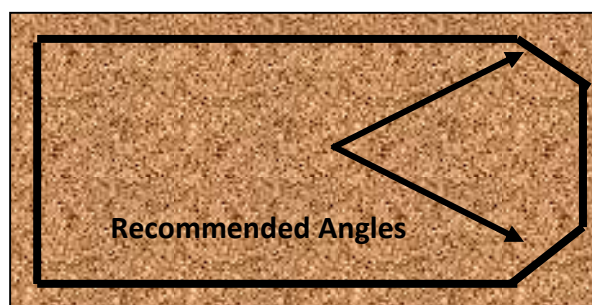


Fig 5

Electronic perimeter beam protection is an excellent deterrent when used in tandem with mounds/ditches to detect a trespass. When sited within a sterile zone the alarm can be left armed at all times. When assessing the suitability of electronic beam protection members need to be aware that the performance of the sensors can be affected by poor weather conditions in particular thick fog. In those parts of the country that experience thick fog on a regular basis then beam protection may not be the preferred choice despite the claims in a sales brochure.

A combination of preventive and detection measures will provide a very secure perimeter. Remember, if they can't get in they can't steal the protected property.

2.2 Security Gates

Wherever possible all manual gates should be of single leaf construction, opening out-over. The gate should be hung on anti-lift hinges and be supported by a nose wheel to prevent stress to the gateposts. In addition the hinges and sliding locking bar should be protected to deter attacks using burning/cutting tools.



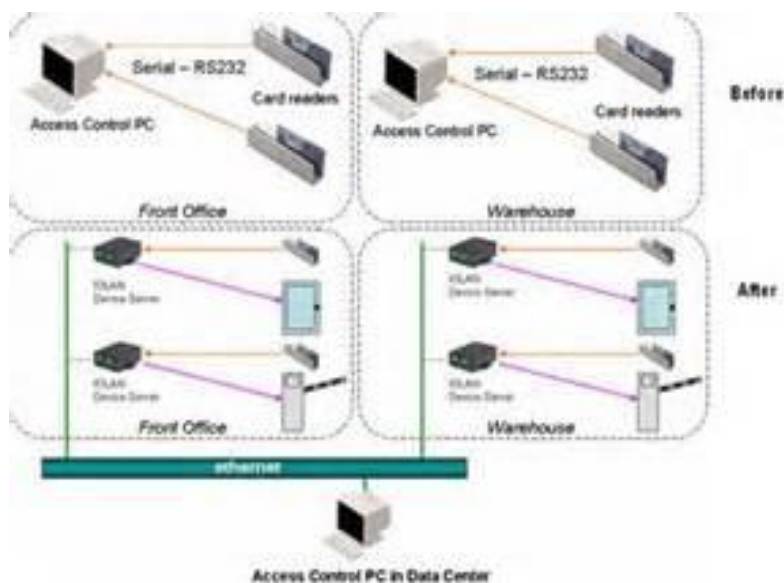
Where keys are issued to plot holders for the exit/entry gate and movement on and off the site is restricted to opening hours, it is good practice to change the padlock on the gate during the out of hour's period.

At first glance the gates in fig 6 look like an effective barrier, but a closer look indicates that neither the hinge supports or the sliding locking bar are protected.

2.3 Access Control

The purpose of access control to a secure area is twofold:

- A- To deny unauthorised users access or egress;
- B- To monitor the movement of authorised users.



Access control is a specialist field where technology has all but replaced the human element. However the purpose of access control can still be achieved without technology, although it may require a physical presence to do so.

The following check list will give an indication what the system may be required to do:

- Logging time, date, and identity of those using exit/entry.
- Anti-pass back control that prevents tailgating.
- Activate CCTV to record certain events, and incidents.
- Produce a site audit showing what should, and should not be on site.
- A simple access control system using cards is available to members.
- The majority of automated systems activate a barrier. On unmanned sites this is not recommended, as the barrier alone does not present a robust physical deterrent.
- A height restriction barrier is an efficient and practical means of controlling caravan movement on and off the site. The height of the barrier should be clearly displayed.
- All exit/entry gates should be robust and designed to withstand a determined attack.

Fundamental to the efficiency of any access control system is a single exit/entry gate.

2.4 Security Padlocks

There are a multitude of locks on the market, each with its own use.

European Standard EN12320 introduced the standard of 6 grades of security, with 6 being the highest down to 1. For serious security purposes level 4 is the minimum, with level 6 for the highest risks. All padlocks grade 3 or above will have a key retention facility which simply means you cannot remove the key when the padlock is in the open mode. Wherever possible a close shackle padlock (Fig 1) should be used, as they are difficult to crop using bolt cutters. As an alternative, a sliding shackle (Fig 2) could be used as they are also difficult to crop. Open Shackle Padlocks (Fig 3) are not as secure because they can be vulnerable to attack by bolt croppers

Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3



As a matter of best practice never leave locks hanging on the gate when it is in the unlocked mode. The lock could be substituted, stolen, or sabotaged.

2.5 Key Security

Good key supervision is vital in any security scheme where the proprietor removes and fits the caravan security devices. The keys should be kept in a purpose made secure cabinet, away from the storage area.

For ease of use and identification purposes all the keys to be numbered, and correspond with the bay of the stored caravan. When choosing a padlock, if possible consult a master locksmith. Where plot holders are issued with a key for the exit/entry gate, the key should be registered to prevent extra keys being cut.



2.6 CCTV

CCTV systems have become an accepted feature of everyday life as we are continually monitored going about our business. Other than those engaged in criminal activity, and some who see CCTV as an invasion of privacy, there is little dispute that CCTV makes a positive contribution in the fight against crime and the fear of crime.

CCTV should complement and not replace other security measures. Ideally it should be part of an integrated system to protect against fire and property loss.

The choice of a CCTV system is dependent on:

- The level of the security risk,
- The level of available lighting,
- The neighbouring environment,
- Whether the system is to be monitored on site or remotely,
- Interfaced with other equipment,
- The picture quality required there are in effect three levels of images: detection, recognition, and identification.

When a system has been chosen it should be tested on site in all lighting conditions, and the recordings taped. Once satisfactory performance has been obtained, the tape should be retained as a guarantee of installed quality.

- Signs should be prominently displayed warning that CCTV is in use.
- The signs must be of adequate size e.g. A4 for foot traffic, and A3 for vehicular traffic.
- The signs must include the identity of the responsible person/organisation, complete with contact details.

A sign indicating that the system is recording 24 hours could indicate to the criminal that the site is not manned 24 hours thus giving an intruder time to remove a caravan before the theft is discovered and the CCTV viewed. It would be prudent to have a sign that did not include the recording details.

Audio – Activated CCTV when installed to BS4818: 2003 gives a level of protection that is far superior to a standard CCTV installation. Members are encouraged to consider BS8418-2010 systems when installing CCTV.

As a guide to best performance from a CCTV system it should:

- 1) An image of a 1.6 metres high figure for detection purposes should fill 10% of the screen.
- 2) An image of the same figure for recognition purposes should fill 50% of the screen.
- 3) This is known as the Rotakin Test and should be familiar to all installation engineers

Where personal data is processed The Data Protection Act 1998 requires that CCTV systems may have to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. The act also sets out a code of practice that advises on data processing procedures. The codes of practice have been amended as recently as January 2008. The registration fee is £35.00. It is recommended that individual proprietors enquire with the Information Commissioner's Office Tel No 01625 545745 or view the web site www.ico.gov.uk.

A recent Home Office study of the value of CCTV identified that eight out of 10 systems are not up to the required standard.

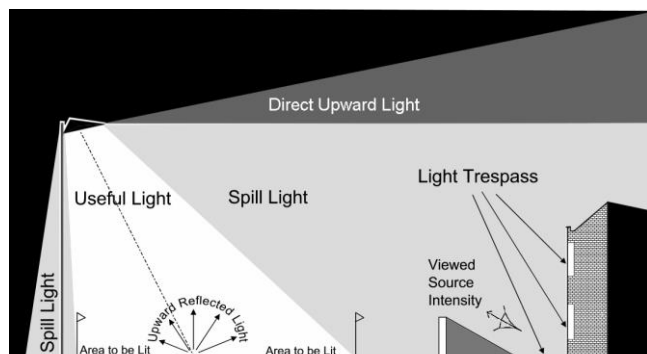
The use of dummy CCTV cameras is not recommended, by fitting such cameras a proprietor could be exposing himself to legal action in the event of a loss occurring on the site. The person suffering the loss may sue for misrepresentation if the dummy cameras were an inducement to take up the storage. Dummy cameras have no place in a consumer contractual agreement.

2.7 Security Lighting

Security lighting unless well planned, correctly installed and maintained, may not hinder an intruder but help to light his way or provide shadows in which he can hide.

Security lighting should:

- Complement physical and electronic features;
- Illuminate the intruder on his approach;
- Conceal a defender from an intruder;
- Illuminate protected premises;
- Operate from dusk to dawn;
- Be mounted out of reach of intruders and protected against missiles.
- Lamp standards should be positioned so that they cannot be used as climbing aids.
- It is most important that any security lighting is based upon a survey during the hours of darkness. In addition the surrounding area should be viewed to assess the impact on the night landscape.



If the property is overlooked then some consultation may be required to ensure that the lighting will not constitute a nuisance, an invasion of privacy, light spillage, or light pollution. For a more detailed analysis of security lighting see www.ile.org.uk the website of The Institution of Lighting Engineers

Planning Authorities may require a report from a lighting consultant before agreeing to security lighting being installed.

2.8 Security Contractors

As in all businesses some security contractors are better than others. Therefore always choose a company that is an accredited member of one or more of the following approved associations:

British Security Industry Association (BSIA)

Tel: 0845 3893889

Fire Protection Association. (FPA)

Tel: 01608 812500 Email: fpa@thefpa.co.uk

Security Systems & Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB)

Tel: 0191 2963242 Email: ssaib@ssaib.co.uk

Fencing Contractors Association

Tel: 07000 560722

Email: info@fencingcontractors.org

National Security Inspectorate

Tel: 01628 637512 Email: nsi@nsi.org.uk

Institute of Lighting Engineers

Tel: 01788 576492 Email: ile@ile.org.uk

As a matter of best practice wherever possible always use a single contractor. In the event of equipment failure or other installation problems there is only one contractor to deal with and he cannot blame anyone else.

Section 3 Fire Protection

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 was introduced in October 2006, and the order applies to caravan storage sites. The full requirements of the order are beyond the scope of this report however a brief summary follows:

1) Identify Fire Hazards

- Sources of ignition;
- Sources of fuel; and
- Sources of oxygen

2) Identify People at risk

- People in and around the premises; and
- People who are especially at risk.

3) Evaluate, remove or reduce, and protect from risk

- Evaluate the risk of a fire starting.
- Evaluate the risk to people from a fire.
- Remove or reduce the hazard.
- Remove or reduce the risks to people from a fire.
- Protect people by providing fire precautions.

4) **Record, plan, inform, instruct, and train**

- Record any major findings and action you have taken
- Discuss and work with other responsible people.
- Prepare an emergency plan.
- Inform and instruct relevant people.
- Provide training.

5) **Review**

- Review your fire risk assessment regularly.
 - Make changes.
- Each stored caravan to have about 30 square metres of space, with the respective caravan jockey wheels set at 3.5 metre centres. Where caravans are parked back to back there should be a 1 metre wide corridor between the rows to act as a firebreak.
 - The removal of Gas Bottles is a complex area following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Wherever possible the respective owners should remove the gas bottles from the caravans. If it is not **reasonably practicable** to remove the Gas Bottles they should be turned off, and disconnected from the internal appliances. The onus of showing that it is not **reasonably practicable** to remove the Gas Bottles lies on the proprietor who will be identified as the responsible person.
 - A caravan fire is Class "A" and an essential issue in fire protection is to ensure the correct equipment is used, for both prevention and fire-fighting.
 - For example where free burning combustible material is stored near the storage area then a hose reel is the most effective method of tackling a blaze.
 - BSEN3 was introduced in 2002 to bring Fire Extinguishers in use in the UK in line with the rest of Europe. All Fire Extinguishers must be red, other than a coloured area to indicate the type of extinguisher thus:

Colour	Type
Red	Water
Cream	Foam
Blue	Powder
Black	Carbon Dioxide
Green	Halon



All fire protection equipment should be:

- Serviced and maintained in good working order;
- Protected from adverse weather conditions;
- Recharged as per the manufacturer's specification
- Where a site is surrounded by undergrowth, periodic checks should be made to ensure that it does not encroach into the storage area. Under no circumstances should undergrowth be burnt back.

All fire points to be readily identifiable as such by the use of both words and a pictogram.

Section 4 Ancillary Matters

4.1 Guard Dogs

The Guard Dogs' Act 1975 regulates the use of dogs, which are used to protect premises and is summarised as follows:

- A person shall not use or permit the use of a guard dog at any premises unless a person (the handler) who is capable of controlling the dog is present on the premises, and the dog is under the control of the handler at all times while it is being so used except while it is secured so that it is not at liberty to go freely about the premises.
- A person shall not use or permit the use of a guard dog at any premises unless a notice containing a warning that a guard dog is present is exhibited at each entrance to the premises. For the purposes of interpretation a "guard dog" means any dog used to protect the premises, property on the premises, or the person guarding the premises.
- Premises mean land other than agricultural land, and land within the curtilage of a dwelling house, and buildings or parts of buildings other than dwellings. There is no doubt that dogs are an excellent deterrent, and if used within the legal requirements of the act, they should present no problems.



4.2 Vermin Infestation

Most if not all insurance policies exclude liability for what is termed as vermin infestation. It is common knowledge that vermin infest caravans and cause considerable damage.

As a matter of site practice, liability for vermin infestation should also be excluded. This can only be done if a recognised vermin control regime is in place.

In the absence of control a proprietor may be liable for any damage caused by vermin. The Court of Appeal has extended the legal scope of liability for nuisance to include damage caused by vermin.

4.3 Emergency Plans

Recent extremes of weather that are predicted to continue have caused major damage. In particular flood damage has been extensive. Site proprietors need to be aware of the dangers from flooding, and the correct response. The Environment Agency has produced a flood map of England and Wales, by entering your postcode you can determine the level of the risk of flooding.



The devastating impact of flooding has been graphically illustrated in recent years where whole areas of land were submerged in floodwaters for many days.

Members should familiarise themselves with different levels of flood warnings as per below:

How are warnings issued?

- **Direct to you** - receive warnings by phone, text, email or fax. Sign up for FREE Floodline Warnings by calling Floodline on 0845 988 1188.
- On the flood warnings website www.environment-agency.gov.uk. View up-to-date information about flood warnings in force, monitor the river or sea levels in your area and check out the latest flood risk forecast for your county.
- **By calling Floodline on 0845 988 1188** - you can listen to recorded information on the latest warnings and predictions or speak to an operator for more general information 24 hours a day.

For more advice on flood risk assessment check www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Section 5 Administrative Requirements

An efficient administration system that complements the security aspects will ensure that the site runs smoothly.

5.1 Records

Accurate records should be kept of all plot holders, and updated as and when necessary. All details provided should, wherever possible, be verified. In particular when someone is seeking storage for an old caravan for a short period, ask for some documentary evidence of address such as gas/ electric bill.

5.2 Insurance Details

The plot holder's insurance document should be examined and the storage conditions noted in the file. It is most important that when the caravan is in your care it is secured as per the terms of the individual policy. If the plot holder does not have insurance for the caravan, then consider declining admission.

5.3 Damage Description

When a caravan is first admitted onto the site it should be examined and any damage noted on the damage descriptive form, which is signed by the caravan owner.

Ideally a check should be made each time the caravan is returned, but realistically this may not be possible on each and every occasion.

The importance of the initial check assumes greater significance where the site proprietor moves the caravans into and out of the storage area.

5.4 Site Fees

The amount of the annual fee is influenced by the quality of the site, its geographical location and the economics of the area. In the more prosperous parts of the country, outside storage can be £500 plus per year. In the less affluent areas the fee could be as low as £150.

5.5 Business Rates

As a new business you will be required to pay business rates, the amount will be determined by the rateable value of the property. This expenditure has to be taken into account when calculating the annual storage fee. For more data on business rates check www.voa.gov.uk some business rate relief may be available which is dependent on the business rate valuation. As with all government incentives there are conditions, they can be found on the above website.

5.6 Value Added Tax

If the gross income from the site exceeds the current threshold of £77,000 then in all probability you will have to pay VAT at the standard rate of 20%. Over the years at least three members have challenged the imposition of VAT on caravan storage, all were unsuccessful. The latest position from HMC&R is VAT Info Sheet number 14/12 and members are advised to seek professional advice.

5.7 Inheritance Tax-Business Property Relief

For the purposes of Business Property Relief (BPR) Caravan Storage is not a business it is classed as the making or holding of investments and as such does not qualify for BPR.

The issue of BPR was first raised by a member in 2007 and on behalf of the membership some basic legal research was carried to try and find a way of restructuring caravan storage so that it qualifies for BHP. From the outset it was clear that this was an extremely complex area of Tax Law that required expertise in the subject. At the time of drafting this document further research is still on-going.

5.8 Storage Contract

A written contract is a must for storage conditions and site discipline. In the event of a dispute the terms of the contract are binding on both parties. All contracts must be fair and reasonable in their terms, and meet the requirements of Unfair Terms in Consumer Contract Regulations 1999

A term is unfair if:

Contrary to the requirement of good faith it causes a significant imbalance in the parties' rights and obligations under the contract, to the detriment of consumers. "good faith" means that you must deal fairly and openly with consumers. Standard terms may be drafted to protect commercial needs but must also take account of the interests and rights of consumers by going no further than is necessary to protect those legitimate commercial interests.

Proprietors need to be aware that plot holders often take advantage of a site where there is no written contract.

5.9 Public Liability Insurance

Public Liability Insurance (PLI) is essential when the nature of the business allows people onto the site for a specific purpose. There is always the potential for an accident, and therefore insurance should be in place for such eventualities. In the event of any incidents or changes that may affect the insured risk, always notify the insurance company as soon as possible. Failure to make a prompt notification may invalidate a claim. If there is any doubt about notification always err on the side of caution and notify your insurer

5.10 Central Registration Identification Scheme (CRiS)

All caravans produced in the UK since 1992 are issued with a 17 digit alphanumeric code. The scheme is always referred to by those in the trade as CRiS, and is owned and administered by the National Caravan Council. Since 1997 caravans manufactured in the UK have a microchip installed during the manufacturing stage containing the CRIS number. The chip is in different locations depending on the make of caravan. For security purposes the locations are only known to a selected few. The contact number for a CRiS check is 0203 282 1000.

Section 6 Legal Requirements

A caravan storage site involves more than providing a secure storage environment, although security is paramount.

6.1 Planning Permission

In the majority of cases Planning Permission for Change of Use will be required, the type of planning approval required is known as B8 - Storage and Distribution to include outside storage. In granting Planning Permission a Planning Authority may impose conditions to the permission, such as: the number of caravans to be stored, security recommendations, opening hours, and landscaping to screen the site. The conditions listed are not exhaustive merely an indication of what may be imposed. Site proprietors must comply with all such conditions; failure to do so could lead to permission being withdrawn, or enforcement action taken.

The current fee for Change of Use is £385.

6.2 Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957&1984 Liability Act (Scotland) 1960

There is no requirement to expand in great detail about occupier's liability as it is too complex and beyond the scope of this report. However the basic principles are highlighted thus:

- For legal purposes you will be identified as the occupier of premises the definition of which includes land.
- As the occupier you owe a common duty of care to all visitors who are there for a lawful purpose.
- The duty is to see that all visitors are reasonably safe while using the premises for the purpose for which access has been granted
- These provisions are contained in The Occupiers' Liability Act 1957.
- The duty of care was extended by The Occupiers' Liability Act 1984 to include trespassers, although this extension is restricted to personal injury and does not include damage. The duty is owed where the occupier is aware a danger exists and the risk is one he may be reasonably be expected to give some form of warning. The most likely situation that could occur is that in the event of razor wire or barbed wire being used as part of the security protection, lawful visitors and trespassers may be injured.

By posting correctly worded sign's warning of the danger, the duty of care is discharged, effectively eliminating any action for breach of statutory duty or negligence. As a matter of best practice the signs to be displayed facing into the site for visitors, and out for trespassers.

6.3 Law of Lien (Possession Notice)

Liens are certain types of rights which one person has over the property of another.

A particular lien is a right to retain goods until all charges incurred in respect of the goods have been paid. As the proprietor of a storage site you can attach a lien to a caravan in storage for which the storage fee has not been paid.

By incorporating this condition into the storage contract it becomes an express agreement, a legal right binding on both parties to the contract.

As a site proprietor you may well ask the question, "How does this affect me?" Quite simply some plot holders will get into arrears with storage fees, and abandon the caravan. It is not uncommon for the arrears to exceed the value of the caravan.

Once a lien has been attached to the caravan it remains valid until the due amount is paid or some other form of security is taken in substitution of the lien.

Once the lien has been discharged in whatever manner that is final.

6.4 Uncollected Goods

Where a caravan owner is in arrears, and has not responded to the notification of the attachment of a lien, provision exists within The Torts Interference with Goods Act 1977 for the bailee (site proprietor) to sell the goods and recover the arrears and costs from the proceeds of the sale. Any remaining balance must be retained for the original owner.

There is a clear duty for the seller of the goods to obtain the best price available based on current market value. A sale under section 12 of the act gives good legal title to the purchaser. The above procedure should not be used where the plot holder in arrears does not have legal title in the caravan.

This is perhaps best illustrated where the caravan is subject of a hire purchase agreement. In these cases the hirer has possession of the caravan, but ownership and legal title remains with the finance company until the agreement has been settled. The Office of Fair Trading has indicated that the ultimate sanction of sale should only be used when all other means have failed. In other words sale of the caravan is the Sanction of Last Resort.

Section 7 Site Management

There are two main methods of running a site. Irrespective of which method is used, the stored caravan must be secured in accordance with the conditions of the individual insurance policy. The insurance policy is a contract between the insurer and the policyholder. In the event of a claim the insurer may be entitled to reject the claim if there is a fundamental breach of contract *i.e.* the security devices were not fitted. If this is a condition of storage imposed by the site proprietor then in the event of a loss he/she may well be liable for that loss. In addition the policy holder may be contributory negligent by not fitting the security devices

7.1 Method A

In this method the caravan owner parks and removes his caravan from the storage plot. He is responsible for fitting the security devices. This method is not labour intensive and is the most common practice for outside storage.

7.2 Method B

In this method the caravan is left or collected from a delivery area. The site proprietor then collects or returns the caravan to the secure storage and secures the caravan in accordance with the policy conditions.

When in the collection/delivery area the caravan is still in **storage** and the responsibility of the site proprietor therefore the caravan must be secured as per the policy conditions.

This method is by far the most secure but is more labour intensive, perhaps even inconvenient. From an operational viewpoint inconvenience is better than liability.

Conclusion

In the preparation of this guide the author has been guided by general security principles. And field experience of dealing with the many issues that affect caravan storage. All of the advice is given in good faith but does not form any guarantee that security cannot be breached. The author does not accept any liability in the event of a breach of any site security.