

**Gypsy and Traveller  
Accommodation Assessment  
North Yorkshire Sub-region – 2007/8**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 6**

Introduction ..... 6

Methodology ..... 6

Documentary Review ..... 6

Estimated Population ..... 7

Existing Accommodation ..... 7

    Site Amenities and conditions ..... 7

    Cost of accommodation ..... 8

    Unauthorised Developments ..... 8

    Conventional Housing ..... 8

Pitch Requirements ..... 8

New Provision ..... 9

Travelling practices ..... 9

Wider service and supporting people needs ..... 10

**1.0 INTRODUCTION ..... 11**

Introductory comments and research objectives ..... 11

Geography ..... 12

Report structure ..... 12

**2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY ..... 14**

**3.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT ..... 16**

Legislative background ..... 16

Policy background ..... 16

<b>4.0</b>	<b>THE CURRENT PICTURE: POPULATION AND PITCH AVAILABILITY .....</b>	<b>19</b>
	Population Estimates.....	19
	Caravan Counts and Authorised Pitches .....	21
<b>5.0</b>	<b>CURRENT ACCOMMODATION POSITION .....</b>	<b>27</b>
	Authorised Sites - Current Provision.....	27
	Tenure.....	27
	Facilities provided on pitches (authorised sites).....	28
	<b>Amenities provided elsewhere on site (authorised sites)</b> .....	28
	CLG Design Guidance .....	29
	<b>Repairs and improvements (authorised sites)</b> .....	29
	<b>Space Requirements</b> .....	31
	<b>State of repair</b> .....	31
	<b>Satisfaction with warden/landlord</b> .....	32
	Overcrowding.....	33
	<b>Facilities shared with other households</b> .....	33
	<b>Cost of accommodation</b> .....	34
	<b>Cost of services</b> .....	35
	<b>Feelings about neighbourhood, safety and security</b> .....	37
	Gypsies and Travellers in Houses .....	37
	<b>Preference for living in a trailer</b> .....	40
<b>6.0</b>	<b>PITCH REQUIREMENTS .....</b>	<b>41</b>
	Calculation of Gypsy and Traveller Sites - Pitch Requirements.....	41
	A. Demographic .....	46
	Number of Households .....	46
	Authorised pitches .....	46
	Estimate in houses.....	46
	B. Drivers of Pitch Need/Demand.....	47
	Concealed households from survey.....	40
	Site requirements from concealed based on preferences .....	47
	Unauthorised Encampments and Developments .....	47
	Household formation 2008 - 2015 (based on CLG model) .....	48

<b>C. Pitch Supply</b> .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
D. Current Shortfall (Pitches).....	48
E. Projected Need 2008 - 2015 (pitches) - allowing for household formation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<u>Additional</u> need .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Geographical distribution of existing households .....	48
Type of new provision .....	50
Showpeople Requirements .....	51
<b>7.0 TRAVELLING PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Travelling behaviour</b> .....	52
Why people travel .....	52
Travelling Routes .....	53
<b>Homelessness and unauthorised encampments</b> .....	53
<b>Transit sites and designated stopping places</b> .....	53
<b>Need for transit sites – preference by local authority area</b> .....	55
Stop-over Yards for Showpeople.....	56
<b>Problems experienced while travelling</b> .....	57
Planning and the unauthorised development of sites .....	58
Unauthorised Developments .....	58
Planning .....	59
<b>8.0 WIDER SERVICE AND SUPPORT NEEDS.....</b>	<b>62</b>
Health and supporting people issues .....	62
<b>Services used in the last year</b> .....	62
<b>Long-term illness or disability</b> .....	66
<b>Support needs</b> .....	66
<b>Supporting People strategies</b> .....	67
<b>Education</b> .....	69
Community Involvement.....	71
<b>9.0 CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>72</b>
Assessment Findings .....	72

Current Conditions .....	72
Pitch Requirements.....	72
Travelling Practices and Requirements .....	74
Wider service needs.....	74
Health.....	74
Strategic Response.....	75
<b>APPENDIX A LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>APPENDIX B POLICY AND GUIDANCE .....</b>	<b>79</b>
The Provision and Condition of Local Authority Gypsy / Traveller Sites in England, Niner, ODPM, 2002	79
Glossary Of Terms.....	95

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# **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment North Yorkshire Sub-region – 2007/8**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

1. This research has been commissioned by local authorities in the North Yorkshire Sub-region to inform the development of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Strategy at a sub-regional level which in turn will inform Local Housing and Homelessness Strategies, Supporting People Strategies and Local Development Frameworks. The research has been carried out by arc4 in partnership with the Northern Network of Travelling People.

### **Methodology**

2. The research methodology has comprised:
  - A comprehensive survey of Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople across the sub-region;
  - Desktop analysis of existing documents and data;
  - A Key Stakeholder Forum with key professionals who have direct contact with local Gypsy and Traveller communities;
  - Consultation with Gypsies and Travellers, the Northern Network of Travelling People and the Showmen's Guild through focus groups and correspondence

### **Documentary Review**

3. Some of the key themes to emerge from the review of relevant literature include:
  - Recognising the long-standing role Gypsies and Travellers have played in society and how prejudice, discrimination and legislative change have increasingly marginalised this distinctive ethnic group;
  - A recognised shortage of pitches on Gypsy and Traveller sites;
  - The importance of understanding Gypsy and Traveller issues in the context of housing and planning policy development at national, regional, sub-regional and local levels;
  - Recognition that Gypsies and Travellers are the most socially excluded group in society and are particularly susceptible to a range of inequalities relating to health, education, law enforcement and quality of accommodation;
  - Recognition of the considerable prejudice and discrimination faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities - "The last acceptable form of racism" as Trevor Phillips put it as Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality.

- A need for better communication and improved understanding between and within Travelling communities themselves, and between Travelling communities and elected members, service providers and permanently settled communities.

## Estimated Population

4. In total it has been estimated that there are 888 Gypsy and Traveller households in the sub region. This mainly comprises English Gypsy (Romany) households but there is a small Irish Traveller Community and a smaller population of Showpeople. This figure has been disaggregated by local authority on the basis of Traveller Education records. Estimates derived in this way suggest concentrations in the York, Hambleton and Selby local authority areas.

## Existing Accommodation

5. There are 11 local authority owned and 4 private authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in the sub-region providing a total of 196 pitches. The three local authority sites in York are managed by the authority while elsewhere the management had been contracted out.
6. Most of the remaining Gypsy and Traveller households live in conventional housing although there are some unauthorised developments and periodically there are unauthorised encampments in the sub-region. This often occurs on the way to and back from fairs but there was a high level of homelessness reported by those encamped unofficially.

## Site Amenities and Conditions

7. Local authority and authorised private sites show some significant differences in the facilities provided on pitches or elsewhere on the site. While the pitches on local authority owned sites normally included dedicated facilities the tendency on private sites was for shared amenities. Site satisfaction appears to have been better for local authority sites, especially in York.
8. Draft Guidance from CLG suggests among other things that there must be an amenity building on each pitch and that this must include, as a minimum: hot and cold water supply; electricity supply; a separate toilet; a bath/shower room; a kitchen and dining area.
9. The most often cited improvement issue on authorised sites was the need for more space on pitches. Beyond this issue LA site residents highlighted the need for improvements to their amenity blocks (sheds).
10. North Yorkshire County Council are undertaking a survey of their sites which were put out to independent management about six years ago. The seven sites require upgrading from their original design and do not meet the present design brief from CLG.

11. Compared with private tenants, LA site respondents were more than four times as likely to report their home as overcrowded. However, overcrowding was not seen as a problem by a very high overall percentage of respondents.
12. Overall there is a low level of shared facilities. However, the incidence of shared use for toilets and bathrooms is relatively high on private sites where there are fewer amenity blocks (sheds) attached to the individual pitches.
13. The condition on one of the County's sites along with the high charges for electricity, it has been suggested, has led to most residents moving off the site.

### Cost of accommodation

14. The cost of accommodation on sites varies widely. The cheapest accommodation is on private sites and the most expensive on local authority sites. Most households are paying in excess of £55 per week excluding the cost of utilities.

### Unauthorised Developments

15. A number of unauthorised developments were reported across the sub-region. In some cases planning applications were in process and in others action was being taken to prevent occupation of the sites.

### Conventional Housing

16. Nearly one third of those interviewed in houses expressed a preference for living in trailers or wagons. There is a strong probability that many Gypsies and Travellers are living in houses because they have either limited or no alternatives available to them.

### Pitch Requirements

#### Current shortfall

17. Using the CLG-approved model for calculating pitch requirements, the research has demonstrated that across the North Yorkshire Sub-region, there is a current shortfall of 113 pitches. Table ES1 shows how this figure is broken down by individual district

**Table ES1** Current shortfall across the North Yorkshire Sub-region

	Existing Pitch Supply	Current Need	Vacant	Current Shortfall
Craven	10	17	0	7
Hambleton	34	61	13	14
Harrogate	40	54	0	14
Richmondshire	20	23	0	3



Ryedale	13	22	0	9
Scarborough	0	3	0	3
Selby	24	50	0	26
York	54	90	0	36
Total	195	321	13	113

18. In addition to this, there is some suggestion from the survey of Showpeople that a small amount of new provision is required in the Selby and York local authority areas.

### Projected need

19. The likely growth in households on sites is unlikely to outstrip the turnover of sites if the current trend of households moving off sites continues. However, it should be carefully noted that much of this movement may be attributed to the existing condition on sites – especially those not directly managed by local authorities – and no account has been taken of the strong preference of Gypsy and Traveller households in conventional housing to move onto sites.

### New Provision

20. Well over half (56.8) of respondents wanting to live in a trailer or chalet on a site for their permanent/winter base indicated that they would prefer to own this land. For those who wished to rent a pitch, the preferred option was to rent from the Council rather than privately.

### Travelling practices

21. Around half of Gypsy and Traveller respondents and 91% of Showpeople reported travelling for some time every year.

22. A distinction should be made between unofficial encampments that are established as part of the cultural practice of travelling and unofficial encampments which are a consequence of being homeless through not having a permanent base.

23. Of those interviewed on unofficial encampments 90% indicated that they were homeless as they did not have a permanent or winter base and 19% of Gypsy and Traveller participants indicated that they (or a member of their household) had been homeless in the past five years.

24. Respondents were asked to rank where they thought it was most important to locate transit sites in the different authorities. The main priorities for transit sites were the Harrogate, Scarborough, Selby and York local authority areas.

25. The closing of traditional stopping places, the behaviour of enforcement officers and the behaviour of other Travellers were identified as problems by survey respondents.

## Wider service and supporting people needs

26. Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople reported few support or wider service needs although there were significant references to their lack of access to doctors and dentists.
27. Few points were made by respondents about education but the views expressed at the Key Stakeholder forum suggest that transport is a key issue for Gypsy and Traveller children living on sites.
28. Of some concern is the high level of Gypsies and Travellers reporting mental health issues. Over one third reported experiencing stress or getting down.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### Introductory comments and research objectives

- 1.1 Arc4 (formerly DCHR and abra) in partnership with the Northern Network of Travelling People was commissioned in May 2007 to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the accommodation and wider service needs of Gypsies and Travellers in North Yorkshire and the City of York.
- 1.2 The overall objective of the research is to inform the development of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Strategy at sub-regional level which in turn will inform Local Housing and Homelessness Strategies, Supporting People Strategies and Local Development Frameworks across the North Yorkshire Sub-region. The research will also provide intelligence to a wider range of stakeholders in the sub-region.
- 1.3 The following key outputs, identified in the brief, have been produced for the sub-region and for each local authority :
  - The type of accommodation needed;
  - The demand for permanent sites;
  - The demand for alternative housing options;
  - The need for expansion and/or improvement of existing sites (including management arrangements);
  - The need for transit sites to meet seasonal, commercial and irregular demand;
  - The geographical gaps in provision, linked to migration patterns and patterns within and outside of the sub-area and in particular extending into East Riding;
  - The affordability of existing and proposed accommodation options;
  - An assessment of support needs, both housing-related support and health education and social care unmet;
  - address issues of physical or sensory impairment.
- 1.4 CLG Guidance (2007) suggests that the following definition of Gypsies and Travellers should be adopted for the purposes of the assessment:

- (a) Persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or living in a caravan;  
and
- (b) all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin,
- (c) including:
  - (i) such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently;  
and
  - (ii) members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).

1.5 This definition is specified in 'The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006'.

## Geography

1.6 The study area (see Map 1.1) comprises the following local authorities:

- Craven
- Hambleton
- Harrogate
- Richmondshire
- Ryedale
- Scarborough
- Selby
- City of York

## Report structure

1.7 This report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the research methodology;

Chapter 3 presents reviews the legislative and policy context of the research;

Chapter 4 reviews estimates of the Gypsy and Traveller population in the North Yorkshire Sub-region and the scale of existing site provision;

Chapter 5 provides a review of the current accommodation situation of Gypsies and Travellers across the North Yorkshire Sub-region and issues arising;

Chapter 6 focuses on current and future pitch requirements. The chapter includes a detailed assessment of drivers of demand, pitch supply and current shortfalls by local authority district;

Chapter 7 discusses travelling patterns and experiences, highlighting issues relating to transit sites;

Chapter 8 considers the wider service and support needs of Gypsies and Travellers including health and education;

Chapter 9 concludes the research by summarising key outputs, recommendations for future monitoring and action points for local authorities and other stakeholders.

1.8 The report is supplemented by two Appendices:

- Appendix A provides details of the legislative background underpinning accommodation issues for Gypsies and Travellers; and
- Appendix B provides a review of policy and guidance documents which have helped to shape this research and the outputs required

## 2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The primary fieldwork for this study comprised survey work with Gypsies and Travellers. This work was managed by the Northern Network of Travelling People (NNTP) and undertaken by Gypsy and Traveller fieldworkers and the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain (Yorkshire and Northern Sections). NNTP, the Showmen's Guild and other community representatives were involved in the design of questionnaires and in the recruitment of fieldworkers. A total of 308 interviews were secured through a process of quota sampling which divided the sample by local authority district, ethnicity (Gypsy, Irish Traveller, Showmen) and place of residence (on sites, on unofficial encampments and in bricks and mortar accommodation) .
- 2.2 Overall, the sample secured is one of the highest in studies of this nature, making this one of the most statistically robust Gypsy and Traveller surveys undertaken to date. The pitch analysis provides a specific breakdown of current shortfalls and future requirements by individual local authority.

**Table 2.1** The range of responses achieved by ethnicity and local authority district.

Local Authority Area	Ethnicity					
	English Gypsy/Romany	Irish Traveller	New Traveller	Showperson	Other	TOTAL
Craven	17	9	0	14	0	40
Hambleton	19	6	0	21	0	46
Harrogate	20	10	0	5	0	35
Richmondshire	15	13	0	1	0	29
Ryedale	28	9	0	3	0	40
Scarborough	14	9	3	2	0	28
Selby	27	7	0	2	0	36
York	26	8	0	8	1	43
Elsewhere	0	0	0	11	0	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	166	71	3	67	1	308

Note: Respondents were not necessarily interviewed in their normal place of residence

- 2.3 Beyond this, a range of complementary research methods have been used in the study to support the survey work and permit the triangulation of results. This included:
- Desktop analysis of existing documents and data;
  - Development of databases of authorised and unauthorised sites;
  - A Key Stakeholder Forum with key professionals who have direct contact with local Gypsy and Traveller communities;
  - Consultation with Gypsies and Travellers, the Northern Network of Travelling People and the Showmen's Guild through focus groups and correspondence.

- 2.4 Good practice guidance and evidence from other studies emphasises that building trust with Travelling communities is a prerequisite of meaningful research. In this case it has been achieved by using interviewers from Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities to conduct the interviews, by engaging with Gypsy and Traveller groups, and by using local resources and workers to make links, working closely with officers who have already established a good relationship.
- 2.5 We have also used the following sources of information:
- The bi-annual caravan count for CLG
  - Records of local authority managed sites
  - Historical information about unauthorised encampments and developments
  - Traveller Education records
- 2.6 The assessment of pitch requirements has been calculated by utilising secondary source information and the results of the sample survey. The overall population has been calculated through secondary sources but current and anticipated behaviour has been assessed through the survey. A detailed explanation of the analysis of pitch requirements is contained in section 6.

## 3.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 This research is grounded in an understanding of how the national legislative and policy context has affected Gypsy and Traveller communities to date.

### Legislative background

3.2 Since 1960, three Acts of Parliament have had a major impact on Gypsies and Travellers

- Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960;
- Caravan Sites Act 1968 (Part II); and the
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

3.3 The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act abolished all statutory obligations to provide accommodation, discontinued Government grants for sites and made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent.

3.4 Since the 1994 Act, the only places where Gypsies and Travellers can legally park their trailers and vehicles are:

- Council Gypsy caravan sites;
- Privately owned land with appropriate planning permission;
- Land with established rights of use, other caravan sites or mobile home parks by agreement or licence along with land required for seasonal farm workers

3.5 The 1994 Act resulted in increased pressure on available sites. It eventually resulted in further reviews of law and policy, culminating in the Housing Act 2004 which placed a requirement (s.225) on local authorities to assess Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

3.6 More detail on the legislation affecting Gypsies and Travellers can be found at Appendix A.

### Policy background

3.7 As part of this research we have carried out a comprehensive literature review which is detailed in Appendix B. A considerable range of guidance documents



has been prepared by Central Government to assist local authority's discharge their strategic housing and planning functions, and numerous research and guidance documents have been published by other agencies. This review examines influential guidance and research which either relate specifically to Gypsies and Travellers or makes reference to them. The documents reviewed are:

- The Provision and Condition of Local Authority Gypsy / Traveller Sites in England, Niner, ODPM, 2002
- At What Cost, Clements and Morris, 2002
- Gypsies and Travellers 2004-2007 Strategy, Commission for Racial Equality, 2004
- Consultation Paper on a New Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) - Housing, ODPM, December 2005
- Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3: Housing Update, DETR January 2005
- A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for Implementation Update, DCLG, June 2006
- Guide to Effective Use of Enforcement Powers - Part 1: Unauthorised Encampments, ODPM, 2006
- Submission to the Good Childhood Inquiry, Commission for Racial Equality, 2006
- Gypsy and Traveller Unit - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments Draft Practice Guidance, ODPM, 2006
- Circular 01/2006 - Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites, ODPM, 2006
- Local Authorities and Gypsy & Travellers Guide to responsibilities and Powers, ODPM, 2006
- Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers, Commission for Racial Equality, May 2006
- Report of the LGA Gypsy and Traveller Task Group - May 2006
- Local Authorities and Gypsies and Travellers: A Guide to Responsibilities and Powers, DCLG, 2007
- Out in the Open - Providing Accommodation, Promoting Understanding and Recognising Rights of Gypsies and Travellers, Building and Social Housing Foundation, June 2007

- Planning and Travelling Showpeople Circular, DCLG, August 2007
- Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments, DCLG, October 2007

3.8 Overall, this range of statutory documentation, advisory and guidance notes along with accepted good practice has helped set a broad context within which this research is positioned.

3.9 Some of the key themes to emerge from the review of relevant literature include:

- Recognising the long-standing role Gypsies and Travellers have played in society and how prejudice, discrimination and legislative change have increasingly marginalised this distinctive ethnic group;
- A recognised shortage of pitches on Gypsy and Traveller sites;
- The importance of understanding Gypsy and Traveller issues in the context of housing and planning policy development at national, regional, sub-regional and local levels;
- Recognition that Gypsies and Travellers are the most socially excluded group in society and are particularly susceptible to a range of inequalities relating to health, education, law enforcement and quality of accommodation;
- Recognition of the considerable prejudice and discrimination faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities - "The last acceptable form of racism" as Trevor Phillips put it as Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality.
- A need for better communication and improved understanding between and within Travelling communities themselves, and between Travelling communities and elected members, service providers and permanently settled communities.

## 4.0 THE CURRENT PICTURE: POPULATION AND PITCH AVAILABILITY

### Population Estimates

- 4.1 A 2006 report by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) suggests that nationally there are around 300,000 Gypsies and Travellers (0.6% of the population) (CRE, 2006). The total number living in trailers is estimated to be between 90,000 and 120,000 with the remainder thought to live in conventional housing. It is not possible to determine how this population is distributed across the country although there are known concentrations of Travelling communities in many parts of the country, including parts of the North Yorkshire Sub-region. Table 4.1 provides a crude estimate of the population across the North Yorkshire Sub-region based on the CRE estimate. The survey results suggest that the average household size for the Gypsy and Traveller population is 3.2 and this has been used to generate an estimate of the number of households.

**Table 4.1** Estimate of Gypsy and Traveller Population (based on CLG, 2007)

District	Total Population (000s) <sup>1</sup>	Estimates of Gypsy and Traveller:	
		Population (0.6%)	Households
Craven	55.3	332	105
Hambleton	87.8	527	166
Harrogate	159.7	958	302
Richmondshire	55.5	333	105
Ryedale	53	318	100
Scarborough	108.8	653	206
Selby	79.6	478	151
York	192.4	1154	364
<b>Total</b>	<b>792.1</b>	<b>4753</b>	<b>1499</b>

<sup>1</sup> Source: ONS, Mid Year Population Estimates 2006

- 4.2 As there is no guarantee that the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population reflects the assumed national average nor that the population is equally distributed across the sub-region, an alternative estimate has been derived from the number of Gypsy and Traveller children known to the Traveller Education Services that operate in the North Yorkshire Sub-region. This estimate has been made by inference by adapting the standard ratio of 2.6 pupils per year group to 100 households . As the survey indicates that the average number of children per family is 1.8 times greater than that of the rest of the population the ratio has been adjusted to 4.8. Taking ten year groups the calculation assumes 100 households per 48 pupils.
- 4.3 In total it has been estimated that there are 888 Gypsy and Traveller households in the sub region. Table 4.2 provides a breakdown by local authority area.

**Table 4.2** Alternative estimate of Gypsy and Traveller households based on number of children and household size assumptions

District	Children known to Traveller Education	Estimate of households
Craven	10	21
Hambleton	92	193
Harrogate	29	61
Richmondshire	6	13
Ryedale	42	88
Scarborough	5	10
Selby	82	172
York	157	330
Total	423	888

- 4.4 There is no estimate available for the number of Showpeople households in the region but the difficulties experienced in securing a sample suggest that the number actually living in the sub-region is very small.
- 4.5 Gypsies and Travellers face considerable prejudice and discrimination and there is an understandable reluctance to report cultural identity. The number of Gypsy and Traveller children known to schools is therefore limited so the figures could

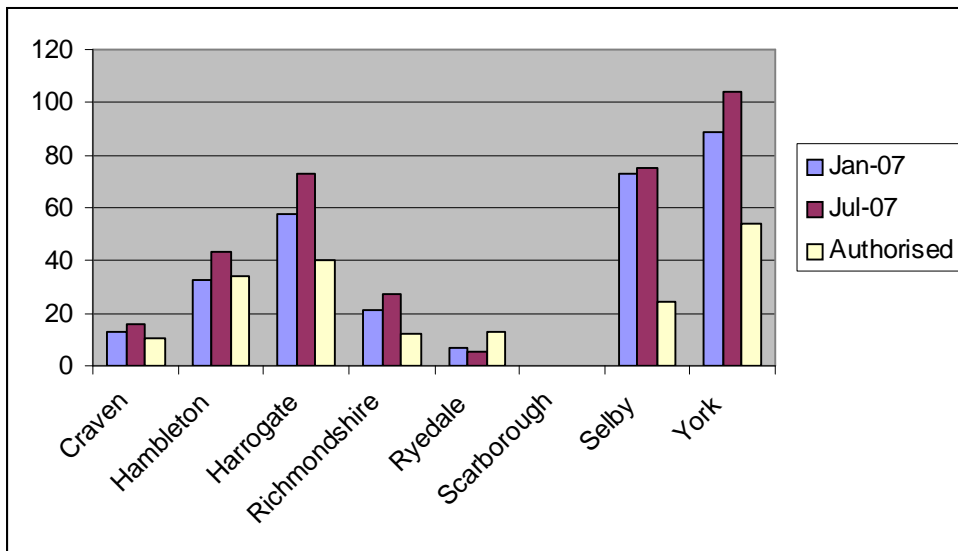
be an underestimate of numbers. They are, however, arguably more accurate than other population based figures.

- 4.6 These figures compare reasonably with the estimates based on 0.6% of the population for Hambleton, Ryedale, Selby and York but are otherwise widely divergent. As the number of pitches on sites is a known, the main issue is the number of Gypsies and Travellers in housing. It may well be that there are significant numbers of people of Gypsy or Traveller descent living in houses who are unknown to Traveller Education providers. This may reflect low levels of 'self-identification' by parents and/or a lack of communication between schools and Traveller Education personnel. Nevertheless, for the purposes of analysing pitch requirements, it is the figure derived in this way that has been adopted because those in houses who are picked up by Traveller Education, and in the survey fieldwork are, more likely to be practising (or have a desire to practise) a traditional way of life. There is a danger of overestimating need by adopting the 0.6% estimate uncritically.

### Caravan Counts and Authorised Pitches

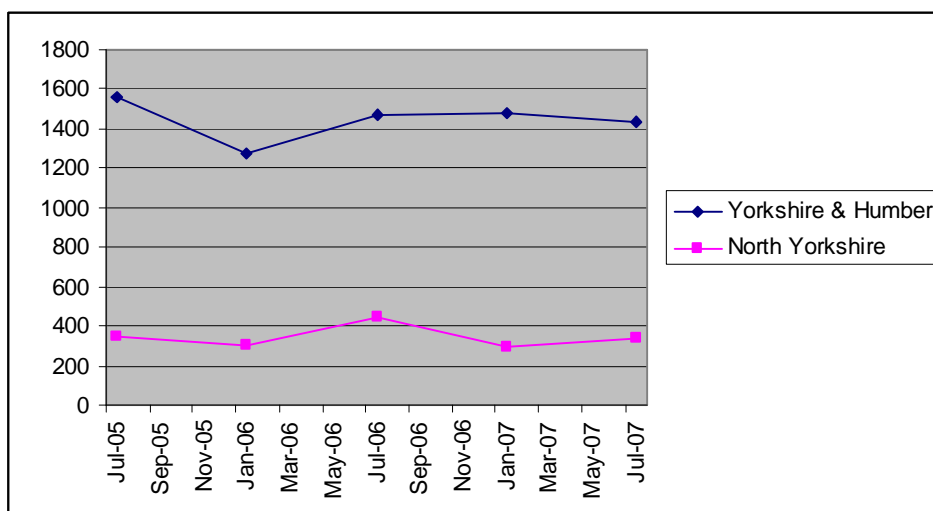
- 4.7 Snapshot counts of the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were requested by the Government in 1979, and have since been made by Local Authorities on a voluntary basis every January and July. Their accuracy varies between Local Authorities and according to how information is included in the process. A major criticism is the non-involvement of Gypsies and Travellers themselves in the counts. However, the counts conducted on a single day twice a year is the only systematic source of information on the numbers and distribution of Gypsy and Traveller trailers. The counts include caravans (or trailers) on and off authorised sites (i.e. those with planning permission) but do not relate necessarily to the actual number of pitches on sites.
- 4.8 A major review of the counting system was undertaken in 2003 by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), which made a number of recommendations and improvements to the process.
- 4.9 Figure 4.1 shows the reported figures for the study area in January and July 2007, together with the current estimate of authorised pitches provided by each local authority. There may be more than one trailer per pitch, and in the case of households doubling up on pitches there could be several trailers. For obvious reasons Gypsies and Travellers living on sites may not be present on the days in which the counts are conducted.
- 4.10 There has been no systematic attempt to quantify the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in conventional housing and they have not been listed as ethnicities in any census.

**Figure 4.1** Bi-annual Caravan Count and Authorised Pitches



Source: Caravan Count CLG (2007) and local records

**Figure 4.2** Caravan Count in Yorkshire & the Humber and The North Yorkshire Sub-region July 2005 - July 2007



- 4.11 The number of all trailers recorded within the North Yorkshire Sub-region study area in the last five Caravan Counts has varied between 294 and 429, representing between 20% and 30% of those in the Yorkshire and the Humber Region. There has been no clear trend in the count over this period, although summer numbers are higher than winter ones.

**Table 4.3** The North Yorkshire Sub-region and Regional caravan counts

Date of count	Regional caravan count	The North Yorkshire Sub-region caravan count	The North Yorkshire Sub-region as % of Region
July 2005	1278	343	22
Jan 2006	1472	294	24
July 2006	1482	429	29
Jan 2007	1436	302	20
July 2007	1561	352	24

- 4.12 There are 11 local authority owned (3 in York) and 4 private authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in the sub-region providing a total of 195 pitches. While it has been reported that all of the County's sites were originally designated as transit provision (and one continues to be reported as part permanent and part transit) they are in fact all now operating as permanent sites.

**Table 4.4** Authorised Sites by Local Authority (Pitches)

	Private	LA	Total
Craven	10	0	10
Hambleton	2	32	34
Harrogate	0	40	40
Richmondshire	8	12	20
Ryedale	0	13	13
Scarborough	0	0	0
Selby	0	24	24
York	0	54	54

Total	20	175	195
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- 4.13 The sites in the City of York are owned and managed by the local authority while on the North Yorkshire County Council sites the management responsibility has been sub-contracted to a leaseholder.
- 4.14 While there are sites in all of the local authority areas except Scarborough current provision is concentrated in the south of the sub region with three sites in York.

**Table 4.5:** Authorised Sites

	Type	Pitches
York (James Street City Traveller Site, James Street, York)	LA	20
York (Osbalwick Caravan Site, Outgang Lane, Osbalwick, York)	LA	11
York (Water Lane Caravan Site, Water Lane, Clifton, York)	LA	23
Hambleton (Thirsk Gypsy Site, Bankside Close, Sowerby)	LA	16
Hambleton (Seamer Gypsy Site, Hillfield Close, Seamer, Stokesley)	LA	16
Hambleton (Ponderosa, Easingwold)	Private	2
Harrogate (Spring Lane Caravan Park, Bickerton, Wetherby)	LA	20
Harrogate (Thistle Hill Caravan Park, Plompton, Knaresborough)	LA	20
Richmondshire (Limekiln Woods Caravan Site, Catterick)	LA	12
Richmondshire (Scotch Corner)	Private	8
Ryedale (Tara Park, York Road, Malton)	LA	13
Selby (Burn Caravan Site, Common Lane, Burn, Selby)	LA	12
Selby (Carlton Caravan Site, Racecourse Lane, Carlton, Goole)	LA	12
Craven (Clay Barn, Burton in Lonsdale)	Private	1
Craven (Bold Venture, Skipton)	Private	9

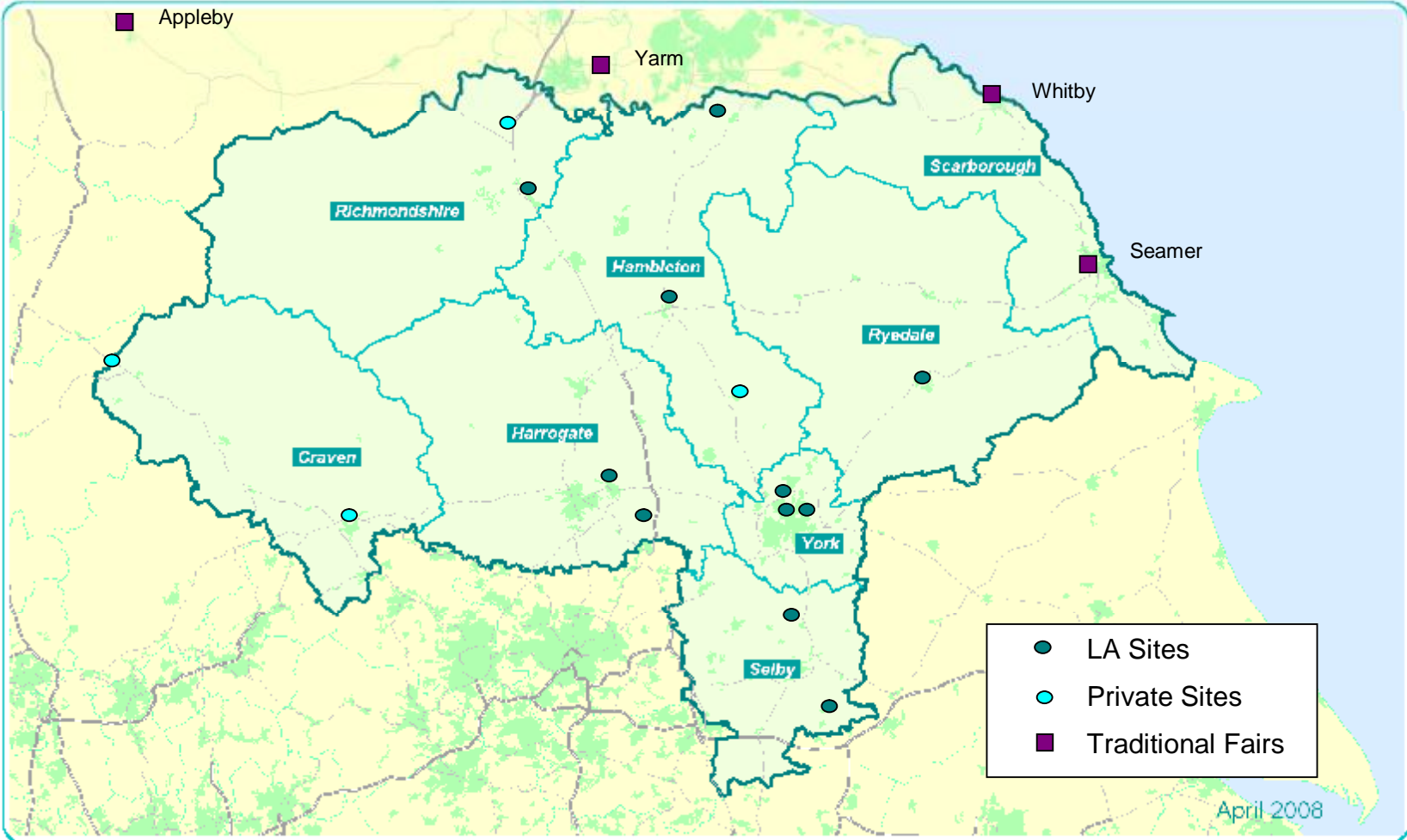


**Map 1.1** Authorised sites in the North Yorkshire sub-region and locations of traditional fairs



## North Yorkshire - Local Authorities

Including neighbouring districts, urban areas and major transport routes



## 5.0 CURRENT ACCOMMODATION POSITION

- 5.1 This chapter reviews the current accommodation circumstances of Gypsies and Travellers across the North Yorkshire Sub-region. It includes a review of authorised sites and issues arising along with a discussion of issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 5.2 The survey included respondents drawn from a range of different situations including those living on authorised sites (both private and local authority) but did not capture respondents from the small number of unauthorised developments.

### Authorised Sites - Current Provision

#### Tenure

- 5.3 A total of 83% of the sample were living in rented accommodation. 45.5% were on local authority pitches, 29.5% on privately-owned pitches with planning permission, and 8% (nearly 10% of the renting total) were renting pitches privately without planning permission.
- 5.4 Nearly 11% of respondents were living on their own land, half with and half without planning permission. This is significantly lower than the commonly-quoted national figure of one-third (TLRP, 2007). It also indicates considerable potential for increasing the percentage of Gypsies and Travellers who are able to live with planning permission on their own land, and reinforces the need for local support for Travelling people in submitting planning applications.
- 5.5 Among the Gypsies and Travellers who were interviewed as part of this research, some 43% responded to a question about whether they rent or own their accommodation. Of these, around 55% rent from local authorities, housing associations or private landlords, and some 44% own their own homes.
- 5.6 It was suggested in the Key Stakeholders' Forum that most Gypsies and Travellers prefer sites run by Local Authorities rather than sites managed by others or privately run sites. Registered social landlords were suggested as a possible way forward, and it was reported that within the City of York Council area 95% of York Travellers want the local authority to continue to manage the sites.

## Facilities provided on pitches

- 5.7 Local authority and authorised private sites show some significant differences in the facilities on pitches or elsewhere on the site. The York sites, which are managed by the local authority, provide bathroom and kitchen facilities on pitches for all of their residents. While this is not the case for those local authority sites managed by others they are more likely to provide these facilities separately than other private sites. Most obviously, kitchens are provided for 54% of local authority tenants but for no private tenants. 92% of local authority tenants have access to a toilet on their pitch, compared with only 78% of private tenants. 85% of local authority tenants have access to a bath on their pitch, compared with only 56% of private tenants, and 46% and 17% respectively have access to a shower. No respondents have access to their own laundry facilities actually on their own pitch.

**Table 5.1** Facilities provided on pitch

Amenity	Local Authority %	Private %
Slab	100	94.40
Shed	84.60	72.20
Kitchen	53.80	0.00
Laundry	0.00	0.00
Laundry Drying Area	7.70	0.00
Bath	84.60	55.60
Shower	46.20	16.70
Toilet	92.30	77.80

## Amenities provided elsewhere on site

- 5.8 It would appear from the survey that for private sites, generally, facilities not provided on pitch, are provided elsewhere on site. 50% of the private tenants who responded to this question had access to a communal meeting area and to a play area, compared with no local authority tenants. Provision of a play area was identified as an important issue by at least one tenant ('I have young children and there is nowhere they can play'). Car parking and communal laundry facilities are other amenities provided for more private than local authority respondents.

**Table 5.2** Amenities provided elsewhere on site – Private tenants

Amenity	Private tenants %
---------	-------------------

Amenity Block	16.70
Toilets	66.70
Showers	66.70
Laundry	83.30
Car Parking	83.30
Space For Storing Loads	16.70
Play Area	50.00
Communal Meeting Area	50.00

## CLG Design Guidance

- 5.9 Draft Guidance from CLG suggests among other things that there must be amenity building on each pitch and that this must include, as a minimum: hot and cold water supply; electricity supply; a separate toilet; a bath/shower room; a kitchen and dining area. The access to the toilet should be through a lobbied area. The amenity building must include: secure storage space for harmful substances/medicines; enclosed storage for food, brooms, washing, cleaning items etc; and space for connection of cooker, fridge/freezer and washing machine. The inclusion of a day/living room in the amenity unit is recommended. The day/living room could be combined with the kitchen area to provide a kitchen/dining/lounge area. It is desirable that the day/living room should not be part of essential circulation space, nor contain essential storage.
- 5.10 The Guidance also maintains that the design and construction of amenity buildings must meet the requirements of the current Building Regulations, Housing Corporation Design and Quality Standards, the Institution of Electrical Engineers regulations, and the Local Water Authority. Materials used must comply with the relevant British Standard Specifications and Codes of Practice and must provide for durable and low maintenance buildings. Its construction should be sympathetic to local architecture, attractive and of a domestic nature.
- 5.11 It is also recommended that amenity buildings incorporate cost effective energy efficiency measures. The building layout and construction should be designed to maximise energy conservation and the use of passive solar gain. All mechanical and electrical systems should be as energy efficient as possible. Consideration should be given to the insulation of plumbing systems, the use of low energy light fittings and appropriate heating and ventilation systems. Any opportunities for using energy from renewable sources should be considered. It is desirable to produce an assessment of materials and construction techniques proposed for the site against standards set out in 'The Green Guide to Housing Specification'.

## Repairs and improvements

- 5.12 The most often cited improvement issue on authorised sites was the need for more space on pitches. Almost half of the LA site respondents and 88% of private site respondents highlighted this issue. Beyond this issue LA site residents highlighted the need for improvements to their amenity blocks (sheds). While LA site households were between five and six times more likely to mention the need for improvements to bathrooms, kitchens and roofs this may simply reflect the greater provision of these facilities on pitches than for private site residents.

- 5.13 North Yorkshire County Council are undertaking a survey of their sites which were put out to independent management about six years ago. The 7 sites require upgrading from their original design and do not meet present design brief from the CLG Gypsy & Traveller Unit.

**Table 5.3** Repairs or improvements needed

Repair required	Local Authority	Private
	%	%
more space on pitch	46.2%	88.2%
bathroom facilities	38.5%	5.9%
roof	30.8%	5.9%
kitchen facilities	23.1%	5.9%
slab/drive	23.1%	11.8%
doors/windows	7.7%	0.0%

## Space Requirements

- 5.14 The lowest levels of overall satisfaction with space are in amenity blocks and on sites and yards, followed by space available on pitches. The main differences between LA and private sites relate to space for trailers, wagons, vehicles and loads where there is a higher level of satisfaction on private sites; and people's own pitches, where there is significantly higher satisfaction among local authority tenants and discontent among private tenants.
- 5.15 Again, the responses on Local Authority sites varied. In York where the sites are also managed by the Council residents were more likely to be satisfied with the space they had on their pitch and for their trailers and wagons. As with those resident on LA owned sites elsewhere, however, they were dissatisfied with the size of their sheds (amenity blocks).

**Table 5.4** Insufficient space (%)

Space Requirement	LA	Private
For your trailers, wagons, vehicles and loads	30.8	27.8
In your own amenity block (shed)	87.5	50
On your pitch	33.3	52.6
On your site/yard	85.7	47.4

## State of repair

- 5.16 There is a marked difference in response between those living on LA sites, only 14% of whom rate their home as 'very good', and those living on private sites, 44% of whom rate their home as 'very good'. 41% of local authority tenants rate their homes as 'poor' or 'very poor', while only 1% of private tenants use similar ratings.
- 5.17 While responses to this question among LA residents were too low to disaggregate further there is some indication that residents on the York sites were slightly more satisfied.

- 5.18 There have been anecdotal reports of dissatisfaction with the state of repair on some of the sites owned by North Yorkshire County Council but managed externally. In one instance it was claimed that this was a major factor in the high level of vacancies on one site.

**Table 5.6** State of repair

Landlord	Very Good	Good	Neither Good nor Poor	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Rent pitch from Council (%)	14.30	21.40	21.40	28.60	14.30	100.0
Rent pitch privately (with planning permission) (%)	44.40	44.40	5.60	5.60	0.00	100.0

- 5.19 Participants at the key stakeholder forum reported that there is a need for improved conditions through refurbishment of existing sites. North Yorkshire County Council have set up a site condition check list to use for each site and are reviewing proposed maintenance programmes for these sites. The list is based on a Caravan licence as issued by a local authority and falls short of a full condition survey or identifying improvement works. A formal inspection of one site suggests that cyclical maintenance is required for the interior and exterior of the sheds and raised concerns about the sewage pumps.

### Satisfaction with warden/landlord

- 5.20 Some 44% of private and local authority tenants were either satisfied or very satisfied with their warden or landlord, with 25% expressing some level of dissatisfaction. While LA site households were more likely to express themselves satisfied (especially in York) there was a high degree of ambivalence among Private site respondents where 50% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
- 5.21 There were comments from residents which support both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. These included ‘very safe’; ‘wardens are very arrogant to Travellers’; and ‘wardens have no knowledge about Gypsies’ lifestyles’.

**Table 5.7** How satisfied are you with your warden/landlord?



Rating	Rent pitch from LA (%)	Rent pitch privately with planning permission (%)	Total (%)
Very Satisfied	14.30	5.60	9.40
Satisfied	42.90	27.80	34.40
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	7.10	50.00	31.20
Dissatisfied	28.60	11.10	18.70
Very Dissatisfied	7.10	5.60	6.30
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

## Overcrowding

- 5.22 Compared with private tenants, LA site respondents were more than four times as likely to report their home as overcrowded. However, overcrowding was not seen as a problem by a very high overall percentage of respondents.

**Table 5.8** Do you think your home is overcrowded?

Landlord	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Rent pitch from Council	21.40	78.60	100.00
Rent pitch privately (with planning permission)	5.60	94.40	100.00
Total	12.50	87.50	100.00

## Facilities shared with other households

- 5.23 Overall there is a low level of shared facilities. However, the incidence of shared use for toilets and bathrooms is relatively high on private sites where there are fewer amenity blocks (sheds) attached to the individual pitches.

**Table 5.9** Facilities shared with other households (absolute numbers)

Facility	Rent pitch from LA (No.)	Rent pitch privately (with planning permission) (No.)	Total number
Bathroom	1	4	5
Toilet	1	4	5
Kitchen	0	1	1
Laundry	0	4	4

## Cost of accommodation

- 5.24 The cost of accommodation on sites varies widely. The cheapest accommodation is on private sites and the most expensive on local authority sites. Most households are paying in excess of £55 per week excluding the cost of utilities. Only local authority tenants pay rents higher than £65 per week. One tenant commented that ‘...I struggle with the bills and the rules and stuff.’

**Table 5.10** How much does your home cost per week?

Rent per week	LA site (%)	Private Site (%)
under £20		5.9%
£31 - £35		11.8%
£36 - £45		
£46 - £50	30.8%	17.6%
£51 - £55	7.7%	
£56 - £60	23.1%	64.7%
£61 - £65		
£66 - £70	15.4%	
£71 - £75	23.1%	
Total	100.0%	100.0%

- 5.25 Almost two thirds of households on Local Authority sites reported that their housing costs were covered in part by Housing Benefit.

**Table 5.11** Housing costs covered by Housing Benefit?

	LA	Private
None	35.7%	63.2%
Part	64.3%	36.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

- 5.26 It was not deemed culturally sensitive to ask about income in the survey so it has not been possible to calculate the proportion of the population with unaffordable accommodation costs.

### Cost of services

- 5.27 A high majority of all respondents found the cost of electricity to be unacceptable. There was also a very high level of dissatisfaction with the cost of gas and water among local authority tenants. Comments from residents included; 'Electricity is too high'; and 'For the cost of utilities you should have more boxes [meters]: the cost is far too much'
- 5.28 The charges levied for electricity on one local authority owned site in Hambleton was also reported to have been a factor in residents relocating elsewhere.



## Feelings about neighbourhood, safety and security

- 5.29 Interviewees were asked how happy they were with the neighbourhood in which they were located. Some 79% of the sample responded to this question, among whom 76% defined themselves as either happy or very happy. Only 5% expressed any degree of dissatisfaction.
- 5.30 A very high proportion of households indicated that they felt safe in their neighbourhood. There is some slight indication from the survey that residents in bricks and mortar accommodation feel more vulnerable.

**Table 5.12** Do you feel safe in this neighbourhood?

Accommodation type	Yes %	No %
Site	96.9	3.1
Bricks and Mortar	91.8	8.2

- 5.31 Participants at the Key Stakeholder Forum raised some concerns about safety and security, among which were the need to consider the location and design of sites, because their current locations often presented hazards such as proximity to sewage treatment works and tips. It was stressed that the design of new sites and the refurbishment of existing sites should take account of safety needs.

## Gypsies and Travellers in Houses

- 5.32 The difficulties in identifying Travelling people living in bricks and mortar homes are well known, and include frequent reluctance on the part of some residents to identify themselves as such. The survey sample of housed Gypsies and Travellers included a range of representatives of different tenures, with owner occupation at 42% of the sample and a total of 58% who rent their homes:

**Table 5.13** Tenure of houses

Tenure	%
Rent from Council	28.1
Rent privately	21.9
Rent from Housing Association	7.3
Own home	41.7
Other:	1.0
Total	100.0

- 5.33 Only 5.4% of respondents living in houses thought that their home was in a poor or very poor state of repair, with 74% rating it as either very good or good.

**Table 5.14** State of repair of houses

State of Repair	%
Very Good	33.7
Good	40.2
Neither Good nor Poor	20.7
Poor	4.3
Very Poor	1.1
Total	100.0

- 5.34 9.3% believed that their houses were overcrowded, and sharing of facilities with other households was reported including 5% sharing bathroom facilities:

**Table 5.15** Do you think your home is overcrowded?

	%
Yes	9.3
No	90.7
Total	100

**Table 5.16** Shared facilities

	Number	%
Bathroom	5	5.1
Toilet	4	4.1
Kitchen	3	3.1
Laundry	6	6.1

- 5.35 The cost of housing for Gypsies and Travellers in housing is much higher than that for those living in trailers on sites. Almost three quarters of respondents in housing reported that their costs were over £100 per week.

**Table 5.17** The cost of housing

Cost of housing	%
£20 - £25	1.4
£41 - £45	1.4
£46 - £50	8.6
£51 - £55	1.4
£56 - £60	11.4
£61 - £65	4.3
£66 - £70	7.1
£71 - £75	11.4
£76 - £80	22.9
£81 - £90	4.3
£91 - £100	2.9
£101 - £110	2.9
Over £110	20.0

Total	100.0
-------	-------

- 5.36 Around half of respondents interviewed in houses perceived the cost of electricity, gas and oil to be unacceptable. Nearly 40% of respondents felt that water was too expensive. A slightly higher proportion of households suggested that the cost of water was a problem.

### Preference for living in a trailer

- 5.37 30% of those interviewed in houses expressed a preference for living in trailers or wagons.

**Table 5.18** Satisfaction with houses

Satisfaction with houses	%
Happy with house	69.1
Prefer trailer or wagon	30.9
Total	100.0

- 5.38 Among respondents' comments on their preference were:
- 'Can't settle in the house. I thought it would be pure comfort but it just isn't home....'
  - 'The man who owns the house is lovely but I wouldn't dream of telling him what we are. You always get bad comments in the shops around X....'
  - 'I am here for my Mam - that's it. I hate the house. As soon as she is stronger or we get two plots I'm gone!'
  - 'I had to move into a house. I don't have a husband any more (deceased) and we can't get on a site'
  - 'The site has been privatised and the family that run it is not doing any repairs so I live here in this house but I go on the road as often as I can to see family and friends'
- 5.39 Given the above responses, together with the estimated shortage of pitches on permanent sites across the North Yorkshire Sub-region, there is a strong probability that many Gypsies and Travellers are living in houses because they have either limited or no alternatives available to them.



## 6.0 PITCH REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 This chapter reviews the overall pitch requirements of Gypsies and Travellers by local authority area. It takes into account current supply and demand and future demand based on modelling of data as advocated by the CLG. Requirements for Gypsies and Travellers and Showmen are reviewed. This chapter also considers planning issues, in particular, the experience of Gypsies and Travellers who have purchased land to provide private pitch provision.
- 6.2 The shortage of sites for Gypsies and Travellers is known nationally (Keightley, 2007) and it was acknowledged by participants at the Key Stakeholder forum that existing sites had little if any capacity to accommodate existing demand. Less is known about the needs of Travelling Showpeople but it was recognised that different communities have a preference for different rather than mixed community sites.

### Calculation of Gypsy and Traveller Sites - Pitch Requirements

- 6.3 The calculation of pitch requirements is based on CLG modelling as advocated in Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Guidance (CLG, 2007). The CLG Guidance requires an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and a projection of future needs. The Guidance advocates the use of a survey to supplement secondary source information and the results from the survey it suggests should be used to derive some of the key supply/demand factors.

#### *Current need*

- 6.4 Through the assessment it should be possible to identify:
- the number of Gypsy and Traveller households that have or are likely to have accommodation need to be addressed, either immediately, or in the foreseeable future;
  - a broad indication of where there is a demand for additional pitches;
  - the level and types of accommodation required for this need to be suitably addressed;
  - the level of unauthorised development which, if planning permission is not approved, is likely to swell the scale of need.

- 6.5 The assessment of current need should, in line with the guidance, take account of existing supply and demand. In the CLG model, current residential supply refers to local authority residential sites and authorised privately owned sites. A modified net stock approach is adopted that accounts for some of the flows in and out of site based accommodation. Supply is calculated by adding occupied and vacant pitches to an estimate of 'relets' for the next 8 years to 2015. The guidance suggests that this is based on the number of survey respondents expressing a desire to live in housing. Allowance should also be made where relevant for any new local authority provision and for new permission granted for private sites.
- 6.6 In this assessment we have reported the existing number of pitches on authorised local authority and private sites.
- 6.7 The CLG guidance suggests that current demand from households should factor in a series of variables. These are now summarised along with how the North Yorkshire Sub-regional study has evidenced demand.

**1. Seeking permanent site accommodation in the area** (based on waiting list and survey data)

Has been based on the proportion of concealed households identified on sites expressing a preference for living in trailers. The proportion expressing this preference was applied to an estimate of the total number of concealed households living on sites.

**2. on unauthorised encampments**

This has been calculated on the basis of the survey results. Over the period of the survey, 87 Gypsy and Traveller households living on unofficial encampments were interviewed. All but 5 of these reported themselves as being homeless and the figure of 82 has been adopted as the need for pitches arising from unauthorised encampments in the above analysis of Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements.

**3. on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected**

This has been based on the information received from each local authority about unauthorised developments in their area.

**4. currently overcrowded**

One site was reported to be overcrowded as there were more pitches on the site than the allocated permission. Overcrowding on pitches (or doubling up) has been accounted for through the estimate of concealed households on sites.

## 5. new households expected to arrive from elsewhere

New households expected to arrive from elsewhere have been estimated from the proportion of concealed households expressing a preference/need for accommodation on sites.

## 6. in housing but with a need for site accommodation No allowance has been made.

- 6.8 The difference between the current supply and the current demand provides the estimate of the existing shortfall.

### *Future Need*

- 6.9 The guidance acknowledges that accurate projections of future needs are likely to be more difficult. It suggests that current levels of satisfaction with existing accommodation will provide some indication of whether households are likely to stay in that accommodation. It suggests that changing demand may be expressed through unauthorised sites, or low demand for authorised sites.
- 6.10 The guidance also suggests that a calculation should be made of need arising from family formation. In the CLG's worked example this is limited to the growth emerging from households on sites. There is an assumption that all the emerging households will require pitches on sites and no allowance is given for future demand for pitches emerging from household growth in bricks and mortar.
- 6.11 The projected growth is calculated on the basis of 3% p.a.. This is at the lower end of the national estimate range of between 3-4% (CLG, 2007).

### *Calculation of requirements*

- 6.12 Table 6.1 provides a summary of the future pitch requirement calculation. Each component in the model is discussed to ensure that the process is transparent and any assumptions clearly stated.



**Table 6.1** Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirements

Notes		Craven	Hambleton	Harrogate	Richmondshire	Ryedale	Scarborough	Selby	York	Total
	<b>DEMOGRAPHIC</b>									
a	Children known to Traveller Education	10	92	29	6	42	5	82	157	423
b	Est of households based on TE data assumes 48 per 100 hh	21	193	61	13	88	10	172	330	888
	<b>EXISTING PITCH SUPPLY</b>									
c	Authorised pitches (LA and private)	10	34	40	20	13	0	24	54	195
d	Estimate in houses	11	159	21	0	75	10	148	276	700
e	Vacant pitches		13							13
	<b>DRIVER OF PITCH NEED/DEMAND</b>									
	Site requirements from concealed based on preferences									
f	from sites	1	4	5	2	2	0	3	6	23
g	from houses	1	14	2	0	6	1	13	24	60
h	Unauthorised Encampments and homeless - preference for site from survey (unweighted)	3	4	8	1	1	0	8	6	31
i	Unauthorised Developments (Households)	2	6				2	2		12
j	<b>CURRENT SHORTFALL (pitches)</b>	7	14	14	3	9	3	26	36	113
k	<b>PROJECTED NEED 2008 - 2015</b> Household formation from sites	3	10	13	6	4	0	9	16	60
	<b>PROJECTED SUPPLY 2008 - 2015</b>									
l	Preferring to move from sites into housing - from survey (to 2015)	6	21	24	12	8	0	15	33	119
m	<b>ADDITIONAL NEED (to 2015)</b>	-3	-11	-12	-7	-4	0	-6	-17	-58

## A. Demographic

### Number of Households

- 6.13 The process starts with an estimate of the total Gypsy and Traveller population derived from Traveller Education data (see Table 6.1) – *line a*. This figure has been used in preference to an estimate of the population/households made by applying the national estimate of 0.6% of the population as explained above. The estimate of households is calculated by inference by adapting the standard ratio of 2.6 pupils per year group to 100 households. As the survey indicates that the average number of children per family is 1.8 times greater than that of the rest of the population the ratio has been adjusted to 4.8. Taking ten year groups the calculation assumes 100 households per 48 pupils (line b).

### Authorised pitches

- 6.14 This figure (line c) includes all local authority and private sites with planning permission reported by local authorities. While it is clear that there is a considerable amount of doubling up on pitches this has been allowed for under concealed/emerging households.

### Estimate in houses

- 6.15 This estimate (*line d*) of Gypsies and Travellers in 'bricks and mortar' housing is calculated by subtracting the number of households on authorised pitches from the estimate of total households.

### Vacant pitches

- 6.16 There is one site in Hambleton that is not fully occupied. This does not suggest an oversupply in the district (or the County) however, as the decision to relocate elsewhere appears to have been motivated by conditions on the site and the cost of services. The vacant pitches have been counted as potential supply (line e) however as remedial work could bring these pitches back into use.

## B. Drivers of Pitch Need/Demand

- 6.17 A range of factors contributing to pitch requirements and assumptions underpinning pitch requirements across the North Yorkshire Sub-region are quantified.

### Site requirements from concealed based on preferences

- 6.18 The estimate of concealed households is derived from the proportions of concealed households in the survey for sites and houses. About 22% of houses and 15% of pitches contained a concealed household. These proportions have been applied to households on sites and the estimate of households in bricks and mortar housing.
- 6.19 The preference for living on sites varies between those concealed households currently living on sites (*line f*) and those living in houses (*line g*). The multiplier has been derived from the preferences expressed in the survey.

### Unauthorised Encampments and Developments

- 6.20 65% of respondents interviewed on Unofficial Encampments had no 'homebase' and 90% of these expressed a preference for living in a trailer. These households have been identified as being in need of a pitch (*line h*). The figure is unweighted as there is no clear indication of the total number on unofficial encampments at any one point in time.
- 6.21 The number of households living on unauthorised developments was reported by each local authority (*line i*)

### Current Shortfall

- 6.22 The Current shortfall (*line j*) is the sum of the need arising from concealed households (*lines f and g*) and from unauthorised encampments and developments (*lines h and i*) less the number of currently vacant pitches.

## Projected Need

### Household formation 2008 - 2015 (based on CLG model)

- 6.23 Household growth is projected at 3% year on year from 2008 to 2015. This formula has been applied to the households on sites (*line k*).

## Projected Supply

- 6.24 Due to a lack in information about turnover of pitches on existing sites an estimate has been made from the survey derived from those expressing a preference to move into housing (*line m*). More detailed records are kept on the York sites and the average annual turnover of pitches on all of their sites has been reported as 4.3 over the last three years. The rate of turnover has declined over this period.

## Additional Need to 2015 (Pitches)

- 6.25 The likely growth in households on sites is unlikely to outstrip the turnover of sites if the current trend of households moving off sites continues (*line m*). However, it should be carefully noted that much of this movement may be attributed to the existing condition on sites – especially those not directly managed by local authorities – and no account has been taken of the strong preference of Gypsy and Traveller households in conventional housing to move onto sites.

## Geographical distribution of existing households

- 6.26 It is also possible to identify the geographical clusters of Gypsy and Traveller households at a sub-district level by examining the Traveller Education data.
- 6.27 The following table provides estimates for a number of townships.



**Table 6.2** Estimate of Households by township

		Traveller Education Children	Estimated Households
Craven	Ingleton	1	2
	Skipton	9	19
Hambleton	Bedale area	3	6
	Easingwold area	2	4
	Middlesbrough*	2	4
	Northallerton	3	6
	Stokesley area	65	136
	Thirsk	17	36
Harrogate	Harrogate	10	21
	Ripon	1	2
	Knaresborough	13	27
	Nr Wetherby	5	10
Richmondshire	Catterick area	4	8
	Richmond	2	4
Ryedale	Malton area	42	88
Scarborough	Filey & Scarborough	5	10
Selby	Selby area	79	166
	Sherburn & Tadcaster	3	6
York	Outer area of York	13	27
	York	144	302
Unknown		14	29
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>437</b>	<b>917</b>

\*Some children resident in Hambleton attend school in Middlesbrough

## Type of new provision

- 6.28 Well over half (56.8) of respondents wanting to live in a trailer or chalet on a site for their permanent/winter base indicated that they would prefer to own this land. When asked what their ideal home would be like there was a strong emphasis on owning land with space for houses, bungalows or chalets but allowing for the parking up of trailers. This was reflected in the comment “don't make loads of new sites - help Gypsies to get their own land passed.”
- 6.29 For those who wished to rent a pitch, the preferred option was to rent from the Council rather than privately. In contrast however the sample was split three ways over the question of management. When asked who should manage sites there was little difference between Councils and Private (Gypsy/Traveller).
- 6.30 When asked about the future needs, a large proportion of respondents indicated a preference for smaller family sites with larger pitches (and slabs). There were many references to having more stands to allow family members to stay on sites. A number also mentioned the need for bigger amenity blocks (sheds).
- 6.31 A key stakeholder also referred to the need for pitches with space for livestock as some homeless Gypsy and Traveller families had been unable to move onto sites because they were unable to do so with their animals.
- 6.32 CLG guidance suggests that smaller sites of between 6-12 pitches are most popular with Gypsies and Travellers and are reported to be easier to manage. They suggest sites should not normally exceed 20 pitches in capacity unless there is clear evidence to suggest that a larger site is preferred by the local Gypsy or Traveller community, or that this recommendation would severely limit the potential to meet local needs.

**Table 6.3 – Preferred Site Management Option**

Preferred Management Option	Percent
Councils	34.2
Private (Gypsy/Traveller)	33.3
Private (non-Gypsy or Traveller)	2.1
Registered Social Landlords/Housing Associations	1.3
Self owned and managed	27.5
Other:	1.7
Total	100

## Showpeople Requirements

- 6.33 Whilst it is often said that a Showman is “born a Showman and dies a Showman” this community is not currently recognised as an ethnic group in the same way as English Gypsies and Irish Travellers. Showpeople travel in connection with their work and therefore live, almost universally, in wagons. During the winter months these are parked up in what was traditionally known as ‘winter quarters’. These ‘yards’ are now often occupied all year around by some family members. (often retired Showpeople, spouses and those with illness or disability) (Power and SGGB, 2007).
- 6.34 There are very few Showpeople living on yards in the sub-region. While 67 households were interviewed in the survey, all but 18 of these resided outside the sub-region and fieldworkers reported that they were unable to identify any more potential respondents.
- 6.35 Nearly all of these were either living on their own land, renting privately or sharing their pitch with another household.
- 6.36 The number of respondents living in the sub-region is too small to be able to provide a reliable assessment of pitch requirements. What is clear from the data is that most (74%) showpeople wish to own their own yards.
- 6.37 Respondents were asked to rank (from 1 to 5) where they preferred or needed to live over winter or for their homebase. Responses have been combined for rankings 1 to 2, giving a preference list as shown in Table 6.4 The data suggests that there may be a need for new Yards in the Selby and York local authority areas.

**Table 6.4** Preferences for new yards

LA	Priority 1 or 2 (%)
Selby	23.4
Elsewhere	18.9
York	18.0
Hambleton	11.7
Harrogate	8.1
Craven	6.3
Richmondshire	6.3
Scarborough	5.4
Ryedale	1.8

## 7.0 TRAVELLING PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

### Travelling behaviour

#### Why people travel

- 7.1 People were asked to identify the main reasons why they travel. Gypsy and Traveller respondents gave their cultural heritage as the most common response (31%). Visiting family and friends and travelling being the only way of life they knew were each given as reasons by 24%. The other reasons (Work related and Personal preference) were chosen by 10% and 12% respectively.
- 7.2 41 of 217 (19%) Gypsy and Traveller respondents stated that either they or a member of their household had been homeless during the past five years.
- 7.3 49% of Gypsy and Traveller respondents and 91% of Showpeople reported travelling for some time every year.
- 7.4 Of these, 46% of Gypsies and Travellers and 6.5% of Showpeople reported travelling all year round. While all of these Showpeople had a permanent base about 70% of the Gypsy and Traveller population who indicated that they travel all year described themselves as homeless.
- 7.5 Of the balance of Gypsy and Traveller respondents, 36% regularly travel for between two and twelve weeks per year, while only 13% said that they travel for over thirteen weeks.

**Table 7.1** Amount of time travelling in a year

	Gypsy and Traveller %	Showpeople %
No more than thirteen days	5.8	1.6
2 to 4 weeks (or one month)	14.2	4.8
5 to 8 weeks (or 2 months)	9.2	3.2
9 to 12 weeks (or 3 months)	12.5	9.7
13 to 26 weeks (or 6 months)	5	21
Over 6 months but less than 10 months	5	32.3
Over 10 months but less than 12 months	2.5	21
All year	45.8	6.5
Total	100.0	100.0

## Travelling Routes

- 7.6 When asked where they would normally go when travelling, respondents provided a wide range of responses with most reporting that they went ‘all over’ or ‘anywhere they could’. Several Fair locations were reported including Appleby, Yarm, Whitby and Seamer.

## Homelessness and unauthorised encampments

- 7.7 A distinction should be made between unofficial encampments that are established as part of the cultural practice of travelling - for example, when a household travels to fairs (such as Appleby Horse Fair) – and unofficial encampments which are a consequence of being homeless through not having a permanent base.
- 7.8 Of those interviewed on unofficial encampments 90% indicated that they were homeless as they did not have a permanent or winter base and 19% of Gypsy and Traveller participants indicated that they (or a member of their household) had been homeless in the past five years.
- 7.9 The Key Stakeholder Forum had commented that all areas experienced some unauthorised encampments over the school holidays, often associated with fairs such as Appleby Horse Fair, Seamer Fair and Whitby Regatta. There were also often encampments associated with the funerals of Travelling community members. The association between travelling and agriculture has decreased as jobs have been replaced by machines although this may still play a part with farmers accommodating Travellers. Local people were reported to be often hostile to Travelling people, although it was suggested that “horses and carts” were perceived romantically and were therefore more likely to be tolerated.

## Transit sites and designated stopping places

- 7.10 The CLG Guidance suggests that, in addition to the need for permanent provision, an assessment should be made of the need for temporary places to stop-over while travelling. Two types of temporary provision has been identified elsewhere.
- 7.11 Transit sites are intended for short-term use while in transit. Sites are usually permanent but there is a limit on the length of time residents can stay. Stop-over places are designated temporary camping areas tolerated by local authorities, used for short-term encampments and sometimes with the provision of temporary toilet facilities, water supplies and refuse collection services.
- 7.12 91% of Gypsy and Traveller respondents agreed with the need for a network of transit sites across the country.

7.13 Of those who responded to the question ‘Would you use a transit site?’, 73% indicated that they would. Respondents’ observations included:

- ‘Before you start making transit sites build some (...) proper sites’
- ‘Build more proper sites before you start worrying about the short term ones’
- ‘Build permanent sites first’
- ‘I feel it would benefit us if we had transit sites because we can’t stop anywhere any more’
- ‘I feel there should be transit sites because no matter where we go we get moved’
- ‘I like to choose my own company; anyone could pull next to you on a transit site’
- ‘If there were enough sites you wouldn’t need transit sites or stopover places’
- ‘If there were transit sites I would be able to travel every now and then’
- ‘If transits or temporary sites were there and properly managed then you would be able to do something about the scummy (...) out there!’
- ‘The transit sites would have to be in nice places and well managed. We wouldn’t go on with a load of savages’, and
- ‘There (are) a lot of Gypsies all over the country. We need transits all over the (place).’
- ‘They would be in miserable places full of concrete’

7.14 Of those who said whether they would use a designated stopping place, 80% agreed that they would, with comments including ‘Need something for Fair times’; ‘Permanent first and then worry about temporary’ and ‘They might be in nicer places and not concrete’

7.15 Respondents were asked whom they would prefer to manage transit sites or stopovers. There was a preference for local authority management (42% of respondents) followed by private Gypsy and Traveller management (34%). Preference for registered social landlords and private non-Traveller management was low, at 14% and 11% respectively.

7.16 Respondents’ comments included; ‘When we travel it’s hard to find stopping places’; ‘Would be good for fair times as long as you were put with the right people’ and ‘Need proper sites otherwise the stopovers will just become sites’.

## Need for transit sites – preference by local authority area

- 7.17 Respondents were asked to rank where they thought it was most important to locate transit sites in the different authorities. Responses have been combined for rankings 1 to 3, giving a preference list as shown in Table 7.2.
- 7.18 The inclusion of Scarborough in the top three preferences is significant as there is currently no site provision in this local authority area. There is a danger that the reporting of need for transit sites in Harrogate, Selby and York in part reflects the existing pressure on permanent sites in these areas.

**Table 7.2** Preference for location of transit sites or stopping places

Local Authority Preference (1 = most popular)	% of 1 - 3 combined	Existing authorised permanent sites (No.)
1 Harrogate	17.5	2
2 Scarborough	16.9	0
3 Selby	16.1	2
4 York	15.5	3
5 Craven	9.8	2
6 Richmondshire	9.2	2
7 Hambleton	8.2	3
8 Ryedale	6.8	1
<b>Total</b>	100.0	15

7.19 The Key Stakeholders' Forum endorsed the need for transit sites and/or stopping places, with participants suggesting that there was a need both for more permanent sites and for transit sites or stopping places to allow for stopovers while travelling. It was suggested that some councils were advising landowners to block off their land to prevent encampments, and noted that elsewhere stop-over places are being opened up and Travellers are happy to pay to use them.

### Stop-over Yards for Showpeople

7.20 While travelling in connection with work Showpeople will commonly stop over on yards belonging to others. Respondents were asked to prioritise (1 to 5) those local authority areas where stop-over facilities were required. The following table (Table 7.3) shows the distribution of those areas where need was considered to be the greatest (i.e. the percentage prioritised 1 or 2).

7.21 Almost 24% considered there to be a need for this kind of facility in York followed by 23% in Selby and 14% in Harrogate.

**Table 7.3** Where yards with stop-over facilities are required

LA	Priority 1 or 2 (%)
York	23.7
Selby	22.9
Harrogate	14.4
Craven	11.9
Hambleton	11.0
Richmondshire	5.9
Scarborough	5.9
Ryedale	4.2



## Problems experienced while travelling

- 7.22 Respondents were asked to identify the problems they most commonly experienced while on the road. The most frequent problem was the lack of toilet (experienced by 85% of respondents) and water facilities (experienced by 83% of respondents).
- 7.23 The behaviour of police was also identified as a commonplace problem, with 82% of respondents citing it as a problem.
- 7.24 Problems with rubbish collection and lack of places to stop over were experienced by high percentages of respondents (78% and 72% respectively). Abuse, harassment and discrimination had been experienced by 67% of respondents. Respondents' comments included:
- 'It's hard ... when you have kids (and the) police making you move at eight o'clock in winter nights';
  - 'Other Travellers can be a disgrace; it's no wonder some people treat us like animals it is all that some deserve';
  - 'People are very disrespectful to Travellers'; and
  - 'When the police come to move (us) on they treat us like dirt'.
  - 'I don't travel any more – it's too hard to get a place on a camp';
  - 'I was born and bred in a trailer, but now there is nowhere to pull as the council has closed all roadsides..'
  - 'Eviction comes all too often without welfare visits'
  - 'Getting sick of the evictions all the time'
  - 'Gypsy life is a hard way of living'
  - 'I think that local council(s) should think about the children when travelling and when evicting families'
  - 'I would love to travel again but I need to be safe and the house is safe'
  - 'If it was easier and less aggravation I would love to have a week or two being a proper Traveller again'; and
  - 'If you get a night on a camp you are doing good. Sometimes as we pull on the site police are there to move us on again'
- 7.25 The closing of traditional stopping places, the behaviour of enforcement officers and the behaviour of other Travellers were identified as problems by 45 - 46% of respondents; a significantly lower proportion than for the other issues:

- ‘Travellers who leave piles of rubbish everywhere should be locked up. It means us decent travellers can’t speak up’; and
- ‘We get evicted after a few days and with children it’s not right. It is not good for my wife either - she has to calm the children down’
- If there was stopping places the kids could come over and see me more stop for a bit not just for the day’,

**Table 7.4** Problems experienced while travelling

Nature of problem	%
Lack of toilet facilities	85.00
No water facilities	82.50
Police behaviour	81.70
Problems with rubbish collection	78.30
No places to stop over	71.70
Abuse, harassment or discrimination	66.70
Closing of traditional stopping places	46.70
Enforcement officer behaviour	45.80
Behaviour of other Travellers	45.00

## Planning and the unauthorised development of sites

### Unauthorised Developments

- 7.26 A number of unauthorised developments were reported across the sub-region. In some cases planning applications were in process and in others action was being taken to prevent occupation of the sites. None of the residents were interviewed in the survey.

**Table 7.5** Unauthorised Developments

District	Unauthorised Developments (Households)
Craven	2
Hambleton	6
Scarborough	2
Selby	2
Total	12

Source: Reported by LAs

## Planning

- 7.27 The experience of the planning system of Gypsies and Travellers was generally poor. Almost 19% of respondents reported that they had at some time applied for planning permission for residential use. Of these applications some 67% had been unsuccessful. Against a national background level of *success* for all planning applications of some 80% (PPG1), these figures are of concern.

**Table 7.6** Planning permission for residential use - outcomes

Outcome	Gypsy and Traveller	Show-people
Permission granted	31.1	24.0
Permission denied	66.7	76.0
In process	2.2	
Total	100.0	100.0

7.28 Given these outcomes, it is hardly surprising that only 7% of the 195 Gypsies and Travellers who responded to the question ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with planning departments?’ expressed any level of satisfaction at all (Table 7.6). By contrast, a very high 49% said that they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

**Table 7.6** Satisfaction with planning departments

Degree of satisfaction	Gypsy and Traveller	Show-people
Very Satisfied	2.1	4.6
Satisfied	5.1	10.8
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	43.6	29.2
Dissatisfied	27.7	10.8
Very Dissatisfied	21.5	44.6
Total	100.0	100

7.29 We received a high volume of comments, reflecting both people’s experience of using planning services and their perceptions of planning services and issues in the North Yorkshire Sub-region. These included:

- ‘Would like to be able to have our daughter and her kids nearer to us. The garden is big enough but don’t know about getting planning permission’
- ‘Would love to be able to live on my own land but the planning department are not helping at all’
- ‘Would love to feel safe and be able to do something with the yard but we are only here because they don’t know we are here. You’ve got no chance of getting planning permission in X so we have to make do with (this)’
- ‘Would love to trust the council enough to apply for planning to have a nice shed and that. As it is we just have to hide away’
- ‘Because of the fight getting planning permission in other areas we didn’t want to take the risk here’

- 'I have a family of four lads but I can only get planning permission for one trailer. It is scandalous'
- 'I have a big mobile home and it's a bit big for the site where I am at but I can't get planning permission for my own land and I want to live in X. It's close to my family and my little boy is in nursery school'
- 'I have never applied for planning permission but my son has. The planning is terrible'
- 'Just wished we could sort out the planning. We have just bought it, but it's not nice knowing whether or not they are going to rip us off'
- 'The place is perfect, stopping in my kids' yard right next to them. If we just had planning permission it would be perfect'
- 'We bought some land but couldn't get planning permission so we had to go back to the roadside, and with two young children it is hard....'

7.30 Participants at the Key Stakeholder forum suggested that there should be consultation with the communities about the siting and nature of new sites, emphasising that there would need to be awareness-raising with existing residents in potential areas for site development.

## 8.0 WIDER SERVICE AND SUPPORT NEEDS

8.1 This research provides a valuable opportunity to review the wider service and support needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This chapter discusses issues raised through household surveys and stakeholder consultation.

### Health and supporting people issues

8.2 Key points raised at the Key Stakeholder forum about health and social care included:

- Lack of awareness among Travelling communities about what is available
- Problems with Gypsies and Travellers accessing health services
- Lack of agencies' understanding of the issues
- Agencies need to be aware of what each other are doing
- Need for joint training and more interagency days or forums
- Minimal Primary Care Trust involvement with Gypsy and Traveller communities so far
- Neighbour disputes resulting from intolerance often cause stress-related problems
- In some instances there is a link between alcoholism and domestic violence. There was some concern about refuges not accepting Gypsies and Travellers.
- Need to establish whether older Gypsies and Travellers are interested in sheltered accommodation.

### Services used in the last year

8.3 Interviewees were asked which services they had used in the last year. The most frequently used services had been medical, with doctors used by 92% and dentists by 64% of Gypsy and Traveller respondents. Accident and emergency services were also well-used (48.5% of respondents), although at a significantly lower rate than doctors. This contrasts with concerns expressed at the Key Stakeholder Forum about 'over-reliance on accident and emergency services'.

- 8.4 Traveller Education was used by 21% of respondents. This was followed by legal, welfare and other advice services. Traveller liaison services, health, adult education and social services had been used least frequently.

**Table 8.1** Services used in the last year

Service	% of total use of services
Doctor (G.P.)	92.00%
Dentist	64.00%
Accident and emergency	48.50%
Health visitors	23.50%
Traveller Education	21.00%
Citizens Advice Bureau	13.00%
Social services	6.50%
Traveller liaison	6.00%
Adult education	4.50%
Law Centre	3.50%
Other welfare rights advice	3.00%
Total	285.50%

Note: percentages add up to more than 100 as respondents used more than one service.

- 8.5 Nearly all (99.40%) respondents were registered with a doctor and 94.60% with a dentist. Surprisingly there was no significant difference in the reported level of registration and the use of services by the type of accommodation.

## Mental health issues

- 8.6 More than a third of Gypsy and Traveller respondents (94 of 243 respondents) said that they experienced stress or got 'down'. Of these 70% indicated that they could cope from day to day without medication or other interventions. 17% told us that they needed support, but did not require medication, and 13% that they required medication. The latter equates to nearly 5% of the estimated total sample household population, and over twice the national estimate of 2.1% of the population.
- 8.7 The three major causes of stress were housing problems (68% of respondents), family problems (54% of respondents), and treatment by other people (44% of respondents). 37% of respondents identified treatment by organisations as a problem leading to stress.
- 8.8 When asked how they cope with these mental health issues, a large majority (87% of respondents) told us that they 'get on with it'. 23% said that they get support from families and/or friends, and 19% get support from their doctor or other medical services. 15% that their religious beliefs helped them cope. 5% told us that they fail to cope.





## Long-term illness or disability

- 8.9 The incidence of long-term illnesses or disabilities among Gypsy and Traveller respondents is set out in table 8.2 below.

**Table 8.2:** Incidence of long-term illness or disability

Condition	% total cases
Asthma	24.00
Educational difficulties/dyslexia	16.30
Arthritis	14.80
Depression/mental health	10.30
Learning disability	8.20
Problems with mobility	7.00
Problems with vision	6.40
Diabetes	5.50
Problems with hearing	5.50
Other	2.00

- 8.10 The high incidence of asthma identified in these responses endorses the suggestion at the Key Stakeholder forum that Travelling people in the North Yorkshire Sub-region had a higher rate of respiratory problems than the settled population.

## Support needs

- 8.11 Among examples of support they needed to access advice, health and other services Gypsy and Traveller respondents identified:
- Family support
  - Better sites
  - Help with rent and fuel costs
  - A permanent address to enable access to services
  - A home
  - Someone to talk to

- General and accommodation advice
  - To stay on the roadside for a few weeks
- 8.12 When asked what additional health and care services would help to meet their needs, Gypsy and Traveller responses included the following:
- More and better doctors and dentists
  - Mobile and walk-in doctors' and dental services
  - Help to get to doctors
  - Provision of personal alarms
  - Visits from health visitors
- 8.13 Other health, advice and support issues raised by Gypsies and Travellers included:
- The need for a place for Travellers and Gypsy and Traveller-specific services
  - The need for doctors and dentists to visit roadside encampments
  - Improved attitudes to Gypsies and Travellers among medical staff ('people need to know they can't treat us like second class ...' and ...'people need training to know they need to treat us fair..')
  - More services for older people

## Supporting People strategies

- 8.14 Substantive issues relating to the housing related support needs of Gypsies and Travellers were identified in the stakeholder forums. This includes:
- a lack of culturally sensitive housing-related support services
  - housing related support research provided clear evidence regarding the changes that were required, which are being implemented
  - implications of ageing populations – work is required to ensure sheltered accommodation is more accessible to all communities
  - physical and mental health issues for Travellers moving into bricks and mortar accommodation - support services to enable support to continue to customers when they move into housing should be maintained.

- There is a need to provide accessible information due to literacy problems among older Travellers
- limited opportunities for communities to access information and support services

## Education

- 8.15 There appeared to be some reluctance to answer questions relating to education, with no more than 40% replying to education questions. Of these, significantly more than half stated that they had a child who had been bullied at school because of their Travelling background.
- 8.16 Overall 64% of households with children stated that their child(ren) were getting the education that they needed.
- 8.17 Observations, hopes and comments from Gypsy and Traveller respondents included the need for:
- Wider acceptance of Travelling lifestyles and children
  - Travelling children to talk about their identity and lives
  - More teaching about Gypsy background
  - More trained Gypsy teachers
  - More work- and skills-based training
  - More nursery provision
  - More help in schools for children with special needs
  - More support of Traveller Education
  - Better understanding and training on Travelling cultures and customs for teachers
  - On-site teaching for Travelling children
  - More travelling education teams
- 8.18 The Key Stakeholder forum suggested that:
- Sites should be located in places that give easy access to services such as pre-school facilities, schools, health services and playgrounds. Account should be taken of access to transport etc.
  - Agency staff training should be provided to agencies by Travellers Education and Traveller agencies (such as York Traveller Trust) as they are in regular touch with the communities.
  - There is an emphasis on family connections when Travellers are looking for a site.

- Better consultation is required with Travelling communities about site location.
- There is a need for education of settled communities, Elected Members, etc.

## Community Involvement

8.19 The Key Stakeholder Forum considered the issue of community involvement, and concluded that among the key issues were:

- Consultation fatigue
- Cultural issues
- Health and safety
- Confidentiality
- Communication between Travelling communities and service providers
- Confidence raising

8.20 Participants suggested that there was a lack of knowledge and understanding of Gypsy and Traveller needs across the different agencies, and a need for more communication and consultation was identified. Clearer methods of communication such as illustrated leaflets with plain English were needed. It was suggested that it was especially difficult to involve male Travellers. There was a need to build up more trust between agencies and Travelling communities, and training was required as part of this process.

8.21 The need for collaboration between agencies, local authorities and community organisations was stressed as agencies were often unaware of Travelling communities, or unsure where they were located.

8.22 Although Gypsies and Travellers were not specifically asked for their views on community involvement, the theme underlies many of their responses to other questions. This is particularly true of their views on education (see 8.18. above). Two comments in particular summarise the wider views of Gypsies and Travellers on this issue:

- They should have more understanding in the (Travelling) community, and the (settled) community should have more understanding of them.
- People don't understand the (Travelling) way of life

## 9.0 CONCLUSIONS

### Assessment Findings

- 9.1 The study of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople in the sub-region has highlighted a range of issues. Estimates of the total number of households, derived from Traveller Education Service records, combined with the results of a survey indicate that the main community in the study area is English Gypsy (or Romany) although there is a small Irish Traveller Community and a smaller population of Showpeople. The study suggests that a large proportion of the communities are now living in conventional housing while continuing to travel especially during the spring and summer. About a third of

### Current Conditions

- 9.2 While respondents were generally happy with their existing permanent sites the survey suggests that the conditions are not good especially on private rented sites. Just under half of those respondents interviewed on private sites (33%) lacked a dedicated toilet on their pitch, nearly half (44%) lacked a shower or bath and no respondent had a kitchen on their pitch.
- 9.3 This compares very poorly with the responses on local authority sites but interestingly, however, this did not translate into perceptions about the state of repair or identified need for improvement. Private sites were in fact rated much higher than local authority sites. It may be that this simply reflects the lack of provision.
- 9.4 The lack of play areas on sites was a significant area of concern reported on both private and local authority sites with several respondents highlighting this issue in 'open text' responses.
- 9.5 The main repair and improvement issues reported was the need for more space on pitches and overcrowding appears to be a particular problem. This was especially the case on private sites. Beyond this the need for repairs and improvements to individual amenity blocks were highlighted on LA sites. Bathroom improvements were the most frequently mentioned issue.
- 9.6 There is broad agreement that conditions on several Local Authority sites in the sub-region are unacceptable, and that remedial action is urgently needed.
- 9.7 As part of any future site provision, it will be important to identify the need for adaptations and access facilities. The possibility of supporting site residents to apply for Disabled Facilities Grants in order to fund improvements should also be explored.

### Pitch Requirements

- 9.8 Since the obligation to provide Gypsy and Traveller sites was abolished in 1994 a gap in the provision of permanent sites has emerged nationally.



- 9.9 By combining research methods and drawing upon secondary source data it has been possible to understand the needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople communities in the sub-region.
- 9.10 The study has provided robust estimates of the size of the population of these communities and established the current and future accommodation needs by local authority area. An indication of the sub-district distribution of Gypsy and Traveller households has also been provided.
- 9.11 Using the CLG-approved model for calculating pitch requirements, the research has demonstrated that across the North Yorkshire Sub-region, there is a current shortfall of 113 pitches. This need is especially apparent in York, Selby, Harrogate and Hambleton.
- 9.12 A sub-regional response needs to be co-ordinated to help deliver these requirements.
- 9.13 The need is not distributed equally across the sub-region with larger gaps in provision for Gypsies and Travellers in York (36 pitches), Selby (26 pitches) Harrogate (14 pitches) and Hambleton (14 pitches).
- 9.14 In addition to this, there is some suggestion from the survey of Showpeople that a small amount of new provision is required in the Selby and York local authority areas.
- 9.15 The likely growth in households on sites is unlikely to outstrip the turnover of sites if the current trend of households moving off sites continues. However, it should be carefully noted that much of this movement may be attributed to the existing condition on sites – especially those not directly managed by local authorities – and no account has been taken of the strong preference of Gypsy and Traveller households in conventional housing to move onto sites.
- 9.16 Some indication of the sub-district distribution of need has been provided through consideration of the distribution of households known to Traveller Education.
- 9.17 Respondents had a clear preference for owning and developing their own land in ways that would accommodate their travelling lifestyle. Where they wished to rent there was a clear preference for local authority provision.
- 9.18 The clear preference of survey respondents was for smaller family sites with larger pitches. This reflects CLG guidance which advocates smaller sites of between 6 and 12 pitches.
- 9.19 There is a need to take a long-term view of the site management as it is more intensive and demanding than most conventional housing management, and it would be sensible to look at this issue in greater depth. Different management models may be appropriate for different sites, with mainstream approaches to recruitment and selection of managers needing to reflect cultural sensitivities.

- 9.20 For all three communities, the method of analysis is such that it is possible to periodically update the assessment of accommodation need, through the careful recording of key data. For Gypsy and Traveller Communities the number of extant authorised pitches and the provision of Traveller Education support needs to be recorded in some detail in order that the estimate can be disaggregated by the different ethnicities. Something that it has not been possible to do in this assessment.

### Travelling Practices and Requirements

- 9.21 The current understanding of travelling patterns and the associated requirements of the Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople communities is more limited. The communities continue to travel because it is part of their cultural heritage and, especially so far as Showpeople are concerned, associated with their work.
- 9.22 However, the high levels of homelessness reported by the Gypsy and Traveller Communities in the North Yorkshire Sub-region suggests that many of the current unofficial encampments are a result of a shortage of permanent provision.
- 9.23 There is a high level of support for the provision of transit sites and stopping places which allow for temporary stop-overs while travelling but there is a serious danger that, until the gap in permanent provision is addressed, any new transit site provision will simply fill up with permanent occupants.
- 9.24 When asked where transit sites should be located the top choices mainly reflected the existing shortage of permanent provision or current growth spots but the inclusion of Scarborough in the top three seems to suggest the need for some transit provision in this area.

### Wider service needs

- 9.25 Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople reported few support or wider service needs although there were significant references to their lack of access to doctors and dentists.
- 9.26 Some Gypsy and Traveller respondents made the point that access to services were hindered by their lack of a permanent base.
- 9.27 Few points were made by respondents about education but the views expressed at the Key Stakeholder forum suggest that transport is a key issue for Gypsy and Traveller children living on sites.

### Health

- 9.28 Of some concern is the high level of Gypsies and Travellers reporting mental health issues. Over one third reported experiencing stress or getting down. The numbers reporting that they required medication to cope with their problem was over twice the national average.

## Strategic Response

9.29 Many of the issues raised in this report require a strategic response. This includes working with the Communities to:

- ensure findings from this study are feedback to the communities
- identify suitable land for the development of new site provision
- consider ways to support Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople in the planning application process
- ensure that new provision conforms to the emerging site design and layout guidance
- make existing site provision fit for purpose
- develop transit or stop-over provision
- tackle inequality in access to services
- raise awareness and tackle prejudice and discrimination

## APPENDIX A LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

- A.1 Between 1960 and 2003, three Acts of Parliament had a major impact upon the lives of Gypsies and Travellers. The main elements of these are summarised below.
- A.2 The **1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act** enabled Councils to ban the siting of caravans for human occupation on common land, and led to the closure of many sites.
- A.3 The **Caravan Sites Act 1968 (Part II)** required local authorities '*so far as may be necessary to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies residing in or resorting to their area*'. It empowered the Secretary of State to make designation orders for areas where he (sic) was satisfied that there was adequate accommodation, or on grounds of expediency. Following the recommendations of the Cripps Commission in 1980, provision began to grow rapidly only after the allocation of 100% grants from central government. By 1994 a third of local authorities had achieved designation, which meant that they were not required to make further provision and were given additional powers to act against unauthorised encampments. The repeal of most of the Caravan Sites Act under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act in 1994 led to a reduction in provision, with some sites being closed over a period in which the Gypsy and Traveller population was increasing.
- A.4 The **1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJ&POA)**:
- Repealed most of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act;
  - Abolished all statutory obligation to provide accommodation;
  - Discontinued government grants for sites; and
  - Under Section 61 made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent.
- A.5 Since the CJ&POA the only places where Gypsies and Travellers can legally park their trailers and vehicles are:
- Council Gypsy caravan sites; by 2000 nearly half of Gypsy caravans were accommodated on council sites, despite the fact that new council site provision stopped following the end of the statutory duty;
  - Privately owned land with appropriate planning permission; usually owned by Gypsies or Travellers. Such provision now accommodates approximately a third of Gypsy caravans in England; and
  - Land with established rights of use, other caravan sites or mobile home parks by agreement or licence, and land required for seasonal

farm workers (under site licensing exemptions).

- A.6 By the late 1990s the impact of the 1994 Act was generating pressure for change on both local and national government. There was a major review of law and policy, which included:
- A Parliamentary Committee report (House of Commons 2004).
  - The replacement of Circular 1/94 by Circular 1/2006.
  - Guidance on accommodation assessments (ODPM 2006).
  - The Housing Act 2004 which placed a requirement (s.225) on local authorities to assess Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.
- A.7 More recent legislation with a direct impact on the lives of Gypsies and Travellers includes the Housing Act 2004 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- A.8 **Section 225: Housing Act 2004** which imposes duties on local authorities in relation to the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers:
- Every local housing authority must as part of the general review of housing needs in their areas under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district;
  - Where a local housing authority are required under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 to prepare a strategy to meet such accommodation needs, they must take the strategy into account in exercising their functions;
  - A local housing authority must have regard to section 226 ('Guidance in relation to section 225') in:
    - carrying out such an assessment, and
    - preparing any strategy that they are required to prepare.
- A.9 **The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004** set out to introduce a simpler and more flexible planning system at regional and local levels. It also introduced new provisions which change the duration of planning permissions and consents, and allow local planning authorities to introduce local permitted development rights using 'local development orders'. It made the compulsory purchase regime simpler, fairer and quicker, to support major infrastructure and regeneration initiatives.
- A.10 The Act introduced major changes to the way in which the planning system operates. The Development Plan now comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Frameworks. Local planning authorities are required to prepare a Local Development Framework, the key components of which are:

- A **Local Development Scheme**, which sets out what local development documents Local Planning Authorities will prepare, along with their timetable and whether they are to be prepared jointly with one or more other authorities.
- A **Statement of Community Involvement**
- **Local Development Documents**, which must be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and which effectively replace local plans, unitary development plans and structure plans. County Councils are able to participate in the preparation of local development documents by becoming part of a joint committee with one or more LPA
- **Annual Monitoring Reports**

A.11 Part 8 of the Act contains a series of measures to reform the compulsory purchase regime and make it easier for local planning authorities to make a case for compulsory purchase orders where it will be of economic, social or environmental benefit to the area. This section also brings in amended procedures for carrying out compulsory purchase orders, including a widening of the category of person with an interest in the land who can object, and deals with ownership issues and compensation.

## APPENDIX B POLICY AND GUIDANCE

B.1 As part of this research, we have carried out a comprehensive literature review which is presented in this Appendix. A considerable range of guidance documents has been prepared by Central Government to assist local authorities discharge their strategic housing and planning functions. In addition there is considerable independent and academic research and guidance on these issues. This review covers documents and research which either relate specifically to Gypsies and Travellers or make reference to them within a broader policy framework. The documents are reviewed in order of publication date.

### **The Provision and Condition of Local Authority Gypsy / Traveller Sites in England, Niner, ODPM, 2002**

B.2 This study for ODPM by the University of Birmingham (Niner 2002) estimated a need in England for 1 - 2,000 additional residential pitches, and up to 2,500 transit or stopping places over a five-year period. This would require 6 - 900 new pitches a year. From January 2003 to January 2005 the net increase was equivalent to 130 pitches a year, at which rate it would take over thirty years to reach the target.

### **At What Cost, Clements and Morris, 2002**

B.3 In 2002 the national public cost of dealing with unauthorised sites was estimated at around £18 million a year and this figure is now believed to be much greater. Local authority and police costs of dealing with unauthorised encampments are high, and include legal expenses, the provision of facilities and services to 'tolerated' sites, and the cost of clearing up in cases where rubbish is left on sites or fly tipping occurs.

### **Gypsies and Travellers 2004-2007 Strategy, Commission for Racial Equality, 2004**

B.4 The CRE produced a strategy document in 2004 covering its work with Gypsies and Travellers through to 2007. The main elements in this strategy include commitments to advise and influence a wide range of agencies on:

- Accommodation;
- Education;
- Employment and training;

- Health and Social Care;
- Criminal justice;
- Records and monitoring; and
- Legal protection.

## **Consultation Paper on a New Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) – Housing, ODPM,**

**December 2005**

B.5 This draft PPS seeks to provide a national policy framework for planning for housing. It sets out what is required at regional and local levels to deliver housing within sustainable communities. This PPS and accompanying guidance is intended eventually to replace Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3) published in March 2000 and Planning Circular 6/98: Planning and Affordable Housing. It makes specific reference to strategic considerations relating to Gypsy and Traveller communities:

## **Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 3: Housing Update, DETR January 2005**

B.6 The preamble to this Guidance Note states that; ‘Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes set out the Government’s policies on different aspects of planning. They should be taken into account by regional planning bodies and local planning authorities in preparing regional planning guidance and development plans and may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. This guidance introduces a new approach to planning for housing which, for most authorities, will mean that their development plan will require early review and alteration in respect of housing.’ There is no reference in the document to Gypsies or Travellers, caravan sites or other issues affecting Travelling communities.

## **A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for Implementation Update, DCLG, June 2006**

B.7 Although not primarily about the provision of caravan sites, facilities or pitches, the June 2006 updated DCLG guidance for social landlords provides a standard for such provision. The guidance is set out under a number of key headings:



- Community-based and tenant-led ownership and management
- Delivering Decent Homes Beyond 2010
- Delivering mixed communities
- Procurement value for money
- Housing Health and Safety

B.8 The guidance defines four criteria against which to measure the standard of a home:

- 1) It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- 2) It is in a reasonable state of repair
- 3) It has reasonably modern facilities and services
- 4) It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

### **Guide to Effective Use of Enforcement Powers - Part 1: Unauthorised Encampments, ODPM, 2006**

B.9 The Guide is the Government's response to unauthorised encampments which cause local disruption and conflict. Strong powers are available to the police, local authorities and other landowners to deal with unauthorised encampments. It provides detailed step-by-step practical guidance to the use of these powers, and sets out advice on:

- Choosing the most appropriate power;
- Speeding up the process;
- Keeping costs down;
- The eviction process;
- Preventing further unauthorised camping.

### **Submission to the Good Childhood Inquiry, Commission for Racial Equality, 2006**

B.10 The 'Good Childhood' investigation by the Children's Society set out to research why the well-being of our children and young people is so poor and what we can do about it; what is particular to the experience of childhood in the UK that so damages the well-being of our children, and what changes in the way childhood is experienced by today's children and young people have the most impact upon their quality of life. The CRE's submission to the inquiry is divided into two sections: general comments on the issues facing ethnic minority children and young people today; and comments on the Inquiry themes where relevant to race equality or integration. The CRE concluded that ethnic minority children and young people are disproportionately disadvantaged across all sectors and at all ages.

B.11 Areas identified as affecting children and young people from Travelling backgrounds included:

- data on attainment of ethnic minority children against the early learning goals set out in the Foundation Stage Profile shows that Irish Travellers and Gypsy/Roma children are the lowest performing ethnic groups
- patterns of achievement appear to broadly mirror attainment gaps at later stages. White and Asian and Irish children are the highest performing ethnic groups whilst the lowest performing are Irish Travellers and Gypsy/Roma children
- Gypsy/Roma and Traveller of Irish Heritage pupils have extremely low attainment and perform considerably below the national average at all Key Stages and at GCSE and equivalent.

**Gypsy and Traveller Unit - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments  
Draft Practice Guidance, ODPM, 2006**

B.12 This guidance supplements the earlier ODPM draft practice guidance on housing market assessments. It provides advice on carrying out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. It does not claim to be exhaustive or prescriptive, and while it recommends that the basic principles it contains should be followed; the exact approach needs to be adapted to local circumstances. It sets out:

- Why the Accommodation Assessment needs to be done
- What it should produce
- Whom it should survey

- Key differences between the Gypsy and Traveller community and others, and the practical implications of these differences
- How accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers differs from those of the settled community
- Timescales for carrying out and updating the assessment.

B.13 It also provides advice on carrying out the assessment, including:

- Partnership working;
- Deciding who should carry out the assessment
- The use of existing data sources;
- The use of specialist surveys, including survey techniques and questions;
- How to identify and communicate with the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

#### **Circular 01/2006 - Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites, ODPM, 2006**

B.14 The Circular sets out the measures related to Gypsies and Travellers contained within Part 6 of the Housing Act 2004:

- It extends the meaning of a 'protected site' in England to include authorised County Council sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The result is that the occupiers of these sites, like tenants in social housing, are entitled to a minimum period of notice before they can be evicted, possession can only be obtained by a court order, and they will be covered by the provisions in the 1968 Act concerning harassment and illegal eviction. This brings County Council-owned Gypsy and Traveller sites into line with sites owned by other types of local authority.
- It provides the courts with the power to suspend eviction orders against those occupying authorised local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites, and allows for these suspensions to last for a period of up to 12 months.
- It requires local authorities to undertake regular assessments of the accommodation needs of 'Gypsies and Travellers' either living in, or resorting to, their area under the Local Housing Needs Assessment process as set out in Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985. This enables them to consider the need for additional temporary and permanent accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in their area.

- It requires local authorities to develop a strategy to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, as they do for the rest of the community, in line with Section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003, and to take any such strategy into account when they are exercising their other functions. Local housing authorities must also take into account any guidance issued by [DCLG] when carrying out their Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment and when developing their strategy.
- It allows for regulations to be issued that define Gypsies and Travellers for the purpose of this section. This allows the Secretary of State to consult on the definition and provides for the possibility of the definition changing over time. This paragraph states that 'accommodation' means sites on which caravans can be stationed, in addition to bricks and mortar housing.
- It allows for the Secretary of State to issue guidance on carrying out needs assessments and the preparation of housing strategies.

#### B.15 The main intentions of the Circular are:

- to create and support ... communities where Gypsies and Travellers have fair access to suitable accommodation, education, health and welfare provision; where there is mutual respect and consideration between all communities for the rights and responsibilities of each community and individual; and where there is respect between individuals and communities towards the environments in which they live and work;
- to reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and developments and the conflict .... they cause and to make enforcement more effective where local authorities have complied with the guidance ....;
- to increase significantly the number of Gypsy and Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission in order to address under-provision;
- to recognise, protect and facilitate the traditional travelling way of life of Gypsies and Travellers, whilst respecting the interests of the settled community;
- to underline the importance of assessing needs at regional and sub-regional level and for local authorities to develop strategies to ensure that needs are dealt with fairly and effectively;
- to identify and make provision for the resultant land and accommodation requirements;

- to ensure that Development Plan Documents include fair, realistic and inclusive policies and to ensure identified need is dealt with fairly and effectively;
- to promote more private Gypsy and Traveller site provision in appropriate locations through the planning system, while recognising that there will always be those who cannot provide their own sites; and
- to help to avoid Gypsies and Travellers becoming homeless through eviction from unauthorised sites without an alternative to move to.

### **Local Authorities and Gypsy & Travellers Guide to responsibilities and Powers, ODPM, 2006**

B.16 The Guide summarises the Government's objective as Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community living together peacefully. .... both must respect the rights of the other and each must discharge its responsibilities to the other.

B.17 The Guide sets out the priorities as:

- adequate provision must be made for authorised sites;
- the planning system and property rights must be respected and effective enforcement action taken promptly against problem sites;
- the small minority who indulge in anti-social behaviour must be dealt with promptly and effectively before they cause further harm to relationships between the two communities.

B.18 The main sections of the Guide set out how the Government sees these priorities being achieved by local authorities:

- each local authority to identify land for the sites that are needed in its area.
- local authorities and the police using existing powers to deal with Gypsies and Travellers who camp on other people's land.
- local authorities and the police dealing with antisocial behaviour by Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community alike
- local authorities taking the lead in assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers alongside those of their settled population;
- locally assessed needs of Gypsies and Travellers incorporated into the Regional Spatial Strategy;

- each local authority playing its part in meeting those needs through the planning system by identifying appropriate sites in local plans.

**Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers, Commission for Racial Equality, May 2006**

- B.19 This report was written four years after the introduction of the statutory duty on public authorities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations and to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination. The CRE expressed concerns about relations between Gypsies and Irish Travellers and other members of the public, with widespread public hostility and, in many places, Gypsies and Irish Travellers leading separate, parallel lives. A dual concern about race relations and inequality led the Commission in October 2004 to launch the inquiry on which this report was based.
- B.20 The Report's recommendations include measures relating to central government, local authorities, police forces and the voluntary sector. Among those relating to central government are:
- developing a realistic but ambitious timetable to identify land for sites, where necessary establishing them, and making sure it is met,
  - developing key performance indicators for public sites which set standards for quality and management that are comparable to those for conventional accommodation,
  - requiring local authorities to monitor and provide data on planning applications, outcomes and enforcement, and on housing and homelessness by racial group, using two separate categories for Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
  - requiring police forces to collect information on Gypsies and Irish Travellers as two separate ethnic categories.
- B.21 Strategic recommendations affecting local authorities include:
- developing a holistic corporate vision for all work on Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
  - reviewing all policies on accommodation for Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
  - designating a councillor at cabinet (or equivalent) level, and an officer at no less than assistant director level, to coordinate the authority's work on all sites,

- emphasising that the code of conduct for councillors applies to their work in relation to all racial groups, including Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
- giving specific advice to Gypsies and Irish Travellers on the most suitable land for residential use, how to prepare applications, and help them to find the information they need to support their application,
- identifying and reporting on actions by local groups or individuals in response to plans for Gypsy sites that may constitute unlawful pressure on the authority to discriminate against Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
- monitoring all planning applications and instances of enforcement action at every stage, by type and racial group, including Gypsies and Irish Travellers, in order to assess the effects of policies and practices on different racial groups.

B.22 Among other recommendations, the Report states that police forces should:

- include Gypsies and Irish Travellers in mainstream neighbourhood policing strategies, to promote race equality and good race relations,
- target individual Gypsies and Irish Travellers suspected of anti-social behaviour and crime on public, private and unauthorised sites, and not whole communities,
- treat Gypsies and Irish Travellers as members of the local community, and in ways that strengthen their trust and confidence in the police,
- provide training for all relevant officers on Gypsies' and Irish Travellers' service needs, so that officers are able to do their jobs more effectively,
- review formal and informal procedures for policing unauthorised encampments, to identify and eliminate potentially discriminatory practices, and ensure that the procedures promote race equality and good race relations,
- review the way policy is put into practice, to make sure organisations and individuals take a consistent approach, resources are used effectively and strategically, all procedures are formalised, and training needs are identified.

B.23 Other recommendations relate to Parish and Community councils the Local Government Association, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the voluntary sector.

## Report of the LGA Gypsy and Traveller Task Group - May 2006

B.24 The LGA's Gypsy and Traveller Task Group was established in December 2004 to respond to the issues raised by the new Circular on Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites. Following the publication of the LGA's response, and amid concerns being expressed from local government and the national press that enforcement issues were not being dealt with, the task group was asked further to extend its work to cover enforcement issues.

B.25 The Report set out recommendations on the way forward in dealing with unauthorised encampments, under nine main headings:

- The scale of the challenge;
- Understanding accommodation needs ;
- Delivering the new planning circular;
- Site provision issues ;
- Site design and management issues ;
- Enforcement against unauthorised encampments ;
- Enforcement against unauthorised development ;
- Resourcing delivery ;
- The role of council leadership.

**Local Authorities and Gypsies and Travellers: A Guide to Responsibilities and Powers, DCLG, 2007**

B.26 The financial, health and other costs to Gypsies and Travellers are substantial, including the constant threat of eviction and disruption of everyday life. Members of settled communities generally enjoy a basic right to secure accommodation. Although they undoubtedly experience adverse effects of unlawful encampments, members of settled communities are not faced with the levels of insecurity, inter- and intra-communal tension or the 'vicious circle of tension' experienced because of a lack of adequate accommodation suffered by many transient Travellers. (DCLG, 2007a)

**Out in the Open - Providing Accommodation, Promoting Understanding and Recognising Rights of Gypsies and Travellers, Building and Social Housing Foundation, June 2007**



B.27 This consultation was organised by the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) to identify practical ways in which housing organisations and other public bodies can work together with Gypsies and Travellers and local communities to provide appropriate accommodation and support for their way of life, as well as promoting respect and understanding between Gypsies and Travellers and other members of the public. Persons of experience and expertise were brought together for three days in order to share and develop ideas as to how to meet this challenge. The key findings are set out in an Executive Summary, as follows.

**B.28 Key areas for action**

- Providing authorised sites to meet urgent short-term accommodation needs, until the Government's new policy framework can deliver permanent sites.
- Addressing the lack of political will across all levels of the political spectrum to tackle the existing widespread discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers.
- Integrating Gypsy and Traveller rights and needs into existing policies and mainstream services.
- Obtaining accurate and wide-ranging information to inform policy, counteract misinformation in the media and enable the sharing of good practice.
- Recognising the opportunities provided by working in partnership with Gypsy and Traveller communities, as well as social housing providers and landowners to improve the availability and choice of accommodation.

***Increasing the Supply of Accommodation***

B.29 Local authorities have a key part to play in the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, whether as a provider themselves or as the authorities responsible for granting planning permission on other providers' sites. A range of recommendations were put forward to increase the overall number of sites. These include:

- Local authorities should use Section 106 agreements to provide land or financial resources for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the same way as they are used to provide additional social housing. The Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA), Local Government Association (LGA) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) should

support this by disseminating good practice case studies as they become available;

- Local authorities should ensure that the planning process addresses the wider sustainability of sites in the same way it would for bricks and mortar accommodation. The process should address factors such as travel to work, access to services and public transport, amongst others, and not cause sites to be developed in areas which would not be acceptable for bricks and mortar accommodation due to environmental and health risks;
- Local authorities should involve Gypsies and Travellers early on in consultations of potential locations for sites;
- Local authorities should assist Gypsies and Travellers in the planning process by providing guidance from the early stage of site selection, through to providing assistance with submitting planning applications.

### ***Meeting Interim Accommodation Needs***

B.30 The Consultation supported the current direction of government policy, which should lead to provision of an adequate number of sites in the longer term. However, the process could take five or more years before additional sites become available.

B.31 As well as engaging positively with the current framework to ensure adequate provision of sites in the longer term, local authorities should take steps to ensure interim provision is as high as possible over the intervening period. It is therefore recommended that:

- Local authorities should consider alternative means of obtaining land for temporary use as a site, such as renting farmland from farmers. Local authorities could consider operating these in the summer months only, to ease the greater shortage at this time of the year, if they feel it would be easier to obtain agreement for this.

### ***Sending a Message***

B.32 Well-trained and well-equipped local authorities can promote understanding of Gypsies and Travellers in a wide variety of ways, through specific activities, through the local media, and by sending a message through the way they work.

B.33 It is important that there should be a widespread challenge to the media when its coverage is inflammatory, inaccurate or prejudicial, and that this should come from local authorities and Gypsies and Travellers, as well as bodies such as the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

B.34 One way in which negative reporting can be countered is by promoting positive stories particularly in the local press, where greater coverage can be given, as well as in the national farming press to highlight examples of mutually beneficial coexistence and cooperation. It is recommended that:

- Local authorities should ensure that responsibility for Gypsy and Traveller issues, at district or borough levels, falls within appropriate departments, such as Housing and/or Equality and Diversity Departments and not in Environmental/Public Health;
- Local authorities should respond to inaccurate reporting in the local media by seeking to put the record straight, as well as actively promoting positive stories;
- All public bodies should include Gypsy and Traveller issues within all their programmes of diversity training and cultural awareness-raising for all front line service providers, including social services staff;
- IDeA should initiate training, education and awareness-raising for councillors, including information on engagement with settled communities on the issues, especially site location. This should include creating a 'Councillors' Toolkit' to help inform elected members about Gypsy and Traveller issues;
- IDeA should disseminate good local authority practice in relation to Gypsies and Travellers; and
- establish a website with information and examples of good practice.
- Local authorities and schools should include Gypsies and Travellers within cultural events where diversity is celebrated.

### ***Partnership Working with Gypsies and Travellers***

B.35 Gypsies and Travellers are rarely involved in local decision-making. This is partly because they have little confidence in the process, but also because arrangements are rarely designed to include them and there is little direct recognition of their rights to be consulted. Gypsy and Traveller needs are assumed to be associated principally with sites, rather than the basic services provided for other members of the public. To help address these issues it is recommended that:

- Local authorities should create and facilitate Gypsy and Traveller Forums with high levels of Gypsy and Traveller participation to provide an opportunity to identify key needs and aspirations.
- Local authorities should seek to engage with Gypsies and Travellers in community consultation processes on all issues affecting their area, not just those that specifically relate to Gypsies and Travellers.
- Local public bodies should establish an inter-agency forum at a regional or sub-regional level, bringing together officers who work with Gypsies and Travellers from different organisations and departments to act as a support network, share best practice and coordinate service provision.
- Local authorities should ensure there is a Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Officer in every authority who is well trained and capable of building and maintaining positive relationships with the community, not just an enforcer.
- Mediation services, who are used to dealing with conflict between different parties, should, with
- appropriate training, offer their services when conflict arises between or within communities to help resolve the conflict.

### ***Recognising Rights***

- B.36 Gypsies and Travellers are entitled to the same rights as other British citizens, including the right to access services such as health, housing, education, welfare and criminal justice. Gypsies and Travellers have significantly lower average educational attainment and health indicators than the settled community and there is little recognition of their particular needs in accessing these services.
- B.37 Many of the barriers that Gypsies and Travellers face are due to the racism and discrimination that is still prevalent. The ability to counteract this is limited by a lack of information on a range of issues. For example, gathering data relating to Gypsy and Traveller ethnic status by the criminal justice system would enable greater clarity as to the extent to which Gypsies and Travellers are involved in criminal activity or experience hate crime. Only with firm evidence can the unsupported assertions of the national and local media be challenged. It is recommended that:
- Local authorities, health authorities and other relevant public bodies should provide information on their services in alternative formats where difficulties may be encountered due to poor literacy;

- Local authorities should ensure that their Equality Impact Assessment processes are robust and that Gypsies and Travellers are actively considered within them;
- All public authorities should include Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers as categories within all exercises where racial/ethnic data is gathered or monitored, including ethnic monitoring of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Local authorities should ensure that Sure Start programmes are accessible to those living on sites, placing a scheme on the site where appropriate; and
- Local Gypsy and Traveller groups with local authority Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Officers should develop and provide training/awareness-raising aimed at Gypsies and Travellers on the roles of police and social services departments and support Gypsies and Travellers to interact effectively with authority figures.

### **Planning and Travelling Showpeople Circular, DCLG, August 2007**

- B37 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the needs of Travelling Showpeople are incorporated into mainstream planning and housing plans, ensuring that their needs are considered within the context of local circumstances and helping mitigate the problems of unauthorised sites for both Travelling Showpeople and the wider community.
- B38 The Circular discusses three possible options, of which that preferred is to introduce better guidance to reflect recent changes to the planning system. This should help local authorities better to meet their responsibilities and facilitate more sites for Travelling Showpeople in appropriate locations. The guidance is intended to replace Circular 22/91 following the implementation of the Housing Act 2004 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- B39 The resulting policies are a significant material consideration in the drawing up of development plans and any planning cases involving Travelling Showpeople. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the needs of Travelling Showpeople are incorporated into mainstream planning and housing provision, thereby ensuring that their needs are considered within the context of local circumstances.

### **Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments, DCLG, October 2007**

B.40 The most recent DCLG Guidance sets out a detailed framework for designing, planning and carrying out Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessments. It includes the needs of Showpeople. It acknowledges that the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers are likely to differ from those of the rest of the population, and that they have hitherto been excluded from accommodation needs assessments. The guidance stresses the importance of understanding accommodation needs of the whole Gypsy and Traveller population, and that any studies obtain robust data. It recognises the difficulties of surveying this population and recommends the use of:

- Qualitative methods such as focus groups and group interviews
- Specialist surveys of those living on authorised sites who are willing to respond
- Existing information, including local authority site records and the twice-yearly caravan counts.

B.41 The Guidance recognises that there are challenges in carrying out these assessments, and accepts that while the approach should be as robust as possible it is very difficult exactly to quantify unmet need.

B.42 The Guidance defines Gypsies and Travellers as:

- persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or living in a caravan; and
- all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:
  - § such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently; and
  - § members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).

B.43 The stated intention of this definition is to cover all whose distinctive ethnicity, cultural background and/or lifestyle may give rise to specific accommodation needs, now or in the future, which need to be assessed and planned for.

## Glossary of Terms

The following abbreviations, words and phrases are used in this report and may need some explanation:

**Caravans** : Mobile living vehicles used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.

**CJ&POA** : Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Includes powers for Local Authorities and police to act against unauthorised encampments.

**CRE** : Commission for Racial Equality.

**CLG** : Department for Communities and Local Government; created in May 2006. Responsible for the remit on Gypsies and Travellers previously held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (O.D.P.M.).

**Gypsies and Travellers** : CLG Guidance (2007) suggests that the following definition of Gypsies and Travellers should be adopted for the purposes of the assessment:

- (d) Persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or living in a caravan;  
and
- (e) all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin,
- (f) including:
  - (i) such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently;  
and
  - (ii) members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).

**Irish Traveller** : Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in England. Irish Travellers have a distinct indigenous origin in Ireland and have been in England since the mid nineteenth century. They have been recognised as an ethnic group since August 2000 in England and Wales (O'Leary v Allied Domecq).

**Mobile home** : Legally a 'caravan' but not usually capable of being moved by towing.

**ODPM** : Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Central Government department with responsibility for housing, planning and gypsy site provision until the creation of the Department for Communities and Local Government in May 2006

**Pitch** : Area of land on a Gypsy/Traveller site occupied by one resident family. Sometimes referred to as a plot.

**Plot** : see pitch

**Roadside** : Term used here to indicate families on unauthorised encampments, whether literally on the roadside or on other locations such as fields, car parks or other open spaces.

**Romany** : Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in England. Romany Gypsies trace their ethnic origin back to migrations, probably from India, taking place at intervals since before 1500. Gypsies have been a recognised ethnic group for the purposes of British race relations legislation since 1988 (CRE V Dutton).

**RRA** : Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

**Sheds** : On most residential Gypsy/Traveller sites 'shed' refers to a small basic building with plumbing amenities (bath/shower, WC, sink), which are provided at the rate of one per plot. Some contain a cooker and basic kitchen facilities.



**Site** : An area of land laid out and used for Gypsy/Traveller caravans; often though not always comprising slabs and amenity blocks or 'sheds'. An authorised site will have planning permission. An unauthorised development lacks planning permission.

**Slab**: An area of concrete or tarmac on sites allocated to a household for the parking of trailers (caravans)

**Stopping places** : In this study, a term used to denote an unauthorised temporary camping area tolerated by Local Authorities, used by Gypsies and Travellers for short-term encampments, and sometimes with the provision of temporary toilet facilities, water supplies and refuse collection services.

**Trailers** : Term used for mobile living vehicles used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as caravans.

**Transit site** : A Gypsy site intended for short-term use while in transit. The site is usually permanent and authorised, but there is a limit on the length of time residents can stay.

**Unauthorised encampment** : Land where Gypsies or Travellers reside in vehicles or tents without permission. Unauthorised encampments can occur in a variety of locations (roadside, car parks, parks, fields, etc) and constitute trespass. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent.

**Unauthorised development** : Establishment of Gypsy sites without planning permission, usually on land owned by those establishing the site. Unauthorised development may involve ground works for roadways and hard standings.

**Wagons** : This is the preferred term for the vehicles used for accommodation by Showpeople.

**Yards** : Showpeople travel in connection with their work and therefore live, almost universally, in wagons. During the winter months these are parked up in what was traditionally known as 'winter quarters'. These 'yards' are now often occupied all year around by some family members.

