

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

Report

January 2018

RRR Consultancy Ltd



Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Policy context.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Population Trends.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Stakeholder Consultation.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Surveys of Gypsy and Traveller families</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Accommodation need.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>9</i>
1. Introduction.....	12
<i>Study context.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Methodological context.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Geographical context.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Tunbridge Wells Borough</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Definition Context</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>16</i>
2. Policy context	18
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>National Policies</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Duty to cooperate and cross-border issues.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Local Planning Policies.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAAs)</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>24</i>
3. Trends in the population levels	26
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Population</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>DCLG data on authorised sites</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>DCLG data on unauthorised sites</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Local authority data on unauthorised encampments.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Pitches within the study area</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Travelling Showpeople.....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>33</i>
4. Stakeholder consultation	34
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Accommodation needs</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Transit provision and travelling patterns</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Barriers to provision</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Relationship between Gypsies, Travellers and the settled community</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Cooperation and communication</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>38</i>
5. Gypsies and Travellers living on sites	40
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Population Characteristics</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Residency characteristics</i>	<i>42</i>

<i>Satisfaction</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Services and health</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Education and employment.....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Travelling</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Accommodation need.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Requirement for residential pitches 2017-2022.....</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Requirement for residential pitches 2022-2037.....</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Requirements for transit pitches / negotiated stopping arrangements: 2017-2037</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>55</i>
6. Conclusions on the evidence	57
<i>Policy Changes.....</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>New provision</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Facilitating new provision</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Managing Gypsy and Traveller sites</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>The location of new provision</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>The size of new provision</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Transit provision.....</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>66</i>
Bibliography	69
Glossary.....	70

Executive Summary

Introduction

- S1. In August 2017 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council commissioned *RRR Consultancy Ltd* to undertake a robust Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the period 2017-2037. The results will be used as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning and to inform the allocation of resources.
- S2. The requirement to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is established through national guidance contained in Planning Policy for Travellers (DCLG, 2015).
- S3. This assessment covers need for caravans insofar as this relates to Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.
- S4. It is important to note that previous and current guidance documents are useful in helping guide the GTAA process and how local authorities should address the needs of the different Gypsy and Traveller groups. This includes data collection and analysis following practice guidance set out by Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in recent 'Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats' (March 2016), and 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (August 2015).
- S5. To achieve the study aims, the research drew on a number of data sources including:
- Review of secondary information
 - Consultation with organisations involved with Gypsies and Travellers
 - Extensive face-to-face surveys of Gypsies and Travellers covering a range of issues related to accommodation and service needs.

Policy context

- S6. In August 2015, the Government published its amended planning policy for traveller sites, which replaced the previous guidance and circulars relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The guidance emphasised the need for local authorities to use evidence to plan positively and manage development. Whilst it is clear that the 2015 PPTS excludes those who have ceased to travel permanently as being Gypsies and Travellers (for planning purposes), it does not explicitly state how the new definition should be interpreted in relation to other factors such as whether families travel for economic or work purposes.

- S7. Given differences in interpretation of PPTS 2015 this GTAA provides two needs figures: first, one based on the accommodation needs of families who have *not permanently ceased to travel*; and second, one which considers the accommodation needs only of families who *travel in a caravan for work purposes*. It is the first interpretation of PPTS 2015 i.e. based on households who have not permanently ceased to travel that this GTAA recommends is adopted by the local authority. This is because needs figures based only on households who travel in a caravan for work purposes are likely to underestimate need and be open to legal challenges. Both interpretations include the accommodation needs of households residing in caravans as well as households residing in bricks and mortar accommodation. The council needs to consider the accommodation needs of households who are not covered by either definition e.g. households who have permanently ceased to travel, through SHMAAs and other needs assessments. However, this GTAA recommends that the council consider the needs of all recognised Gypsies and Travellers in a culturally sensitive manner.
- S8. In March 2016, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published its draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats. It states that, when considering the need for caravans and houseboats, local authorities will need to include the needs of a variety of residents in differing circumstances including, for example, caravan and houseboat dwelling households and households residing in bricks and mortar dwelling households.
- S9. The local authority planning policies outline the criteria by which the location of new Gypsy and Traveller accommodation should be determined. It is apparent that they consider it important to consider a range of factors including the sustainability of new sites e.g. proximity to local services, and the potential impact on the environment. However, it is likely that any revised local policies would reflect the findings of this GTAA. Current planning policies in relation to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation will be superseded by the new Local Plan policies based on evidence including this GTAA.

Population Trends

- S10. There are two major sources of data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers in the study area – the national DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, and local authority data. The DCLG count has significant difficulties with accuracy and reliability. As such, it should only be used to determine general trends – it is the survey undertaken as part of the GTAA which provides more reliable and robust data.
- S11. Compared to neighbouring local authorities, the number of caravans recorded by the July 2017 caravan count in Tunbridge Wells is relatively low at 85 caravans. However, when the population of the local authority is taken into account the density of caravans in Tunbridge Wells is slightly higher compared to neighbouring local authorities.
- S12. A combination of local authority data and site visits indicates a total provision of 40 occupied pitches with full planning permission across the study area including 31 occupied

privately owned pitches and 9 local authority pitches. There is also 1 pitch with temporary planning permission and 1 pitch which is currently disused and uninhabitable but could potentially be redeveloped. There is also a Gypsy and Traveller site which was primarily occupied by non-Gypsies and Travellers at the time of the surveys.

- S13. There was a total of 88 unauthorised caravans on authorised sites over the period January 2014 to July 2017 equating to an average of 11 per every six months. The peak of 30 unauthorised caravans in July 2015 was mainly due to a large number of caravans visiting one site. There was only a small number of unauthorised caravans in January and July 2017. Nonetheless, this may indicate unmet need or the need for transit provision.

Stakeholder Consultation

- S14. Consultations with a range of stakeholders were conducted between August 2017 and December 2017 to provide in-depth qualitative information about the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Showpeople. The aim of the consultation was to obtain both an overall perspective on issues facing these groups, and an understanding of local issues that are specific to the study area.
- S15. It was generally acknowledged that there is a lack of accommodation provision throughout the study area. Much of the accommodation need is due to growing families on existing pitches leading to overcrowding. According to stakeholders, there is a lack of potential Gypsy and Traveller sites outside of green belt areas. It was acknowledged that Gypsies and Travellers may have difficulty in securing planning permission for new sites or extensions to existing sites due to the amount of land designated as Green Belt and changes to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS 2015).
- S16. The main barriers to provision of both permanent and transit sites were seen to be perceptions of Gypsies and Travellers, public and political opposition, lack of available and affordable land, the planning process and related issues such as the changes to the planning definition, the cost of the process and knowing the process.

Surveys of Gypsy and Traveller families

- S17. Between August 2017 and September 2017, a total of 37 surveys were undertaken by *RRR Consultancy* with Gypsy and Traveller families residing on authorised permanent and temporary sites (36 out of potential 40 occupied pitches with permanent permission (90%) and 1 occupied pitch with temporary permission (100%)).
- S18. Reflecting longevity of tenure, most households had resided on their respective pitches for more than 5 years, although a small proportion of households had lived on site for 5 years or less. The commitment of families to remaining on existing sites is reflected in the fact that all wanted to stay in the area. Satisfaction rates regarding sites were generally high although households residing on the local authority sites were less satisfied due to concerns they had about the poor condition of their utility blocks and space restrictions.

Most households residing on private sites were generally satisfied although some require new utility blocks.

- S19. Two thirds of the respondents had travelled during the last 12 months in a caravan or trailer. Households were more likely to travel during the summer and spring months compared to autumn or winter. The main reasons for travelling included: to visit family or friends; to attend events; for cultural reasons; to holiday; and for work. Importantly, in relation to determining the needs figures, over half of families with accommodation need stated that someone in the household travels for work purposes.

Accommodation need

- S20. Accommodation need for the study area was assessed using analysis of primary and secondary data. The accommodation needs calculation steps were based on a model in accordance with both previous and current Practice Guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It contains seven basic components; five assessing need and two assessing supply, which are applied to each sub-group, based on primary data.
- S21. Table S1 summarises accommodation need over the period 2017-37. It shows that a further 32 Gypsy and Traveller pitches (24 excluding households who do not travel for work) are needed over twenty years in the study area.
- S22. In relation to Gypsies and Travellers, the main drivers of need are from newly forming families, families residing on overcrowded pitches, and psychological aversion of households living in bricks and mortar accommodation.

Table S.1: Summary of accommodation needs 2017-37

Period	G&T Pitch need	G&T Pitch need who travel for work	TS Plots
Total 2017-22	15	9	0
Total 2022-27	5	5	0
Total 2027-32	6	5	0
Total 2032-37	6	5	0
Total 2017-37	32	24	0

Source: GTAA 2018

- S23. In relation to transit provision, it is also recommended that the local authority has a corporate policy in place to address negotiated stopping places for small scale transient encampments, and that it continues to work with local authorities across the county to provide new transit provision.
- S24. The accommodation need can be addressed by expanding number of pitches permitted on existing sites. Further need could also be met by granting full planning permission to occupiers residing on sites with temporary planning permission, and reviewing current appeal applications.

Conclusions

S25. As well as quantifying accommodation need, the study also makes recommendations on key issues including:

Planning policy:

- Develop criteria and processes for determining the suitability of Gypsy and Traveller sites, and Travelling Showpeople yards, as indicated above for including in emerging/future Local Plans.
- Review existing provision for opportunities for expansion where suitable and appropriate.
- Implement corporate policy to provide negotiated stopping arrangements to address unauthorised encampments for set periods of time at agreed locations.

General policy/site management:

- Authorities could consider helping to meet the needs of households unable to afford to own a site by renting or leasing small parcels of local authority owned land to them and assisting with planning applications and site development.
- To consider alternative options for developing new sites such as sites developed on a cooperative basis, shared ownership, or small sites owned by a local authority, but rented to families for their own use.
- To consider alternative site funding mechanisms such as: site acquisition funds; loans for private site provision through Community Development Financial Institutions; and joint ventures with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- Develop a holistic vision for their work on Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople yards and embed it in Community and Homelessness Strategies, Local Plans and planning and reporting obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Provide regular training and workshop sessions with local authority and service provider employees (and elected members) help them to further understand the key issues facing the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople yards communities.
- Formalise communication processes between relevant housing, planning and enforcement officers etc. in both the study area and neighbouring local authorities.
- To consider alternative site management structures as discussed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) (2016) research.
- In liaison with relevant enforcement agencies such as the police to develop a common approach to dealing with unauthorised encampments.
- Develop a common approach to recording unauthorised encampments which includes information such as location, type of location (e.g. roadside, park land etc.), number of caravans/vehicles involved, start date, end date, reason for unauthorised encampment (e.g. travelling through area, attending event, visiting family etc.), family name(s), and action taken (if any).

- Encourage local housing authorities to include Gypsy and Traveller categories on ethnic monitoring forms to improve data on population numbers, particularly in housing.
- Better sharing of information between agencies which deal with the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople.
- The population size and demographics of all two community groups can change rapidly. As such, their accommodation needs should be reviewed every 5 to 7 years.

S26. The accommodation need identified in this report primarily derives from households residing on private sites. There is adequate land on such sites to meet accommodation need. Consequently it is recommended that the council take the following steps to address the accommodation needs:

- Liaise with owners and occupiers of sites with accommodation need to determine how many additional pitches can be accommodated on the site to meet the household's needs
- Review if, and how, existing local authority sites can be expanded and consider funding options
- Determine whether the potential expansion of existing sites would meet current planning policy criteria.

S27. The above could be undertaken using the services of external consultants or relevant agencies if required.

1. Introduction

Study context

- 1.1 In August 2017 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council commissioned *RRR Consultancy Ltd* to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Study (GTAA) for the period 2017-2037. The results will be used as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning and to inform the allocation of resources.
- 1.2 The requirement to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is established through national guidance contained in Planning Policy for Travellers (DCLG, 2015).

Methodological context

- 1.3 To achieve the study aims, the research drew on a number of data sources including:
 - Review of secondary information: a review of national and local planning policies and recently undertaken GTAA's, and analysis of secondary data. This included analysis of the most recently published (January 2017) DCLG Traveller Caravan Count to determine trends in the population of Gypsies and Travellers.
 - An online survey and telephone interviews with key stakeholders providing qualitative data regarding the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.
 - Extensive face-to-face surveys of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, covering a range of issues related to accommodation and service needs. This key methodology determined an extensive range of data enabling accommodation needs to be determined.
- 1.4 The above provided an extensive range of quantitative and qualitative data enabling a robust and reliable assessment of accommodation needs.

Geographical context

- 1.5 The following is a map of the GTAA study area (shaded in green) with neighbouring authorities (unshaded).

Figure 1.1 Study Area (with neighbouring local authorities)

Source: ONS 2017

Tunbridge Wells Borough

- 1.6 The estimated population of the Tunbridge Wells Borough area is 117,100 people (ONS 2016). According to the Council's Core Strategy (2010)¹, the Borough covers an area of 326 square kilometres. The Borough borders the authorities of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Ashford in Kent; and Rother and Wealden in East Sussex.

¹ Tunbridge Wells Core Strategy Development Plan Document Adopted June 2010

- 1.7 Royal Tunbridge Wells forms the majority of the main urban area and provides a large proportion of the social, cultural and economic opportunities available in the Borough. In addition to being the Borough's principal retail centre, the town provides a wide variety of services, including primary and secondary schools, and sports and community facilities. Historical and architectural features of the town, such as the Pantiles, also provide a high quality environment that attracts a significant amount of tourism to the Borough. The town is subject to considerable constraints, such as its location within the Metropolitan Green Belt and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.8 Paddock Wood benefits from good transport links and higher-order facilities, such as a secondary school and sports centre. There is a large employment area to the north of the railway line, which supports a wide rural hinterland. Apart from the Waitrose supermarket, existing retail is mainly devoted to the provision of local services. In physical landscape terms, Paddock Wood is not as constrained as the other towns in the Borough, but the western edge of the centre abuts the Green Belt and the results of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2007 suggest that many areas, particularly to the north of the town, are at risk of flooding.
- 1.9 Cranbrook is an attractive, vibrant rural town located within the High Weald AONB. The weatherboarded houses and features such as the Vestry Hall give it a unique character. Cranbrook also benefits from a range of comparison shopping facilities, a supermarket, secondary schools, a sports centre and the Weald Information Centre.
- 1.10 Like Cranbrook, Hawkhurst features the weatherboarded buildings that are distinctive to the area. The settlement is also located within the High Weald AONB and therefore is considerably constrained. It supports a wide rural hinterland and benefits from a primary school, small independent cinema and supermarkets.
- 1.11 Tunbridge Wells Borough is also home to 17 villages, each with its own character. Most of the villages are located in the Green Belt and/or the High Weald AONB and all provide some facilities, such as a primary school, shop, public house or church. In addition, there are a number of hamlets and other more remote buildings dispersed across the Borough, many of which are located within the AONB or Green Belt and provide important features of the landscape.
- 1.12 Approximately 70% of the Borough is designated as High Weald AONB and 22% as Metropolitan Green Belt. The Borough also has 19 separately identified Landscape Character Areas and is home to a number of other valuable landscapes, including Important Landscape Approaches, Areas of Landscape Importance, Arcadian Areas and Areas of Important Open Space, as well as other aspects of value, such as tree lines, woodlands, hedgerows and rural lanes. The Borough also supports extensive areas of Ancient Woodland and one Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS).

- 1.13 According to the Core Strategy (2010), the existence of these features acts not only as a constraint on development, but also as an opportunity. A challenge is the preservation and enhancement of this character and distinctiveness, while balancing the competing pressures for retail, employment and residential development.
- 1.14 The Borough benefits from a good rail service to Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and London, a bus network that covers both the urban and rural areas and good provision of car parking facilities within the town centres, many of which are free in the more rural towns. There are opportunities to increase current low levels of cycling, walking and use of public transport and therefore one of the key challenges is to encourage alternative forms of transport and facilitate a modal shift away from private car use.

Definition Context

- 1.15 It is essential to consider definitions relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population. According to Niner², there are three broad groupings of Gypsies and Travellers in England: traditional English (Romany) Gypsies, traditional Irish Travellers, and New Travellers. There are smaller numbers of Welsh Gypsies and Scottish Travellers. Romany Gypsies were first recorded in Britain around the year 1500, having migrated across Europe from an initial point of origin in Northern India.
- 1.16 Gypsies and Irish Travellers have been recognised by the courts to be two distinct ethnic groups, so have the full protection of the Equality Act 2010. The courts made clear that travelling is not a defining characteristic of these groups, but only one among others. This is significant, because the majority of Britain's estimated 300,000 Gypsies and Travellers are thought to live in conventional housing, some by choice, and some because of the severe shortage of sites³.
- 1.17 However, in relation to planning. In August 2015, the DCLG amended its definition of Gypsies and Travellers, as set out below:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

² Pat Niner (2004), Counting Gypsies & Travellers: A Review of the Gypsy Caravan Count System, ODPM, February 2004 located at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/158004.pdf>.

³ Commission for Racial Equality, *Common Ground Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers - Report of a CRE inquiry in England and Wales*, (Summary), May 2006, pages 3-4.

In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

- a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life*
- b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life*
- c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.*

1.18 Unlike Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople are not considered to be an ethnic minority. Although some Gypsies and Travellers may earn a living as ‘travelling showpeople’, Travelling Showpeople as a group do not consider themselves to belong to an ethnic minority⁴.

1.19 According to DCLG (August 2015) guidance on planning policy for traveller sites, the definition of Travelling Showpeople is:

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.⁵

1.20 Also, for the purposes of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA’s), Travelling Showpeople are included under the definition of ‘Gypsies and Travellers’ in accordance with The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006, and the draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs (March 2016). It recommends that Travelling Showpeople’s own needs and requirements should be separately identified in the GTAA⁶. To ensure it is following DCLG guidance, this GTAA adheres to the definition of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople as defined by the DCLG ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ (August 2015) (see paragraphs above).

Summary

1.21 Whilst the Housing and Planning Act removes the requirement for all local authorities to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, the August 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) reiterates the need for local authorities to evidence the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and to

⁴ DCLG, *Consultation on revised planning guidance in relation to Travelling Showpeople*, January 2007, p. 8

⁵ DCLG, *Planning Policy for Traveller Sites*, August 2015.

⁶ DCLG, *Planning Policy for Traveller Sites*, August 2015 and DCLG, *Draft Guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs (Caravans and Houseboats)* March 2016.

determine the number, type and location of new provision. The PPTS amended the definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes.

- 1.22 The purpose of this assessment is to quantify the accommodation and housing related support needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the study area between 2017 and 2037. This is in terms of permanent pitches (and sites) and transit sites /negotiated stopping arrangements for Gypsies and Travellers, plots (and yards) for Travelling Showpeople. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources and as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning.
- 1.23 To achieve the study aims, the research drew on several data sources: a review of secondary information; consultation with organisations involved with Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople issues, and extensive surveys of Gypsies and Travellers. These provided an extensive range of quantitative and qualitative data enabling a robust and reliable assessment of accommodation needs.
- 1.24 The Borough borders the authorities of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Ashford in Kent; and Rother and Wealden in East Sussex. Royal Tunbridge Wells forms the majority of the main urban area and provides a large proportion of the social, cultural and economic opportunities available in the Borough. Tunbridge Wells Borough is also home to 17 villages, each with its own character. Approximately 70% of the Borough is designated as High Weald AONB and 22% as Metropolitan Green Belt. The Borough benefits from a good rail service to Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and London, a bus network that covers both the urban and rural areas and good provision of car parking facilities within the town centres.

2. Policy context

Introduction

- 2.1 To assess the current policy context, existing documents have been examined to determine what reference is made to Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople issues.
- 2.2 The intention is to highlight areas of effective practice in the study area, and examine the extent to which authorities are currently addressing the issue. Furthermore, understanding the current position will be important in the development of future strategies intended to meet accommodation need and housing related support need among Gypsies and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople.

National Policies

DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (August 2015)

- 2.3 In August 2015 the Government published its amended planning policy for traveller sites, which replaced the previous guidance and circulars relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People. The guidance emphasised the need for local authorities to use evidence to plan positively and manage development. The PPTS requires local authorities to work with neighbouring local authorities to determine transit and permanent pitch and plot targets. It states that in assembling the evidence base necessary to support their planning approach, local authorities should:
- effectively engage with both settled and traveller communities
 - co-operate with traveller groups to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit/emergency accommodation needs of their areas
 - and use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions
- 2.4 There are some key differences between the March 2012 and August 2015 versions of the PPTS, including the weight which can be given to any absence of a five-year supply of permanent sites when deciding planning applications for temporary sites, and the weight which can be given to any absence of a five year supply of permanent sites when deciding planning applications for temporary sites⁷.

⁷ House of Commons Library, *Gypsies and Travellers: Planning Provisions*, Briefing Paper 07005, 4 January 2016 p.14.

- 2.5 One important amendment relates to the change in the definitions of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. The August 2015 PPTS changed the definition to exclude households who have permanently ceased to travel – in effect, for planning purposes, PPTS regards such households as members of the settled community. As such, their accommodation needs are not considered as part of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments, and so this is the approach taken in this GTAA.
- 2.6 Whilst it is clear that the 2015 PPTS excludes those who have ceased to travel permanently as being Gypsies and Travellers (for planning purposes), it does not explicitly state how the new definition should be interpreted in relation to other factors such as whether families travel for economic or work purposes.
- 2.7 One interpretation is that ‘a nomadic habit of life’ means travelling for an economic purpose. Previous case law e.g. *R v Shropshire CC ex p Bungay* (1990) and *Hearne v National Assembly for Wales* (1999) has been used to support this point. However, there is nothing within PPTS which indicates that Gypsy or Traveller status (for planning purposes) is solely derived from whether there is any employment-related travelling. Also, such case law precedes the August 2015 definition change and it is believed that there has not yet been any caselaw in relation to the updated definition.
- 2.8 More recent Planning Inspectors’ reports have reached differing conclusions regarding whether the Gypsy and Traveller status (for planning purposes) should be based on patterns of employment-related nomadism. For example, a planning appeal decision regarding a site at Throcking, Hertfordshire, in 2016 concluded the appellant was not a Gypsy and Traveller for planning purposes as there was insufficient evidence “that he is currently a person of a nomadic habit of life”⁸ for employment purposes (i.e. he did not meet the August 2015 PPTS definition).
- 2.9 In contrast, some other Planning Inspectors’ reports have appeared to give less weight to the travelling status of Gypsies and Travellers. For example, an appeal decision regarding a site in Blythburgh, Suffolk, states that whilst the appellant had permanently ceased to travel, he is nonetheless an ethnic Romany gypsy with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010⁹. *RRR Consultancy* is also aware of current and potentially forthcoming legal challenges to the August 2015 PPTS definition. For example, the Community Law Partnership is preparing a legal challenge to the definition on behalf of a Gypsy woman. It is therefore *possible* that applying a strict employment-based interpretation of the August 2015 definition for planning purposes could lead to difficulties, but it is also possible that the

⁸ Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/16/3145267 Elmfield Stables, Thirty Acre Farm, Broadfield, Throcking, Hertfordshire, 6 December 2016.

SG9 9RD

⁹ Appeal Ref: APP/J3530/A/14/2225118, Pine Lodge, Hazels Lane, Hinton, Blythburgh, Suffolk IP17 3RF 1 March 2016.

legal challenge to PPTS could fail and the employment-based interpretation become more settled.

- 2.10 In the absence of caselaw on the current (2015) PPTS definition, the key conclusion to draw on this matter is that there is no firm, settled understanding of the extent to which nomadism for employment-related purposes is determinative of the planning status of a self-identifying Gypsy and Traveller. As the differing appeal decisions show, the facts of each individual case are very important in reaching a conclusion.
- 2.11 Given the above, our approach is to undertake a methodology which provides two needs figures: first, one based on the accommodation needs of families who have not permanently ceased to travel; and second, considers the accommodation needs only of families who travel in a caravan for work purposes. Using these methods will 'future-proof' the Accommodation Needs Assessment and ensure that the revised definition is applied in both a fair and objective manner. As such, the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers are able to be determined in respect of the current definition that is both robust and reliable and minimises possible future challenges. Different GTAA's reach differing conclusions on this matter and it is for the Local Authorities to decide individually which approach to take for planning purposes. It is recommended that this be kept under review in the light of evolving appeal decisions and caselaw.

DCLG Draft Guidance on Housing Needs (March 2016)

- 2.12 In March 2016 DCLG published its draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats. It states that when considering the need for caravans and houseboats local authorities will need to include the needs of a variety of residents in differing circumstances, for example:
- Caravan and houseboat dwelling households:
 - who have no authorised site anywhere on which to reside
 - whose existing site accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable, but who are unable to obtain larger or more suitable accommodation
 - who contain suppressed households who are unable to set up separate family units and
 - who are unable to access a place on an authorised site, or obtain or afford land to develop on.
 - Bricks and mortar dwelling households:
 - Whose existing accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable ('unsuitable' in this context can include unsuitability by virtue of a person's cultural preference not to live in bricks-and-mortar accommodation).

- 2.13 Importantly, in respect of this report, the draft guidance states that assessments should include, but are not limited to, Romany Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, New Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.14 The DCLG draft guidance (2016) recognises that the needs of those residing in caravans and houseboats may differ from the rest of the population because of:
- their nomadic or semi-nomadic pattern of life
 - their preference for caravan and houseboat-dwelling
 - movement between bricks-and-mortar housing and caravans or houseboats
 - their presence on unauthorised encampments or developments.
- 2.15 Also, it suggests that as mobility between areas may have implications for carrying out an assessment local authorities will need to consider:
- co-operating across boundaries both in carrying out assessments and delivering solutions
 - the timing of the accommodation needs assessment
 - different data sources
- 2.16 Finally, the DCLG draft guidance (2016) states that in relation to Travelling Showpeople account should be taken of the need for storage and maintenance of equipment as well as accommodation, and that the transient nature of many Travelling Showpeople should be considered.

Housing and Planning Act 2016

- 2.17 The Housing and Planning Act, which gained Royal Assent on 12 May 2016, omits sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004, which previously identified 'gypsies and travellers' as requiring specific assessment for their accommodation needs when carrying out reviews of housing needs. Instead, the Act amends section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 governing the assessment of accommodation needs to include all people residing in or resorting to the district in caravans or houseboats. However, for planning purposes, as noted above, the DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015) still requires local authorities to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Duty to cooperate and cross-border issues

- 2.18 The duty to cooperate was created in the Localism Act 2011. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England, and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation relating to strategic cross boundary matters.

- 2.19 Local authorities are required to work together to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs for their areas. They should also consider the production of joint development plans to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area.
- 2.20 As part of the production of this assessment, consultation was undertaken with adjoining planning and housing authorities, representatives from the Police and Health and Wellbeing officers were invited to discuss issues relevant to them relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The findings from the consultation are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Local Planning Policies

- 2.21 The 2006 Local Plan states that in order to protect designated areas and the countryside, much of the Plan area is unsuitable for the allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites. For this reason, and that demand for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough has remained very low, a criteria-based policy for judging planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites is considered most appropriate for the Plan area.
- 2.22 Saved Policy H4 of the 2006 Local Plan states that Proposals for the establishment of Gypsy and Traveller sites will be permitted provided all of the following criteria are satisfied:
1. The size of the site and the number and distribution of pitches within it would be appropriate to its location
 2. The configuration of the site would be satisfactory and its physical containment against unauthorised extension would be achievable
 3. The proposal would not be visually intrusive and would be well-screened by existing vegetation and physically contained by landscaping
 4. Proposals would not be located within an exposed position in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or a Special Landscape Area or elsewhere where they would have more than a minimal impact on the rural character of the locality; and
 5. The location of the proposed site is appropriate in terms of proximity to essential local services such as shops, schools, public transport, medical and social services.
- 2.23 Core Policy 6 of the Core Strategy (2010) states that Gypsy and Traveller sites will be identified, allocated and safeguarded to accommodate the number of pitches required to address the unmet need as identified in the South East Plan (revoked in May 2010). It states that in identifying and allocating sites and in considering proposals for accommodation, the Borough Council will have regard to the following:
- the provisions of Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development
 - the potential to extend existing sites or re-use previously occupied sites

- the suitability of sites with temporary permissions
- that development should not prejudice the development strategy for the Borough, as set out in Chapters 4 and 5 of the Core Strategy.

2.24 The above policies will be superseded by the new Local Plan policies based on evidence including this GTAA.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA's)

2.25 Given the transient nature of Gypsies and Travellers it is important for the GTAA to consider Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need in neighbouring authorities. Also, the travelling patterns of Gypsies and Travellers transcend local authority boundaries. As such, the following section discusses the results of GTAA's recently undertaken by neighbouring and nearby local authorities specifically in relation to accommodation need and travelling patterns.

Ashford, Maidstone, Tonbridge & Malling, and Tunbridge Wells Gypsy and Traveller and Accommodation Assessment, 2006

2.26 The GTAA identified a need of 64 additional pitches across the study area for the period 2006-2011. It states that the Gypsy and Traveller community in the study area are well settled with two thirds of households residing on sites having lived at their current base for more than 5 years. Nearly three quarters of surveyed households had not travelled in the last 12 months. 'Way of life' was cited as the most common reason given for travelling. Two thirds of households living on sites had no plans to move. The majority of those who did plan to move were doing so because their site was temporary or because they disliked the area. The demand for transit provision was not assessed by the GTAA. This 2017 GTAA supersedes the 2006 GTAA in relation to Tunbridge Wells.

Dartford Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment, 2013

2.27 The GTAA identifies a need for 34 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 3 additional Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2013-2028. In terms of travelling routes, the GTAA states that those families who do travel were likely to travel to Appleby Fair in Cumbria or a number of other traditional horse fairs across the UK. A wide variety of other places across the whole of the UK were also mentioned such as Birmingham, Yorkshire, Derby, Wales and Ireland. Coastal towns in the South of England appeared to be fairly popular such as Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings, Margate, Bournemouth and Clacton-on-Sea. In relation to unauthorised encampments, the GTAA noted a general decrease in the number of unauthorised encampments over the previous 5 year period. Those encampments that have occurred were more likely to be groups in transit, travelling between the months of April and October, staying on private landowners land rather than public land. The GTAA finds little evidence of a need for formal transit sites within the borough.

East Kent Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment, 2014

- 2.28 The GTAA was commissioned by the local authorities of Canterbury, Dover, Shepway, and Thanet. The GTAA identifies a need for 63 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 1 additional Travelling Showpeople plot over the period 2013 to 2027. In relation to travelling, households who travel were more likely to state that they travel to fairs such as Appleby, Cambridge and Stow. However, respondents also made reference to visiting various parts of England, including Essex, Plymouth and Scarborough. According to the GTAA, information provided by the local authorities and other stakeholders suggests that the study area experiences a low level of unauthorised camping each year. As such, it suggests that there is little evidence for the provision of formal separate transit sites.

Medway Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment, 2013

- 2.29 The Medway GTAA was commissioned by the local authorities of Tonbridge and Malling, Gravesham, Ashford, Medway, and Swale. The GTAA identifies a need for 22 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches and no additional Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2013-2028. In terms of travelling routes, the GTAA states that households residing on private sites and in bricks and mortar appear to travel more often to destinations such as Cumbria, Tees Valley, and Merseyside. It states that the travelling patterns of Gypsies and Travellers in Medway share similarities with other near and adjacent local authorities within Kent. According to the GTAA, there has only been a small number of unauthorised encampments over the period 2009 to 2012, most consisting of between 1 and 3 caravans, although there have been occasionally larger encampments consisting of between 8 and 20 caravans.

Sevenoaks Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment, 2014

- 2.30 According to the GTAA, there is a total need over the 5 year period 2017/18 to 2021/22 for 167 pitches in Sevenoaks compared with a supply of 106 authorised pitches (including vacant pitches). The result is an overall shortfall of 61 pitches. The GTAA identifies no need for Travelling Showpeople plots within the borough. According to the GTAA, families stated that they tend to travel all over the country although specific places included Wales, Stow, Appleby, Cambridge and the North. In terms of time of travel the summer months, 'summertime' and 'school holidays' were mentioned most often. In relation to transit provision, the GTAA notes that unauthorised encampment activity is generally limited in Sevenoaks District. There is some activity which usually involves a small number of caravans for up to 2 days. As such, the GTAA recommends that the Council consider the use of existing local authority sites to provide a small number of pitches suitable for transit use but that no new site is currently required.

Wealden Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2016

- 2.31 The GTAA states that there is a need for additional 21 pitches over the period 2016-2038 based on families who meet the August 2015 definition. Taking into account the needs of families whose travelling status is 'unknown' could lead an additional need of between 1

and 6 pitches. According to the GTAA, family groups move between areas which can cause issues. Wealden has links with its bordering neighbours such as Lewes, and Eastbourne and works in partnership with the rest of the County on the issue of unauthorised encampments. The GTAA states that all Districts and Boroughs pay the County Council to support the transit site, Bridie's Tan, which is for the use of everyone in the County.

Summary

- 2.32 DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015) emphasises the need for local authorities to use evidence to plan positively and manage development. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 amends section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 governing the assessment of accommodation needs to include all people residing in the district in caravans or houseboats. However, for planning purposes, as noted above, the DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015) still requires local authorities to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.33 The local planning policies of the study area local authority, outlines the criteria by which the location of new Gypsy and Traveller accommodation should be determined. It is apparent that they consider it important to consider a range of factors including the sustainability of new sites e.g. proximity to local services, and the potential impact on the environment. However, it is likely that any revised local policies would reflect the findings of this GTAA.
- 2.34 Given the cross-boundary characteristic of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues, it is important to consider the findings of GTAAs produced by neighbouring local authorities. GTAAs recently undertaken by neighbouring local authorities suggest that there remains Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need throughout the county.

3. Trends in the population levels

Introduction

- 3.1 This section examines population levels in the GTAA study area and population trends. The primary source of information for Gypsies and Travellers (including Travelling Showpeople) in England is the DCLG Traveller Caravan Count. This was introduced in 1979 and places a duty on local authorities in England to undertake a twice-yearly count for the DCLG on the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in their area. The count was intended to estimate the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population for whom provision was to be made and to monitor progress in meeting need.
- 3.2 Although the duty to provide sites was removed in 1994, the need for local authorities to conduct the count has remained. There are, however, several weaknesses with the reliability of the data. For example, across the country counting practices vary between local authorities, and the practice of carrying out the count on a single day ignores the rapidly fluctuating number and distribution of unauthorised encampments. Also, some authorities include Travelling Showpeople in the same figures as the Gypsies and Travellers and others distinguish between the groups and others don't include Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.3 Significantly, the count is only of caravans and so Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation are excluded. It should also be noted that pitches / households often contain more than one caravan, typically two or three.
- 3.4 However, despite concerns about accuracy, the count is valuable because it provides the only national source of information about numbers and distribution of Gypsy and Traveller caravans. As such, it is useful for identifying trends in the Gypsy and Traveller population, if not determining absolute numbers.
- 3.5 Additional data on unauthorised encampments has been gathered by the study area authorities for the purpose of both assessing need and monitoring the effectiveness of enforcement approaches and providing a good overview of the numbers of unauthorised caravans in the past three years in the study area.
- 3.6 This data has been used in conjunction with the DCLG Traveller Caravan Count figures. It is worth noting that since this monitoring tends to be more comprehensive than many local authorities the relative number of unauthorised caravans counted in the study area as compared to other counties and regions may be higher although more accurate.
- 3.7 The DCLG Count includes data concerning both Gypsies and Travellers sites¹⁰. It distinguishes between caravans on socially rented authorised, private authorised, and unauthorised pitches. Unauthorised sites and pitches are broken down as to whether they

¹⁰. Data regarding Travelling Showpeople is published separately by the DCLG as 'experimental statistics'.

are tolerated or not tolerated. The analysis in this chapter includes data from January 2015 to January 2017.

Population

- 3.8 The total Gypsy and Traveller population living in the UK is unknown, with estimates for England ranging from 90,000 and 120,000¹¹ (1994) to 300,000¹² (2006). There are uncertainties partly because of the number of different definitions that exist, but mainly because of an almost total lack of information about the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers now living in bricks and mortar accommodation. Estimates produced for the DCLG suggest that at least 50% of the overall Gypsy and Traveller population are now living in permanent housing.
- 3.9 Local authorities in England provide a count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in January and July each year for the DCLG. The January 2017 Count (the most recent figures available) indicated a total of 22,004 caravans. Applying an assumed three person per caravan¹³ multiplier would give a population of over 66,000.
- 3.10 Again, applying an assumed multiplier of three persons per caravan and doubling this to allow for the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in housing,¹⁴ gives a total population of around 132,000 for England. However, given the limitations of the data this figure can only be very approximate, and is likely to be a significant underestimate.
- 3.11 For the first time, the national census, undertaken in 2011, included the category of 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' in the question regarding ethnic identity. The 2011 Census suggests there were 322 Gypsies and Travellers living in the study area representing around 0.3% of the usual resident population.¹⁵

Table 3.1 Gypsy and Traveller Population			
	Population (no.)	G&T Pop (no.)	G&T Pop (%)
Tunbridge Wells	115,049	322	0.3%

Source: NOMIS 2017

- 3.12 It is also possible to determine the Gypsy and Traveller population within the study area by tenure. Derived from 2011 Census data, Table 3.2 shows the tenure of 94 Gypsy and Traveller households. The most common tenure is social rented housing occupied by over half (55%) of households, followed by a third (33%) who own the housing they occupy, and around a tenth (12%) who rent privately. This includes households residing both on sites and in bricks and mortar accommodation.

¹¹ J. P. Liegeois, (1994) *Romas, Gypsies and Travellers* Strasbourg: Council of Europe. This is equivalent to 0.15% to 0.21% of the total population.

¹² Commission for Racial Equality, *Common Ground Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers - Report of a CRE inquiry in England and Wales*, (Summary), May 2006, pages 3-4.

¹³ Niner, Pat (2003), *Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England*, ODPM.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See ONS 2011 Census Table KS201EW Ethnic Group located at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/>

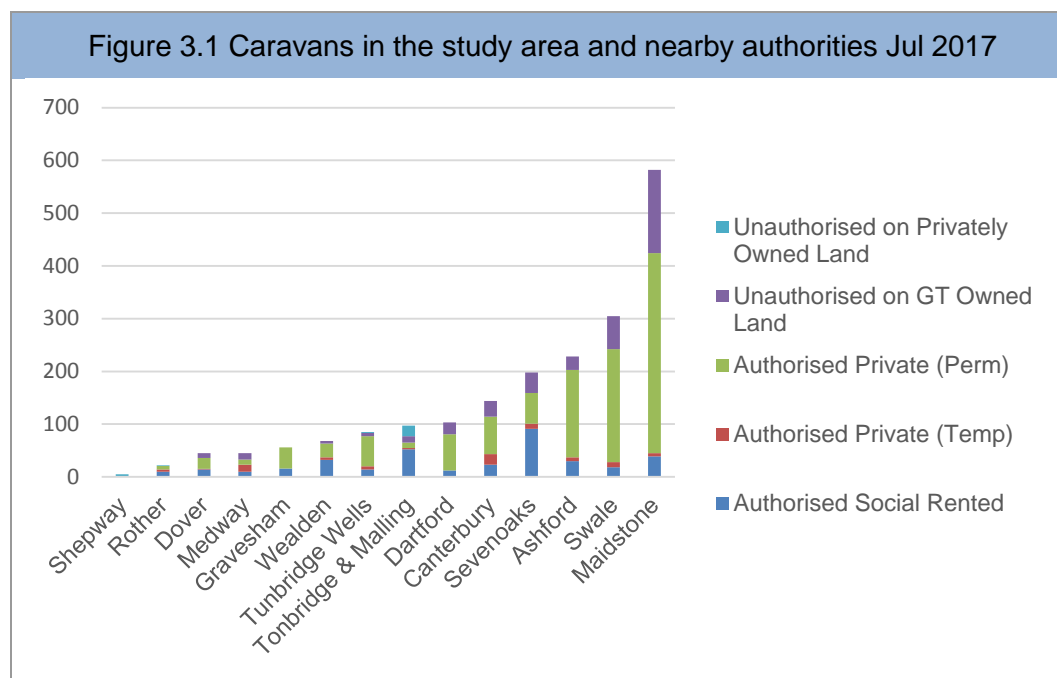
Table 3.2 Gypsy and Traveller Population by tenure

	Social rented		Owned		Private rented		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Tunbridge Wells	52	55%	31	33%	11	12%	94	100%

Source: NOMIS 2017

- 3.13 Figure 3.1 shows Tunbridge Wells' Traveller Caravan Count in the context of nearby authorities. As the chart below shows, there is some variation in the number of caravans in each local authority. Nine of the local authority areas (including Tunbridge Wells with 85 caravans)¹⁶ recorded a count of less than the average of 142 caravans. In contrast, four local authority areas (Sevenoaks, Ashford, Swale, and Maidstone) recorded higher than average counts with by far the most caravans (582) recorded in Maidstone.

Figure 3.1 Caravans in the study area and nearby authorities Jul 2017

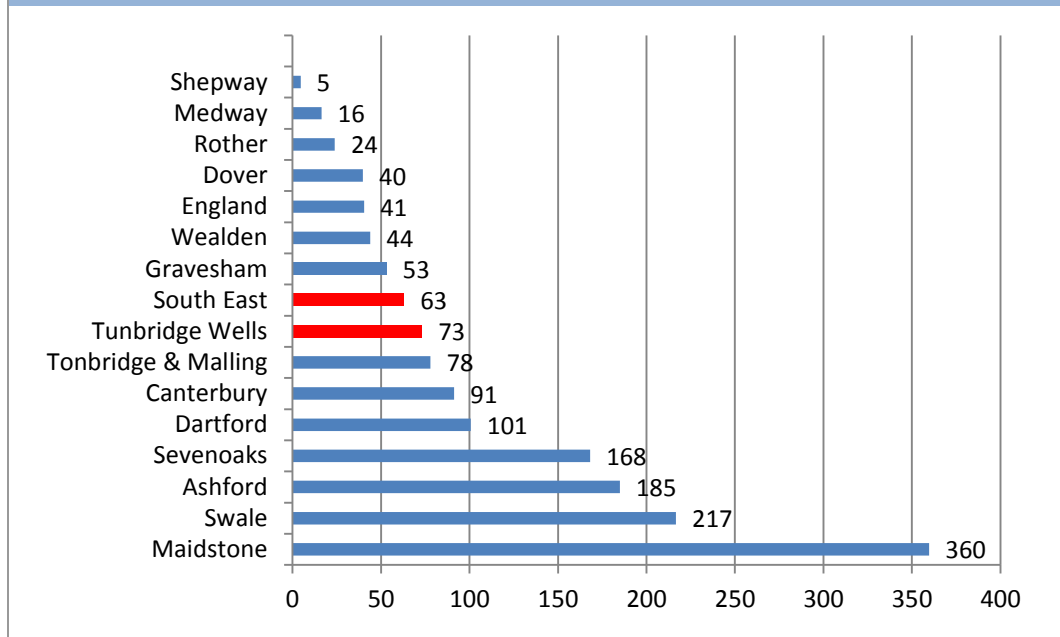


Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Jul 2017

- 3.14 Similarly, Figure 3.2 shows that when the population is taken into account the density of caravans varies widely. Shepway (5 caravans per 100,000 population), Medway (16), Rother (24), Dover (40), Wealden (46) and Gravesham (57) are below the regional average of 63 caravans per 100,000 population. Tunbridge Wells is just above the regional average at 73 caravans per 100,000 population. In contrast, Sevenoaks (168 caravans per 100,000 population), Ashford (185), Swale (217), and Maidstone (360) are very much above it.

¹⁶ Please note that due to discrepancies the figures for Tunbridge Wells are based on Council data rather than the DCLG Caravan Count.

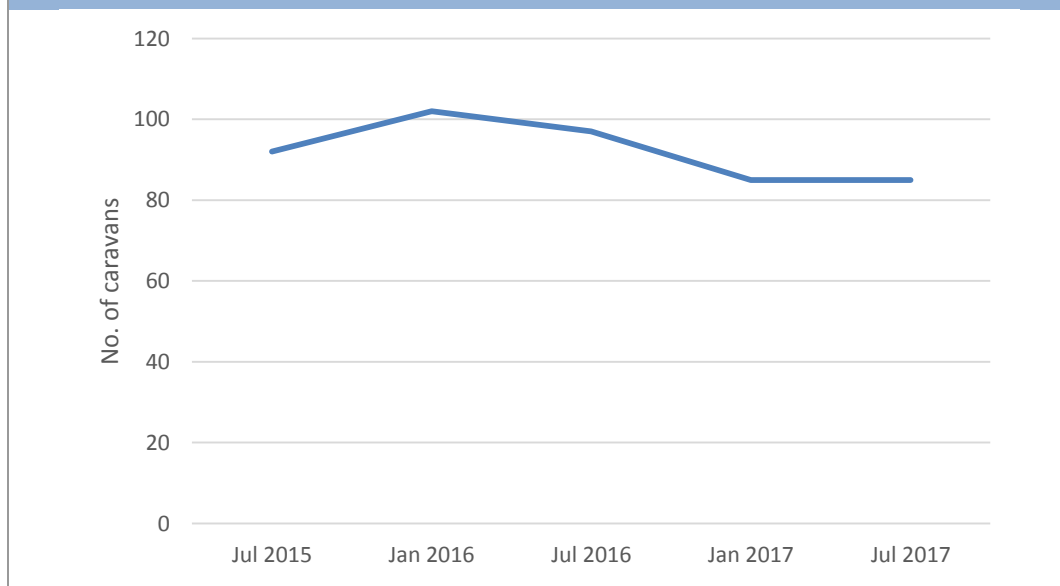
Figure 3.2 Caravans in the study area and nearby authorities adjusted for population Jul 2017



Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Jul 2017

- 3.15 Figure 3.3 shows that the total number of caravans recorded in Tunbridge Wells has varied over the period July 2015 to July 2017. The number of caravans recorded by the Caravan Counts in Tunbridge Wells has varied from a high of 102 in January 2016 to 85 recorded in January and July 2017.

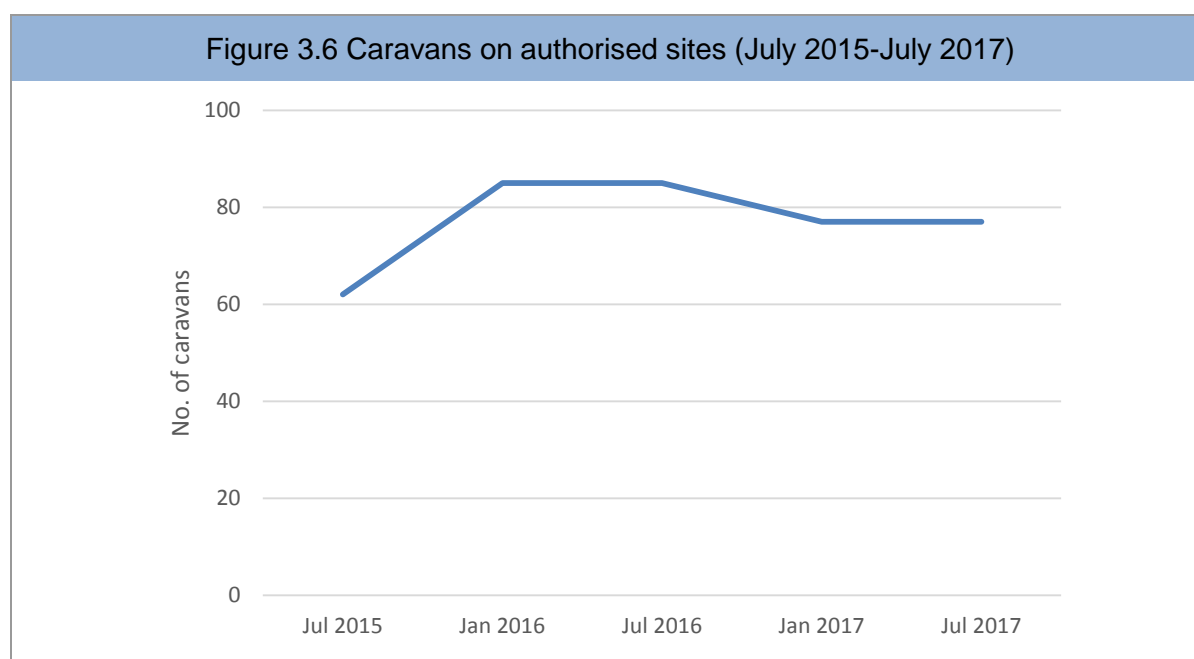
Figure 3.3 DCLG Traveller Caravan Count Jul 2015-July 2017



Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Jul 2017

DCLG data on authorised sites

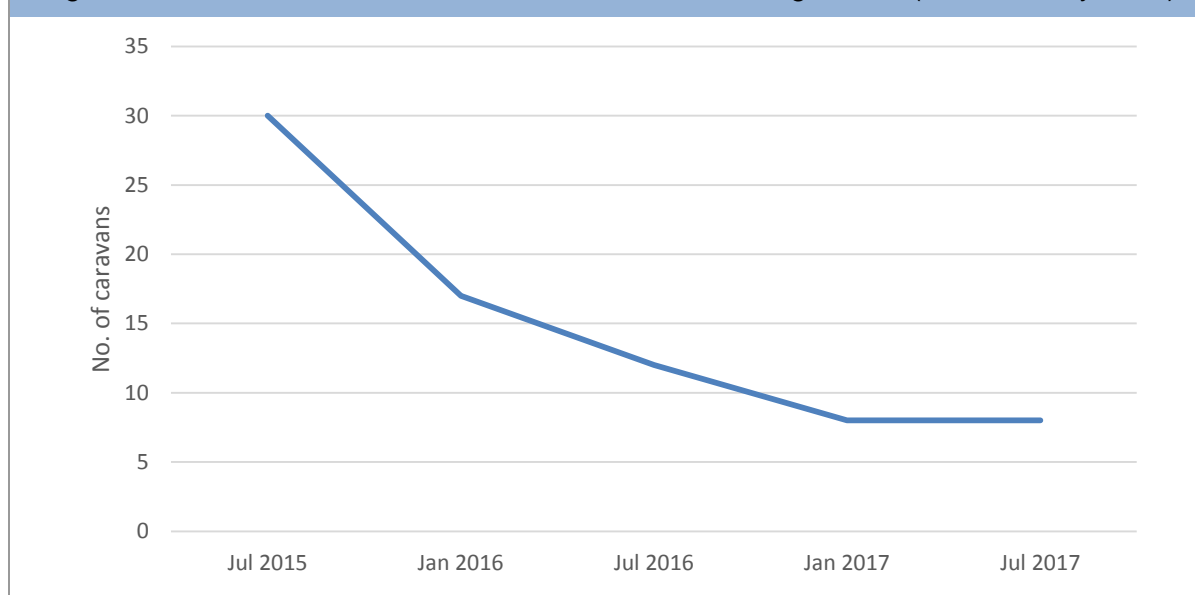
- 3.16 As seen in Figure 3.6 below, the number of caravans on authorised caravans recorded in the study area by the DCLG Traveller Count varied between the period July 2015 to July 2017 averaging 77 caravans. The number of caravans on authorised sites in Tunbridge Wells ranged between a low of 62 in July 2015 and a peak of 85 caravans in January and July 2016. The most recent (July 2017) count recorded 77 caravans on authorised pitches.



Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, July 2017

DCLG data on unauthorised sites

- 3.17 The DCLG count records the number of caravans situated on unauthorised sites (i.e. sites without planning permission) within the study area. The DCLG data on unauthorised encampments is of limited accuracy. For example, caravans on unauthorised sites may be more likely to be observed in more populated, urban areas compared with less populated rural areas. However, the data may indicate general trends (although it should be noted that the DCLG count caravans on unauthorised sites, whilst the study area local authority data records the number of encampments). The numbers below include unauthorised caravans on both Gypsy-owned and non-Gypsy owned land, and which are tolerated (meaning that no enforcement action is currently being taken) and not tolerated.
- 3.18 Figure 3.7 indicates the number of unauthorised pitches throughout the district over the period July 2015 to July 2017. It shows that the number of unauthorised pitches recorded by the DCLG Traveller Count within the borough steadily declined from a high of 30 pitches in July 2015, 17 in January 2016 reducing to a low of 8 pitches in both January and July 2017.

Figure 3.7 Caravans on unauthorised caravans in Tunbridge Wells (Jul 2015-July 2017)

Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Jan 2017

Local authority data on unauthorised encampments

- 3.19 As previously noted, the DCLG data on unauthorised encampments (i.e. caravans residing temporarily on 'sites' without planning permission) is of limited accuracy, although it may indicate general trends. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council keep more detailed records of unauthorised encampments. These records differ from those usually collected by local authorities in that they show the number of unauthorised caravans on existing sites rather than unauthorised caravans on the roadside. Nonetheless, they are useful in helping to determine unmet need or the need for transit provision.
- 3.20 Table 3.3 shows the number of unauthorised caravans on authorised sites in the study area for the period January 2014 to July 2017. There was a total of 88 unauthorised caravans over the period equating to an average of around 11 every 6 months. However, the number of unauthorised caravans peaked at 30 in July 2015 and 17 in January 2016 before reducing to only 8 in January 2017 and 8 in July 2017. The high number of caravans in July 2015 was due to caravans visiting a particular site. There was also a surge of temporary mobile homes at another site which reduced after the site was redeveloped. Similarly, a surge of unauthorised caravans at a third site eased in subsequent years.

Table 3.3 Unauthorised caravans January 2014 to July 2017

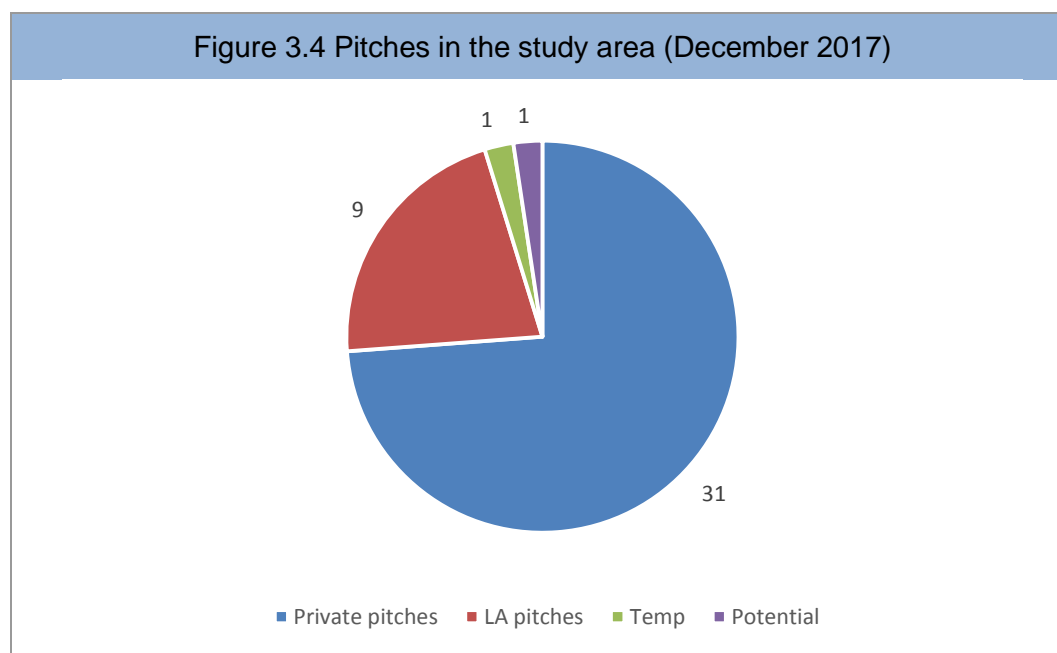
	Sites	Pitches	Caravans
January 2014	1	2	2
July 2014	2	3	3
January 2015	3	5	8
July 2015	3	5	30
January 2016	1	1	17
July 2016	2	2	12
January 2017	0	0	8
July 2017	0	0	8

Source: Tunbridge Wells BC 2017

Pitches within the study area

- 3.21 The following charts are based on local authority data and site visits. Figure 3.4 shows a total provision of 42 pitches across the study area including 31 occupied privately owned pitches, 9 local authority pitches, and 1 pitch with temporary planning permission. There is also currently one pitch which is currently disused and uninhabitable but could potentially be redeveloped. A Gypsy and Traveller site was mainly occupied by non-Gypsies and Travellers at the time of the surveys and, as such, is not shown in Chart 3.4 below or included in the pitch supply calculations.

Figure 3.4 Pitches in the study area (December 2017)



Source: GTAA 2018

Travelling Showpeople

- 3.22 Data is also available in the study area from planning data showing provision for Travelling Showpeople. The study area currently contains no plots. The cultural practice of Travelling Showpeople is to live on a plot in a yard in static caravans or mobile homes, along with smaller caravans used for travelling or inhabited by other family members (for example,

adolescent children). Their equipment (including rides, kiosks and stalls) is usually kept on the same plot.

- 3.23 It should consequently be borne in mind that the amount of land needed to live on is greater than for Gypsies and Travellers. For clarity, we refer to Travelling Showpeople 'plots' rather than 'pitches', and 'yards' rather than 'sites' to recognise the differences in design.

Summary

- 3.24 There are two major sources of data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers in the study area – the national DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, and other local authority data. The DCLG count has significant difficulties with accuracy and reliability. As such, it should only be used to determine general trends.
- 3.25 Compared to neighbouring local authorities, the number of caravans recorded by the January and July 2017 caravan counts in Tunbridge Wells was relatively low at 85 caravans. However, when the population of the local authority is taken into account the density of caravans in Tunbridge Wells is slightly higher compared to some neighbouring local authorities.
- 3.26 The data indicates total provision of 40 occupied pitches with full planning permission across the study area including 31 occupied privately owned pitches, and 9 local authority pitches. There is also 1 pitch with temporary planning permission and 1 pitch which is currently disused and uninhabitable but could potentially be redeveloped.
- 3.27 There was a total of 88 unauthorised caravans on authorised sites over the period January 2014 to July 2017 equating to an average of 10 per quarter. The peak of 30 unauthorised caravans in July was mainly due to a large number of caravans visiting one site. There was only a small number of unauthorised caravans in January and July 2017. Nonetheless, this may indicate unmet need or the need for transit provision.

4. Stakeholder consultation

Introduction

- 4.1 Consultations with a range of stakeholders were conducted between August 2017 and December 2017 to provide in-depth qualitative information about the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Showpeople. The aim of the consultation was to obtain both an overall perspective on issues facing these groups, and an understanding of local issues that are specific to the study area.
- 4.2 In recognition that Gypsy and Traveller issues transcend geographical boundaries and the need to cooperate in addressing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, an online survey and email and telephone consultation was undertaken with stakeholders and representatives from the study area and neighbouring local authorities. This included District and County Council officers with responsibility for Gypsy and Traveller issues (including planning officers, housing officers, education, and enforcement officers), elected members, planning agents, police, and health services.
- 4.3 Themes raised through the consultations included: the need for additional provisions and facilities; travelling patterns; the availability of land; accessing services; and work taking place to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This chapter presents brief summaries of the online survey consultation and face-to-face and telephone consultation with stakeholders and highlights the main points that were raised. Where relevant, the points raised are considered further in relation to the analysis in Chapter 6.

Accommodation needs

- 4.4 Stakeholders commented on the main issues facing regarding the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in local areas. One stakeholder commented on how there used to be a local authority owned site in Tunbridge Wells town. After the site closed some families ended up on the roadside whilst other families, over time, managed to get their own site (although some of these families still have accommodation need including the family residing on the site with temporary planning permission).
- 4.5 According to most stakeholders, there is a lack of potential Gypsy and Traveller sites outside of green belt areas. One stakeholder from a neighbouring authority stated that they had identified a need for new permanent pitches although they currently have no allocations. It was acknowledged that Gypsies and Travellers may have difficulty in securing planning permission for new sites or extensions to existing sites due to the amount of land designated as Green Belt and changes to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS 2015). A key issue is the growth of family units which is leading to overcrowding and demand for more permanent sites. It was suggested that there is some overcrowding on existing sites due to concealed households and some families 'doubling up' on existing

pitches. Also, it was acknowledged that overcrowding prevents younger family members from forming their own household and that a number of teenagers residing on existing sites may need separate accommodation within the next 5 years. Stakeholders suggested there is evidence that some pitches are being occupied by non-Gypsy and Traveller households. A stakeholder stated that they know of at least one Gypsy and Traveller households residing in bricks and mortar accommodation who would prefer to reside on a site. Although it was generally agreed that there is not the same lack of suitable accommodation in local areas for Travelling Showpeople, it was suggested that current plots (in neighbouring authority areas) tend to lack sufficient space for storing equipment.

- 4.6 Some stakeholders stated that the introduction of PPTS 2015 has impacted on the way in which Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs figures are determined. It was noted that some GTAAAs undertaken since the 2015 change in definition tend to provide two needs figures: one based on ethnic identity and a second based on the 2015 PPTS definition (similar to this GTAA). A stakeholder from a neighbouring local authority stated that this has led to a reduction in need from 66 pitches for the period 2013-2038 to 21 pitches for the period 2016-2038 although some of this difference was due to methodological changes. One stakeholder stated that they intend to adhere to the 'ethnic' accommodation needs figures so as to not contravene the 2010 Equalities Act.
- 4.7 The necessity of revising Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs figures has led to delays to the evidence base of some Local Plans. It was suggested that the more restrictive PPTS 2015 definition of Gypsy and Traveller has limited opportunities for additional sites. Similar impact noted by stakeholders were delays in the determination of some planning applications and further work to establish whether pitch applicants met the 2015 PPTS definition. In one instance it was identified that none of site occupants met the 2015 PPTS definition and that the local authority will have to meet accommodation needs using mainstream housing.

Transit provision and travelling patterns

- 4.8 The need for the provision of new transit sites was discussed. It was felt that there is an absence of transit provision across the county. A lack of transit provision not only impacts on Gypsy and Traveller families but also on the local community and agencies. Although evidence discussed in Chapter 3 indicates that there are few unauthorised encampments in Tunbridge Wells, a stakeholder from a neighbouring authority stated that they experience unauthorised encampments ranging between 2 and 20 caravans with the average unauthorised encampment consisting of between 6 and 12 caravans.
- 4.9 According to one stakeholder the low number of unauthorised encampments combined with the fact that they tend to be seasonal means that there is no need for additional transit provision. However, it was suggested that any new transit provision should meet the county's need and should be located close to main travelling routes such as the M23, M256, A21, and A228. Some stakeholders felt that the August 2015 PPTS change in

definition has led to an increase in unauthorised encampments. Gypsies and Travellers have begun to travel more in order to 'prove' their status in relation to the new definition.

- 4.10 Stakeholders suggested that there is anecdotal evidence to support the notion that the number of unauthorised encampments in their local area had increased since 2015 (albeit by small numbers), although one stakeholder stated that levels of unauthorised encampments in their local area have remained relatively low over a number of years and tend to be short-term and transient. However, there is little evidence to suggest that any change in the number of unauthorised encampments is due to the impact of PPTS 2015.
- 4.11 Stakeholders stated that most Gypsy and Traveller families tend not to travel often and are settled long-term on sites. However, families that travel usually do so between March and September. It was agreed that it can be difficult to determine travelling routes although there was acknowledgment that these transcend local authority boundaries. Stakeholders reported that some Gypsy and Traveller families derive from or travel to places as far as Ireland and France. Some families passing through before travelling on to horse fairs such as Appleby may stay in the county for a week or two. It was noted that some Gypsy and Traveller families travel to the south east for seasonal work between Easter and the end of the summer. Also, some families travel to the county to attend family events such as weddings or funerals.

Barriers to provision

- 4.12 The main barriers to provision of both permanent and transit were seen to be perceptions of Gypsies and Travellers, public and political opposition, lack of available and affordable land, the planning process and related issues such as the changes to the planning definition, the cost of the process and knowing the process.
- 4.13 A key barrier noted by several stakeholders relate to environmental and biodiversity constraints as well as to high land values in the area. The widespread coverage of Areas of Natural Beauty (AONB) and Green Belt land covers around 94% of the local area. The limited amount of open and undeveloped land within the district's urban area and larger rural settlements was also perceived to limit potential sites. It was noted that no land which could be used for new sites was identified through the Local Plan consultation process. The risk of flooding combined with high land values precludes some land within the local area being used for potential sites.
- 4.14 According to stakeholders the sometimes difficult relationship between the Gypsy and Traveller, and settled communities means that there can be public opposition to the development of new sites. Finally, it was suggested that the revisions to national policy i.e. PPTS 2015 during the production of the Local Plan made determining potential sites more difficult.

Relationship between Gypsies, Travellers and the settled community

- 4.15 According to stakeholders, the relationship between Gypsies, Travellers and the settled community varies on a site by site basis. Some Gypsy and Traveller residents have good relationships with the settled community, although public responses to consultations and planning applications for new sites suggest that this is not always the case. One stakeholder stated that the relationship between Gypsies, Travellers and the settled community is quite poor. There is an incorrect assumption by the settled community that much rural crime is usually committed by members of the Gypsy and Traveller community. Also, Gypsies and Travellers are sometimes perceived to be treated advantageously by the planning system. However, it was noted that Gypsy and Traveller site applications are sometimes rejected based on the perceived relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and crime. One stakeholder stated that the relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community is generally negative and hostile. The settled community sometimes avoid contact with the Gypsy and Traveller community due to anti-social behaviour.
- 4.16 It was suggested that issues such as forced entry onto land and flytipping are frequently associated with Gypsies and Travellers. According to stakeholders, other issues that the settled community associate with Gypsies and Travellers include noisy generators, untethered dogs, damage to the land and surrounding area, verbal abuse, and littering. Another area of concern regarding Gypsies and Travellers shown by the settled community is unauthorised encampments. However, it was suggested that tolerance to unauthorised encampments is shown by the settled community if they know that action is being taken by either the landowner or local authority. According to one stakeholder: “the Travelling community is part of Kent society whether people realise it or not”.
- 4.17 Another stakeholder stated that one cause of contention between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community is the disparity in Green Belt policy. Their local authority has received many comments that Gypsy and Travellers are more likely to be allowed to develop on green belt land whilst members of the settled community are restricted. This leads to misunderstanding and mistrust. In response, they suggested improving relations by bringing together the two communities. It was suggested that members of the Gypsy and Traveller community should be encouraged to seek planning permission before buying land to settle on. Finally, it was suggested that improved education for Gypsies and Travellers and community forums and meetings may help break down barriers.
- 4.18 Stakeholders were asked if they were aware of any particular health, education or any other service issue experienced by the Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople currently based in their local area. Generally, stakeholders were not aware of any particular needs, although it was recognised that educational and health needs can be challenging due to the transient nature of traveller culture. Also, it was suggested that a settled base enables children to attend school and access to specialist health facilities – this is frequently a consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals.

Cooperation and communication

- 4.19 Stakeholders spoke of how they are currently working towards improving the partnership working between council departments and other agencies which deal with Gypsy and Traveller issues, which continues to be a work in progress. It was noted that the Kent Policy Officer group for Gypsies and Travellers is very helpful and allows local planning authorities to share experience and expertise. Local authorities in east Sussex cooperate on Gypsy and Traveller issues and work with East Sussex County Council. The January 2015 East Sussex GTAA was commissioned and funded by all East Sussex local authorities as well as the South Downs National Park Authority. East Sussex County Council Gypsy and Traveller Team coordinate countywide monitoring work and coordinates meetings between authorities.
- 4.20 According to one stakeholder, the Borough Council works well with landowners such as parish councils and Commons Conservators to ensure that land is cleared in an appropriate timescale while respecting the human and cultural rights of the Travelling community. Another stated that the Borough Council works “respectfully and honestly” with Travellers to negotiate an end to unauthorised encampments although they use appropriate legislation when this is not possible. Another stakeholder stated that they have a robust protocol for dealing with unauthorised encampments which brings together the police, housing and planning officers. Also, the Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership works closely with Traveller families. It was suggested that a policy of expanding existing sites rather than developing new sites would be useful. Finally, it was stated that there is insufficient national policy on how to plan for Gypsy and Traveller needs and that the lack of a regional or national approach to addressing needs is unhelpful.

Summary

- 4.21 The consultation with key stakeholders offered important insights into the main issues within the study area. It was generally acknowledged that there is a lack of accommodation provision throughout the study area. Much of the accommodation need is due to growing families on existing pitches leading to overcrowding. It was suggested that there is some overcrowding on existing sites due to concealed households and some families ‘doubling up’ on existing pitches. Stakeholders suggested there is evidence that some pitches are being occupied by non-Gypsy and Traveller households.
- 4.22 According to most stakeholders, there is a lack of potential Gypsy and Traveller sites outside of green belt areas. It was acknowledged that Gypsies and Travellers may have difficulty in securing planning permission for new sites or extensions to existing sites due to the amount of land designated as Green Belt and changes to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS 2015). Some stakeholders stated that the introduction of PPTS 2015 has impacted on the way in which Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs figures are determined. It was suggested that the more restrictive PPTS 2015 definition of Gypsy and Traveller has limited opportunities for additional sites

- 4.23 Stakeholders felt that there is an absence of transit provision across the county. It was agreed that it can be difficult to determine travelling routes although there was acknowledgment that these transcend local authority boundaries. Some stakeholders stated that the low number of unauthorised encampments combined with the fact that they tend to be seasonal means that there is no need for additional transit provision. However, it was suggested that any new transit provision should meet the county's need and should be located close to main travelling routes such as the M23, M256, A21, and A228.
- 4.24 The main barriers to provision of both permanent and transit sites were seen to be perceptions of Gypsies and Travellers, public and political opposition, lack of available and affordable land, the planning process and related issues such as the changes to the planning definition, the cost of the process and knowing the process.
- 4.25 According to stakeholders, the relationship between Gypsies, Travellers and the settled community varies on a site by site basis. Some Gypsy and Traveller residents have good relationships with the settled community, although public responses to consultations and planning applications for new sites suggest that this is not always the case. Finally, stakeholders stated that they are currently working towards improving the partnership working between council departments and other agencies which deal with Gypsy and Traveller issues, which continues to be a work in progress.

5. Gypsies and Travellers living on sites

Introduction

5.1 This chapter provides a snapshot of the supply of existing pitches and an analysis of need for current and future pitches across the study area. In doing so, it examines the key findings derived from the consultation with Gypsy and Traveller families. It is based on a survey of 37 households¹⁷ living on sites:

- 36 out of potential 40 authorised pitches with full planning permission¹⁸
- 1 out of potential 1 authorised pitches with temporary planning permission

5.2 The surveys were undertaken between August and September 2017. After identifying the number and location of existing pitches, each pitch was visited. Households were consulted on key issues regarding their needs. The combination of site visits and surveys helped to clarify the status of pitches, which pitches are occupied or not occupied by Gypsies and Travellers, which pitches are vacant or occupied, overcrowded pitches, pitches occupied by household members with a need for separate accommodation (current and future need), and other needs issues.

5.3 Weighting was applied to the survey in order to ensure that it represented the whole population of Gypsies and Travellers residing in the Borough and not just surveyed households. This ensures that the survey results and accommodation needs figures are representative of all households leading to increased robustness and reliability. Weighting was calculated by comparing the number of occupied authorised pitches to the number of completed surveys. The weighting is only applied to authorised pitches. It was applied as shown in Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1 Sample weighting				
	Sample	Pitches	%	Weight
Tunbridge Wells	36	40	90	1.11

Source: GTAA 2018

¹⁷ The definition of 'household' is used flexibly. The survey assumes that a pitch is occupied by a single household although it acknowledges that this may also include e.g. extended family members or hidden households.

¹⁸ Including one of which was granted planning permission in December 2017.

Population Characteristics

- 5.4 The survey recorded 141 people self-identifying as Gypsies and Travellers (in accordance with ethnic identity, and given full protection under the Equality Act 2010) and 1 non Gypsy and Traveller (married to a Gypsy and Traveller) living on sites. Interestingly, this compares with figures derived from the 2011 Census which suggests that there are 322 Gypsies and Travellers living in the study area¹⁹. However, whilst the Census figures are likely to reflect a larger proportion of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation, they may not record all those residing on sites. The average size of families living on the survey sites is 3.5 people compared to a 2011 UK average of 2.4 people per household.
- 5.5 All households surveyed identified themselves as Romany Gypsies. There was a range of number of people living on each pitch (household size), ranging from 1 with 8 people and 12 with 2. The households represented by the survey contained high proportions of younger people with almost half (46%) of all respondent household members aged 19 or under. This compares with Census 2011 findings which suggests that around a quarter (24%) of the population of England is aged 19 or under.

Table 5.2 Number of people in household

	Number	Percentage
1 person	6	15%
2 people	12	29%
3 people	3	7%
4 people	7	17%
5 people	7	17%
6 people	3	7%
7 people	2	5%
8 people	1	2%
Total	41	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

Table 5.3 Age of household members

	Number	Percentage
0-10 years	33	23%
11-14 years	22	15%
15-19 years	12	8%
20-40 years	36	25%
41-60 years	18	13%
61-70 years	9	6%
71+ years	12	8%
Total	142	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

¹⁹ See ONS 2011 Census Table KS201EW Ethnic Group located at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/>

Residency characteristics

- 5.6 There are 18 established private small family sites with a total of 30 pitches and 1 site containing a pitch with temporary planning permission. Respondents were asked about the tenure of their current pitch. Most of the respondents occupy a private pitch owned by the occupant or by a family member or friend. There are two local authority sites (one with 6 pitches and a second with 3 pitches) in the study area.

Table 5.4 Tenure		
	Number	Percentage
Own / family owned pitch	32	78%
Rent from the council	9	22%
Total	41	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

- 5.7 There is a 10 pitch site owned and managed by a Gypsy and Traveller family, but with 9 of the 10 pitches were occupied by non-Gypsies and Travellers. There is also land adjacent to the site (owned by the same family) primarily occupied by non-Gypsies and Travellers. This site is not included in supply as it is recommended that the status of the site is reviewed and re-categorised as residential caravan site rather than a Gypsy and Traveller site.²⁰
- 5.8 There is 1 site containing 1 pitch currently abandoned and in need of redevelopment. As such, it is categorised in Table 5.9 below (the accommodation needs table) as a potential pitch.
- 5.9 Reflecting longevity of tenure, 34 (83%) of the households had lived on their respective pitches for more than 5 years. However, 6 (15%) respondents had lived on site for between 3-5 years and 1 (2%) for less than a year.
- 5.10 The commitment of families to remaining on existing sites is reflected in the fact that all wanted to stay in the area and almost all (37) stated that they did not intend to move in the future. Only 2 respondents stated that they did not know when they intended to move. One family recently sold their site to non-Gypsy and Travellers and expected to move into a house. As the site has been sold to a non-Gypsy and Traveller family, moving into a house does not free up the pitch for another Gypsy or Traveller family potentially resulting in a reduction of 1 in the council's supply. A second respondent spoke of needing to move for personal reasons.

²⁰ NB irrespective of this site not being included in supply, the site would not have any impact on final needs due to the demographics of the occupants of the site.

- 5.11 In terms of spatial provision, all households stated that they had space for a large trailer (100%), drying space for clothes (100%), a lockage shed (100%), and a tourer (100%) on their pitches. However, in relation to space for keeping animals (other than small pets), and space to park two cars and work equipment, most said that these spaces were available on site, but not necessarily on their respective pitch. In some cases, there was insufficient space on the sites for work equipment and large animals, although alternative spaces on site were sometimes available (especially on open plan private sites). There would be space for dogs and smaller animals on pitches, although in most instances larger animals such as horses would be located elsewhere on the site or in a neighbouring field.

Satisfaction

- 5.12 In terms of site conditions, amenities and the location, satisfaction rates were generally high. 30 (73%) respondents stated that they were satisfied with sites compared to only 11 (27%) who were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. There were some differences in terms of tenure. Households residing on the local authority sites were less satisfied due to concerns they had about the poor condition of their utility blocks and some of the space restrictions on the sites.
- 5.13 Most households residing on private sites were generally pleased and proud of their sites. Other than major alterations requiring planning permission, they were able to make any necessary changes to their respective sites when required. However, some households were frustrated at being unable to expand existing sites to accommodate growing families without gaining the requisite planning permission or changing licences. Some households residing on private sites also stated that they wanted new utility blocks. Those households without planning permission for new utility blocks intend to apply in due course.
- 5.14 The households residing on the temporary site are satisfied with the land they occupy including its location, size and potential for development. However, a lack of permanent planning permission means that the families feel restricted regarding the extent to which the site could be developed and lack of security.

Table 5.5 Satisfaction with site		
	Number	Percentage
Satisfied	30	73%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	11	27%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Total	41	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

- 5.15 Almost all of households stated that they felt safe residing on the site. However, 7 of respondent households stated that there was no safe place for children to play (these households were mainly residing on the local authority sites). The key factors influencing perceptions of safety were the condition of the site, the extent to which cars were moving

around the site and the absence of a designated area. Those on one of the local authority sites said that there is space on the site that would be ideal for such provision, and also space for a few more pitches and space for keeping animals and another for storage of work equipment. Some on both local authority sites spoke of how the sites would benefit from a few changes.

- 5.16 None of the households stated that the cost of pitches is an issue. The rent of pitches was not regarded as a concern for most households. Changes to benefits, employment, and health were cited as possible factors which might impact on affordability. Financial concerns were primarily in relation to the development and maintenance of pitches or sites. This was particularly so when households were first developing sites. The planning process was also mentioned as an expensive process and was a concern for those in need of additional planning permission. As one said, “although they can afford to make the necessary changes to their site to accommodate more pitches, it is the cost of the actual planning process and in particular if it was to have to go through appeal process that is worrying us”.

Services and health

- 5.17 All respondents felt that they had experienced some form of discrimination due to their cultural identity. Respondents also stated that they had considered it necessary, on occasion, to hide their ethnic identity in order to access services. Some stated that it was ‘part of life for us’. However, few households stating that they had experienced discrimination reported it to the relevant authorities. The main reasons for not reporting it included wanting to ignore it, or believing that reporting incidences to authorities would be ineffective.

Table 5.6 Registered with a GP		
	Number	Percentage
Yes	41	100%
No	0	0%
Total	41	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

- 5.18 In relation to accessing health services, all families were registered with a local doctor. Health issues reported included: problems due to old age, mental illness, long-term illness (including cancer), high blood pressure and physical disability. Compared with the settled community, the health status of Gypsies and Travellers tends to be poorer than the general population²¹.

²¹ Cemlyn, Sarah, Greenfields, Margaret, Burnett, Sally, Matthews, Zoe and Whitwell, Chris (2009) *Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review*, Equality and Human Rights Commission, London.

Education and employment

- 5.19 In relation to children of school age, all primary aged children were receiving school education. Some secondary school aged children are home tutored, due to cultural reasons and the children 'learning the family trade' and 'way of life'. However, two thirds of respondent family with secondary aged children have continued onto secondary school including some who have gone onto further education.

Table 5.7 School age children in family		
	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	41%
No	24	59%
Total	41	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

- 5.20 Education was regarded by households as very important. Some respondents commented on how it was important for children and grandchildren to receive an education as they did not have the same opportunity. Some families with pre-school children recognised the importance of early education and planned to send children to a nursery once old enough.
- 5.21 Respondents commented on how traditional employment opportunities for Gypsies and Travellers are now less available and this is why education is becoming more important. Although Gypsy and Traveller children have not traditionally done so, more families are ensuring that children gain qualifications either by attending secondary school or college or undertaking home tutoring. Some families spoke of how well their children were doing in terms of education.
- 5.22 Other respondent households of working age were most likely to be self-employed (including horse dealers, scrap metal workers, roofers, landscaping, builders, joiners etc.), or housewives.

Travelling

- 5.23 Two thirds of the respondents had travelled during the last 12 months in a caravan or trailer. Households were more likely to travel during the summer and spring months compared to autumn or winter. The main reasons for travelling included: to visit family or friends; to attend events; for cultural reasons; to holiday; and for work. Importantly, in relation to determining the needs figures, over half of families with accommodation need stated that someone in the household travels for work purposes.
- 5.24 In accordance with the revised PPTS definition (August 2015), for planning purposes the accommodation needs of families who have permanently ceased travelling cannot be considered as part of an assessment of need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches. Families who have permanently stopped travelling have done so due to age, health and support issues. 7 respondents and families in Tunbridge Wells have permanently stopped travelling, and 18 do not travel for work purposes. However, not travelling only impacts on two households with accommodation need. It is possible that the families' circumstances might change in

the future, as the first family consists of a single mother, and the second family does not travel as much due to health and personal circumstances.

Table 5.8 Does someone in the household travel for work purposes		
	Number	Percentage
Yes	23	56%
No	18	44%
Total	41	100%

Source: GTAA 2018

- 5.25 When asked about travelling routes, most households stated that 'it varies'. They commented on how it depends upon where they are going and the reason for their journey. Families also spoke about how they sometimes made arrangements to stay with family or friends living on sites in other areas whilst travelling.

Accommodation need

- 5.26 Whilst families believe there is a need for more permanent sites in the study area, they were unsure as to whether there is a need for more transit sites. They stated that there needs to be provision for visiting family and friends. However, they were unsure about the need for a permanent transit site particularly given that transit sites can be difficult to manage, owners can determine which families can use the sites, and in some instances, families may permanently reside on them.
- 5.27 From consultation with households it was determined that small family sites are ideal. However, respondents stated that there needs to be sufficient space on sites to enable family and friends to visit. They also stated that negotiated stopping agreements may be preferable to permanent transit sites. This would involve the police and local authorities developing a formal agreement with households residing on unauthorised encampments as to where and how long they could stay. Two issues mentioned by families were difficulties in obtaining planning permission for new sites and preconceptions by the settled community about such applications. They spoke of how they feel safer on smaller sites which are also easier to manage and maintain. They commented on how smaller sites tend to be more accepted by the local settled community and leads to better integration.
- 5.28 Over half of the households had at some point lived in a house, but all said that they would not like to live in a house, as unable to cope in a house. One household is moving into housing, but this does not lead to available pitches for others to occupy, as the pitch has been sold to a non Gypsy / Traveller family.
- 5.29 All of the sites with need, due to either overcrowding or with new family formations, has plenty of land space but have limited planning provision in terms of number of caravans and pitches. Some families spoke about how their accommodation need could be addressed by increasing the number of caravans allowed on existing pitches or by granting planning permission for new or extended pitches/sites. A family who own land with temporary permission stated that the site would not only accommodate their own needs but those of a daughter and her family.

- 5.30 There are 3 pitches on 2 sites which have additional need due to overcrowding. As discussed above, the first site has adequate space to accommodate additional pitches. The second overcrowded pitch consists of a couple with 6 children residing in a static caravan containing only three bedrooms. They have sufficient land to accommodate more pitches and caravans. In the long-term they will require more pitches for their children. In the meantime, they need a change to their licence to allow them to accommodate more caravans. This would enable the eldest children to have their own bedspace and for the youngest child to move into a bedroom rather than sharing a bed with his parents.
- 5.31 The survey asked if households contained any people who may require separate accommodation within the next 5 years (i.e. children turning 16/18). This question helps to determine the extent of future accommodation needs deriving from existing households. 5 households contained a total of 8 children who will require separate accommodation in the next five years.

Requirement for residential pitches 2017-2022²²

- 5.32 The need for residential pitches in Tunbridge Wells is assessed according to a 15-step process, based on the model suggested in DCLG (2007) guidance and supplemented by data derived from the survey. The results of this are shown in Table 5.1 below, while the subsequent section contains explanations of the sourcing and calculation of figures for each step.
- 5.33 As discussed in Chapter 2, there are differing interpretations of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (PPTS) August 2015 definition. As such, Table 5.1 provides two needs figures: first, one based on the accommodation needs of families who have not permanently ceased to travel; and second, one which considers the accommodation needs only of families who travel in a caravan for work purposes (in brackets). It is the first interpretation of PPTS 2015 i.e. based on households who have not permanently ceased to travel that this GTAA recommends is adopted by the local authority. This is because needs figures based only on households who travel in a caravan for work purposes are likely to underestimate need and be open to legal challenges.
- 5.34 As Table 5.9 shows, there is a need of 15 pitches for the period 2017-2022 based on households who have not permanently ceased to travel, and 10 pitches for the same period based only on the needs of families who travel in a caravan for work purposes.

²² Please note that due to rounding column totals may differ slightly from row totals

Table 5.9 Estimate of the need for permanent residential site pitches 2017-2022	
1) Current occupied permanent residential site pitches	40 (40) *
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0 (0)
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2017-2022	1 (1)
4) Net number of family units on sites expected to leave the study area in next 5 years	0 (0)
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0 (0)
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2017-2022	1 (1)
7) Less pitches with temporary planning permission	1 (1)
Total Supply	1 (1)
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2017-2022, excluding those counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 11	1 (0)
9) Family units on transit pitches requiring residential pitches in the area	0 (0)
10) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	0 (0)
11) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	0 (0)
12) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit in step 8	3 (2)
13) Net new family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	0 (0)
14) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	8 (6)
Total Need	12 (8)
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
15) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	4 (2)
Total Need	16 (10)
<i>Balance of Need and Supply</i>	
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	15 (9)
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	3 (2)

Source: GTAA 2018

*As noted above, this supply does not include one 10 pitch site as it is primarily not occupied by Gypsies and Travelers and should therefore have its licence changed to Residential Caravan site and if 1 pitch which has been sold non Gypsies and Travellers the supply will be reduced to 39

Requirement for residential pitches, 2017-2022: steps of the calculation

5.35 The calculations depend on base information derived from the GTAA using data corroborated by local authorities in the study area. The key variables used to inform the calculations include:

- The number of Gypsies and Travellers housed in bricks and mortar accommodation
- The number of existing Gypsy and Traveller pitches
- The number of families residing on unauthorised encampments requiring accommodation (and surveyed during the survey period)
- The number of unauthorised developments (during the survey period)
- The number of temporary pitches
- The number of vacant pitches
- The number of planned or potential new pitches
- The number of transit pitches

5.36 The remainder of this chapter describes both the process and results of the Gypsy and Traveller needs calculations.

Supply of pitches 2017-2022

5.37 Supply (steps 1 to 7) steps are the same irrespective of the interpretation of the PPTS (2015) definition.

Step 1: Current occupied permanent site pitches

5.38 Based on information provided by the respective Councils and corroborated by information from site surveys. There are currently 40 occupied authorised Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the study area.

Step 2: Number of unused residential pitches available

5.39 According to the survey data there are currently 0 vacant pitches on authorised sites in the study area. This is where pitches are developed, and available to be occupied. There were none when the surveys were being undertaken.

Step 3: Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant, 2017-2022

5.40 This is calculated using mortality rates as applied in conventional Housing Needs Assessments. However, the figures for mortality have been increased in accordance with studies of Gypsy and Traveller communities suggesting a life expectancy approximately 10 years lower than that of the general population.²³

²³ E.g. L. Crout, *Traveller health care project: Facilitating access to the NHS*, Walsall Health Authority, 1987. NB: For Travelling Showpeople, the standard mortality rate is used.

Step 4: Number of family units in site accommodation expressing a desire to leave the study area

- 5.41 This was determined by survey data. It was assumed, given that development of sites is likely to occur in the areas surrounding the study areas as well as in the planning area itself (which in the case of this GTAA is the same geographical area), that those currently living on sites expecting to leave the area permanently in the next five years – out of choice (step 4) or due to overcrowding (step 12) – would generally be able to do so.
- 5.42 In total, given the low level of interest in leaving the study area, this resulted in the supply of 0 pitches in the study area.

Step 5: Number of family units in site accommodation expressing a desire to live in housing

- 5.43 This was determined by survey data. It was assumed that all those currently living on sites planning to move into housing in the next five years (step 5), or preferring to move into housing from an overcrowded pitch (step 11), would be able to do so.
- 5.44 A supply of 0 pitches in the study area were expected from this source, excluding those moving out of the study area, since these are already counted in step 4.

Step 6: Residential pitches planned to be built or brought back into use, 2017-2022

- 5.45 This is determined by local authority data and from an assessment of sites during visits. There is 1 new pitch on a small site in the study area that is expected to be built or brought back into use in the study area during the period 2017-2022. As discussed in Chapter 3, these pitches are referred to as 'potential' pitches. This means that the pitches have been granted planning permission but have not yet been developed. This can include pitches which have been partly developed or which were previously occupied but are now vacant and in need of redevelopment.

Step 7: Pitches with temporary planning permission

- 5.46 This is determined by local authority data. It is assumed families living on pitches whose planning permission expires within the period 2017-2022 will still require accommodation within the study area. There is currently 1 pitch with temporary planning permission located in the study area.

Need for pitches 2017-2022

Step 8: Family units on pitches seeking residential pitches in the study area 2017-2022

- 5.47 This was determined by survey data. These family units reported that they 'needed or were likely' to move to a different home in the next five years, and wanted to stay on an authorised site, or that they were currently seeking accommodation.

- 5.48 This category of need overlaps with those moving due to overcrowding, counted in step 11, and so any family units which are both overcrowded and seeking accommodation are deducted from this total. This generates a total need of 1 pitch in the study area. The alternative needs figure, based only on those households who travel in a caravan for work purposes leads to a need of 0 pitches.

Step 9: Family units on transit pitches seeking residential pitches in the study area 2017-2022

- 5.49 This was determined by survey data. These family units reported that they required permanent pitches within the study area in the next five years. This generates a total need of 0 pitches as there is no transit site in the study area.

Step 10: Family units on unauthorised encampments seeking residential pitches in the area

- 5.50 Guidance (DCLG 2007) indicates that it should be considered whether alternative accommodation is required for families living on unauthorised encampments. Using survey data, it has been calculated how many families on unauthorised encampments want residential pitches in the study area. They generate a need for 0 additional pitches (a family who travel for work purposes). Please note that only Gypsies and Travellers requiring permanent accommodation within the study area have been included in this calculation – transiting Gypsies and Travellers are included in separate calculations.

Step 11: Family units on unauthorised developments seeking residential pitches in the area

- 5.51 This was determined by survey data. The guidance also indicates that the accommodation needs of families living on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected must be considered. Regularising families living on their land without planning permission would reduce the overall level of need by the number of pitches given planning permission. There is a need of 0 pitches deriving from unauthorised developments in the study area. The alternative needs figure, based only on those households who travel in a caravan for work purposes leads to a need of 0 pitches.

Step 12: Family units on overcrowded pitches seeking residential pitches in the area

- 5.52 This was determined by survey data. Households which also contain a newly formed family unit that has not yet left are excluded. This is because it is assumed that once the extra family unit leaves (included in the need figures in step 13) their accommodation will no longer be overcrowded. The calculations suggest that there is a need for 3 additional pitches in the study area to resolve overcrowding over the period 2017-2022. The alternative needs figure, based on only those households travelling in a caravan for work purposes leads to a need of 2 additional pitches.

Step 13: New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere

- 5.53 In the absence of any sustainable data derivable from primary or secondary sources (beyond anecdotal evidence) on the moving intentions of those outside the study area moving into the area, as in the case of those moving out of the area, it is assumed that the

inflow of Gypsies and Travellers into the area will be equivalent to the outflow. In addition, inflow equivalent to the outflow of newly forming family units must be considered. Together, these amount to a net inflow of 0 units in the study area.

Step 14: New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites

- 5.54 This was determined by survey data. The number of individuals needing to leave pitches to create new family units was estimated from survey data. Allowing for those planning to leave the area, and for estimated rates of marriages to both Gypsies and Travellers and non-Gypsies and Travellers, it is estimated that this will result in the formation of 8 new households requiring residential pitches during the 2017-2022 period in the study area. The alternative needs figure, based only on those households travelling in a caravan for work purposes leads to a need of 6 additional pitches.

Step 15: Family units in housing with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation

- 5.55 This was determined firstly by estimating the number of houses occupied by Gypsies and Travellers using a ratio of 1:1 i.e. for every occupied permanent and temporary pitch, there is potentially two families residing in bricks and mortar accommodation. This is then followed by estimating the proportion of which suffer from psychological aversion to housed accommodation (10%).
- 5.56 This supply arises from family units moving onto sites that were considered to have a psychological aversion to housing. This leads to an estimated need of 4 pitches across the study area.
- 5.57 The alternative needs figure, based on those only travelling in a caravan for work purposes leads to a need of 2. This need calculation is based on an estimation of those experiencing “psychological aversion” and only travelling for work purposes in a caravan (based on proportion of those travelling for work purposes in a caravan on sites).

Balance of Need and Supply

- 5.58 From the above the Total Additional Pitch Requirement is calculated by deducting the supply from the need.

Including families who do not travel for work:

- Total Supply (not including existing occupied provision) = 1
- Total Need (including psychological aversion) = 16
- Total Additional Pitch Requirement = 16 less 1 = 15

Excluding families who do not travel for work:

- Total Supply (not including existing occupied provision) = 1
- Total Need (including psychological aversion) = 10
- Total Additional Pitch Requirement = 10 less 1 = 9

Requirement for residential pitches 2022-2037

- 5.59 Considering future need it assumed that those families with psychological aversion will move onto sites within a 5-year period. As such, only natural population increase, mortality, and movement into and out of the study area need be considered. The base figures regarding the number of pitches on sites at the end of the first 5-year period are shown in Table 5.10 below. Please note that the 2017 base figures include both authorised occupied and vacant pitches, whilst the 2022 base figures assume that any potential pitches have been developed.

Table 5.10 Base figures for pitches as at 2022 assuming all need is met for 2017-2022				
2017 Base	Vacant	Potentials 2017-22	Need 2017-22	2022 Base
40 (40)	0 (0)	1 (1)	15 (9)	56 (50)

Source: GTAA 2018 (figures in brackets are those excluding households who do not travel for work)

- 5.60 In March 2014 Brandon Lewis (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State within the Department for Communities and Local Government) confirmed that the 3% household growth rate does not represent national planning policy. Alternatively, it is suggested that an annual household growth rate of between 1.5% to 2.5% is more appropriate.
- 5.61 In relation to this accommodation assessment, analysis of the current population indicates that an annual household growth rate of 2.4 % per annum (compound) equating to a 5-year rate of 12.6% is more appropriate. This is based on an analysis of various factors derived from the surveys including current population numbers, the average number of children per household, and marriage rates. It is assumed that these rates are likely to continue during the period 2027-2037.
- 5.62 The following tables show the accommodation need for the periods 2022-2027, 2027-2032, and 2032-2037.

Table 5.11 Estimate of the need for residential pitches 2022-2027

<i>Pitches as at 2022</i>	
1) Estimated pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	56 (50)
<i>Supply of pitches</i>	
2) Pitches expected to become vacant due to mortality 2022-2027	2 (1)
3) Number of family units on pitches expected to move out of the study area	0 (0)
Total Supply	2 (1)
<i>Need for pitches</i>	
4) Family units moving into the study area (100% of outflow)	0 (0)
5) Newly forming family units	7 (6)
Total Need	7 (6)
<i>Additional Need</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement, 2022-2027	5 (5)
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1 (1)

Source: GTAA 2018 (figures in brackets are those excluding households who do not travel for work)

Table 5.12 Estimate of the need for residential pitches 2027-2032

<i>Pitches as at 2027</i>	
1) Estimated pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	61 (55)
<i>Supply of pitches</i>	
2) Pitches expected to become vacant due to mortality 2027-2032	2 (2)
3) Number of family units on pitches expected to move out of the study	0 (0)
Total Supply	2 (2)
<i>Need for pitches</i>	
4) Family units moving into the study area (100% of outflow)	0 (0)
5) Newly forming family units	8 (7)
Total Need	8 (7)
<i>Additional Need</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement, 2027-2032	6 (5)
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1 (1)

Source: GTAA 2018 (figures in brackets are those excluding households who do not travel for work)

Table 5.13 Estimate of the need for residential pitches 2032-2037

<i>Pitches as at 2032</i>	
1) Estimated pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	67 (60)
<i>Supply of pitches</i>	
2) Pitches expected to become vacant due to mortality 2032-2037	2 (2)
3) Number of family units on pitches expected to move out of the study area	0 (0)
Total Supply	2 (2)
<i>Need for pitches</i>	
4) Family units moving into the study area (100% of outflow)	0 (0)
5) Newly forming family units	8 (7)
Total Need	8 (7)
<i>Additional Need</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement, 2032-2037	6 (5)
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1 (1)

Source: GTAA 2018 (figures in brackets are those excluding households who do not travel for work)

Requirements for transit pitches / negotiated stopping arrangements: 2017-2037

- 5.63 As noted in Chapter 3 (paragraph 3.18 to 3.20) there were a total of 88 unauthorised caravans over the period January 2014 to July 2017 equating to an average of around 11 every 6 months. Without data regarding the average number of vehicles per unauthorised encampment, it is difficult to determine the number of transit pitches required. However, the number of unauthorised caravans peaked at 30 in July 2015 and 17 in January 2016 before reducing to only 8 in January 2017 and 8 in July 2017.
- 5.64 As such, it is recommended that the local authority considers setting up a negotiated stopping places policy. The term 'negotiated stopping' is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent 'built' transit sites but negotiated arrangements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. The arrangement is between the local authority and the (temporary) residents.
- 5.65 Agreements could be made with households residing on sites allowing visiting family and friends to stay for agreed periods of time. This would lead to fewer unauthorised encampments which adversely impact on the local community.

Summary

- 5.66 This chapter has provided both quantitative and qualitative data regarding key characteristics of respondent households residing on Gypsy and Traveller sites. The survey recorded 65 people self-identifying as Gypsies and Travellers residing on 40 occupied pitches with permanent planning permission and 1 with temporary planning permission (in accordance with ethnic identity as given full protection under the Equality Act 2010). All households surveyed identified themselves as Romany Gypsies. Reflecting national trends, it is apparent that respondent Gypsy and Traveller households tend to be larger and have a younger age composition compared with families in the settled community.
- 5.67 Reflecting longevity of tenure, most households had resided on their respective pitches for more than 5 years, although a small proportion of households had lived on site for 5 years or less. The commitment of families to remaining on existing sites is reflected in the fact that all wanted to stay in the area. Satisfaction rates regarding sites were generally high although households residing on the local authority sites were less satisfied due to concerns they had about the poor condition of their utility blocks and space restrictions. Most households residing on private sites were generally satisfied although some require new utility blocks.
- 5.68 Two thirds of the respondents had travelled during the last 12 months in a caravan or trailer. Households were more likely to travel during the summer and spring months compared to autumn or winter. The main reasons for travelling included: to visit family or friends; to attend events; for cultural reasons; to holiday; and for work. Importantly, in relation to determining the needs figures, over half of families with accommodation need stated that someone in the household travels for work purposes.

5.69 Accommodation need, resulting from the calculations above, are summed up as follows:

Table 5.14: Summary of Gypsy and Traveller and pitch needs 2017-37

Period	2017-2022	2022-27	2027-2032	2032-2037	Total
	15 (9)	5 (5)	6 (5)	6 (5)	32 (24)

Source: GTAA 2018 (figures in brackets are those excluding households who do not travel for work)

6. Conclusions on the evidence

- 6.1 This final chapter draws conclusions from the evidence. It then makes a series of recommendations relating to meeting the identified need for new pitches, facilities, and recording and monitoring processes.
- 6.2 The chapter begins by presenting an overview of the policy changes, followed by review of the needs and facilitating the needs of Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople, and then concludes with key recommendations.

Policy Changes

- 6.3 As noted in Chapter 1, in 2012 the Coalition Government brought about new statutory guidance regarding Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. This built on earlier commitments to strengthen measures to ensure fair and equal treatment for Gypsies and Travellers in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.
- 6.4 The new planning policy gave councils the freedom and responsibility to determine the right level of Gypsy and Traveller site and Travelling Showpeople plot provision in their area, in consultation with local communities and based on sound evidence such as GTAAs, while ensuring fairness in the planning system. It sat within a broader package of reforms such as the abolition of the previous Government's Regional Strategies and the return of planning powers to councils and communities.
- 6.5 In August 2015 the DCLG published 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (including Travelling Showpeople yards). It states that for the purposes of planning policy "gypsies and travellers" means:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

- 6.6 In determining whether persons are "Gypsies and Travellers" for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:
- a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
 - b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
 - c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

- 6.7 For the purposes of planning policy, “travelling showpeople” means:
Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.
- 6.8 The accommodation needs calculations undertaken as part of this GTAA were based on analysis of both secondary data and primary surveys with Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople.
- 6.9 In March 2016 the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published its draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats. It states that when considering the need for caravans and houseboats local authorities will need to include the needs of a variety of residents in differing circumstances including, for example caravan and houseboat dwelling households and households residing in bricks and mortar dwelling households.
- 6.10 The Housing and Planning Act, which gained Royal Assent on 12 May 2016, deletes sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004, which previously identified ‘gypsies and travellers’ as requiring specific assessment for their accommodation needs when carrying out reviews of housing needs. Instead, the Act amends section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 governing the assessment of accommodation needs to include all people residing in or resorting to the district in caravans or houseboats. However, for planning purposes, as noted above, the DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015) still requires local authorities to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

New provision

- 6.11 As discussed in Chapters 2 and 4 there are differing interpretations of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ (PPTS) August 2015 definition. As such, Table 6.1 provides two needs figures: first, one based on the accommodation needs of families who have *not permanently ceased to travel*; and second, one which considers the accommodation needs only of families who *travel in a caravan for work purposes* (in brackets). In relation to site allocations, it is the first interpretation of PPTS 2015 i.e. based on households who have not permanently ceased to travel that this GTAA recommends is adopted by the local authority. This is because needs figures based only on households who travel in a caravan for work purposes are likely to underestimate need and be open to legal challenges.

- 6.12 As there are no known Travelling Showpeople in the area nor any who have registered an interest in moving into the area, there is no need for Travelling Showpeople plots. Table 6.1 therefore summarises the results from Chapters 5:

Table 6.1: Summary of accommodation needs 2017-37

Period	G&T Pitch need	G&T Pitch need who travel for work	TS Plots
Total 2017-22	15	9	0
Total 2022-27	5	5	0
Total 2027-32	6	5	0
Total 2032-37	6	5	0
Total 2017-37	32	24	0

Source: GTAA 2018

- 6.13 In relation to Gypsies and Travellers, the main drivers of need are from newly forming families, families residing on overcrowded pitches, and psychological aversion of households living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 6.14 New accommodation provision for Gypsies and Travellers may need to accommodate larger families. Similarly, there may be a requirement for space to accommodate trailers and caravans. Also, it is important to acknowledge the cultural sensitivities involved in allocating housing to Gypsy and Traveller families. For example, allocating housing without access to open space may negatively impact on re-housed families' satisfaction with accommodation.

Facilitating new provision

- 6.15 A key issue remains the facilitation of new sites. Over the last 10 years most new provision within the study area consisted of privately owned sites. Most households on sites and yards stated that they preferred small family sites or yards.
- 6.16 Nationally, it is difficult to determine the extent to which new sites provided in the last 10 years are privately or publically owned as there are no national records. The January 2017 DCLG Count shows that around a third of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were residing on social rented sites, whilst the remaining two thirds were residing on privately owned sites. Interestingly, this compares with the January 2010 DCLG Count which indicated that just under half of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were residing on social rented sites, whilst the remaining half were residing on privately owned sites. This suggests either that the provision of new social rented pitches has not kept pace with demand and/or that Gypsy and Traveller households prefer to reside on privately owned sites.
- 6.17 Each DCLG Count provides details of all new local authority and Private Registered Provider sites opened since 1934 (although 38 sites are undated). In total, 28 local authority and Private Registered Provider sites have opened since 2010. The 28 new sites provide a total of 282 permanent pitches and 33 transit pitches able to accommodate 517 caravans.

- 6.18 Some Gypsy and Traveller sites are owned or managed by housing associations. Although DCLG data does not distinguish between local authority and housing association owned/managed social rented sites, the January 2017 Count indicates that there are a total of 327 local authority sites or schemes owned and/or managed by local authorities or private registered providers.
- 6.19 Although the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)(now 'Homes England') allocated £3m for the provision of new and improved sites within the 'East and South East' area for the period 2011-15, none of this funding was allocated to the study area. Also, the HCA's 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) which included funds for new sites or pitches is now closed.
- 6.20 Analysis of the most recent HCA figures (September 2016) indicate that 2 new sites were funded by the AHP including a new site of 22 pitches in Darlington, and a new site of 22 pitches in Harlow. However, at £2.4m the combined funding for the 2 new sites represents only a small proportion of the total AHP funding of the £527m already allocated for new affordable homes. Given the above, it may be difficult for study area local authorities to gain central government funding for new sites.
- 6.21 Analysis of current provision of Gypsy and Travellers sites (see Chapter 5) suggests that most current authorised, permanent provision within the study area is privately owned. As with other accommodation needs assessments undertaken by *RRR Consultancy Ltd*, this assessment concludes that most Gypsy and Traveller families would prefer to reside on privately-owned family-sized sites, and that those who are unable to purchase land would still prefer to live on small sites.
- 6.22 The difference between current local public and private provision is due to several factors. One factor is that, as acknowledged by stakeholders (see Chapter 4), the development process including the acquisition of land is too expensive for most Gypsy and Traveller families, and the perceived complexity of the planning process can also a potential barrier. Another factor is that there has been a lack of finance for the development of publically owned sites for a number of years. Given current financial constraints on public expenditure, it is unlikely that this situation will change significantly in coming years.
- 6.23 Most of the accommodation need can be addressed by expanding existing sites. Further need could also be met by granting full planning permission to occupiers residing on sites with temporary planning permission, and reviewing current appeal applications.
- 6.24 This GTAA recommends that local authorities support and guide potential site developers through the planning application process from beginning to end. This could include helping the owners of small family sites to apply for planning permission in order to extend sites to address future need. The council could also contact households who have previously

- displayed an interest in developing a new site but have progressed to the planning application stage.
- 6.25 Further, local authorities could consider helping to meet the needs of households unable to afford to own a site by renting or leasing small parcels of local authority owned land to them and assisting with planning applications and site development. Occupying families could be granted the option to wholly purchase the site at a later date.
- 6.26 The local authorities could also consider sites developed on a cooperative basis, shared ownership, or small sites owned by a local authority, but rented to an extended Gypsy or Traveller family for their own use. These options might involve the families carrying out physical development of the site (self-build) with the land owner providing the land on affordable terms. Local councils might develop such initiatives or in partnership with Registered Providers. Local authorities could jointly examine their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) or Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments (HELAAs) to identify suitable locations.
- 6.27 For example, Bristol City Council (2009) considered various options for facilitating new sites including: only purchasing land for self-build projects; purchasing land and providing infrastructure such as drains and electricity supply and/or making finance available for materials; providing pre-built pitches which are available to buy using shared- or part-ownership options²⁴.
- 6.28 Another example is South Somerset District Council which has been exploring, in consultation with local travellers, ideas such as: site acquisition funds; loans for private site provision through Community Development Financial Institutions; and joint ventures with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community²⁵.

Managing Gypsy and Traveller sites

- 6.29 The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) (2016) undertook research on managing and delivering Gypsy and Traveller sites. Its case studies identified a variety of management approaches including:
1. Local authority owned and managed.
 2. Arm's Length Management Organisation²⁶ (ALMO) or national housing association managed.
 3. Local housing association managed.

²⁴ For discussion of the benefits of community land trusts in relation to Gypsies and Travellers see: <http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/where-you-live-2/community-land-trusts/>

²⁵ *A Big or Divided Society?* Interim Recommendations and Report of the Panel Review into the Impact of the Localism Bill and Coalition Government Policy on Gypsies and Travellers.

²⁶ A not-for-profit company that provides housing services on behalf of a local authority.

- 6.30 Within the above three management approaches there are further typologies:
- a. A non-Gypsy/Traveller direct employee visits the site to undertake any management duties required.
 - b. A Gypsy/Traveller direct employee who is non-resident on any of the sites visits them to undertake any management duties required.
 - c. A Gypsy/Traveller site resident is employed by the organisation to undertake some management duties on that site and possibly other nearby sites. Site residents may refer to this role as a 'warden'.
 - d. Multi-agency unit managed – normally this is led by a county council in an area and includes police, health and education officers in the team.
 - e. Housing association proactively building and managing sites in an area.
 - f. Private Gypsy/Traveller organisation managing sites on a lease agreement.
 - g. Private Gypsy/Traveller managing sites acquired from council divesting stock.
- 6.31 Importantly, the report states that sites were most likely be developed and better managed where a 'grasp the nettle' culture had been adopted i.e. where officers, politicians and Gypsies and Travellers were engaged in attempting to meet ongoing need for site provision (p.17). The report concludes by making 12 key recommendations to housing bodies, local authorities and government agencies:
- Recognise that site provision is the key to resolving continuous unauthorised encampments in an area.
 - Where sites are not already in existence, consider 'negotiated stopping', rather than eviction, as a more resource-efficient and humane approach to unauthorised encampments.
 - Understand unauthorised encampments and lack of permanent sites as housing issues reflecting unmet accommodation needs.
 - Have robust Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment data based on open channels of communication with residents.
 - Identify sites in Local Plans and consult with Gypsies, Travellers and other residents on location of sites.
 - Encourage elected members to play a key role in leading local debates on managing and delivering sites, supported through training and by national political leadership.
 - Recognise a duty to promote equality in this area and challenge discriminatory discourse about Gypsies and Travellers as part of this.
 - Plan for a mixture of tenure, size and location for new Gypsy and Traveller sites, as with general housing stock.
 - Bring in Gypsy and Traveller accommodation alongside other social housing, in terms of policies, administration and standards of management.
 - Recognise that a well-run site will not cost money in the long term (income can cover costs) but capital funding is needed initially to support delivery.

- See information sharing as key to good management: inefficiencies occur when lines of accountability between departments and agencies are blurred.
- Pay careful consideration to future management and ownership issues when undertaking reviews of local authority sites.

The location of new provision

- 6.32 Stakeholder and Gypsy and Traveller household comments suggested that smaller sites are preferred by Gypsy and Traveller households due to better management and maintenance of sites and feeling safer. Ongoing monitoring of site provision and vacant provisions should be undertaken by the local authorities alongside discussions with Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople to ensure that any additional need that may arise is identified. The precise location (along with design and facilities) will, however, need to be drawn up in consultation with Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople to ensure the extra provision meets their needs.
- 6.33 Ensuring that new sites are located in a safe environment is important although the impact of land costs on determining feasibility must also be considered. The settled community neighbouring the sites should also be involved in the consultation from an early stage. There may be scope for expanding existing sites to meet some arising need. However, in relation to Gypsies and Travellers, the preference is for smaller sites which tend to be easier to manage.
- 6.34 In terms of identifying broad locations for new permanent sites, there are a number of factors which could be considered including:

Costs

- How do land costs impact on feasibility i.e. is it affordable?
- Implementation of services – is it possible for the new site to connect to nearby mains services e.g. electricity, gas, water or sewerage?
- Can good drainage be ensured on the new provision?

Social

- Does the proposed location of the new provision lie within a reasonable distance of school catchment areas?
- Sustainability – is the proposed location close to existing bus routes?
- Proximity of social and leisure services – is the proposed location close to leisure facilities such as sports centres, cinemas etc. or welfare services such as health and social services etc.

Availability

- Who owns the land and are they willing to sell / rent?
- Is access easy or will easements across other land be needed both for residents and services/utilities?

- Are utilities close enough to service the provision at realistic prices?

Deliverability

- Does the proposed location meet existing general planning policy in terms of residential use, for example in relation to flooding and the historic environment)?
- Can the owner sell the land easily and quickly?
- Can utilities connect to the proposed provision?
- Can highways connect to the proposed provision?

6.35 Considering the evidence gathered throughout the GTAA, it is likely that the key factors determining new provision in the study area are:

- The affordability of land suitable for the development of new sites and the cost of development
- The need to ensure that new provision are within reasonable travelling distance of social, welfare and cultural services
- The need to carefully consider the proximity of new provisions to existing provisions i.e. whether social tensions might arise if new provisions are located too close to existing provisions
- The sustainability of new provisions i.e. ensuring that they do not detrimentally impact on the local environment and do not place undue pressure on the local infrastructure

6.36 It is important that new provisions are located close to amenities such as shops, schools and health facilities and have good transport links. DCLG (2015) guidance suggests that local planning authorities should strictly limit new Gypsy and Traveller site development in the open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan. Local planning authorities should ensure that sites in rural areas do not dominate the nearest settled community, and avoid placing an undue pressure on the local infrastructure.

6.37 It also states that when considering applications, local planning authorities should attach weight to the following matters:

- a. effective use of previously developed (brownfield), untidy or derelict land
- b. sites being well planned or soft landscaped in such a way as to positively enhance the environment and increase its openness
- c. promoting opportunities for healthy lifestyles, such as ensuring adequate landscaping and play areas for children
- d. not enclosing a site with so much hard landscaping, high walls or fences, that the impression may be given that the site and its occupants are deliberately isolated from the rest of the community

- 6.38 There may be families within the study area who would like to increase the number of pitches and plots and/or number of caravans allowed per pitch or plot on existing sites/yards. The consideration of expansion of sites with adequate space would contribute towards meeting existing need.
- 6.39 Similarly, consideration could be given to whether it would be appropriate to grant planning permission for unauthorised sites in the study area.
- 6.40 In some instances it may be necessary for the identified need to be met outside of the local authority where it arises, and local planning authorities should work together under the Duty to Co-operate where this is the case.

The size of new provision

- 6.41 DCLG (2008) guidance states that there is no one-size-fits-all measurement of a pitch as, in the case of the settled community, this depends on the size of individual families and their particular needs. However, they do suggest that as a general guide, it is possible to specify that an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan, (or two trailers, drying space for clothes, a lockable shed for bicycles, wheelchair storage etc.), parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area.
- 6.42 Based on previous and current DCLG guidance, it can be determined that a pitch of approximately 325 square metres would take into account all minimum separation distance guidance between caravans and pitch boundaries as stipulated in guidance and safety regulations for caravan development. A pitch size of at least 500 square metres would comfortably accommodate the following on-pitch facilities:
- Hard standing for 1 touring/mobile caravan and 1 static caravan
 - 2 car parking spaces
 - 1 amenity block
 - Hard standing for storage shed and drying
 - Garden/amenity area
- 6.43 If granting permission on an open plan basis, permission should be given on a pitch by pitch equivalent basis to the above. For example, an existing pitch which has enough space to accommodate a chalet structure, 2 touring caravans and 1 – 2 static caravans along with 4 parking spaces, 2 blocks etc., could be counted as 2 pitches even if based on an open plan basis on one structured pitch. However, this would need to be recorded for future monitoring.

Transit provision

- 6.44 As noted in previous chapters, when families do stop in the area, they usually only stop for short periods of time. As transit provision alleviates the unauthorised encampments and all the negative publicity these always seem to bring with them. Through absence of negotiated agreements and transit sites where families visiting the area can automatically go to, local authorities are shifting the issues around the county, all of which leads to unnecessary costs to the council and other agencies (including police and courts), insecurity to the families, unnecessary disturbance to local community, and unnecessary conflict between settled community and Gypsies and Travellers.
- 5.70 We recommend that the local authority sets up a negotiated stopping places policy. They are pieces of land in temporary use as authorised short-term (less than 28 days) stopping places for all travelling communities. They may not require planning permission if they are in use for fewer than 28 days in a year. The requirements for emergency stopping places reflect the fact that the site will only be used for a proportion of the year and that individual households will normally only stay on the site for a few days. Agreements could be made with households residing on sites allowing visiting family and friends to stay for agreed periods of time. This would lead to fewer unauthorised encampments which adversely impact on the local community.
- 6.45 We also recommend that the councils within the county continue with work together to address the transit needs. This combination of provision would address the larger scale and more long term unauthorised encampments. Having clear transit provision will provide the police and other agencies with a place that they can relocate visiting families to, and for visiting families to be able to go directly to. This will therefore potentially limit conflict between the settled community, agencies and Gypsies and Travellers, and save the agencies and local authorities unnecessary expense.

Summary

- 6.46 There is an overall need in the study area over the next twenty years of some 32 residential pitches (22 pitches excluding households who do not travel for work). It is also recommended that the authority has a corporate policy in place to address negotiated stopping places for small scale transient encampments, and that the council works with neighbouring authorities to determine the location and size of new transit provision within the county.
- 6.47 The policy process that follows on from this research will also need to consider how the identified needs relating to Gypsies and Travellers, can be supported through the planning process. The study also highlighted a number of issues relating to the management and condition of provisions i.e. that smaller sites are easier to manage.
- 6.48 As well as quantifying accommodation need, the study also makes recommendations on key issues including:

Planning policy:

- Develop criteria and processes for determining the suitability of Gypsy and Traveller sites, and Travelling Showpeople yards, as indicated above for including in emerging/future Local Plans.
- Review existing provision for opportunities for expansion where suitable and appropriate.
- Implement corporate policy to provide negotiated stopping arrangements to address unauthorised encampments for set periods of time at agreed locations.

General policy/site management:

- Authorities could consider helping to meet the needs of households unable to afford to own a site by renting or leasing small parcels of local authority owned land to them and assisting with planning applications and site development.
- To consider alternative options for developing new sites such as sites developed on a cooperative basis, shared ownership, or small sites owned by a local authority, but rented to families for their own use.
- To consider alternative site funding mechanisms such as: site acquisition funds; loans for private site provision through Community Development Financial Institutions; and joint ventures with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- Develop a holistic vision for their work on Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople yards and embed it in Community and Homelessness Strategies, Local Plans and planning and reporting obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Provide regular training and workshop sessions with local authority and service provider employees (and elected members) help them to further understand the key issues facing the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople yards communities.
- Formalise communication processes between relevant housing, planning and enforcement officers etc. in both the study area and neighbouring local authorities.
- To consider alternative site management structures as discussed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) (2016) research.
- In liaison with relevant enforcement agencies such as the police to develop a common approach to dealing with unauthorised encampments.
- Develop a common approach to recording unauthorised encampments which includes information such as location, type of location (e.g. roadside, park land etc.), number of caravans/vehicles involved, start date, end date, reason for unauthorised encampment (e.g. travelling through area, attending event, visiting family etc.), family name(s), and action taken (if any).
- Encourage local housing authorities to include Gypsy and Traveller categories on ethnic monitoring forms to improve data on population numbers, particularly in housing.
- Better sharing of information between agencies which deal with the Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople.

- The population size and demographics of all two community groups can change rapidly. As such, their accommodation needs should be reviewed every 5 to 7 years.

6.49 The accommodation need identified in this report primarily derives from households residing on private sites. There is adequate land on such sites to meet accommodation need. Consequently it is recommended that the council take the following steps to address the accommodation needs:

- Liaise with owners and occupiers of sites with accommodation need to determine how many additional pitches can be accommodated on the site to meet the household's needs
- Review if, and how, existing local authority sites can be expanded and consider funding options
- Determine whether the potential expansion of existing sites would meet current planning policy criteria.

6.50 The above could be undertaken using the services of external consultants or relevant agencies if required.

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Glossary

Amenity block

A small permanent building on a pitch with bath/shower, WC, sink and (in some larger ones) space to eat and relax. Also known as an amenity shed or amenity block.

Authorised site

A site with planning permission for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site. It can be privately owned (often by a Gypsy or Traveller), leased or socially rented (owned by a council or registered provider).

Average

The term 'average' when used in this report is taken to be a mean value unless otherwise stated.

Bedroom standard

The bedroom standard is based on that which was used by the General Household Survey to determine the number of bedrooms required by families. For this study, a modified version of the bedroom standard was applied to Gypsies and Travellers living on sites to take into account that caravans or mobile homes may contain both bedroom and living spaces used for sleeping. The number of spaces for each accommodation unit is divided by two to provide an equivalent number of bedrooms. Accommodation needs were then determined by comparing the number (and age) of family members with the number of bedroom spaces available.

Bricks and mortar accommodation

Permanent housing of the settled community, as distinguished from sites.

Caravan

Defined by Section 29 (1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 a caravan as:

"... any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle so designed or adapted."

Concealed household

A household or family unit that currently lives within another household or family unit but has a preference to live independently and is unable to access appropriate accommodation (on sites or in housing).

Doubling up

More than one family unit sharing a single pitch.

Emergency stopping places

Emergency stopping places are pieces of land in temporary use as authorised short-term (less than 28 days) stopping places for all travelling communities. They may not require planning permission if they are in use for fewer than 28 days in a year. The requirements for emergency stopping places reflect the fact that the site will only be used for a proportion of the year and that individual households will normally only stay on the site for a few days.

Family Owner Occupied Gypsy Site

Family sites are seen as the ideal by many Gypsies and Travellers in England. They are also often seen as unattainable. There are two major obstacles: money/affordability and getting the necessary planning permission and site licence. While the former is clearly a real barrier to many less well-off Gypsies and Travellers, getting planning permission for use of land as a Gypsy caravan site (and a 'site' in this context could be a single caravan) is currently a major constraint on realising aspirations among those who could afford to buy and develop a family site.

Family unit

The definition of 'family unit' is used flexibly. The survey assumes that a pitch is occupied by a single household or family unit although it acknowledges that this may also include e.g. extended family members or hidden households.

Gypsy

Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in Britain. In this report it is used to describe English (Romany) Gypsies, Scottish Travellers and Welsh Travellers. English Gypsies were recognised as an ethnic group in 1988.

Gypsy and Traveller

As defined by DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015):

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

The DCLG guidance also states that in determining whether persons are "gypsies and travellers" for the purposes of planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

- a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
- b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
- c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

Household

The definition of 'household' is used flexibly. The survey assumes that a pitch is occupied by a single household or family unit although it acknowledges that this may also include e.g. extended family members or hidden households.

Irish Traveller

Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in Britain. Distinct from Gypsies but sharing a nomadic tradition, Irish Travellers were recognised as an ethnic group in England in 2000.

Local Authority Sites

The majority of local authority sites are designed for permanent residential use. The latest published Traveller Caravan Count undertaken in January 2017 suggests that there are a total of 5,850 permanent local authority and private registered provider pitches capable of housing 9,557 caravans.

Local Development Documents (LDD)

Local Plans and other documents that contain planning policies and are subject to external examination by an Inspector. It is important to note that Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) contain guidance are not subject to Examination. Planning applications are determined in relation to an adopted Development Plan which contains documents found to be sound at an External Examination.

Negotiated Stopping

The term 'negotiated stopping' is used to describe agreed short term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent 'built' transit sites but negotiated arrangements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. The arrangement is between the local authority and the (temporary) residents.

Net need

The difference between need and the expected supply of available pitches (e.g. from the re-letting of existing socially rented pitches or from new sites being built).

New Traveller (formerly 'New Age Traveller')

Members of the settled community who have chosen a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle. The first wave of New Travellers began in the 1970s and were associated with youth culture and 'new age' ideals. They now comprise a diverse range of people who seek an alternative lifestyle for differing reasons including personal or political convictions. Economic activities include making hand-made goods that are sold at fairs.

Newly forming families

Families living as part of another family unit of which they are neither the head nor the partner of the head and who need to live in their own separate accommodation, and/or are intending to move to separate accommodation, rather than continuing to live with their 'host' family unit.

Overcrowding

An overcrowded dwelling is one which is below the bedroom standard. (See 'Bedroom Standard' above).

Permanent residential site

A site intended for long-stay use by residents. They have no maximum length of stay but often constraints on travelling away from the site.

Pitch

Area on a site developed for a family unit to live. On socially rented sites, the area let to a tenant for stationing caravans and other vehicles.

Plot

Area on a yard for Travelling Showpeople to live. As well as dwelling units, Travelling Showpeople often keep their commercial equipment on a plot.

Primary data

Information that is collected from a bespoke data collection exercise (e.g. surveys, focus groups or interviews) and analysed to produce a new set of findings.

Private rented pitches

Pitches on sites which are rented on a commercial basis to other Gypsies and Travellers. The actual pitches tend to be less clearly defined than on socially rented sites.

Psychological aversion

An aversion to living in bricks and mortar accommodation. Symptoms can include: feelings of depression, stress, sensory deprivation, feeling trapped, feeling cut off from social contact, a sense of dislocation with the past, feelings of claustrophobia. Proven psychological aversion to living in bricks and mortar accommodation is one factor used to determine accommodation need.

Secondary data

Existing information that someone else has collected. Data from administrative systems and some research projects are made available for others to summarise and analyse for their own purposes (e.g. Traveller Caravan Count).

Settled community

Used to refer to non-Gypsies and Travellers who live in housing.

Site

An area of land laid out and/or used for Gypsy and Traveller caravans for residential occupation, which can be authorised (have planning permission) or unauthorised. Sites can be self-owned by a Gypsy and Traveller resident, or rented from a private or social landlord. Sites vary in type and size

and can range from one-caravan private family sites on Gypsies' and Travellers' own land, through to large local authority sites. Authorised private sites (those with planning permission) can be small, family-run, or larger, privately-owned rented sites.

Socially rented site

A Gypsy and Traveller site owned by a council or private Registered Provider. Similar to social rented houses, rents are subsidised and offers at below private market levels.

Tolerated

An unauthorised development or encampment may be tolerated by the local authority meaning that no enforcement action is currently being taken.

Transit site/pitch

This is the authorised encampment option for Gypsies and Travellers travelling in their caravans and in need of temporary accommodation while away from 'home'. Transit sites are sometimes used on a more long-term basis by families unable to find suitable permanent accommodation

Travelling Showpeople

People who organise circuses and fairgrounds and who live on yards when not travelling between locations. Most Travelling Showpeople are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain.

Unauthorised development

Unauthorised developments include situations where the land is owned by the occupier, or the occupier has the consent of the owner (e.g. is tolerated /no trespass has occurred), but where relevant planning permission has not been granted.

Unauthorised encampment

Unauthorised encampments include situations where the land is not owned by the occupier, the land is being occupied without the owner's consent, and as such a trespass has occurred. An encampment can include one or more vehicles, caravans or trailers.

Unauthorised site

Land occupied by Gypsies and Travellers without the appropriate planning or other permissions. The term includes both unauthorised development and unauthorised encampment.