

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Clarification Statement regarding Intended Implementation of Proposed Article 4 (1) Direction in relation to Camping and Caravanning March 2025

What is an Article 4(1) Direction?

An Article 4 Direction withdraws the planning permission which the General Permitted Development Order grants for a class of development. Such a direction may be made by a Local Planning Authority or by the Welsh Ministers under Article 4 of that order. The National Park Authority already has some Article 4 Directions in place in relation to Conservation Areas in order to protect the historic environment.

What does this change mean?

The National Park Authority is considering implementing an Article 4 (1) Direction in relation to 28 day camping, caravans and mobile homes. Implementing the Article 4(1) Direction will enable the Authority to mandate the requirement for planning permission for temporary 28-day camping, caravan, and mobile home sites. This measure ensures that their placement and operation are carefully managed to safeguard the unique environment of the National Park and its communities.

If approved, the Article 4 Direction, will take effect on Wednesday 1 January 2026, to allow landowners and site operators sufficient time to understand the new requirements and submit planning applications. Planning applications for these sites will not incur fees, and the Authority will aim to prioritise applications to minimise delays. Existing sites that have planning permission or those sites that operate under an exempted organisation certificate will not be affected by the Article 4 Direction.

Clarification regarding potential Implementation of Article 4

Uses which do not involve development

A number of activities take place around the National Park on a regular basis. Many of these activities do not involve any form of physical development or change of use of land, for example triathlons and filming. These events do not constitute development and do not operate under permitted development rights. They are therefore not impacted by the potential introduction of an Article 4 (1) Direction.

Uses which will continue to benefit from 28 day permitted development rights

A range of different uses operate under permitted development rights across the National Park, the proposed Article 4 (1) Direction is in relation to camping, caravans and mobile homes only. Uses which do not involve camping, caravans or mobile homes and are only active/on site for 28 days or fewer each year will be unaffected. Such examples include:

- Using a field for a temporary car park for up to 28 days
- Siting a temporary mobile sauna for up to 28 days

Exempted Certificate Sites

Organisations which meet certain requirements can apply to the Welsh Government for exemption certificates under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and Public Health Act 1936.

To be eligible, organisations must have:

- A formal constitution;
- Objectives including the encouragement or promotion of a recreational activity; and
- The resources to arrange and supervise activities.

In England, Scotland and Wales there are 321 such organisations holding Exemption Certificates. Certificates are free of charge and are valid for up to 5 years.

There are 3 types of exemptions for caravan organisations:

- a) Paragraph 4 – allows use of land as a caravan site occupied by an organization holding a certificate of exemption granted by Welsh Government for up to 28 days on the site by no more than 3 caravans at any one time;
- b) Paragraph 5 – allows organisations to issue certificates (valid for 1 year) to owners/occupiers of sites stating that the land has been approved by them for use by their members for the purpose of recreation for no more than 5 caravans (or campervans/motorhomes) at any one time;
- c) Paragraph 6 – allows organisations to arrange meetings of its members only, lasting up to 5 days (known as rallies).

There is a further exemption for tented camping which allows the use of any camping ground owned by (or provided or used by) organisation members to be used for tented camping.

The Article 4 (1) Direction proposed by the Authority would not affect the operation of these exemption certificates. A number of bodies such as The Scouts Association operate under this route and would not be affected by the proposed Article 4(1) Direction.

Exempted Uses

The Authority can confirm that the following uses will be treated as separate uses if the Article 4 (1) Direction is implemented and will not need to apply for planning permission even where some element of camping or caravanning is proposed, provided that the camping and caravanning use is considered to be ancillary to the event in nature:

- Weddings
- Festivals
- Filming for television or film where a physical camp is required
- Agricultural shows

These uses will continue to benefit from 28 day permitted development rights. In assessing whether a use does fall under the description of a wedding, festival or show or filming use – the Authority will consider the following types of information:

- Any licenses gained for the event

- Any advertising undertaken
- The proportion of the site on which any ancillary tents or caravans are situated
- The length of time the event is taking place for

Level of information to support a planning application

Where planning permission is necessary for camping, caravans or mobile homes from 1st January 2026, no planning fee will be charged. The Authority will also offer a free pre-application service for those seeking to apply, to provide bespoke support for applicants in preparing applications.

Information needed will be:

- A site area map showing the land in question in a red line boundary
- Information on number of pitches
- Information on the dates in which the 28 day period will operate
- Information on toilet facilities and waste water disposal intentions including for hot tubs
- Access arrangements

A walkover ecology survey will be required in areas of sensitive natural environment – if this is required the Authority will clarify this at pre-application stage.

Site areas of over 1 hectare are considered major development and will require a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) in line with Welsh Government requirements. [Planning major developments: guidance on pre-application consultation | GOV.WALES](#)

The Authority will consider on a case by case basis whether longer term planning permissions can be granted, for example for 5 year periods or permanent permission.