

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Five-Year Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Supply Statement 2021

December 2021

Position as at 1 October 2021



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Introduction

1. The [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) (PPTS) 2015, in conjunction with the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) 2021, requires local planning authorities to identify and annually update specific deliverable sites suitable for Gypsies and Travellers.
2. The need for new Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the borough is ascertained from the [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#) (GTAA) 2018, which also provides the basis for determining pitch requirements to be met through the emerging Local Plan.
3. This Statement provides a summary of the current level of need for new pitches and the 5-year supply position of deliverable Gypsy and Traveller sites within Tunbridge Wells Borough for the period from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2026. It will be used to inform the consideration of planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites/pitches.

Need for Pitches

4. As mentioned above, the present and future need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is calculated and presented within the Tunbridge Wells GTAA. Its assessment reviews the period between 01 April 2017 – 31 March 2037.
5. **Table 1** indicates the pitch numbers required in order to meet needs in five-year periods. The total pitch need is 33 between 2017-2038, with 15 pitches needed within the first five-year period of the GTAA (2017-2022), equating to 3 per year.

Table 1 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Needs 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2037 (GTAA, 2018)

Period (1 April to 31 March)	Pitch Need	Transit Site Plots
2017-2022	15	0
2022-2027	5	0
2027-2032	6	0
2032-2037	6	0
2017-2037	32	0

Note: As the Local Plan period runs one year longer than that of the GTAA, to 2038, one additional pitch has been added to the total GTAA need of 32 pitches (approximating to the annual pitch need in later years of the GTAA). Hence, the Local Plan sets an overall need of 33 pitches for the period 2017 – 2038; see paragraphs 3.63 & 3.64 in the [Housing Needs Assessment Topic Paper](#)).

6. Taking the above 5-year need (2017 – 2022) of 15 pitches, or 3 pitches/year, and applying it to the 4.5 years from the base date of the GTAA (i.e., 1 April 2017) to the base date of this statement (i.e., 1 October 2021), there is an identified total need of 13.5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches as at 1 October 2021. (NB: Where a need for 0.5 of a pitch has been determined, this is due to this Statement’s base date of 1 October 2021 being halfway through the GTAA’s annual calculations).
7. Between 1 April 2017 and the base date of this Statement (1 October 2021), 7 new pitches were completed, as shown on **Table 2** below.

Table 2 - Pitch Completions Between 1 April 2017 and 30 September 2021

Site Name	Parish	Number of Pitches	Monitoring Period	Planning Reference
Funnel Piece	Paddock Wood	1	4/2017 – 3/2018	16/504444/FULL
Willow Stables	Paddock Wood	1	4/2018 – 3/2019	18/00856/FULL
Mile Oak Stables	Paddock Wood	1	4/2020 – 9/2021	18/01543/FULL
Heartenoak	Hawkhurst	2	4/2020 – 9/2021	18/03187/FULL
Touchwood	Paddock Wood	1	4/2020 – 9/2021	19/02848/FULL
Lordship Stables	Brenchley & Matfield	1	4/2020 – 9/2021	20/01504/FULL
TOTAL		7		

8. Hence, over the period 1 April 2017 – 30 September 2021, there has been a shortfall of 6.5 pitches (i.e. 7 pitches completed against a need for 13.5 pitches).
9. In addition, a further need for an additional 6 pitches for the period 01 October 2021 to 30 September 2026 can be calculated from the GTAA, as below:

1.5 (half annual need Oct 2021 to March 2022)	} Annual need calculated by GTAA 2018 (Table 1).
+ 1 (annual need April 2022 to March 2023)	
+ 1 (annual need April 2023 to March 2024)	
+ 1 (annual need April 2024 to March 2025)	
+ 1 (annual need April 2025 to March 2026)	
+ 0.5 (half annual need April 2026 to Oct 2026)	
= 6 (need from April 2021 to Sept 2026)	

10. Table 3 below shows the components of the calculation of the total need for the 5-year period, being 12.5 pitches.

Table 3 - Calculation of Pitch Needs October 2021 - September 2026

	Number of Pitches
Need - April 2017 to Sept 2021	13.5
Completions - April 2017 to Sept 2021	7
Shortfall - April 2017 to Sept 2021	6.5
Need - Oct 2021 to Sept 2026	6
Total Need = Shortfall from April 2017—September 2021 + Need from Oct 2021 to Sept 2026	12.5

11. It is highlighted that this calculation provides for meeting all the outstanding need from 2017 within the next 5 years; that is, by 30 September 2026.

Deliverable Supply of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

12. **Table 4** identifies those sites with an extant, but currently unimplemented, planning permission for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches, as at 1 October 2021. In addition, an existing pitch at Oak Tree Farm is included, as it is now occupied and supported in the [Submission Local Plan](#), and has been granted retrospective permission (21/02687/FULL) on 12 October 2021.
13. All these pitches are expected to be delivered within the next 5 years, with one exception. This relates to one of the pitches at Cinderhill Wood, which involves the sub-division of an existing pitch.

Table 4 - Supply of New Gypsy and Traveller Pitches as at 1 October 2021

Site	Pitches within 5-Year period	Beyond 5-Year Period	Net Pitches
Cinderhill Wood	2	1	3
Lordship Stables	2	-	2
Mile Oak Stables	3	-	3
Touchwood	3	-	3
Oak Tree Farm	1	-	1
Total	11	1	12

Conclusion

14. From the above, it can be seen that the total identified supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the next five-year period (1 October 2021 - 30 September 2026) equals 11 (**Table 4**). Measuring this against the need for 12.5 pitches (which includes a carried forward under-supply from the previous period), as calculated in **Table 3**, a supply of **4.4 years** is identified as at 1 October 2021.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Years of Supply} &= \text{Period of time multiplied by Supply divided by Need} \\ \mathbf{4.4 \text{ years}} &= 5 \text{ years} \quad \times \quad 11 \text{ pitches} \quad / \quad 12.5 \text{ pitches} \end{aligned}$$

15. This is below the target of at least a 5-year supply of deliverable pitches, albeit a relatively small shortfall.

16. At the same time, it is important to note that, at this point, the assessment does not include the additional pitches identified and proposed in the [Submission Local Plan](#). These are not included, as the Local Plan had not been submitted at the base date of this assessment, being submitted on 1 November 2021.
17. The [Submission Local Plan](#) and the Council's supporting evidence base (see [Annex 1 of Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper](#)) provides an assessment of estimated additional capacity at existing sites for further pitches through intensification, expansion, and/or regularisation, as well as the potential for new identified sites throughout the borough.
18. On the assumption that the sites/pitches in the submitted Local Plan are endorsed, then the longer-term position would be as set out in **Table 5** below.

Table 5 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need Against the Potential Supply over the Local Plan Period (as at October 2021)

	Number of Pitches
Pitch Need - April 2017 to March 2038	33
Pitch completions - April 2017 to Sept 2021	7
Outstanding Need - Oct 2021 to March 2038	26
Potential additional pitch capacity at existing sites	15-17
Potential additional pitches at new site allocations	6
Pitch approvals not completed at Oct 2021	11
Estimated Pitch Capacity - Oct 2021 to March 2038	32-34

19. This shows that, over the Plan period, the outstanding need, as at October 2021, for 26 pitches, should be met, and exceeded, by the provision of 32-34 pitches.
20. This potential "surplus" of 6-8 pitches compares to that estimated in the [Submission Local Plan](#) (paragraph 6.391) of +1-4 pitches (as at December 2020) showing that the position has improved as a result of recent pitch completions and the granting of planning permissions.
21. For those identified sites within the Local Plan that are yet to gain planning permission, the Council is pro-actively engaging with occupants and landowners to assess deliverability timescales. It fully expects that it will be able to robustly demonstrate clear evidence of deliverability for at least some of these sites within an identified 5-year period shortly.
22. Therefore, while it is acknowledged that there is not, currently, a clear 5-year supply of pitches, through the identification of additional capacity at existing sites within the emerging Local Plan, the Council is confident that a 5-year supply of pitches will be achieved in future iterations of this Statement.
23. The Five-Year Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Supply Statement will be updated as at 1 April 2022.

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