

NORTH TYNESIDE GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2014



July 2014



Opinion Research Services The Strand, Swansea SA1 1AF
Nigel Moore, Dr Claire Thomas and Steve Jarman
enquiries: 01792 535300 · info@ors.org.uk · www.ors.org.uk

© Copyright July 2014

Contents

1. Introduction	5
The Survey	5
Definitions	5
Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers	6
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites	8
Links to the National Planning Policy Framework	9
Tackling Inequalities for Gypsy and Traveller Communities	10
Funding for New Sites	11
2. Research Methodology	12
Stage 1: Desk-Based Research	12
Stage 2: Stakeholder Engagement	13
Stage 3: Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities	13
Stage 4: Survey of Travelling Communities	14
Stage 5: Bricks and Mortar Households	14
Stage 6: Current and Future Pitch/Plot Requirements	14
Stage 7: Conclusions	15
3. Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Population	16
Evidence and Local Policy Background	16
North Tyneside Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Population	17
UK Census of Population 2011	20
Caravan Count	21
4. Stakeholder Consultation	22
Introduction	22
North Tyneside	23
Travelling Showpeople	23
Gypsies and Travellers	23
Travellers in Bricks and Mortar	24
Unauthorised Encampments	24
Cross Border Issues and the Duty to Cooperate	25
Conclusions and Areas of Consideration	25
Neighbouring Authorities	25
Durham County Council	25

Gateshead Council.....	26
Newcastle City Council	27
Northumberland County Council	27
South Tyneside Council	28
Sunderland City Council.....	28
Conclusions and Areas for Consideration.....	29
5. Engagement with Travelling Communities.....	30
6. Future Site Provision	31
Pitch Provision	31
Supply of pitches	31
Current Need	31
Future Need.....	31
Current Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision	32
Additional Site Provision: Current Need.....	32
Bricks and Mortar and Waiting Lists.....	32
Overcrowded Households	33
Waiting Lists for Public Sites.....	33
Temporary Planning Permissions	33
In-migration from Other Sources	34
Summary of Permanent Needs in North Tyneside for Gypsies and Travellers	35
Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision	35
Travelling Showpeople	36
7. Conclusions.....	37
Introduction.....	37
Gypsy and Traveller Future Pitch Provision.....	37
Travelling Showperson Requirements.....	37
Transit or Emergency Stopping Site Provision.....	37
Other Areas for Consideration from the Stakeholder Interviews	37
Recommendations.....	38
Appendix 1.....	39
Advert on Friends Families and Travellers Community Noticeboard.....	39

1. Introduction

The Survey

^{1.01} Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by North Tyneside Council to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

^{1.02} The study seeks to provide an evidence base to enable the authority to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies and 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 and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in North Tyneside for the Local Plan period until 2032.

^{1.03} We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

Definitions

^{1.04} 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 dependents' 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).

^{1.05} Within the main definition of Gypsies and Travellers, there are a number of main cultural groups which include:

- » Romany Gypsies;
- » Irish Travellers; and
- » New Travellers.

^{1.06} Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2010.

^{1.07} Alongside Gypsies and Travellers, a further group to be considered are 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 dependents' more localized 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).

^{1.08} One of the main considerations of studies such as this is the current and future provision of pitches and sites for Gypsies and Travellers. For Gypsies and Travellers 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 terms most commonly used are a “plot” for the space occupied by one household, and a “yard” for a collection of plots (typically occupied exclusively 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 North Tyneside.

^{1.09} The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of Gypsy and Traveller site is the publicly-provided residential site, which is provided by the local authority or a registered provider (usually a housing association). Places on public sites can be obtained through a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the licensees (similar to social housing).

^{1.10} The alternative to public residential sites is private residential sites for Gypsies and 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.

^{1.11} The Gypsy and 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 weeks to a period of months. An alternative is an “emergency stopping place”. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time for which someone can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities. Both of these two types of site are designed to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers whilst they travel.

^{1.12} Further considerations in the Gypsy and Traveller population are “unauthorised developments” and “unauthorised encampments”. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers, 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.

Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

^{1.13} Decision-making for policy concerning Gypsies and 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 and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

- » Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012;
- » National Planning Policy Framework 2012;
- » Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance October 2007;

- » Environmental Protection Act 1990 for statutory nuisance provisions;
- » The Human Rights Act 1998, when making decisions and welfare assessments;
- » The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended);
- » Homelessness Legislation and Allocation Policies;
- » Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (sections 61, 62);
- » 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 the this element of government guidance;
- » Housing Act 1996 in respect of homelessness.
- » National Planning Practice Framework Guidance 2014

^{1.14} To focus on Gypsies and Travellers, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (Sections 77, 78) is particularly important with regard to the issue of planning for Gypsy and Traveller site provision. This repealed the duty of local authorities to provide appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. However, Circular 1/94 did support maintaining existing sites and stated that appropriate future site provision should be considered.

^{1.15} For site provision, the previous Labour Government guidance focused on increasing site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and encouraging local authorities to have a more inclusive approach to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within their Housing Needs Assessment. The Housing Act 2004 required 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.

^{1.16} 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.

^{1.17} The Coalition Government announced that the previous government's thinking contained in 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites' (Circular 01/06) was to be repealed, along with the Regional Spatial Strategies which were used to allocate pitch provision to local authorities. The Department of Communities and Local Government (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.

^{1.18} More recently additional changes have been set out in a letter from Brandon Lewis, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, 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

^{1.19} The document Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) sets out the direction of government policy. Among other objectives the new policies' aims in respect of Traveller sites are (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, pages 1-2):

- » that 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; and

- » 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:

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.
(Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG, March 2012, page 3)

^{1.21} Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

- » Identify, and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets based on analysis of need;
- » identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 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 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; and,
- » protect local amenity and environment.

^{1.22} In circumstances where a GTAA, or other relevant assessment, confirms that there is no 'need' for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (pages 3-4) requires that :

".....criteria-based policies should be included [into local plans] 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".

Links to the National Planning Policy Framework

^{1.23} A key issue is the link between Planning Policy for Traveller Sites which came into force in March 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework, also from March 2012. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites is closely linked to the National Planning Policy Framework, but is to be viewed as a separate document.

^{1.24} ORS have sought clarification of this relationship from CLG and have been advised that Planning Policy for Traveller Sites should be viewed effectively as a separate document with little overlap. In particular, ORS queried paragraph 47 and 159 of the National Planning Policy Framework. 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.

Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20%.'

^{1.25} While paragraph 159 states that:

'Local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. They should:

Prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period which:

Meets household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change; addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes).'

^{1.26} ORS have been informed by CLG that there is 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 confirmed 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.

Tackling Inequalities for Gypsy and Traveller Communities

^{1.27} In April 2012 the government issued a further document relating to Gypsies and Travellers in the form of 'Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers' (CLG, April 2012).

^{1.28} The 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 £60m 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 for New Sites

- ^{1.29} The Coalition Government policies also involved financial incentives for new affordable pitch provision in the form of the New Homes Bonus. For all new annual supply of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches/plots on local authority or Registered Social Landlord owned and managed sites, local councils 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 pounds per pitch.
- ^{1.30} 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 invested £16.3m in 26 schemes across the country to provide 88 new or additional pitches and 179 improved pitches. The HCA welcomes bids from local authorities, housing associations and traveller community groups working with Registered Providers.
- ^{1.31} The HCA has now confirmed allocations for all of its £60m 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.
- ^{1.32} 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. Providers are advised to continue to work closely with HCA area teams to develop their proposals should any funding become available.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 This section sets out the methodology we have followed to deliver the outputs for this new 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 and this has been updated in light of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, as well as recent changes set out by the Planning Minister in March 2014. This is an evolving methodology that has been adaptive to recent changes in planning policy as well as the outcomes of Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals that ORS have been involved in. The methodology used by ORS has been challenged on several occasions and at both Examinations and Appeals and whilst Planning Inspectors have ruled against the outcomes of previous GTAA Studies at times, the methodology itself has not been called into question. More recently ORS were approached by the Welsh Government to provide advice to support the development of new Gypsy and Traveller Policy for Wales on the basis of our considerable experience in undertaking GTAA studies across the UK, having completed studies for over 120 local authorities since the PPTS was published in 2012.

2.2 The stages below provide a summary of the process undertaken by ORS, with more information on each stage provided in the appropriate section of the report.

Stage 1: Desk-Based Research

2.3 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.
- » Detail of all authorised public and private sites and yards.
- » Site management records.
- » Waiting lists for public sites.
- » Biannual Traveller Caravan Counts.
- » Records of any unauthorised sites and encampments.
- » Relevant information from education and health services.
- » Information on planning applications and appeals.
- » Information on any other current enforcement actions.
- » Existing GTAAs and other relevant local studies.
- » Existing policy, guidance and best practice.

2.4 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

- 2.5 This study included extensive local stakeholder engagement. This involved a series of in-depth telephone interviews with Officers from Planning Policy, Development Management, Housing Strategy, Environmental Health and Property Services in North Tyneside Council.
- 2.6 In addition ORS conducted a telephone interview with a representative from the Showmen's Guild as part of the stakeholder consultation process.
- 2.7 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 and Travellers to an area;
 - » Identification of any seasonal fluctuations that may occur;
 - » Awareness of any occurrences of temporary stopping by Gypsies and 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; and
 - » Any other comments on the Gypsy and Traveller community in the study area.

Stage 3: Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities

- 2.8 Given the Duty to Co-operate, 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 those on wider travelling routes etc. 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 Planning Officers from the following neighbouring authorities and covered the same broad issues as the local stakeholder interviews. These were :
- » Gateshead Council;
 - » Newcastle City Council;
 - » South Tyneside Council;
 - » Sunderland City Council;
 - » Northumberland County Council; and
 - » Durham County Council.

Stage 4: Survey of Travelling Communities

- 2.9 Through the desk-based research and stakeholder interviews ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments in the study area.
- 2.10 ORS would normally seek 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) would be visited by experienced ORS researchers who would conduct 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 interviews would be based on a structure that would be agreed with the Council.

Stage 5: Bricks and Mortar Households

- 2.11 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 pitch in the study area.

Stage 6: Current and Future Pitch/Plot Requirements

- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 To identify need Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires an assessment for current and future pitch/plot 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/plots is to compare the supply of pitches/plots 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:

Supply of Pitches/Plots

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

Current Need

- 2.14 Total current need, which is not necessarily the need for additional pitches/plots 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/yards for which planning permission is not expected.
 - » Concealed households.
 - » Households in bricks and mortar accommodation wishing to move to sites/yards.
 - » Households on waiting lists for public sites/yards.
- 2.15 When identifying the components of current need it is important to address issues of double counting as individuals and households could be included in 1 or more of these categories of need.

Future Need

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

- » Households living on sites/yards with temporary planning permissions.
 - » New household formation.
 - » In-migration.
- 2.16 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.
- 2.17 All of these components of supply and need are presented in tables (one for Gypsies and Travellers and one for Travelling Showpeople) which identify the overall net requirements for current and future accommodation. 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 covering the Local Plan period to 2032.

Stage 7: Conclusions

- 2.18 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 North Tyneside.

3. Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Population

Evidence and Local Policy Background

The Tyne and Wear Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment 2009

^{3.01} The previous GTAA undertaken in the study area was the Tyne and Wear Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment 2009. The purpose of this study was to assess the level of need in the Tyne and Wear area (comprising the local authorities for Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland). In total the study concluded that between 2008 and 2018 the entire Tyne and Wear area would need to accommodate:

- 103 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers; and
- 27 plots for Travelling Showpeople.

^{3.02} The 2009 GTAA recommended there was a need for 8 additional pitches in North Tyneside during the period 2008-2013 and then a further 1 pitch for the period 2013-2018.

^{3.03} ORS have reviewed the methodology of the 2009 GTAA as part of this Study to assess the robustness of the recommendations made for future provision across the North Tyneside area. In short the following issues were identified:

- Notwithstanding the conclusions reached, the 2009 GTAA only extends over a period to 2018. It fails to provide adequate evidence for the full period of the emerging Local Plan (currently anticipated to run to 2032). In accordance with the Planning Policy for Travellers Sites, this does not provide a sound basis for identifying the full objectively assessed needs of the borough.
- Recommendations on the level of need within the Borough were derived from interviewing 28 households on unauthorised encampments across the full Tyne and Wear area. The 2009 GTAA found that only 2 households were seeking permanent pitches. The results from this exercise were then simply extrapolated across the full Tyne and Wear area to provide an estimate for households seeking to live in each area on permanent sites. For this GTAA we have focused only on the needs which can be directly linked to North Tyneside
- Through our review of the 2009 GTAA methodology, we found that no households interviewed at the time stated that they would wish to live on a site in North Tyneside and there is no evidence that households in transit in across Tyne and Wear area want to live on permanent or transit pitches within the borough.

^{3.04} Given the above critique, it is the opinion of ORS that there are a number of serious flaws with the methodology used in the 2009 GTAA and, as such, it does not provide a sound basis on which the emerging

Local Plan can proceed in planning for the future needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in North Tyneside. In direct contrast to our own methodology, used through this study in assessing existing and future needs within the borough, we are of the view that the 2009 GTAA fails to offer clear and demonstrable reasons as to why the requirements for additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers within the borough were previously identified.

3.05 For this reason, it is our opinion, that the findings of the 2009 GTAA should be disregarded. Equally, it is our recommendation that there are no sound reasons to conclude that there is any latent demand for Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, for instance an outstanding need for transit pitches for the period 2008 to 2013 identified in the T&W Study, which remains to be met.

Local Planning Policy within North Tyneside

3.06 The North Tyneside Unitary Development Plan (UDP, 2002) included a criteria-based policy (Policy H14) against which applications for the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites would be assessed. No sites for Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople were allocated through the UDP.

3.07 The North Tyneside Local Plan Consultation Draft (LPCD, November 2013) was prepared whilst this GTAA was being prepared and as such did not benefit from up-to-date evidence on the future need for pitches for the Travelling Community in the Borough. Consequently no sites were proposed for allocation in the emerging Plan. However, in accordance with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Policy DM/7.14 in the emerging Local Plan outlines a criteria-based policy in the event that an application for development is submitted during the Plan period.

3.08 The nomadic nature of the travelling community means that this is a cross boundary issue. The Council has been working with other Local Planning Authorities in the North East in gathering evidence, and will continue to do so in finding appropriate accommodation for the travelling community.

North Tyneside Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Population

3.09 There are currently no public or transit sites in North Tyneside. In addition no private sites have been identified as part of this study. Research has also shown that the Council has not received any formal planning applications or indeed any pre-application enquiries, relating to providing a site or yard for the Gypsy and Traveller population or for Travelling Showpeople.

3.10 However there is a history of a small number of unauthorised Gypsy encampments occurring each year in North Tyneside.

3.11 The tables and maps below and overleaf show the number of encampments recorded on Council-owned land since 2005, and the number of encampments on private land between 2007 and 2013. This shows that there were a total of 26 unauthorised encampments on Council-owned land between 2005 and 2013, and 18 on private-owned land between 2007 and 2013. The figures in brackets indicate the number of encampments in any one location. In the opinion of ORS this does not represent a high figure. By means of comparison details of unauthorised encampments in neighbouring authorities show that in Northumberland there are between 60-65 each year, and in Sunderland there are also high numbers of short term encampments. Interviews with officers in these areas identified that these were mainly members of the Travelling Community en route to the Appleby Fair or Scotland as these areas are on the main travelling route to these destinations. Figures for Gateshead (4 in 3 years) and Newcastle (average 3

per year) are significantly lower as these areas are not seen to be on travelling routes. Therefore an average of 6 encampments a year on Council-owned and private land since 2007 is a low figure.

Figure 1

Instances of Unauthorised Encampments on Council-owned land 2005–2013

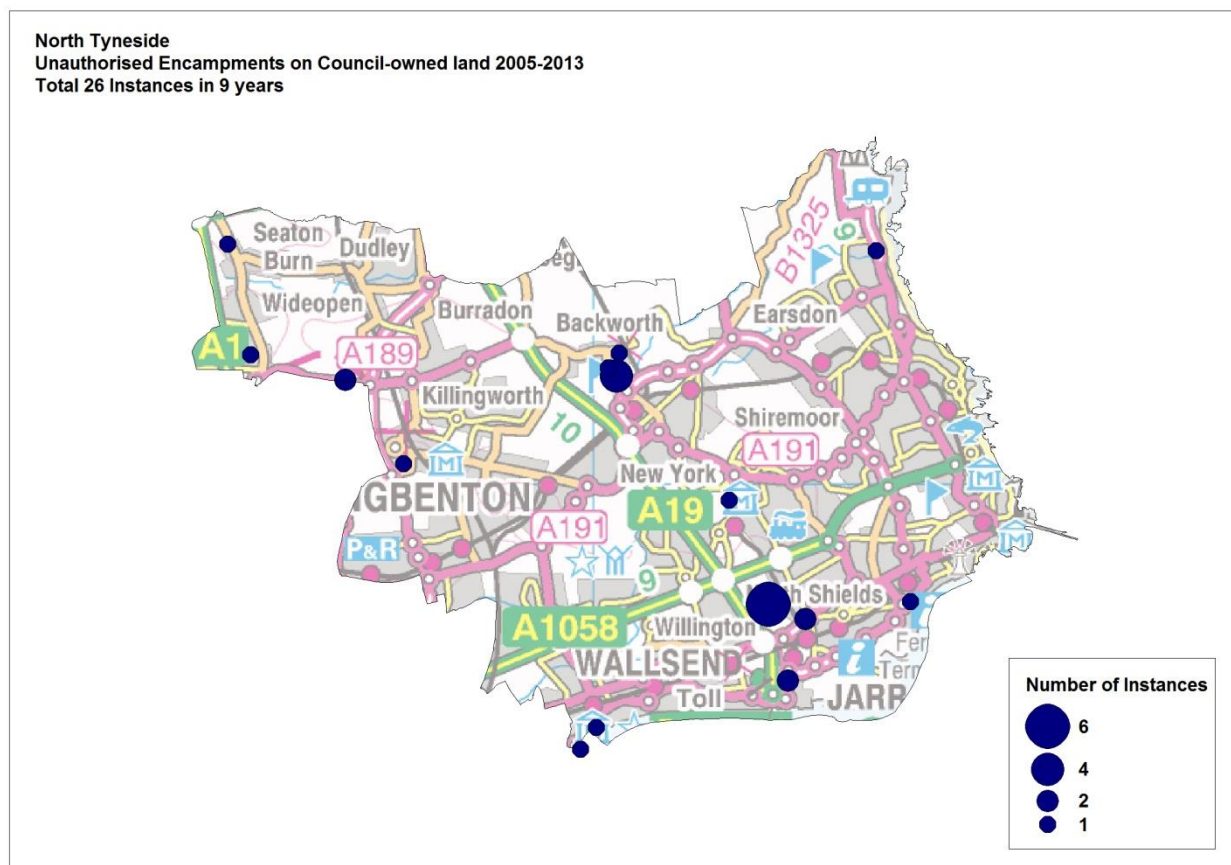


Figure 2

Unauthorised Encampments on Council Land: 2005–2013

Date Notified	Location	Notice Served
2005-06	Land at East Howdon	08/09/05
	Land at Sandy Lane Wideopen	19/10/05
	Land at Silverfox Way New York	15/12/05
2006-07	Land at Wallsend Road North Shields	27/4/06
	Land at East Howdon	16/5/06
	Land at Wallsend Road North Shields	2/7/06
	Land at Neptune Road Wallsend	31/8/06
2007-08	Land at Ecclestone Close Backworth	5/4/07
	Flatworth Playing Fields North Shields	6/6/07
	Briardene Car Park Whitley Bay	14/8/07
	Ecclestone Close Backworth	28/11/07

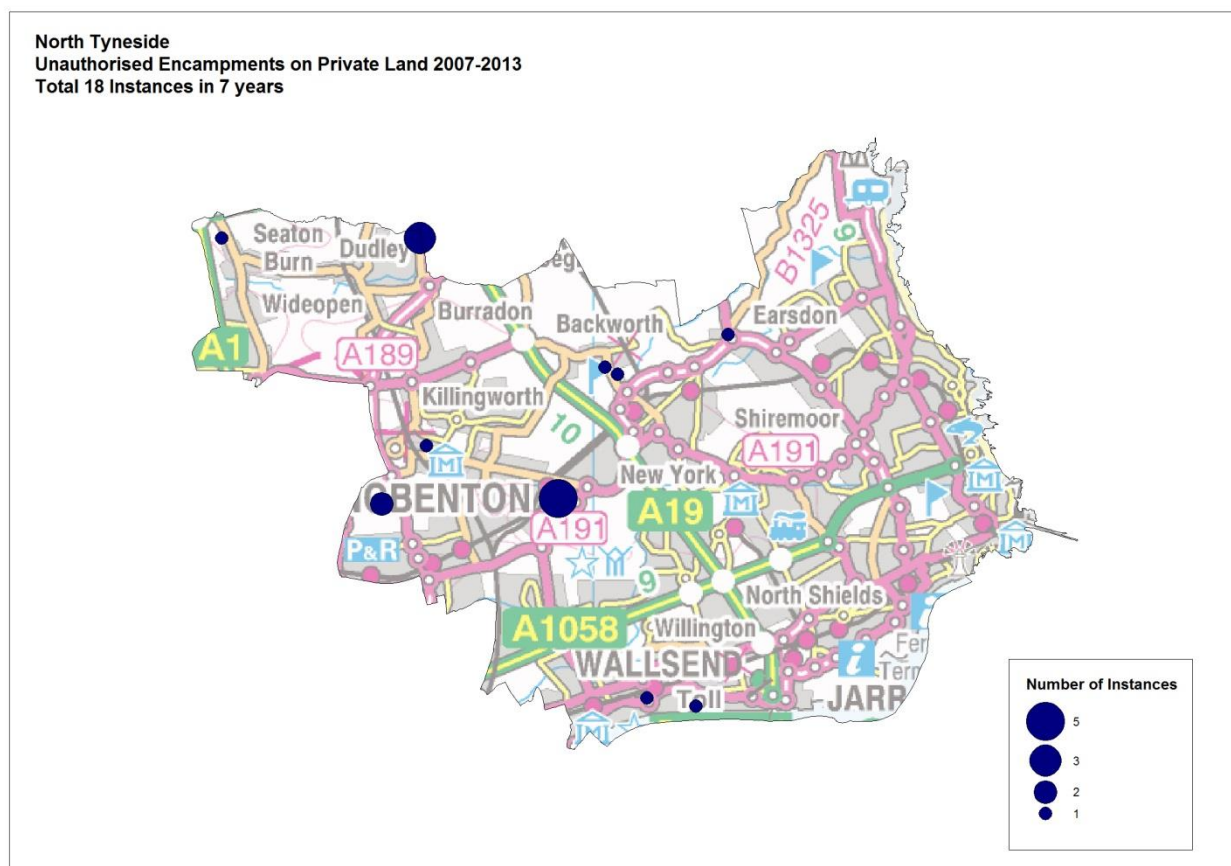
2008-09	Land at Eccleston Close Backworth	4/8/08
	Trinity Road Whitley Bay	7/11/08
	Benton Lane West Moor	Site vacated
	Eccleston Close Backworth	27/1/09
2009-10	No instances on Council owned land	
2010-11	Land at Flatworth Playing Fields	21/5/10
	Land at Birchwood Avenue Wideopen	28/5/10
	Land at Flatworth Playing Fields	14/6/10
	Former Sandy Lane Wideopen	Site vacated
2011-12	Land at Church Road Backworth	10/6/11
	Flatworth Playing Field North Shields	8/8/11
2012-13	Land at Brenkley Way Seaton Burn	24/5/12
2013-14	Land at Station Road Backworth	5/4/13
	Flatworth Playing Fields North Shields	10/6/13
	Gainers Terrace Wallsend	1/8/13
	Flatworth Playing Fields North Shields	4/9/13
2014/15	Flatworth Playing Fields North Shields	Site vacated
	Flatworth Playing Fields North Shields	7/5/2014

Figure 3
Unauthorised Encampments on Private Land: 2007–2013

Date Notified	Location	Number of Vans	Date Vacated
2007/08			
06/01/2007	Swan Hunters, Hadrian Road, Wallsend	12	12/02/2007
12/01/2007	O'Briens Site, Hadrian Road, Wallsend	12	26/02/2007
05/09/2007	North Tyne Industrial Estate, Benton	2	06/09/2007
02/10/2007	North Tyne Industrial Estate, Benton	2	02/10/2007
26/11/2007	North Tyne Industrial Estate, Benton	6	27/11/2007
2008/09			
18/06/2008	Front Street, Annitsford (Travelling Fair)	4	20/06/2008
20/06/2008	North Tyne Industrial Estate, Benton	8	30/06/2008
30/06/2008	Balliol Business Park, Longbenton	8	30/07/2008
18/07/2008	Balliol Business Park, Longbenton	8	20/07/2008
2009/10			
23/01/2009	North Tyne Industrial Estate, Benton	8	25/01/2009
05/10/2009	Front Street, Annitsford (Travelling Fair)	4	19/10/2009
2010/11			

06/10/2009	Front Street, Annitsford (Travelling Fair)	4	20/10/2010
2011/12			
None	No complaints/travellers identified		
2012/13			
11/07/2012	Bleazard Business Park, Seaton Burn	2	20/07/2012
17/07/2012	Hotspur South, Backworth	1	25/07/2012
04/08/2012	Ecclestone Close, Backworth	3	20/08/2012
2013/14			
08/04/2013	Old Stephenson House site Killingworth	4	15/04/2013
08/05/2013	Earsdon Road south side facing Earsdon (Part of Fair)	4	15/05/2013

Figure 4
Incidence of Unauthorised Encampments on private land 2007–2013



UK Census of Population 2011

^{3.12} The UK Census of Population 2011 included Gypsy and Travellers as a distinct ethnic category for the first time. Across the whole of England, around 55,000 people identified themselves as being Gypsies and Travellers. The evidence from the 2011 Census suggests that North Tyneside has a population of 29 Gypsy

and Traveller persons living in 15 households. However the figure of 29 persons is likely to be an underestimate of the total population due to some Gypsies and Travellers not declaring their ethnic status or indeed not completing the Census at all. It is also worth noting that the current categories used for the 2011 Census does not allow Travelling Showpeople to distinguish themselves as a separate ethnic grouping. The table below shows the Gypsy and Traveller population of North Tyneside compared to surrounding local authorities and shows that it has the lowest with only South Tyneside having a lower figure

Figure 5

Number of Gypsy and Traveller Persons in North Tyneside (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)

Local Authority	Number of Persons
Durham	467
Gateshead	87
Newcastle	163
North Tyneside	29
Northumberland	156
South Tyneside	9
Sunderland	70
Total	981

Caravan Count

- 3.13 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 the count is not only restricted to caravans lived in by ethnic Gypsies and Travellers, but also includes those occupied by non-traditional travellers.
- 3.14 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.
- 3.15 Data from the Caravan count shows that there were just 7 unauthorised caravans in July 2008 and 1 in July 2012. The counts also do not record any Showpeople caravans in the area since these counts started in 2012. These are counted separately each January. We would also 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.

4. Stakeholder Consultation

Introduction

- 4.01 In order to provide thoughtful consideration of the issues by a wide range of key stakeholders involved with Gypsy and Traveller issues, ORS conducted a total of 12 semi-structured interviews during January 2014.
- 4.02 A list of stakeholders was compiled by North Tyneside Council at the outset of the project. ORS reviewed this list for consistency with other studies to ensure it was comprehensive and fair. Each stakeholder received an email outlining the aims and objectives of the project and the interview timetable, which was followed up with a telephone call to arrange a suitable time to undertake the interview. The interviews were conducted via telephone and typically lasted between 30 and 90 minutes.
- 4.03 ORS spoke to five Council Officers representing North Tyneside, and a representative of the Showman's Guild of Great Britain (Northern Section). ORS also contacted three Elected Members and interviewed one. Another responded via email declining the invitation to take part in the study on the basis of little awareness of Gypsy and Traveller issues.
- 4.04 As stated in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Local Authorities have a duty to cooperate (S.110 Localism Act 2011) on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. In order to explore issues relating to cross border working, ORS interviewed a Planning Officer from each of the following six local authorities:
- » Durham County Council;
 - » Gateshead Borough Council;
 - » Newcastle City Council;
 - » Northumberland County Council;
 - » South Tyneside Council; and
 - » Sunderland City Council.
- 4.05 Themes covered in the interviews included: the need for additional accommodation provision and facilities; travelling patterns; the availability of land; accessing services; and work being done to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 4.06 Interviews allowed interested parties to reflect and feedback on the general situation - as well as how matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are currently handled and perceived within the study area and surrounding areas. Qualitative research of this type attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and is used to supplement the statistical information gathered through quantitative surveys of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities.
- 4.07 Importantly, this element of the study provided an opportunity for the research team to speak to stakeholders who are likely to be in contact with housed Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople with

the aim of identifying accommodation needs resulting from this group. ORS also placed an advert detailing the GTAA study and asking those in bricks and mortar accommodation to take part in a confidential interview on the Friends and Families of Travellers Facebook page, Travellers Times website and in the World's Fair publication. Despite these efforts, no contact was made with Travellers residing in bricks and mortar accommodation or other members of the travelling population. It is recommended by ORS that local authorities put in place robust systems to monitor the number of Gypsies and Travellers accommodated in bricks and mortar. This could be achieved through working with housing providers to record Gypsies and Travellers on monitoring forms and making contact with this group via health and education.

^{4.08} The views expressed in this section of the report represent a balanced summary of the views expressed by Council Officers, Elected Members and key stakeholders. In all cases they reflect the views of the individual concerned, rather than the official policy of their Council. Due to issues surrounding data protection, and in order to protect the anonymity of those who took part, this section presents a summary of the views expressed by interviewees and verbatim comments have not been used.

North Tyneside

Travelling Showpeople

^{4.09} Officers and Elected Members confirmed that there are no authorised or unauthorised yards/plots in North Tyneside and were not aware of any Travelling Showpeople in the area or any demand for accommodation from Showpeople living in neighbouring areas. Similar to Gypsies and Travellers there was no reason given by Officers as to why Travelling Showpeople have not expressed interest in settling in the area and have preferred to live in neighbouring areas, particularly Sunderland.

^{4.10} When this issue was explored with a representative of the Showman's Guild, it was felt that it could be the case that Showmen have bought land in North Tyneside but have not been able to obtain planning permission. However this is unlikely as North Tyneside Council confirmed that no planning applications or formal pre-application enquiries have been submitted.

^{4.11} The representative explained that North Tyneside may not be a popular place to settle because Showpeople tend to buy land in areas which have an existing community or where there are Travelling Showpeople living in houses. Evidence gathered by ORS in studies in surrounding areas also suggests that North Tyneside is not a favoured location for Travelling Showpeople to relocate to.

Gypsies and Travellers

^{4.12} Interviews with Officers and Elected Members confirmed that there are no authorised or unauthorised sites or pitches in North Tyneside. Officers were not aware of any planning or pre-planning applications. Officers could not provide any specific reasons why there has been no interest in settling in the area but assumed it could be that Travellers prefer to settle in the area south of the River Tyne and have no historical ties with the area. The Sunderland and South Tyneside GTAA 2014 shows that there is only one Gypsy and Traveller site in South Tyneside and none in Sunderland, but there are 3 Travelling Showpeople yards in Sunderland.

Travellers in Bricks and Mortar

- 4.13 Although the latest 2011 Census reports 29 Gypsy and Traveller persons living in bricks and mortar, Officers and Elected Members were unaware of any Gypsies and Travellers residing in this type of accommodation who would wish to participate in the study. The assumption here is that they are settled in their current accommodation and do not wish to move to a site.

Unauthorised Encampments

- 4.14 Officers and Elected Members confirmed the numbers of unauthorised encampments (on both private and public land) are generally felt to be low. This view is supported by ORS based on higher numbers of unauthorised encampments in other parts of the country. Data on unauthorised encampments (for private land) and property services (for public land) is collated by the Council. The size of the encampments are not routinely recorded but are said to be around three to four caravans. Details of unauthorised encampment can be found in Section 2 of this report and concur with the Officer views that the levels of unauthorised encampments in North Tyneside are low compared to many neighbouring authorities.

- 4.15 When asked why unauthorised encampments occur it is understood that they arise, not due to a lack of permanent accommodation, but for the following possible reasons:

- Travelling north to south (or vice versa) from Sunderland, South Tyneside and Durham into Northumberland and Scotland where there are more suitable permanent and/or temporary sites available; It could therefore be assumed that as North Tyneside is a small local authority, travellers simply pass through en-route to areas where there is transit provision or more accessible stopping places.
- Short stay camping before using the Ferry (North Shields to Europe for work); and
- Visiting housed families in the area.

- 4.16 Interviewees were also of the opinion that the numbers of unauthorised encampments are believed to be small, in comparison to some of its neighbouring authorities, because the area is not used as a stopping place when Travellers are en route to the annual Appleby Horse Fair. The Sunderland and South Tyneside GTAA 2014 confirms that there are more unauthorised encampments in Sunderland in particular.

The Appleby Horse Fair is an annual gathering of Gypsies and Travellers in the town of Appleby in Cumbria, which takes place on the first week in June, from Thursday to the following Wednesday, but this is essentially a weekend event. Appleby Fair is unique in Europe and, as well as attracting around 10,000 Gypsies and Travellers from all over the UK, it attracts over 30,000 other visitors. It transforms the town of Appleby for the week, as it normally has a population of around 2,500. Due the large number of Gypsies and Travellers who attend the fair from across the UK it does result in increased numbers of very seasonal unauthorised encampments and transit need in the weeks leading up to and after the fair.

- 4.17 When asked about how encampments are managed, it was explained that a Council Officer and an Officer from Northumbria Police will attend the site and present the Travellers with a standard request notice and investigate how long they intend to stay. Depending on the length of the stay and the potential harm to the environment, the encampment is either tolerated or moved on.

- 4.18 Overall, it was felt by those who were interviewed that, given there are no real issues stemming from the small numbers of encampments a formal transit site is not required.

Cross Border Issues and the Duty to Cooperate

- 4.19 Officers were not aware of any particular issues that require a joint approach. It was felt that if neighbouring authorities had identified any issues these would have been raised in the Duty to Cooperate meetings which are attended by planning Officers in the north (Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle) and the south (Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Durham) of the North East LEP area. Any issues identified at these meetings would have been fed into the 'Heads of Planning' group which meet to discuss important issues when required. The Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople issue was recently discussed during the development of the Memorandum of Understanding and the need to update the GTAA's was deemed a priority which has been, or is in the process of being, met by all the authorities.
- 4.20 Officers also referred to past North East working groups (particularly around the time that the Tyne and Wear GTAA was being developed and completed) and felt these had been useful in establishing a point of contact and as a way of finding out what was happening in neighbouring areas. It is argued that although planning policy no longer requires a regional approach it would be useful to establish a cross border working group, although it was felt that the Duty to Cooperate meetings have been adequate in fulfilling this need to date.

Conclusions and Areas of Consideration

- 4.21 Overall, the discussions with Officers and Elected Members did not reveal there to be any interest from the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople to settle in North Tyneside.
- 4.22 There are few unauthorised encampments, and therefore, interviewees were of the opinion that the provision of a temporary stopping place or formal transit site is not required. Nevertheless, one Elected Member felt that enforcement should be properly undertaken in the event of a large encampment.
- 4.23 No issues were identified which require a cross border response.
- 4.24 Officers and Elected Members were of the opinion that North Tyneside should:
- » Share information and best practice with neighbouring authorities in order to understand the accommodation needs across the sub region.

Neighbouring Authorities

- 4.25 The accommodation situations of the authorities surrounding the study areas and cross-border issues (as reported by their respective Council Officer) are summarised below:

Durham County Council

- » Durham County Council own and manage 115 pitches spread across six sites and have the largest number of pitches in the sub region.
- » Although a Traveller Site Needs Assessment (TSNA) was completed for Durham in 2013 it was noted that the assessment was complicated by the on-going refurbishment programme on all of Durham County Council's six Gypsy and Traveller sites, a project that is anticipated to run from April 2009 until June 2015. This is said to be the most extensive and comprehensive refurbishment programme of its type in the country. Two sites have

already been refurbished and work on the other four is on-going. Residents on sites where work is yet to be completed have either been transferred already to allow refurbishment work to begin, or will be transferred at some point between now and June 2015. Residents who have been moved have either been relocated or have left the County. Those relocated have been moved onto commercial caravan sites, onto other Durham County Council sites or into housing stock. In addition, it is intended that over this same period a new management regime will be introduced on all six Durham County Council Gypsy and Traveller sites, including increases in rental charges, something which Officers felt may affect their popularity. However these changes have not yet been put in place. Undertaking a Needs Assessment during this time is understandably difficult; therefore, the County Council will undertake another assessment in 2020.

- » Durham County Council and Sunderland City Council have discussed needs for Travelling Showpeople and it has been agreed that any need arising through Sunderland City Council's assessment will be met within the boundary of Sunderland.

Gateshead Council

- » Gateshead Council runs and maintains a Gypsy and Traveller Site at Baltic Road which has recently been increased from 16 to 20 pitches (there is no possibility of further site expansion).
- » No community cohesion issues were reported.
- » The 2013 GTAA concluded that five pitches are required in the next five years (up to 2018).
- » Unauthorised encampments in Gateshead have reduced dramatically and only four instances have been recorded in the last 3 years. Based on these small numbers the 2013 GTAA, covering both Gateshead and Newcastle, concluded that there was no need for a transit site.
- » The Officer was aware of movement to and from Durham, Cumbria and Northumberland but was not sure of eastward travelling patterns.
- » A joint GTAA has been carried out with Newcastle City Council (2013). It was felt that there was room for improvement and, rather than depending upon anecdotal evidence (which is currently the case), monitoring and information gathering could be improved to be more robust and effective. More coordination is also needed between different councils and different elements within the same authority.
- » The Officer also referred to the Memorandum of Understanding which is the agreement between Newcastle City Council, Gateshead Council, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park, Durham County Council, North Tyneside Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council to comply with the duty to co-operate on planning issues set out in s.33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as well as those that relate to Strategic Priorities as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Newcastle City Council

- » There are no authorised sites and no identified demand for any. The last remaining site in Leamington was closed in 2013 because only a couple of the twenty pitches were in use. No rehousing issues were reported as a result. However, the Council Officer stated that Newcastle City Council would be willing to consider applications, particularly for any private sites coming forward.
- » The recent joint GTAA (2013) that was carried out jointly with Gateshead Borough Council identified occasional instances of unauthorised encampments which are said to average three per year and never more than four or five caravans at any one time. These occur near the A69 and A1, throughout the year, but predominantly in the summer months when Travellers are en route to the Appleby Fair.
- » The study concluded that there was no need for additional permanent or transit provision. It was recommended that any provision for Gypsy and Travellers should be discussed with adjacent local authorities to ensure that the provision best meets the needs of the community.
- » The study recommended monitoring unauthorised encampments and that any significant increase should be addressed. In the event that the area provides transit pitches, this should be discussed and managed at a regional level and supported by an expanded 'Management Protocol for Unauthorised Encampments'.
- » Although the report recommended that these are monitored to establish whether a transit site is required, the representative of Newcastle City Council argued that, given the size and frequency, it would not be cost effective to provide a transit site.
- » The representative felt the City have been complying with the Duty to Cooperate and referred to several cross border meetings that took place to discuss the development of the Core Strategy. Importantly, these meetings were not thought to have raised any pressing issues in relation to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

Northumberland County Council

- » There are two public sites (comprising of 22 and 11 pitches). Both sites have an on-site warden who will collect rents and deal with any maintenance issues.
- » Similar to in Durham, the numbers of unauthorised encampments is high (approximately 60-65 encampments per year). They mainly occur during April to September but peak in June at the time of the Appleby Fair. Travellers also move through the area when en route to Scotland, for employment purposes and to visit the large settled Traveller population. Although a high number of encampments occur, the County Council does not incur any legal costs.
- » Northumberland County Council have developed a new Traveller Strategy (2013-2016) and are considering providing a temporary stopping place/site for the large numbers of encampments they get during the Appleby Fair period. They have discussed this issue with Durham County Council where there are currently tolerated stopping places in situ.

- » It was the view of the Officer that as North Tyneside is largely a built up area it means it is not favoured by Travellers, whereas Northumberland has the open spaces preferred.
- » Although no cross boundary issues with North Tyneside, Newcastle and Gateshead were reported, the Officer was of the opinion that a North East forum, which would include representatives from all local authorities, would be beneficial.

South Tyneside Council

- » There is one private Gypsy and Traveller site with 11 pitches at West Boldon which has recently been granted planning permission, and one site for Travelling Showpeople in close proximity to the Fairground at South Shields. The site has a consistent turnover of vacant plots.
- » The primary travelling routes are the A19 and the A1 corridors from Northumberland down to Yorkshire. Travellers are said to use these routes when travelling to and from the annual Appleby Horse Fair. There has been a reduction in authorised encampments.
- » Considering the travelling route, liaising with Sunderland City Council was considered to be a priority. However, because Gateshead has a large Gypsy and Traveller population, one Officer thought it may be useful to find out what the issues are and if there any opportunities for sharing best practice.
- » There was support for the development of cross border working on the basis that it would be beneficial to have a better understanding of regional travelling patterns and a consistent North East enforcement approach.

Sunderland City Council

- » At the time of the study, Sunderland City Council had commissioned a joint Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment with South Tyneside Council and was awaiting the results.
- » There are no authorised sites for Gypsy and Travellers and Sunderland City Council were not aware of a need for permanent provision deriving from Travellers living in bricks and mortar who have presented themselves as homeless.
- » There are Travelling Showpeople yards in Washington, Houghton-Le-Spring and Hetton-Le-Hole and it was accepted that further land is required to meet the needs of the growing population and for those getting married. It was felt that Sunderland has attracted Travelling Showpeople because of the availability of suitable land, in particular old industrial sites.
- » There are said to be a high number of short-term unauthorised encampments which occur primarily when Travellers are en route to the Appleby and other Fairs that are visited by Travellers. Some Irish Travellers also move around the area for employment opportunities. Most encampments occur in the Washington area because of its close proximity to the A19. Travellers are said to use the A19 to travel through Sunderland and down towards Durham from Gateshead and Newcastle. Consultation with this group was considered particularly difficult due to the short term nature of their presence in the area and the fact that they prefer not to engage with the Council.

- » There are plans to consider temporary provision for Travellers who are in transit which would make encampments easier to manage and enable Travellers to access services whilst they are in the area.
- » When asked about cross-border working, Officers referred to cross border meetings with neighbouring authorities and felt that Sunderland City Council, despite having different policies, is trying to work in sync with other areas and develop similar ways of working. Going forward it was felt that a North East Forum should be established so those involved in Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople issues could share information and best practice in order to develop a consistent approach across the region.

Conclusions and Areas for Consideration

^{4.26} Overall, no pressing cross border issues were reported but it was suggested that it would be beneficial if local authorities in the North East could work together to develop a North East Forum, to discuss Gypsy and Traveller issues, which could:

- » Share the methodologies and findings from each GTAA;
- » Establish a greater understanding of travelling patterns;
- » Regularly exchange Information and experiences;
- » Share best practice on site management; and
- » Develop a common protocol for managing unauthorised encampments.
- » Put in place robust systems to monitor the number of Gypsies and Travellers accommodated in bricks and mortar. This could be achieved through working with housing providers to record Gypsies and Travellers on monitoring forms and making contact with this group via health and education.

5. Engagement with Travelling Communities

Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 5.01 One of the major components of a GTAA study is to seek to undertake a detailed survey of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in the study area, including those living in bricks and mortar accommodation. This should aim to engage with current households to identify housing needs and to assess likely future household formation from within existing households, to help judge the need for any future site provision.
- 5.02 However through the desk-based research and stakeholder interviews no authorised and unauthorised sites or encampments were identified in the study area. Given that there are no permanent sites within the borough for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, nor were there any instances of unauthorised encampments during the time this study was prepared, ORS were unable to undertake any direct engagement with Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in North Tyneside. It should be noted however that whilst there were instances of unauthorised encampments in the periods before and after the study, the timeframe for this study was consistent with others undertaken by ORS to give sufficient time for any engagement with Travelling Communities to take place. The timeframe for the fieldwork was between December 2013 and April 2014.
- 5.03 Contacts with Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation were also sought using a range of methods. These included speaking with Council Officers and stakeholders to identify if they knew of any families living in bricks and mortar who may wish to move to a site; and through placing adverts on the Friends and Families of Travellers Community Noticeboard and in the World's Fair publication¹.
- 5.04 Through this 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. However at the time of this report we were unable to identify any contacts in bricks and mortar who we could interview as part of the study.

¹ Copies of these adverts can be found in the Appendices to this report.

6. Future Site Provision

Pitch Provision

^{6.01} This section focuses on the requirement to provide additional sites in North Tyneside both to meet any current need and the need over the Local Plan period to 2032.

^{6.02} The March 2012, CLG document 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites', requires an assessment for future pitch provision, 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 based on:

Current / Unmet Needs + Future Needs – Existing Pitch Supply = Deficiency or Surplus of Pitch Provision

^{6.03} In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the existing 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 below:

Supply of pitches

^{6.04} Pitches which are available for use can come from a variety of sources. These include

- » Currently vacant pitches;
- » Any pitches currently programmed to be developed within the study period;
- » Pitches vacated by people moving to housing;
- » Pitches vacated by people moving out of the study area; and
- » Pitches vacated due to the dissolution of households (normally through the death of a single person household).

Current Need

^{6.05} There are four key components of current need. Total current need (which is not necessarily need for additional pitches) is:

- » Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected;
- » Concealed households;
- » Households in bricks and mortar wishing to move to sites; and
- » Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Future Need

^{6.06} 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; and
- » Migration to sites from outside the study area.

Current Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision

6.07 The first stage of the process is to assess how much space is, or will become available on existing sites in North Tyneside through:

- » Currently vacant pitches;
- » Any pitches currently programmed to be developed within the study period;
- » Pitches vacated by people moving to housing;
- » Pitches vacated by people moving out of the study area; and
- » Pitches vacated due to the dissolution of households (normally through the death of a single person household).

6.08 Currently, there are no formally designated sites or pitches, of either a permanent or transit nature, in North Tyneside. Based on known evidence to date, North Tyneside Council presently do not have any plans for installing new provision.

Additional Site Provision: Current Need

6.09 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;
- » Households in bricks and mortar wishing to move to sites;
- » Concealed/overcrowded households; and,
- » Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Current Unauthorised Developments

6.10 There are currently no known households on unauthorised developments in North Tyneside.

Bricks and Mortar

6.11 No Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation were identified to interview during the timeframe of the study. Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue when carrying out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments.

6.12 As previously outlined, the 2011 UK Census of Population identified a population of 29 Gypsy and Traveller persons in North Tyneside living in 15 households. The figure of 29 persons is likely to be an under-estimate of the total population due to some Gypsies and Travellers not declaring their ethnic status or not

completing the Census at all, but it would seem to indicate a very low population living in bricks and mortar accommodation in North Tyneside.

6.13 We would also note that it would be possible for the Council to undertake an extremely expensive process to try and identify all households in bricks and mortar. However, the National Planning Policy Framework requires councils to use a proportionate evidence base and the new National Planning Policy Guidance, Section 3, para 1 recommends:

‘Plan makers should avoid expending significant resources on primary research (information that is collected through surveys, focus groups or interviews etc. and analysed to produce a new set of findings) as this will in many cases be a disproportionate way of establishing an evidence base’.

6.14 Whilst ORS went to **disproportionate** lengths to identify households living in bricks and mortar, none were identified to interview. Therefore, we have taken the decision to set the number of households seeking to move from housing to new pitches at zero.

Concealed Households

6.15 There are currently no sites in North Tyneside so there is no evidence of any concealed households which could potentially add to need.

Waiting Lists for Public Sites

6.16 North Tyneside currently has no public sites, and there are therefore no individuals on waiting lists that need to be taken into account.

Additional Site Provision: Future Need

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

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

Temporary Planning Permissions

6.18 North Tyneside currently has no sites with temporary planning permissions.

New Household Formation

6.19 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. This figure was used in the North East Regional plan and the previous GTAA for North Tyneside. 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.

6.20 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.'

6.21 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.

6.22 However, as there are not any sites in North Tyneside, we have not allowed for any household formation.

In-migration from Other Sources

6.23 The most complicated area for a survey such as this is to estimate how many households will require accommodation from outside the area. Potentially Gypsies and Travellers could move to North Tyneside from anywhere in the country. The number of households seeking to move to North Tyneside is likely to be heavily dependent upon pitch provision elsewhere. 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 leads to under-counting of need, or they over-counted need by assuming every household visiting the area required a pitch.

6.24 Overall the level of in-migration to the North Tyneside is a very difficult issue to predict. Given that there are no existing sites and that the evidence from the stakeholder interviews does not indicate any known desire for permanent in-migration, we have allowed for net migration to sum to zero. This is the same approach as was adopted in the 2009 Tyne and Wear GTAA. This avoids the problems seen with other Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments where the modelling of migration clearly identified too low or 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. It is also unlikely, from the evidence gathered from the stakeholder interviews and analysis of unauthorised encampments, that the development of transit provision would have any further impact on levels of Gypsies and Travellers seeking to live in the area on a permanent basis.

6.25 Beyond this number, rather than assess in-migrant households seeking to develop new sites in the area, we 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 authorities to have clear criteria-based planning policies in place for any new potential sites which do arise.

Summary of Permanent Needs in North Tyneside for Gypsies and Travellers

6.26 There is no evidence of any current unmet need in North Tyneside and no evidence that any will arise beyond potential in-migration from other areas. As there are no unauthorised sites, sites with temporary planning permission or public sites with waiting lists, the only potential local source of need is household formation from North Tyneside's existing Gypsy and Traveller population living in bricks and mortar and there is no evidence to suggest any movement to sites from this group of the local population.

Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision

6.27 Transit sites serve a specific function of meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who are visiting an area or who are passing through on the way to somewhere else. A transit site typically has a restriction on the length of stay of around 13 weeks and has a range of facilities such as water supply, electricity and amenity blocks. They do not have a function in meeting local need which must be addressed on permanent sites.

6.28 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 someone can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities with typically only a source of water and chemical toilets provided.

6.29 As well as facilitating the accommodation needs of household visiting an area, the presence of a transit site or emergency stopping place in an area can speed up enforcement on unauthorised encampments, with households facing committing an offence if they do not move on to the site, or leave the local authority area. However, we would note that Local Authorities are not able to use transit provision on private sites as part of their enforcement action policies and therefore while it does provide an option for visiting households it is at the discretion of the site owner who is allowed on to the site.

6.30 ORS have spoken to a number of local authorities and county councils across the country (such as those in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire and Hertfordshire). Several indicate that publicly provided transit sites are poorly used and in some cases have fallen out of use. This is partly due to such sites being poorly located away from major travelling routes. Worcestershire district councils have a formal temporary toleration policy which generally meets the needs of Travellers moving through the county without establishing a formal transit site. The joint policy towards unauthorised encampments of Gypsies and Travellers in Worcestershire allows Travellers to remain and camp for up to 21 days provided there are no issues.

6.31 Records indicate that a small number of unauthorised encampments occur in North Tyneside. However, these encampments appear to be only periodic principally based around seasonal north to south movements for work reasons or travelling related to Appleby Fair. North Tyneside Council has followed a similar policy of 'sensitive management' an approach which addresses the need for proper judgement in policy response according to the nature of the site, the Gypsy or Traveller group and the concerns of residents and businesses. This balanced approach has minimised the need for formal legal action.

^{6.32} There is no clear evidence of sufficient travelling to justify the development of a more permanent transit site. Therefore, this study concludes that there is no identified need for an additional transit site or emergency stopping place. Evidence from neighbouring authorities also supports this view with Sunderland seeing a much higher number of encampments per annum and seeking to develop a transit site, while South Tyneside has a much smaller number of encampments and currently does not plan to develop a transit site.

Travelling Showpeople

^{6.33} There are currently no known Travelling Showpeople plots in North Tyneside, nor any evidence of Showpeople in bricks and mortar accommodation and therefore no projected future family formation. Representatives from the Showmen's Guild have confirmed this position and also feel that there would be little interest amongst Travelling Showpeople in living in North Tyneside. Nonetheless, it is still important for the authorities to have criteria based planning policies in place in the event of someone seeking to develop a new Showpeople's yard in the Borough which North Tyneside has addressed by way of its saved UDP Policy (H14) and its emerging Local Plan Policy DM/7.14..

7. Conclusions

Introduction

- ^{7.01} This chapter brings together the evidence presented earlier in the report to provide some key policy conclusions for North Tyneside. It focuses upon the key issues of future site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and also Travelling Showpeople.
- ^{7.02} Overall evidence gathered during the stakeholder interviews with Officers from North Tyneside and those from surrounding local authorities demonstrates that the area has not been a popular stopping place for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and the view is that this is unlikely to change in the future.
- ^{7.03} Officers could not provide any specific reasons why there has been such limited interest in settling in North Tyneside, but felt that the geographic location of the area is a reason for this, as well as there being no known historical ties with the area.

Gypsy and Traveller Future Pitch Provision

- ^{7.04} Based upon the evidence presented in Chapter 4, the estimated extra pitch provision that is required for Gypsies and Travellers at the current time for the current Local Plan period to 2032 in North Tyneside is zero pitches, and as such there is no requirement to identify a 5-year supply of land to meet this need. However it must be noted that this could change over time and that the study should be reviewed on a periodic basis. North Tyneside should also ensure that criteria based policies are in place in order that any applications for sites received from Gypsies and Travellers in the future can be evaluated effectively.

Travelling Showperson Requirements

- ^{7.05} There are currently no sources of need for the provision of Travelling Showperson yards in North Tyneside. Nonetheless, North Tyneside should ensure that criteria based policies are in place in order that any applications for sites received from Travelling Showpeople in the future can be evaluated effectively.

Transit or Emergency Stopping Site Provision

- ^{7.06} While unauthorised encampments do arise in North Tyneside, there is no clear evidence of sufficient travelling through the area to justify the development of any permanent transit or emergency stopping site. This is backed up by evidence gathered during the stakeholder interviews. Instead, the current 'sensitive management' approach adopted by North Tyneside to assess each encampment can be continued unless there is a clear increase in the number of encampments a year.

Other Areas for Consideration from the Stakeholder Interviews

- ^{7.07} Overall, the discussions with Officers and Elected Members did not reveal there to be any interest from the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople to settle in the area.

- 7.08 There are few unauthorised encampments, and therefore, interviewees were of the opinion that the provision of a temporary stopping place or formal transit site is not required. Nevertheless, one Elected Member felt that enforcement should be properly undertaken in the event of a large encampment.
- 7.09 No issues were identified which require a cross border response.
- 7.10 Officers and Elected Members were of the opinion that North Tyneside should share information and best practice with neighbouring authorities in order to understand the accommodation needs across the sub region.
- 7.11 Overall, no pressing cross border issues were reported by Officers from surrounding local authorities but it was suggested that it would be beneficial if Officers from neighbouring areas and North Tyneside could work together to develop a North East Forum which could:
- » Share the methodologies and findings from of their GTAA.
 - » Establish a greater understanding of travelling patterns.
 - » Regularly exchange Information and experiences.
 - » Share best practice on site management, and
 - » Develop a common protocol for managing unauthorised encampments.

Recommendations

- 7.12 ORS have already worked with a small number of other local authorities who have no clear need for new pitches or plots in their area. These include Scarborough, Ribble Valley, Southend-on-Sea, Bournemouth and Worthing. Some of these councils have already brought forward local plans and in all cases they have placed criteria polices for new sites as the key component of their plans and none are seeking to provide a site to cover potential needs.
- 7.13 ORS would also recommend that North Tyneside monitor the number of encampments in their area each year. If this number is seen to be clearly rising then they should consider seeking to develop a transit sites. We also recommend developing a protocol which would require asking those on unauthorised encampments if they are seeking permanent or transit sites in the area.
- 7.14 ORS would also recommend that North Tyneside work with housing, health and education providers to try to identify Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar. This group is the most difficult to reach and any available contacts would aid the process of updating this study in the future.

Appendix 1

Advert on Friends Families and Travellers Community Noticeboard

(This is a 'rolling' advert that is updated by ORS on a regular basis to reflect the studies that we are undertaking)

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: **Sunderland and South Tyneside; North Tyneside; Central Bedfordshire; Bexley; Reading; Lambeth; Hertsmere; York; Blackpool; Fylde and Wyre.**

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.



Advert in the World's Fair Publication

Accommodation for Travelling Showpeople

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 plots and yards will need to be provided in the future.

ORS would like to speak to Travelling Showpeople who live in or are looking to develop plots in any of the following areas: **Sunderland, South Tyneside, North Tyneside, Central Bedfordshire, Bexley, Reading, Hertsmere, York, Blackpool, Fylde, Wyre and Lambeth.**

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**

W9886