

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Five-Year Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Supply Statement 2025

Position as at 1 April 2025



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Introduction

1. The [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) (PPTS) December 2024, in conjunction with the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) 2024, requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and annually update specific deliverable sites suitable for Gypsies and Traveller pitches.
2. The need for new Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the borough is informed by the 2024 [Tunbridge Wells GTAA Final Report June 2024 \(v2\)](#) GTAA). This needs assessment for the borough covers the period 2024 – 2039 and is part of the evidence base supporting the Adopted Local Plan ([TWBC Adopted Local Plan 2020-2038](#)).
3. This Statement provides a summary of the current level of need, and the five-year supply position of deliverable, Gypsy and Traveller pitches within Tunbridge Wells borough for the five-year period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030. This position will be used to inform the consideration of planning decisions relating to Gypsy and Traveller sites/pitches.

Need for Pitches

4. As noted at paragraph 2, the present and future need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is calculated and presented in the GTAA (2024). [Tunbridge Wells GTAA Final Report June 2024](#) This study identifies the level of need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and travelling show people between 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2039. The document takes account of any previous under-supply.
5. **Table 1** indicates the total level of need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the borough as identified within the 2024 GTAA. The GTAA provides two need figures: one based on the ethnic identity definition, and one based on the PPTS 2023 definition (now superseded by the updated [PPTS 2024](#)). The ethnic definition includes all Gypsies and Travellers, whatever their race or origin and regardless of whether they have ceased to travel or not. The PPTS definition includes Gypsies and Travellers who have permanently or temporarily ceased to travel due to their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age. The 2024 PPTS updated this definition to include “and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan”. No need for travelling showpeople plots was identified in the study.
6. The Council will seek to meet the ‘ethnic’ need in accordance with the recommendations of the GTAA 2024 to ensure that the needs of all households who ethnically identify as Gypsies and Travellers are accounted for, regardless of whether they have ceased to travel. Policy H9 of the Adopted Local Plan, at paragraph 6.401, confirms this position. The need of 52 pitches over the Plan period will be met through a combination of identified additional pitches at existing and new sites as well as through windfall development subject to a permissive, criteria-based windfall policy (that is, as per the criteria within Policy H9). Policy H9 therefore applies to both existing site allocations as well as future (windfall) sites.

Table 1 (ES.1 of GTAA 2024) - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Needs Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2039

Period (1 April to 31 March)	Pitch Need (Ethnic)	Pitch Need (PPTS 2023)	Transit Site Plots
2024 –2029	37	29	0
2029 - 2034	8	8	0
2034 - 2039	9	8	0
Total 2024 - 2039	54	45	0

7. **Table 1** indicates that there is a total need for 54 pitches under the ethnic definition, and 45 pitches under the PPTS (2023) definition for the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2039. As discussed above, the Council has adopted the requirement of meeting the ethnic need in accordance with the most up to

date 2024 PPTS, which has superseded the 2023 PPTS definition. There is no identified need for transit site plots.

8. The Local Plan period runs to 2038, and the GTAA identifies need to 2039. The need to March 2038 equates to 52 pitches under the ethnic definition. To the end of the 10-year supply period in the Local Plan (i.e., to 31 March 2035) the requirement is for 47 pitches. The yearly averages are broken down in **Table 2**.

Table 2 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Needs Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2039 (Yearly Breakdown) Taken from GTAA 2024 Tables 5.5 to 5.8)

Period (1 April to 31 March)	Pitch Need (Ethnic)
2024 – 2025	7.4
2025 – 2026	7.4
2026 – 2027	7.4
2027 – 2028	7.4
2028 – 2029	7.4
2029 – 2030	1.6
2030 – 2031	1.6
2031 – 2032	1.6
2032 – 2033	1.6
2033 – 2034	1.6
2034 – 2035	1.8
2035 – 2036	1.8
2036 – 2037	1.8
2037 – 2038	1.8
2038 – 2039	1.8
Total 2024 - 2039	54

9. The 2024 GTAA assessment updates the base date of the need assessment to 1 April 2024. Any under-supply has been considered within the base date and applied to the first five-year period (hence the need figure for the first five years is higher than within the remainder of the assessment period to 2039). This Five-Year Pitch Supply Statement also takes account of any shortfalls and surpluses since 1st April 2024. Against the need of 7.4 pitches for 2024/2025, there has been delivery of 3 pitches (as listed in **Table 3** below) giving an outstanding need for 4.4 pitches. These completions are where pitches have been both completed and occupied.

Table 3 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Completions and Occupations Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2035

Site Name	Permission	Number of Pitches Completed
Land Adjacent to Thrift Cottages, Knoxbridge, Frittenden, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 2BS	24/01228/FULL	1

Land North of Grandshore Farm, Grandshore Lane, Frittenden, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 2BZ	24/00728/FULL	1
Land Adjacent to Old Slaughter House, Heartenoak Road, Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Kent	24/00605/FULL	1

10. It is necessary also to ascertain the extent of extant supply (i.e., unoccupied lawful pitches, either by vacancy or non-implemented extant planning permissions) as of 1 April 2025. This is considered within the following section.

Deliverable Supply of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

11. **Table 4** identifies the calculated allowance, as identified within the GTAA (2024), for additional existing pitches to become available/vacant through mortality within the five-year period, as well as pitches expected to become available through households leaving the borough within the five-year period. TWBC is not aware of any deaths or travellers leaving the area in the last year and therefore Table 3 remains the same as set out in the previous [Five-Year Gypsy and Traveller Supply Statement, dated 1st April 2024](#). **Table 5** identifies those sites with an extant planning permission for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches as of 1 April 2025, and **Table 6** identifies those existing sites with lawful unoccupied pitches. Finally, **Table 7** identifies the overall expected supply position between 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030.

Table 4 – Supply: Pitches Expected Through Vacancy

<i>Form of Supply</i>	<i>Pitches Within 4-Year period</i>	<i>Pitches Beyond 4-Year Period</i>	<i>Outstanding Net Pitches</i>
<i>N/A – Number of Existing Pitches Expected to Become Vacant Through Mortality in Next Five Years</i>	2	0	2
<i>N/A – Net Number of Households on Sites Expected to Leave the Area in Next Five Years</i>	2	0	2
Total	4	0	4

Table 5 – Supply: Extant Planning Permissions for Additional Gypsy and Traveller Pitches as at 1 April 2025

<i>Site</i>	<i>Planning Reference</i>	<i>Number of Pitches Permitted (Net)</i>	<i>Number of Pitches Completed (and occupied) as at 31 March 2025</i>	<i>Pitches Within 5-Year period</i>	<i>Pitches Beyond 5-Year Period</i>	<i>Outstanding Net Pitches</i>
Oak Tree Farm	23/02519/FULL	4	0	4	-	4
Cinder Hill Wood	20/02649/FULL	3	1	1	1	2
Lordships Stables/ Marle Place	21/00184/FULL	2	0	2	-	2
Mile Oak Stables/Mile Oak Road	21/02389/FULL	3	0	3	-	3
Touchwood, Pearsons Green Road	21/02236/FULL	3	0 (2 implemented but unoccupied: see Table 6)	1	-	1
Funnel Piece, Lucks Lane	22/01294/FULL	2	0	2	-	2
Greenfields Farm, Old Hay	22/02506/FULL	3	0	3	-	3
Total		20	1	16	1	17

12. Sites with extant planning permission are generally assumed to be deliverable. Sites which are phased beyond the five-year period generally comprise sites where the Council has seen insufficient evidence of implementation nor deliverability and where the permission is close to expiry. Sites with extant planning permission may also include sites where pitches have been consented for both the short and long-term, with long-term pitches phased beyond the five-year period (while these may not be implemented for several years, they remain extant by virtue of the implementation of short-term pitches).

Table 6 – Supply: Existing Sites with Lawful Unoccupied Pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches Within 5-Year period</i>	<i>Pitches Beyond 5-Year Period</i>	<i>Outstanding Net Pitches</i>
Willow Stables	1	0	1
Land Adjacent to 1-3 Holly Cottages	1	0	1
Touchwood (19/02848/FULL)	1	0	1
Touchwood (21/02236/FULL)	2	0	2
Total	5	0	5

13. The sites listed in **Table 6** are existing sites with lawful unoccupied pitches (differing to completions, as while lawfully implemented, they are not yet occupied but are deemed available for occupation). All pitches are assumed to be deliverable within the five-year period. Both Willow Stables and Touchwood are existing occupied sites, and while the Land Adjacent to 1-3 Holly Cottages is not currently occupied, the permission has been partially implemented. Given that all pitches are available for occupation at any time, it is considered an

appropriate assessment to consider that they should contribute towards meeting the identified need in the borough.

Table 7 – Overall Supply of Pitches for the Period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030

<i>Form of Supply</i>	<i>Pitches Within 5-Year period</i>
Pitches Expected Through Vacancy	4
Extant Planning Permissions for Additional Gypsy and Traveller Pitches as at 1 April 2025	16
Existing Sites with Lawful Unoccupied Pitches	5
Total	25

14. **Table 7** indicates that there is an extant supply of 25 pitches that are expected to be delivered over the period from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030. The assessment against outstanding need is addressed within the following section.
15. **Table 8** shows the Local Plan Allocations for Gypsy and Traveller sites. The full Policy for H9 Gypsy and Traveller Provision in the adopted Local Plan can be viewed here: [TWBC Adopted Local Plan 2020-2038](#). It should be noted that some allocations in **Table 8** are covered by extant permissions in **Table 5** and lawful unoccupied pitches in **Table 6**. It is considered that a further 15 pitches (rounded down, noting the range at Willow Stables) are deemed deliverable in the five-year period through allocations.

Table 8 – Local Plan 2020 - 2038 Allocations for Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

Site	Number of Pitches in Allocation	No. of Existing Completed Pitches	Outstanding Pitch Permissions (as of 1 April 2025)	Potential Pitches Expected Within 5-Year Period	Pitches Expected Beyond 5-Year Period
STR/SS 1 <i>The Strategy for Paddock Wood and land at East Capel</i>	3	0	0	3	0
Bassetts Farm, Horsmonden	3	1	0	2	0
Broomhill Nurseries, Cranbrook & Sissinghurst	5	3	0	2	0
Cinderhill Wood, Matfield	3	1	2	1	1
Dean Wood, Paddock Wood	3	1	0	2	0
Funnel Piece, Lucks Lane	3	1	2	2	0
Greenfields Farm, Paddock Wood	3	0	3	3	0
Heartenoak (North), Hawkhurst	10	10	0	0	0

Site	Number of Pitches in Allocation	No. of Existing Completed Pitches	Outstanding Pitch Permissions (as of 1 April 2025)	Potential Pitches Expected Within 5-Year Period	Pitches Expected Beyond 5-Year Period
1 Hartleylands, Cranbrook	4	2	0	2	0
3 Hartleylands, Cranbrook	3	3	0	0	0
Lordship Stables, Brenchley	4	3	2	2	0
Mile Oak Stables	5	2	3	3	0
Oak Tree Farm, Cranbrook	6	2	4	4	0
Touchwood, Paddock Wood	6	5 (but 3 unoccupied)	1	0	0
Vines Farm, Paddock Wood	3	1	0	2	0
Willow Stables, Paddock Wood	5-6	3 (but 1 unoccupied)	0	2 - 3	0

Five-Year Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Supply Position

16. The five-year Gypsy and Traveller pitch supply position, covering the period from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030, is illustrated within **Table 9** below.

Table 9 – Pitch Supply Position for the Period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2030

<i>Supply/Need</i>	<i>Number of Pitches</i>
Overall Supply (Including Completions Since Base Date) for Five-Year Period	43
<i>Completions for 24-25</i>	3
<i>Pitches Expected Through Vacancy</i>	4
<i>Extant Planning Permissions</i>	16
<i>Existing Sites with Lawful Unoccupied Pitches</i>	5
<i>Local Plan Allocations</i>	15
Overall Need for Five-Year Period (and including need since base date)	38.6, rounded to 39 (31.2 within five-year period, plus need of 7.4 from 24-25)
Outstanding Need for Five-Year Period	Surplus of 4 (supply of 43 pitches against need of 39)
Five-Year Supply (Ethnic)	5.51 years ((5/39) *43)

17. As per **Table 9** above, the Council can demonstrate a supply of **5.51 years** under the ethnic definition and as per the 2024 PPTS. The supply includes 15 pitches which do not currently have planning permission but are included as allocations in the Local Plan under Policy H9.

Conclusion

18. From the above, the Council can therefore currently demonstrate a five-year supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches as of 1 April 2025. The supply position is based on the identified ethnic need in the GTAA 2024 equates to 5.51 **years**.
19. The Adopted Local Plan, informed by a supporting evidence base (see [Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper 2021](#), and [Annex 1](#), as well [Hearing Statements Matter 8, Issue 11, 2022](#), and [Matter 9, Issue 3, 2024](#)), provides an assessment of estimated additional capacity at existing sites for further pitches through intensification, expansion, and/or regularisation, as well as the potential for new identified sites throughout the borough. These sites are identified in Local Plan Policy H9 as well as Appendix 5 of the Local Plan. A number of the sites allocated as suitable to deliver additional pitches have now been consented and/or delivered and these are included as new supply at **Table 5** and not double-counted under allocations at **Table 8**.
20. While **Table 10** shows that there would be a shortfall in meeting needs to the end of the Plan period (31 March 2038), the Council expects suitable windfall development to be delivered in accordance with Local Plan Policy H9, therefore ensuring that needs are met over the Plan period. The Council is also committed to an early review of the Local Plan following adoption in December 2025 and as part of the early review the Council will seek additional sites and/or additional capacity at existing sites to ensure that the full needs of Gypsies and Traveller within the borough are met in full to the end of the Plan period

Table 10 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need Against the Potential Supply over the Local Plan Period (as of 1 April 2025)

	Number of Pitches
Pitch Need - April 2024 to March 2039 (Ethnic)	54
Total Supply (see Table 9; note this figure includes additional 'higher range' pitch at Willow Stables, and additional pitch expected beyond five-year period at Cinderhill)	44-45
Anticipated Supply v Ethnic Need (April 2024 to March 2039)	44-45 (supply) v 54 (need) = shortfall of 9-10
Anticipated Supply v Ethnic Need (April 2024 to March 2038)	44-45 (supply) v 52 (need) = shortfall of 7-8
Anticipated Supply v Ethnic Need (April 2024 to March 2035)	44-45 (supply) v 47 (need) = shortfall of 2-3

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