



CASE STUDY: Squatters Stand Off!

AlphaGuardK9 provide guard dogs and property patrol services in Sussex and throughout the UK.

Originally contacted by a client who was concerned about kids getting into the garden of a boarded up property on a busy main road, AlphaGuardK9 visited to perform a security assessment. **We very quickly deemed that due to its position the main problem was likely to be from squatters**, but despite our recommendations we were instructed to patrol between 3.30pm and 5pm on weeknights.

At approximately 1pm on the day in question, we received a phone call from distressed neighbours saying that there were people in the property. We dispatched an AlphaGuardK9 response unit, and the police were informed. I arrived to find the police on site, who said that **the individuals inside had claimed squatters rights under section 6 of the 1977 Criminal Law Act.**

Shortly afterwards, 2 of the 4 occupants left, asking us to leave the side gate unlocked as it would be more convenient for them! They had already forced the padlock on the gate, but as it was still just functional, the police deemed that it did not constitute criminal damage. The police then removed a 16 year old girl due to concerns that she may be at risk, leaving 1 occupant inside.

After 2 hours were joined by a colleague from our sister company **Shadow Surveillance**, and his knowledge of trespass and eviction law was invaluable - thank you Paul! We then decided to set a perimeter, and whilst we were happy to respect their right of occupancy, we were unwilling to let anyone else enter. Initially there were 2 guards and security dogs on site. Within a short period of time, a further 27 'squatters' arrived in 2 vans, and we had to increase the security presence to 3 dogs and handlers, 2 more security guards and a 999 call to the police!

For the next 3 hours there was a VERY tense stand-off, with several attempts by the 'squatters' to force entry to the property. After these attempts proved fruitless, the occupier eventually decided it wasn't worth continuing, and decided to leave, returning occupation of the property to us.

Sussex Police maintained a very professional stance throughout, allowing us to do our job. Our thanks go to them and to the AlphaGuardK9 staff who provided a united and coordinated team. The dogs were simply awesome! Thanks to Richard and Sandra and the **NTIPDU**, this truly showed how the superb levels of training creates an impassable security team that exceeds the basic uses of guard dogs, and demonstrated how effective properly trained security dogs can be in a public order situation.

Visit www.AlphaGuardK9.co.uk for further information. ###