

Protestor Pack

Protestors and the supply chain

Climate Change and Animal Rights Activists are increasingly carrying out protests which are intentionally planned to cause mass disruption to supply chains. Historically activists targeted large energy companies at power generation sites and head offices. More recently, activists have specifically been targeting supply chains and distribution centres in order to cause maximum impact.

McDonald's: Animal rights group blockades depots, activists say: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-57210428>

Aylesbury milk factory blockaded by climate activists: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-58396352>

The police may take action where protestors obstruct a highway and/or commit aggravated trespass. However, the action can often be slow (the McDonalds protestors prevented lorries leaving the depot for nearly 4 days). As trespass is a civil offence (not a criminal offence), in some instances it may be necessary to seek an urgent High Court injunction against persons unknown, preventing them from entering or remaining on the property or if relevant harassing employees.

Breach of a High Court injunction is a contempt of court, which is punishable by imprisonment. Such injunctions have been successfully used where police action alone has been ineffective.

Insulate Britain: Injunction granted against M25 protesters: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-58649286>

Prepare Proactively!

The majority of the work required to prepare for a civil injunction against protestors can be done in advance. This includes the relevant Court documents which explain the nature of the business and the ownership of the land (which can often be complicated on large sites, industrial estates and distribution centres). Protests regularly occur outside of usual office hours. The worst time to start to try to prepare is when the protestors are already on site and the business is in crisis mode trying to keep operations running and manage the impact.

We can work with you to proactively prepare a 'Protestor Pack', which contains all the documents necessary to seek an urgent court injunction. In the event of an incident, the documents can simply be completed with the specific detail. This avoids delays in obtaining the information during the incident and means action can be taken swiftly to minimise the impact of the protestors.

We offer our 'Protestor Packs' for a fixed fee for the first site, and reduced fees for each further site (depending on the number of sites). For details of our fees please contact us.

What do we do if protestors turn up at my site?

- 1** Immediate engagement with the police is key.
- 2** Involve us from the outset. We will be able to advise you on the strategy required in the event the police fail to act swiftly, including the potential option to obtain a High Court injunction. Being prepared in advance will avoid delay at this stage.
- 3** Identify precisely where the protestors are. Are they on private land? If so, who is the freeholder/leaseholder of that land? Are they on an adopted road? Identifying the legal boundaries and ownerships of sites, especially entrances/exits, can be carried out in advance.

How we can help

We are experts in preparing for urgent High Court action as a result of protestors causing disruption at sites.

- 1** We can work with you to prepare a 'Protestor Pack' so you are prepared as far as possible in the event of an incident.
- 2** We can provide training and internal guidance notes regarding the process and what steps to take in the event of an incident in order to minimise disruption.
- 3** In the event of an incident, we can manage the process in order to swiftly seek an injunction from the High Court.

Please contact Gwendoline, Nick or Twm for advice or assistance.



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