

Carmarthenshire Country Council

Fees Policy

Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013

Introduction

The Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 came into effect on 1st October 2014. It is designed to help regulation of the industry, so that conditions on mobile home sites are improved and the rights of residents are better protected.

Mobile Homes are used by their owners all year round as their permanent home on a residential caravan site, often known as 'parks'. They should have specific planning permission for a permanent residential caravan site. In Carmarthenshire, there are around 340 mobile homes located on at least 10 sites across the county. They are often a popular retirement choice for older people. In most cases, residents own the mobile home and rent a pitch on a site. Welsh Government wants these sites to be better managed and regulated.

The Act amends the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 in relation to mobile homes. It does not apply to holiday caravan sites which are normally licensed for use during 8 – 10 months of the year.

The local authority has been given greater powers to regulate sites, issue licences and carry out enforcement work to ensure compliance with the site licence conditions. The Act also includes new powers to allow local authorities to charge fees for this licensing and enforcement work.

In calculating the costs, reference had been made to the Department of Communities and Local Government – The Mobile Homes Act 2013 – A guide for Local Authorities on setting licence fees and a fee calculator tool provided by Welsh Government.

Summary of Charges

Site Licence Fees

There is a cost to setting up the licensing scheme, the processing and administration of each new licence, as well as compliance checks on each site at set intervals throughout the five year licensing period.

Licence applications are charged as follows

	Flat Fee (£)	Cost per pitch (£)	Total (£)
Initial Licence (Year 1)	380.38	9.73	Calculated

For example: A site that has 50 pitches will have to pay:

$$£380.38 + (£9.73 \times 50) = £866.88 \text{ for the initial licence in year 1}$$

The fees have been calculated by looking at the cost of each stage in the licensing process, particularly the time invested by officers from the development stage through to licensing the site and beyond.

Annual Site Inspection

No fee

Replacement licence

If a site owner requests a replacement copy of the licence, there will be no fee.

Variation of existing licensing conditions

Where the site owner requests an amendment to the site licence conditions, the council may charge a fee.

If the council deem it necessary to alter conditions, then no fee will be payable.

Lodging of Site Rules with Local Authority

No fee

Renewal Cost (after year 5)

The owners of the Mobile Home/ Residential Sites will have to re- licence the site at the end of the five year period. Assuming there have been no changes in the meantime, the administration 'set up costs' will not be included and we will be able to offer a reduced re-licensing fee.

	Flat Fee (£)	Cost per pitch (£)	Total(£)
Re- licence (Year 5)	80.09	9.73	Calculated

For example: A site that has 50 pitches will have to pay:

$$£ 80.09 + (£9.73 \times 50) = £566.59 \text{ for a re- licence.}$$

Enforcement Action

When investigating complaints about particular problems on site and the service of statutory notices, officer time and reasonable expenses incurred, including travelling costs will be charged. There is not a flat fee for this action

- **Fixed penalty notices** – for minor breaches of site conditions.
- **Compliance Notice** – where the site owner is failing or has failed to comply with a site licence condition
- **Emergency Action** - a situation arises that there is an imminent risk to health and safety of anyone on the site, due to failure to comply with a site licence condition, the Local Authority has the power to take emergency action to remove the risk.

The Local Authority is entitled to recover from the site owner its costs in carrying out the remedial work and reasonable costs in dealing with the case. This is not a flat fee as it would be different in each case. Costs would include relevant officer time, which may include the cost of 'expert advice', administration, preparation and serving of any notice as well as taking the necessary action.