



**Thurrock Council Gypsy, and Traveller  
Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)**

**Final Report**

July 2023



Opinion Research Services, The Strand, Swansea SA1 1AF

Steve Jarman, Michael Bayliss, Elliot Muldoon, Hanna Lloyd, , Gill Craddock, Lee Craddock, Jonathan Lee, and Nigel Moore

Enquiries: 01792 535300 · [info@ors.org.uk](mailto:info@ors.org.uk) · [www.ors.org.uk](http://www.ors.org.uk)

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of this 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 Thurrock Borough Council (the Council) area (with the exception of the large Showpeople yard at Buckles Lane which are the subject of a separate GTAA report that was published in 2022).
- 1.2 As well as updating previous GTAAs, the assessment provides a robust and credible evidence base which can be used to aid the implementation of Local Plan Policies and, where appropriate, identify the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots for the plan period 2023 to 2040. This will enable the Council to meet the 15-year requirements set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) and to support the preparation of the new Local Plan. The outcomes of this study supersede the outcomes of any previous GTAAs for Thurrock Borough Council.
- 1.3 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in the Council area through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder interviews, and engagement with members of the Travelling Community living on all known sites, yards, and encampments (with the exception of the large Showpeople yards at Buckles Lane which are the subject of a separate report).
- 1.4 A total of 84 interviews or proxy interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers living on sites and on the roadside in Thurrock, and a total of 2 interviews were completed with Travelling Showpeople. No interviews were completed with households living in bricks and mortar.
- 1.5 A total of 19 stakeholder interviews were also completed with Officers from Thurrock Council and with Officers from neighbouring local authorities.
- 1.6 The fieldwork for the study, including the interviews, was completed between September 2022 and April 2023, and the baseline date for the study is April 2023.

## Summary of Key Findings

### Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.7 Overall, the pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers for the period 2023-2040 are set out below. Needs are set out for those households that met the PPTS planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller; for any undetermined households<sup>1</sup> where an interview was not able to be completed; and for those households that did not meet the planning definition.
- 1.8 Only the need from those households who meet the planning definition and from those from undetermined households who subsequently demonstrate that they meet it, should be formally considered as need arising from the GTAA.

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<sup>1</sup> See Paragraph 3.28 for further information on undetermined households.

- 1.9 The need arising from households that met the planning definition should be addressed through site allocation/intensification/expansion Local Plan Policies as appropriate.
- 1.10 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address any need associated with undetermined Travellers as it is unlikely that all this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Council should consider the use of a Criteria-Based Local Plan Policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any undetermined households, as well as to deal with any windfall applications, and need from bricks and mortar.
- 1.11 In general terms, the need for those households who did not meet the planning definition will need to be addressed as part of general housing need and through separate Local Plan Policies. This approach is specifically referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021. Paragraph 61 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Paragraph 62 then states that [emphasis added] ‘Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, *travellers*, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes’. The footnote to this section states that ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.’
- 1.12 The findings of this report should be considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment of overall housing need in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Whilst the findings in this report are aggregated totals for the whole of Thurrock due to data protection issues, the Council have more detailed data to support the preparation of any future Local Plan Policies.
- 1.13 In addition, the potential implications of the Court of Appeal decision for *Lisa Smith v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities* [2022] EWCA Civ 1391 that was handed down in October 2022 may also have to be considered. See Paragraphs 2.34-2.36 for further details.

## Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.14 There were 29 Gypsy or Traveller households identified in Thurrock that met the planning definition and 48 households that did not meet the planning definition. There were also 21 undetermined households that may meet the planning definition where households were either not present during the fieldwork period, or where households refused to complete and interview.
- 1.15 There is a need for **18 pitches for households that met the PPTS planning definition over the plan period to 2040**. This is made up of 3 households on unauthorised developments; 1 concealed or doubled-up household or single adult; a need for 11 pitches deriving from 5-year need from teenage children; 1 pitch with temporary planning permission; and 13 pitches from new household formation<sup>2</sup>, using a rate of 1.90% derived from the household demographics. There is also supply of 7 vacant pitches on public sites and 4 pitches on public sites due to be vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar.
- 1.16 There is a need for up to **21 pitches for undetermined households over the plan period to 2040**. This is made up of 15 unauthorised pitches; and 6 from new household formation, using the ORS national fieldwork rate of 1.50%. If the ORA national rate for households that meet the planning

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 7 for further information on new household formation.

definition of 30% is applied this could result in a need for 6 pitches. If the locally derived rate for households that met the planning definition of 38% is applied this could result in a need for 8 pitches.

1.17 Whilst not now a requirement to include in a GTAA, there is a need for **36 pitches for households that did not meet the PPTS planning definition over the plan period to 2040**. This is made up of 1 household on an unauthorised development; 7 concealed or doubled-up households or single adults; a need for 10 pitches deriving from 5-year need from teenage children; 1 pitch for immigration or roadside households; and 17 from new household formation, using a rate of 1.90% derived from the household demographics.

1.18 Figure 1 summarises the identified need and Figure 2 breaks this down by 5-year periods.

**Figure 1 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock (2023-40)**

Status	2023-2040
Meet Planning Definition	18
Undetermined	0-21
Do not meet Planning Definition	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>

**Figure 2 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock that met the Planning Definition by year periods**

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	5
6 – 10	2028-32	4
11 – 15	2033-37	5
16 – 18	2038-40	4
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>18</b>

1.19 It should also be noted that the need figures that have been identified in the GTAA are not necessarily a need for pitches on additional sites as it is likely that a proportion of the need could be accommodated on existing sites through intensification, expansion, or through natural turnover of pitches over time.

## Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople

1.20 Overall, the plot needs for Travelling Showpeople from 2023-2040 are set out below. Needs are set out for those households that met the planning definition of a Travelling Showperson; for those undetermined households where an interview was not able to be completed who may meet the planning definition; and for those households that did not meet the planning definition (although this is no longer a requirement for a GTAA). Note that the GTAA did not assess the needs of Showpeople living on yards at Buckles Lanes as these were the subject of a separate GTAA that was published in 2022.

1.21 Only the need from those households who met the planning definition and from those of the undetermined households who may subsequently demonstrate that they meet it should be considered as need arising from the GTAA. Those who do not meet the planning definition will be provided for via other relevant policies within the Local Plan.

1.22 The need arising from households that meet the planning definition should be addressed through a combination of allocation/intensification/expansion of sites in the Local Plan.

- 1.23 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address any need associated with any undetermined Travelling Showpeople as it is unlikely that all of this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Travelling Showpeople plots.
- 1.24 Any need for households who did not meet the planning definition will need to be considered as part of general housing need for the Local Plan.
- 1.25 There is a need for **7 plots for households that met the PPTS planning definition over the plan period to 2040**. This is made up of 3 concealed or doubled-up households or single adults; a need of 1 plot deriving from 5-year need from teenage children; and 3 from new household formation, derived from the household demographics.
- 1.26 There were 2 undetermined households that generated a need for 1 pitch through new household formation, and 1 household that did not meet the planning definition that did not generate any current or future need over the plan period to 2040.

**Figure 3 – Need for Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock (2023-40)**

Status	2023-40
Meet Planning Definition	7
Undetermined	1
Do not meet Planning Definition	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>

**Figure 4 – Need for Travelling Showpeople households that met the Planning Definition by year periods**

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	4
6 – 10	2028-32	2
11 – 15	2033-37	1
16 – 18	2038-40	0
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>7</b>

## Transit Recommendations

- 1.27 Due to historic low numbers of encampments, it is not recommended that there is a need for a formal public transit site in Thurrock at in the short-term. However, the situation relating to levels of encampments should continue to be monitored to determine if there are any increases in the number of encampments, and the nature of these encampments.
- 1.28 As well as information on the size and duration of the encampments, this monitoring should also seek to gather information from residents on the reasons for their stay in the local area; whether they have a permanent base or where they have travelled from; and whether they have any need or preference to settle permanently in the local area. This information could be collected as part of a Welfare Assessment (or similar).
- 1.29 It is recommended that a review of the evidence base relating to encampments, including the monitoring referred to above, should be undertaken on an Essex-wide basis. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in any new transit provision or emergency stopping places, or whether a managed approach is preferable.



- 1.30 The Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) have commissioned ORS to complete a detailed study of transit needs across Essex, Southend-on-Sea, and Thurrock. This is due to be completed in 2024.
- 1.31 In the short-term the Council should continue to use its current approaches when dealing with encampments, and management-based approaches such as negotiated stopping agreements could also be considered.
- 1.32 The term 'negotiated stopping' is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent 'built' transit sites but negotiated agreements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. Agreements are made between the Council and the (temporary) residents regarding expectations on both sides. See [www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk](http://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk) for further information.
- 1.33 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. It is understood that regular large-scale events are unlikely to occur in Thurrock, however the Council should still be aware of temporary arrangements that could be put in place if required.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 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, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, the Housing and Planning Act (2016), the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021, and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2021.
- 2.2 The GTAA provides a robust assessment of need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the study area (with the exception of the large Showpeople yards at Buckles Lane which are the subject of a separate GTAA that was published in 2022).
- 2.3 It is a credible evidence base which can be used to inform the new Local Plan covering the period 2023 to 2040, and the 15-year requirements of the PPTS.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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 Needs Assessment (GTAA).
- 2.6 The baseline date for the study is April 2023, which was when the household interviews were completed.

### 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).

### The Planning Definition in PPTS (2015)

- 2.8 For the purposes of the planning system, the definition was changed in PPTS (2015). The planning definition is set out in Annex 1 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.*

*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)***

- 2.9 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 no longer fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA.

## Definition of Travelling

- 2.10 One of the most important questions that GTAA's 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*'.
- 2.11 **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.
- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 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*.
- 2.14 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.
- 2.15 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.
- 2.16 **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.
- 2.17 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, or for seeking work, 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 holidays and visiting friends or relatives. It will not cover those who commute to work daily from a permanent place of residence (see **APP/E2205/C/15/3137477**).

- 2.18 It may also be that within a household some family members travel for nomadic purposes on a regular basis, but other family members stay at home to look after children in education, or other dependents with health problems etc. In these circumstances the household unit would be defined as travelling under the planning definition.
- 2.19 Households will also fall under the planning definition if they can demonstrate 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 demonstrate that they have travelled for work in the past. In addition, households will also have to demonstrate that they plan to travel again for work in the future.
- 2.20 This approach was endorsed by a Planning Inspector in Decision Notice for an appeal in East Hertfordshire (**Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/16/3145267**) that was issued in December 2016. 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.*

- 2.21 This was further reinforced in a more recent Decision Notice for an appeal in Norfolk that was issued in February 2018 (**Ref: APP/V2635/W/17/3180533**) that stated:

*As discussed during the hearing, although the PPTS does not spell this [the planning definition] out, it has been established in case law (R v South Hams DC 1994) that the nomadism must have an economic purpose. In other words, gypsies and travellers wander or travel for the purposes of making or seeking their livelihood.*

## Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

- 2.22 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 Act, 1985
- » Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), 2015
- » The Housing and Planning Act, 2016

- » National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021
- » Planning Practice Guidance<sup>3</sup> (PPG), 2021

2.23 In addition, Case Law, Ministerial Statements, the outcomes of Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals, and Judicial Reviews need to be taken into consideration. Relevant examples have been included in this report.

2.24 The primary guidance for undertaking the assessment of housing need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is set out in the 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.

### Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015

2.25 PPTS (2015), sets out the direction of Government policy. As well as introducing 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):

- » 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.

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

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<sup>3</sup> With particular reference to the sections on Housing needs of different groups (May 2021).

- » 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.

2.28 Local Authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5-year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, PPTS 2015 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.

## National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

2.29 The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework was issued in July 2021. Paragraph 61 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance.

2.30 Paragraph 62 then states that [emphasis added] '*Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes*'. The footnote to this section states that '*Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.*'

2.31 This essentially sets out that the needs of households that meet the planning definition should be assessed under the PPTS and that the needs of households that are not found to meet the planning definition should be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of an area.

2.32 In an Appeal Decision that was published in March 2020 for an appeal in Central Bedfordshire (APP/P0240/C/18/3213822) the Inspector concluded in relation to the then Paragraph 61 of the NPPF (now paragraph 62) that:

*It seems to me that this wording makes clear that it is only those meeting that definition that should be included in an assessment of need for 'planning definition' travellers and that gypsies who have ceased travelling should be counted and provided for elsewhere and this is the approach proposed in the emerging LP.*

*This does not, of course mean that these gypsies should be allocated 'bricks and mortar' type housing. They will also need a suitable supply of caravan sites to meet their needs.*

## Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill (2022)

<sup>2.33</sup> Among other things, this Bill seeks to make provision about town and country planning. Whilst there is currently no specific reference to changes to policy and guidance for Gypsies and Travellers, the Council may need to consider the outcomes of any changes to planning legislation that may impact on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

## Lisa Smith v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and others [2022]

<sup>2.34</sup> In October 2022 the Court of Appeal handed down judgment in *Lisa Smith v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities [2022] EWCA Civ 1391*. The case was a challenge to a specific appeal decision and concerned whether the planning definition of Gypsies and Travellers contained in Annex 1 of the PPTS (2015) is discriminatory against Travellers who are settled and who no longer travel for work. The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal and quashed the Inspectors decision from 2018 and referred the case back to The Secretary of State for redetermination.

<sup>2.35</sup> Whilst certain parts of the PPTS planning definition of a Traveller were found to be discriminatory, as the PPTS 2015 itself was not the subject of the case it has not been quashed or declared unlawful at this time.

<sup>2.36</sup> It is too early to properly identify the impact that the judgement will have on an assessment of need for Travellers. However, the approach taken by ORS does include an assessment of need for all Travellers, and should any changes be made to the PPTS planning definition of a Traveller, the outputs of the GTAA can be amended accordingly in any subsequent review.

## 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 Needs Assessments. This has been updated in light of changes to PPTS in August 2015, the Housing and Planning Act (2016), the NPPF (2021), and the PPG (2021). It has also responded to changes set out by Ministerial Statements, 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 GTAA methodology. This includes the need to pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both the 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 ORS would note that since the changes to the PPTS in August 2015 the ORS GTAA methodology has been repeatedly found to be sound and robust, including through Local Plan Examinations in Bedford, Blaby, Brentwood, Cambridge, Castle Point, Central Bedfordshire, Chelmsford, Cheltenham, Cotswold, Daventry, East Hertfordshire, Gloucester, Hart, Maldon, Milton Keynes, Newham, Runnymede, South Cambridgeshire, South Northamptonshire, Tendring, Tewkesbury, and Waverley.
- 3.4 An Appeal Decision for a Hearing in Central Bedfordshire (APP/P0240/C/18/3213822) that was issued in March 2020 concluded:

*'...whilst there have been some queries in previous appeal decisions over the conclusions of other GTAAs produced by ORS, the methodology, which takes into account the revisions made in 2015 to the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), has nevertheless been accepted by Inspectors in a considerable number of Local Plan Examinations.'*

- 3.5 The Inspector for the East Herts District Plan also found the evidence base in relation to Gypsies and Travellers to be sound in her Inspection Report that was issued in July 2018. She concluded:

*'The need of the travelling community has been carefully and robustly assessed and locations to meet identified needs have been allocated for the plan period. Policy HOU9 sets out the need for 5 permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers... the approach to the provision of housing is comprehensive, positively prepared, appropriate to the needs of the area and consistent with national policy.'*

- 3.6 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/Acronyms

<sup>3.7</sup> A Glossary of Terms/Acronyms can be found in **Appendix B**.

## Desk-Based Review

<sup>3.8</sup> ORS collated a range of secondary data that was used to support the study. This included:

- » Census data.
- » Traveller Caravan Count data.
- » 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

<sup>3.9</sup> Engagement was undertaken with key Council Officers from Thurrock through email and telephone and Teams interviews. A total of 5 interviews were completed with Council Officers from the study area.

## Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities

<sup>3.10</sup> To help support the Duty-to-Cooperate and provide background information for the study, email and 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 Councils set out below.

- » Basildon.
- » Bexley.
- » Brentwood.
- » Castle Point.
- » Dartford.
- » Essex County Council.
- » Gravesham.
- » Havering.
- » Rochford.
- » Southend.

## Survey of Travelling Communities

<sup>3.11</sup> 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 the robust information needed to assess households against the planning definition of a Traveller, up to

3 attempts were made to contact all households where it was not initially possible to conduct an interview because they were not available at the time.

- 3.12 Our experience suggests that an attempt to interview households on all pitches is more robust. A sample-based approach often leads to an under-estimate of need – and is an approach which is regularly challenged by the Planning Inspectorate and at Planning Appeals.
- 3.13 ORS worked closely with the Council to ensure that the interviews collected all the necessary information to support the study. The site interview questions that were used (**see Appendix D**) take account of past changes to PPTS and collect the information ORS feel is necessary to apply the current planning definition of a Traveller.
- 3.14 All interviews were completed by members of our dedicated team of experienced Researchers who work on our GTAA studies across England and Wales. Researchers attempted to conduct 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. Researchers 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.
- 3.15 Researchers 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.
- 3.16 Where it was not possible to undertake an interview, Researchers sought to capture as much information as possible about each pitch through a proxy interview from sources including neighbouring residents and site management (if present).

## Engagement with Bricks and Mortar Households

- 3.17 The 2021 Census recorded 39 households that identified as either Gypsies or Irish Travellers who lived in a house or bungalow in Thurrock and 17 living in a flat or maisonette. The 2021 Census also recorded 68 households that identified as Roma living in a house or bungalow and 49 living in a flat or maisonette. Roma was a new ethnicity category that was included for the first time in the 2021 Census.
- 3.18 ORS apply 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 sought through a range of sources including the interviews with people on existing sites and yards; intelligence from the stakeholder interviews; information from housing registers; and other local knowledge from stakeholders. Through this approach the GTAA endeavoured to do everything to give households living in bricks and mortar the opportunity to make their views known.
- 3.19 As a rule, ORS do not make any assumptions on the overall needs from household in bricks and mortar based on the outcomes of any interviews that are completed, 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. ORS work on the assumption that all those wishing to move will make their views known to us based on the wide range of publicity put in place.

## Timing of the Fieldwork

<sup>3.20</sup> ORS are fully aware of the transient nature of many travelling communities and subsequent seasonal variations in site and yard occupancy. ORS would normally aim to complete fieldwork during the non-travelling season, and also to avoid days of known local or national events. The fieldwork was completed between September 2022 and April 2023 and Researchers were able to collect information on the majority of residents living on sites and yards in Thurrock

## Applying the PPTS Planning Definition

<sup>3.21</sup> The primary change to PPTS (2015) in relation to the assessment of need was the change to 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. The revised PPTS was issued in 2015 and a number of relevant appeal decisions have been issued by the Planning Inspectorate on how the planning definition should be applied (see Paragraphs 2.20 and 2.21 for examples) – these support the view that households need to be able to demonstrate that they travel for work purposes, or for seeking work, to meet the planning definition, and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so, or have ceased to travel for work purposes temporarily due to education, ill health or old age.

<sup>3.22</sup> The household survey included a structured section of questions to record information about the travelling characteristics of household members. This included questions on the following key issues:

- » Whether any household members have travelled in the past 12 months.
- » Whether household members have ever travelled.
- » The reasons for travelling.
- » Where household members travelled to.
- » The times of the year that household members travelled.
- » Where household members stay when they are away travelling.
- » When household members stopped travelling.
- » The reasons why household members stopped travelling.
- » Whether household members intend to travel again in the future.
- » When and the reasons why household members plan to travel again in the future.

<sup>3.23</sup> When the household interviews were completed, the answers from the questions on travelling were used to determine the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). Through a combination of responses, households need to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that household members travel for work purposes, or for seeking work, and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to education, ill health or old age, and plan to travel again for work purposes in the future. The same definition applies to Travelling Showpeople as to Gypsies and Travellers.

<sup>3.24</sup> Households that need to be formally considered in the GTAA fall under one of three classifications. Only those households that meet, or may meet, the planning definition will form the components of need to be formally 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.

<sup>3.25</sup> Whilst the needs of those households that do not meet the planning definition do not need to be included in the GTAA, they have been assessed to provide the Council with components of need to

consider as part of their work on wider housing needs assessments. This is consistent with the requirements of the NPPF (2021).

- 3.26 In addition, the potential implications of the Court of Appeal decision for *Lisa Smith v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities* [2022] EWCA Civ 1391 that was handed down in October 2023 may also have to be considered. See Paragraphs 2.34-2.36 for further details.

## Undetermined Households

- 3.27 As well as calculating need for households that meet the planning definition, a GTAA has to consider the needs of any households where an interview was not able to be completed (either due to refusal to be interviewed or households that were not present during the fieldwork period). Whilst there is no law or guidance that sets out how the needs of these households should be addressed; an approach would have been taken that sought an estimate of potential need from these households. This would be an additional need figure over and above the need identified for households that meet the planning definition.
- 3.28 The estimate would seek to identify potential current and future need from any pitches known to be temporary or unauthorised, and through new household formation. As the demographics of any undetermined households are unknown, the ORS national household formation rate of 1.50% has been used.
- 3.29 Data that has been collected from over 5,500 household interviews that have been completed by ORS since the changes to PPTS in 2015 suggests that overall, approximately 30% of households who have been interviewed meet the planning definition (this rises to 70% for Travelling Showpeople based on over 500 interviews that have been completed) – and in some local authorities, no households meet the planning definition.
- 3.30 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 14,000 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in England and ORS have spoken with households on approximately 40% of them at a representative range of sites. Approximately 30% meet the 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.
- 3.31 This would also suggest that it is likely that only a proportion of any potential need identified from undetermined households would need conditioned Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority will need to be addressed through separate Local Plan Policies.
- 3.32 The ORS methodology to address the need arising from undetermined households was supported by the Planning Inspector for a Local Plan Examination for Maldon District Council, Essex. In his Report that was published on 29th June 2017 he concluded:

*The Council's stance is that any need arising from 'unknowns' should be a matter left to the planning application process. Modifications to Policy H6 have been put forward by the Council setting out criteria for such a purpose, which I consider further below. To my mind, that is an appropriate approach. While there remains a possibility that up to 10 further pitches may be needed, that cannot be said to represent identified need. It would be unreasonable to demand that the Plan provide for needs that have not been established to exist.*

## Households that Do Not Meet the Planning Definition

<sup>3.33</sup> Households who do not travel for work now fall outside of the planning definition of a Traveller. However Romany Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers may be able to claim a right to culturally appropriate accommodation under the Equality Act (2010) as a result of their protected characteristics. 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 and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans. This is echoed in the NPPF (2021).

<sup>3.34</sup> Paragraph 62 of the NPPF states that [emphasis added]:

*'Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'. The footnote to this section states that 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.'*

## Calculating the Current and Future Need

<sup>3.35</sup> 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.

### Supply of Pitches

<sup>3.36</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).

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

- 3.37 It is important when seeking to identify supply from vacant pitches that they are in fact available for general occupation – i.e. on a public or social rented site, or on a private site that is run on a commercial basis with anyone being able to rent a pitch if they are available. Typically, vacant pitches on small private family sites are not included as components of available supply but can be used to meet any current and future need from the family living on the site.

## Current Need

- 3.38 The second stage was to identify components of current need, which is not necessarily the need for pitches because they may be able to be addressed by space already available in the study area. It is important to address issues of double counting:
- » Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected.
  - » Concealed, doubled-up or over-crowded households (including single adults).
  - » Teenage children in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years.
  - » In-migration/roadside.
  - » Households in bricks and mortar needing to move to sites.
  - » Households in need on waiting lists for public sites.

## Future Need

- 3.39 The final stage was to identify components of future need. This includes the following components:
- » Households living on sites with temporary planning permission.
  - » New household formation.
- 3.40 Household formation rates are often the subject of challenge at appeals or examinations. ORS firmly believe that any household formation rates should use a robust local evidence base, rather than simply relying on national precedent. The approach taken is set out in more detail in Chapter 7 of this report.
- 3.41 ORS are also increasingly identifying households and adult household members who have been forced to leave sites due to over-crowding or exceeding planning conditions on the number of caravans permitted on sites. These households are typically living on the roadside or doubling-up on pitches in neighbouring local authorities. ORS include these households as components of hidden need and term them displaced in-migration.
- 3.42 All of these components of supply and need are presented in tabular format which identify the overall net need for current and future accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This has proven to be a robust model for identifying needs. The residential and transit pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are identified separately and the needs are to 2040.

## Pitch Turnover

- 3.43 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 approach frequently ends up significantly under-estimating need as, in the majority of cases, vacant pitches on sites are not available to meet any local 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.*

- 3.44 In addition, Best Practice for Assessing the Accommodation Needs of Gypsies and Travellers<sup>5</sup> produced jointly in June 2016 by 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.*

- 3.45 As such, other than current vacant pitches on sites that are known to be available, or pitches that are known to become available through the household interviews, pitch turnover has not been considered as a component of supply in this GTAA.

## Transit Provision

- 3.46 GTAA studies require the identification of demand for transit provision. 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 can be developed to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers as they move through different areas.

- » **Transit sites** - full facilities where Gypsies and Travellers might live temporarily (for up to three months) – for example, to work locally, for holidays or to visit family and friends.
- » **Emergency stopping places** - more limited facilities.
- » **Temporary sites and stopping places** - only temporary facilities to cater for an event.
- » **Negotiated stopping places** - agreements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time.

- 3.47 Transit sites serve a specific function of meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who are visiting an area or who are passing through on the way to somewhere else. A transit site typically has a restriction on the length of stay of usually around 12 weeks and has a range of facilities such as water supply, electricity, and amenity blocks.

- 3.48 An alternative to or in addition to a transit site is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time for which someone can stay on it but has much more limited facilities with typically only a source of water and chemical toilets provided.

- 3.49 Another alternative is 'negotiated stopping'. The term 'negotiated stopping' is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent 'built' transit sites but negotiated agreements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces

<sup>5</sup> See [www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/resources/](http://www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/resources/) for details

of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. Agreements are made between the authority and the (temporary) residents regarding expectations on both sides.

- <sup>3.50</sup> 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.
- <sup>3.51</sup> The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (Section 62a) is particularly important with regard to the issue of Gypsy and Traveller transit site provision. Section 62a of the Act allows the police to direct trespassers to remove themselves and their vehicles and property from any land where a suitable transit pitch on a relevant caravan site is available within the same local authority area (or within the county in two-tier local authority areas).
- <sup>3.52</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 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)<sup>6</sup> Traveller Caravan Count. The outcomes of the Stakeholder Interviews with Council Officers and with Officers from neighbouring planning authorities were also taken into consideration when determining this element of need in the study area.

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<sup>6</sup> Formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).



## 4. GYPSY, TRAVELLER & 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<sup>7</sup>. 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 tenants (similar to social housing).
- 4.3 The alternative to a public residential site is a private residential site and yard for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, respectively. 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 types of sites due to its mobile nature, as described more fully in Chapter 3 above. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a maximum occupancy 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. A number of authorities also operate an accepted encampments policy where short-term stopovers are tolerated without enforcement action.
- 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 landowner, 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.

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<sup>7</sup> Whilst it has now been withdrawn, *Government Guidance on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2007)* recommended that, as a general guide, an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer [a static caravan or park home for example] and touring caravan, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area.

## Sites and Yards

4.6 In Thurrock on the base date for the GTAA, there were:

- » 3 public sites (64 pitches);
- » 8 private sites with permanent planning permission (23 pitches);
- » 1 private site with temporary planning permission (1 pitch);
- » 3 sites that are tolerated for planning purposes (14 pitches);
- » 5 unauthorised sites (20 pitches);
- » 2 Travelling Showmen's yards with permanent planning permission (7 plots);
- » There were no public transit sites identified.

4.7 See **Appendix E** for further details.

**Figure 5 - Total amount of provision in Thurrock (April 2023)**

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots
Public sites	3	64
Private with permanent planning permission	8	23
Private with temporary planning permission	1	1
Tolerated pitches	3	14
Unauthorised sites	5	20
Public transit sites	0	0
Travelling Showpeople yards – private with permanent planning permission	2	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>129</b>

## DLUHC Traveller Caravan Count

4.8 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 DLUHC. This is a statistical count of the number of caravans on both authorised and unauthorised sites across England. With effect from July 2013, the Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count was renamed the Traveller Caravan Count due to the inclusion of information on Travelling Showpeople caravans.

4.9 As this count is of caravans and not households, it makes it more difficult to interpret for a study such as this 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 later in this report.

4.10 The most recent Traveller Caravan Count in July 2022 recorded 90 caravans on socially rented sites; 223 caravans on sites with permanent planning permission; 23 tolerated caravans on land owned by Travellers; and 6 not tolerated caravans on land owned by Travellers.

## 5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### Introduction

- 5.1 ORS undertook a stakeholder engagement programme to complement the information gathered through interviews with members of the Travelling Community. This consultation took the form of telephone interviews which were tailored to the role of the individual.
- 5.2 The aim of these interviews was to provide an understanding of current provision and possible future need; short-term encampments; transit provision; and cross-border issues.
- 5.3 A total of 5 interviews were undertaken with Council Officers from the study area.
- 5.4 As stated in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Local Authorities have a duty to cooperate on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries (S.110 Localism Act 2011). In order to explore issues relating to cross boundary working, ORS interviewed a Planning Officer from the following neighbouring authorities:
- » Basildon.
  - » Bexley.
  - » Brentwood.
  - » Castle Point.
  - » Dartford.
  - » Essex County Council.
  - » Gravesham.
  - » Havering.
  - » Rochford.
  - » Southend.
- 5.5 Due to issues surrounding data protection, and in order to protect the anonymity of those who took part, this section presents a summary of the views expressed by interviewees and verbatim comments have not been used. The views expressed in this section of the report represent a balanced summary of the views expressed by stakeholders, and on the views of the individuals concerned, rather than the official policy of their Council or organisation.

### Views of Key Stakeholders and Council Officers in Thurrock

#### Accommodation Needs

- 5.6 Since the last GTAA the Council has focused on trying to meet their identified need.
- 5.7 The Gammon Field site will have to be relocated due to the new Lower Thames Crossing. The Council are aware that the potential disruption caused by the relocation will have to be managed closely.
- 5.8 The Council confirmed that Stantec consultants are preparing a Gypsy Site Assessment to gather information on developing and expanding existing sites in Thurrock.

## Short-term Encampments and Transit Provision

- 5.9 The Council confirmed that all short-term encampments in Thurrock are alerted to the Council.
- 5.10 The Council believe that the short-term encampments are a result of seasonal movement or Travellers visiting families. No favoured stopping places were identified.
- 5.11 Thurrock Council have an agreed Negotiated Stopping Policy and have a Temporary Transit agreement in place.

## Cross Border Issues

- 5.12 No cross-border issues were identified.
- 5.13 One Officer expressed concerns with how Basildon Council resolve accommodation issues and identified needs. It was suggested that Basildon residents are approaching Thurrock Council for accommodation because of the lack of accommodation in Basildon.
- 5.14 Council Officers confirmed they are happy to cooperate with cross-border joint working but feel plans in neighbouring authorities are at different stages, leaving them working less closely with neighbouring authorities.
- 5.15 The Council work with NATGO (National Association of Gypsy and Traveller Officers), and neighbouring authorities when discussing the movement of families across borders.

## Future Priorities and Any Further Issues

- 5.16 The Council are prioritising the potential need for site expansion, as well as additional provision, when preparing the new Local Plan.

## Neighbouring Authorities

- 5.17 Potential cross border issues were raised by the following authorities:
- » Basildon
  - » Dartford
  - » Essex County
  - » Rochford
- 5.18 Thurrock Council was made aware of all issues brought forward by the neighbouring authorities for each Council.
- 5.19 The following authorities responded to indicate no potential cross border issues:
- » Brentwood
  - » Bexley
  - » Castlepoint
  - » Gravesham
  - » Havering
  - » Southend

## 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 and Traveller population living in the study area, and also efforts to engage with the bricks and mortar community.
- 6.2 In Thurrock at the base date for the GTAA, there were 3 public Gypsy and Traveller sites (64 pitches); 8 privately owned sites with permanent planning permission (23 pitches); 1 site with temporary planning permission (1 pitch); 3 sites that are tolerated for planning purposes (14 pitches); 5 unauthorised sites (20 pitches); 2 authorised Travelling Showmen's yards (7 plots); and no public transit sites. See **Appendix E** for further details.
- 6.3 Note that this does not include any Travelling Showpeople yards at Buckles Lane as these are the subject of a separate GTAA report that was published in 2022.
- 6.4 The tables below set out the number of pitches/plots, the number of interviews that were completed, and any reasons why interviews were not able to be completed.
- 6.5 When adjusted for undeveloped or vacant pitches, this represents a response rate of 80%.

**Figure 6 – Interviews completed in Thurrock**

Site Status	Pitches/Plots	Interviews	Reasons for not completing interviews/additional interviews
<b>Public Sites</b>			
Gammonfield <sup>8</sup>	21	14	4 x demolished, 3 x vacant
Pilgrims Lane	22	20	2 x vacant
Ship Lane	21	21	
<b>Private Sites</b>			
Beauchamp Place	5	5	
Knightlee Lodge	2	2	
Manor View	4	4	
Orchard Stables	1	0	1 x refusal
Small Acres	3	0	3 x vacant
The Laurels	5	0	5 x refusals
The Paddock	1	1	
The Willows	2	5	Additional units on site
<b>Temporary Sites</b>			
Fort William Road	1	1	
<b>Tolerated Sites</b>			
Echo Farm	8	1	7 x storage

<sup>8</sup> Note that this site is due to be located within Thurrock as it is on the path of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing.

Lower Crescent	3	3	
Love Lane	3	3	
<b>Unauthorised Sites</b>			
Holy Lands	3	2	1 x pitch does not exist
St Chads North	5	0	5 x refusals
St Chads South	5	0	5 x refusals
The Laurels	5	0	5 x refusals
The Willows	2	2	
<b>Public Transit Sites</b>			
None	-	-	-
<b>TSP – Authorised</b>			
Chadfields	4	2	2 x refusals
Fairacres	3	0	1 x no contact, 2 x plots do not exist
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>86</b>	

## 7. CURRENT AND FUTURE PITCH PROVISION

### Introduction

- 7.1 This section focuses on the pitch and plot provision which is needed in the study area currently and to 2040. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future<sup>9</sup>. 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, 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, planning records and stakeholder interviews. 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 provision, which is required in the area, but also whether there is a need for any transit sites and/or emergency stopping place provision.

### New Household Formation Rates

- 7.4 Nationally, a household formation and growth rate of 3.00% net per annum<sup>10</sup> 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 pitches unrealistically. In this context, ORS prepared a Technical Note on Gypsy and Traveller Household Formation and Growth Rates in 2015 and updated it in June 2020. The main conclusions are set out here and the full paper is in **Appendix G**.
- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 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 (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.

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<sup>9</sup> See Paragraphs 3.37 and 3.39 for details of components on current and future need.

<sup>10</sup> Page 25, *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments – Guidance (DCLG – 2007)* Now withdrawn.

- 7.8 This view has been supported by Planning Inspectors in a number of Decision Notices. The Inspector for 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 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 1.50% but that a 2.50% 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 1.50% 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 1.50% figure is justified in the case of Doncaster.*

- 7.9 Another case was in relation to an appeal in Guildford that was issued in March 2018 (Ref: APP/W/16/3165526) where the agent acting on behalf of the appellant again claimed that a rate closer to 3.00% should be used. The Inspector concluded:

*There is significant debate about household formation rates and the need to meet future growth in the district. The obvious point to make is that this issue is likely to be debated at the local-plan examination. In my opinion, projecting growth rates is not an exact science and the debate demonstrates some divergence of opinion between the experts. Different methodologies could be applied producing a wide range of data. However, on the available evidence it seems to me that the figures used in the GTAA are probably appropriate given that they are derived by using local demographic evidence. In my opinion, the use of a national growth rate and its adaptation to suit local or regional variation, or the use of local base data to refine the figure, is a reasonable approach.*

- 7.10 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 in December 2017. The overall purpose of the journal is to encourage and promote high standards of social research for public benefit.
- 7.11 ORS assessments take full account of the net local household growth rate per annum calculated on the basis of demographic evidence from the site surveys, and the 'baseline' includes all current authorised households, all households identified as in current need (including concealed households, 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, household dissolution, and in-/out-migration.
- 7.12 Overall, the household growth rate used for the assessment of future needs is informed by local evidence. This local demographic evidence is usually used to adjust the ORS national growth rate of 1.50% up or down based on the proportion of those aged under 18 (by planning status).
- 7.13 This approach has been followed for Gypsy and Traveller Households that met and did not meet the planning definition. For those households that met the planning definition 46% were aged under 18 so the ORS national rate of 1.50% has been adjusted to 1.90%. For households that did not the



planning definition 46% were aged under 18 so the ORS national rate of 1.50% has also been adjusted to 1.90%.

- 7.14 However, in certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are low, or the population age structure cohorts are skewed by certain age groups, it is not appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement is made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children. This is based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in the area. This is based on evidence from other GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales. This approach has been used to determine future need from Travelling Showpeople who met the planning definition due to low numbers of children living on yards.
- 7.15 In addition, the ORS national rate of 1.50% has been used to estimate growth for undetermined Travellers, based on the best available evidence due to lack of local demographic evidence for undetermined Traveller households.
- 7.16 New household formation has been calculated from year 6 of the GTAA period onwards. New household formation for years 0-5 of the GTAA period is from teenagers in need of a pitch in the next 5 years who have been identified as components of need in the household interviews. This eliminates any double counting in the assessment of need.

## Breakdown by 5 Year Bands

- 7.17 In addition to tables which set out the overall need for Gypsies and Travellers, the overall need has also been broken down by 5-year bands as required by PPTS (2015). 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 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 GTAA period based on the compound rate of growth that was applied rather than being split equally over time.

## Applying the Planning Definition

- 7.18 The outcomes from the household interviews were used to determine the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). This assessment was based on the responses to the questions given to Researchers. Only those households that met the planning definition or those who demonstrated that they have ceased to travel temporarily (due to education, ill health, or old age) form the components of need in the GTAA that will need to be addressed through a Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Policy. In addition, 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 undetermined households. Whilst they do not need to be formally considered in the GTAA, need from households that did not meet the planning definition has also been assessed to provide the Council with information on levels of need that will have to be considered as part of the wider housing needs of the area and through separate Local Plan Policies.

7.19 The information used to assess households against the planning definition 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 and for what reasons. The table below sets out the planning status of households that were interviewed for the Thurrock GTAA. This includes any hidden households that were identified during the household interviews including concealed and doubled-up households or single adults and accepted in-migration.

Figure 7 – Planning status of households in Thurrock

Status	Meet Planning Definition	Do Not Meet Planning Definition	Undetermined
<b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>			
Public Sites	4	43	0
Private Sites	11	3	6
Temporary Sites	1	0	0
Tolerated Sites	8	0	0
Unauthorised Sites	5	1	15
Roadside	0	1	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Travelling Showpeople</b>			
TSP – Private	4	1	3
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>24</b>

7.20 Figure 7 shows that for Gypsies and Travellers in Thurrock 29 Gypsy and Traveller households met the planning definition of a Traveller, and 4 Travelling Showmen's households met the definition in that they were able to demonstrate that household members travel for work purposes, or for seeking work, and stay away from their usual place of residence or have ceased to travel temporarily.

7.21 A total of 48 Gypsy and Traveller households, and 1 Travelling Showmen's household did not meet the planning definition as they were not able to demonstrate 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 relatives or friends, and others had ceased to travel permanently.

7.22 It was not possible to make contact with 21 Gypsy and Traveller households, and 3 Travelling Showmen's households during the fieldwork period as households either refused to take part in an interview or were not present during the fieldwork period. These households are recorded as Undetermined for the purposes of the GTAA.

## Migration

- 7.23 Evidence drawn from stakeholder and household interviews has been considered alongside assessments of need that have been completed in other nearby local authorities. The household interviews identified no households living in other local authorities with a need to move to a site or yard in Thurrock.
- 7.24 ORS have found no firm evidence from other local studies that have been completed recently of any households wishing to move to Thurrock. Therefore, net migration to the sum of zero has been assumed for the GTAA – which means that net pitch requirements are driven by locally identifiable need rather than speculative modelling assumptions.
- 7.25 It is important to note that any applications for new sites or additional pitches as a result of in-migration should be seen as windfall need and should be dealt with by Criteria-Based Local Plan Policies.

## Waiting Lists for Public Sites

- 7.26 There are 3 public sites in Thurrock with 64 pitches. At the time of reporting there were no details available on potential levels of need from these 3 sites from households on the waiting lists. However, the household interviews did identify a number of vacant pitches, and households seeking to move to bricks and mortar accommodation so this would suggest that there is little or no need from households on waiting lists for these 3 sites. In addition, it should be noted that the proposed Lower Thames Crossing route will necessitate the relocation of the public site at Gammonfield. Should the proposed route be approved, the Government have agreed to relocate this site on a like-for-like basis with no loss of pitches.

## Gypsy and Traveller Needs

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

<sup>7.27</sup> Analysis of the household interviews indicated that there is a need from 3 households on unauthorised developments; 1 concealed or doubled-up household or single adult; a need for 11 pitches deriving from 5-year need from teenage children; a need from 1 temporary pitch; and a need for 13 from new household formation using a rate of 1.90% derived from the demographics of the residents. There is also supply from 7 vacant pitches on public sites and 4 pitches on public sites due to be vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar. Therefore, the overall level of need for those households who met the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller in Thurrock is for an additional **18 pitches over the plan period to 2040**.

**Figure 8 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock that met the Planning Definition**

<b>Gypsy &amp; Traveller – Meeting Planning Definition</b>	<b>Pitches</b>
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Available supply from vacant public and private pitches	7
Available supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	4
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	3
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-Up/Over-Crowding	1
5 year need from teenage children	11
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Displacement	7
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
Households on pitches with temporary planning permission	1
New household formation	13
<i>(Household base 41 and formation rate 1.90%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Need</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>18</b>

**Figure 9 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock that met the Planning Definition by year periods**

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	5
6 – 10	2028-32	4
11 – 15	2033-37	5
16 – 18	2038-40	4
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>18</b>

## Pitch Needs – Undetermined Gypsies and Travellers

7.28 The assessment identified **a need for up to 21 pitches** for undetermined households. This is made up of 15 unauthorised pitches; and a maximum of 6 households (using the ORS national formation rate of 1.50%) from new household formation. If the ORS national proportion of 30% of households that meet the planning definition were to be applied this would result in 6 pitches for households meeting the planning definition. If the local proportion of 38% were to be applied this would result in 8 pitches for households meeting the planning definition.

7.29 See **Appendix C** for further details.

## Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers that do not meet the Planning Definition

7.30 It is not now a requirement for a GTAA to include an assessment of need for households that did not meet the planning definition. However, this assessment is included for illustrative purposes, to help fulfil the requirements of the Housing Act (1985)<sup>11</sup> and the NPPF (2021) and to provide the Council with information on levels of need that will have to be addressed through separate Local Plan Policies.

7.31 On this basis, it is evident that whilst any needs from the households who did not meet the planning definition will represent only a very small proportion of the overall housing need, the Council will still need to ensure that arrangements are in place to properly address these needs – especially as many identified as Irish and Romany Gypsies and may claim that the Council should meet their housing needs through culturally appropriate housing.

7.32 The assessment identified **a need for 36 pitches** for households that did not meet the planning definition over the plan period. This is made up of 1 household on an unauthorised development; 7 concealed or doubled-up households or single adults; a need for 10 pitches deriving from 5-year need from teenage children; 1 pitch for in-migration or roadside households; and 17 from new household formation, using a rate of 1.90% derived from the household demographics.

7.33 See **Appendix D** for further details.

<sup>11</sup> See Paragraph 3.34 for details.

## Travelling Showpeople Needs

### Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople

<sup>7.34</sup> Analysis of the household interviews indicated that there is a need from 3 concealed or doubled-up households or single adults; a need for 1 plot deriving from 5-year need from teenage children; and a need of 3 plots from new household formation derived from the demographics of the residents. Therefore, the overall level of need for those households who met the planning definition of a Travelling Showperson in Thurrock is for **7 plots over the plan period**.

Figure 10 – Need for Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock that met the Planning Definition

Travelling Showpeople – Meeting Planning Definition	Plots
<b>Supply of Plots</b>	
Available supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Available supply from plots on new yards	0
Plots vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Plots 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	3
5 year need from teenage children	1
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
In-Migration/Roadside	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
Households on plots with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	3
<i>(Formation from demographics)</i>	
<b>Total Future Need</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>7</b>

**Figure 11 – Need for Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock that met the Planning Definition by year periods**

<b>Year Period</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Need</b>
0 – 5	2023-27	4
6 – 10	2028-32	2
11 – 15	2033-37	1
16 – 18	2038-40	0
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>7</b>

## Transit Requirements

- 7.35 When determining the potential need for transit provision the assessment has looked at data from the DLUHC Traveller Caravan Count; the outcomes of the stakeholder interviews; and records on numbers of unauthorised encampments.

## DLUHC Traveller Caravan Count

- 7.36 Whilst it is considered to be a comprehensive national dataset on numbers of authorised and unauthorised caravans across England, it is widely acknowledged that the Traveller 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.
- 7.37 Data from the July 2022 Traveller Caravan Count shows that there have been no unauthorised caravans on land not owned by Travellers recorded in the study area in recent years.

## Stakeholder Interviews and Local Data

- 7.38 The stakeholder interviews suggested that there a low number of encampments in Thurrock and that the majority are short-term and transient. The interviews also suggested that the Council have an existing approach to tolerate short-term encampments.
- 7.39 Data provided by the Council identified a total of 16 recorded encampments between June 2019 and December 2022. This again suggests that the encampments that have been recorded in Thurrock are short-term and transient, with most comprising 6 or less caravans, and only staying for a short period of time.

## Transit Recommendations

- 7.40 Due to historic low numbers of encampments, it is not recommended that there is a need for a formal public transit site in Thurrock at this time. However, the situation relating to levels of encampments should continue to be monitored to determine if there are any increases in the number of encampments, and the nature of these encampments.
- 7.41 As well as information on the size and duration of the encampments, this monitoring should also seek to gather information from residents on the reasons for their stay in the local area; whether they have a permanent base or where they have travelled from; and whether they have any need or preference to settle permanently in the local area. This information could be collected as part of a Welfare Assessment (or similar).
- 7.42 It is recommended that a review of the evidence base relating to encampments, including the monitoring referred to above, should be undertaken on an Essex-wide basis. This will establish



whether there is a need for investment in any new transit provision or emergency stopping places, or whether a managed approach is preferable.

- 7.43 The Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) have commissioned ORS to complete a detailed study of transit needs across Essex, Southend-on-Sea, and Thurrock. This is due to be completed in 2024.
- 7.44 In the short-term the Council should continue to use its current approaches when dealing with encampments, and management-based approaches such as negotiated stopping agreements could also be considered.
- 7.45 The term 'negotiated stopping' is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent 'built' transit sites but negotiated agreements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. Agreements are made between the Council and the (temporary) residents regarding expectations on both sides. See [www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk](http://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk) for further information.
- 7.46 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. It is understood that regular large-scale events are unlikely to occur in Thurrock, however the Council should still be aware of temporary arrangements that could be put in place if required.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 This study provides a robust evidence base to enable the Council to assess the housing needs of the Travelling Community as well as complying with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 1985, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021, and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2021. It also provides the evidence base which can be used to support the Local Plan.

### Gypsies and Travellers

8.2 In summary, in Thurrock for the period 2023-2040, there is a need for:

- » 18 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households that met the planning definition.
- » Up to 21 pitches for undetermined Gypsy and Traveller households that may meet the planning definition.
- » 36 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households who did not meet the planning definition.

8.3 In general terms need identified in a GTAA is seen as need for pitches. As set out in Chapter 4 of this report, the now withdrawn *Government Guidance on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2007)* recommended that, as a general guide, an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area.

8.4 As well as considering new pitch allocations in the Local Plan, it is also recommended that alternative approaches should be considered when seeking to address the levels of need identified in this GTAA, especially when seeking to meet the need through the intensification or expansion of existing private sites.

8.5 The first approach to consider is in relation to single concealed or doubled-up adults and teenagers who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years. In the short to medium term, it is likely that the accommodation needs of these individuals could be met through additional touring caravans on existing sites which are, generally, each equivalent to the provision of a pitch, as opposed to more formally set out pitches.

8.6 The second approach to consider is for private sites occupied by larger extended family groups. Again, sites like this may be able to meet the overall accommodation needs through a combination of shared static caravans, tourers and dayrooms on existing sites which are, generally, each equivalent to the provision of a pitch – as opposed to more formally set out sites with separate pitches. It is common for conditions in Decision Notices for Travellers sites to simply place limits on the numbers and types of caravans as opposed to placing limits on the number of pitches.

8.7 Future need from new household formation could also be met through natural turnover of pitches over time.

8.8 It is recognised that the Council has an adopted Local Plan – the Core Strategy, 2015. The findings of this report should therefore be considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment of overall housing need in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople during the preparation of the new Local Plan. Whilst the findings in this report are aggregated totals for the whole of the new Local Plan period to 2040, due to data protection issues,

the Council have more detailed data to enable an accurate review of Local Plan allocations to be made.

## Travelling Showpeople

- 8.9 In summary, in Thurrock for the GTAA period 2023-2040, there is a need for:
- » 7 plots for Travelling Showpeople households that met the planning definition
  - » 1 plot for undetermined Travelling Showpeople households that may meet the planning definition.
  - » No plots for Travelling Showpeople households who did not meet the planning definition

## Transit Provision

- 8.10 Due to historic low numbers of encampments, it is not recommended that there is a need for a formal public transit site in Thurrock at this time. However, the situation relating to levels of encampments should continue to be monitored to determine if there are any increases in the number of encampments, and the nature of these encampments.
- 8.11 It is also recommended that a review of the evidence base relating to encampments, including the monitoring referred to above, should be undertaken on an Essex-wide basis. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in any new transit provision or emergency stopping places, or whether a managed approach is preferable.
- 8.12 The Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) have commissioned ORS to complete a detailed study of transit needs across Essex, Southend-on-Sea, and Thurrock. This is due to be completed in 2024.

## Summary of Need to be Addressed – Gypsies and Travellers

- 8.13 Taking into consideration all of the elements of need that have been assessed, together with the assumptions on the proportion of undetermined households that are likely to meet the planning definition, the table below sets out the likely number of pitches that will need to be addressed either as a result of the GTAA, or through the Council's Housing Need Assessment (HNA) process and through separate Local Plan Policies.
- 8.14 Total need from Gypsy and Traveller households that met the planning definition, who were undetermined, and from those households who did not meet the planning definition is for 75 pitches between 2023-2040.
- 8.15 The tables below break total need down by:
- » The number that met the planning definition;
  - » The likely proportion of need from undetermined households that will meet the planning definition. It does this by taking 30% (the ORS national average of Gypsies and Travellers that meet the planning definition) of need from undetermined households and 38% (the locally derived proportion that meet the planning definition);
  - » The number that did not meet the planning definition; and
  - » The likely proportion of need from undetermined households that will not meet the planning definition. It does this by taking 70% (the ORS national average of Gypsies

and Travellers that do not meet the planning definition) of need from undetermined households and 62% (the locally derived proportion that did not meet the planning definition);

8.16 Need from households that meet the planning definition (both known and undetermined) will need to be addressed through a Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Policy through a combination of site allocations and through a Criteria-Based Policy.

8.17 Need for households that did not meet the planning definition will need to be met through other Local Plan Housing Policies.

**Figure 12 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households broken down by Local Plan Policy Type – ORS National %**

Delivery Status	Gypsy and Traveller Policy	Housing Policy	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 30% Undetermined)	24	0	<b>24</b>
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 70% Undetermined)	0	51	<b>51</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>75</b>

**Figure 13 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households broken down by Local Plan Policy Type – Thurrock %**

Delivery Status	Gypsy and Traveller Policy	Housing Policy	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 38% Undetermined)	26	0	<b>26</b>
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 62% Undetermined)	0	49	<b>49</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>75</b>

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## Appendix B: Glossary of Terms / Acronyms Used

### Glossary

**Amenity block** meaning a building where basic plumbing amenities are provided. This could include a bath, a shower, a WC and a sink.

**Bricks and mortar** is used to describe mainstream housing.

**Caravan** is used to describe mobile living vehicle used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.

**Concealed household** is used to describe households living within other households, who are unable to set up separate family units.

**Doubling-Up** refers to there being more than the permitted number of caravans on a pitch or plot.

**Emergency Stopping Place** is a temporary site with limited facilities to be occupied by Gypsies and Travellers while they travel.

**Green Belt** refers to 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.

**Household Formation** is the process in which individuals form separate households. This is normally though adult children setting up their own household.

**In-migration** refers to movement of households into a region or community.

**Local Plans** are Local Authority spatial planning documents that can include specific policies and/or site allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

**Out-migration** refers to the Movement from one region or community in order to settle in another.

**Pitch/plot** is an area of land on a site or 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.

**Private site** is an authorised site owned privately. This can be owner-occupied, rented or a mixture of owner-occupied and rented pitches.

**Site** refers to an area of land on which Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are accommodated in caravans, chalets, or vehicles. Can contain one or multiple pitches or plots.

**Social/Public/Council Site** is an authorised site owned by either the local authority or a Registered Housing Provider.

**Temporary planning permission** refers to a private site with planning permission for a fixed period of time.

**Tolerated site/yard** refers to long-term tolerated sites or yards where enforcement action is not expedient, and a certificate of lawful use would be granted if sought.

**Transit provision** refers to a site intended for short stays and containing a range of facilities. There is normally a limit on the length of time residents can stay.

**Unauthorised Development** refers to caravans on land owned by Gypsies and Travellers and without planning permission.

**Unauthorised Encampment** refers to caravans on land not owned by Gypsies and Travellers and without planning permission.

**Waiting list** is a record held by the local authority or site managers of applications to live on a site.

**Yard** is a name often used by Travelling Showpeople to refer to a site.

## Acronyms and Initials

**DLUHC** Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

**GTAA** Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

**LPA** Local Planning Authority

**NPPF** National Planning Policy Framework

**ORS** Opinion Research Services

**PPG** Planning Practice Guidance

**PPTS** Planning Policy for Traveller Sites refers to a site intended for short stays and containing a range of facilities. There is normally a limit on the length of time residents can stay.

## Appendix C: Undetermined households

Figure 14 – Need for undetermined Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock

Gypsy & Traveller – Undetermined	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Available supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Available 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	15
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-Up/Over-Crowding	0
5 year need from teenage children	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
In-Migration/Roadside	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
Households on pitches with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	6
<i>(Household base 21 and formation rate 1.50%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Need</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>21</b>

Figure 15 – Need for undetermined Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock by year periods

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	16
6 – 10	2028-32	2
11 – 15	2033-37	2
16 – 18	2038-40	1
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>21</b>



Figure 16 – Need for undetermined Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock

Travelling Showpeople – Undetermined	Plots
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Available supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Available supply from plots on new sites	0
Plots vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Plots 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
5 year need from teenage children	0
In-Migration/Roadside	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
Households on plots with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	1
<i>(Household base 2 and formation rate 1.50%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Need</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>1</b>

Figure 17 – Need for undetermined Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock by year periods

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	0
6 – 10	2028-32	0
11 – 15	2033-37	1
16 – 18	2038-40	0
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>1</b>

## Appendix D: Households that did not meet the Planning Definition

Figure 18 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock that did not meet the Planning Definition

Gypsy & Traveller – Not Meeting Planning Definition	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Available supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Available 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	1
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-Up/Over-Crowding	7
5 year need from teenage children	10
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Roadside	1
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
Households on pitches with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	17
<i>(Household base 58 and formation rate 1.90%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Need</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>36</b>

Figure 19 – Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Thurrock that did not meet the Planning Definition by year periods

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	19
6 – 10	2028-32	6
11 – 15	2033-37	7
16 – 18	2038-40	4
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>36</b>

Figure 20 – Need for Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock that did not meet the Planning Definition

Travelling Showpeople – Not Meeting Planning Definition	Plots
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Available supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Available supply from plots on new sites	0
Plots vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Plots 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
5 year need from teenage children	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
In-Migration/Roadside	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
Households on pitches with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	0
<i>(No need from 1 household)</i>	
<b>Total Future Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>0</b>

Figure 21 – Need for Travelling Showpeople households in Thurrock that did not meet the Planning Definition by year periods

Year Period	Dates	Need
0 – 5	2023-27	0
6 – 10	2028-32	0
11 – 15	2033-37	0
16 – 18	2038-40	0
<b>0 – 18</b>	<b>2023-40</b>	<b>0</b>

## Appendix E: Site and Yard List

Site/Yard	Tenure	Authorised	Unauthorised
Gammonfield	Public	21	-
Pilgrims Lane	Public	22	-
Ship Lane	Public	21	-
Beauchamp Place	Private	5	-
Knightlee Lodge	Private	2	-
Manor View	Private	4	-
Orchard Stables	Private	1	-
Small Acres	Private	3	-
The Laurels	Private	5	-
The Paddock	Private	1	-
The Willows	Private	2	-
Fort William Road	Temporary	1	-
Echo Farm	Tolerated	-	8
Love Lane	Tolerated	-	3
Lower Crescent	Tolerated	-	3
Holy Lands	Unauthorised	-	3
St Chads North	Unauthorised	-	5
St Chads South	Unauthorised	-	5
The Laurels	Unauthorised	-	5
The Willows	Unauthorised	-	2
<b>Total Pitches</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>34</b>
Chadfields	TSP - Private	4	-
Fairacres	TSP - Private	3	-
<b>Total Plots</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

## **Appendix F: Questionnaire**

Interview or Proxy?



Project Code

## GTAA Questionnaire

### Introduction

Good morning / afternoon My name is [INTERVIEWER] from Opinion Research Services, working on behalf of [CLIENT]

The Council are undertaking a study of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showmen 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 Showmen 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 Showmen households.

All questions are optional and all information you provide will be processed by ORS in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR. Your responses will be stored and processed electronically and securely. This paper form will be securely destroyed after processing. Your household will not be identified to the council and only anonymous data and results will be submitted, though verbatim comments may be reported in full, and the data from this survey will only be used to help understand the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showmen households

### A: General Information

#### Q1. Name of planning authority

Please write in

#### Q1b Sub area (if needed)

-----

-----

-----

#### Q2. Address & pitch number

Please write in

#### Q3. Date of visit

Please write in – DD/MM/YY

#### Q4. Time of visit

Please write in – HH:MM

#### Q5. Status of Private Site?

Private rented

Private owned

N/A

<p><b>Q6. Name of respondent</b></p> <p>Please write in</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p><b>Q10. Where is your main residence?</b></p> <p>Please write in</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 120px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p><b>Q7. Which of these best describes you?</b></p> <p>READ OUT: Please tick ONE box only</p> <p>Romany Gypsy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Irish Traveller <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Scots Gypsy or Traveller <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Travelling Showmen <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>New Traveller <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>English Traveller <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Welsh Gypsy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Non Traveller <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Please write in</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p><b>Q11. How long have you lived here?</b></p> <p>Years and months</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p><b>Q8. How many units are on the pitch?</b></p> <p>Please write a number in each box</p> <p>Mobile homes / Static caravans <input type="text"/></p> <p>Touring caravans <input type="text"/></p> <p>Day Rooms / Utility Shed <input type="text"/></p> <p>Bungalows / Bricks and Mortar <input type="text"/></p> <p>Other (e.g. Park Home or American Caravan) <input type="text"/></p>	<p>IF MOVED IN PAST FIVE YEARS ASK</p> <p><b>Q12. Where did you move from?</b></p> <p>Please write in</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 50px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p><b>Q9. Is this site your main place of residence?</b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SKIP TO Q11</b></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ANSWER Q10</b></p>	<p><b>Q13. Do you live here out of choice or because there is no other option?</b></p> <p>Choice <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SKIP TO Q15</b></p> <p>No other option <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ANSWER Q14</b></p>
	<p><b>Q14. Why do you feel there is no other choice?</b></p> <p>Please write in</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 120px; width: 100%;"></div>
	<p><b>Q15. Is this site suitable for your household?</b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SKIP TO Q17</b></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ANSWER Q16</b></p>

**Q16. Why do you feel this site isn't suitable?**

PROBE: SCHOOLS, WORK, HEALTHCARE, FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Please write in

**Q17. How many separate families or single adults live on this pitch?**

Please write a number in the box

**B: HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS**

**Q18. Please tell me about the members of your household**

Please complete below for the main household on this pitch. Any further families pertinent to this pitch should be included in section G using the format below.

For example, a seven year old daughter should be entered as

<b>F</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Daughter</b>	

Person 1

GENDER	AGE
<b>Interviewee</b>	

Person 2

GENDER	AGE

Person 3

GENDER	AGE

Person 4

GENDER	AGE

Person 5

GENDER	AGE

Person 6

GENDER	AGE

Person 7

GENDER	AGE

Person 8

GENDER	AGE

Person 9

GENDER	AGE

Person 10

GENDER	AGE

**How many additional families or single adults are included in Section G?**

Please write a number

**C: ACCOMMODATION NEEDS**

**Q19. How many families or single adults living on this pitch will need a pitch of their own in the next five years?**

An adult is defined as 18+  
Please write a number

**Q20. How many of your children will need a home of their own in the next 5 years?**

Please write a number

IF ZERO SKIP TO Q24

**Q21. Do the individuals counted above currently live on this site?**

Yes  **GO TO Q22**

No  **SKIP TO Q23**

**Q22. Would they wish to stay here and, if not, where would they wish to move to?**

Please write in



**Q23. Where do they currently live? And would they wish to move to this site or another local site if possible?**

Please write in

**D: FUTURE ACCOMMODATION NEEDS**

**Q24. Do you plan to move from this site in the next five years?**

Yes  **GO TO Q32**  
 -----  
 No  **SKIP TO Q36**

**Q25. Why do you plan to move?**

Please write in

**Q26. Where do you plan to move to?**

Another site in this area   
 -----  
 A site in another council area   
 -----  
 Bricks & mortar in this area   
 -----  
 Bricks & mortar in another council area   
 -----  
 Other (e.g. land they own elsewhere)

Please provide more detail on the answer above

**Q27. Would you prefer to buy a site or rent on a public or private site?**

Private buy   
 -----  
 Private rent   
 -----  
 Public rent

**Q28. Can you afford to buy a private pitch or site?**

Yes   
 -----  
 No   
 -----  
 Don't know

**Q29. Are you aware of, or do you own any land that has potential for new pitches**

Yes  **GO TO Q37**  
 -----  
 No  **SKIP TO Q38**

**Q30. Where is the site and who owns it?**

Please write in

**E: Travelling**

**Q31. How many trips, living in a caravan or a trailer, have you or members of your family made away from your permanent base in the last 12 months?**

0  **SKIP TO Q44**  
 -----  
 1   
 -----  
 2   
 -----  
 3  **GO TO Q39**  
 -----  
 4   
 -----  
 5+

**Q32. Which family members travelled?**

All the family   
 -----  
 Adult males   
 -----  
 Other

Please write in

**Q33. What were the reasons for travelling?**

- Work
- Holidays
- Visiting family
- Fairs
- Other

If work, please write I profession or trade; and if fairs, holidays or visiting family, probe whether this involves any elements of work.

**Q34. At what time of year do you or family members usually travel?**

- All year
- Summer
- Winter

**Q35. How long do you usually travel for?**

Please write in

**Q36. Where do you or family members usually stay when they are travelling?**

- LA transit sites
- Private transit sites
- Roadside
- Friends / Family
- Other

Please write in

**IF BEEN TRAVELLING - GO TO Q49**  
**NON-TRAVELLING ANSWER Q44 - Q48**

**Q37. Are there any reasons you don't travel at the moment?**

Please write in

**Q38. Have you or family members ever travelled**

- Yes  **GO TO Q46**
- No  **SKIP TO Q49**

**Q39. When did you or family members last travel?**

Please write in

**Q40. What were the reasons for travelling?**

- Work
- Holidays
- Visiting family
- Fairs
- Other

Please write in or list profession if for work. If for work, please write profession or trade; and if fairs, holidays or visiting family, probe whether this involves any elements of work.

**Q41. Why do you not travel anymore?**

- Children in school

---

- Ill health

---

- Old age

---

- Settled now

---

- Nowhere to stop

---

- No work opportunities

---

- Other

Please write in

**Q42. Do you or other family members plan to travel in the future**

- Yes  **ANSWER Q50**

---

- No  **SKIP TO Q51**

---

- Don't know  **SKIP TO Q51**

**Q43. When and why do you / they plan to travel?**

Please write in

**Q44. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your travelling patterns?**

Please write in

**F: Contact information**

**Q45. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about this site and your accommodation needs?**

Please write in

**Q46. Would you like ORS to contact you again regarding future needs assessments?**

- Yes  **GO TO Q54**

---

- No  **SKIP TO Q56**

**47. Would you like the Council to contact you about your accommodation needs?**

- Yes  **GO TO Q55**

---

- No  **SKIP TO Q56**

**Q48. Can I confirm the details they should use to contact you?**

We cannot guarantee if and when they will make contact with you.

Name

Phone number

Email address

**Q48a. Do you know of anyone living in Bricks and Mortar who we should contact for this study?**

- Yes

---

- No

**Q48b. Can you provide their contact details?**

Name

Phone number

Email address

**If can't provide details will you ask them to contact us on 0800 0789786**

**G: Any notes / Extra information**

**Interviewer: please use this space for any additional information including details about additional households**

**Interviewer Declaration: I confirm that this interview was conducted in accordance with all interviewing guidelines and that the data collected is accurately recorded**

Interviewer Name:	
Interviewer Signature:	
Date:	



## **Appendix G: Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates**



## Technical Note

# Gypsy and Traveller Household Formation and Growth Rates

June 2020

**Opinion Research Services**



As with all our studies, this research is subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of this research requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

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# 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 until 2013 little detailed work had been done to assess their likely scale. ORS undertook work in 2013 to assess the likely rate of demographic growth for the Gypsy and Traveller population and concluded that the figure could be as low 1.25% per annum, but that best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum.
2. This analysis was produced as a separate document in 2013 and then updated in 2015 ([www.opinionresearch.co.uk/formation2015](http://www.opinionresearch.co.uk/formation2015)) in light of comments from academics, planning agents and local authorities. The 2015 document was complex because there was still serious dispute as to the level of demographic growth for Gypsies and Travellers in 2015. However, ORS now consider these disputes have largely been resolved at Planning Appeals and Local Plan Examinations, so we consider that much of the supporting evidence is now no longer required to be in the document.
3. This current document represents a shortened re-statement to our findings in 2015 to allow for easier comprehension of the issues involved. It contains no new research and if reader wishes to see further details of the supporting information, they should review the more detailed 2015 report.

## Introduction

4. 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.

## Modelling Population and Household Growth Rates

5. 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, in-/out-migration and household dissolution. Nevertheless, deriving satisfactory estimates is difficult because the evidence is often tenuous – so, in this context in 2013, ORS 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 supplemented the available national statistical sources with data derived from our own surveys.

## Migration Effects

6. 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.

## Population Profile

7. The main source for the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth is the UK 2011 Census. 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.

**Table 1 - 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

8. 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.
9. 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 fertility rates of the UK Gypsy and Traveller community, in *'Ethnic identity and inequalities in*

*Britain: The dynamics of diversity* by Dr Stephen Jivraj and Professor Ludi Simpson (published May 2015). The authors use the 2011 Census data to estimate the TFR for the Gypsy and Traveller community as 2.75.

10. ORS used our own multiple survey data to investigate the fertility rates 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 infer an average of 3 children per woman during her lifetime, which is broadly consistent with the estimate of 2.75 children per woman derived from the 2011 Census.

## Death Rates

11. Although the above data imply an annual growth rate through births of about 2%, the death rate has also to be taken into account. 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).
12. Therefore, in our population growth modelling we 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).

## Modelling Outputs

13. If we assume a TFR of 3 and an average life expectancy of 72 years for Gypsies and Travellers, then the modelling, undertaken in PopGroup, projects the population to increase by 66% over the next 40 years – implying a population compound growth rate of 1.25% per annum. If we assume that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy increases to 77 years by 2050, then the projected population growth rate rises to nearly 1.50% per annum. To generate an 'upper range' rate of population growth, we assumed an implausible 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 1.90% per annum.

## Household Growth

14. 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.
15. Because the Gypsy and Traveller population is relatively young and has many single parent households, a 1.25%-1.50% 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.
16. 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 3.60% of household representatives are aged 16-24, compared with 8.70% in the Gypsy and Traveller population. ORS's survey data shows that about 10% of Gypsy and Traveller households have household representatives aged under-25 years.

Table 2 - 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 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%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,063,368</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19,458</b>	<b>100%</b>

17. 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

Table 3 - 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 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%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,063,368</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19,458</b>	<b>100%</b>

18. The key point, though, is that since 20% of Gypsy and Traveller households are lone parents with dependent children, 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 1.25%-1.50% per annum Gypsy and Traveller population growth rate is likely to lead to a household growth rate of 1.25%-1.50% per annum

## Summary Conclusions

19. The best available evidence suggests that the net annual Gypsy and Traveller household growth rate is 1.50% per annum. Some local authorities might allow for a household growth rate of up to 2.50% 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, lower estimates should be used.
20. The outcomes of this Technical Note can be used to provide an estimate of local new household formation rates by adjusting the upper national growth rate of 1.50% based on local demographic characteristics.
21. In addition, in certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are higher or lower than national data has identified, or the population age structure is skewed by certain age groups, it may not be appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement should be made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children identified in local household interviews. This should be based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in any given area and that 50% will pair up and move to another area, while still considering the impact of dissolution. This is based on evidence from over 140 GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales involving over 4,300 household interviews.