South Norfolk

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment

June 2014
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Opinion Research Services

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1. Introduction

The Survey

1.1 Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by South Norfolk Council in March 2014 to undertake a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA).

1.2 The study seeks to provide an evidence base to enable the Council to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012. The main objective of this study is to provide the Council with robust, defensible and up-to-date evidence about the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the study area until 2031 covering the financial years¹ 2014-2019, 2019-2024, 2024-2029 and 2029-2031. It will also seek to identify whether or not the Council needs to plan for the provision of permanent accommodation as well as transit sites or emergency stopping places.

1.3 We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

1.4 This document is the main report and summarises the key findings of the study, in particular where they relate to existing policies, or have implications for future policy decisions across the study area.

Definitions

1.5 For the purposes of the planning system, Gypsies and Travellers means:

*Persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.* (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), March 2012).

1.6 Within the main definition of Gypsies and Travellers, there are a number of main cultural groups which include:

- Romany Gypsies
- Irish Travellers
- New (Age) Travellers.

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¹ 01/04 – 31/03
Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2010.

Alongside Gypsies and Travellers, a further group to be considered is Travelling Showpeople. They are defined as:

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their family’s or dependant’s more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above. (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG, March 2012).

Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

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

- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- National Planning Policy Guidance 2012
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance October 2007
- The Human Rights Act 1998 (when making decisions and welfare assessments)
- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended)
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (both as victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour)
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Housing Act 2004 (which requires local housing authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople as part of their housing needs assessments. This study complies with this element of government guidance)

To focus on Gypsies and Travellers, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is particularly important with regard to the issue of planning for Gypsy and Traveller site provision. This repealed the duty of Local Authorities from the Caravans Act 1968 to provide appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. However, at this time Circular 1/94 did support maintaining existing sites and stated that appropriate future site provision should be considered.

For site provision, the previous Labour Government guidance focused on increasing site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and encouraged Local Authorities to have a more inclusive approach to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within their Housing Needs Assessment. The Housing Act 2004 Section 225 requires Local Authorities to identify the need for Gypsy
and Traveller sites, alongside the need for other types of housing, when conducting Housing Needs Surveys. Therefore, all Local Authorities were required to undertake accommodation assessments for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople either as a separate study such as this one, or as part of their main Housing Needs Assessment.

1.12 Local Authorities were encouraged rather than compelled to provide new Gypsy and Traveller sites by central Government. Circular 1/06 ‘Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites’, released by the CLG in January 2006, replaced Circular 1/94 and suggested that the provision of authorised sites should be encouraged so that the number of unauthorised sites would be reduced.

1.13 The Coalition Government announced that the previous Government’s guidance contained in Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (Circular 01/06) and Planning for Travelling Showpeople (Circular 04/07) was to be repealed, along with the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) which were used to allocate pitch provision to Local Authorities. The CLG published ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ in March 2012 which set out the Government’s planning policy for Traveller sites. It should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.14 More recently additional changes have been set out in a letter from the Planning Minister in March 2014. This clarified the Government’s position on household formation rates and stated:

‘Following the recent consolidation of planning guidance we will be seeking to consult on updating and streamlining the remaining elements of traveller planning practice guidance and also on strengthening traveller planning policy. We will ensure that any new guidance supports councils to accurately assess their needs and would remove ambiguous references to the 3% growth rate figure, which, I stress, is only illustrative. This would, once published, have the effect of cancelling the last Administration’s guidance.’

‘I can confirm that the annual growth rate figure of 3% does not represent national planning policy. The previous Administration’s guidance for local authorities on carrying out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments under the Housing Act 2004 is unhelpful in that it uses an illustrative example of calculating future accommodation need based on the 3% growth rate figure. The guidance notes that the appropriate rate for individual assessments will depend on the details identified in the local authority’s own assessment of need. As such the Government is not endorsing or supporting the 3% growth rate figure, though in some cases we are aware that inspectors have, in considering the level of unmet local need when demonstrating specific traveller appeals, used the 3% growth rate figure in the absence of a local authority’s own up-to-date assessment of need.’

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

1.15 The document ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ which came into force in March 2012 sets out the direction of government policy. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites is closely linked to the National Planning Policy Framework, but is to be viewed as a separate document. ORS have sought clarification of this relationship from CLG and have been told that Planning Policy for Traveller Sites should be viewed as effectively a separate document with little overlap. In particular, ORS queried paragraphs 47 and 159 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.16 Paragraph 47 states that local authorities should:
Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.

1.17 While paragraph 159 states local authorities should:

*Prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.*

1.18 We were informed by CLG that there was no requirement to implement these paragraphs in Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments because they are not in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. Similarly a Planning Inspector at a hearing in Wokingham has ruled that the requirement to have a buffer for land supply contained in paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework does not apply to Gypsy and Traveller sites because it is not in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. Therefore, it is clear that Planning Policy for Traveller Sites is best considered largely in isolation from the wider requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.19 Among other objectives, the aims of the policy in respect of Traveller sites are (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites Pages 1-2):

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

1.20 In practice, the document states that (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites Page 3):
Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

1.21 In producing their Local Plan local planning authorities should:

» Identify and annually update a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets.

» Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.

» Consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries).

» Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density.

» Protect local amenity and environment.

1.22 A key element to the new policies is a continuation of previous Government policies. Local Authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5 year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ also notes on Pages 3-4 that:

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

Tackling Inequalities for Gypsy and Traveller Communities

1.23 In April 2012 the Government issued a further document relating to Gypsies and Travellers titled ‘Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers’ (CLG April 2012).

1.24 The aforementioned report contains 28 commitments to help improve the circumstances and outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers across a range of areas including:

» Identifying ways of raising educational aspirations and attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

» Identifying ways to improve health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers within the proposed new structures of the NHS.

» Encouraging appropriate site provision; building on £60 million Traveller Pitch Funding and New Homes Bonus incentives.
» Tackling hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers and improving their interaction with the criminal justice system.
» Improving knowledge of how Gypsies and Travellers engage with services that provide a gateway to work opportunities, and working with the financial services industry to improve access to financial products and services.
» Sharing good practice in engagement between Gypsies and Travellers and public service providers.

**Funding**

1.25 The Coalition Government policies also involved financial incentives for new affordable pitch provision in the form of the New Homes Bonus. For all new pitches on Local Authority or Registered Provider-owned and managed sites, Local Authorities received a New Homes Bonus equivalent to Council Tax (based on the national average for a Band A property), plus an additional £350 per annum for six years. This equated to around £8,000 per pitch.

1.26 Direct grant funding was also available for Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) took over delivery of the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant programme from CLG in April 2009. Since then they have invested £16.3 million in 26 schemes across the country to provide 88 new or additional pitches and 179 improved pitches. The HCA welcomed bids from Local Authorities, Housing Associations and Traveller community groups working with Registered Providers.

1.27 The HCA has now confirmed allocations for all of its £60 million of future funding which will support 96 projects around the country for the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites and new pitches on existing sites, as well as the improvement of existing pitches. For the HCA 2015-18 Affordable Housing Programme there is no ring-fenced funding, but proposals for Gypsy and Traveller pitches will be considered within the programme. The table below shows the current allocation outside of London.

**Figure 1 - HCA Grant Allocations for New Pitches (Source: HCA)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Amount of money</th>
<th>Number of new pitches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East and South East</td>
<td>£6,218,381</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>£14,126,576</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East, Yorkshire and The Humber</td>
<td>£15,328,694</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>£3,850,763</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and South West</td>
<td>£16,713,954</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£56,238,368</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,099</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.28 While all HCA funds for Gypsy and Traveller pitches have now been allocated, further funding may become available as a result of slippage over the course of the programme. Local authorities and Registered Providers are advised to continue to work closely with HCA area teams to develop their proposals should any further funding become available as a result of some funded schemes not proceeding.
1.29 It is accepted that individual local authorities are likely to find it very difficult financially to provide the new sites that are identified in this study and other sources of funding should be considered, for example S106 funding that has been identified to fund the provision of new pitches in other local authorities, working closely with Registered Providers, and encouraging the development or expansion of other private sites or yards.
2. Methodology

2.1 This section sets out the methodology we have followed to deliver the outputs for this study. Over the past 10 years ORS has developed a methodology which provides the required outputs from a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment. This was updated in 2012 in light of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. The methodology was updated again to accommodate recent changes set out by the Planning Minister in March 2014 with particular reference to new household formation rates (see Paragraph 1.14 for further details).

2.2 The methodology also reflects changes that address some of the weaknesses that were identified in the methodology that was used to complete previous GTAA study in 2012 that covered South Norfolk. These included the following concerns:

- That the study only covered a 5 year period and was therefore not felt to be compliant with new guidance and policy.
- A regional emphasis in the analysis and reporting of the findings did not support local decisions on site location.
- The use of a nationally-applied 3.00% new household formation rate did not take account of local circumstances in South Norfolk.
- Extrapolation of a new household formation base figure from the interview sample was not robust.
- Scaling up of the household survey findings assuming comparable household demographics did not take full account of local circumstances.
- The use of a lengthy household interview form may have resulted in inaccurate survey results.
- That no desk-based assessment was completed of secondary data sources.
- That no engagement was undertaken with Council Officers, neighbouring local authorities or other local stakeholders.

2.3 The stages below provide a summary of the revised methodology that was used by ORS to complete the new study. More information on each stage is provided in the appropriate sections of this report.

Stage 1: Desk-Based Research

2.4 At the outset of the project ORS sought to understand the background to the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in the study area. This comprised the collation of a range of important secondary data from the following available sources:

- Census data.
» Details of all authorised public and private sites and yards.
» Site management records.
» Waiting lists.
» Biannual Traveller Caravan Counts.
» Records of any unauthorised sites and encampments.
» Relevant information from planning, housing, education, community safety, environmental health and health services.
» Information on planning applications and appeals – including those that have recently been refused and those awaiting determination.
» Information on any other current enforcement actions.
» Existing GTAAs and other relevant local studies.
» Existing policy, guidance and best practice.

2.5 This data has been used to inform the stakeholder interviews and fieldwork and has also been analysed in conjunction with the outcomes of the other elements of the study to allow ORS to complete a thorough review of the needs of travelling communities in the study area.

Stage 2: Stakeholder Engagement

2.6 This study included extensive local stakeholder engagement. This involved a series of telephone depth-interviews with Council officers from Planning, Planning Policy; Housing/Housing Advice; Housing Strategy and Enabling; Equalities; and Planning Enforcement.

2.7 Interviews were conducted with a range of other local stakeholders including the NPS Group; Norfolk Traveller Education Services; Norfolk Gypsy and Traveller and Roma Liaison Service; Norfolk Integrated Community Health and Social Care Commissioning Team; Norfolk Community Relations and Equalities; Leeway Housing Support; Norfolk Police; and Norfolk Fire Service.

2.8 In addition interviews were conducted with a range of Registered Providers responsible for the provision of housing in the area, as well as the managers of the two public sites in South Norfolk. Other providers included Orbit East; Saffron Housing Trust; Cotman Housing; Stonham; Sanctuary Housing Group; Metropolitan; and Broadland Housing.

2.9 In addition ORS conducted telephone interviews with representative groups of the Gypsy and Traveller community, including the Showmen’s Guild and the Association of Independent Showmen as part of the stakeholder consultation process, as well as site managers for the public sites.

2.10 The stakeholder interviews covered the following key topics:
» What dealings or relationships people have with Gypsies and Travellers
» Experiences of any particular issues in relation to Gypsies and Travellers
» Awareness of any Gypsy and Traveller sites either with or without planning permission and whether this varies over the course of a year
» Any trends people may be experiencing with regard to Gypsies and Travellers (e.g. increase in privately owned sites or temporary sites)
» What attracts Gypsies & Travellers to an area
» Identification of any seasonal fluctuations that may occur
» Awareness of any occurrences of temporary stopping by travellers
» Identifying the relationship between the settled and travelling communities
» Awareness of any travellers currently residing in bricks and mortar accommodation
» Awareness of any cross boundary issues
» Any other comments on the Gypsy and Traveller community in the study area

Stage 3: Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities

Given the duty to cooperate, interviews were also conducted with officers from neighbouring authorities and any other authorities where we identified a direct link with the needs of the study area – for example wider travelling routes etc. These authorities make up the neighbouring local planning authorities and wider housing market area. These interviews ensure that the GTAA addresses wider issues that may impact on the outcomes of the study. These stakeholders were identified as part of the desk-based review and in conjunction with officers from the Council. Interviews were conducted with officers from the following neighbouring authorities and covered the same broad issues as the local stakeholder interviews:

» Norwich
» Broadland
» Breckland
» North Norfolk
» Great Yarmouth
» Waveney
» Mid Suffolk
» Broads Authority

Stage 4: Survey of Travelling Communities

Through the desk-based research and stakeholder interviews ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments in the study area. This work identified 2 public sites, a new transit site owned by the Council that opened in late spring 2014, a total of 11 private sites with permanent planning permission, 1 private site with temporary planning permission and 8 unauthorised encampments – 4 of which are tolerated. One small Travelling Showpeople yard was also identified. The location of these sites is shown on the map below, and full details of the sites and yards can be found in Appendix A.
ORS sought to undertake a full demographic study of all pitches as part of our approach to undertaking the GTAA as our experience suggests that a sample based approach very often leads to an under-estimate of current and future needs which can be the subject of challenge at subsequent appeals and examinations. All pitches (including those on current unauthorised sites that were present at the time of the study) were visited by experienced ORS researchers who conducted interviews with residents on as many pitches as possible to determine their current demographic characteristics, whether they have any current or likely future accommodation needs and how these may be addressed, and whether there are any concealed households. The interview was based around an approach that was agreed with the Council. This approach also allowed the interviewers to identify information about the sites and pitches that could help support any future work on possible site expansion by undertaking an overall assessment of each pitch/site.

Where it was not possible to undertake an interview, our researchers captured as much information as possible about the site from site management or from residents on adjacent sites or pitches.

All of the site fieldwork was undertaken week beginning 7th April 2014 and researchers were able to conduct interviews, or obtain information, for households on all of the sites in the study area, including interviews with the unauthorised sites and encampments. Additional site visits were made to additional sites that were identified during the fieldwork period.
Stage 5: Bricks and Mortar Households

In our experience many Planning Inspectors and Appellants question the accuracy of GTAA assessments in relation to those Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation who may wish to move on to a site. ORS feel that the only practical approach is to go to disproportionate lengths to identify as many households in bricks and mortar who may want to take part in an interview to determine their future accommodation needs, including a wish to move to a permanent pitch in the study area.

Contacts in bricks and mortar were sought through a wide range of sources including speaking with people living on existing sites to identify any friends or family living in bricks and mortar who may wish to move to a site, intelligence from the Council and other local stakeholders. In addition contacts were sought during the stakeholder interviews with Registered Housing Providers. Adverts were also place on the Friends, Families and Travellers Community Website and in the World’s Fair publication.

Officers and Registered Providers were unable to provide information regarding Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople who may be living in bricks and mortar accommodation and who may wish to move into the South Norfolk area. One officer from a neighbouring authority knew of one family in their area living in bricks and mortar accommodation. A letter from ORS was given to the local authority to pass to this contact to see if they would contact ORS independently to be interviewed – this did not elicit a response.

As a result of this we were unable to identify any contact in bricks and mortar to interview.

However through our approach we endeavoured to do everything within our means to publicise that a local study was being undertaken in order to give all households living in bricks and mortar who may wish to move on to a site the opportunity to make their views known to us.

As a rule we do not extrapolate the findings from our fieldwork with Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar households up to the estimated Gypsy and Traveller bricks and mortar population as a whole, and work on the assumption that those wishing to move will make their views known to us based on the wide range of publicity that we put in place.

Stage 6: Current and Future Pitch/Plot Requirements

The methodology used by ORS to calculate future pitch and plot requirements has been developed over the past 10 years and has drawn on lessons from both traditional housing needs assessments and also best and worst practice from Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments conducted across the country.

To identify need Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires an assessment for current and future pitch requirements, but does not provide a methodology for this. However, as with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future needs of the population. The key factors in each of these elements are set out below and will be set out in more detail in the relevant chapter of this report:

2 Copies of these adverts can be found in Appendix B of this report
Supply of Pitches

» Current vacant pitches.
» Pitches currently with planning consent due to be developed within the study period.
» Pitches vacated by people moving to housing.
» Pitches vacated by people moving from the study area.
» Pitches vacated due to the dissolution of households.

Current Need

2.24 Total current need, which is not necessarily the need for additional pitches because they may be able to be addressed by space available in the study area, is made up of the following. It is important to address issues of double counting:

» Households on unauthorised sites for which planning permission is not expected.
» Concealed households.
» Households in B&M wishing to move to sites.
» Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Future Need

2.25 Total future need is the sum of the following three components:

» Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions.
» New household formation.
» In-migration.

2.26 Household formation rates are often the subject of challenge at appeals or examinations. While many GTAA studies undertaken by other companies have continued to use a net growth figure of 3%, we agree with the position now being taken by CLG and firmly believe that any household formation rates should use a robust local evidence base, rather than simply relying on precedent. This is set out in more detail later in Chapter 6 of this report.

2.27 All of these components of supply and need are presented in easy to understand tables which identify the overall net requirements for current and future accommodation for both Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This has proven to be a robust model for identifying needs. The residential and transit pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers are identified separately from those for Travelling Showpeople and for each group the requirements are identified in 5 year periods to 2029, and a final 2 year period to 2031.

Stage 7: Conclusions

2.28 This stage of the study will draw together the evidence from Stages 1 to 6 to provide an overall summary of the requirements for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in South Norfolk.
3. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Population

Sites in South Norfolk

3.1 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) focuses upon the number of dwellings required in an area, and how many of these should each be provided by the public and private sector. The central aim of this study was to follow a similar format for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation requirements.

3.2 One of the main considerations of this study is the provision of pitches and sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. A pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for one or two caravans, but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers. For Travelling Showpeople, the most common descriptions used are a plot for the space occupied by one household and a yard for a collection of plots which are typically exclusively occupied by Travelling Showpeople. Throughout this study the main focus is upon how many extra pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople are required in South Norfolk.

3.3 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of a Gypsy and Traveller site is the publicly-provided residential site, which is provided by a Local Authority or by a Registered Provider (usually a Housing Association). Pitches on public sites can be obtained through signing up to a site preference list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the licensees (similar to social housing).

3.4 The alternative to public residential sites are private residential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on existing private sites. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing. Generally the majority of Travelling Showpeople yards are privately owned and managed.

3.5 The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population also has other forms of sites due to its mobile nature. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a maximum period of residence which can vary from a few days or weeks to a period of months. An alternative to a transit site is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time someone can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities. Both of these two types of site are designed to accommodate, for a temporary period, Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople whilst they travel. A number of authorities also operate an accepted encampments policy where short-term stopovers are tolerated without enforcement action.
Further considerations for the Gypsy and Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers or with the approval of the land owner, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential purposes. Unauthorised encampments occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers.

In South Norfolk there are 2 public residential sites; 11 private residential sites; and a new transit site that opened in late spring 2014. There are currently no emergency stopping places in South Norfolk. A total of 8 unauthorised encampments were identified during the study period, 4 of which are classified as tolerated. These provide a total of 74 residential pitches in South Norfolk as of April 2014. One small Travelling Showpeople yard was also identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private sites</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sites with temporary planning permission</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sites not occupied by Gypsies and Travellers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Private Sites</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sites (Council and Registered Providers)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorised Sites (6 pitches tolerated)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (Excluding Travelling Showpeople yard)</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Caravan Count

One source of information available on the Gypsy and Traveller population derives from the bi-annual Traveller Caravan Count which is conducted by each Local Authority in England on a specific date in January and July of each year, and reported to CLG. This is a statistical count of the number of caravans on both authorised and unauthorised sites across England. With effect from July 2013, CLG has renamed the ‘Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count’ as the ‘Traveller Caravan Count.’ This does not reflect any changes to the coverage of the count but brings its title into line with the terminology used for planning policy purposes. It is also consistent with the fact that its scope is wider than caravans lived in by ethnic gypsies and travellers, but also includes non-traditional travellers.

As this count is of caravans and not households, it makes it more difficult to interpret for a study such as this because it does not count pitches or resident households. It must also be remembered that the count is merely a ‘snapshot in time’ conducted by the Local Authority on a specific day, and that any unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates will not be recorded. Likewise any caravans that are away from authorised sites on the day of the count will not be included.

The chart below shows the number of unauthorised and authorised caravans in South Norfolk at the time of the counts in January and July each year from 2008 to 2013. Please note the figures are provided for illustrative purposes to demonstrate the relative size of the populations and are not used in any modelling of future pitch requirements. A count has also been completed of Travelling Showpeople caravans each January since 2011 (this group are usually travelling in July). No Travelling Showpeople caravans have been
recorded in South Norfolk in any of these counts, even though there is one small Travelling Showpeople yard.

It can be seen from the chart that the number of unauthorised caravans has decreased significantly from a peak of over 100 in July 2008 to a recorded figure of 15 in July 2013. Conversely the number of authorised caravans has steadily increased over the same period of time.

Figure 3
Gypsy Caravan Count for South Norfolk: July 2008–July 2013 (Source: CLG Traveller Caravan Count)
4. Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

4.1 To be consistent with the guidance set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites and the methodology used in other GTAA studies that ORS have completed, a process of stakeholder engagement was undertaken. The purpose of this was to provide thoughtful consideration of the issues by a wide range of key stakeholders using in-depth telephone interviews. Qualitative research of this type attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and is used to supplement the information gathered during visits to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites.

4.2 To enable ORS to identify key stakeholders, the Council were asked to identify contacts which included Registered Providers, Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople representatives, support services, and relevant Council officers from Housing, Planning, Environmental Health and Human Resources. Neighbouring authorities were also contacted.

4.3 The aim of interviewing neighbouring authorities was to satisfy the Duty to Co-operate and to identify any migration between districts, what routes may be travelled, background information on the framework within which the authorities operate and any perceptions they may have regarding Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities within their own areas.

4.4 Wider stakeholders included the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Service (Norfolk and Suffolk), Norfolk Constabulary, the Association of Independent Showmen, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, Community Relations and Equalities Board (Norfolk County Council), Leeway, the Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain, Integrated Health and Social Care Commissioning Team (Norfolk County Council), NPS Group, Roundwell Site Warden, and the following Registered Providers (RPs).

» Broadland Housing Association;  » Saffron Housing Trust;
» Cotman Housing Association;  » Sanctuary Housing Group Ltd;
» Metropolitan;    » Stonham.
» Orbit East;

4.5 ORS completed a total of 35 interviews during March and April which comprised:

» 6 Officers from South Norfolk.
» 12 Officers from neighbouring authorities.3
» 17 other stakeholders.

4.6 The map overleaf shows the local authorities that were interviewed.

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3 Neighbouring authorities: Breckland District Council, Broadland District Council, Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Norwich City Council, North Norfolk District Council and Waveney District Council (with Suffolk Coastal).
In addition to wider information all interviewees were asked whether they could identify or knew any Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar accommodation and if so, could they give a letter from ORS to them asking if they would like to be involved in the study.

RPs, together with other organisations, were unable to provide much data through their monitoring systems on Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar. The reasons given for not being able to identify households were due to people not self-declaring their ethnicity during the housing application process or that it was not possible to identify this information from administrative records.

Due to issues around data protection and in order to protect the confidentiality of those who took part, this chapter does not include verbatim comments and it aims to represent a summary of the views and responses expressed by Officers and other stakeholders during the interviews.

The comments may, in some places, be representative of personal views and opinions and not necessarily the views of the organisation the interviewee works for. Some respondents also noted that at times their reply is based on a Norfolk-wide experience and not specifically to South Norfolk but note is made of this.

The chapter is based on information provided during the interview process and may not have a direct correlation to the factual information passed to ORS from the local authority e.g. number and names of sites.
Policy and Strategy

4.12 Those interviewed felt that South Norfolk have taken a positive approach to meet the needs identified in the Greater Norwich Sub Region GTAA which was undertaken by ORS in 2012. Progress has been made in relation to the delivery of sites through planning permissions for private sites and the creation of a new transit site. The majority of interviewees believe that South Norfolk has led Norfolk for a number of years with regard to providing sites and raising awareness in relation to Gypsies and Travellers.

4.13 Officers from South Norfolk referred to the preparation of a new Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan to identify a supply of deliverable sites and developable sites or broad locations for new sites, and that this GTAA study is part of the commitment to the new plan.

4.14 Officers from neighbouring areas confirmed the following about the current status of their GTAAs:

» Breckland District Council – GTAA undertaken 2014 which indicated there is a small need for additional public provision;

» Broads Authority – The Broads Authority is not a housing authority and therefore does not have to undertake a GTAA nor provide accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. The Broads Authority as a planning authority could enable the provision of sites in its area if there is evidence of need and suitable sites are identified;

» Broadland District Council – Undertook a GTAA as part of the Greater Norwich Sub Region in August 2012 which resulted in a small pitch provision being required that would likely be met through private provision. Since then the Council has continued to consult on options for sites through the Council’s site allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Council’s Development Management policies;

» Great Yarmouth Borough Council – The needs of Gypsies and Travellers has been updated as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) published in 2012. A small need had been identified in the Single Issue Review of the East of England Plan (EiP) and that need has been met through the expansion of an existing site.

» Mid Suffolk District Council – Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, working in conjunction with Ipswich Borough, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils, commissioned ORS to deliver an up-to-date assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in those parts of Suffolk during the period to 2027. An update of the Council’s GTAA was undertaken in 2013 which identified a need for an additional 38 pitches to 2027.

» North Norfolk District Council – The Council has an adopted Core Strategy including a criteria based Development Management Policy HO4. As the former Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) annualised targets identified a small target for North Norfolk the Council has not felt it necessary to undertake an updated GTAA, but have met need through the development of two temporary stopping places in Cromer and Fakenham and through private windfall sites;

» Norwich City Council – A Greater Norwich GTAA was undertaken in 2012 which identified a need for an additional 8 pitches. The Council is seeking to work with neighbouring authorities to help identify suitable sites to meet needs, as part of a Greater Norwich Sub-regional approach although discussions have yet to take place;

» Waveney District Council – the Council, working in conjunction with Suffolk Coastal, Babergh, Mid Suffolk District Councils and Ipswich Borough councils commissioned ORS to deliver an up-to-date assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and
Travelling Showpeople in those parts of Suffolk during the period to 2027. An update of the Council’s GTAA was undertaken in 2013 which identified a need for an additional 10 pitches to 2027.

Population and Accommodation Need

4.15 South Norfolk is considered to be an area that has a greater number of Gypsies and Travellers than most areas in Norfolk. Gypsies and Travellers living in the area are reportedly local and less transient. There are one or two families/individuals that move between South Norfolk, Breckland and North Norfolk or between South Norfolk and Mid Suffolk.

4.16 There are a number of unauthorised encampments during the year but they are not considered to be a major problem in the area. Some respondents were of the view that the transit site that opened in May 2014 will provide a facility for those who are transient in the area.

4.17 Interviewees were asked their opinion on the extent of the accommodation need within South Norfolk based on the following:

- Current site provision;
- Bricks and mortar accommodation;
- Long term unauthorised/tolerated developments; and
- Unauthorised encampments.

Current Site Provision

Public Site Provision

4.18 There are two public sites in South Norfolk – one in Costessey known as The Roundwell (18 pitches) and one in Harford Bridge called Brooks Green (8 pitches). The majority of those interviewed were of the view that the two public sites are well managed, provide good facilities and meet the needs of residents. They also said that because of the popularity of the public sites pitches rarely become available as those living on the sites wish to remain.

4.19 However the following concerns were highlighted by those who were interviewed:

- Compared to Brooks Green, the Roundwell site is thought to be in need of updating;
- The sites are always full and there is an active waiting list;
- Pitch turnover on both sites is considered to be low;
- There are some issues for residents in relation to recent benefit capping;
- There are others (including non-Gypsies or Travellers) wishing to move to sites because of finding themselves homeless.

4.20 Based on the information provided by Stakeholders, ORS concludes that the public sites in South Norfolk are meeting the needs of residents, but that there is low turnover and a waiting list for pitches which would indicate a need for further site provision.

4.21 Officers in neighbouring authorities referred to the following authorised public sites in their areas:
» Breckland District Council – The Splashes, Swaffham (23 pitches + 1 warden pitch) public site managed by Norfolk County Council;
» Broads Authority – The Broads Authority do not have any sites in their area as far as they are aware;
» Great Yarmouth Borough Council – The Council owns the land at Gapton Hall and the site is managed by NPS Group. The site can accommodate 15 permanent and 9 transit pitches and the site warden is from the Travelling Community;
» North Norfolk District Council – The Council has provided two temporary stopping places, one in Cromer and the other in Fakenham. The temporary stopping places can each provide 10 pitches. The land is in private ownership and leased to the Council for 15-20 years – the sites are not in frequent use;
» Norwich City Council – Mile Cross, Swanton Road (23 pitches – 3 currently unoccupied). The land is owned by the Council and the site is managed by Norfolk County Council. The site was extended by 3 pitches in 2011;
» Waveney District Council – one public site owned by the Council at Kessingland (24 pitches) which is leased and managed privately.

4.22 The general consensus of Officers from neighbouring authorities was that the public sites in their areas are, in the majority of cases, meeting the needs of residents. Some of the public sites in neighbouring authorities also have small waiting lists for pitches. No current issues in relation to anti-social behaviour or community cohesion were raised.

Private Site Provision

4.23 Within South Norfolk a large number of sites are privately owned and managed accommodating 38 pitches (each site being between 1-8 pitches) for family groups and friends.

4.24 The majority of those interviewed had limited knowledge of private sites and therefore gave a balance of views as to their condition and suitability, and were unable to comment on the extent to which the provision is meeting the needs of current residents.

4.25 The view was that the condition of private sites varies because some owners have money to buy the land, gain planning permission and provide the necessary infrastructure, whilst others will have enough money to buy land and gain planning permission, but not enough money left to invest in the infrastructure.

4.26 Officers in neighbouring authorities referred to the following levels of private sites in their areas:
» Breckland District Council – There are 14 small family owned sites usually for personal use, but on some sites plots are rented out to other Gypsies or Travellers;
» Broads Authority – The Broads Authority do not have any sites in their area as far as they are aware;
» Broadland District Council – There are a number of small, privately owned sites in the area mainly to the north west of the district;
» Mid Suffolk District Council – There are 16 private authorised sites in the District (including one which has a 4 year temporary permission), that can accommodate over 100 caravans;
4.27 The view was that generally private sites in Norfolk meet the needs of residents. However, the following observations were made:

- Some private sites may not always meet the needs of residents because of community cohesion issues between family members;
- There are problems for Gypsies and Travellers when applying for planning permission for new sites in terms of complaints or objections from the settled community.

4.28 Although it was noted that in some areas in Norfolk there are difficulties in obtaining planning permission for private sites, it was agreed that this has improved over the years. It is often the case that despite objections by the settled community when planning applications for new sites are submitted, once the sites have been established there are few complaints and those living on the sites do become integrated into the community.

**Travelling Showpeople**

4.29 Those interviewed were not aware of any Travelling Showpeople sites in South Norfolk and no issues were raised. Officers in neighbouring authorities referred to the following yards for Travelling Showpeople:

- Breckland District Council - 3 private yards in their area for Travelling Showpeople;
- Norwich City Council - 2 private yards for Travelling Showpeople; one yard is managed by the Showmen’s Guild and the other is privately owned and managed. One stakeholder argued that both these yards are full to capacity with no scope for family growth;
- Mid Suffolk District Council - 1 private mixed site is for both Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople with capacity for 22 caravans.

4.30 ORS has experience of working across the UK with regard to GTAAs and representatives of Travelling Showpeople have confirmed that their yards are often overcrowded and this has often been substantiated through site visits. Travelling Showpeople and their representatives have told us they prefer to expand existing yards rather than seek new yards if at all possible. It is therefore believed unlikely that Travelling Showpeople living in yards in neighbouring authority areas will wish to find new sites in the South Norfolk area if needed, but this is not based on local evidence.

**Unauthorised Developments/Temporary Permission**

4.31 South Norfolk has a low level of unauthorised developments and there is one site with temporary planning permission until 2015; the view was that this site is meeting the needs of residents.

4.32 Officers from neighbouring authorities referred to the following list of sites being in their area that have temporary permission or are unauthorised developments:

- Breckland District Council – two unauthorised tolerated sites;
- North Norfolk District Council – A private authorised site was given retrospective temporary planning for two additional pitches for 3 years;
- Mid Suffolk District Council has one site which has temporary planning permission for 4 years.
4.33 Interviewees generally held the view that unauthorised developments or sites with temporary planning permission do not generally meet the needs of residents. The basis for this is that there is no permanency or legality for owners to risk financial investment in a site; there can be hostility from the settled community; issues around sanitation; and potential difficulties in accessing education and health services.

Roadside Encampments

4.34 Roadside encampments do not regularly occur in South Norfolk. When encampments do occur it was thought to be because:

» There are historical links to the area;
» A pitch had become available on a public site in South Norfolk;
» The encampment is a local Gypsy or Traveller family who are known to be transient in the area and do not wish to settle;
» There are not enough pitches in South Norfolk;
» They are travelling through the area for work.

4.35 Those interviewed generally acknowledged that the number of roadside encampments in South Norfolk has decreased over recent years, although there have been recent encampments in Queens Hill, Costessey and last year there was a prominent encampment in Newton Flotman. Diss was also referred to as being an area where encampments had occurred in the past.

4.36 When asked about tolerated sites in the area, South Norfolk Officers referred to 2 sites (Needham and Stockton) each accommodating one pitch being tolerated, although it is unknown whether either site meets the needs of those living on them.

Transit Provision

4.37 The first transit site in South Norfolk recently opened in Bawburgh and accommodates 6 pitches. The new site is kept locked and access can be arranged by telephoning the key holder. The facilities on the site include a water supply and portable toilets will be provided whilst the site is occupied but residents need to provide their own electricity. The maximum stay on the site is 3 months. As the site has recently opened there was no feedback as to whether the site is meeting residents needs or not.

4.38 It was felt during the interviews that the transit site has been needed for many years and this need had been identified in the Council’s last GTAA; the view was the new transit site should decrease the number of unauthorised encampments. However it was noted that there are transit sites in other areas that are under occupied and rarely used.

4.39 ORS recommend that in order to be able to understand the value of the new transit site, it will be imperative for the Council to implement mechanisms to monitor the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of it.
Bricks and Mortar

4.40 There was awareness of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are living in bricks and mortar accommodation in South Norfolk although there was little evidence identified in the last GTAA. Interviewees suggested that these communities would not wish to take part in the GTAA because:

» They would not wish to identify themselves;
» They are happy living in bricks and mortar accommodation;
» They are suspicious of those in authority;
» Their views have been sought in the past and they are unsure as to what changes have been made;
» There is concern as to how and what the information will be used for.

4.41 Respondents had mixed views as to whether bricks and mortar accommodation meets the needs of Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. These views included females, especially those with children, may be more inclined to live in bricks and mortar accommodation because children will be more able to regularly attend school, improved access to health and other local amenities, and that bricks and mortar housing may be considered more sustainable and secure. It was also suggested that research has been undertaken nationally that concludes that some Gypsies and Travellers can have difficulties in adjusting to living in a house because it can affect their mental health.

Trends, Favoured Locations and Stopping Points

4.42 When asked to consider trends in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople interviewees were of the view there are few significant trends and the situation largely remains static in South Norfolk and in Norfolk generally. Some interviewees referred to an increase in the number of successful planning applications for private sites and that in some cases applications are now being received from second-generation Gypsies or Travellers. This could be an indication that these communities are becoming more confident with the planning system and although the majority of applications are still submitted retrospectively, this is not always the case.

4.43 There was some evidence to suggest that Gypsies and Travellers have higher expectations in relation to the quality, type of services they wish to receive and/or the facilities they wish to have on sites; these expectations are higher than those of the older generation from these communities and at times this is hard for officers to achieve and deliver.

4.44 Based on what interviewees told ORS slight changes with regard to Gypsies and Travellers were identified over recent years, although these are not considered to be an indication of trends that could shape the future:

» Fewer Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople appear to be applying for or asking advice with regard to bricks and mortar accommodation;
» The number of encampments, especially during the summer months, and unauthorised developments appears to be have declined over recent years;
» Gypsies and Travellers appear to be less transient than in the past;
In South Norfolk there appears to be more political will and understanding that any need should be met;

There has been a decrease in funding for housing support for these communities although all funding for housing support in Norfolk has been cut;

There has been an increase in confidence by Gypsies and Travellers in relation to submitting planning applications even though these often go to appeal;

There has been an increase in Gypsies or Travellers buying land collectively because of land values;

Members of these communities are more likely to access domestic violence services during the summer months;

There tends to be less respect shown by Gypsies and Travellers for those in authority, especially those who are on roadside encampments and they are unlikely to abide by the Code of Conduct.

When asked about locations favoured by Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople, the following areas were identified:

- Diss;
- Costessey;
- Norwich fringe;
- Thetford;
- Norfolk coast;
- Great Yarmouth (town);
- A148 corridor;
- Cromer;
- Sheringham;
- A140;
- Waveney Valley;
- Harford Bridge;
- A11;
- Swaffham;
- Wingfield Green;
- Barnham Cross Common.

With regard to Travelling Showpeople it was reported that they are travelling less and using their yards all year round and not just for winter quarters. Suggested reasons for these changes included increases in fuel prices, the change in the general public’s use of money and leisure time and changes from traditional fair events in Spring to early Autumn to specific occasions such as Bonfire Night and Christmas. This could mean that Travelling Showpeople may want to expand their yards because more will want to stay on a permanent basis rather than travelling.

New Site Criteria

Interviewees highlighted criteria they felt should be considered when deciding on an appropriate location for a Gypsy and Traveller site, responses are ordered by frequency:

- Sites should be near local services and facilities such as shops, GPs/health services, public transport and schools;
- Sites should have access to services and facilities such as water, sanitation, rubbish collection and electricity;
- Sites should be accessible to local road networks without causing safety issues;
- Effective consultation should be undertaken with Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople and the settled community on any proposed sites;
» Sites should be well screened, have adequate parking, storage, space to keep livestock, space for turning and servicing vehicles on site;
» Sites should be located in areas where Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople will use them and want to live, but be sufficiently far enough away from local residents;
» Sites should have sufficient access and space for emergency vehicles, articulated lorries and storing equipment (especially relevant to Travelling Showpeople);
» Sites should be in reasonable proximity to other residential areas and not located in rural areas where residents can become isolated;
» An impact assessment should be undertaken in relation to constraints on any proposed site such as flood risk and contamination - any proposed site needs to suit the local environment and community in order to be sustainable.
» Sites should be located sensitively away from local residents because of any noise disturbance, but close enough to facilities because of the cost of fuel and travelling time;
» Reference should be made to government guidance, National Planning Policy Guidance, existing criteria based policies and emerging policies such as South Norfolk Council’s DM3.4;
» Sites need to meet specific legal legislation such as the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

**Site Location**

4.48 National guidance is to locate sites in existing communities and close to facilities, however in practice this is hard to achieve. Interviewees were asked to consider potential locations for new sites within South Norfolk. It was evident from the response and also experience of conducting GTAA’s elsewhere that there is generally a reluctance to provide potential site locations on the basis that few have detailed knowledge on land availability or suitability in the area of concern. Those who gave an answer suggested the following locations, responses are ordered by frequency:

» Costessey;
» Diss;
» A140 (for a transit site);
» Norwich fringe;
» The A11 corridor;
» Close to the Waveney Valley (the border between South Norfolk Council/Waveney District Council, as the site in Waveney District Council’s area is not near to South Norfolk
» Wingfield Green.

4.49 Some interviewees appreciated that Costessey and Diss are favoured locations. Costessey has a public site and is an area where encampments have historically occurred; therefore this perhaps demonstrates a wish for these communities to live in the area. Diss has also, over the years, had a number of encampments and therefore locating a public site in the Diss area could meet an element of need from those that border hop to Mid Suffolk and those travelling through the Waveney Valley.
Future Accommodation Needs

4.50 The general views of those who were interviewed is that there is demand for further site provision in South Norfolk and the consensus was there is a need for more permanent sites and that these should be met through public and private provision.

4.51 Reasons put forward as to why more sites are needed included the belief that existing public sites are full and there is evidence of encampments and tolerated sites. In terms of the type of sites needed views were based on the belief that residents living on the public sites are more likely to be in receipt of benefits and unable to purchase their own site; those who can afford to purchase land will do so; and provision of sites should be meeting identified need in the same way as those who cannot afford to buy a house such as the option of affordable housing.

4.52 Some officers responding from neighbouring authorities reported there is a small need in their areas for additional sites and some need would be met from private sites. In some areas small private sites managed by a specific family have proven to be successful and there tend to be fewer social issues and less call on public funds than those provided through the public sector.

4.53 Additional sites or the expansion of existing sites are all likely to have their own unique challenges including opposition from local residents. Although a need for sites can often be evidenced, meeting such need in terms of finding a suitable site that is an appropriate size, that will meet the necessary planning criteria, and is available and affordable will often be the biggest challenge for local authorities especially where land is of a premium.

4.54 The issue of future transit provision divided opinion. Some interviewees were of the view there is little or no demand for further provision in the area because of the new transit site; the decrease in the number of unauthorised encampments; and that additional transit provision may not be used because some people do not like to be told where and what to do. Some interviewees suggested that should additional transit sites be required a good location would be along the A140 and/or available only during the summer months. It was also suggested there is a need for a network of transit sites across Norfolk and the responsibility and use of the sites could be a shared resource.

4.55 As previously suggested in this report effective monitoring by South Norfolk Council of the new transit site will provide evidence as to whether a further transit site is required and carrying out consultation with those that use the facility will help to inform the Council as to whether one is needed and if so, where it could be located.

4.56 Those interviewed did not give a view as to whether there is a need for more yards for Travelling Showpeople in South Norfolk. However it was suggested that the two Travelling Showpeople sites in Norwich are full to capacity and have no scope for family growth within them. The sites are also very old and the families have outgrown them to a degree. Although both sites are well established in the local community, expansion within the vicinity would be the ideal solution; whether residents would want to relocate to South Norfolk is not known.
Site Ownership and Management

4.57 When asked about site ownership the majority of those interviewed did not give a view. Those who did believed that as long as sites are well managed it does not matter who is managing them although some suggested that third parties such as RPs are in a better position to develop and manage sites as opposed to private site owners. The reasons given for this were that RPs are knowledgeable about rent and benefit changes and have an ability to access funding streams. In addition to this site provision becomes part of an affordable housing portfolio. It was also suggested that alternative or different models of management such as co-operatives managing sites together could be developed. By involving more people it may be possible to have greater engagement and a balance of views rather than a choice between private or public management.

4.58 Travelling Showpeople do prefer to own and manage their own sites and do not often wish for public provision. However, although not wishing to be provided for, it is understood they may wish to work in partnership with local authorities in order to assist in the planning process to expand existing sites and if this is not possible to help identify appropriate new sites as a last resort (this is not specific to South Norfolk).

4.59 Information gathered from GTAAs across the country suggests there is no right or wrong way for sites to be owned or managed. Although some would argue that sites are better managed by Gypsies or Travellers themselves, there is evidence to suggest that when this happens a site can become occupied by one group e.g. being a Gypsy site or an Irish Traveller site for example. This has led to some local authorities feeling pressurised to provide more sites to cater for individual groups.

4.60 What is clear is that sites that work well, whether privately or publicly managed need to have clear management policies in order that residents and managers know what procedures there are and there is a consistent approach.

4.61 RPs and support agencies were asked whether they use policies specific to Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople; the consensus was they use overarching policies and constitutional documents that include an equality and diversity statement. The Showmen’s Guild also uses a code of practice in relation to its members.

4.62 RPs explained they have not undertaken specific training in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople although these communities are sometimes included within Equality and Diversity training.

4.63 Although in some cases those being interviewed had a lot of knowledge of Gypsies and Travellers, and to a lesser extent Travelling Showpeople, ORS would recommend that the Council look to instigate specific training in this field in order that officers, and stakeholders who may be willing to share in any costs, could engage and better understand the needs of these communities.

Site Size

4.64 When considering a preferred size for sites respondents in the main did not provide a view. It was suggested by those who did give a view that a preferred size for a site should be less than 20 pitches and preferably no bigger than 8-10 pitches.
ORS have undertaken GTAAs across the UK and has experience of interviewing both residents and managers of sites and the consensus is that larger sites of more than 15 pitches can create management issues. However, in most cases it is not the size that results in a site being difficult to manage, but the effectiveness and relationship of the manager and residents that is often the cause.

In terms of Travelling Showpeople it was suggested that 6-8 plots would be ideal with each plot being approximately ½ acre (this is because of the amount of equipment needed and space for storage and space to repair equipment).

**Cross Border Movement**

Stakeholders suggested that the following roads are the main travelling routes for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in the area. The map below shows these routes:

- A140;
- A14;
- A12;
- B1123;
- A144;
- A1074;  
- A1066;
- A47;
- A11;
- A148;
- A143 and
- The Waveney Valley.
Some of those who were interviewed held the view that there is no general trend for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople to move to neighbouring districts from South Norfolk neither does it appear these communities are being moved between local authority areas. There is one family that moves around the area from South Norfolk, North Norfolk and Breckland. It was further noted that if there is a vacancy on a transit site which cannot be filled in one of the local authority areas, it will be offered to another local authority area in Norfolk; therefore there is a certain amount of partnership working in Norfolk already.

Others did give specific examples such as instances of border hopping of local families that wish to remain transient and when forced to move on from South Norfolk will often border hop into Mid Suffolk. Some of these local families have been given permission to live on permanent sites, but have on occasions been asked to leave and therefore remain for all intents and purposes, homeless. A view was given however that often Gypsies or Travellers were unaware of the boundary lines between local authority areas and this is especially relevant when looking at the fringes of Norwich and determining where these communities would like to live. For example, those Gypsies or Travellers may say they wish to live in Norwich but consider Costessey part of Norwich rather than being in South Norfolk Council’s area.

The general view of those interviewed is that Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in South Norfolk and across Norfolk are locally based and seldom travel. Officers in South Norfolk have the view that when, on the rare occasions encampments occur, Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople are moving through the area usually from Norfolk or sometimes Kent and Essex and visiting family, attending religious events and/or looking for work opportunities. One Officer from a neighbouring authority area reported that two Gypsy or Traveller families had moved from South Norfolk to Breckland; one family had since moved further away and the other remains in the area and does not wish to return to South Norfolk.

It is reported that Travelling Showpeople would be less likely to travel the same routes through the County but will criss-cross the country dependent on the location of a fair or show and that Travelling Showpeople travel to work to a known location, not to find a place to live or to find opportunities for work.

Duty to Cooperate and Joint Working

Those interviewed were of the view that South Norfolk Council is meeting its Duty to Co-operate and that other neighbouring councils are too.

Some concerns were raised however such as changes in Government guidance since the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) were abolished. The RSS had previously set clear targets but the new guidance is more unclear and it was felt that some councils are interpreting the guidance in different ways. In direct relation to South Norfolk Council and the Duty to Cooperate it was suggested that the Council is at the first stage of the process in that neighbouring authorities are consulted as part of the GTAA and therefore there will be the need to continue consultation after the results of the GTAA are published. Many also believed the Duty to Cooperate will only be fully realised when local authorities are working together and providing sites that can meet needs outside of a local authority’s area.

The general view of wider stakeholders was that cross boundary working could be improved. However examples of partnership working were given such as the Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller Strategy; the quarterly Gypsy and Traveller Forum; the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Liaison Group and sub groups; a dedicated Police Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer who works across County; and the Norfolk and Suffolk
Roma, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. In addition it was noted that the last GTAA for South Norfolk Council was undertaken as part of the Greater Norwich Sub Region and the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group has sub-groups, one of which was specifically for accommodation issues.

4.75 Other examples of good practice were given as the Norfolk Unauthorised Encampments Protocol and Code of Conduct, the Gypsy and Traveller Action Plan and the joint Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller Strategy. It was also identified that the Council has been very pro-active in promoting the Duty to Co-operate during the preparation of the new GTAA study, and chaired a well-attended meeting of District and County Council Officers. Council Officers also sit on a number of committees and are active in partnership working.

4.76 It is interesting to note that whilst there appear to be a number of groups in Norfolk related to accommodation and support for specific client groups such as those with drug/alcohol dependency, older people or ex-offenders, no such group exists for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople other than the sub-group that sits under the umbrella of the Norfolk Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group. It would be advisable for the Council to ensure that a representative in Housing or Strategic Housing attends the housing sub-group if not already doing so or that a representative of the Greater Norwich Housing Partnership attends the sub-group in order to report back.

4.77 In the main the general view was that South Norfolk Council is the most proactive council in Norfolk when it comes to issues that affect Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, although there were some suggestions for further improvement.

Other Issues

4.78 A range of other issues were also discussed during the interviews including Community Cohesion, Health and Wellbeing, Education, Employment and Consultation Activities. The outcome of these discussions can be found in the Appendix C to this report. Additional conclusions and recommendations relating to these issues can also be found in the Appendix.

Conclusions and Areas for Consideration

4.79 The general view of those interviewed was that significant change is unlikely in relation to the numbers of Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living or travelling either in South Norfolk or in the wider Norfolk area.

4.80 It was appreciated there is more political will to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, especially from Council Members, even though Gypsies and Travellers are considered to be a contentious issue at times. Some examples of how working together had improved people’s understanding of some of the issues that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople encounter included the approval of more private sites and the new transit site.

4.81 It was suggested that the priority for the Council should be to establish the level of need for site provision, the type of sites and the location of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the area and then ensure, using clear criteria, there are enough sites in suitable locations which are accessible to services to meet any need identified. This was considered by some who were interviewed to be a priority for neighbouring authorities too.
There was no consensus of what types of sites should be provided but those interviewed agreed that more sites were needed in South Norfolk. Some interviewees were of the view that the priority for South Norfolk Council should be to provide a mixture of additional public sites and private sites; some also had the view that this should be a priority for other local authorities in Norfolk and the fact that Norfolk is largely a rural county, this should be easily achieved. A suggestion was made in terms of improving The Roundwell in line with what has been provided at Brooks Green.

The challenge for South Norfolk Council is likely to be identifying new sites if need is evidenced and how they will be funded because of the end of the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) funding programme and whether politicians will support a bid for funding.

The identification of sites is likely to be difficult especially when sites will be in competition with the need to build bricks and mortar accommodation and this is often cited as a challenge when ORS have undertaken GTAAs for other local authorities. It was further noted that as Norfolk has large areas of green space when compared to other areas in the South East, more pressure may be put on Norfolk to start developing more houses and sites to meet needs outside of its County boundary.

It was of note that there is an understanding that Council Officers will need to continue working together as issues arise and that information continues to be shared, and that this will help the Council in providing a clear and strategic view in relation to meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in particular.

Interviewees did have some concerns such as whether there would be an increase in Gypsies and Travellers seeking affordable housing because of recent and forthcoming changes to benefits and the changing needs of Gypsies and Travellers such as their need to ensure their children are accessing good quality education. It could be that such an increase in those moving to affordable housing will evidence an increasing need for accommodation support to sustain tenancies.

Recommendations

As a result of the outcomes of the interviews with stakeholders ORS would recommend that the Council explore a range of opportunities in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The following ideas could help improve services and strengthen joint working and ORS would recommend that the Council take these on board:

- Working across Norfolk with Travelling Showpeople and national organisations that represent them to help to meet any unmet accommodation needs of this community, especially in relation to the two sites in Norwich that are believed to be overcrowded;
- Improving the way and amount of consultation with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in South Norfolk and the wider area;
- Local authorities in Norfolk should put in place measures to enable elected Members and other stakeholders including Registered Providers to improve their understanding of the issues that affect Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople such as providing training;
- Consideration should be made to encourage Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to participate in these sessions, and for elected Members and other
stakeholders to make visits to sites where planning permission is being sought to engage with residents and seek their views on the development proposals;

» More work needs to be undertaken with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople regarding domestic and sexual violence against both sexes to build awareness of how to deal positively with relationship differences in terms of what is right both morally and legally;

» Additional and specific support should be provided to Gypsies and Travellers seeking and living in bricks and mortar accommodation, most likely to be affordable housing. This could help these tenants to sustain their tenancies;

» Communication networks need to be improved with members of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities across Norfolk in order to ensure that improvements can be made to sites, such as safe access for emergency services and consultation activities generally;

» Managers of sites in Norfolk should liaise with the local emergency services such as the Fire Service so they can speak with residents about issues around fire safety.

4.89 Some priorities to discuss with neighbouring authorities could include:

» Monitoring current sites to identify over or under occupation and monitor the level of private sites being applied for as this could indicate a need to update GTAAs for example;

» Updating their understanding of the needs in their area by undertaking or refreshing GTAAs;

» Looking at existing sites to see whether there is the potential to meet identified need and/or to find or the need to find new sites;

» Updating policies to ensure any site identified will be assessed clearly and effectively to ensure that site delivery is achieved;

» Informing Gypsies and Travellers about local authority boundaries when undertaking GTAAs or site identification by providing clear maps.

» Fire safety should also be a priority for all types of sites across Norfolk and that those designing, developing, managing and living on sites should know who to contact for fire safety advice.

4.90 The Council may also wish to consider the following recommendations that ORS believe will also help to improve how the Council, neighbouring local authorities and other local stakeholders engage with and provide services for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

» Develop a methodology for gathering and recording information from residents using the new transit site and that this is undertaken as soon as possible. Such an approach will ensure the ability to compare data so that any concerns or indeed trends are able to be acted upon and that a value for money exercise is feasible;

» An officer of the Council preferably from housing or strategic housing attend the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group accommodation sub-group, or a representative from the
Greater Norwich Housing Partnership attends in order to report back thus improving partnership working in relation to the accommodation issues of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;

» Make improvements in relation to partnership working between South Norfolk and RP housing departments because some of those interviewed appear to think that site accommodation is a planning issue and not part of accommodation provision more generally;

» Public bodies such as Police, Fire, Health etc. should be provided with relevant information regarding sites in each local authority area as there appears to be some confusion as to where sites are, what type of sites there are and in which local authority area they are in.

» Meetings could be held with those households living on sites to discuss how best to communicate the outcomes of this study and subsequent Local Plan documents, and what language to use.
5. Survey of Travelling Communities

5.1 Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

One of the major components of this study was a detailed survey of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in South Norfolk. This aimed to identify current households with housing needs and to assess likely future household formation from within existing households, to help judge the need for any future site provision. As noted in the introduction, “Gypsy and Traveller” refers to:

Persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG, March 2012).

5.2 Through the desk-based research and stakeholder interviews ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments in the study area. This identified 2 public sites owned by the Council at Roundwell and Brooks Green; 11 private sites with permanent planning permission; 1 private site with temporary planning permission; and 8 unauthorised encampments. One Travelling Showpeople Yard was also identified. The table below identifies the sites that ORS staff visited during the course of the fieldwork:

Figure 4
Sites Visited in South Norfolk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roundwell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brooks Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bawburgh (Transit site)</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Private Sites</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carleton Rode 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carleton Rode 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easton 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easton 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easton 3</td>
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<td>Flordon</td>
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<td>Newton Greenways</td>
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<td>Norwich Common</td>
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<td>Spooner Row</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tharston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thorpe Abbots</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ORS sought to undertake a full demographic study of all pitches as part of our approach to undertaking the GTAA as our experience suggests that a sample based approach very often leads to an under-estimate of current and future needs which can be the subject of challenge at subsequent appeals and examinations. A summary of the findings from each site can be found under the headings below.

### Public Sites

#### Roundwell – Public Site

Staff from ORS visited the Roundwell public site on Tuesday 8th April 2014. It is a well-run public site. A total of 17 of the 18 pitches were surveyed – one family were away on holiday - and a total of 19 adults, 12 young children and 2 teenagers were identified as living on the site. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

#### Brooks Green – Public Site

Staff from ORS visited the Brooks Green public site on Tuesday 8th April 2014. This is a more modern site with larger pitches and day room provision and is well laid out. It is occupied predominantly by single mothers and younger children. All 8 of the pitches were surveyed and a total of 10 adults and 18 young children were identified as living on the site. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

#### Bawburgh – Transit Site

The Bawburgh Transit Site was not operational at the time of the site interviews but is now open. Information obtained from the Council showed that 4 households moved onto the site the day that it opened.
Private Sites

Carleton Rode 1 – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Carleton Rode 1 site on Wednesday 9th April 2014. The site has ample space for expansion. At the time of the fieldwork there were 2 trailers and 2 touring caravans on the site. At the time of the fieldwork there were 2 families living on the site comprising 3 adults and 2 young children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Carleton Rode 2 – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Carleton Rode 2 site on Wednesday 9th April 2014. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 family living on the site comprising 2 adults, 1 young child and 2 teenage children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Easton 1 – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Easton 1 site on Wednesday 9th April 2014. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 family living on the site comprising 2 adults and 2 young children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Easton 2 – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Easton 2 site on Wednesday 9th April 2014. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 vacant pitch. There were 5 families living on the site comprising 10 adults, 8 young children and 3 teenage children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Easton 3 – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Easton 3 site on Thursday 10th April 2014. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 family living on the site comprising 2 adults and no children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Flordon – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Flordon site on Wednesday 9th April 2014. It is a site comprising trailers, a chalet and a dayroom. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 family living on the site comprising 2 adults and no children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Newton Greenways

Staff from ORS visited the Newton Greenways site on Wednesday 9th April and Thursday 10th April 2014. However no contact was made with the residents of the site and interviewers were unable to ascertain details of the occupiers from other sources.
Norwich Common – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Norwich Common site on Wednesday 9th April 2014. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 family living on the site comprising 2 adults and 1 teenage child. One of the adults reported being in a poor state of health. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Spooner Row – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Spooner Row site on Thursday 10th April 2014. The site is occupied by an extended family group. There were 2 vacant pitches at the time of the site visit. At the time of the fieldwork there were 6 families living on the site comprising 12 adults, 8 young children and 4 teenage children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Tharston – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Tharston site on Thursday 10th April 2014. The site is split into two with 2 chalets and 2 touring caravans. At the time of the fieldwork there were 2 families living on the site comprising 4 adults and 4 young children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Thorpe Abbots – Private Site

Staff from ORS visited the Thorpe Abbots site on Tuesday 8th April 2014. It is a new age traveller site with a relatively transient population of residents who act as showpeople working on the festival circuit. All 6 of the pitches were surveyed and a total of 3 family groups comprising 6 adults and 4 young children were identified as living on the site. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Temporary Sites

Forncett St Peter – Private Temporary Site

Staff from ORS visited the Forncett St Peter site on Thursday 10th April 2014. At the time of the fieldwork there was 1 family living on the site comprising 2 adults and 1 young child. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding on the site.

Unauthorised Sites

Aslacton – Private Unauthorised Site

Staff from ORS visited the Aslacton site on Wednesday 9th April and Thursday 10th April 2014. However no contact was made with the residents of the site and interviewers were unable to ascertain details of the occupiers from other sources.
Costessey – Unauthorised Site

5.20 Staff from ORS visited Costessey on Thursday 10th April 2014. There were 2 family groups comprising 4 adults and 5 young children. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding.

Diss – Unauthorised Site

5.21 Staff from ORS have been unable to visit Diss site but the housing waiting lists indicates that the site is inhabited by a couple with five young children who wish to move to a permanent pitch in South Norfolk.

Harleston – Unauthorised Site

5.22 Staff from ORS have been unable to visit Harleston site but the housing waiting lists indicates that the site is inhabited by a couple with a young child who wish to move to a permanent pitch in South Norfolk.

Morley St. Bolotoph – Unauthorised Site

5.23 Staff from ORS have been unable to visit the Morley St. Bolotoph site but planning records indicate that there is currently one pitch with 3 caravans.

Needham – Tolerated Unauthorised Site

5.24 Staff from ORS visited Needham site on Thursday 10th April 2014. There was one old wooden wagon present and the single male resident reported to have lived there for over 20 years. There was no evidence of concealed households or over-crowding.

Stockton (A146) – Tolerated Unauthorised Site

5.25 Staff from ORS visited Stockton (A146) on Thursday 10th April 2014. There was an old camper van parked up but staff were unable to speak to the person who was living there. Due to the size of the van it is estimated that there are a maximum of 2 occupants.

Wortwell – Tolerated Unauthorised Site

5.26 Staff from ORS have been unable to visit Wortwell site but information obtained from the Council indicates that the site is inhabited by a single adult with no children, and that no issues have been reported in relation to the site other than that it is unauthorised, subject to enforcement action and tolerated until September 2015.

Travelling Showpeople

Soton – Travelling Showpeople Yard

5.27 Staff from ORS have been unable to visit Wymondham Yard at this time but planning records indicate that it is a small family yard who have sufficient room on the yard to meet their future needs.
Summary of Site Demographics

The table below provides a summary of the site resident demographics that were identified during the site visits.

**Figure 5**
Sites Visited in South Norfolk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Young Children</th>
<th>Teenagers</th>
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<td>Bawburgh (Transit site)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sites</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Current and Future Pitch Provision

Pitch Provision

6.1 This section focuses on the extra pitch provision which is required by South Norfolk Council currently and to 2031. This includes both current unmet needs and needs which are likely to arise in the future. This time period allows for robust forecasts of the requirements for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and also secondary data sources.

6.2 We would note that this section is based upon a combination of the on-site surveys, planning records, stakeholder interviews and site preference list information. In many cases, the survey data is not used in isolation, but instead is used to validate information from planning records or other sources.

6.3 This section concentrates not only upon the total extra provision which is required in the area, but also whether there is a need for any transit sites and/or emergency stopping place provision.

6.4 To identify current and future need, the March 2012 CLG guidance ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ requires an assessment for current and future pitch requirements, but does not provide a suggested methodology for undertaking this calculation. However, as with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future needs of the households. The key factors in each of these elements are set out in the sections below:

Supply of Pitches

» Current vacant pitches.
» Pitches currently with planning consent due to be developed within the study period.
» Pitches vacated by people moving to housing.
» Pitches vacated by people moving from the study area.
» Pitches vacated due to the dissolution of households.

Current Need

6.5 Total current need, which is not necessarily the need for additional pitches because it may be able to be addressed by space available in the study area, is made up of the following. It is important to address issues of double counting. For example potential in-migrants may already be included on a waiting lists, or households on a waiting list may already be living as a concealed household on a permitted site or on an unauthorised encampment in the area:

» Households on unauthorised sites for which planning permission is not expected.
Concealed households.
Households in B&M wishing to move to sites.
Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Future Need

Total future need is the sum of the following three components. Again it is important to address issues of double counting as, for example, potential in-migrants may already be on a waiting list:

- Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions.
- New household formation.
- In-migration.

ORS will firstly provide the model as set out above for Gypsies and Travellers in South Norfolk and will then separately analyse the possible need for additional transit provision in the study area.

Current Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision

Planning records indicate that there are 26 authorised public pitches; 37 authorised private pitches; and 1 pitch with temporary planning permission in South Norfolk. In addition there are 10 pitches on unauthorised sites, 6 of which are tolerated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private sites</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sites with temporary planning permission</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sites not occupied by gypsy and travellers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Private Sites</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sites (Council and Registered Providers)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorised Sites (6 tolerated)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (Excluding Travelling Showpeople Yard)</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next stage of the process is to assess how much space is, or will become, available on existing sites. The main ways of finding this is through:

- Current empty pitches
- New sites or site extensions which have already been granted permission, or are likely to gain planning permission in the foreseeable future, or sites which are likely to come back into use following refurbishment.

Currently, all authorised public pitches are occupied, so there is no available space. The site visits did identify 3 vacant pitches on private sites, but as these are on small family sites as opposed to larger commercial sites they cannot be counted as available supply. In addition whilst there are sites at various
stages in the planning system it was felt unlikely following conversations with Planning Officers that these will be realised during the study period.

6.11 No evidence was found of pitches on public sites likely to be vacated by people moving to housing, pitches likely to be vacated by people moving from the study area, or pitches likely to be vacated due to the dissolution of households.

**Additional Pitch Provision: Current Need**

6.12 The next stage of the process is to assess how many households are currently seeking pitches in the area. Groups of people who are likely to be seeking pitches will include those:

» Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected.

» Concealed households.

» Households in bricks and mortar wishing to move to sites.

» Gypsy and Traveller households on waiting lists for public sites.

**Current Unauthorised Developments**

6.13 The study has identified 8 unauthorised encampments in South Norfolk. In addition information from the biannual Traveller Caravan Count indicates that, whilst there have historically been a high number of unauthorised caravans, these have decreased on an annual basis since 2008. No more unauthorised caravans were found during the study period.

6.14 A problem with many Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments is that they count all caravans on unauthorised sites as requiring a pitch in the area when in practice many are simply visiting or passing through, and some may be on sites that are tolerated for planning purposes. In order to remedy this, ORS’ approach is to treat need as only those households on unauthorised sites already in the planning system (i.e. sites/pitches for which a planning application has been made), those otherwise known to the Local Authorities as being resident in the area or those identified through the household survey as requiring pitches.

6.15 Staff visited all 8 unauthorised encampments and identified that all 4 households considered South Norfolk as their permanent place of residence and expressed a wish to move to a permanent pitch in South Norfolk. Whilst staff also visited pitches on tolerated sites, these are excluded from future need requirements (but included in calculations for new household formation).

**Concealed Households**

6.16 The household survey also sought to identify concealed households on authorised sites that require a pitch immediately. A concealed household is one who is living within another household and would wish to form their own separate family unit, but is unable to do so because of a lack of space on public or private sites. Site interviews did not identify any concealed households in South Norfolk.
**Bricks and Mortar**

6.17 Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue with Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments. The 2011 UK Census of Population identified a total of 75 Gypsy and Traveller households in South Norfolk.

6.18 As noted earlier, ORS went to disproportionate lengths to identify gypsies and travellers living in bricks and mortar and worked with stakeholders, Council officers and on-site interviewees to identify households to interview. This process however resulted in no contacts to interview.

6.19 ORS would also note that in a number of recent studies undertaken, ORS has worked with national Gypsy and Traveller representatives to identify households in bricks and mortar. For a number of recent studies the representatives reported over 100 known households in housing and they encouraged them to come forward to take part in the survey. The actual number who eventually took part in the surveys ranged from zero to six households per area, and a very small proportion of these wished to move back to sites. Therefore, while there is anecdotal evidence of many Gypsies and Travellers in housing, most appear to be content to remain there and when provided with the opportunity by national representatives to register an interest in returning to sites, few choose to do so.

6.20 It should be noted that movement between housing and sites runs in both directions. The on-site interviews did not identify any households who wished to move from sites to bricks and mortar therefore the net movement between sites and bricks and mortar is nil.

**Waiting Lists**

6.21 Analysis of the current Housing Register (as at April 9th 2014) identified a total of 13 Gypsy and Traveller households. Of these:

- 1 is living in a caravan on a private site.
- 2 are settled in bricks and mortar and do not wish to move to a pitch.
- 4 are known to be living outside of South Norfolk and whilst they have indicated a desire to move into the area they are not identified as immediate need.
- 2 are not recorded as currently living in South Norfolk, but no further details are recorded.
- 2 have no further information recorded, therefore there is no evidence that they are living in South Norfolk.
- 2 are currently living on unauthorised sites in South Norfolk and are identified as being in need for a permanent pitch. These are included as unauthorised sites in need of a permanent pitch for the purpose of this study.

**Additional Pitch Provision: Future Need**

6.22 The next stage of the process is to assess how many households are likely to be seeking pitches in the area in the future. There are three key components of future need. Total future need is the sum of the following:

- Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions.
» New household formation expected during the study period.
» Migration to sites from outside the study area.

Temporary Planning Permissions

6.23 There is currently 1 site in South Norfolk with temporary planning permission. This will be counted as additional need when calculating current and future pitch requirements.

New Household Formation

6.24 It is recognised that an important group for future pitch provision will be children and young adults from existing households who will wish to form their own households in future years. Historically studies of Gypsy and Traveller population have assumed a net growth in the population of 3.00% per annum. However, long-term trends indicate that the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on site has grown by 134% nationally in the past 34 years, which equates to a net growth of around 2.50% per annum. Unfortunately, no specific figures are available for Gypsy and Traveller households. However, the UK Census of Population 2011 and ORS’ own national survey data both indicate the population of Gypsies and Travellers grows at a rate between 1.50% and 2.50% per annum.

6.25 More recently in a letter dated 26th March 2014 Brandon Lewis MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government, clarified the Government’s position on household formation rates and stated:

‘I can confirm that the annual growth rate figure of 3% does not represent national planning policy. The previous Administration's guidance for local authorities on carrying out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments under the Housing Act 2004 is unhelpful in that it uses an illustrative example of calculating future accommodation need based on the 3% growth rate figure. The guidance notes that the appropriate rate for individual assessments will depend on the details identified in the local authority’s own assessment of need. As such the Government is not endorsing or supporting the 3% growth rate figure, though in some cases we are aware that inspectors have, in considering the level of unmet local need when demonstrating specific traveller appeals, used the 3% growth rate figure in the absence of a local authority’s own up-to-date assessment of need.’

6.26 While many GTAA studies undertaken by other companies have continued to use a net growth figure of 3%, we agree with the position being taken by CLG and firmly believe that any household formation rates should use a robust local evidence base, rather than simply relying on precedent.

6.27 The household survey for Gypsies and Travellers in South Norfolk indicates 49% of the on-site population are children and teenagers aged under 20. This is higher than the percentage of children and teenagers for the Gypsy and Traveller population in South Norfolk as a whole in the 2011 Census which was 43%, and significantly higher that the percentage of children and teenagers for the population of South Norfolk as a whole from the 2011 Census which was 23%.

6.28 In the 2011 based interim ONS Population Projections the projected growth rate for the whole population of England is 0.83% per annum. A population where 35% are children a gives a new household formation rate of 1.50%. As such ORS considers it appropriate to allow for future projected household growth for the
Gypsy and Traveller population in South Norfolk to occur at a rate proportionally higher than 1.50% based on the higher percentage of children that were identified during the site visits (49%). Therefore, an annual growth rate of **2.00%** has been used in this assessment. ORS do still consider that this is a generous rate that this will provide enough new pitches to accommodate all newly-forming households in South Norfolk, as well as any concealed households and those living in bricks and mortar, who may not have been identified in the survey, to have their future needs met.

Based on a new household formation rate of **2.00%** we estimate that a total of **30 additional pitches** will be required during the study period as a result of new household formation, assuming that each forming household will requires a pitch of its own. The private site with residents who have expressed a desire to move to bricks and mortar has not been included in the base for the calculation of new household formation.

**In-migration from outside South Norfolk**

The most complicated area for a study such as this is to estimate how many households will require accommodation from outside the area. Potentially, Gypsies and Travellers could move to the South Norfolk area from anywhere in the country, or further afield. It has been noted that a weakness of many Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments conducted across the country has been that they either allowed for out-migration without in-migration, which led to under-counting of need, or they over-counted need by assuming every household visiting the area required a pitch.

Typically, ORS allow for a balanced level of migration. The advantage of allowing for net migration to sum to zero is that it avoids the problems seen with other Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments where the modelling of migration clearly identifies too low or too high a level of total pitch provision. An assumption of net nil migration implies that the net pitch requirement is driven by locally identifiable need.

This issue has been raised at a number of planning appeals and ORS have demonstrated that in order to include a component for net in-migration need there is also the requirement to identify where out-migration will occur from.

There are three main sources of out-migration. Historically, London has seen a loss of Gypsy and Traveller sites and this has seen population displaced to areas across the country. However, ORS are currently working with a number of London Boroughs including Camden, Lambeth, Bexley and also the London Legacy Development Corporation to undertake their GTAA’s. In all cases the authorities have been advised by their Planning Inspectors to undertake these studies and to meet the needs identified before their Local Plans can be found to be sound. Therefore, the Planning Inspectorate is requiring London Boroughs to assess needs and provide sites, which should prevent, or significantly limit any future out-migration.

The second potential source of out-migration is from local authorities with significant areas of green belt. A Ministerial Statement in July 2013 reaffirmed that:

‘The Secretary of State wishes to make clear that, in considering planning applications, although each case will depend on its facts, he considers that the single issue of unmet demand, whether for traveller sites or for conventional housing, is unlikely to outweigh harm to the green belt and other harm to constitute the ‘very special circumstances’ justifying inappropriate development in the green belt.’
However, while this reaffirmation of policy states that green belt development is likely to be inappropriate, it does not remove the requirement for local authorities with green belt to assess their needs and to provide pitches. There is a requirement for local authorities who have difficulties in meeting their own local need in their own area to work with neighbouring authorities through the Duty to Cooperate process to have these needs met. It is not the place of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to assume a particular authority will meet the needs of another and instead any authority unable to meet their own needs should work with neighbours to meet these. This process is already well established in general housing provision.

The final main source of out-migration is from the closure of unauthorised sites and encampments. There are several well documented cases of large-scale movement of gypsies and travellers following enforcement action against unauthorised sites – Dale Farm being a good example.

Whilst households have been identified on the Waiting List for public sites from households living outside of South Norfolk ORS have still assumed nil net migration for the purpose of this study as these households have expressed a desire to move into the area should a pitch become available, as opposed to having an immediate need to be provided for in the area. Beyond this, rather than assess in-migrant households seeking to develop new sites in the area, ORS would propose that each case is assessed as a desire to live in the area and that site criteria rules are followed for each new site. It is important for the Council to have clear criteria-based planning policies in place for any new potential sites which do arise.

Overall Needs for South Norfolk

The estimated extra provision that is required now and for the plan period to 2031 will be 35 additional pitches to address the needs of all identifiable households. This includes the existing households on unauthorised sites, sites with temporary planning permission and growth in household numbers due to new household formation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014-2031 (2.00% Formation Rate)</th>
<th>Gross</th>
<th>Supply</th>
<th>Net</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current unauthorised developments or encampments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current sites with temporary planning permission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorised sites currently seeking planning permission</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New household formation (2.00%)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New movement to/from bricks and mortar</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concealed Households</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently overcrowded and required to move (doubled-up)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Council waiting list</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply from empty pitches</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply from sites with planning permission expected</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total additional pitch need</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This excludes 6 pitches on tolerated sites. These are included in the new household formation calculation (Para 6.15)*

*The households identified on the waiting list are included under current unauthorised developments*
6.39 In terms of providing results by 5 year time periods, ORS has assumed that all unauthorised sites and those with temporary planning permissions are addressed in the first 5 years. In addition new household formation is apportioned over time based on the age profile of children that was recorded during the household interviews (86% younger children and 14% teenage children). The figure for 2014-19 is made up of 5 from unauthorised sites and temporary planning permissions and 3 from new household formation.

Figure 8
Extra pitch provision in South Norfolk in 5 Year Periods (Financial Year 01/04-31/03)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision

6.40 Transit sites serve a specific function of meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who are visiting an area or who are passing through. A transit site typically has a restriction on the length of stay of around 13 weeks and has a range of facilities such as water supply, electricity and amenity blocks.

6.41 An alternative to a transit site is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time for which a Traveller can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities with typically only a source of water and chemical toilets provided. Some authorities also operate an accepted encampment policy where households are provided with access to lighting, drinking water, refuse collection and hiring of portable toilets at a cost to the Travellers.

6.42 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is particularly important with regard to the issue of Gypsy and Traveller transit site provision. Section 62A of the Act allows the Police to direct trespassers to remove themselves, their vehicles and their property from any land where a suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is available within the same Local Authority area (or within the county in two-tier Local Authority areas).

6.43 A suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is one which is situated in the same Local Authority area as the land on which the trespass has occurred, and which is managed by a Local Authority, a Registered Provider or other person or body as specified by order by the Secretary of State. Case law has confirmed that a suitable pitch must be somewhere where the household can occupy their caravan and bricks and mortar housing is not a suitable alternative to a pitch.

6.44 Therefore, a public transit site both provides a place for households in transit to an area and also a mechanism for greater enforcement action against inappropriate unauthorised encampments.

6.45 Evidence provided by stakeholders and data from the Council indicates that, whilst there have been large numbers of unauthorised caravans in recent years, these have reduced dramatically from over 100 in July 2008 to 15 in July 2013. In addition only 7 unauthorised caravans were identified during the study period.

6.46 Given that there is a new transit site recently opened at Bawburgh and that it has not been fully occupied since it opened, and that the current unauthorised caravans are included in our recommendation to be
provided for on permanent pitches, our recommendation would be for no additional transit provision in South Norfolk.

**Needs for Plots for Travelling Showpeople**

6.47 Planning records indicate that there is one small Travelling Showpeople yard in South Norfolk. During the stakeholder interviews Officers from South Norfolk Council did not provide any information relating to this yard.

6.48 Staff from ORS have been unable to visit this yard but planning records indicate that this is a small family yard and that there is sufficient space on the yard to meet any future needs that may arise.

6.49 In addition Officers from neighbouring local authorities identified the following provision for Travelling Showpeople:

- Three private yards in Breckland.
- A mixed site in Mid Suffolk for Gypsies and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople.
- Two private yards in Norwich.

6.50 As such we would **not recommend any further provision for Travelling Showpeople** in South Norfolk, but will endeavour to make contact with residents living on the yard to ascertain whether they have any additional needs.
7. Broad Location Selection Criteria

Introduction

7.1 As part of the study in South Norfolk ORS has investigated criteria for the potential identification of broad locations which will be a guide for the subsequent identification of specific sites.

7.2 Criteria for defining broad locations have been developed taking account of national and local policy, guidance, the outcomes of the stakeholder interviews and desk-based research and identified physical constraints.

National Policy

7.3 National planning policy is contained within Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). This identifies three key criteria for identifying appropriate sites for delivery through the planning system. To be deliverable within five years or developable within years 6-15, sites should:

» Be available - the site should be available now or there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available at the point envisaged;

» Be suitable – the site should be in a suitable location for development

» Be achievable – there is a realistic or reasonable prospect that housing could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

7.4 Local planning authorities should identify sufficient deliverable sites to provide five years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets. For years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15, they should identify a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth.

7.5 National policy recommends that criteria should be developed to guide land allocations if there is identified need and if there is no identified need, to develop criteria-based policies to provide a basis for determining planning applications which may nevertheless come forward.

7.6 Criteria “should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of Travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community” (PPTS, para. 10). Many previous studies and local plan criteria based policies across the country have used very restrictive criteria which have prevented many reasonable sites from coming forward. This is one of the principal reasons why the Government is no longer relying simply upon criteria based policies to bring forward suitable sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

7.7 PPTS identifies a series of issues for criteria that South Norfolk need to address to ensure that Traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. Specific policies that are relevant to South Norfolk set out the national approach towards sites in rural areas and the countryside (Policy C), rural
exception sites (Policy D), mixed planning use sites (Policy F), major development projects (Policy G) and determining planning applications (Policy H).

**Local Policy**

7.8 Policy 4 (Housing Delivery) in the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk makes reference to meeting the current and future housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It states that:

- Need will be met on a number of sites.
- Generally sites will not have more than 10 to 12 pitches, but may be varied to suit the circumstances of a particular site.
- The sites will be provided in locations which have good access to services and in locations where local research demonstrates they would meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- Some of the allowance to be provided after 2011 is expected to be provided in association with large-scale strategic housing growth.

**Other Policy and Guidance**

7.9 Other relevant considerations which should be taken into account include:

- National policy set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

7.10 These policies and guidance will have been taken into consideration when developing criteria for identifying broad locations for new sites within South Norfolk.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

7.11 The majority of stakeholders who were interviewed felt strongly that there is for further site provision in South Norfolk, and this is reflected in the overall assessment of current and future demand identified in this study. The consensus was that there is a need for more permanent sites and these should be met through a mixture of public and private provision to cater for those households who can afford to buy their own land and those who cannot, including those lower income households in receipt of Housing Benefit. The following reasons were given for the need for further site provision:

- Existing public sites were believed to be full, with many residents on low incomes who are unable to afford to buy their own land to develop a private site of their own. The turnover on the sites is low so vacant pitches do not become available very often.
- Some Gypsies and Travellers aspire to purchase their own land and some can afford to do that, but others cannot always afford to do.
Provision of sites should be meeting identified need in the same way as those who cannot afford to buy a house, with the option of affordable housing.

There are encampments and sites that are tolerated, which demonstrate there is a need for more sites.

7.12 One stakeholder felt that expansion of smaller private sites in rural locations and managed by individual family groups has proven to be successful and there tend to be far fewer social issues and less call on public funds than those provided through the public sector.

7.13 When considering a preferred size for sites stakeholders in the main did not provide a view. One stakeholder suggested a preferred size for a site should be less than 20 pitches and two stakeholders gave the view that sites should be no bigger than 8-10 pitches.

7.14 In terms of Travelling Showpeople it was suggested that 6-8 plots would be ideal with each plot being approximately ½ acre (this is because of the amount of equipment needed and space for storage and space to repair equipment).

**Travelling Communities**

7.15 The views of the travelling – both living on sites and in bricks and mortar should also be a consideration when identifying broad locations for new sites.

7.16 Site interviews identified a number of rural private sites with ample space for expansion to accommodate additional pitches should planning conditions be changed. Occupiers on private sites also felt that the Council have been historically fair and reasonable in allocating suitable permissions.

7.17 Interviews with residents living on private sites indicated that in the main they are occupied by successful hardworking small legitimate business people including car dealers, landscaping and tree surgeons. Given that family groups do tend to want to live together, or near to each other, as expanded families this would suggest that any future site expansion/provision will need to address issues relating to on-site business facilities.

**Criteria for Identifying Broad Locations**

7.18 Having regard to the national and local policy context, engagement with stakeholders, and engagement with the Travelling Communities, the following site criteria for determining broad settlement locations in South Norfolk are recommended:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Identifying Broad Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fit with Spatial Strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy and Traveller residential sites and Travelling Showpeople sites should, where possible, be located close to sustainable settlements with a range of local services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy and Traveller transit sites or temporary stopping places should be very close to main transport routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local infrastructure should be capable of accommodating development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fit with Identified Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy and Traveller residential sites and Travelling Showpeople sites should have good access to local services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Gypsy and Traveller residential sites should reflect the patterns of emerging needs to avoid the need for long distance travelling and extensions to existing sites may be appropriate to accommodate future immediate family needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy and Traveller transit sites or temporary stopping places should be located along historic transit routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avoiding Physical Constraints and Protected Areas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites should not be located within an international, national or local nature conservation designation or in a location where it will have a significant effect upon any designation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites within the Broads National Park are acceptable in principle but conserving landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites should not be located within areas at high risk of flooding which cannot be mitigated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites should not be located within historic parks and gardens or scheduled ancient monuments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship with Other Land Uses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites, or a combination of sites, should respect the scale of the nearest settlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The location of sites should avoid adversely impacting upon neighbouring residential amenities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential sites should not be located immediately adjacent to major transport corridors unless noise, safety and air quality impacts can be mitigated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites with mixed residential and business uses can contribute to sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites should, where possible, make effective use of previously developed or derelict land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites should not be located on unstable land or on contaminated land which cannot be mitigated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Identifying Broad Locations**

7.19 Existing and emerging spatial strategies within South Norfolk are not explicit regarding the general location of future sites for the travelling communities.

7.20 Stakeholders were asked to consider what they thought were potential locations for sites within South Norfolk. They gave a balance of views as to whether sites should be located in rural and adjacent to existing communities. Some stakeholders appreciated that national guidance is to locate sites in existing communities and close to facilities, but did accept that in practice this is hard to achieve because of the
culture of Gypsies and Travellers to socialise and work out of doors which can be considered anti-social behaviour to the settled community.

7.21 Views were expressed by stakeholders that Costessey and Diss could be locations for new provision based on experiences of the Gypsy and Traveller community. Costessey has a public site and is an area where there have been a number of unauthorised encampments; therefore this perhaps demonstrates a wish for these communities to live in the area. Diss has also, over the years, had a number of unauthorised encampments and therefore locating a public site in the Diss area could meet an element of need from those that border hop to Mid Suffolk and those travelling through from the Waveney Valley.

7.22 Whilst there is no identified need for an additional transit site in the district over the plan period, the Council could consider whether it should provide a site to the south of the district to complement the existing facility located in the northern part of the district. This may even take the form of a shared facility with Mid Suffolk District Council.

7.23 In the view of ORS any new sites should be located within a reasonable access to local services and amenities but accept that due to potential high land prices, and the likely expectations of current landowners in those locations for residential development, it may be unrealistic to expect private residential Gypsy sites to come forward within or immediately adjacent to settlements and that a more flexible approach should be taken. It should be noted that national policy does not preclude development in more rural locations.

7.24 Whilst access to local employment should also be seen as a key consideration when identifying locations for new sites it should also be recognised that many Travellers are self-employed and sites are effectively live-work units. Therefore the Council should consider being flexible when defining sustainable locations for sites. Within this context, national policy states that Travellers working and living from the same location could contribute to sustainability (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, para. 11).

7.25 There are no definitions contained within emerging local policy of what “reasonable” or “easy” access to local services and facilities means when deciding where sites should be located. For the purposes of defining broad locations, it is recommended that the priority should be to identify sites within approximately 1 mile of key facilities within settlements. This figure represents a reasonable maximum walking distance for site residents to be able to access those facilities without reliance on the use of the private car.

7.26 National policy also identifies health services, schools, welfare services and employment as key local services which local authorities should promote access to. Other local services that should be considered could include health, schools, shops and public transport. Also, generally, families with children and/or older people would like to be close to community facilities.

7.27 When deciding on the broad location for new sites consideration should also be given to them being well located with respect to the highway network.
Fit with Current Provision

7.28 Current private residential Gypsy and Traveller sites in South Norfolk are generally located to the south east of the area along the A143 and to the west of the A140, with a small cluster of sites located around Costessey. There are very few sites located in the east and north east of South Norfolk or in the Broads Authority area.

7.29 The only Travelling Showpeople site is located south west of Wymondham in Suton.

7.30 Whist the current study did not ask specific questions on site related issues the previous Greater Norwich GTAA (2012) study did ask these questions. The evidence from this study, and views expressed during the current study suggest that the existing spatial pattern reflects a well-established pattern of residence for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities, with the main reasons given for their current location including that their family comes from the area, while many had either always lived in the area. There is also evidence that historically unauthorised encampments have tended to feature in the eastern areas of South Norfolk.

7.31 The majority of respondents were satisfied with their sites. 70% of respondents expressed some form of satisfaction with their site, with only 19% expressing dissatisfaction.

7.32 In the view of ORS future Gypsy and Traveller residential site needs are predominantly generated from a combination of achieving pitches for those currently living on unauthorised sites or sites subject to temporary permissions within the area, for those on the waiting list for public sites or to meet future household growth from existing sites.
ORS are of the view that the easiest and most appropriate way of meeting current and future needs would be to explore options to extend existing public and private sites or to locate new sites in the same general locations.

**Avoiding Physical Constraints and Protected Areas**

The National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 06/2005 both identify the protection that should be given to international, national and locally designated biodiversity and geological conservation sites. Heritage assets of the highest significance, such as scheduled monuments, battlefields and historic parks and gardens should also be protected and development at these locations wholly exceptional. The NPPF also states that local planning authorities should give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks.

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites identifies areas at high risk of flooding including functional floodplains should be avoided given the particular vulnerability of caravans.

ORS are of the opinion that there are a number of constraints that are absolute due to national policy which identifies such locations as generally inappropriate for built development.

For the purposes of defining broad locations, these areas are:
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and other sites of importance for nature conservation and within buffer zones where a significant effect is determined.
- Ancient Woodland.
- Areas at high risk of flooding.
- Historic Battlefields.
- Historic parks and gardens.
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Other designations, such as listed buildings, conservation area, etc. whilst being a major constraint on development are not absolute constraints, as the acceptability or otherwise of development depends upon a site assessment of impact.

The Broads National Park Authority should be expected to accommodate sites within its area, if there is identified need. By definition the National Park designation cannot be an absolute constraint. However, landscape, wildlife and heritage impacts will need to be given great weight in determining appropriate locations in this area.

**Relationship with other Land Uses**

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites states that local planning authorities should have due regard to the protection of local amenity, for example by ensuring that the scale of sites in rural or semi-rural locations does not dominate the nearest settled community.
7.41 In addition, local authorities should give proper consideration to the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of occupants of sites.

7.42 Generally speaking, these issues are site specific and it is difficult to identify any general implications for the identification of broad locations.

**Recommended Broad Locations**

7.43 Taking into consideration the themes and criteria outlined above, broad locations can be identified for the purposes of the subsequent identification of specific sites by the Council for use in development management decision making.

**Residential Sites**

7.44 The broad locations for residential Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites should include land within 1 mile of the edge of main urban areas, towns and larger villages.

7.45 Within each broad location, the same absolute constraints should be avoided that are set out in Paragraph 7.36.

7.46 Within each broad location, proximity to services should be a key consideration. An assessment of sites should take into consideration the distance from each site to health, education, welfare services and employment opportunities and if opportunities exist for residents to access public transport services.

7.47 The identification of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople residential sites should focus on the broad locations and should take into account where the need arises and the capacity of local infrastructure to determine the most appropriate broad location to commence the site search.

7.48 If suitable sites cannot be identified within the most appropriate broad location(s), other broad locations should be investigated before specific site locations are considered.

7.49 The needs assessment has concluded that there is a local need for 35 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and no further provision for Travelling Showpeople. Therefore the Council should investigate public sites within the most sustainable broad locations, particularly in locations where there is good access to main facilities and services such as local hospitals and schools.

7.50 The Council should be reasonably flexible about the location of small private sites and should consider sites outside but close to the broad locations.

**Transit sites or temporary stopping places**

7.51 As a new transit site has recently opened in South Norfolk this study does not identify need at this time for additional transit provision. However should the need be identified in the future the broad locations for additional transit sites or temporary stopping places should be located adjacent to the A11, A140 or A143.

7.52 The Council and National Park Authority could also consider allowing a pitch within or adjacent to existing private residential sites to accommodate the needs of seasonal visitors to existing families.
8. Conclusions

Introduction

8.1 This chapter brings together the evidence presented earlier in the report to provide some key policy conclusions for South Norfolk. It focuses upon the key issues of current and future site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and also Travelling Showpeople.

Gypsy and Traveller Future Pitch Provision

8.2 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated extra pitch provision required for Gypsies and Travellers to 2031 in South Norfolk is 35 pitches. These figures should be seen as the projected amount of provision which is necessary to meet the statutory obligations towards identifiable needs of the population arising in the area.

8.3 The table below shows the provision required by type of site in 5 year time periods, and a final 2 year period to 2031. This is based upon addressing any current backlog of need where it arises in the next 5 years and then projecting forward household growth based upon the size of the existing on-site population. The figure for the period 2014-2019 is made up of immediate need from unauthorised sites and temporary planning permissions (5), and a proportion of the new household formation (3).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommended Broad Locations

8.4 Taking into consideration the themes and criteria outlined above, broad locations can be identified for the purposes of the subsequent identification of specific sites by the Council for use in development management decision making.

Residential Sites

8.5 The broad locations for residential Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites should include land within 1 mile of the edge of main urban areas, towns and larger villages.

8.6 Within each broad location, the following absolute constraints should be avoided:
» Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and other sites of importance for nature conservation.
» Ancient Woodland.
» Areas at high risk of flooding.
» Historic Battlefields.
» Historic parks and gardens.
» Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

8.7 Within each broad location, proximity to services should be a key consideration. An assessment of sites should take into consideration the distance from each site to health, education, welfare services and employment opportunities and if opportunities exist for residents to access public transport services.

8.8 The identification of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople residential sites should focus on the broad locations and should take into account where the need arises and the capacity of local infrastructure to determine the most appropriate broad location to commence the site search.

8.9 If suitable sites cannot be identified within the most appropriate broad location(s), other broad locations should be investigated before specific site locations are considered.

8.10 The needs assessment has concluded that there is a local need for 35 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and no further provision for Travelling Showpeople. Therefore the Council should investigate public sites within the most sustainable broad locations, particularly in locations where there is good access to main facilities and services such as local hospitals and schools.

8.11 The Councils should be reasonably flexible about the location of small private sites and should consider sites outside but close to the broad locations.

Transit Provision

8.12 A public transit site both provides a place for households in transit to an area and also a mechanism for greater enforcement action against inappropriate unauthorised encampments.

8.13 Evidence provided by stakeholders and data from the Council indicates that, whilst there have been large numbers of unauthorised caravans in recent years, these have reduced dramatically from over 100 in July 2008 to 15 in July 2013. In addition only 7 unauthorised caravans were identified during the study period.

8.14 Given that a new transit site has recently opened at Bawburgh and that it has not been fully occupied since it opened, and that the current unauthorised caravans are included in our recommendation to be provided for on permanent pitches, our recommendation would be for no additional transit provision in South Norfolk.

8.15 However should the need be identified in the future the broad locations for additional transit sites or temporary stopping places should be located adjacent to the A11, A140 or A143. The Council could consider whether it should provide a site to the south of the district to complement the existing facility
located in the northern part of the district. This may even take the form of a shared facility with Mid Suffolk District Council.

8.16 The Council and Broads Authority could also consider allowing a pitch within or adjacent to existing private residential sites to accommodate the needs of seasonal visitors to existing families.

**Travelling Showpeople Requirements**

8.17 Planning records indicate that there is one small Travelling Showpeople yard in South Norfolk. During the stakeholder interviews Officers from South Norfolk Council did not provide any information relating to this yard. Staff from ORS have been unable to visit this yard but planning records indicate that this is a small family yard and that there is sufficient space on the yard to meet any future needs that may arise.

8.18 As such we would **not recommend any further provision for Travelling Showpeople** in South Norfolk, but will endeavour to make contact with residents living on the yard to ascertain whether they have any additional needs.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

8.19 As a result of the outcomes of the interviews with stakeholders ORS would recommend that the Council explore a range of opportunities in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

8.20 The following ideas could help improve services and strengthen joint working and ORS would recommend that the Council take these on board:

- Improving the way and amount of consultation with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in South Norfolk and the wider area;

- Local authorities in Norfolk should put in place measures to enable elected Members and other stakeholders including Registered Providers to improve their understanding of the issues that affect Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople such as providing training;

- Consideration should be to encourage Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to participate in these sessions, and for elected Members and other stakeholders to make visits to sites where planning permission is being sought to engage with residents and seek their views on the development proposals;

- More work needs to be undertaken with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople regarding domestic and sexual violence against both sexes to build awareness of how to deal positively with relationship differences in terms of what is right both morally and legally;

- Additional and specific support should be provided to Gypsies and Travellers seeking and living in bricks and mortar accommodation, most likely to be affordable housing. This could help these tenants to sustain their tenancies;

- Communication networks need to be improved with members of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities across Norfolk in order to ensure that improvements
can be made to sites, such as safe access for emergency services and consultation activities generally;

- Managers of sites in Norfolk should liaise with the local emergency services such as the Fire Service so they can speak with residents about issues around fire safety.

### 8.21 Some priorities to discuss with neighbouring authorities could include:

- Monitoring current sites to identify over or under occupation and monitor the level of private sites being applied for as this could indicate a need to update GTAAs for example;
- Updating their understanding in their area by undertaking or refreshing GTAAs;
- Looking at existing sites to see whether there is the potential to meet identified need and/or to find or the need to find new sites;
- Updating policies to ensure any site identified will be assessed clearly and effectively to ensure that site delivery is achieved;
- Informing Gypsies and Travellers about local authority boundaries when undertaking GTAAs or site identification by providing clear maps.

Fire safety should also be a priority for all types of sites across Norfolk and that those designing, developing, managing and living on sites should know who to contact for fire safety advice.

### 8.22 The Council may also wish to consider the following recommendations that ORS believe will also help to improve how the Council, neighbouring local authorities and other local stakeholders engage with and provide services for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

- Develop a methodology for gathering and recording information from residents using the new transit site and that this is undertaken as soon as possible. Such an approach will ensure the ability to compare data so that any concerns or indeed trends are able to be acted upon and that a value for money exercise is feasible;
- An officer of the Council preferably from housing or strategic housing attend the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group accommodation sub-group, or a representative from the Greater Norwich Housing Partnership attends in order to report back thus improving partnership working in relation to the accommodation issues of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
- Make improvements in relation to partnership working between South Norfolk and RP housing departments because some of those interviewed appear to think that site accommodation is a planning issue and not part of accommodation provision more generally;
- Public bodies such as Police, Fire, Health etc. should be provided with relevant information regarding sites in each local authority area as there appears to be some confusion as to where sites are, what type of sites there are and in which local authority area they are in.
Meetings could be held with those households living on sites to discuss how best to communicate the outcomes of this study and subsequent Local Plan documents, and what language to use.
## Appendix A: Gypsy and Traveller Sites in South Norfolk (April 2014)

### Gypsy and Traveller Sites in South Norfolk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Number of Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Sites</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundwell</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks Green</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawburgh (Transit site)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON PUBLIC SITES</strong></td>
<td><strong>26 (6)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sites with Permanent Permission</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carleton Rode 1</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carleton Rode 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easton 1</td>
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<td>Easton 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton 3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flordon</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton Greenways</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich Common</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spooner Row</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tharston</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Abbots</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON PRIVATE SITES WITH PERMANENT PERMISSION</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sites with Temporary Permission</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forncett St Peter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON PRIVATE SITES WITH TEMPORARY PERMISSION</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tolerated Sites – Long-term without planning permission</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aslacton</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Needham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stockton A146</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wortwell</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON LONG-TERM TOLERATED PRIVATE SITES</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unauthorised Developments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Costessey</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diss</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harleston</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morley St Botolph</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Bricks & Mortar Adverts

Friends, Families of Travellers – May 2014

we seek to end racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers, whatever their ethnicity, culture or background, whether settled or mobile, and to protect the right to pursue a nomadic way of life

Community Noticeboard
Welcome to the FFT noticeboard featuring events, campaigns, jobs, funding opportunities, resources and more.....

Click here to send us your events and news.

Views expressed on this noticeboard are not necessarily those of FFT. Items for sale are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by FFT.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is an independent research company with experience in carrying out Accommodation Assessments across the country. These assessments must be carried out by every local authority to inform how many new pitches and sites will need to be provided in the future.

ORS would like to speak to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are looking to develop a site/yard or live in bricks and mortar and would prefer to live on a site/yard in any of the following areas: Birmingham; South Norfolk; Eastleigh and Southampton; Hyndburn Borough; Wokingham; Windsor and Maidenhead; and West Berkshire.

If you would like to speak to ORS about your accommodation needs, please contact Claire Thomas on (01792) 535337 or email Claire.Thomas@ors.org.uk.
Stormy weather at Beaconsfield
but the show goes on

By Desmond FitzGerald

The annual Beaconsfield Charter Fair, the 74th holding of the Buckinghamshire’s Trade Town event, took place on May 10, which Thursday fell on a Saturday. Once more there were some surprises, with showers across the fair’s four Entries (roads) that radiate from the central roundabout.

However, once again there were gaps across the fair, especially in the Market and Aylesbury-Ends, with both the forecast stormy weather, with gusting winds, and the fear of being a better weekend's business elsewhere due to other events, influencing traders to leave their goods under hoods or indeed to leave their stands altogether.

This position has seen several varied gaps across the years and the Loop of More proved as capable as any and surprisingly visible as that. That it was power in height but then the traditional Windbreakers and significantly

lower than the newer Broom, you might notice its advantage here.

The windy conditions that we’d expected on Thursday and were set to continue throughout the weekend meant that Bridget Burton’s Broom was unlikely to pull on. It was standing by in the nearby Borough Stein in Ruffle’s yard waiting for the wind to die down. However, did and the ride had to be replaced on its position in the London End, the highest point of the fair. Amd, with his colleague stewards of visibility uniform, Bill Pettigrew, Phillip Steeple and London Section Vice Chairman John Edwards among them.

Theatrical pull-out of rides and attractions, with some arriving

on the morning of Saturday’s final day, but, as ever there were still some horses parked on side positions that have to moved.

As part of the legal and logistical duties of holding the fair, special road closures and diversionary signs were placed across the fair. It’s an important consideration, with the adjacent M4 nearby.

The alternative route in an emergency through the Parkland used by the lat, so as extra diversionary route is needed.

The numbers of local residents of all ages who get to see the pull on huge annually, their sites visited by fargung

enthusiasts drawn from across the country, along with all our Peggins as far official from Hall Farm Estates, the Charter Trustees, and town Clerk, Mr. Smith in all regards. The Town Clerk officially read out the Charter proclamation at each of the four Ends, ahead of the official possession of the streets from 6:00pm.

Harry Pederson, returning with his build up of Dodson’s in the London End fer a second year, where John PAN’s Edward and Wenonvd-Wed’s Wheel are usually seen.

They arched drawn by a late Flander’s-Brotherly, to be celebrated the Governor

Continued on page 2
Appendix C: Additional Stakeholder Views

Community Cohesion

When asked to consider whether there were any issues in relation to community cohesion either between Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities or between these communities and the settled community no specific issues in South Norfolk were recorded. Those interviewed were of the view that the public and private sites in Norfolk have no issues with regard to community cohesion and there are no areas where public authorities are not able to feel they can attend site, if there is a need to do so. One Officer from a neighbouring authority confirmed they had however received one report of a hate crime from a Gypsy or Traveller who had moved into settled accommodation.

Some interviewees gave the opinion that when there is an encampment, an unauthorised development or a new site is being submitted for planning, the public are immediately concerned and issues arise with Gypsies or Travellers and local settled residents. However, when sites are established few issues arise between the settled community and residents.

Those being interviewed for GTAAs often report that the settled community have a fear of Gypsies and Travellers which is not helped by the media. Some interviewees who have direct experience of working with Gypsies and Travellers in particular, highlighted that these communities are occasionally blamed for ASB such as fly tipping or when rubbish is left on an unauthorised encampment, but when further investigations have been carried out the culprits have been found to be local residents. It was also reported there are sometimes internal family feuds and also specific groups of Gypsies and Travellers, such as Irish Travellers and English Gypsies, who appear unwilling to live on the same site due to cultural differences; this can lead to sites needing to become specific to either one or the other.

Those interviewed suggested the following ideas when new sites are being developed:

» They need to be for specific groups of Gypsies or Travellers as mixed sites, unless robust management is in place from the start, will be difficult to manage;

» They need to be for specific groups of Gypsies or Travellers (especially if they are related) as this helps build stronger communities;

» The settled community in the vicinity should be invited to visit any existing sites so they can see for themselves what a site looks like and meet Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople face-to-face.

It was suggested there is a need for MPs, Council Members and Officers working for local authorities in Norfolk to receive training on issues that affect and impact on Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and wherever possible, have an opportunity to meet members of these communities who live
in areas they represent. This is considered by ORS to be a key area for any local authority aiming to improve community cohesion within its district.

Those stakeholders who had experience of housing Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in bricks and mortar accommodation had few specific issues or examples to report but more generalised comments were recorded. One interviewee noted that there appears to be some negative feelings from the settled community towards Gypsies and Travellers living in affordable housing. Complaints by the settled community ranged from the numbers of visitors, large bonfires and the number of vehicles, and this can sometimes arise as soon as a Gypsy or Traveller moves into a property; these types of complaints are obviously not unique to Gypsies or Travellers. Some stakeholders believed that additional specific housing support is required for Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation.

One stakeholder who has direct experience of supporting Gypsy or Travelling communities highlighted the difficulties in inspiring the younger generation to enable change for their communities and this can cause tensions. It was suggested there is a need to support, mentor and educate young people within Gypsy and Traveller families in order to develop role models for young people to aspire to.

No issues in relation to Travelling Showpeople and the settled community were reported. One stakeholder did give the view, however, that issues can arise relating to community cohesion within the Travelling Showpeople community because there is a hierarchy where those with the larger rides will have respect and influence, whilst those with side stalls for example will have less authority.

**Health and Well-being**

When considering access to health services interviewees argued that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are able to access health services in South Norfolk and the wider area. Some held the view that Gypsies and Travellers who are transient may be less able to access health services than those living on permanent sites, especially with regard to registering with a GP for a short period of time; however with NHS walk-in centres this is now less of a challenge.

Some interviewees had a view that Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to visit A&E as they have a reactive rather than a proactive approach to managing their health. However, it was highlighted that there are health issues for these communities and national research has evidenced lower life expectancy and higher rates of diabetes and asthma than those in the settled community. It was also reported that members of the Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople communities are sometimes reluctant and/or sceptical of engaging with services they have little contact with or where there are cultural taboos such as mental health or domestic violence.

The health and well-being of Gypsies and Travellers is widely known to be significantly lower than other communities in the UK and these communities are harder to engage with as well as being less likely to access health and support services. It is widely reported that improving site access and accommodation improves the health and well-being outcomes for these communities. The Council may wish to consider approaching the local health authority to see what initiatives in relation to improving the health of residents on sites in the area and whether there are any specific areas that residents would like to address. One good practice example is that of a project led by Health Promotion Devon’s Inequalities Team Community Development Worker for Gypsies and Travellers (Northern Devon Healthcare Trust), in
conjunction with Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council, with input from Health Promotion Devon staff. The objectives of the project\(^6\) were to “develop an intervention combining training and community development work with Gypsy & Traveller communities in Devon in order to:

- Increase uptake of smoking cessation services by community members;
- Provide up to 6 community members with skills to support reducing the harms of smoking in their communities;
- Encourage community members to be health champions promoting positive alternatives to smoking which improve health & wellbeing.

**Education**

The early age at which Gypsy and Traveller children leave education, levels of attainment, the levels of absenteeism and the numbers who are home educated are areas of concern for some interviewees. It was generally agreed, however, that access to education and the quality of education being received by Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople has improved over the last 10 years.

Stakeholders more directly involved with Gypsies and Travellers explained that Gypsy and Traveller children, girls in particular, continue to leave education to help with domestic chores and childcare once they reach high school age and there is a tradition for boys to leave school around 13 to help their fathers. Attendance by Gypsy and Traveller children has historically been lower than the settled community, but in recent years, especially at primary level, attendance has improved nationally.

Some stakeholders reported an increase in Gypsies and Travellers wishing to remain in one area so children can attend school and older people or those with health/disability needs can access health services. It was also reported that when Gypsies or Travellers are staying in refuges, children regularly attend school and there are no issues in relation to absenteeism. It is believed this is because of the additional support and encouragement given to mothers which helps them to sustain their children’s attendance during the course of their stay; whether or not it continues once mothers leave refuges is not known.

One concern raised in relation to education is that there are a number of Gypsies and Travellers who are considered to be NEETs\(^7\) and who are unlikely to find suitable skills and/or trades. Because of the changes in legislation in relation to traditional employment such as scrap metal dealing, the traditional employment routes will become difficult and young people will need to improve their skills and qualifications in order to improve their employment prospects.

Another concern raised by those interviewed was in relation to the numbers who are currently “home” educating. These concerns were about the quality of the education being given. Some have the view that greater responsibility is needed from parents to ensure their children receive a good standard of education, however the relevant authority needs to check that the children receiving home education are being taught to a standard that can be measured and this will require some effort.

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\(^7\) Definition: 15-24 years old not in Education, Employment or Training
It is understood that Traveller Education (outreach) Officers and Advisors are now taking a positive approach and are engaging with parents who are home educating and are also working closely with schools in order to encourage more children to attend school.

On another positive note praise was given to the Norfolk Traveller Education Service who, interviewees believe, have improved both attainment and attendance for members of these communities in Norfolk.

**Employment**

When asked about employment opportunities respondents held that view that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will not want or need to access employment services as they are likely to be self-employed and unlikely to seek employment outside of their communities.

One stakeholder highlighted that because of recent changes in legislation relating to dealing in cash, the cost of diesel and being registered to deal in scrap metal some areas of work sometimes associated with Gypsies or Travellers are no longer sustainable. The stakeholder argued that there may be a need for these communities to be assisted in finding out their options with regard to employment opportunities in order they are well informed and able to access employment advice services.

Another obstacle for members of these communities in accessing employment services and opportunities was believed to be innate prejudice from the settled community when a job application is received from a Gypsy or a Traveller living on a site because it could be discarded; therefore the majority have only one option but to be self-employed or receive benefits. It was also mentioned during interviews about address based discrimination; one way to tackle this is to ensure that site names do not use the term “site”, which neither of the public sites in South Norfolk does.

With the knowledge that traditional employment opportunities are decreasing and the number of NEETs on public sites already exist, the Council may wish to consider requesting whether residents would like some career advice for younger people or support to aspire to apprenticeship schemes in the future.

**Consultation Activities**

Respondents gave a view that regular consultation with Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in Norfolk does not happen other than when there is specific consultation required for a specific reason such as GTAAs, site identification or the Local Plan. When consultation is undertaken national bodies such as the National Gypsy and Traveller Federation will be contacted and local consultation is carried out by involving the Norfolk and Suffolk Roma, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer who visits all public sites regularly and knows how best to engage with residents. Some interviewees also commented that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities also attend the Norfolk and Suffolk Liaison Group, although concerns were raised as to whether those living on private sites are not being given the opportunity to take part in any consultation.

Those interviewed are of the view that if consultation was undertaken it would be by face-to-face contact, via telephone or through focus groups; these methods are considered preferable to using written formats due to the low levels literacy often associated with Gypsies and Travellers.
One stakeholder was of the view that consultation was not regularly undertaken on any sites because they felt that the outcomes could falsely raise expectations of those living on the sites.

On a positive note it was confirmed that inter-agency meetings are held regularly with residents of the two public sites in South Norfolk.

During the stakeholder engagement interviews it was suggested that when consultation is undertaken by those in authority the language that is used is not always clear to residents for example the use of jargon. It is reported that some Gypsies or Travellers find it difficult to understand what is being asked of them or what benefits there could be for them to be involved and/or through the responses they make. This means they often do not engage or if they do agree to being interviewed, they do not turn up and therefore they are acting against their own interests.

It was suggested that through general engagement and encouragement Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and mortar accommodation are becoming involved in the wider community because trust has improved and in addition to this one stakeholder highlighted work that been undertaken to engage with Travelling Showpeople and complimented South Norfolk on that work. It was suggested that working together in Norfolk and across the country could be re-established to enable positive engagement with the aim of resolving any unmet needs of the Travelling Showpeople community in particular.