



# **Bedford Borough**

## **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment**

**Final Report**

February 2017



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# Contents

<b>1. Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction and Methodology .....	1
Key Findings.....	2
Additional Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers .....	2
Additional Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople .....	3
Transit Requirements .....	4
<b>2. Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
The Study.....	5
Local Plan Policy .....	5
Definitions .....	6
The Planning Definition in PPTS (2015).....	6
Definition of Travelling.....	7
Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers.....	8
PPTS (2015) .....	9
<b>3. Methodology .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Background.....	11
Glossary of Terms.....	11
Desk-Based Review .....	11
Stakeholder Engagement .....	12
Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities .....	12
Survey of Travelling Communities.....	12
Engagement with Bricks and Mortar Households.....	13
Timing of the Fieldwork .....	14
Waiting Lists .....	15
Calculating Current and Future Need .....	15
Applying the Planning Definition.....	15
Unknown Households .....	16
Non-Travelling Households .....	17
Supply of Pitches .....	17
Current Need.....	17
Future Need .....	18
Pitch Turnover .....	18
Transit Provision.....	19
<b>4. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Population .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Introduction.....	20
Sites and Yards in Bedford Borough.....	21

Caravan Count.....	22
--------------------	----

## 5. Stakeholder Interviews.....23

Introduction.....	23
<b>Bedford Borough - Main Findings .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers .....	24
Bricks and Mortar.....	25
Unauthorised Encampments.....	25
Cross-boundary Issues and the Duty-to-Cooperate.....	26
Future Issues to Consider .....	27
<b>Neighbouring Authorities .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Central Bedfordshire .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Accommodation .....	28
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	28
<b>East Northamptonshire .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Accommodation .....	28
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	29
<b>Huntingdonshire.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Accommodation .....	29
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	30
<b>Luton.....</b>	<b>30</b>
Accommodation .....	30
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	31
<b>Milton Keynes.....</b>	<b>31</b>
Accommodation .....	31
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	31
<b>Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit (CTU) on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council (NCC).....</b>	<b>32</b>
Accommodation .....	32
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	32
<b>Wellingborough.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Accommodation .....	33
Cross-Boundary Issues .....	33
Issues to Consider .....	34
<b>Councillor and Parish Council Responses.....</b>	<b>34</b>
Dealings with Gypsies & Travellers .....	35
Awareness of any Particular Issues in relation to Gypsies and Travellers .....	35
Awareness of any Gypsy and Traveller Sites.....	36
Any Trends or Recent Changes with regard to Gypsies and Travellers .....	36
What Attracts Gypsies and Travellers to the Area .....	37
Awareness of Temporary Stopping by Travellers .....	37
Relationship between the Settled and Travelling Community .....	37
Awareness of any Travellers Residing in Bricks and Mortar .....	38
Any Other Comments.....	38

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<b>6. Survey of Travelling Communities .....</b>	<b>39</b>
Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers.....	39
Efforts to Contact Bricks and Mortar Households .....	39
<b>7. Current and Future Pitch Provision.....</b>	<b>40</b>
Introduction.....	40
Planning Definition.....	40
New Household Formation Rates .....	40
Breakdown by 5 Year Bands.....	42
Waiting Lists .....	42
Bricks and Mortar Interviews.....	42
Applying the Planning Definition.....	42
Accommodation Needs for Gypsies and Travellers .....	43
Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers that Meet the Planning Definition .....	44
Pitch Needs – Unknown Gypsies and Travellers .....	45
Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers that Do Not Meet the Planning Definition .....	45
Accommodation Needs for Travelling Showpeople.....	46
Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople that meet the Planning Definition.....	46
Plot Needs – Unknown Travelling Showpeople .....	47
Allocations and Designations Local Plan .....	48
Transit Requirements.....	48
DCLG Caravan Count .....	48
Stakeholder Interviews and Local Data.....	49
Potential Implications of PPTS (2015) .....	49
Transit Recommendations .....	49
<b>Appendix A: Glossary of Terms .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Appendix B: Unknown Households .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Appendix C: Households that do not meet the Planning Definition .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Appendix D: Sites and Yards Lists (September 2016) .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Appendix E: Site Record Form.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Appendix F: Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates.....</b>	<b>65</b>

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# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of the 2016 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in Bedford Borough (the Council).
- 1.2 As well as updating previous GTAAs, another key reason for completing the study was the publication of a revised version of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015. This included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes. The key change that was made was the removal of the term *persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA (see Paragraph 2.11 for the full definition).
- 1.3 The GTAA provides a credible evidence base which can be used to aid the implementation of Development Plan policies and the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots for the period up to 2035. The outcomes of this study supersede the outcomes of any previous Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessments completed in Bedford Borough.
- 1.4 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in Bedford Borough through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder interviews and engagement with members of the travelling community living on all known sites. A total of 18 interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers; a further two were completed with Travelling Showpeople living on authorised yards; and three were completed with Showpeople living in bricks and mortar. Despite extensive efforts to identify them it was not possible to interview any Gypsies or Travellers living in bricks and mortar. A total of 23 telephone interviews were completed with Officers from the Council; Officers from neighbouring local authorities; and other local stakeholders.
- 1.5 The fieldwork for the study was completed in August and September 2016, which was after the publication of PPTS (2015). As a result of this change questions to enable the determination of the travelling status of households were included in the household interviews.
- 1.6 The baseline date for the study is **September 2016**.

## Key Findings

### Additional Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.8 Overall the additional pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers from 2016-2035 are set out below. Additional needs are set out for those households that meet the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller, for those unknown households where an interview was not able to be completed (either due to households refusing to be interviewed, or not being present despite three visits to each site) who may meet the planning definition, and for those households that do not meet the planning definition.
- 1.9 Only the need from those households who meet the planning definition and from those of the unknown households who subsequently demonstrate that they meet it should be considered as need arising from the GTAA.
- 1.10 The need arising from households that meet the planning definition should be addressed through site allocation/intensification/expansion policies. Consideration will also need to be given to the allocation of pitches on public sites.
- 1.11 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with unknown Travellers as it is unlikely that all of this need will need to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan policies, the Council could consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.
- 1.12 The need for those households who do not meet the planning definition will need to be addressed through other means such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- 1.13 One Gypsy or Traveller household has been identified in Bedford Borough that meets the planning definition, 15 unknown households have been identified that may meet the planning definition and 25 households have been identified that do not meet the planning definition.
- 1.14 Need for **two additional pitches** for households that meet the planning definition is made up of two from new household formation (based on the demographics of the residents).
- 1.15 Need of up to six additional pitches for unknown households is made up of four unauthorised pitches, new household formation of five from a maximum of 15 unknown households, less supply from three pitches to become vacant on one of the public sites. If the ORS national average<sup>1</sup> of 10% were applied this could result in a need for one additional pitch.

Figure 1 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition 2016-36

Status	Total
Meet the Planning Definition	2
Unknown	0-6
Do not meet the Planning Definition	34

<sup>1</sup> Based on the outcomes of over 1,800 interviews that have been completed with Gypsies and Travellers by ORS since the publication of PPTS (2015).

**Figure 2 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough who meet the Planning Definition by 5 year periods**

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-35	
	0	1	1	0	<b>2</b>

1.16 Based on the ages of the children in households that meet the definition it is estimated that the need through new household formation will come about in years 7 and 10 of the GTAA period.

## Additional Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople

1.17 Overall, the additional plot needs for Travelling Showpeople from 2016 to 2035 are set out below. Additional needs are set out for those households that meet the planning definition of a Travelling Showperson, for those unknown households where an interview was not able to be completed (either due to households refusing to be interviewed, or not being present despite three visits to each site) who may meet the planning definition, and for those households that do not meet the planning definition.

1.18 Only the need from those households who meet the planning definition and from those of the unknown households who subsequently demonstrate that they meet it, should be considered as need arising from the GTAA.

1.19 The need arising from households that meet the planning definition should be addressed through site allocation/intensification/expansion policies.

1.20 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with unknown Showpeople as it is unlikely that all of this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Travelling Showpeople plots. In terms of Local Plan policies, the Council could consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.

1.21 The need for those households who do not meet the planning definition will need to be addressed through other means such as the SHMA.

1.22 Two Travelling Showpeople households living on yards and two households living in bricks and mortar have been identified in Bedford Borough that meet the planning definition, four unknown households have been identified that may meet the planning definition and one household living in bricks and mortar has been identified that does not meet the planning definition.

1.23 Need for **five additional plots** for households that meet the planning definition is made up of one unauthorised plot, two teenage children in need of a plot of their own in the next 5 years, and two from bricks and mortar.

1.24 There is no need for any additional plots for unknown households providing the development of a new yard at Cople proceeds.

**Figure 3 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition 2016-36**

Status	Total
Meet the Planning Definition	<b>5</b>
Unknown	<b>0</b>
Do not meet the Planning Definition	<b>0</b>

**Figure 4 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition by 5 year periods**

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-35	
	5	0	0	0	5

## Transit Requirements

- 1.25 It is recommended that whilst there may be a number of encampments in some areas, the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should be continually monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop.
- 1.26 A review of the evidence base relating to unauthorised encampments should be undertaken in autumn 2018 once there is a new 3 year evidence base following the changes to PPTS in 2015 – including attempts to try and identify whether households on encampments meet the planning definition. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in more formal transit sites or emergency stopping places.
- 1.27 In the short-term, the Council should continue to use its existing published Gypsy and Traveller Management Policy when dealing with any encampments. This will ensure that each encampment is dealt with and assessed on an individual basis. It will ensure that decisions on whether to tolerate or take enforcement actions are made on the basis of assessments carried out on each encampment. Whilst consideration should be given as to how to deal with households that do and do not meet the planning definition, from a practical point of view it is likely that households on all unauthorised encampments will need to be dealt with in the same way and therefore the existing Policy will be an effective method of doing so.
- 1.28 Temporary stopping places can be made available at times of increased demand due to fairs or cultural celebrations that are attended by Gypsies and Travellers. A charge may be levied as determined by the local authority although they only need to provide basic facilities including: a cold water supply; portaloos; sewerage disposal point and refuse disposal facilities.

## 2. Introduction

### The Study

- 2.1 The primary objective of the 2016 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in Bedford Borough. The outcomes of this study supersede the outcomes of any previous Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessments completed in Bedford Borough.
- 2.2 The study provides an evidence base to enable the Council to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 1985, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014, PPTS (2015), and the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- 2.3 The GTAA is credible evidence base which can be used to aid the implementation of development plan policies and the provision of Traveller pitches and plots covering the period 2016 to 2035. As well as identifying current and future permanent accommodation needs, it also seeks to identify any need for the provision of transit sites or emergency stopping places.
- 2.4 We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a Gypsy and Traveller (and Travelling Showpeople) Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).
- 2.5 The baseline date for the study is **September 2016**.

### Local Plan Policy

- 2.6 Providing for the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is covered by a Local Plan policy for Bedford Borough. This is set out below.

Figure 5 – Local Plan Policy

*Bedford Borough Council - Core Strategy & Rural Issues Plan (Adopted 16th April 2008)*

*POLICY CP9 - ACCOMMODATION FOR GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE*

*Where a need has been identified through the RSS (or, in advance of this, through a GTAA) for the provision of additional accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, sites will be allocated and planning permission will be granted within or adjoining the urban area or SPAs or, where no such sites are reasonably available or suitable for the use, in the countryside, provided that in relation to all locations, the following requirements are clearly satisfied:*

- i) Submission of evidence to justify local need for the scale and nature of the accommodation proposed; and*
- ii) Satisfactory vehicular access from the public highway; and*
- iii) Siting and landscaping ensure that any impact upon the character and appearance of the*

*locality is minimised, including impacts on biodiversity and nature conservation. In areas of nationally recognised designations planning permission will only be granted where the objectives of designation would not be compromised by the development; and*

*iv) The amenities of the occupiers of nearby land and property would not be harmed by the development in an unacceptable manner; and*

*v) Adequate schools, shops and other community facilities are within reasonable travelling distance and preferably can be reached by foot, cycle or public transport; and*

*vi) The scale of the site or the number of pitches would not be sufficient to dominate the nearest settled community and would not place undue pressure on local infrastructure; and*

*vii) The site would not be located in an area at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplain.*

*This policy also applies outside of the Growth Area.*

## Definitions

- 2.7 The planning definition for a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson is set out in PPTS (2015). The previous definition set out in the Housing Act (2004) was repealed by the Housing and Planning Act (2016).
- 2.8 Provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act now include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Draft Guidance<sup>2</sup> related to this section of the Housing and Planning Act has been published setting out how the government would want local housing authorities to undertake this assessment and it is the same as the GTAA assessment process. The implication is therefore that the housing needs of any Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller will need to be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of the area through the SHMA process for example, and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans.
- 2.9 Another key issue is that there may also be Romany, Irish and Scottish Travellers who no longer travel so will not fall under the planning definition, but Councils may still need to meet their needs through the provision of culturally suitable housing under the requirements of the Equality Act.

## The Planning Definition in PPTS (2015)

- 2.10 For the purposes of the planning system the definition was changed in PPTS (2015). The definition is set out in Annex 1 of PPTS and states that:

*For the purposes of this 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.*

<sup>2</sup> “Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats.” (March 2016)

*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.*

*For the purposes of this 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.*

(Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), August 2015)

- 2.11 The key change that was made to both definitions was the removal of the term *persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA.

## Definition of Travelling

- 2.12 One of the most important questions that GTAs will need to address in terms of applying the planning definition is *what constitutes travelling?* This has been determined through case law that has tested the meaning of the term ‘*nomadic*’.
- 2.13 **R v South Hams District Council (1994)** – defined Gypsies as “persons who wander or travel for the purpose of making or seeking their livelihood (not persons who travel from place to place without any connection between their movements and their means of livelihood.)” This includes ‘born’ Gypsies and Travellers as well as ‘elective’ Travellers such as New Age Travellers.
- 2.14 In **Maidstone BC v Secretary of State for the Environment and Dunn (2006)**, it was held that a Romany Gypsy who bred horses and travelled to horse fairs at Appleby, Stow-in-the-Wold and the New Forest, where he bought and sold horses, and who remained away from his permanent site for up to two months of the year, at least partly in connection with this traditional Gypsy activity, was entitled to be accorded Gypsy status.
- 2.15 In **Greenwich LBC v Powell (1989)**, Lord Bridge of Harwich stated that a person could be a statutory Gypsy if he led a nomadic way of life *only seasonally*.
- 2.16 The definition was widened further by the decision in **R v Shropshire CC ex p Bungay (1990)**. The case concerned a Gypsy family that had not travelled for some 15 years in order to care for its elderly and infirm parents. An aggrieved resident living in the area of the family’s recently approved Gypsy site sought judicial review of the local authority’s decision to accept that the family had retained their Gypsy status even though they had not travelled for some considerable time. Dismissing the claim, the judge held that a person could remain a Gypsy even if he or she did not travel, provided that their nomadism was held in abeyance and not abandoned.

- 2.17 That point was revisited in the case of **Hearne v National Assembly for Wales (1999)**, where a traditional Gypsy was held not to be a Gypsy for the purposes of planning law as he had stated that he intended to abandon his nomadic habit of life, lived in a permanent dwelling and was taking a course that led to permanent employment.
- 2.18 **Wrexham County Borough Council v National Assembly of Wales and Others (2003)** determined that households and individuals could continue to lead a nomadic way of life with a permanent base from which they set out from and return to.
- 2.19 The implication of these rulings in terms of applying the planning definition is that it will only include those who travel (or have ceased to travel temporarily) for work purposes and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence. It can include those who have a permanent site or place of residence, but that it will not include those who travel for purposes other than work – such as visiting horse fairs and visiting friends or relatives. It will not cover those who commute to work daily from a permanent place of residence.
- 2.20 It will also be the case in our view that a household where some family members travel for nomadic purposes on a regular basis, but where other family members stay at home to look after children in education, or other dependents with health problems etc. the household unit would be defined as travelling under the planning definition.
- 2.21 Households will also fall under the planning definition if they can provide information that they have ceased to travel temporarily as a result of their own or their family's or dependants' educational, health needs or old age. In order to have ceased to travel temporarily these households will need to provide information that they have travelled in the past. In addition, households may also have to provide information that they plan to travel again in the future.
- 2.22 This approach was endorsed by a Planning Inspector in a recent Decision Notice for an appeal in East Hertfordshire (Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/16/3145267). A summary can be seen below.

*Case law, including the R v South Hams District Council ex parte Gibb (1994) judgment referred to me at the hearing, despite its reference to 'purposive activities including work' also refers to a connection between the travelling and the means of livelihood, that is, an economic purpose. In this regard, there is no economic purpose... This situation is no different from that of many landlords and property investors or indeed anyone travelling to work in a fixed, pre-arranged location. In this regard there is not an essential connection between wandering and work... Whilst there does appear to be some connection between the travel and the work in this regard, it seems to me that these periods of travel for economic purposes are very short, amounting to an extremely small proportion of his time and income. Furthermore, the work is not carried out in a nomadic manner because it seems likely that it is done by appointment... I conclude, therefore, that XX does not meet the definition of a gypsy and traveller in terms of planning policy because there is insufficient evidence that he is currently a person of a nomadic habit of life.*

## Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

- 2.23 Decision-making for policy concerning Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sits within a complex legislative and national policy framework and this study must be viewed in the context of this legislation and guidance. For example, the following key pieces of legislation and guidance are relevant when developing policies relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

- » The Housing and Planning Act, 2016
- » Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), 2015
- » National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012
- » Planning Practice Guidance<sup>3</sup> (PPG), 2014
- » The Equality Act (2010)

2.24 The primary guidance for undertaking the assessment of housing need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is set out in PPTS (2015). It should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition, the Housing and Planning Act makes provisions for the assessment of need for those Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households living on sites and yards who do not meet the planning definition – through the assessment of all households living in caravans.

## PPTS (2015)

2.25 PPTS (2015) sets out the direction of Government policy. As well as amending the planning definition of a Traveller, PPTS is closely linked to the NPPF. Among other objectives, the aims of the policy in respect of Traveller sites are (PPTS Paragraph 4):

- » Local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.
- » To ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.
- » To encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- » That plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- » To promote more private Traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those Travellers who cannot provide their own sites.
- » That plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective.
- » For local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies.
- » To increase the number of Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply.
- » To reduce tensions between settled and Traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions.
- » To enable provision of suitable accommodation from which Travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure.
- » For local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

2.26 In practice, the document states that (PPTS Paragraph 9):

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<sup>3</sup> With particular reference to the sections on Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments

- » Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

<sup>2.27</sup> PPTS goes on to state (Paragraph 10) that in producing their Local Plan local planning authorities should:

- » Identify and annually update a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets.
- » Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.
- » Consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty-to-cooperate on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries).
- » Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density.
- » Protect local amenity and environment.

<sup>2.28</sup> Local Authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5 year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, PPTS also notes in Paragraph 11 that:

- » Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria-based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of Travellers, while respecting the interests of the settled community.

## 3. Methodology

### Background

- 3.1 Over the past 10 years, ORS has continually refined a methodology for undertaking robust and defensible Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments. This has been updated in light of the introduction of the PPG in 2014, changes to PPTS in August 2015 and the Housing and Planning Act in 2016, as well as responding to changes set out by Planning Ministers, with particular reference to new household formation rates. This is an evolving methodology that has been adaptive to changes in planning policy as well as the outcomes of Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals.
- 3.2 PPTS (2015) contains a number of requirements for local authorities which must be addressed in any methodology. This includes the need to pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both settled and traveller communities (including discussing travellers' accommodation needs with travellers themselves); identification of permanent and transit site accommodation needs separately; working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities; and establishing whether households fall within the planning definition for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.3 The approach currently used by ORS was considered in April 2016 by the Planning Inspector for the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy who concluded:
- 'The methodology behind this assessment included undertaking a full demographic study of all occupied pitches, interviewing Gypsy and Traveller households, including those living in bricks and mortar accommodation, and considering the implications of the new Government policy. On the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the assessment has been appropriately carried out, and there is no reason for me to dispute the figures.'*
- 3.4 The stages below provide a summary of the methodology that was used to complete this study. More information on each stage is provided in the appropriate sections of this report.

### Glossary of Terms

- 3.5 A Glossary of Terms can be found in **Appendix A**.

### Desk-Based Review

- 3.6 ORS collated a range of secondary data that was used to support the study. This included:
- » Census data
  - » Caravan counts
  - » Records of unauthorised sites/encampments
  - » Information on planning applications/appeals
  - » Information on enforcement actions
  - » Existing Needs Assessments and other relevant local studies
  - » Existing national and local policy, guidance and best practice

## Stakeholder Engagement

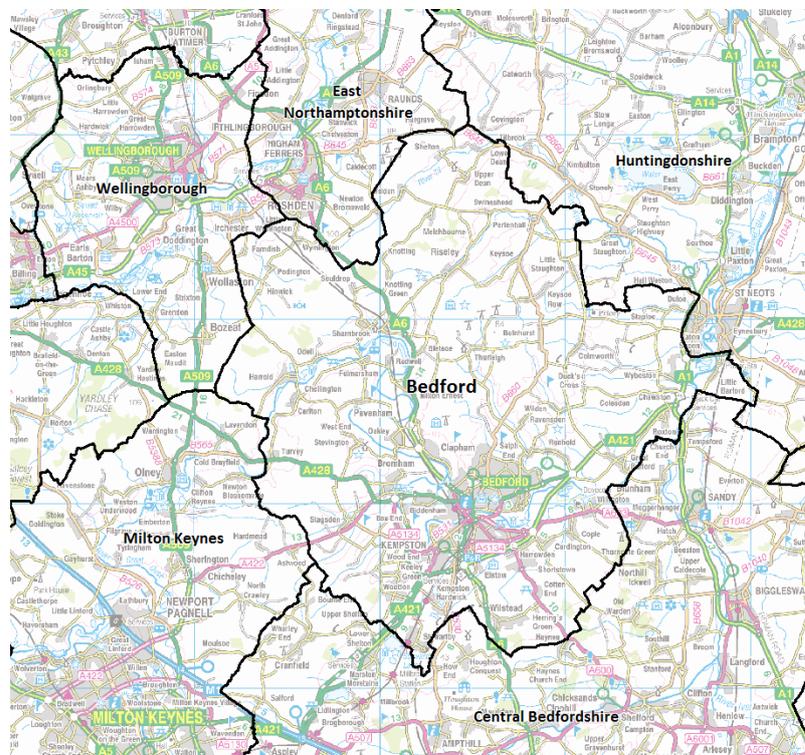
- 3.7 Engagement was undertaken with key Council Officers and with wider stakeholders through telephone interviews. Council stakeholders include Officers from departments including Housing and Planning. Wider stakeholders included representatives the Showmen's Guild and registered housing providers. A detailed topic guide was agreed with the Council for the telephone interviews.

## Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities

- 3.8 To help support the duty-to-cooperate and provide background information for the study, telephone interviews were conducted with Planning Officers in neighbouring planning authorities. These interviews will help to ensure that wider issues that may impact on this project are fully understood. This included interviews with Officers from the Council set out below. Again, a detailed topic guide was agreed with the Council.

- » Central Bedfordshire
- » East Northamptonshire
- » Huntingdonshire
- » Luton
- » Milton Keynes
- » Wellingborough

Map 1 - Neighbouring Local Authorities Interviewed



## Survey of Travelling Communities

- 3.9 Through the desk-based research and the stakeholder interviews, ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites/yards and encampments in the study area and attempted to complete an interview with the residents on all occupied pitches and plots. In order to gather robust information to

use to assess households against the planning definition of a Traveller multiple visits were made to households where it was initially not possible to conduct an interview because they were not in or not available.

- 3.10 Our experience suggests that an attempt to interview households on all pitches is more robust, as opposed to a sample based approach which often leads to an under-estimate of need - an approach which is regularly challenged by the Planning Inspectorate and at planning appeals.
- 3.11 ORS worked closely with the Council to ensure that the interviews collected all the necessary information to support the study. The questions that were used have been updated to take account of recent changes to PPTS and to collect the information ORS feel is necessary to apply the planning definition. All pitches and plots were visited by members of our dedicated team of experienced interviewers who work solely on our GTAA studies across England and Wales. They conducted semi-structured interviews with residents to determine their current demographic characteristics, their current or future accommodation needs, whether there is any over-crowding or the presence of concealed households and travelling characteristics (to meet the in PPTS (2015)). Interviewers also sought to identify contacts living in bricks and mortar to interview, as well as an overall assessment of each site to determine any opportunities for intensification or expansion to meet future needs.
- 3.12 They also sought information from residents on the type of pitches they may require in the future – for example private or socially rented, together with any features they may wish to be provided on a new pitch or site.
- 3.13 Where it was not possible to undertake an interview, staff sought to capture as much information as possible about each pitch from sources including neighbouring residents and site management (if present).

## Engagement with Bricks and Mortar Households

- 3.14 The 2011 Census recorded just 36 households that identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller who live in a house or flat in Bedford Borough.
- 3.15 ORS applied a rigorous approach to making contact with bricks and mortar households as this is a common issue raised at Local Plan examinations and planning appeals. Contacts were identified through a range of sources including the interviews with people on existing sites and yards, intelligence from the Council and housing providers (see below), and adverts on social media (including the Friends, Families and Travellers Facebook group).
  - » **Council Site Waiting List:** A letter was sent to all households on the list asking them to contact ORS if they had any accommodation needs.
  - » **Registered Providers:** ORS contacted 24 housing providers who manage accommodation in Bedford Borough; only one responded to confirm they are not aware of any Gypsy and Traveller households.
- 3.16 As a rule, we do not extrapolate the findings from our fieldwork with bricks and mortar households up to the total estimated bricks and mortar population as a whole as in our experience this leads to a significant over-estimate of the number of households wishing to move to a site or a yard. We work on the assumption that all those wishing to move will make their views known to us based on the wide range of publicity we will put in place. Thus we are seeking to shift the burden of responsibility on to

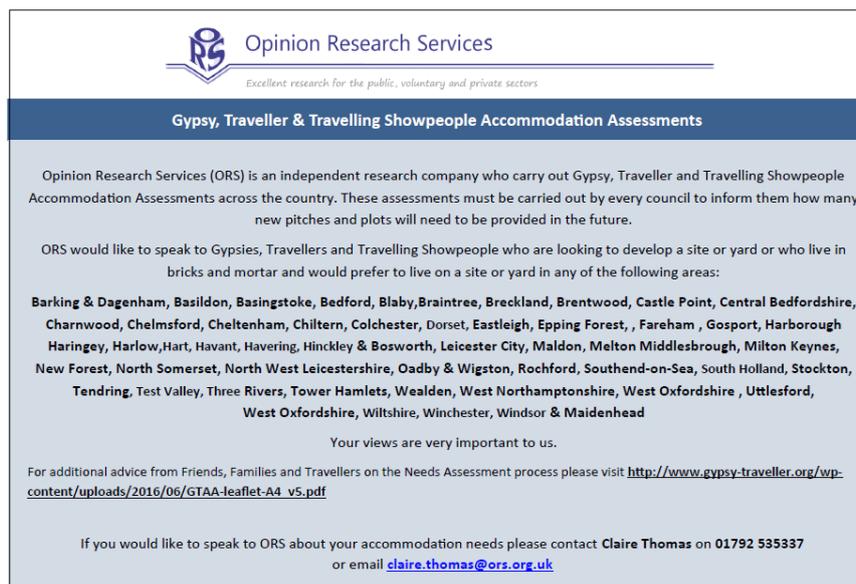
those living in bricks and mortar through demonstrating disproportionate efforts to make them aware of the study.

Figure 6 – Bricks and Mortar Adverts



**Friends, Families and Travellers**  
21 September at 09:01 · ©

Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments  
If you would like to speak to ORS about your accommodation needs please contact Claire Thomas on 01792 535337 or email [claire.thomas@ors.org.uk](mailto:claire.thomas@ors.org.uk)  
Opinion Research Services (ORS) is an independent research company who carry out Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments across the country. These assessments must be carried out by every council to inform them how many new pitches and plots will need to be provided in the future.  
ORS would like to speak to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are looking to develop a site or yard or who live in bricks and mortar and would prefer to live on a site or yard in any of the following areas:  
Barking & Dagenham, Basildon, Basingstoke, Bedford, Blaby, Braintree, Breckland, Brentwood, Castle Point, Central Bedfordshire, Charnwood, Chelmsford, Cheltenham, Chiltern, Colchester, Dorset, Eastleigh, Epping Forest, , Fareham , Gosport, Harborough Haringey, Harlow, Hart, Havant, Havering, Hinckley & Bosworth, Leicester City, Maldon, Melton Middlesbrough, Milton Keynes, New Forest, North Somerset, North West Leicestershire, Oadby & Wigston, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, South Holland, Stockton, Tendring, Test Valley, Three Rivers, Tower Hamlets, Wealden, West Northamptonshire, West Oxfordshire , Uttlesford, West Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Winchester, Windsor & Maidenhead  
Your views are very important to us.  
For additional advice from Friends, Families and Travellers on the Needs Assessment process please visit [http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/.../06/GTAA-leaflet-A4\\_v5.pdf](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/.../06/GTAA-leaflet-A4_v5.pdf)



 **Opinion Research Services**  
*Excellent research for the public, voluntary and private sectors*

**Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments**

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ORS would like to speak to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are looking to develop a site or yard or who live in bricks and mortar and would prefer to live on a site or yard in any of the following areas:

**Barking & Dagenham, Basildon, Basingstoke, Bedford, Blaby, Braintree, Breckland, Brentwood, Castle Point, Central Bedfordshire, Charnwood, Chelmsford, Cheltenham, Chiltern, Colchester, Dorset, Eastleigh, Epping Forest, , Fareham , Gosport, Harborough Haringey, Harlow, Hart, Havant, Havering, Hinckley & Bosworth, Leicester City, Maldon, Melton Middlesbrough, Milton Keynes, New Forest, North Somerset, North West Leicestershire, Oadby & Wigston, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, South Holland, Stockton, Tendring, Test Valley, Three Rivers, Tower Hamlets, Wealden, West Northamptonshire, West Oxfordshire , Uttlesford, West Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Winchester, Windsor & Maidenhead**

Your views are very important to us.

For additional advice from Friends, Families and Travellers on the Needs Assessment process please visit [http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/GTAA-leaflet-A4\\_v5.pdf](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/GTAA-leaflet-A4_v5.pdf)

If you would like to speak to ORS about your accommodation needs please contact **Claire Thomas** on **01792 535337** or email [claire.thomas@ors.org.uk](mailto:claire.thomas@ors.org.uk)

## Timing of the Fieldwork

- 3.17 ORS are fully aware of the transient nature of many travelling communities and subsequent seasonal variations in site and yard occupancy. Due time constraints however, the fieldwork commenced during the travelling season in August 2016, but continued through September when households that had been away travelling had returned to sites and yards.

## Waiting Lists

- 3.18 There are two public sites in Bedford Borough. Information was sought about households on waiting lists for these sites to identify how many were already living on the sites (to help eliminate double-counting of need), to identify how many live in bricks and mortar, to identify any who may be living on unauthorised encampments, and to identify how many currently live outside of Bedford Borough.

## Calculating Current and Future Need

- 3.19 The primary change introduced by PPTS (2015) in relation to the assessment of need is the change in the definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson for planning purposes. Through the site interviews, ORS sought to collect information necessary to assess each household against the planning definition. As the PPTS is still relatively recent only a small number of relevant appeal decisions have been issued by the Planning Inspectorate as to how the planning definition should be applied – however (see Paragraph 2.23) these support the view that households need to be able to demonstrate that they travel for work purposes to meet the planning definition and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so.
- 3.20 To identify need, PPTS (2015) requires an assessment for current and future pitch requirements, but does not provide a methodology for this. However, as with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future needs of the population.

## Applying the Planning Definition

- 3.21 When the household survey was completed, the outcomes from the questions on travelling were used to determine the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). The same definition issue applies to Travelling Showpeople as to Gypsies and Travellers. Interviews were also completed with households in Bedford Borough in 2015 as part the GTAA (PPTS (2015) was issued prior to the report being completed and a new round of fieldwork was commissioned)). Where it was not possible to complete interviews information was sought to confirm whether the same households were still living on the pitches. Where they were information to determine travelling status was used from the previous fieldwork.
- 3.22 Households that need to be considered in the GTAA fall under one of three classifications that will determine whether their housing needs will need to be assessed in the GTAA. Only those households that meet, or may meet the planning definition need to be included in the GTAA:
- » Households that travel under the planning definition.
  - » Households that have ceased to travel temporarily under the planning definition.
  - » Households where an interview was not possible who may fall under the planning definition.
- 3.23 Whilst the needs of those households that do not meet the planning definition do not need to be included in the GTAA, they provide the Council with a component of need to consider as part of their work on SHMA. (see **Appendix C**)

## Unknown Households

- 3.24 As well as calculating need for households that meet the planning definition, the needs of the households where an interview was not completed (either due to refusal to be interviewed or households that were not present during the fieldwork period) need to be considered as part of the GTAA where they are believed to be ethnic Gypsies and Travellers who **may** meet the planning definition. Whilst there is no law or guidance that sets out how the needs of these households should be addressed, an approach has been taken that seeks an estimate of potential need from these households. This will be a maximum additional need figure over and above the need identified for households that do meet the planning definition.
- 3.25 The estimate seeks to identify potential current and future need from many pitches known to be temporary or unauthorised, and through new household formation. For the latter the national rate of 1.5% has been used as the demographics of residents are unknown. This approach is consistent with the outcomes of a recent Planning Appeal where access to a site was not possible but basic information was known about the number of households residing there. (Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/Z6950/A/14/2212012).
- 3.26 Should further information be made available to the Council that will allow for the planning definition to be applied, these households could either form a confirmed component of need to be addressed through the GTAA or the SHMA.
- 3.27 ORS are of the opinion that it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not households where an interview was not completed meet the planning definition based on the outcomes of households where an interview was completed.
- 3.28 However, data that has been collected from over 1,800 household interviews that have been completed by ORS since the changes to PPTS in 2015 suggests that overall approximately 10% of households who have been interviewed meet the planning definition (this rises to 70% for Travelling Showpeople based on over 250 interviews that have been completed) – and in some local authorities, particularly London Boroughs, 100% of households do not meet the planning definition.
- 3.29 ORS are not implying that this is an Official National Statistic - rather a national statistic based on the outcomes of our fieldwork since the introduction of PPTS (2015). It is estimated that there are between 12,000-14,000 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in England and we have spoken to over 12% of them at a representative range of sites and just over 10% meet the planning definition. ORS also asked similar questions on travelling in over 2,000 pre-PPTS (2015) household interviews and also found that 10% of households would have met the PPTS (2015) planning definition. It is ORS' view therefore that this is the most comprehensive national statistic in relation to households that meet the planning definition in PPTS (2015) and should be seen as a robust statistical figure.
- 3.30 This would suggest that it is likely that only a small proportion of the potential need identified from these households will need conditioned Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority will need to be addressed through the SHMA.
- 3.31 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with unknown Travellers in Local Plan policies as it is unlikely that all of this need will need to be addressed through the provision of Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan policies, the Council could consider the use of a specific site allocation/protection policy for those households that do meet the planning

definition, together with a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition. An assessment of need for unknown Travellers can be found in **Appendix B**.

## Non-Travelling Households

<sup>3.32</sup> Whilst households who do not travel fall outside the planning definition of a Traveller, Romany Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers may be able to demonstrate a right to culturally appropriate accommodation under the Equality Act (2010). In addition, provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act (2016) now include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Draft Guidance<sup>4</sup> related to this section of the Act has been published setting out how the government would want local housing authorities to undertake this assessment and it is the same as the GTAA assessment process. The implication is therefore that the housing needs of any Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller will need to be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of the area, for example through the SHMA process, and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans. An assessment of need for Travellers who do not meet the planning definition can be found in Appendix C.

## Supply of Pitches

<sup>3.33</sup> The first stage of the assessment sought to determine the number of occupied, vacant and potentially available supply in the study area:

- » Current vacant pitches.
- » Pitches currently with planning consent due to be developed within 5 years.
- » Pitches vacated by people moving to housing.
- » Pitches vacated by people moving from the study area (out-migration).

## Current Need

<sup>3.34</sup> The second stage was to identify components of current need, which is not necessarily the need for additional pitches because they may be able to be addressed by space already available in the study area. This is made up of the following. It is important to address issues of double counting:

- » Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not anticipated.
- » Households on unauthorised encampments for which planning permission is not expected.
- » Concealed, doubled-up or over-crowded households (including single adults).
- » Households in bricks and mortar wishing to move to sites.
- » Households in need on waiting lists for public sites.

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<sup>4</sup> "Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats." (March 2016)

## Future Need

- 3.35 The final stage was to identify components of future need. This includes the following four components:
- » Older teenage children requiring a pitch of their own.
  - » Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions.
  - » New household formation.
  - » In-migration.
- 3.36 Household formation rates are often the subject of challenge at appeals or examinations. We agree with the position now being taken by DCLG and firmly believe that any household formation rates should use a robust local evidence base, rather than simply relying on precedent. This is set out in more detail later in Chapter 7 of this report.
- 3.37 All of these components of supply and need are presented in easy to understand tables which identify the overall net need for current and future accommodation for both Gypsies and Travellers. This has proven to be a robust model for identifying needs. The residential and transit pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers are identified separately and the needs are identified in 5 year periods to 2035. These run from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March with the first year being 2016/17.

## Pitch Turnover

- 3.38 Some assessments of need make use of pitch turnover as an ongoing component of supply. ORS do not agree with this approach or about making any assumptions about annual turnover rates. This is an approach that usually ends up with a significant under-estimate of need as in the majority of cases vacant pitches on sites are not available to meet any additional need. The use of pitch turnover has been the subject of a number of Inspectors Decisions, for example APP/J3720/A/13/2208767 found a GTAA to be unsound when using pitch turnover and concluded:

*West Oxfordshire Council relies on a GTAA published in 2013. This identifies an immediate need for 6 additional pitches. However, the GTAA methodology treats pitch turnover as a component of supply. This is only the case if there is net outward migration yet no such scenario is apparent in West Oxfordshire. Based on the evidence before me I consider the underlying criticism of the GTAA to be justified and that unmet need is likely to be higher than that in the findings in the GTAA.*

- 3.39 In addition, a GTAA Best Practice Guide was produced in June 2016 by a number of organisations including Friends, Families and Travellers, the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit, the York Travellers Trust, the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, Garden Court Chambers and Leeds GATE concluded that:

*Assessments involving any form of pitch turnover in their supply relies upon making assumptions; a practice best avoided. Turnover is naturally very difficult to assess accurately and in practice does not contribute meaningfully to additional supply so should be very carefully assessed in line with local trends. Mainstream housing assessments are not based on the assumption that turnover within the existing stock can provide for general housing needs.*

- 3.40 As such, other than current vacant pitches on sites that are known to be available or planned moves, pitch turnover has not been considered as a component of supply in this GTAA.

## Transit Provision

- <sup>3.41</sup> PPTS (2015) also requires an assessment of the need for any transit sites or stopping places. While the majority of Gypsies and Travellers have permanent bases either on Gypsy and Traveller sites or in bricks and mortar and no longer travel, other members of the community either travel permanently or for part of the year. Due to the mobile nature of the population, a range of sites or management approaches can be developed to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers as they move through different areas.
- » Transit sites
  - » Temporary/Emergency stopping places
  - » Temporary (seasonal) sites
  - » Negotiated Stopping Agreements
- <sup>3.42</sup> In order to investigate the potential need for transit provision when undertaking work to support the study, ORS sought to undertake analysis of any records of unauthorised sites and encampments, as well as information from the CLG Caravan Count. The outcomes of the interviews with Council Officers, Officers from neighbouring planning authorities and other stakeholders were also be taken into consideration when determining this element of need in the study area.

## 4. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Population

### Introduction

- 4.1 One of the main considerations of this study is to provide evidence to support the provision of pitches and plots to meet the current and future accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. A pitch is an area normally occupied by one household, which typically contains enough space for one or two caravans, but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers. For Travelling Showpeople, the most common descriptions used are a plot for the space occupied by one household and a yard for a collection of plots which are typically exclusively occupied by Travelling Showpeople. Throughout this study the main focus is upon how many extra pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople are required in the study area.
- 4.2 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of a Gypsy and Traveller site is the publicly-provided residential site, which is provided by a Local Authority or by a Registered Provider (usually a Housing Association). Pitches on public sites can be obtained through signing up to a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the licensees (similar to social housing).
- 4.3 The alternative to public residential sites are private residential sites and yards for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on existing private sites. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing. Generally, the majority of Travelling Showpeople yards are privately owned and managed.
- 4.4 The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population also has other forms of sites due to its mobile nature. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a maximum period of residence which can vary from a few days or weeks to a period of months. An alternative to a transit site is an emergency or negotiated stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time someone can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities. Both of these two types of site are designed to accommodate, for a temporary period, Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople whilst they travel.
- 4.5 Further considerations for the Gypsy and Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers or with the approval of the land owner, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential purposes. Unauthorised encampments occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers.

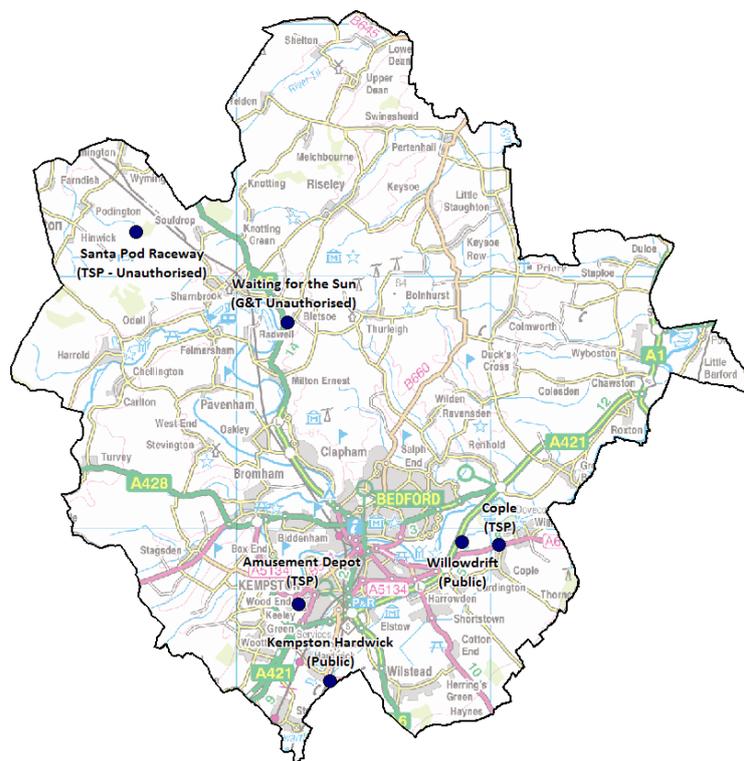
## Sites and Yards in Bedford Borough

- 4.6 There are currently two public sites with 36 pitches; no private sites with permanent planning permission; no pitches on sites with temporary planning permission; no pitches on sites that are tolerated for planning purposes; one unauthorised site with four pitches; one private Travelling Showpeople yard with five plots; and one unauthorised Travelling Showpeople yard with one plot. There is no transit provision in Bedford Borough. Further details can be found in Chapter 6 and **Appendix D**.

Figure 7 - Total amount of provision in Bedford Borough

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots
Private with permanent planning permission	0	0
Private sites with temporary planning permission	0	0
Public Sites (Council and Registered Providers)	2	36
Unauthorised sites	1	4
Public Transit Provision	0	0
Private Transit Provision	0	0
Travelling Showpeople Provision <sup>5</sup>	2	6

Map 2 – Indicative location of sites and yards in Bedford Borough



<sup>5</sup> There are also 6 Travelling Showpeople plots at Cople that have planning permission but are not occupied.

## Caravan Count

- 4.7 Another source of information available on the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population is the bi-annual Traveller Caravan Count which is conducted by each Local Authority in England on a specific date in January and July of each year, and reported to DCLG. This is a statistical count of the number of *caravans* on both authorised and unauthorised sites across England. With effect from July 2013, DCLG has renamed the 'Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count' as the 'Traveller Caravan Count.'
- 4.8 As this count is of caravans and not households, it makes it more difficult to interpret because it does not count pitches or resident households. The count is merely a 'snapshot in time' conducted by the Local Authority on a specific day, and any unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates will not be recorded. Likewise, any caravans that are away from sites on the day of the count will not be included. As such it is not considered appropriate to use the outcomes from the Traveller Caravan Count in the calculation of current and future need as the information collected during the site visits is seen as more robust and fit-for-purpose. However, the Caravan Count data has been used to *support* the identification of the need to provide for transit provision and this is set out in Chapter 7.

# 5. Stakeholder Interviews

## Introduction

- 5.1 To be consistent with the guidance set out in PPTS and methodology used in other GTAA studies undertaken by ORS a stakeholder engagement programme was completed to complement the information gathered through interviews with members of the Travelling Community.
- 5.2 The Council identified stakeholders including registered housing providers, Travelling Showpeople representatives, key partners, and relevant Council Officers. Officers from neighbouring local authorities Central Bedfordshire, East Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, Luton, Milton Keynes, and Wellingborough were also interviewed to support the duty-to-cooperate. A response was also received from the Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit.
- 5.3 Organisations such as Friends and Families Trust and the Society of Independent Roundabout Proprietors, although willing to take part, said they do not operate in the area or there are other organisations representing Travelling communities in the area.
- 5.4 ORS made every effort to contact the Gypsy Council but were unable to complete an interview during the study period.
- 5.5 ORS reviewed the list of contacts for consistency with other studies to ensure that it was comprehensive and fair. The number and range of responses received is viewed to be satisfactory and consistent with similar GTAA's ORS have completed.
- 5.6 Themes covered in the interviews included: current accommodation provision and facilities, perception of need, cross-boundary issues and unauthorised encampments.
- 5.7 Importantly, this element of the study provided an opportunity for the research team to speak to stakeholders who may house Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in bricks and mortar housing. This is important as it enables identifying accommodation needs resulting from this group which may otherwise be hidden. The following registered providers responded:
  - » Guinness Trust
  - » Hanover
  - » Stonewater
- 5.8 There are issues in relation to data protection, and in order to protect the anonymity of those who took part, this section presents a summary of the views expressed and verbatim comments have not been used.
- 5.9 The views expressed in this section of the report represent a balanced summary of the responses given by stakeholders. In all cases they reflect the views of the individual concerned, rather than the official policy of their employer/organisation.

## Bedford Borough - Main Findings

### Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers

- 5.10 David Couttie Associates (DCA) undertook a Bedfordshire and Luton GTAA in 2006; this covered Bedford Borough, Mid Bedfordshire, Luton and South Bedfordshire. The report recommended the provision of up to 10 households being provided with permanent site accommodation and up to 45 emergency stopping places across the study area (2006-2011). In 2007 an appendix to the Report was published detailing the needs of Travelling Showpeople; a need for seven plots (2007-2012) was identified.
- 5.11 A further Assessment was undertaken in 2010 to cover the Plan period 2010-2021. The Assessment estimated a need for 18 additional pitches required by 2021 in addition to two pitches already planned at the Kempston Hardwick site. The most recent study undertaken in 2012 estimated a need for 20 additional pitches and this has been met by the provision of six additional pitches at Kempston Hardwick and a new public site (Willow Drift) for 14 pitches.
- 5.12 In addition to the 2007 Travelling Showpeople appendix a considerable amount of work was undertaken by the Council in 2014 to determine which Travelling Showpeople households had a housing need and what need there was from households with a local connection to Bedford Borough. Because of the number of GTAAs undertaken by the Borough, the issue of survey fatigue was raised by stakeholders.
- 5.13 There are two public sites: Kempston Hardwick (22 pitches) and Willow Drift (14 pitches); the Willow Drift site is managed by the Council in consultation with a residents' association. The majority of stakeholders said that the sites, especially Willow Drift, are in good condition and provide facilities such as amenity blocks. It was said that children living on the sites regularly attend school and when travelling, the Council's Education Welfare Officer arranges dual registration.
- 5.14 There is a low turnover of pitches and there is a waiting list for both sites. Kempston Hardwick is said to be less popular than Willow Drift. The list is regularly reviewed to check the status of applicants to ensure information is up-to-date; there is also a local connection criteria based policy.
- 5.15 Those who knew of the sites had not heard of any issues of overcrowding or concealed households and there are not known to be any management issues. However, those more directly involved confirmed there are some issues of overcrowding and some ASB at Kempston Hardwick and these are being resolved. The majority of stakeholders had heard of these sites and were aware they provide provision for Travellers needs within the Borough.
- 5.16 There are no authorised private sites and of the small number of planning applications submitted in recent years only the application for the Waiting for the Sun site was accompanied by any evidence of need. This unauthorised site has been taken into account. There are also no transit sites in the area. There are no tolerated sites or sites with temporary planning.
- 5.17 Based on previous GTAAs and the current waiting list stakeholders believe there is a need for another small public site of approximately the same size as Willow Drift. However, some stakeholders questioned whether the waiting list is evidence of need or demand.
- 5.18 Stakeholders did not know whether there is a need for private sites or whether those seeking sites had sufficient finances to buy land, seek planning and/or to develop sites. Some stakeholders said few

planning applications had been submitted and they could only presume this is because buying land and developing sites is too expensive. Another indication of affordability, although less so at Willow Drift, is that residents living on public sites are more likely to be in receipt of benefits.

## Bricks and Mortar

- 5.19 ORS made every attempt to involve housed Travellers in this study but the majority of stakeholders said housed Travellers would be unlikely to engage in the process because they do not want to be identified, they do not wish to move to a site and/or there is a level of distrust/suspicion of public authorities.
- 5.20 All those interviewed were asked whether they could help ORS to contact Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar housing in the area. However, only five interviewees could identify households and letters were passed on. No responses were received.
- 5.21 The majority of stakeholders said there are Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar in Bedford Borough. One stakeholder said they support one family living in bricks and mortar and another respondent said they visit a few families living in bricks and mortar but none are said to want to move to a site, however this information could not be verified.
- 5.22 Three Registered Providers (RPs) responded and said they have their own waiting list for the properties they have in the area. They confirmed that they are able to monitor ethnicity but data was dependent on whether applicants completed the section in the application form. Although they have equality and diversity policies none are specific to Gypsies and Travellers. RPs interviewed said anecdotally there may be some Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in their properties. There were no specific issues highlighted and no changes had been made to policies or management procedures. RPs have equality and diversity training for new and existing staff on a regular basis, but no specific training relating to Gypsy and Traveller communities had been carried out.
- 5.23 The majority of stakeholders were not aware of any specific support for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar. The Council's GTLO provides support to those living on site and to those living in bricks and mortar. The support varies from assisting with benefit claims and signposting to appropriate advice/support. There is the opportunity for those living in bricks and mortar accommodation to register for pitches on the Council's site waiting list.

## Unauthorised Encampments

- 5.24 The Council employs a full time Liaison Officer who deals with unauthorised encampments in the area. Stakeholders were mainly of the opinion that encampments are infrequent and irregular and the numbers have decreased. When encampments occur they are usually during the summer months (May-September) because Travellers are on holiday or they are travelling through for a specific event e.g. family wedding.
- 5.25 The majority of stakeholders said there is no transit provision in the area; some stakeholders did not know the transit site next to Willow Drift was closed. Stakeholders directly involved with Gypsies and Travellers confirmed that the transit provision has been closed for some time due to the development of Willow Drift. Some concerns were raised about re-opening a transit facility next to the site because of potential management and cohesion issues.

- 5.26 There was no evidence to suggest that not having a transit site in the area is having an impact on neighbouring boroughs. However, it was suggested that having some kind of transit provision would be helpful, as there is little provision across Bedfordshire or Northamptonshire.
- 5.27 Locations where encampments have occurred include:
- » Jubilee Park
  - » Land adjacent to the cemetery in Bedford Borough
  - » Interchange Retail Park
  - » Norse Road
  - » Asgard Road
  - » Meadow Lane
  - » Ampthill Road
- 5.28 The majority of stakeholders believe that some kind of transit provision would be of use to the Council; it was suggested that open grassland could be used on an occasional basis. Some stakeholders said transit provision should provide basic facilities which Travellers should pay for. Having transit provision would also ensure Travellers, especially children, would be safe and if a need for support was identified this could more easily be arranged. It was also thought that having transit provision would have less of an impact on the settled community than an unauthorised encampment. A minority of stakeholders believe transit provision is not needed due to the low levels of encampments.

## Cross-boundary Issues and the Duty-to-Cooperate

- 5.29 There was little evidence to suggest that Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople are moving between boroughs other than when Bedford Borough provided Travellers from Fenland with pitches whilst their site was refurbished. In the past there may have been some Travellers moving to and from Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough.
- 5.30 Stakeholders reported that there is some strategic partnership working across the area in relation to sharing skills and knowledge. Examples given include:
- » Council Enforcement Officers share updates of encampments e.g. Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire;
  - » GTLO officers across the eastern region attend NAGTO meetings held in South Cambridgeshire every quarter;
  - » Information exchange, support and liaison e.g. waiting list referrals between Bedford Borough, Milton Keynes, Central Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire;
  - » There is a partnership group chaired by the Police which meet to discuss unauthorised encampments and joint protocols.
- 5.31 Some stakeholders suggested there is additional scope for the Council to engage in joint working with neighbouring authorities in particular. The following benefits to joint working are highlighted below:
- » It enables opportunities to cross analyse information of needs evidenced in GTAA's and discuss joint opportunities to meet unmet needs;

- » There is an ability to share best practice and provide a consistent approach to policy formulation and review;
- » It could provide a joint response to transit provision which may decrease encampments and ease tensions between the settled community and Travellers across a wider area;
- » The ability to share staff resources.

5.32 There was no evidence to suggest that neighbouring authorities are looking to Bedford Borough to meet unmet need for sites in the Bedford Borough area.

5.33 Stakeholders were mainly of the view that Bedford is complying with the Duty-to-Cooperate and neighbouring authorities are too.

## Future Issues to Consider

5.34 In relation to the future issues for the Council to consider the majority of stakeholders confirmed it is dependent on the results of the GTAA and levels of need identified. If a need for pitches is the outcome, it was suggested that enough sites should be provided to meet identified need especially for those who are local. The priority should also support those who have the financial means to enable their own site provision in the area.

5.35 The majority of stakeholders believe a priority for the Council could be to provide another public site similar in size to Willow Drift. This is because of demand on the site waiting list, population growth on the existing sites and the inability to afford land to develop private sites.

5.36 The majority of stakeholders believe there is a need for some kind of transit provision in the area. Some suggested this should be privately managed by a member of the Gypsy or Traveller community rather than managed by the Council. Some stakeholders also said the Council should consider those who are considered vulnerable on roadside encampments as a priority e.g. children. A minority of stakeholders do not believe transit provision is a priority because of the low levels of encampments.

## Neighbouring Authorities

5.37 As stated in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Local Authorities have a duty-to-cooperate (S.110 Localism Act 2011) on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. In order to explore issues relating to cross-border working, ORS interviewed Bedford Borough Officers, Northamptonshire County Council and Officers from six neighbouring authorities:

- |                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| » Central Bedfordshire  | » Luton          |
| » East Northamptonshire | » Milton Keynes  |
| » Huntingdonshire       | » Wellingborough |

## Central Bedfordshire

### Accommodation

- 5.38 There are currently three public sites (47 pitches), a number of private sites, tolerated sites and unauthorised developments. With regard to Travelling Showpeople there are three yards with planning permission (eight caravans), three tolerated yards (five caravans) and one unauthorised yard (three caravans) in the area.
- 5.39 ORS undertook a GTAA back in January 2014 details of which are available on the Council's website; this shows the needs for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in the area. This was subsequently updated following changes introduced by PPTS in 2015. Following comments made by the Planning Inspectorate the Council's Local Plan was withdrawn in September 2014 and has therefore not been subject to a Section 78 appeal and/or a Local Plan examination. Under the Duty-to-Cooperate the Council consulted with all neighbouring authorities.
- 5.40 The Council has written a Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Document (2014) which was based on the needs identified in the Council's previous GTAA.
- 5.41 The Council do not monitor information regarding Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar accommodation. In order to ensure tenancies are sustainable the Council provides an additional level of support for these communities moving into Council accommodation. Consideration of what movement and needs there may be from these communities living in bricks and mortar and wishing to move to sites in the area and vice versa will be included as part of the methodology in the Council's GTAA.

### Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.42 The Council had a number of Duty-to-Cooperate meetings as part of their previous Local Plan process with adjoining authorities; no unmet need was identified but as the process is to begin again the same co-operation and joint working is likely to take place. There are also meetings held on a sub-regional basis in terms of housing delivery across a wider area and this is likely to include any needs arising from Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 5.43 The Council has regular illegal encampments on Council owned land which usually occur May – September. If locations are regularly used, the Council takes measures to secure sites as soon as possible. The Council has a Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. The Council has no transit provision in its area.

## East Northamptonshire

### Accommodation

- 5.44 There are two privately owned Gypsy sites and one yard for Travelling Showpeople in the area. As far as the Council knows the sites are meeting the needs of residents and there are no issues with regards to overcrowding or concealed households
- 5.45 There are no unauthorised, tolerated or sites with temporary planning in the area.

- 5.46 A Northamptonshire GTAA was published in 2008 and the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) commissioned an update published in 2011. The update covers the local authority areas of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough, collectively known as North Northamptonshire; the update forms part of the evidence base for the North Northamptonshire JCS 2011-2031. The GTAA update evidenced the Council has a need for seven permanent pitches, four Travelling Showpeople plots and three transit pitches (2012-2022). The evidence of need has been incorporated into the Council's Policy 31.
- 5.47 The Council is confident that it will be able to meet the needs identified through windfall sites, given that the low quantum of locally identified need.
- 5.48 The Council is not aware of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar except where this has been their choice and there have been no instances of these communities presenting themselves to the Council as homeless.

## Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.49 The Council undertakes regular Duty-to-Cooperate conferences and meetings with neighbouring councils. Within the North Northamptonshire context meetings are held as part of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). No cross-boundary issues between East Northamptonshire and Bedford Borough have been raised. The only connection is a site owner in Bedford Borough who also owns a site in East Northamptonshire.
- 5.50 It is reported there are low numbers of unauthorised encampments in the area.
- 5.51 There are low levels of encampments and evidence of need in the area and in terms of priority for these communities the Council will look to update the GTAA in due course.

## Huntingdonshire

### Accommodation

- 5.52 The Council has one public site managed by an RP (20 pitches) and a number of private sites (30 pitches) in the area. It is believed the sites are meeting the needs of residents and there are no specific issues relating to overcrowding or concealed households. It is said that in the future there may be some need for additional public provision from future growth, but this is anecdotal.
- 5.53 In addition to the provision listed above there is one potential Travelling Showpeople yard (4 pitches) and a further three applications on private sites (nine pitches) yet to be determined.
- 5.54 There are two unauthorised sites (three pitches) and one site with temporary planning permission (11 pitches) and no transit sites in the Council's area.
- 5.55 In 2009 the Council undertook a Land Availability Assessment which identified a number of sites, including some of the sites with temporary planning permission, and these were consulted upon. Prior to consultation, five sites were already identified as unsuitable; following further technical analysis none of the sites identified were progressed due to specific issues e.g. flood risk and access difficulties.
- 5.56 The Cambridge Sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) was undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council and published in 2011. Nine authorities participated:

Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Forest Heath, Huntingdonshire, King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Peterborough, South Cambridgeshire and St Edmundsbury.

- 5.57 The GTANA evidenced a need in Huntingdonshire for 53 permanent pitches for 2011-31 which has been increased to 64 permanent pitches (2011-36) in line with the draft Local Plan period. There was no identified need for transit or Travelling Showpeople provision evidenced.
- 5.58 Following changes to PPTS in 2015 Cambridgeshire – together with King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Peterborough and West Suffolk – commissioned ORS to complete a new GTAA. This was published in September 2016 and identified a need for nine additional pitches to meet the needs of households that meet the planning definition; up to 18 additional pitches for unknown households that may meet the new definition; and 38 additional pitches for households that do not meet the planning definition.
- 5.59 The Council is working to meet the needs identified through planning policy and encouraging owners of sites with temporary planning permissions to convert to permanent permissions where appropriate. The Council received feedback from private site owners stating they are supportive of the planning route rather than a sites allocation approach. By doing this, 26 new pitches have been established since 2011 which has made a considerable contribution to meeting the needs evidenced. In addition to the four planning applications awaiting determination there may be an opportunity to convert the one site with temporary planning permission (11 pitches) to permanent.
- 5.60 The Council has not been asked to meet the needs of neighbouring areas, nor is it aware of any neighbouring borough having unmet needs which cannot be met. A replacement GTANA is to be commissioned in autumn 2015 jointly amongst several Cambridgeshire authorities which may result in revised targets and will consider the distribution of need amongst the districts participating.

## Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.61 The Council works jointly with neighbouring authorities wherever possible and would be interested in discussing experiences and findings of neighbouring authorities' GTAA/GTANAs.
- 5.62 There are no cross-boundary links or cross-boundary issues between Huntingdonshire and Bedford Borough regarding Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople as far as known.
- 5.63 The Council has few encampments and the GTANA did not identify a need for transit provision so it is not considered a priority in the area. The nearest transit site to Huntingdonshire is a site at Willingham in South Cambridgeshire. The only point that may be considered is whether there is a need for transit provision/emergency stopping places along the A1.
- 5.64 Council officers attend various joint working groups within Cambridgeshire, but these do not include Bedford Borough.

## Luton

### Accommodation

- 5.65 The Council has one public site (20 pitches), no transit provision, no private sites and seven yards (two plots) for Travelling Showpeople. The sites and yards generally meet the needs of residents but elements of the public site may be refurbished in the future. There is also a mobile homes park in the area where it is known some Gypsies and Travellers reside.

- 5.66 There are no unauthorised developments, tolerated sites or sites with temporary planning permission in the area.
- 5.67 ORS has recently undertaken a GTAA for the Council – this found that no Gypsy or Traveller households met the planning definition of a Traveller. Under the Duty-to-Cooperate the Council consulted with all neighbouring authorities.
- 5.68 The Council is aware of Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar in their area and there are some waiting for housing on the waiting list.

## Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.69 The Council works jointly with neighbouring authorities wherever possible. However, there are no clear cross-boundary links nor cross-boundary issues between Luton and Bedford Borough regarding Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.
- 5.70 The Council has few encampments and the ones that occur are due to a couple of local families moving around the area that are said to want permanent rather than transit provision. The Council uses enforcement to move the families on, but they regularly use two parks and highway land in the area.
- 5.71 The Council is aware that Bedfordshire Police is looking to set up an Encampment Joint Policy Group and Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Bedford Borough councils have been invited to attend.
- 5.72 The priority for the Council will be to upgrade its public site, publish the GTAA and look to meet any need evidenced through the progression of its Local Plan.

## Milton Keynes

### Accommodation

- 5.73 The Council has two public sites (18 pitches) and no private or transit sites. There are no private Travelling Showpeople yards in Milton Keynes. As far as is known there are no issues on the two sites.
- 5.74 There are no unauthorised developments, tolerated sites or sites with temporary planning permission in the area.
- 5.75 As part of the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) ORS undertook an assessment of the needs of Gypsies and Travellers which was completed in 2016 (but not yet published). The research did not evidence any need arising for Travelling Showpeople.
- 5.76 The Council is aware of Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar in their area. The 2014 SHMA research evidenced no net movement from those wishing to move from bricks and mortar to sites.

## Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.77 The Council works jointly with neighbouring authorities wherever possible. However, they more likely to work with Central Bedfordshire than Bedford as there are no clear cross-boundary links nor cross-boundary issues between Milton Keynes and Bedford regarding Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.

- 5.78 The Council has few encampments and they have had one encampment since 2012.
- 5.79 The Council is aware there is joint working with neighbouring authorities concerning strategic housing; this often results in sub groups being formed to discuss specific issues which Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are one. In addition to this, the Council is working with Luton and others in a review of the housing market areas which Bedford is likely to be invited to participate in.
- 5.80 The priority for the Council will be to meet the needs as evidenced in the SHMA and GTAA 2016.

## Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit (CTU) on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)

### Accommodation

- 5.81 There are six public sites (78 pitches), 24 private sites (142 pitches)<sup>6</sup>, three private sites with temporary planning (five pitches), four unauthorised developments (nine pitches), 11 Travelling Showpeople yards (46 plots) and one Travelling Showpeople depot (zero plots) in the NCC area. There are no transit sites or emergency stopping places in the area.
- 5.82 NCC is not required to undertake a GTAA but the CTU were instrumental in undertaking the 2008 Northamptonshire GTAA; this has now been superseded. Northamptonshire local authorities are either undertaking their GTAs independently or are working in partnership on a housing sub regional basis.
- 5.83 The current provision of sites in Northamptonshire may not be meeting the current needs identified in local authority GTAs. The enabling of windfall private sites, although meeting some need, will not meet the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers so far identified. It is though there is a need for councils across Northamptonshire to work in partnership to help address this. It was suggested that local authorities could look to local authorities such as Corby and Kettering, who have made more progress in the identification of sites.
- 5.84 There are known to be many Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar in the area, especially in Corby, Kettering and Northampton. However, there are often issues in identifying these households when undertaking GTAs. In the past key officers such as health have helped but many officers who had the expertise and experience of working with Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople have either retired or have been made redundant; this knowledge has now been lost.

### Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.85 There are not thought to be any cross-boundary issues between NCC and Bedford Borough. In relation to encampments they occur in Northamptonshire mainly because of its geographic location, major road networks and the link with housed Travellers in the area of which there are many.
- 5.86 In terms of partnership working the CTU have some dialogue with Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officers and/or planning officers from Bedford Borough but this is unlikely to be regular. There are other partnership forums officers attend such as the East Midlands Traveller Forum.

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<sup>6</sup> This includes 10 pitches not yet developed, 1 site (25 pitches privately leased from NCC) and 1 site (2 pitches currently not occupied).

- 5.87 According to the CTU there were 145 encampments across Northamptonshire (1<sup>st</sup> April 2014–31<sup>st</sup> March 2015). Reasons why Travellers are coming to the area is because they are passing through, visiting relatives or friends in the area either living on sites or in bricks and mortar, or they have moved out/been forced to move out of bricks and mortar housing and have no permanent place. The result of this is that they circulate around the area which increases the number of encampments by the same groups.
- 5.88 The main routes Travellers use through the area are the M1, M6 and A14 before accessing minor roads. As stated there are no transit sites or emergency stopping places in the area. There is some concern over supporting the provision of transit sites because of issues around the management of sites and resource implications. It was suggested that some emergency stopping places would be considered helpful in the area.

## Wellingborough

### Accommodation

- 5.89 The Council has one public site (three pitches), two private sites (26 pitches) and four Travelling Showpeople yards (22 plots) in the area. These figures include a recent consent and one expected to be implemented shortly. The sites and yards are generally believed to meet the needs of residents.
- 5.90 There are no unauthorised developments, tolerated sites or sites with temporary planning permission in the area.
- 5.91 A Northamptonshire GTAA was published in 2008 and the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) commissioned an update published in 2011. The update covers the local authority area together with Corby, East Northamptonshire and Kettering. The GTAA update evidenced the Council has a need for nine permanent pitches (2012-2022) and two Travelling Showpeople plots (2012-2017); no need for transit provision was evidenced. The recent consent and one to be implemented shortly will mean that the need identified in the GTAA will be met. The Council has not been asked to meet the needs of neighbouring areas, nor is it aware of any neighbouring borough having unmet needs which cannot be met.
- 5.92 The Council has housed several Gypsy and Traveller households who no longer wish to live on sites and is aware of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites who have applied to the Council for housing, as they no longer wish to live on sites. As far as the Council is aware there are no Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople currently living in bricks and mortar housing who wish to live on a site.

### Cross-Boundary Issues

- 5.93 The Council works jointly with the Countywide Traveller Unit (CTU) who manages Gypsy and Traveller issues on their behalf. The Council does not keep information regarding Gypsies and Travellers in transit, however the CTU confirmed there were 23 encampments (April 2014 – March 2015) in the Wellingborough area.
- 5.94 The CTU confirmed there are no clear cross-boundary links nor cross-boundary issues between Wellingborough and Bedford Borough regarding Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.
- 5.95 As the current provision will shortly meet the need identified in the GTAA up to 2022, further provision is not a priority for Wellingborough.

## Issues to Consider

- 5.96 Dependent on the findings of the GTAA most stakeholders are of the opinion that a further public site is required in the area. It is therefore suggested that the Council works with Gypsies and Travellers to identify the type of site required and identification of a suitable location should a need be evidenced.
- 5.97 There is no public transit provision across Bedford Borough and surrounding areas. Councils will have greater flexibility by developing transit provision jointly. It is therefore recommended that the Council considers working with other local authorities to establish what needs there are for transit provision across the wider area and what solutions and shared resources may be possible. The Council/s would also be recommended to consider the different needs of Gypsies and Travellers to that of Travelling Showpeople.
- 5.98 The following recommendations could help improve services and strengthen joint working for the Council:
- » Ensure the results of the GTAA are shared and discussed with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the area and the dialogue is kept up;
  - » Ensure needs evidenced in the GTAA are met and any progression of new public, private and/or transit provision involves Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the area;
  - » Work with neighbouring boroughs on a joint approach to recording and dealing with encampments in order to share information to inform GTAA's in the future;
  - » Work with RPs in the area to improve ethnic and cultural understanding by enabling specific training, monitoring and systematic recording of needs;
  - » Work with neighbouring boroughs to improve partnership working by the setting up a joint Bedfordshire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Forum involving key partners e.g. Police, Health and Fire services;
  - » Work with neighbouring boroughs once the GTAA has been published to share experiences and plan for future site identification and resources by discussing the possible impact of any unmet need across a wider area;
  - » Work with neighbouring boroughs to discuss shared staff resources especially in areas where key staff involved in working directly with Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople have been lost due to retirement or redundancy;
  - » If the Council has land for a yard it would be recommended to contact the Showmen's Guild and Association of Independent Showmen if they have not already done so.

## Councillor and Parish Council Responses

- 5.99 To complement the Stakeholder Interviews a link to a short online questionnaire was sent to representatives from each Parish Council and to all Borough Councillors. A total of 45 responses were received from 43 Parish Councils; and a total of two responses were received from Borough Councillors. These represented two electoral wards and 27 Parish Councils.
- 5.100 A larger number of responses were received from Parish Councils where current sites are located including three from Bletsoe (Waiting for the Sun), three from Cardington (Willowdrift) and seven from Wootton (Kempston Hardwick).

- 5.101 A total of 16 respondents were aware of Gypsies and Travellers living in their ward or parish.
- 5.102 The questionnaire included questions on the following broad subject areas:
- » Dealings or relationships with Gypsies and Travellers
  - » Awareness of any particular issues in relation to Gypsies and Travellers
  - » Awareness of any Gypsy and Traveller sites
  - » Any trends with regard to Gypsies and Travellers
  - » What attracts Gypsies and Travellers to the area
  - » Any kinds of seasonal fluctuations
  - » Awareness of temporary stopping by travellers
  - » Relationship between the settled and travelling community
  - » Aware of any Travellers residing in bricks and mortar
  - » Any other comments.
- 5.103 A summary of views and responses that were submitted by Borough Councillors and Parish Council can be found below.

## Dealings with Gypsies & Travellers

- » Many have little/no dealings with Gypsies and Travellers. Some present this in a negative light.
- » No dealings or relationships with the Gypsy and Travellers in our Parish as they do not seem to integrate into village life.
- » The Travellers do not get involved in village events, so there is limited opportunity to build any relationship and we are unclear whether any children from the site attend local schools, which might help to develop better relationships.
- » Some mention negative dealings with Gypsies and Travellers.
- » We tend to have a negative relationship due to the activities of the Gypsies and Travellers e.g. Commercial activities on site which they do not have permission for, receiving waste into the site for ground works without a permit and general noise e.g. loud music, shouting, bonfires and grinding noise associated with commercial activity.
- » There have been instances of aggressive and/or anti-social behaviour on the part of the Travellers towards some members of the settled community.
- » One presents their dealings in a positive light saying that the local policing team who visit the Meadow Lane site report "excellent relations with the permanent residents".

## Awareness of any Particular Issues in relation to Gypsies and Travellers

- » Some comments referred to problems regarding ASB, litter, disturbances between individuals, noise and problems with stray animals.
- » Since 2007/2008, when the site was first occupied, a log was created by local residents which recorded instances of unauthorized activities and other intimidating behaviour towards the settled community.

- » Camping on parks and green spaces, litter, low level ASB.
- » Some also refer to issues around planning with the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Particularly relating to inequality issues around planning law between that of the Gypsy and Traveller community and the settled community and illegal encampments (in particular on land in between A421 and Cambridge Road).
- » A continuing cause of concern for those within the settled community is the lack of equality with regard to planning laws (it is not a “level playing field”), and the apparent reluctance of the Local Authority to robustly enforce breaches in the same way as they might with breaches by the settled community. Taken together these do not enhance community cohesion.
- » The Travellers set up residential mobile homes and sewage treatment plants etc. without planning permission.
- » Several say that there have been no particular issues in relation to Gypsies and Travellers.

### Awareness of any Gypsy and Traveller Sites

- » Four specific sites were identified. Each site was mentioned twice by different people. These were Bletsoe, Waiting for the Sun, Meadow Lane and Kempston Hardwick.
- » In relation to The Sun the comments relate to issues with planning permission. While one person states that it is an illegal and unauthorised site another person says that temporary planning permission is in place at the moment. Both suggest that the four pitches are not used much throughout the year.
- » We believe that the site is an opportunistic, speculative development, and the principal motivation is to obtain housing on land, which would otherwise not be available for development.
- » With regard to the other sites there does not seem to be much known about them.
- » The site is at Kempston Hardwick. As I have never had any reason to visit the site I have no idea how big it is.
- » Meadow Lane site is the only site within our Parish. I believe that there are 14 pitches at the site but I do not know the occupancy numbers.

### Any Trends or Recent Changes with regard to Gypsies and Travellers

- » Many comments state that there have been no increases in sites recently.
- » Some state that the only change has been the establishment of the Meadow Lane site.
- » One person talks about how Bletsoe site was originally supposed to be for eight pitches but this got scaled back down to four. They do not believe that there are further grounds/need for expansion at this site.

<sup>5.104</sup> Other comments include:

- » Agricultural land being used for what appears to be caravans stored there and the occasional person staying on the site.
- » There is a danger that small plots of agricultural land, on the edge of, or adjacent to, villages will be seen as potential “private” sites, leading to an increasing number of applications, whatever the

merits of a particular site. In turn this leads to prolonged appeals, often continually delayed, over many years, which further serves to frustrate local communities.

## What Attracts Gypsies and Travellers to the Area

- » Many comments refer to the fact that the cheap agricultural land with easy planning permission is what attracts Gypsy and Travellers to the area.
- » Inexpensive agricultural land available to purchase and it may be that the Gypsy and Travellers felt they would easily get permission to live there.
- » Cheap agricultural land, which can be purchased at a much lower price than land within settlement policy areas.
- » The location of this land is also seen as an attractive element to Gypsy and Travellers:
- » Near a main road without buildings overlooking it.
- » The site is fairly remote from settled sites so there is much less opportunity for friction between the two.
- » Others did not know what would attract Gypsy and Travellers to the sites.

## Awareness of Temporary Stopping by Travellers

- » Specific temporary stopping sites which were identified were: Goldington Green, land near Norse Road, Bletsoe, Waiting for the Sun, Meadow Lane, Elstow Brook, along Cambridge Road, Hillsground playing fields, Addison Park, north of the Borough C95 road and by the site of the A421 road.
- » One such encampment led to a major pollution of the Brook which was dealt with by the Environment Agency.
- » There have been some incidences when Gypsies have stayed for short periods on the grass verges around the parish. Those who have visited regularly over the years do not normally stay for long periods and mostly do not leave too much of a mess behind them.
- » Most people suggest that these sites are used fairly irregularly, ranging from every few months to once every couple of years.

## Relationship between the Settled and Travelling Community

- » Many comments suggest a negative relationship between the settled and travelling community. These relate to suspicion, hostile, tension and a lack of integration.
- » Non-travelling community are extremely suspicious of travellers with some justification. Travellers are extremely hostile.
- » Gypsies and Travellers do not integrate with the settled population in the village. The relationship is one of tolerance for many.
- » Some comments refer to inequality issues between the settled and travelling community.
- » Negative, due to the impacts of noise, activities etc. on the site and the perceived inequality of Travellers rights and the settled communities' rights. One example of this is that their children do not go to school, but if the settled community do not send their children to school for even one unauthorised day they can be fined! The fact that they can settle on sites which were previously

unavailable for the settled community and the flouting of environmental and planning regulations. This is compounded by the lack of enforcement action taken by the authorities.

- » However, some comments refer to the relationship between the two communities as being good/OK.
- » Travellers keep themselves very much to their selves so I would say OK to a point.
- » When the unlawful development of the Travellers site was first established, there was a lot of tension between the two communities. In the following years this became less.
- » Reasonably good because the Gypsy site is fairly remote so individuals do not cause too much trouble.

## Awareness of any Travellers Residing in Bricks and Mortar

- » Only one respondent was aware of any Travellers residing in bricks and mortar.

## Any Other Comments

- » Some comments refer to the location and the facility needs of Gypsies and Travellers. It is believed that they should have access to health care, schools, shops, public transport etc. Therefore, some suggest that the location of sites is best served in or outside of towns in order for them to be close to these facilities.
- » Yes, sadly the travelling community have poor health care and very poor education they need good access to many public services, health care, schools etc. As such any new sites should be near hub villages or towns with easy access to those facilities. Sites should not be allowed in inappropriate places such as fields in open country side, which has happened in the past.
- » I think Gypsy and Travellers should be accommodated in or on the edge of towns as there are no facilities or transport systems in rural communities.
- » Sites should be provided for the Gypsy and Traveller community by local councils where they are close to employment, schools, transport, health care etc. Rural fields are not appropriate sites.
- » However, some complain that there is no room/ no suitable sites/ no need for anymore sites/ they do not want any Gypsy and Traveller sites in their communities or that sites should be shared among all Parishes.
- » Only that we do not want any more sites in or around the village.
- » I accept not all Parishes want travellers but I feel they should be shared around all Parishes with openness.
- » I have questioned people within our ward and there are no known Gypsies or Travellers at all. We have concluded that there is no need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in this area.
- » Some comments refer to issues with the need for 2021. Namely that the need should be looked at now in order to have sites already in place in 2021.
- » A couple of respondents are worried about minor crime associated with Gypsies and Travellers.
- » There has been minor crime around the parish which has been attributed to Gypsy and Travellers, but might be prejudice. I do know of many hare coursing incidents and fighting which can be attributed to this group.

## 6. Survey of Travelling Communities

### Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers

- 6.1 One of the major components of this study was a detailed survey of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population living on sites and yards in the study area. This aimed to identify current households with housing needs and to assess likely future housing need from within existing households, to help judge the need for any future site provision. The questions asked can be found in a sample Site Record Form that can be found in **Appendix E**. However, for the purpose of this study the interviews were completed using an electronic CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) tablet.
- 6.2 Through the desk-based research and stakeholder interviews ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites and yards in the study area. Interviews were completed between August and September 2016. Up to three attempts were made to interview each household where they were not present when interviewers first visited. The tables below identify the sites that ORS staff visited during the course of the fieldwork, and also set out the number of interviews that were completed at each site, together with the reasons why interviews were not completed where this information is available. All of the site lists have been agreed with the Council.

Figure 8 - Sites and yards visited in Bedford Borough

Site Status	Pitches/Plots	Interviews	Reasons for not completing interviews
<b>Public Sites</b>			
Kempston Hardwick	22	10	6 x refusals, 6 x no contact possible
Willow Drift	14	8	1 x refusal, 5 x no contact possible
<b>Private Sites</b>			
None	-	-	-
<b>Temporary Sites</b>			
None	-	-	-
<b>Tolerated Sites</b>			
None	-	-	-
<b>Unauthorised Sites</b>			
Waiting for the Sun	4	0	4 x refusals
<b>Travelling Showpeople Yards</b>			
Amusement Depot	5	1	4 x refusals
Bedford Road, Cople	6	0	6 x unimplemented plots
Santa Pod Raceway	1	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>20</b>	

### Efforts to Contact Bricks and Mortar Households

- 6.3 Despite all the efforts that were made to identify households living in bricks and mortar, it was not possible to complete any interviews with Gypsies or Travellers. However, it was possible to complete interviews with three Travelling Showperson households living in bricks and mortar (at Great North Road, Wyboston and Goldington Green, Bedford).

# 7. Current and Future Pitch Provision

## Introduction

- 7.1 This section focuses on the additional pitch provision which is needed in the study area currently and to 2035. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future. This time period allows for robust forecasts of the requirements for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and also secondary data sources. Whilst the difficulty in making accurate assessments beyond 5 years has been highlighted in previous studies completed by ORS, the approach taken in this study to estimate new household formation has been accepted by Planning Inspectors as the most appropriate methodology to use.
- 7.2 We would note that this section is based upon a combination of the on-site surveys and planning records. In many cases, the survey data is not used in isolation, but instead is used to validate information from planning records or other sources.
- 7.3 This section concentrates not only upon the total additional provision which is required in the area, but also whether there is a need for any transit sites and/or emergency stopping place provision.

## Planning Definition

- 7.4 As well as assessing housing need, PPTS (2015) requires a GTAA to determine whether households living on sites, yards, encampments and in bricks and mortar fall within the planning definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson. Only households that fall within the planning definition, and those who *may* meet the planning definition (households where an interview was not completed), will have their housing needs assessed separately from the wider population in the GTAA. The planning definition now excludes those who have ceased to travel permanently.

## New Household Formation Rates

- 7.5 Nationally, a household formation and growth rate of 3.00% net per annum has been commonly assumed and widely used in local Gypsy and Traveller assessments, even though there is no statistical evidence of households growing so quickly. The result has been to inflate both national and local requirements for additional pitches unrealistically. In this context, ORS has prepared a *Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates (August 2015)*. The main conclusions are set out here and the full paper is in **Appendix F**.
- 7.6 Those seeking to provide evidence of high annual net household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers have sometimes sought to rely on increases in the number of caravans, as reflected in caravan counts. However, caravan count data is unreliable and erratic – so the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through demographic analysis.
- 7.7 The Technical Note concludes that in fact, the growth in the national Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.25% per annum – much less than the 3.00% per annum often assumed, but still

greater than in the settled community. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that net Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth rates are above 2.00% per annum nationally.

- 7.8 The often assumed 3.00% per annum net household growth rate is unrealistic and would require clear statistical evidence before being used for planning purposes. In practice, the best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum for Gypsies and Travellers. This view has been supported by Planning Inspectors in a number of Decision Notices. The most recent was in relation to an appeal in Doncaster that was issued in November 2016 (Ref: APP/F4410/W/15/3133490) where the agent acting on behalf of the appellant claimed that a rate closer to 3.00% should be used. The Inspector concluded:

*In assessing need account also needs to be taken of likely household growth over the coming years. In determining an annual household growth rate the Council relies on the work of Opinions Research Services (ORS), part of Swansea University. ORS's research considers migration, population profiles, births & fertility rates, death rates, household size data and household dissolution rates to determine average household growth rates for gypsies and travellers. The findings indicate that the average annual growth rate is in the order of 1.5% but that a 2.5% figure could be used if local data suggest a relatively youthful population. As the Council has found a strong correlation between Doncaster's gypsy and traveller population age profile and the national picture, a 1.5% annual household growth rate has been used in its 2016 GTANA. Given the rigour of ORS's research and the Council's application of its findings to the local area I accept that a 1.5% figure is justified in the case of Doncaster.*

- 7.9 In addition, the Technical Note has recently been accepted as a robust academic evidence base and has been published by the Social Research Association in its journal Social Research Practice. The overall purpose of the journal is to encourage and promote high standards of social research for public benefit. It aims to encourage methodological development by giving practitioners the space and the incentive to share their knowledge – see link below.

<http://the-sra.org.uk/journal-social-research-practice/>

- 7.10 ORS assessments take full account of the net local household growth rate per annum for each local authority, calculated on the basis of demographic evidence from the site surveys. The 'baseline' includes all current authorised households, all households identified as in current need (including concealed households, 5 year need from older teenage children, movement from bricks and mortar and those on waiting lists not currently living on a pitch or plot), as well as households living on tolerated unauthorised pitches or plots who are not included as current need. The assessments of future need also take account of modelling projections based on birth and death rates, and in-/out-migration.
- 7.11 Overall, the household growth rate used for the assessment of future needs has been informed by local evidence for each local authority. This demographic evidence has been used to adjust the national growth rate of 1.50% up or down based on the proportion of those aged under 18 (by travelling status).
- 7.12 In certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are low it may not be appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement will be made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children. This will be

based on the assumption that 50% of likely households to form will stay in the area. This is based on evidence from other GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales.

- 7.13 In addition, research by ORS has identified a national growth rate of 1.00% for Travelling Showpeople and this has also been adjusted locally based on site demographics.

## Breakdown by 5 Year Bands

- 7.14 In addition to tables which set out the overall need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, the overall need has also been broken down by 5 year bands as required by PPTS. The way that this is calculated is by including all current need (from unauthorised pitches, pitches with temporary planning permission, concealed and doubled-up households, 5 year need from older teenage children, and net movement from bricks and mortar) in the first 5 years. In addition, the total net new household formation is split across the 5 year bands based on the rate of growth that was applied – as opposed to being spread evenly.

## Waiting Lists

- 7.15 There are two public sites in Bedford Borough with 36 pitches. The Council have confirmed that there are 27 families on the waiting list for the sites and that there is low turnover of pitches. It was also confirmed that two households are currently living on one of the sites; two are living in bricks and mortar in Bedford Borough; 18 are living on sites outside of Bedford Borough; and five are living in bricks and mortar outside of Bedford Borough. It has not been possible to identify any further need arising from the households on the waiting list at the time of this report as none responded to the letter was sent to them asking them to contact ORS if they had any accommodation needs.
- 7.16 Should these households wish to be considered for a tenancy on one of the public sites they may have to provide information on their travelling patterns during the site allocation process as and when a pitch becomes available.

## Bricks and Mortar Interviews

- 7.17 It was not possible to complete any interviews with Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar in Bedford Borough. However, three interviews were completed with Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar (at Great North Road, Wyboston and Goldington Green, Bedford).

## Applying the Planning Definition

- 7.18 The outcomes from the questions in the household survey on travelling were used to determine the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). This assessment was based on the verbal responses to the questions given to interviewers as it is understood that oral evidence is capable of being sufficient when determining whether households meet the planning definition. Only those households that meet the planning definition, in that they were able to provide information during the household interview that **they travel for work purposes, and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so – or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to education, ill health or old age**, form the components of need that will form the baseline of need in the GTAA. Households where an interview was not completed who **may** meet the planning definition have also been included as a potential additional component of need from 'unknown' households. Need for households that do not meet the planning definition is included in the appendices to this report.

7.19 Information that was sought from households where an interview was completed allowed each household to be assessed against the planning definition of a Traveller. This included information on whether households have ever travelled; why they have stopped travelling; the reasons that they travel; and whether they plan to travel again in the future. In addition, on seven where it was not possible to complete an interview it was confirmed that the same households were living on the pitches and that they were interviewed in 2015 and provided sufficient information to be assessed against the planning definition. The table below sets out the travelling status of households in Bedford Borough.

Figure 9 – Travelling Status of Households in Bedford Borough<sup>7</sup>

Site Status	Meets Planning Definition	Does Not Meet Planning Definition	Unknown
<b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>			
Public Sites	1	25	11
Unauthorised Sites	0	0	4
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Travelling Showpeople</b>			
Private Yards	1	0	4
Unauthorised Yards	1	0	0
Bricks and Mortar	2	1	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>

7.20 Figure 9 shows that for Gypsies and Travellers one household meets the planning definition of a Traveller, and for Travelling Showpeople four households meet the planning definition - in that they stated during the interview that they travel for work purposes and stay away from their usual place of residence, or have ceased to travel temporarily. A total of 25 Gypsy and Traveller households and one Travelling Showperson household did not meet the planning definition as they were not able to provide information that they travel away from their usual place of residence for the purpose of work, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to children in education, ill health or old age. Some did travel for cultural reasons to visit fairs, relatives or friends, and others had ceased to travel permanently – these households did not meet the planning definition.

7.21 The number of households on each site where an interview was not possible are recorded as unknown. The reasons for this included households that refused to be interviewed and households that were not present during the fieldwork period – despite up to three visits.

## Accommodation Needs for Gypsies and Travellers

*In summary there is need for **two additional pitches** in Bedford Borough for Gypsy and Traveller households that meet the planning definition; a need for up to six additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households that may meet the planning definition – although if the ORS national average of 10% were to be applied this could be as few as one additional pitch; and a need for 34 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition.*

<sup>7</sup> At the time of the GTAA there was one pitch occupied by 2 households on one of the public sites.

## Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers that Meet the Planning Definition

- 7.22 The one household who met the planning definition of Travelling was found on one of the public sites. Analysis of the household interview indicated that there is no current need for any additional pitches through them being unauthorised, through concealed or doubled-up households, through movement from bricks and mortar, or through households on the waiting lists.
- 7.23 The demographics of the household suggest that there is future need for two **additional pitches** as a result of new household formation.
- 7.24 Therefore, the overall level of additional need for those households who meet the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller is for **two additional pitches** over the 19 year GTAA period.
- 7.25 Based on the ages of the children in households that meet the definition it is estimated that the need through new household formation will come about in years 7 and 10 of the GTAA period.

Figure 10 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition 2016-35

Gypsies and Travellers - Meeting Planning Definition	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from older teenage children	0
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	2
<i>(Formation from household demographics)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>2</b>

Figure 11 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition by 5 Year Periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-2035	
	0	1	1	0	2

## Pitch Needs – Unknown Gypsies and Travellers

- 7.26 Whilst it was not possible to determine the travelling status of a total of 15 households as they either refused to be interviewed, or were not on site at the time of the fieldwork, the needs of these households still need to be recognised by the GTAA as they are believed to be ethnic Gypsies and Travellers and **may** meet the planning definition as defined in PPTS.
- 7.27 ORS are of the opinion that it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not households where an interview was not completed meet the planning definition based on the outcomes of households in that local authority where an interview was completed.
- 7.28 However, data that has been collected from over 1,800 household interviews that have been completed by ORS since PPTS (2015) suggests that nationally approximately 10% of households that have been interviewed meet the planning definition – and in some local authorities, particularly London Boroughs, 100% of households do not meet the planning definition.
- 7.29 This would suggest that it is likely that only a small proportion of the potential need identified from these households will need new Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority will need to be addressed through other means such as the SHMA.
- 7.30 Should further information be made available to the Council that will allow for the planning definition to be applied to the unknown households, the overall level of need could rise by up to four from unauthorised pitches and by up to five pitches from new household formation (this uses a base of the 15 households and a net growth rate of 1.50%<sup>8</sup>). There is also supply of three pitches at one of the public sites through one household seeking to move to bricks and mortar and two households seeking to move to sites in another local authority (both to Cambridgeshire).
- 7.31 Therefore, additional need *could* increase by up to a further six pitches, plus any concealed adult households or 5 year need arising from older teenagers living in these households (if all 15 unknown pitches are deemed to meet the planning definition). However, as an illustration, if the ORS national average of 10% were to be applied this could be as few as one additional pitch. Tables setting out the components of need for unknown households can be found in **Appendix B**.

## Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers that Do Not Meet the Planning Definition

- 7.32 It is not a requirement for a GTAA to assess levels of need for households who do not meet the planning definition. However, these figures are included in **Appendix C** for illustrative purposes only.

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<sup>8</sup> The ORS Technical Note on Population and Household Growth (2015) has identified a national growth rate of 1.50% for Gypsies and Travellers which has been applied in the absence of further demographic information about these households.

## Accommodation Needs for Travelling Showpeople

*In summary there is need for five **additional plots** for Travelling Showpeople households that meet the planning definition; a need for no additional plots for Travelling Showpeople households that may meet the planning definition; and a need for no additional plots for Travelling Showpeople households who do not meet the planning definition.*

### Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople that meet the Planning Definition

- 7.33 Two households that meet the planning definition of Travelling were found on one private yard (Amusement Depot) and one unauthorised yard (Santa Pod Raceway). In addition interviews were completed with three Travelling Showpeople households living in bricks and mortar and two meet the planning definition (both at Great North Road, Wyboston).
- 7.34 Analysis of the household interviews and site demographics for households living on the two yards has identified current need for one additional plot from the main household unit being on an unauthorised plot that is becoming too small to meet operational requirements, and future need for two additional plots for teenage children living on the unauthorised yard who will be in need of a plot of their own in the next 5 years. There is no additional future need identified from new household formation.
- 7.35 Analysis of the household interviews and site demographics for the households living in bricks and mortar at Great North Road, Wyboston, has identified that whilst the main residents are happy to stay in housing, there are two concealed single adults living in one of the households who meet the planning definition who would like plots of their own. The family would like to expand their existing yard to accommodate the new plots. They would also like to be on a waiting list for a suitably sized new yard for them and their fair equipment.
- 7.36 Therefore, the overall level of additional need for those households who meet the planning definition of a Travelling Showperson is for **five additional plots** over the 19 year GTAA period.

Figure 12 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition 2016-35

Travelling Showpeople - Meeting Planning Definition	Plots
<b>Supply of Plots</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Additional supply from pitches on new yards	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	1
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	2
Households on waiting lists for public yards	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from older teenage children	2
Households on yards with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	0
<i>(No additional new household formation)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>5</b>

Figure 13 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough that meet the Planning Definition by 5 Year Periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-35	
	5	0	0	0	5

## Plot Needs – Unknown Travelling Showpeople

7.37 Whilst it was not possible to determine the travelling status of a total of four households as they refused to be interviewed, the needs of these households still need to be recognised by the GTAA as they are believed to be Travelling Showpeople and **may** meet the planning definition as defined in PPTS (2015).

7.38 All of the unknown households were living at the Amusement Depot. Previous work that was completed in 2015 to identify accommodation needs for Travelling Showpeople identified that some of the residents at the Amusement Depot, along with additional households living in bricks and mortar in Bedford Borough (who were not interviewed as part of this study), Central Bedfordshire and Thurrock are joint owners of the site at Cople which has planning consent for a new six plot yard. It is felt that the development of this yard would relieve any potential current and future over-crowding issues at the Amusement Depot. Therefore, no additional plots are needed to meet current or future needs should the development of the new yard at Cople proceed.

## Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople that do not meet the Planning Definition

- 7.39 There were no Travelling Showpeople interviewed living on yards that did not meet the planning definition, and the one household living in bricks and mortar that does not meet the planning definition is happy to stay in housing and has no current or future accommodation needs.

## Allocations and Designations Local Plan

- 7.40 The Bedford Borough Council Allocations and Designations Local Plan (2013) included an allocation for a new Travelling Showpeople yard at Manton Lane with eight plots. This was as a result of need that was identified in the East of England Plan single issue review. It is understood that no further progress has been made to obtain planning consent for and develop this yard so it cannot therefore be considered as a component of supply to meet any identified need.

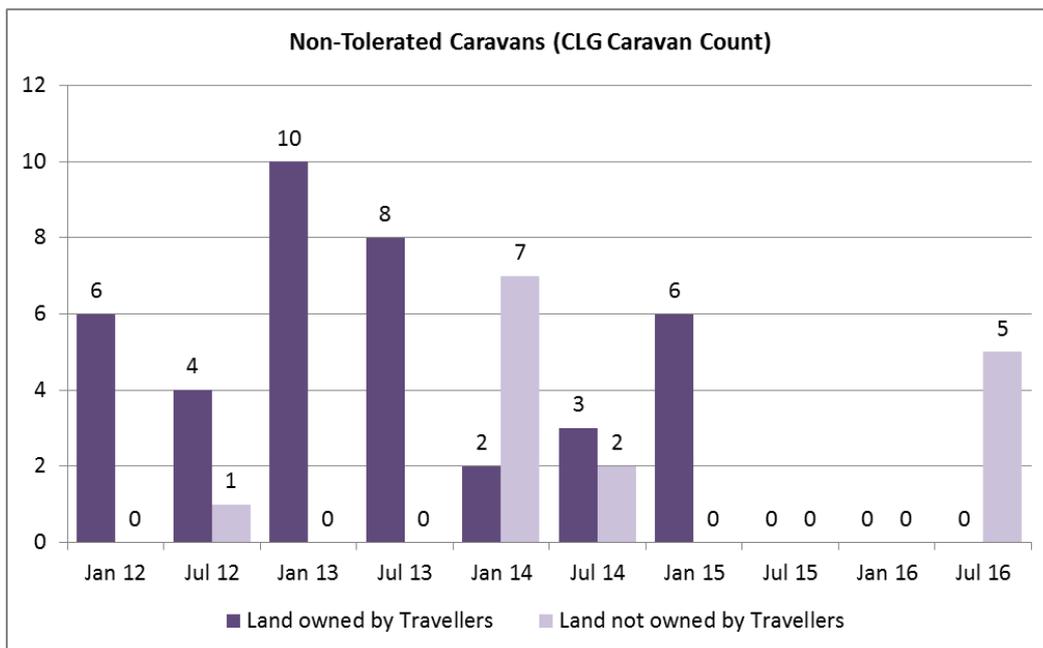
## Transit Requirements

- 7.41 When determining the potential need for transit provision the assessment has looked at data from the DCLG Caravan Count and records on numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the potential wider issues related to changes made to PPTS in 2015.

## DCLG Caravan Count

- 7.42 Whilst it is considered to be a comprehensive national dataset on numbers of authorised and unauthorised caravans across England, it is acknowledged that the Caravan Count is a count of caravans and not households. It also does not record the reasons for unauthorised caravans. This makes it very difficult to interpret in relation to assessing future need because it does not count pitches or resident households. The count is also only a twice yearly (January and July) 'snapshot in time' conducted by local authorities on a specific day, and any caravans on unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates are not recorded. Likewise, any caravans that are away from sites on the day of the count are not included. As such it is not considered appropriate to use the outcomes from the Traveller Caravan Count in the assessment of future transit provision. It does however provide valuable historic and trend data on whether there are instances of unauthorised caravans in local authority areas.
- 7.43 Data from the Caravan Count shows that there have been very low numbers of non-tolerated caravans on land owned and land not owned by Travellers recorded in the study area in recent years.

Figure 14 – Caravan Count Data 2012-2016



## Stakeholder Interviews and Local Data

- 7.44 Information from the stakeholder interviews identified that there used to be a transit site but that this was closed when the Willow Drift site was developed and has not reopened as a result of concerns about management and cohesion issues (there are very often problems when a transit site is located adjacent to a permanent site).
- 7.45 Stakeholders were mainly of the opinion that encampments are infrequent and irregular and the numbers have decreased. So far this year there have been low numbers of encampments in the area. When encampments occur they are likely to be during the summer months (May-September) because Travellers are on holiday and some may live in bricks and mortar in Bedford Borough, live in nearby areas where there are sites or they are travelling through for a specific event e.g. family wedding.

## Potential Implications of PPTS (2015)

- 7.46 It has been suggested by some groups representing the Travelling Community that there will need to be an increase in transit provision across the country as a result PPTS (2015) leading to more households travelling. This may well be the case but it will take some time for any changes to pan out. As such the use of historic evidence to make an assessment of future transit need is not recommended at this time. Any recommendation for future transit provision will need to make use of a robust post-PPTS (2015) evidence base and there has not been sufficient time yet for this to happen at this point in time.

## Transit Recommendations

- 7.47 It is recommended that whilst there may be a number of encampments in some areas, the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should be continually monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop.

- 7.48 A review of the evidence base relating to unauthorised encampments should be undertaken in autumn 2018 once there is a new 3 year evidence base following PPTS (2015) – including attempts to try and identify whether households on encampments meet the planning definition. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in more formal transit sites or emergency stopping places.
- 7.49 In the short-term, the Council should continue to use its existing published Gypsy and Traveller Management Policy when dealing with any encampments. This will ensure that each encampment is dealt with and assessed on an individual basis. It will ensure that decisions on whether to tolerate or take enforcement actions are made on the basis of assessments carried out on each encampment. Whilst consideration should be given as to how to deal with households that do and do not meet the planning definition, from a practical point of view it is likely that households on all unauthorised encampments will need to be dealt with in the same way and therefore the existing Policy will be an effective method of doing so.
- 7.50 Temporary stopping places can be made available at times of increased demand due to fairs or cultural celebrations that are attended by Gypsies and Travellers. A charge may be levied as determined by the local authority although they only need to provide basic facilities including: a cold water supply; portaloos; sewerage disposal point and refuse disposal facilities.

# Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

<b>Amenity block/shed</b>	A building where basic plumbing amenities (bath/shower, WC, sink) are provided.
<b>Bricks and mortar</b>	Mainstream housing.
<b>Caravan</b>	Mobile living vehicle used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.
<b>Chalet</b>	A single storey residential unit which can be dismantled. Sometimes referred to as mobile homes.
<b>Concealed household</b>	Households, living within other households, who are unable to set up separate family units.
<b>Doubling-Up</b>	Where there are more than the permitted number of caravans on a pitch or plot.
<b>Emergency Stopping Place</b>	A temporary site with limited facilities to be occupied by Gypsies and Travellers while they travel.
<b>Green Belt</b>	A land use designation used to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
<b>Household formation</b>	The process where individuals form separate households. This is normally through adult children setting up their own household.
<b>In-migration</b>	Movement of households into a region or community
<b>Local Plans</b>	Local Authority spatial planning documents that can include specific policies and/or site allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
<b>Out-migration</b>	Movement from one region or community in order to settle in another.
<b>Personal planning permission</b>	A private site where the planning permission specifies who can occupy the site and doesn't allow transfer of ownership.
<b>Pitch/plot</b>	Area of land on a site/development generally home to one household. Can be varying sizes and have varying caravan numbers. Pitches refer to Gypsy and Traveller sites and Plots to Travelling Showpeople yards.
<b>Private site</b>	An authorised site owned privately. Can be owner-occupied, rented or a mixture of owner-occupied and rented pitches.
<b>Site</b>	An area of land on which Gypsies, Travellers and

	Travelling Showpeople are accommodated in caravans/chalets/vehicles. Can contain one or multiple pitches/plots.
<b>Social/Public/Council Site</b>	An authorised site owned by either the local authority or a Registered Housing Provider.
<b>Temporary planning permission</b>	A private site with planning permission for a fixed period of time.
<b>Tolerated site/yard</b>	Long-term tolerated sites or yards where enforcement action is not expedient and a certificate of lawful use would be granted if sought.
<b>Transit provision</b>	Site intended for short stays and containing a range of facilities. There is normally a limit on the length of time residents can stay.
<b>Unauthorised Development</b>	Caravans on land owned by Gypsies and Travellers and without planning permission.
<b>Unauthorised Encampment</b>	Caravans on land not owned by Gypsies and Travellers and without planning permission.
<b>Waiting list</b>	Record held by the local authority or site managers of applications to live on a site.
<b>Yard</b>	A name often used by Travelling Showpeople to refer to a site.

## Appendix B: Unknown Households

Figure 15 - Additional need for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough 2016-35

Gypsies and Travellers - Unknown	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	1
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	2
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	4
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from older teenage children	0
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	5
<i>(Base number of households 15 and formation rate 1.50%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>6</b>

Figure 16 – Additional need for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough by 5 Year Periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-35	
	2	1	2	1	<b>6</b>

Figure 17 - Additional need for unknown Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough 2016-35

<b>Travelling Showpeople - Unknown</b>	<b>Plots</b>
<b>Supply of Plots</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Additional supply from pitches on new yards	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public yards	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from older teenage children	0
Households on yards with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	1
<i>(Base number of households 4 and formation rate 1.00%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>1</b>

Figure 18 – Additional need for unknown Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough by 5 Year Periods

<b>Years</b>	<b>0-5</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>11-15</b>	<b>16-19</b>	
	<b>2016-21</b>	<b>2021-26</b>	<b>2026-31</b>	<b>2032-35</b>	<b>Total</b>
	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>

# Appendix C: Households that do not meet the Planning Definition

Figure 19 - Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough that do not meet the Planning Definition - 2016-35

Gypsies and Travellers - Not Meeting Planning Definition	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	2
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from older teenage children	11
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	21
<i>(Base number of households 38 and formation rate 2.30%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>34</b>

Figure 20 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Bedford Borough that do not meet the Planning Definition by 5 Year Periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-35	
	18	5	5	6	<b>34</b>

Figure 21 - Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough that do not meet the planning definition 2016-35

Travelling Showpeople - Not Meeting Planning Definition	Plots
<b>Supply of Plots</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private plots	0

Additional supply from pitches on new yards	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public yards	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from older teenage children	0
Households on yards with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	0
<i>(There are no non-Travelling Showpeople in Bedford Borough)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>0</b>

Figure 22 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Bedford Borough that do not meet the Planning Definition by 5 Year Periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2032-35	
	0	0	0	0	0

# Appendix D: Sites and Yards Lists (September 2016)

Site/Yard	Authorised Pitches or Plots	Unauthorised Pitches or Plots
<b>Public Sites</b>		
Kempston Hardwick	22	-
Willow Drift	15	-
<b>Private Sites with Permanent Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Private Sites with Temporary Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Tolerated Sites – Long-term without Planning Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Unauthorised Developments</b>		
Waiting for the Sun	-	4
<b>TOTAL PITCHES</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Authorised Travelling Showpeople Yards<sup>9</sup></b>		
Amusements Depot	5	-
Bedford Road, Cople	6	-
<b>Unauthorised Travelling Showpeople Yards</b>		
Santa Pod Raceway	-	1
<b>TOTAL PLOTS</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Transit Provision</b>		
None	-	-

<sup>9</sup> There are also 6 unimplemented plots at Cople

# Appendix E: Site Record Form

## GTAA Questionnaire 2015



**INTERVIEWER:** Good Morning/afternoon/evening. My name is < > from Opinion Research Services, working on behalf of < > Council.

The Council are undertaking a study of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs assessment in this area. This is needed to make sure that accommodation needs are properly assessed and to get a better understanding of the needs of the Travelling Community.

The Council need to try and speak with every Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople household in the area to make sure that the assessment of need is accurate.

Your household will not be identified and all the information collected will be anonymous and will only be used to help understand the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households.

You do not have to answer all the questions but the more information you can provide the better the survey will be. The survey will take around 10-15 minutes to complete.

*For each question, put a cross in the appropriate box like this  . Mark only one box for each question unless otherwise instructed. If you mark the wrong box, fill in the box  and cross  the correct one.*

### A

### General Information

<b>A1</b>	<b>Name of planning authority:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please write in</i>			
<b>A2</b>	<b>Date/time of site visit(s):</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please write in</i>	DD/MM/YY	TIME	
<b>A3</b>	<b>Name of interviewer:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please write in</i>			
<b>A4</b>	<b>Address and pitch number:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please write in</i>			
<b>A5</b>	<b>Type of accommodation:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please cross one box only</i>	Council <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	Unauthorised <input type="checkbox"/>
			Bricks and Mortar <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>A6</b>	<b>Name of Family:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please write in</i>			
<b>A7</b>	<b>Ethnicity of Family:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please cross one box only</i>	Romany Gypsy <input type="checkbox"/>	Irish Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>	Scots Gypsy or Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>
		New Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>	English Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>	Show Person <input type="checkbox"/>
			Welsh Gypsy <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>
		Other (please specify) <span style="float: right;">[ ]</span>		
<b>A8</b>	<b>Number of units on the pitch:</b> <i>INTERVIEWER please write in</i>	Mobile homes	Touring Caravans	Day Rooms
		Other (please specify)	[ ]	

**A9 How long have you lived here? If you have moved in the past 5 years, where did you move from?** *INTERVIEWER: Please write in below*

Years	Months	If you have moved in the past 5 years, where did you move from?
-------	--------	---

**A10 Did you live here out of your own choice or because there was no other option? If there was no other option, why?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Choice       No option        If no option, why?

**A11 Is this site suitable for your household? If so why and if not why not? (For example close to schools, work, healthcare, family and friends etc.)**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes       No        Reasons (please specify)

**A12 How many separate families or unmarried adults live on this pitch?**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

**B Demographics**

**B1 Demographics — Household 1** *INTERVIEWER: Please write-in*

Person 1		Person 2		Person 3	
Sex	Age	Sex	Age	Sex	Age

**Complete additional forms for each household on pitch** *INTERVIEWER: Please write-in*

Person 4		Person 5		Person 6		Person 7		Person 8	
Sex	Age								

**C Accommodation Needs**

**C1 How many families or unmarried adults living on this pitch are in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

Other Please specify

**C2 How many of your children will need a home of their own in the next 5 years as a result of getting married or leaving home? If they live here now, will they want to stay on this site? If not, where would they wish to move? (e.g. other site, in bricks and mortar etc.) If they do not live on this site, would they want to move on this site or another local site if they could get a pitch?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

Other Please specify

Details (Please specify)

**D Waiting List**

**D1 Is anyone living here on the waiting list for a pitch in this area?**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes  —————> Continue to D2  
 No  —————> Go to D4

**D2 How many people living here are on the waiting list for a pitch in this area?**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Other (Please specify)

Details (Please specify)

**D3 How long have they been on the waiting list?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

0-3 months  3-6 months  6-12 months  1-2 years  2+ years

Other (Please specify)

Details (Please specify)

**D4 If they are not on the waiting list, do any of the people living here want to be on the waiting list?**  
**If they do not want to be on the waiting list, why not?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

No  Other (Please specify)

Details (Please specify)

**E Future Accommodation Needs**

**E1 Do you plan to move from this site in the next 5 years? If so, why?**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes  If yes —————> Continue to E2   
 No  If no —————> Go to F1

**E2 Where would you move to?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Another site in this area  A site in another council  Bricks and mortar in this area  Bricks and mortar in another council  Other (Please specify)

Please specify

**E3 If you want to move would you prefer to buy a private pitch or site, or rent a pitch on a public or private site?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Private buy  Private rent  Public rent

**E4 Can you afford to buy a private pitch or site?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only

Yes  No

**F Travelling**

**F1 How many trips, living in a caravan or trailer, have you or members of your family made away from your permanent base in the last 12 months?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only

0  1  2  3  4  5+

Go to F6 Continue to F2

**F2 If you or members of your family have travelled in the last 12 months, which family members travelled?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only

All the family  Adult males  Other

**F3 What was the main reason for travelling?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only

Work  Holidays  Visiting family  Fairs  Other

**F4 At what time of year do you or family members usually travel? And for how long?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only

All year  Summer  Winter

**F5 Where do you or family members usually stay when they are travelling?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross all boxes that apply

Transit sites  Roadside  Friends/family  Other

**F6 INTERVIEWER: Ask F6 — F8 ONLY if F1 = 0. Otherwise, go to F9**

**Have you or family members ever travelled?** INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only

Yes  —————> Continue to F7

No  —————> Go to F9

**F7 When did you or family members stop travelling?** INTERVIEWER: Please write in

**F8 Why do you not travel anymore?** INTERVIEWER: Cross all boxes that apply & probe for details

Children in school  Ill health  Old age  Settled now  Nowhere to stop  No work opportunities  Other

**F9 Do family members plan to travel in the future?**

*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

- Yes  —————> *Continue to F10*  
No  —————> *Go to G1*

**F10 When, and for what purpose do they plan to travel?**

Details

**G**

**Bricks & Mortar Contacts**

**G1 Contacts for Bricks and Mortar interviews?** *INTERVIEWER: Please write in*

Details

**G2 Any other information about this site or your accommodation needs?**

*INTERVIEWER: Please write in*

Details (e.g. can current and future needs be met by expanding or intensifying the existing site?)

**G3 Site/Pitch plan? Any concerns?** *INTERVIEWER: Please sketch & write in*

Sketch of Site/Pitch — any concerns?

***INTERVIEWER: May I also take your name, telephone number and address? ORS may wish to contact you to confirm that this interview took place. These details will only be used for this purpose and will not be passed onto anyone else.***

Respondent's Name.....

Respondent's Telephone.....

Respondent's Email.....

***INTERVIEWER: Thank you for your time and help completing this questionnaire***

***INTERVIEWERS DECLARATION:***

***I certify that I have conducted this interview personally with the person named above in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct***

***Interviewers Signature:***

# Appendix F: Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates



## **Technical Note**

# **Gypsy and Traveller Household Formation and Growth Rates**

**August 26<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**Opinion Research Services**  
Spin-out company of Swansea University



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# Contents

Household Growth Rates.....	4
Abstract and conclusions.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Compound growth.....	6
Caravan counts .....	7
Modelling population growth.....	8
Household growth .....	12
Household dissolution rates .....	14
Summary conclusions .....	14

# Household Growth Rates

## Abstract and conclusions

1. National and local household formation and growth rates are important components of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments, but little detailed work has been done to assess their likely scale. Nonetheless, nationally, a net growth rate of 3% per annum has been commonly assumed and widely used in local assessments – even though there is actually no statistical evidence of households growing so quickly. The result has been to inflate both national and local requirements for additional pitches unrealistically.
2. Those seeking to provide evidence of high annual net household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers have sometimes sought to rely on increases in the number of caravans, as reflected in caravan counts. However, caravan count data are unreliable and erratic – so the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through demographic analysis (which, of course, is used to assess housing needs in the settled community).
3. The growth in the Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.25% per annum – a rate which is much less than the 3% per annum often assumed, but still at least four times greater than in the general population. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that net Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth rates are above 2% per annum nationally.
4. The often assumed 3% per annum net household growth rate is unrealistic and would require clear statistical evidence before being used for planning purposes. In practice, the best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.5% per annum for Gypsies and Travellers.
5. Some local authorities might perhaps allow for a household growth rate of up to 2.5% per annum, to provide a ‘margin’ if their populations are relatively youthful; but in areas where on-site surveys indicate that there are fewer children in the Gypsy and Traveller communities, the lower estimate of 1.5% per annum should be used for planning purposes.

## Introduction

6. The rate of household growth is a key element in all housing assessments, including Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments. Compared with the general population, the relative youthfulness of many Gypsy and Traveller populations means that their birth rates are likely to generate higher-than-average population growth, and proportionately higher *gross* household formation rates. However, while their *gross* rate of household growth might be high, Gypsy and Traveller communities’ future accommodation needs are, in practice, affected by any reduction in the number of households due to dissolution and/or by movements in/out of the area and/or by transfers into other forms of housing. Therefore, the *net* rate of household growth is the *gross* rate of formation *minus* any reductions in households due to such factors. Of course, it is the *net* rate that is important in determining future accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers.

7. In this context, it is a matter of concern that many Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessments have not distinguished *gross* and *net* growth rates nor provided evidence for their assumed rates of household increase. These deficiencies are particularly important because when assumed growth rates are unrealistically high, and then compounded over a number of planning years, they can yield exaggerated projections of accommodation needs and misdirect public policy. Nonetheless, assessments and guidance documents have assumed 'standard' *net* growth rates of about 3% without sufficiently recognising either the range of factors impacting on the *gross* household growth rates or the implications of unrealistic assumptions when projected forward on a compound basis year by year.
8. For example, in a study for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister ('Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites in England', 2003), Pat Niner concluded that *net* growth rates as high as 2%-3% per annum should be assumed. Similarly, the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) (which continued to be quoted after their abolition was announced in 2010) used *net* growth rates of 3% per annum without providing any evidence to justify the figure (For example, 'Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England: A Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England July 2009').
9. However, the guidance of the Department of Communities and Local Government ('Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments: Guidance', 2007) was much clearer in saying that:

*The 3% family formation growth rate is used here as an example only. The appropriate rate for individual assessments will depend on the details identified in the local survey, information from agencies working directly with local Gypsy and Traveller communities, and trends identified from figures previously given for the caravan count. [In footnote 6, page 25]*
10. The guidance emphasises that local information and trends should always be taken into account – because the *gross* rate of household growth is moderated by reductions in households through dissolution and/or by households moving into bricks and mortar housing or moving to other areas. In other words, even if 3% is plausible as a *gross* growth rate, it is subject to moderation through such reductions in households through dissolution or moves. It is the resulting *net* household growth rate that matters for planning purposes in assessing future accommodation needs.
11. The current guidance also recognises that assessments should use local evidence for *net* future household growth rates. A letter from the Minister for Communities and Local Government (Brandon Lewis MP), to Andrew Selous MP (placed in the House of Commons library on March 26th 2014) said:

*I can confirm that the annual growth rate figure of 3% does not represent national planning policy.*

*The previous Administration's guidance for local authorities on carrying out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments under the Housing Act 2004 is unhelpful in that it uses an illustrative example of calculating future accommodation need based on the 3% growth rate figure. The guidance notes that the appropriate rate for individual assessments will depend on the details identified in the local authority's own assessment of need. As such the Government is not endorsing or supporting the 3% growth rate figure.'*

12. Therefore, while there are many assessments where a national Gypsy and Traveller household growth rate of 3% per annum has been assumed (on the basis of 'standard' precedent and/or guidance), there is little to justify this position and it conflicts with current planning guidance. In this context, this document seeks to integrate available evidence about *net* household growth rates in order to provide a more robust basis for future assessments.

## Compound growth

13. The assumed rate of household growth is crucially important for Gypsy and Traveller studies because for future planning purposes it is projected over time on a compound basis – so errors are progressively enlarged. For example, if an assumed 3% *net* growth rate is compounded each year then the implication is that the number of households will double in only 23.5 years; whereas if a *net* compound rate of 1.5% is used then the doubling of household numbers would take 46.5 years. The table below shows the impact of a range of compound growth rates.

**Table 1**  
**Compound Growth Rates and Time Taken for Number of Households to Double**

Household Growth Rate per Annum	Time Taken for Household to Double
3.00%	23.5 years
2.75%	25.5 years
2.50%	28 years
2.25%	31 years
2.00%	35 years
1.75%	40 years
1.50%	46.5 years

14. The above analysis is vivid enough, but another illustration of how different rates of household growth impact on total numbers over time is shown in the table below – which uses a baseline of 100 households while applying different compound growth rates over time. After 5 years, the difference between a 1.5% growth rate and a 3% growth rate is only 8 households (116 minus 108); but with a 20-year projection the difference is 46 households (181 minus 135).

**Table 2**  
**Growth in Households Over time from a Baseline of 100 Households**

Household Growth Rate per Annum	5 years	10 years	15 years	20 years	50 years	100 years
3.00%	116	134	156	181	438	1,922
2.75%	115	131	150	172	388	1,507
2.50%	113	128	145	164	344	1,181
2.25%	112	125	140	156	304	925
2.00%	110	122	135	149	269	724
1.75%	109	119	130	141	238	567
1.50%	108	116	125	135	211	443

15. In summary, the assumed rate of household growth is crucially important because any exaggerations are magnified when the rate is projected over time on a compound basis. As we have shown, when compounded and projected over the years, a 3% annual rate of household growth implies much larger future Gypsy and Traveller accommodation requirements than a 1.5% per annum rate.

## Caravan counts

16. Those seeking to demonstrate national Gypsy and Traveller household growth rates of 3% or more per annum have, in some cases, relied on increases in the number of caravans (as reflected in caravan counts) as their evidence. For example, some planning agents have suggested using 5-year trends in the national caravan count as an indication of the general rate of Gypsy and Traveller household growth. For example, the count from July 2008 to July 2013 shows a growth of 19% in the number of caravans on-site – which is equivalent to an average annual compound growth rate of 3.5%. So, *if plausible*, this approach could justify using a 3% or higher annual household growth rate in projections of future needs.
17. However, caravan count data are unreliable and erratic. For example, the July 2013 caravan count was distorted by the inclusion of 1,000 caravans (5% of the total in England) recorded at a Christian event near Weston-Super-Mare in North Somerset. Not only was this only an estimated number, but there were no checks carried out to establish how many caravans were occupied by Gypsies and Travellers. Therefore, the resulting count overstates the Gypsy and Traveller population and also the rate of household growth.
18. ORS has applied the caravan-counting methodology hypothetically to calculate the implied national household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers over the last 15 years, and the outcomes are shown in the table below. The January 2013 count suggests an average annual growth rate of 1.6% over five years, while the July 2013 count gives an average 5-year rate of 3.5%; likewise a study benchmarked at January 2004 would yield a growth rate of 1%, while one benchmarked at January 2008 would imply a 5% rate of growth. Clearly any model as erratic as this is not appropriate for future planning.

**Table 3**  
**National CLG Caravan Count July 1998 to July 2014 with Growth Rates (Source: CLG)**

Date	Number of caravans	5 year growth in caravans	Percentage growth over 5 years	Annual over last 5 years.
Jan 2015	20,123	1,735	9.54%	1.84%
July 2014	20,035	2,598	14.90%	2.81%
Jan 2014	19,503	1,638	9.17%	1.77%
July 2013	20,911	3,339	19.00%	3.54%
Jan 2013	19,359	1,515	8.49%	1.64%
Jul 2012	19,261	2,112	12.32%	2.35%
Jan 2012	18,746	2,135	12.85%	2.45%
Jul 2011	18,571	2,258	13.84%	2.63%
Jan 2011	18,383	2,637	16.75%	3.15%
Jul 2010	18,134	2,271	14.32%	2.71%
Jan 2010	18,370	3,001	19.53%	3.63%
Jul 2009	17,437	2,318	15.33%	2.89%
Jan 2009	17,865	3,503	24.39%	4.46%
Jul 2008	17,572	2,872	19.54%	3.63%
Jan 2008	17,844	3,895	27.92%	5.05%

<b>Jul 2007</b>	17,149	2,948	20.76%	3.84%
<b>Jan 2007</b>	16,611	2,893	21.09%	3.90%
<b>Jul 2006</b>	16,313	2,511	18.19%	3.40%
<b>Jan 2006</b>	15,746	2,352	17.56%	3.29%
<b>Jul 2005</b>	15,863	2,098	15.24%	2.88%
<b>Jan 2005</b>	15,369	1,970	14.70%	2.78%
<b>Jul 2004</b>	15,119	2,110	16.22%	3.05%
<b>Jan 2004</b>	14,362	817	6.03%	1.18%
<b>Jul 2003</b>	14,700			
<b>Jan 2003</b>	13,949			
<b>Jul 2002</b>	14,201			
<b>Jan 2002</b>	13,718			
<b>Jul 2001</b>	13,802			
<b>Jan 2001</b>	13,394			
<b>Jul 2000</b>	13,765			
<b>Jan 2000</b>	13,399			
<b>Jan 1999</b>	13,009			
<b>Jul 1998</b>	13,545			

19. The annual rate of growth in the number of caravans varies from slightly over 1% to just over 5% per annum. We would note that if longer time periods are used the figures do become more stable. Over the 36 year period 1979 (the start of the caravan counts) to 2015 the compound growth rate in caravan numbers has been 2.5% per annum.
20. However, there is no reason to assume that these widely varying rates correspond with similar rates of increase in the household population. In fact, the highest rates of caravan growth occurred between 2006 and 2009, when the first wave of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessments were being undertaken – so it seems plausible that the assessments prompted the inclusion of additional sites and caravans (which may have been there, but not counted previously). Counting caravan numbers is very poor proxy for Gypsy and Traveller household growth. Caravans counted are not always occupied by Gypsy and Traveller families and numbers of caravans held by families may increase generally as affluence and economic conditions improve, (but without a growth in households)
21. There is no reason to believe that the varying rates of increase in the number of caravans are matched by similar growth rates in the household population. The caravan count is not an appropriate planning guide and the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through demographic analysis – which should consider both population and household growth rates. This approach is not appropriate to needs studies for the following reasons:

## Modelling population growth

### Introduction

22. The basic equation for calculating the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth seems simple: start with the base population and then calculate the average increase/decrease by allowing for births, deaths and in-/out-migration. Nevertheless, deriving satisfactory estimates is difficult because the evidence is often tenuous – so, in this context, ORS has modelled the growth of the national Gypsy and Traveller population based on the most likely birth and death rates, and by using PopGroup (the leading software for

population and household forecasting). To do so, we have supplemented the available national statistical sources with data derived locally (from our own surveys) and in some cases from international research. None of the supplementary data are beyond question, and none will stand alone; but, when taken together they have cumulative force. In any case the approach we adopt is more critically self-aware than simply adopting 'standard' rates on the basis of precedent.

### Migration effects

23. Population growth is affected by national net migration and local migration (as Gypsies and Travellers move from one area to another). In terms of national migration, the population of Gypsies and Travellers is relatively fixed, with little international migration. It is in principle possible for Irish Travellers (based in Ireland) to move to the UK, but there is no evidence of this happening to a significant extent and the vast majority of Irish Travellers were born in the UK or are long-term residents. In relation to local migration effects, Gypsies and Travellers can and do move between local authorities – but in each case the in-migration to one area is matched by an out-migration from another area. Since it is difficult to estimate the net effect of such movements over local plan periods, ORS normally assumes that there will be nil net migration to/from an area. Nonetheless, where it is possible to estimate specific in-/out- migration effects, we take account of them, while distinguishing between migration and household formation effects.

### Population profile

24. The main source for the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth is the UK 2011 Census. In some cases the data can be supplemented by ORS's own household survey data which is derived from more than 2,000 face-to-face interviews with Gypsies and Travellers since 2012. The ethnicity question in the 2011 census included for the first time 'Gypsy and Irish Traveller' as a specific category. While non-response bias probably means that the size of the population was underestimated, the age profile the census provides is not necessarily distorted and matches the profile derived from ORS's extensive household surveys.
25. The age profile is important, as the table below (derived from census data) shows. Even assuming zero deaths in the population, achieving an annual population growth of 3% (that is, doubling in size every 23.5 years) would require half of the "year one" population to be aged under 23.5 years. When deaths are accounted for (at a rate of 0.5% per annum), to achieve the same rate of growth, a population of Gypsies and Travellers would need about half its members to be aged under 16 years. In fact, though, the 2011 census shows that the midway age point for the national Gypsy and Traveller population is 26 years – so the population could not possibly double in 23.5 years.

**Table 4**

**Age Profile for the Gypsy and Traveller Community in England (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)**

Age Group	Number of People	Cumulative Percentage
Age 0 to 4	5,725	10.4
Age 5 to 7	3,219	16.3
Age 8 to 9	2,006	19.9
Age 10 to 14	5,431	29.8
Age 15	1,089	31.8
Age 16 to 17	2,145	35.7
Age 18 to 19	1,750	38.9

Age 20 to 24	4,464	47.1
Age 25 to 29	4,189	54.7
Age 30 to 34	3,833	61.7
Age 35 to 39	3,779	68.5
Age 40 to 44	3,828	75.5
Age 45 to 49	3,547	82.0
Age 50 to 54	2,811	87.1
Age 55 to 59	2,074	90.9
Age 60 to 64	1,758	94.1
Age 65 to 69	1,215	96.3
Age 70 to 74	905	97.9
Age 75 to 79	594	99.0
Age 80 to 84	303	99.6
Age 85 and over	230	100.0

### Birth and fertility rates

26. The table above provides a way of understanding the rate of population growth through births. The table shows that surviving children aged 0-4 years comprise 10.4% of the Gypsy and Traveller population – which means that, on average, 2.1% of the total population was born each year (over the last 5 years). The same estimate is confirmed if we consider that those aged 0-14 comprise 29.8% of the Gypsy and Traveller population – which also means that almost exactly 2% of the population was born each year. (Deaths during infancy will have minimal impact within the early age groups, so the data provides the best basis for estimating of the birth rate for the Gypsy and Traveller population.)
27. The total fertility rate (TFR) for the whole UK population is just below 2 – which means that on average each woman can be expected to have just less than two children who reach adulthood. We know of only one estimate of the fertility rates of the UK Gypsy and Traveller community. This is contained in the book, ‘Ethnic identity and inequalities in Britain: The dynamics of diversity’ by Dr Stephen Jivraj and Professor Ludi Simpson published in May 2015. This draws on the 2011 Census data and provides an estimated total fertility rate of 2.75 for the Gypsy and traveller community
28. ORS’s have been able to examine our own survey data to investigate the fertility rate of Gypsy and Traveller women. The ORS data shows that, on average, Gypsy and Traveller women aged 32 years have 2.5 children (but, because the children of mothers above this age point tend to leave home progressively, full TFRs were not completed). On this basis it is reasonable to assume an average of three children per woman during her lifetime which would be consistent with the evidence from the 2011 Census of a figure of around 2.75 children per woman. In any case, the TFR for women aged 24 years is 1.5 children, which is significantly short of the number needed to double the population in 23.5 years – and therefore certainly implies a net growth rate of less than 3% per annum.

### Death rates

29. Although the above data imply an annual growth rate through births of about 2%, the death rate has also to be taken into account – which means that the *net* population growth cannot conceivably achieve 2% per

annum. In England and Wales there are nearly half-a-million deaths each year – about 0.85% of the total population of 56.1 million in 2011. If this death rate is applied to the Gypsy and Traveller community then the resulting projected growth rate is in the region of 1.15%-1.25% per annum.

30. However, the Gypsy and Traveller population is significantly younger than average and may be expected to have a lower percentage death rate overall (even though a smaller than average proportion of the population lives beyond 68 to 70 years). While there can be no certainty, an assumed death rate of around 0.5% to 0.6% per annum would imply a net population growth rate of around 1.5% per annum.
31. Even though the population is younger and has a lower death rate than average, Gypsies and Travellers are less likely than average to live beyond 68 to 70 years. Whereas the average life expectancy across the whole population of the UK is currently just over 80 years, a Sheffield University study found that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy is about 10-12 years less than average (Parry et al (2004) 'The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers: Report of Department of Health Inequalities in Health Research Initiative', University of Sheffield). Therefore, in our population growth modelling we have used a conservative estimate of average life expectancy as 72 years – which is entirely consistent with the lower-than-average number of Gypsies and Travellers aged over 70 years in the 2011 census (and also in ORS's own survey data). On the basis of the Sheffield study, we could have supposed a life expectancy of only 68, but we have been cautious in our approach.

#### Modelling outputs

32. If we assume a TFR of 3 and an average life expectancy of 72 years for Gypsies and Travellers, then the modelling projects the population to increase by 66% over the next 40 years – implying a population compound growth rate of 1.25% per annum (well below the 3% per annum often assumed). If we assume that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy increases to 77 years by 2050, then the projected population growth rate rises to nearly 1.5% per annum. To generate an 'upper range' rate of population growth, we have assumed a TFR of 4 and an average life expectancy rising to 77 over the next 40 years – which then yields an 'upper range' growth rate of 1.9% per annum. We should note, though, that national TFR rates of 4 are currently found only in sub-Saharan Africa and Afghanistan, so it is an implausible assumption.
33. There are indications that these modelling outputs are well founded. For example, in the ONS's 2012-based Sub-National Population Projections the projected population growth rate for England to 2037 is 0.6% per annum, of which 60% is due to natural change and 40% due to migration. Therefore, the natural population growth rate for England is almost exactly 0.35% per annum – meaning that our estimate of the Gypsy and Traveller population growth rate is four times greater than that of the general population of England.
34. The ORS Gypsy and Traveller findings are also supported by data for comparable populations around the world. As noted, on the basis of sophisticated analysis, Hungary is planning for its Roma population to grow at around 2.0% per annum, but the underlying demographic growth is typically closer to 1.5% per annum. The World Bank estimates that the populations of Bolivia, Cambodia, Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines and Venezuela (countries with high birth rates and improving life expectancy) all show population growth rates of around 1.7% per annum. Therefore, in the context of national data, ORS's modelling and plausible international comparisons, it is implausible to assume a net 3% annual growth rate for the Gypsy and Traveller population.

## Household growth

35. In addition to population growth influencing the number of households, the size of households also affects the number. Hence, population and household growth rates do not necessarily match directly, mainly due to the current tendency for people to live in smaller (childless or single person) households (including, of course, older people (following divorce or as surviving partners)). Based on such factors, the CLG 2012-based projections convert current population data to a projected household growth rate of 0.85% per annum (compared with a population growth rate of 0.6% per annum).
36. Because the Gypsy and Traveller population is relatively young and has many single parent households, a 1.5% annual population growth could yield higher-than-average household growth rates, particularly if average household sizes fall or if younger-than-average households form. However, while there is evidence that Gypsy and Traveller households already form at an earlier age than in the general population, the scope for a more rapid rate of growth, through even earlier household formation, is limited.
37. Based on the 2011 census, the table below compares the age of household representatives in English households with those in Gypsy and Traveller households – showing that the latter has many more household representatives aged under-25 years. In the general English population 3.6% of household representatives are aged 16-24, compared with 8.7% in the Gypsy and Traveller population. Because the census includes both housed and on-site Gypsies and Travellers without differentiation, it is not possible to know if there are different formation rates on sites and in housing. However, ORS's survey data (for sites in areas such as Central Bedfordshire, Cheshire, Essex, Gloucestershire and a number of authorities in Hertfordshire) shows that about 10% of Gypsy and Traveller households have household representatives aged under-25 years.

**Table 5**

**Age of Head of Household (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)**

Age of household representative	All households in England		Gypsy and Traveller households in England	
	Number of households	Percentage of households	Number of households	Percentage of households
Age 24 and under	790,974	3.6%	1,698	8.7%
Age 25 to 34	3,158,258	14.3%	4,232	21.7%
Age 35 to 49	6,563,651	29.7%	6,899	35.5%
Age 50 to 64	5,828,761	26.4%	4,310	22.2%
Age 65 to 74	2,764,474	12.5%	1,473	7.6%
Age 75 to 84	2,097,807	9.5%	682	3.5%
Age 85 and over	859,443	3.9%	164	0.8%
Total	22,063,368	100%	19,458	100%

38. The following table shows that the proportion of single person Gypsy and Traveller households is not dissimilar to the wider population of England; but there are more lone parents, fewer couples without children, and fewer households with non-dependent children amongst Gypsies and Travellers. This data suggest that Gypsy and Traveller households form at an earlier age than the general population.

**Table 6**  
**Household Type (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)**

Household Type	All households in England		Gypsy and Traveller households in England	
	Number of households	Percentage of households	Number of households	Percentage of households
Single person	6,666,493	30.3%	5,741	29.5%
Couple with no children	5,681,847	25.7%	2345	12.1%
Couple with dependent children	4,266,670	19.3%	3683	18.9%
Couple with non-dependent children	1,342,841	6.1%	822	4.2%
Lone parent: Dependent children	1,573,255	7.1%	3,949	20.3%
Lone parent: All children non-dependent	766,569	3.5%	795	4.1%
Other households	1,765,693	8.0%	2,123	10.9%
Total	22,063,368	100%	19,458	100%

39. ORS's own site survey data is broadly compatible with the data above. We have found that: around 50% of pitches have dependent children compared with 45% in the census; there is a high proportion of lone parents; and about a fifth of Gypsy and Traveller households appear to be single person households. One possible explanation for the census finding a higher proportion of single person households than the ORS surveys is that many older households are living in bricks and mortar housing (perhaps for health-related reasons).
40. ORS's on-site surveys have also found more female than male residents. It is possible that some single person households were men linked to lone parent females and unwilling to take part in the surveys. A further possible factor is that at any time about 10% of the male Gypsy and Traveller population is in prison – an inference drawn from the fact that about 5% of the male prison population identify themselves as Gypsies and Travellers ('People in Prison: Gypsies, Romany and Travellers', Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, February 2004) – which implies that around 4,000 Gypsies and Travellers are in prison. Given that almost all of the 4,000 people are male and that there are around 200,000 Gypsies and Travellers in total, this equates to about 4% of the total male population, but closer to 10% of the adult male population.
41. The key point, though, is that since 20% of Gypsy and Traveller households are lone parents, and up to 30% are single persons, there is limited potential for further reductions in average household size to increase current household formation rates significantly – and there is no reason to think that earlier household formations or increasing divorce rates will in the medium term affect household formation rates. While there are differences with the general population, a 1.5% per annum Gypsy and Traveller population

growth rate is likely to lead to a household growth rate of 1.5% per annum – more than the 0.85% for the English population as a whole, but much less than the often assumed 3% rate for Gypsies and Travellers.

## Household dissolution rates

42. Finally, consideration of household dissolution rates also suggests that the net household growth rate for Gypsies and Travellers is very unlikely to reach 3% per annum (as often assumed). The table below, derived from ORS's mainstream strategic housing market assessments, shows that generally household dissolution rates are between 1.0% and 1.7% per annum. London is different because people tend to move out upon retirement, rather than remaining in London until death. To adopt a 1.0% dissolution rate as a standard guide nationally would be too low, because it means that average households will live for 70 years after formation. A 1.5% dissolution rate would be a more plausible as a national guide, implying that average households live for 47 years after formation.

**Table 7**  
**Annual Dissolution Rates (Source: SHMAs undertaken by ORS)**

Area	Annual projected household dissolution	Number of households	Percentage
Greater London	25,000	3,266,173	0.77%
Blaenau Gwent	468.2	30,416	1.54%
Bradford	3,355	199,296	1.68%
Ceredigion	348	31,562	1.10%
Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, Teignbridge and Torbay	4,318	254,084	1.70%
Neath Port Talbot	1,352	57,609	2.34%
Norwich, South Norfolk and Broadland	1,626	166,464	0.98%
Suffolk Coastal	633	53,558	1.18%
Monmouthshire Newport Torfaen	1,420	137,929	1.03%

43. The 1.5% dissolution rate is important because the death rate is a key factor in moderating the *gross* household growth rate. Significantly, applying a 1.5% dissolution rate to a 3% *gross* household growth formation rate yields a *net* rate of 1.5% per annum – which ORS considers is a realistic figure for the Gypsy and Traveller population and which is in line with other demographic information. After all, based on the dissolution rate, a *net* household formation rate of 3% per annum would require a 4.5% per annum *gross* formation rate (which in turn would require extremely unrealistic assumptions about birth rates).

## Summary conclusions

44. Future Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs have typically been over-estimated because population and household growth rates have been projected on the basis of assumed 3% per annum net growth rates.
45. Unreliable caravan counts have been used to support the supposed growth rate, but there is no reason to suppose that the rate of increase in caravans corresponds to the annual growth of the Gypsy and Traveller population or households.

46. The growth of the national Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.25% per annum – which is still four times greater than in the settled community. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that the net national Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth is above 2% per annum nationally. The often assumed 3% net household growth rate per annum for Gypsies and Travellers is unrealistic.
47. The best available evidence suggests that the net annual Gypsy and Traveller household growth rate is 1.5% per annum. The often assumed 3% per annum net rate is unrealistic. Some local authorities might allow for a household growth rate of up to 2.5% per annum, to provide a ‘margin’ if their populations are relatively youthful; but in areas where on-site surveys indicate that there are fewer children in the Gypsy and Traveller population, the lower estimate of 1.5% per annum should be used.