

Unauthorised Encampments

Key points:

- Between February 2019 and April 2021, there have been 145 unauthorised encampments in the county reported to Cornwall Council;
- 34 of these were on public land, 96 were on private land and 15 were unknown;
- 87 (60% were reported to be non-Gypsy and Traveller (G&T), whereas 58 (40%) were reported to be from the G&T community;
- Summer months (Jun-Aug) recorded the most unauthorised encampments (55) compared to other seasons;
- The top frequented site was Tregunnel Car Park in Newquay;
- The Home Secretary has announced a new criminal offence¹ to target trespassers using vehicles to reside on land who are causing disruption to local communities.

Background

The Government defines unauthorised encampments as 'encampments of caravans and/or other vehicles on land without the landowner or occupier's consent and constituting trespass'². Unauthorised encampments fall into two main categories:

- **Public land** – land owned by local authorities (highways, schools, public parks and car parks);
- **Private land** – privately owned land.

Unauthorised encampments can, in some cases, cause harm and unsettle communities that are affected by them. It can also be time-consuming and costly for local communities to have them removed. Some of the issues that are caused by unauthorised encampments can include:

- Failure to appropriately dispose of litter;
- Interference with utility supplies (electricity, gas, and/or water);
- Animals not under control and defecating on the land without subsequent clearing up by owners;
- Noise pollution through loud music, generators or motor vehicle engines being revved;
- Inappropriate disposal of human waste or sewage.

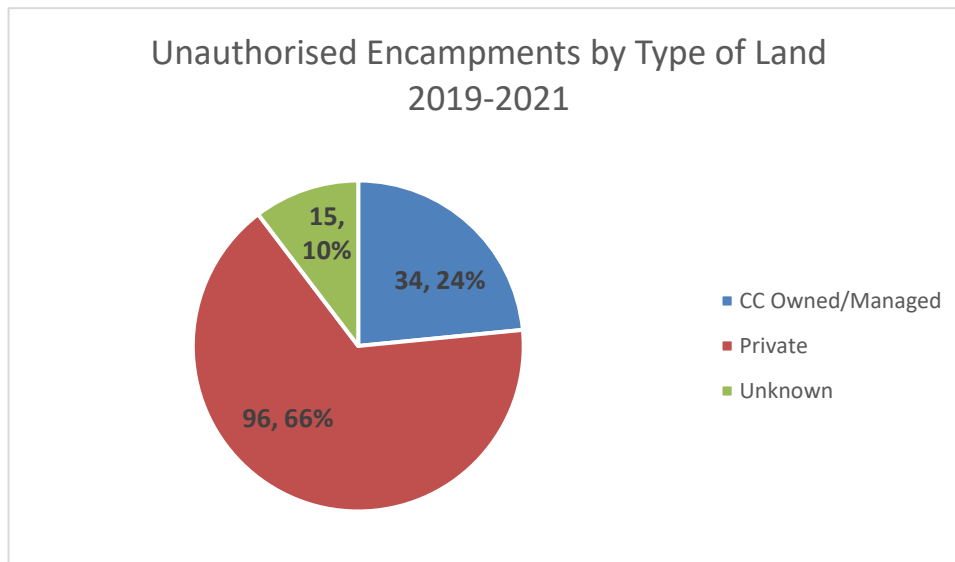
Unauthorised Encampments in Cornwall

Due to some unauthorised encampments not being reported, it is difficult to accurately determine the true numbers of such encampments each year. However, between February 2019 and April 2021 there were 145 records of unauthorised encampments provided by the Cornwall Housing unauthorised encampment team. Within this, 34 (24%) were on Cornwall Council managed or owned land, 96 (66%) were on private land and 15 (10%) were unknown (as shown by the chart below).

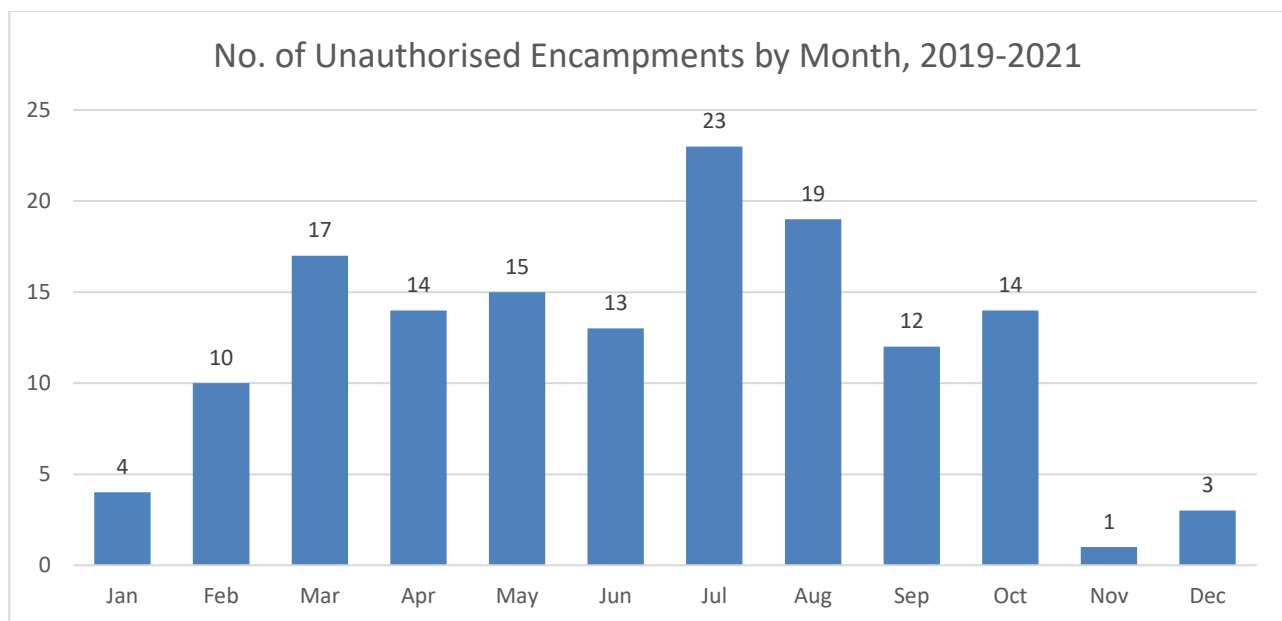
¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-give-police-powers-to-tackle-unauthorised-encampments>

² <https://www.cornwallhousing.org.uk/about-cornwall-housing/gypsy-and-travellers/unauthorised-encampments/>

Housing in Cornwall 2021 Unauthorised Encampments



Below highlights the seasonality of unauthorised encampments, with summer months having the most encampments, whereas the winter has the least.



Links to further information

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-illegal-and-unauthorised-encampments>
- <https://www.cornwallhousing.org.uk/about-cornwall-housing/gypsy-and-travellers/unauthorised-encampments/#:~:text=The%20Government%20defines%20unauthorised%20encampments,occupier's%20consent%20and%20constituting%20trespass'>