



PARK HOME RESIDENTS ACTION ALLIANCE(PHRAA)



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MOBILE HOME HELL.....



South West

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Mobile conflict - Pat Cousins and home.

Mobile home hell

Inside Out investigates a mobile home park on the edge of Dartmoor in Okehampton, where some residents claim, the operator is making their lives a misery.

Residents of a quarter of the owner/occupied caravans on Oaklands Park, Okehampton, have claimed that the new operator, Joe Cooper...

- has refused to take ground rent,
- returned pitch fee cheques ripped up,
- failed to tell residents of his redevelopment plans,



Ripped up cheque returned to resident.

and...

- changed long standing park arrangements with little or no notice.

These are allegations that Mr Cooper strongly denies.

Law not on residents' side?

Pensioner Famey Henderson is one of those residents.

She's disabled and has a car port opposite her home which, she says, was erected with the previous owners' permission.

Now she's been told it will be demolished: "I told him I was disabled and had to have the car as near as possible, but he said he can take the car ports down and give me a new parking space."

Resident Roger Pavey, a courier, told us: "It's typical of what's going on all over the place.



Ron Joyce - nationwide problem.

"The law needs to be changed, it's loaded on the side of the park owner, not the little man."

General Secretary of the Park Residents' Action Group, Ron Joyce, says that there is a nationwide problem: "We get two to three complaints a day from people all over the country.

"You can't imagine how bad things can get, and the law is not on our side.

insideout/content/articles/2008/10/27/south_west_caravans_s14_w7_feature.shtml

"The government promised us changes in 2006 but these have made the situation worse.

"At the moment the law actually encourages bad park owners to try and get rid of their tenants."

Mobile home woes

The residential mobile home industry is governed by the 1983 Mobile Homes Act, which allows park owners to vet those buying homes on their parks.

It's this law, campaigners argue, that could allow less scrupulous operators to hold van owners to ransom.

Ron Joyce says: "The law relies on the little old lady taking the park operator to court and that can cost thousands of pounds, take years, all with no guarantee of success at the end."

At Oaklands Park the remains of an old caravan mixed with earth was dumped outside nurse 62-year-old Pat Cousins' home and on her parking space.



Messy site - residents cite problems.

The man responsible, Mr Cooper's son-in-law, a Mr Valler, told Pat at the time that he could leave the mess there for months.

Subsequently Mr Cooper told us that this was a mistake, and that neither he, or Mr Valler, realised Pat used her parking space.

Pat, 62, who says Mr Cooper has returned her ground rent cheques ripped up, is furious.

"They've done this to intimidate me. I believe Mr Cooper wants me off this Park. But I'm not leaving," she told Inside Out.

Satisfactory relationship?

We wanted to put the residents concerns to Mr Cooper.

He didn't want to appear on camera but did agree to talk on the phone.

Cooper denied he's trying to get rid of Pat, or anyone else on the site - or that he's returned any ripped up cheques, or refused anyone's rent.

He said he was flexible over when rent was paid and that Pat was involved in a long standing rent dispute.



Cooper (left) and son-in-law, Mr Valler.

Mr Cooper says he's entitled to move parking spaces and demolish Faimey's car port.

He claims the vast majority of park residents are perfectly happy.

He also added that he'd noted the residents' concerns and hoped to establish satisfactory relations with all of them in the long term.

Pat is unimpressed: "The stress and anxiety of this situation is making my life a nightmare, a waking nightmare."

