



Highways Act 1980

1980 CHAPTER 66

PART IX **E+W**

LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL INTERFERENCE WITH HIGHWAYS AND STREETS

Obstruction of highways and streets

137 Penalty for wilful obstruction. **E+W**

(1) If a person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way wilfully obstructs the free passage along a highway he is guilty of an offence and liable to [^{F1}imprisonment for a term not exceeding 51 weeks or] a fine [^{F2}or both].

[^{F3}(1A) In relation to an offence committed before the coming into force of section 281(5) of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (alteration of penalties for certain summary offences: England and Wales), the reference in subsection (1) to 51 weeks is to be read as a reference to 6 months.

(1B) For the purposes of this section it does not matter whether free passage along the highway in question has already been temporarily restricted or temporarily prohibited (whether by a constable, a traffic authority or otherwise).

(1C) In subsection (1B), “traffic authority” has the same meaning as in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (see section 121A of that Act).]

^{F4}(2)

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 137(1) inserted (12.5.2022) by [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 \(c. 32\)](#), [ss. 80\(2\)\(a\)](#), 208(1); S.I. 2022/520, [reg. 4\(b\)](#) (with [reg. 8](#))
- F2** Words in s. 137(1) substituted (12.5.2022) by [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 \(c. 32\)](#), [ss. 80\(2\)\(b\)](#), 208(1); S.I. 2022/520, [reg. 4\(b\)](#) (with [reg. 8](#))
- F3** [S. 137\(1A\)-\(1C\)](#) inserted (12.5.2022) by [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 \(c. 32\)](#), [ss. 80\(3\)](#), 208(1); S.I. 2022/520, [reg. 4\(b\)](#) (with [reg. 8](#))

Changes to legislation: Highways Act 1980, Section 137 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 19 July 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

F4 S. 137(2) repealed by Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (c. 60, SIF 95), s. 119, **Sch. 7 Pt. I**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 S. 137 modified (16.8.2006) by The Dover Harbour Revision Order 2006 (S.I. 2006/2167), **art. 27**

Changes to legislation:

Highways Act 1980, Section 137 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 19 July 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.

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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. 79(15)(aa) inserted by [2023 asc 3 Sch. 13 para. 54\(b\)](#)
- s. 90B(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 15\(3\)](#)
- s. 90C(2)(2A) substituted for s. 90C(2) by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 16\(3\)](#)
- s. 90FA inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 20](#)
- s. 118ZA(5)(a) words inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 25\(3\)](#)
- s. 120(3ZA) inserted by [2000 c. 37 Sch. 6 para. 13\(6\)](#)
- s. 121E(1A)(1B) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 23\(5\)](#)
- s. 146(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 24\(6\)\(d\)](#)
- s. 147(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 24\(3\)](#)
- s. 147(5A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 24\(5\)](#)
- s. 203(2)(b)(ia) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 219(1)(a)(i)(ii) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(3\)](#)
- s. 220(1A) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(4\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 223(1A) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(5\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 223(5A) inserted by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(5\)\(d\)](#)
- s. 223(5B)-(6) s. 223(6) renumbered as s. 223(5B)(6) by [S.I. 2023/908 reg. 6\(5\)\(e\)](#)
- s. 322(5)(ab) inserted by [2004 c. 18 s. 64\(2\)](#)
- s. 325(2B) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 10 para. 21](#)
- s. 337(c) inserted by [2024 asc 3 Sch. 3 para. 2\(10\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 1(3ZA) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2(2ZA)-(2ZE) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(3\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2(4) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(4\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2(5)(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(5\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 2ZZA inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(6\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 4A(2) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(7\)\(c\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 5(ba) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(8\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 4A(1) words renumbered as Sch. 6 para. 4A(1) by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(7\)\(a\)](#)
- Sch. 6 para. 4A(1) words substituted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 7 para. 8\(7\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 6 Pt. 1 para. 2B(4) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 25\(6\)](#)