



Public Order Act 1986

1986 CHAPTER 64

PART II

PROCESSIONS AND ASSEMBLIES

[^{F1}14A Prohibiting trespassory assemblies.

- (1) If at any time the chief officer of police reasonably believes that an assembly is intended to be held in any district at a place on land to which the public has no right of access or only a limited right of access and that the assembly—
 - (a) is likely to be held without the permission of the occupier of the land or to conduct itself in such a way as to exceed the limits of any permission of his or the limits of the public's right of access, and
 - (b) may result—
 - (i) in serious disruption to the life of the community, or
 - (ii) where the land, or a building or monument on it, is of historical, architectural, archaeological or scientific importance, in significant damage to the land, building or monument,he may apply to the council of the district for an order prohibiting for a specified period the holding of all trespassory assemblies in the district or a part of it, as specified.
- (2) On receiving such an application, a council may—
 - (a) in England and Wales, with the consent of the Secretary of State make an order either in the terms of the application or with such modifications as may be approved by the Secretary of State; or
 - (b) in Scotland, make an order in the terms of the application.
- (3) Subsection (1) does not apply in the City of London or the metropolitan police district.
- (4) If at any time the Commissioner of Police for the City of London or the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis reasonably believes that an assembly is intended to be held at a place on land to which the public has no right of access or only a limited right of access in his police area and that the assembly—

Changes to legislation: Public Order Act 1986, Section 14A is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 10 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (a) is likely to be held without the permission of the occupier of the land or to conduct itself in such a way as to exceed the limits of any permission of his or the limits of the public's right of access, and
- (b) may result—
 - (i) in serious disruption to the life of the community, or
 - (ii) where the land, or a building or monument on it, is of historical, architectural, archaeological or scientific importance, in significant damage to the land, building or monument,

he may with the consent of the Secretary of State make an order prohibiting for a specified period the holding of all trespassory assemblies in the area or a part of it, as specified.

[Subsection (4D) applies if at any time the chief constable of the British Transport Police Force reasonably believes that—

- (a) an assembly is intended to be held at a place—
 - (i) within section 31(1)(a) to (f) of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003, and
 - (ii) on land to which the public has no right of access or only a limited right of access, and
- (b) the conditions in subsections (4B) and (4C) are met.

(4B) The condition in this subsection is that the assembly is likely—

- (a) to be held without the permission of the occupier of the land, or
- (b) to conduct itself in such a way as to exceed—
 - (i) the limits of any permission of the occupier, or
 - (ii) the limits of the public's right of access.

(4C) The condition in this subsection is that the assembly may result—

- (a) in serious disruption to the provision of railway services (within the meaning of Part 3 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003),
- (b) in serious disruption to the life of the community, or
- (c) where the land, or a building or monument on it, is of historical, architectural, archaeological or scientific importance, in significant damage to the land, building or monument.

(4D) Where this subsection applies, the chief constable of the British Transport Police Force may with the consent of the relevant national authority make an order prohibiting for a specified period the holding of all trespassory assemblies in a specified area.

(4E) An area specified in an order under subsection (4D) must comprise only—

- (a) the place mentioned in subsection (4A)(a), or
- (b) that place together with any place—
 - (i) within section 31(1)(a) to (f) of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003, or
 - (ii) where an assembly could affect a railway within the meaning of Part 3 of that Act or anything occurring on or in relation to such a railway.

(4F) In subsection (4D) “the relevant national authority” means—

- (a) in relation to an area in England and Wales, the Secretary of State;
- (b) in relation to an area in Scotland, the Scottish Ministers.

Changes to legislation: Public Order Act 1986, Section 14A is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 10 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (4G) Subsection (4J) applies if at any time the chief constable of the Ministry of Defence Police reasonably believes that—
- (a) an assembly is intended to be held at a place—
 - (i) to which section 2(2) of the Ministry of Defence Police Act 1987 applies, and
 - (ii) on land to which the public has no right of access or only a limited right of access, and
 - (b) the conditions in subsections (4H) and (4I) are met.
- (4H) The condition in this subsection is that the assembly is likely—
- (a) to be held without the permission of the occupier of the land, or
 - (b) to conduct itself in such a way as to exceed—
 - (i) the limits of any permission of the occupier, or
 - (ii) the limits of the public’s right of access.
- (4I) The condition in this subsection is that the assembly may result—
- (a) in serious disruption to the use for a defence purpose of—
 - (i) a place within section 2(2)(a) to (c) of the Ministry of Defence Police Act 1987,
 - (ii) a place within section 4(1) of the Atomic Weapons Establishment Act 1991, or
 - (iii) in relation to a time after the coming into force of section 5 of the Defence Reform Act 2014, a place within subsection (1) of that section,
 - (b) in serious disruption to the life of the community, or
 - (c) where the land, or a building or monument on it, is of historical, architectural, archaeological or scientific importance, in significant damage to the land, building or monument.
- (4J) Where this subsection applies, the chief constable of the Ministry of Defence Police may with the consent of the Secretary of State make an order prohibiting for a specified period the holding of all trespassory assemblies in a specified area.
- (4K) An area specified in an order under subsection (4J) which is not made in reliance on subsection (4I)(a) must comprise only one or more places to which section 2(2) of the Ministry of Defence Police Act 1987 applies.]
- (5) An order prohibiting the holding of trespassory assemblies operates to prohibit any assembly which—
- (a) is held on land to which the public has no right of access or only a limited right of access, and
 - (b) takes place in the prohibited circumstances, that is to say, without the permission of the occupier of the land or so as to exceed the limits of any permission of his or the limits of the public’s right of access.
- (6) No order under this section shall prohibit the holding of assemblies for a period exceeding 4 days or in an area exceeding an area represented by a circle with a radius of 5 miles from a specified centre.
- (7) An order made under this section may be revoked or varied by a subsequent order made in the same way, that is, in accordance with subsection (1) and (2) [F3, subsection (4), subsection (4D) or subsection (4J)], as the case may be.

Changes to legislation: Public Order Act 1986, Section 14A is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 10 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (8) Any order under this section shall, if not made in writing, be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after being made.
- (9) In this section and sections 14B and 14C—
- “assembly” means an assembly of 20 or more persons;
 - “land” means land in the open air;
 - “limited”, in relation to a right of access by the public to land, means that their use of it is restricted to use for a particular purpose (as in the case of a highway or road) or is subject to other restrictions;
 - “occupier” means—
 - (a) in England and Wales, the person entitled to possession of the land by virtue of an estate or interest held by him; or
 - (b) in Scotland, the person lawfully entitled to natural possession of the land, and in subsections (1) [^{F4}, (4), (4B) and (4H)] includes the person reasonably believed by the authority applying for or making the order to be the occupier;
 - “public” includes a section of the public; and
 - “specified” means specified in an order under this section.
- [In relation to Scotland, the references in this section to the public’s rights (or limited ^{F5}(9A) right) of access do not include any right which the public or any member of the public may have by way of access rights within the meaning of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (asp 2).]
- (10) In relation to Scotland, the references in subsection (1) above to a district and to the council of the district shall be construed—
- (a) as respects applications before 1st April 1996, as references to the area of a regional or islands authority and to the authority in question; and
 - (b) as respects applications on and after that date, as references to a local government area and to the council for that area.
- (11) In relation to Wales, the references in subsection (1) above to a district and to the council of the district shall be construed, as respects applications on and after 1st April 1996, as references to a county or county borough and to the council for that county or county borough.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 14A inserted (3.11.1994) by 1994 c. 33 ss. 70, 172(4)
- F2** S. 14A(4A)-(4K) inserted (2.7.2023) by Public Order Act 2023 (c. 15), ss. 16(4)(a), 35(4)
- F3** Words in s. 14A(7) substituted (2.7.2023) by Public Order Act 2023 (c. 15), ss. 16(4)(b), 35(4)
- F4** Words in s. 14A(9) substituted (2.7.2023) by Public Order Act 2023 (c. 15), ss. 16(4)(c), 35(4)
- F5** S. 14A(9A) inserted (S.) (9.2.2005) by Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (asp 2), ss. 99, 100(3), sch. 2 para. 9 (with s. 100(2)); S.S.I. 2005/17, art. 2(b)

Changes to legislation:

Public Order Act 1986, Section 14A is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 10 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 4B inserted by [2023 c. 47 s. 1](#)