



# **Dacorum Borough Council**

## **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment**

### **Final Report**

March 2019



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# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of this Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the Borough of Dacorum. As well as updating the previous GTAA, another key reason for completing the study was the publication of a revised version of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015. This included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes. The key change that was made was the removal of the term “*persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*”, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA (see Paragraph 2.7 for the full definition).
- 1.2 The GTAA provides a credible evidence base which can be used to aid the implementation of Development Plan Policies and, where appropriate, the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots for the period up to 2036. The outcomes of this study supersede the outcomes of the previous Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment completed in January 2013<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in Dacorum through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder interviews and engagement with members of the travelling community living on all known sites. 39 interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers and 1 interview was completed with Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar. Whilst 3 Travelling Showpeople yards were identified, no interviews were completed with Travelling Showpeople as all the plots were occupied by non-Travellers.
- 1.4 The study also included a wider assessment of the accommodation needs of wider caravan and houseboat dwellers as required by the Housing and Planning Act (2016).
- 1.5 The fieldwork for the study was completed in July 2017 and this is also the baseline date for the study.

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<sup>1</sup> Three Rivers and Dacorum Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Update (January 2013) - <http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/planning-development/trdc-and-dacorum-travellers-needs-assessment-website.pdf?Status=Master&sfvrsn=0>

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## Key Findings

### Additional Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.6 Overall the additional pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers from 2017-2036 are set out below. Additional needs are set out for those households that met the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller; for those unknown households<sup>2</sup> where an interview was not able to be completed (either due to households refusing to be interviewed, or not being present despite up to three visits to each site) who may meet the planning definition; and for those households that did not meet the planning definition – although this is no longer a requirement for a GTAA.
- 1.7 Only the need from those households who met the planning definition and from those of the unknown households who subsequently demonstrate that they meet it should be formally considered as need arising from the GTAA.
- 1.8 The need arising from households that met the planning definition should be addressed through site allocation/intensification/expansion/Local Plan Policies, as appropriate.
- 1.9 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with unknown Travellers as it is unlikely that all this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Council should consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.
- 1.10 A local example of a robust Criteria-Based Policy that has recently been through Examination can be found in the East Herts District Plan. This was subject to an Examination in Public between October 2017 and January 2018 followed by a period of public consultation on the Main Modifications agreed through the Examination between February and March 2018. Following this, the Inspector issued her Final Report on the Examination of the East Herts District Plan in July 2018. The policy to refer to is *Policy HOU9 Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*.
- 1.11 In general terms, the need for those households who do not meet the planning definition will need to be addressed as part of general housing need and through separate Local Plan Policies (including any plans that have already been adopted, as all Travellers will have been included as part of the overall Objectively Assessed Need - OAN).
- 1.12 This approach is specifically referenced in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019). Paragraph 60 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Paragraph 61 then states that (emphasis added): *‘Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes’*. The footnote to this section states that: *‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.’*
- 1.13 It is recognised that the Council already has in place an adopted Local Plan that sets out overall housing need. When this plan is reviewed, or a new plan prepared, the findings of this report should be

<sup>2</sup>See Paragraph 3.22 for further information on unknown households.

considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment of overall housing need in relation to those households that do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller.

- 1.14 As an example, it is again useful to look at the East Hertfordshire Local Plan that was found to be sound in an Inspectors Report that was issued in July 2018. The Local Plan contains *Policy HOU10 New Park Home Sites for Non-Nomadic (i.e. households that do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller) Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*. This sets out that any applications for planning permission for park homes for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople that do not meet the planning definition must be in accordance with the NPPF and PPTS and the criteria set out in Policy HOU10, and not under the criteria set out in *Policy HOU9 Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*.
- 1.15 There were 4 Gypsy or Traveller households identified in Dacorum that met the planning definition, 12 unknown households that may meet the planning definition and 36 households that did not meet the planning definition. There was also 1 household living in bricks and mortar that did not meet the planning definition.
- 1.16 There is a need for **7 additional pitches for households that met the planning definition**. This is made up of 3 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 2 teenage children in need of a pitch of their own in the next five years and 2 from new household formation based on the demographics of the households that were interviewed. Whilst there are two allocations for 12 pitches in the Local Plan these have not been considered as supply at this point as they do not yet have planning permission. However, if they do get planning permission, they can be used to offset the need that has been identified.
- 1.17 Need of **up to 4 additional pitches for unknown households** is made up of 4 pitches from new household formation from a maximum of 12 households (using the ORS national formation rate of 1.50%). If the ORS national average<sup>3</sup> of 25% were applied this could result in a need for 1 additional pitch. Note that the proportion of households in Dacorum that meet the planning definition is lower than this at 10%.
- 1.18 Whilst not now a requirement to include in a GTAA, there is a need for **69 additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition**. This is made up of 18 concealed or doubled-up households of single adults, 1 movement from bricks and mortar, 12 for teenage children living on sites who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, 5 for teenage children living in the bricks and mortar household who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 33 from new household formation using a rate of 2.20% derived from the household demographics of the households that were interviewed.
- 1.19 Figure 1 summarises the identified need and Figure 2 breaks this down by 5-year periods.

**Figure 1 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum (2017-2036)**

Status	Total
Meet Planning Definition	<b>7</b>
Unknown	<b>0-4 (25% = 1)</b>
Do not meet Planning Definition	<b>69</b>

<sup>3</sup>Based on over 3,500 interviews completed by ORS across England.



Figure 2– Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum that meet the Planning Definition by year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2017-22	2022-27	2027-32	2032-2036	
	5	0	0	2	7

## Additional Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople

- 1.20 It was not possible to interview any Travelling Showpeople as all the households who were living on the Travelling Showpeople yards were not Travelling Showpeople (nor were they Gypsies or Travellers).
- 1.21 There is therefore no current or future need for additional plots for Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum.

## Transit Requirements

- 1.22 There is a public transit site in Hertsmere (at South Mimms) with 15 pitches that could be used to move any unauthorised encampments to there from Dacorum as it is in another district in Hertfordshire. Whilst at present 9 pitches are not available as they are occupied on a permanent basis, these residents are included as components of current need for a permanent pitch in the most recent GTAA for Hertsmere. This leaves 6 available transit pitches. As such it is not recommended that there is a need for any additional transit provision in Dacorum at this time.
- 1.23 However, the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should be monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop – for example a potential increase in the number of households travelling to seek to meet the current planning definition.
- 1.24 As well as information on the size and duration of the encampments, this monitoring should also seek to gather information from residents on the reasons for their stay in the local area; whether they have a permanent base or where they have travelled from; whether they have any need or preference to settle permanently in the local area; and whether their travelling is a result of changes to PPTS (2015). This information could be collected as part of a Welfare Assessment<sup>4</sup> (or similar).
- 1.25 A review of the evidence base relating to unauthorised encampments, including the monitoring referred to above, should be undertaken once there is a robust evidence base following the changes to PPTS in 2015 – for example an increase in the number of households travelling and setting up encampments. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in any new transit provision or emergency stopping places, or whether a managed approach is preferable. Given that there are potentially 15 transit pitches in Hertsmere it is unlikely that this review will result in a need for additional transit pitches in Dacorum. If such a need is identified, then work will need to be undertaken on a Hertfordshire-wide basis to identify suitable locations to meet the provision.
- 1.26 In the short-term the Council should continue to use available pitches on the existing transit site for dealing with unauthorised encampments. Management based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments such as negotiated stopping agreements could also be considered.
- 1.27 The term ‘negotiated stopping’ is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent ‘built’ transit sites but negotiated agreements which allow

<sup>4</sup> Welfare Assessments – action carried out by local authority officers with unauthorised campers to identify and address any issues that require the involvement of other local authority departments and agencies in terms of immediate health, education etc. needs.

caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. Agreements are made between the Council and the (temporary) residents regarding expectations on both sides. See [www.leedsgate.co.uk](http://www.leedsgate.co.uk) for further information.

- 1.28 Temporary stopping places can be made available at times of increased demand due to fairs or cultural celebrations that are attended by Gypsies and Travellers. A charge may be levied as determined by the local authority although they only need to provide basic facilities including: a cold-water supply; portaloos; sewerage disposal point and refuse disposal facilities. Whilst such events are unlikely to occur in Dacorum, the Council should still be aware of temporary arrangements that could be put in place if required. and it is recommended that the Council consider investigating whether there are any suitable locations in Dacorum for temporary stopping places.

## Additional Needs – Caravan and Houseboat Dwellers

- 1.29 It is not considered that there is a direct need for any additional residential caravan pitches in Dacorum that is driven by a local demand for additional pitches, but instead that more pitches could help to address the wider housing needs of the area. Therefore, the only evidenced need is for Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller, this figure forms a small part of the existing OAN and is not additional to it.
- 1.30 It is not considered that there is a direct need for any additional permanent residential moorings in Dacorum that is driven by a local demand for additional moorings, but instead that more moorings could help to address the wider housing needs of the area. ORS would suggest the role of additional moorings in meeting current housing needs in Dacorum is likely to be very small and this figure would form part of the existing OAN and is not additional to it.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 The primary objective of this Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in Dacorum. The outcomes of the study will supersede the outcomes of the previous Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessments completed in Dacorum.
- 2.2 The study provides an evidence base to enable the Council to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 1985, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, the Housing and Planning Act (2016) and the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019.
- 2.3 The GTAA provides a robust assessment of need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the study area. It is a credible evidence base which can be used to aid the implementation of Local Plan Policies and the provision of Traveller pitches and plots covering the period 2017 to 2036, including a break-down to 2032 to meet the 15-year requirements of the PPTS. As well as identifying current and future permanent accommodation needs, it also seeks to identify any need for the provision of transit sites or emergency stopping places.
- 2.4 We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a Gypsy and Traveller (and Travelling Showpeople) Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).
- 2.5 The baseline date for the study is July 2017 which was when the household interviews were completed.

### Definitions

- 2.6 The planning definition for a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson is set out in PPTS (2015). The previous definition set out in the Housing Act (2004) was repealed by the Housing and Planning Act (2016).

### The Planning Definition in PPTS (2015)

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

*For the purposes of this planning policy “gypsies and travellers” means:*

*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*

*In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:*

- a) *Whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life.*
- b) *The reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life.*

c) *Whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.*

*For the purposes of this planning policy, “travelling showpeople” means:*

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

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

- 2.8 The key change that was made to both definitions was the removal of the term “*persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*”, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will no longer fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA.

## Definition of Travelling

- 2.9 One of the most important questions that GTAAs will need to address in terms of applying the planning definition is *what constitutes travelling?* This has been determined through case law that has tested the meaning of the term ‘*nomadic*’.
- 2.10 **R v South Hams District Council (1994)** – defined Gypsies as “persons who wander or travel for the purpose of making or seeking their livelihood (not persons who travel from place to place without any connection between their movements and their means of livelihood.)” This includes ‘born’ Gypsies and Travellers as well as ‘elective’ Travellers such as New Age Travellers.
- 2.11 In **Maidstone BC v Secretary of State for the Environment and Dunn (2006)**, it was held that a Romany Gypsy who bred horses and travelled to horse fairs at Appleby, Stow-in-the-Wold and the New Forest, where he bought and sold horses, and who remained away from his permanent site for up to two months of the year, at least partly in connection with this traditional Gypsy activity, was entitled to be accorded Gypsy status.
- 2.12 In **Greenwich LBC v Powell (1989)**, Lord Bridge of Harwich stated that a person could be a statutory Gypsy if he led a nomadic way of life *only seasonally*.
- 2.13 The definition was widened further by the decision in **R v Shropshire CC ex p Bungay (1990)**. The case concerned a Gypsy family that had not travelled for some 15 years in order to care for its elderly and infirm parents. An aggrieved resident living in the area of the family’s recently approved Gypsy site sought judicial review of the local authority’s decision to accept that the family had retained their Gypsy status even though they had not travelled for some considerable time. Dismissing the claim, the judge held that a person could remain a Gypsy even if he or she did not travel, provided that their nomadism was held in abeyance and not abandoned.
- 2.14 That point was revisited in the case of **Hearne v National Assembly for Wales (1999)**, where a traditional Gypsy was held not to be a Gypsy for the purposes of planning law as he had stated that he intended to abandon his nomadic habit of life, lived in a permanent dwelling and was taking a course that led to permanent employment.

- 2.15 **Wrexham County Borough Council v National Assembly of Wales and Others (2003)** determined that households and individuals could continue to lead a nomadic way of life with a permanent base from which they set out from and return to.
- 2.16 The implication of these rulings in terms of applying the planning definition is that it will **only include those who travel (or have ceased to travel temporarily) for work purposes, or for seeking work, and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence**. It can include those who have a permanent site or place of residence, but that it will not include those who travel for purposes other than work – such as holidays and visiting friends or relatives. It will not cover those who commute to work daily from a permanent place of residence (see APP/E2205/C/15/3137477).
- 2.17 It may also be that within a household some family members travel for nomadic purposes on a regular basis, but other family members stay at home to look after children in education, or other dependents with health problems etc. In these circumstances the household unit would be defined as travelling under the planning definition.
- 2.18 Households will also fall under the planning definition if they can demonstrate that they have ceased to travel temporarily as a result of their own or their family's or dependants' educational, health needs or old age. In order to have ceased to travel temporarily these households will need to demonstrate that they have travelled for work in the past. In addition, households will also have to demonstrate that they plan to travel again for work in the future.
- 2.19 This approach was endorsed by a Planning Inspector in Decision Notice for an appeal in East Hertfordshire (Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/16/3145267) that was issued in December 2016. A summary can be seen below.

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

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

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

## Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

<sup>2.21</sup> Decision-making for policy concerning Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sits within a complex legislative and national policy framework and this study must be viewed in the context of this legislation and guidance. For example, the following key pieces of legislation and guidance are relevant when developing policies relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

- » Planning Practice Guidance<sup>5</sup> (PPG), 2014
- » Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), 2015
- » The Housing and Planning Act, 2016
- » National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2019

<sup>2.22</sup> The primary guidance for undertaking the assessment of housing need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is set out in PPTS (2015). It should be read in conjunction with the NPPF (2019). In addition, the Housing and Planning Act (2016) makes provisions for the assessment of need for those Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households living on sites and yards who do not meet the planning definition – through the assessment of all households living in caravans.

### PPTS (2015)

<sup>2.23</sup> PPTS (2015), sets out the direction of Government policy. As well as introducing the planning definition of a Traveller, PPTS is closely linked to the NPPF. Among other objectives, the aims of the policy in respect of Traveller sites are (PPTS Paragraph 4):

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

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<sup>5</sup>With particular reference to the sections on Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments

- » *For local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.*

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

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

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

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

2.26 Local Authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5-year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, PPTS 2015 also notes in Paragraph 11 that:

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

## Revised National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

2.27 The revised National Planning Policy Framework was issued in February 2019. Paragraph 60 of the revised NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance.

2.28 Paragraph 61 then states that (emphasis added) '*Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes*'. The footnote to this section states that '*Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.*'

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

## 3. Methodology

### Background

- 3.1 Over the past 10 years, ORS has continually refined a methodology for undertaking robust and defensible Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessments. This has been updated in light of the introduction of the PPG in 2014, changes to PPTS in August 2015, the Housing and Planning Act (2016) and the revised NPPF (2019). It also responds to changes set out by Planning Ministers, with particular reference to new household formation rates. This is an evolving methodology that has been adaptive to changes in planning policy as well as the outcomes of Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals.
- 3.2 PPTS (2015) contains a number of requirements for local authorities which must be addressed in any methodology. This includes the need to pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both settled and traveller communities (including discussing travellers' accommodation needs with travellers themselves); identification of permanent and transit site accommodation needs separately; working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities; and establishing whether households fall within the planning definition for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.3 The approach currently used by ORS was considered in April 2016 and July 2017 by the Planning Inspector for the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy. She concluded in her final Examination Report that was published in October 2017:

*'The methodology behind this assessment incorporates a full demographic study of all occupied pitches, a comprehensive effort to undertake interviews with Gypsy and Traveller households, and consideration of the implications of the new national policy. I am satisfied that the GTAA provides a robust and credible evidence base and I accept its findings.'*

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

### Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

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

### Desk-Based Review

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



## Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.7 Engagement was undertaken with key Council Officers and with wider stakeholders through telephone interviews. Two interviews were undertaken with Council Officers from the study area. A representative from the Showmen’s Guild was also interviewed.

## Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities

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

- » Aylesbury Vale
- » Central Bedfordshire
- » Luton
- » South Buckinghamshire and Chiltern
- » St Albans
- » Three Rivers
- » Watford

## Survey of Travelling Communities

- 3.9 Through the desk-based research and the stakeholder interviews, ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites/yards and encampments in the study area and attempted to complete an interview with the residents on all occupied pitches and plots. In order to gather the robust information needed to assess households against the planning definition of a Traveller, up to 3 visits were made to households where it was not initially possible to conduct an interview because they were not available at the time.
- 3.10 Our experience suggests that an attempt to interview households on all pitches is more robust. A sample-based approach often leads to an under-estimate of need – and is an approach which is regularly challenged by the Planning Inspectorate and at Planning Appeals.
- 3.11 ORS worked closely with the Council to ensure that the interviews collected all the necessary information to support the study. The site interview questions that were used have been updated to take account of recent changes to PPTS and to collect the information ORS feel is necessary to apply the planning definition. All sites and yards were visited by members of our dedicated team of experienced interviewers who work on our GTAA studies across England and Wales. Interviewers attempted to conduct semi-structured interviews with residents to determine their current demographic characteristics, their current or future accommodation needs, whether there is any over-crowding or the presence of concealed households and travelling characteristics. Interviewers also sought to identify contacts living in bricks and mortar to interview, as well as an overall assessment of each site to determine any opportunities for intensification or expansion to meet future needs.

- 3.12 Interviewers also sought information from residents on the type of pitches they may require in the future – for example private or socially rented, together with any features they may wish to be provided on a new pitch or site.
- 3.13 Where it was not possible to undertake an interview, interviewers sought to capture as much information as possible about each pitch from sources including neighbouring residents and site management (if present).
- 3.14 Interviewers also distributed copies of an information leaflet that was prepared by Friends, Families and Travellers explaining the reasons for the need to complete the household interview as part of the GTAA process.

Figure 3 – Friends, Families and Traveller Leaflet



## Engagement with Bricks and Mortar Households

- 3.15 The 2011 Census recorded 52 households that were identified as either Gypsies or Irish Travellers who live in a house or flat in Dacorum.
- 3.16 ORS apply a rigorous approach to making contact with bricks and mortar households as this is a common issue raised at Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals. Contacts were sought through a range of sources including the interviews with people on existing sites and yards; intelligence from the stakeholder interviews; information from housing registers; and other local knowledge from stakeholders and adverts on social media (including the Friends, Families and Travellers and Herts Gate Facebook group). Through this approach the GTAA endeavoured to do everything to give households living in bricks and mortar the opportunity to make their views

known. The following additional approaches were taken to identify potential households to interview in Dacorum:

- » **Local Authority Housing Services:** Unfortunately, the Housing department does not collect data on whether there are Gypsy and Travellers on the waiting list.
- » **Hertfordshire GATE:** GATE is a Community led organisation which covers the Hertfordshire area. ORS contacted the group and, although they do not directly work with Gypsy and Travellers in this area, they were happy to post information about the project on their Facebook page.
- » **Hertfordshire County Council Gypsy and Traveller Section:** A letter detailing the GTAA was sent to 52 families that are on the site waiting list and that have said they are looking for a site in Dacorum and Watford.

3.17 ORS also attempted to contact the Herts County Council Traveller Education Team but had not received any response at the time of this report.

3.18 As a rule, we do not make any assumptions on the overall needs from household in bricks and mortar based on the outcomes of any interviews that are completed, as in our experience this leads to a significant over-estimate of the number of households wishing to move to a site or a yard. We work on the assumption that all those wishing to move will make their views known to us based on the wide range of publicity we will put in place. Thus, we are seeking to shift the burden of responsibility on to those living in bricks and mortar through demonstrating rigorous efforts to make them aware of the study.

Figure 4 – Bricks and Mortar Adverts



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post. At the top left is the FFT logo, which consists of the letters 'fft' in a green circle. To the right of the logo is the text 'Friends, Families and Travellers' in blue. Below this is the text 'Published by Fft Brighton [?] - Just now -'. To the right of the post is a small downward-pointing arrow. The main text of the post reads: 'ORS would like to speak to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are looking to develop a site or yard or who live in bricks and mortar and would prefer to live on a site or yard in the areas listed below. This forms part of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment for these areas. For advice on responding to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments, please take a look at this flyer prepared by FFT: [http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/.../06/GTAA-leaflet-A4\\_v5.pdf](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/.../06/GTAA-leaflet-A4_v5.pdf)



Opinion Research Services

*Excellent research for the public, voluntary and private sectors*

### Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is an independent research company who carry out Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments across the country. These assessments must be carried out by every council to inform them how many new pitches and plots will need to be provided in the future.

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

**Arun, Adur, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Chichester, Dacorum, Gravesham, Halton, Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames Medway, Mole Valley, Runnymede, Spelthorne, St Albans, Surrey Heath, Runnymede, Warrington, Watford and Worthing**

Your views are very important to us.

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

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



### Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is an independent research company who carry out Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments across the country.

These assessments must be carried out by every council to inform them how many new pitches and plots will need to be provided in the future.

We are currently undertaking an assessment for Watford, Dacorum and North Hertfordshire Council and Basingstoke and would like to speak to any Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are looking to develop a site or yard or who live in bricks and mortar and would prefer to live on a site or yard.

If you would like to speak to ORS about your needs please contact Claire Thomas on 01792535337 or email [claire.thomas@ors.org.uk](mailto:claire.thomas@ors.org.uk)

## Timing of the Fieldwork

- 3.19 ORS are fully aware of the transient nature of many travelling communities and subsequent seasonal variations in site and yard occupancy. ORS would normally aim to complete fieldwork during the non-travelling season, and also avoid days of known local or national events. However, the public sites were fully occupied in July 2017 and interviewers were able to collect information on the majority of residents.

## Applying the Planning Definition

- 3.20 The household survey included a structured section of questions to record information about the travelling characteristics of household members. This included questions on the following key issues:
- » Whether any household members have travelled in the past 12 months.
  - » Whether household members have ever travelled.
  - » The main reasons for travelling.
  - » Where household members travelled to.
  - » The times of the year that household members travelled.
  - » Where household members stay when they are away travelling.
  - » When household members stopped travelling.
  - » The reasons why household members stopped travelling.
  - » Whether household members intend to travel again in the future.
  - » When and the reasons why household members plan to travel again in the future.
- 3.21 When the household survey was completed, the answers from these questions on travelling were used to determine the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). Through a combination of responses, households need to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that household members travel for work purposes, or for seeking work, and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to education, ill health or old age, and plan to travel again for work purposes in the future. The same definition applies to Travelling Showpeople as to Gypsies and Travellers.
- 3.22 Households that need to be considered in the GTAA fall under one of three classifications that will determine whether their housing needs will need to be assessed in the GTAA. Only those households that meet, or may meet, the planning definition will form the formal components of need to be included in the GTAA:
- » Households that travel under the planning definition.
  - » Households that have ceased to travel temporarily under the planning definition.
  - » Households where an interview was not possible who *may* fall under the planning definition.
- 3.23 Whilst the needs of those households that do not meet the planning definition do not need to be included in the GTAA, they will be assessed to provide the Council with components of need to consider as part of their work on wider housing needs assessments.

## Unknown Households

- 3.24 As well as calculating need for households that meet the planning definition, the needs of the households where an interview was not completed (either due to refusal to be interviewed or households that were not present during the fieldwork period) need to be assessed as part of the GTAA where they are believed to be Gypsies and Travellers who **may** meet the planning definition. Whilst there is no law or guidance that sets out how the needs of these households should be addressed; an approach has been taken that seeks an estimate of potential need from these households. This will be an additional need figure over and above the need identified for households that do meet the planning definition.
- 3.25 The estimate of potential need in unknown households seeks to identify potential current and future need from many pitches known to be temporary or unauthorised, and through new household formation. For the latter, the ORS national formation rate of 1.50% has been used as the demographics of residents that are unknown.
- 3.26 Should further information be made available to the Council that will allow for the planning definition to be applied, these households could either form a confirmed component of need to be addressed through the GTAA or the SHMA and through separate Local Plan Policies.
- 3.27 ORS are of the opinion that it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not households where an interview was not completed, meet the planning definition based on the outcomes of households where an interview was actually completed.
- 3.28 However, data that has been collected from over 3,500 household interviews that have been completed by ORS across England since the changes to PPTS in 2015 suggests that overall, approximately 25% of households who have been interviewed meet the planning definition – and in some local authorities, particularly London Boroughs, no households meet the planning definition.
- 3.29 ORS are not implying that this is an official national statistic - rather a national statistic based on the outcomes of our fieldwork since the introduction of PPTS (2015). It is estimated that there are up to 14,000 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in England. ORS have interviewed households on over 25% of these pitches at a representative range of sites. Of the households that have been interviewed approximately 25% meet the planning definition. ORS also asked similar questions on travelling in over 2,000 pre-PPTS (2015) household interviews and found that approximately 10% of households would have met the PPTS (2015) planning definition. It is ORS's view therefore that this is the most comprehensive national statistic in relation to households that meet the planning definition in PPTS (2015) and should be seen as a robust statistical figure.
- 3.30 This would suggest that it is likely that only a small proportion of the potential need identified from unknown households will need conditioned Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority will need to be addressed as part of wider general housing need alongside need from households that do not meet the planning definition and through separate Local Plan Policies.
- 3.31 In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Council should consider a criteria-based policy in accordance with PPTS for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.

- 3.32 An assessment of need for unknown households can be found in **Appendix B**.
- 3.33 The ORS methodology to address the need arising from unknown households was supported by the Planning Inspector for a Local Plan Examination for Maldon District Council, Essex. In his Report that was published on 29th June 2017 he concluded:
150. The Council's stance is that any need arising from 'unknowns' should be a matter left to the planning application process. Modifications to Policy H6 have been put forward by the Council setting out criteria for such a purpose, which I consider further below. To my mind, that is an appropriate approach. While there remains a possibility that up to 10 further pitches may be needed, that cannot be said to represent identified need. It would be unreasonable to demand that the Plan provide for needs that have not been established to exist. That being said, **MM242h** is nonetheless necessary in this regard. It commits the Council to a review of the Plan if future reviews of the GTAA reveal the necessity for land allocations to provide for presently 'unknown' needs. For effectiveness, I have altered this modification from the version put forward by the Council by replacing the word "may" with "will" in relation to undertaking the review committed to. I have also replaced "the Plan" with "Policy H6" – the whole Plan need not be reviewed.

## Households that Do Not Meet the Planning Definition

- 3.34 Households who do not travel for work now fall outside the planning definition of a Traveller. However Romany Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers may be able to claim a right to culturally appropriate accommodation under the Equality Act (2010) as a result of their protected characteristics. In addition, provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act (2016) now include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Draft Guidance<sup>6</sup> related to this section of the Act has been published setting out how the government would want local housing authorities to undertake this assessment and it is the same as the GTAA assessment process. The implication is therefore that the housing needs of any Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller will need to be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of the area and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans. This is echoed in the revised NPPF (February 2019).
- 3.35 Paragraph 61 of the revised NPPF states that (emphasis added) '*Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes*'. The footnote to this section states that '*Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document*.'
- 3.36 An assessment of need for Travellers that do not meet the planning definition can be found in **Appendix C**. A wider assessment of need for Caravan and Boat Dwellers can be found in **Appendix D**.

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<sup>6</sup> Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats. DCLG (March 2016).

## Calculating Current and Future Need

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

## Supply of Pitches

- 3.39 The first stage of the assessment sought to determine the number of occupied, vacant and potentially available supply in the study area:
- » Current vacant pitches.
  - » Pitches currently with planning consent due to be developed within 5 years.
  - » Pitches vacated by people moving to housing.
  - » Pitches vacated by people moving from the study area (out-migration).
- 3.40 It is important when seeking to identify supply from vacant pitches that they are in fact available for general occupation – i.e. on a public or social rented site, or on a private site that is run on a commercial basis with anyone being able to rent a pitch if they are available. Typically, vacant pitches on small private family sites are not included as components of available supply but can be used to meet any current and future need from the family living on the site.

## Current Need

- 3.41 The second stage was to identify components of current need, which is not necessarily the need for additional pitches because they may be able to be addressed by space already available in the study area. It is important to address issues of double counting:
- » Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected.
  - » Concealed, doubled-up or over-crowded households (including single adults).
  - » Households in bricks and mortar wishing to move to sites.
  - » Households in need on waiting lists for public sites.



## Future Need

- 3.42 The final stage was to identify components of future need. This includes the following four components:
- » Teenage children in need of a pitch of their own.
  - » Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions.
  - » New household formation.
  - » In-migration.
- 3.43 Household formation rates are often the subject of challenge at appeals or examinations. ORS agrees with the position set out by DCLG in the Ministerial Statement of 2014 and firmly believe that any household formation rates should use a robust local evidence base, rather than simply relying on precedent. Our approach is set out in more detail later in this report.
- 3.44 All of these components of supply and need are presented in tabular format which identify the overall net need for current and future accommodation for both Gypsies and Travellers. This has proven to be a robust model for identifying needs. The residential and transit pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers are identified separately and the needs are identified in 5-year periods to 2036, with a split to 2032 to meet the 15-year period required by the PPTS.

## Pitch Turnover

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

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

- 3.46 In addition, a recent GTAA Best Practice Guide produced jointly by organisations including Friends, Families and Travellers, the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit, the York Travellers Trust, the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, Garden Court Chambers and Leeds GATE concluded that:

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

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

## Transit Provision

3.48 PPTS also requires an assessment of the need for any transit sites or stopping places. While the majority of Gypsies and Travellers have permanent bases either on Gypsy and Traveller sites or in bricks and mortar and no longer travel, other members of the community either travel permanently or for part of the year. Due to the mobile nature of the population, a range of sites or management approaches can be developed to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers as they move through different areas, including:

- » Transit sites
- » Emergency stopping places
- » Temporary (seasonal) sites
- » Negotiated Stopping Agreements.

3.49 In order to investigate the potential need for transit provision when undertaking work to support the study, ORS sought to undertake analysis of any records of unauthorised sites and encampments, as well as information from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)<sup>7</sup> Traveller Caravan Count. The outcomes of discussions with Council Officers and with Officers from neighbouring planning authorities were also taken into consideration when determining this element of need in the study area.

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<sup>7</sup> Formerly the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

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

## Introduction

- 4.1 One of the main considerations of this study is to provide evidence to support the provision of pitches and plots to meet the current and future accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. A pitch is an area normally occupied by one household, which typically contains enough space for one or two caravans but can vary in size<sup>8</sup>. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers. For Travelling Showpeople, the most common descriptions used are a plot for the space occupied by one household and a yard for a collection of plots which are typically exclusively occupied by Travelling Showpeople. Throughout this study the main focus is upon how many extra pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople are required in the study area.
- 4.2 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of a Gypsy and Traveller site is the publicly provided residential site, which is provided by a Local Authority or by a Registered Provider (usually a Housing Association). Pitches on public sites can be obtained through signing up to a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the tenants (similar to social housing).
- 4.3 The alternative to public residential sites are private residential sites and yards for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on existing private sites. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing. Generally, the majority of Travelling Showpeople yards are privately owned and managed.
- 4.4 The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population also has other types 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 occupancy period of residence which can vary from a few days or weeks to a period of months. An alternative to a transit site is an emergency or negotiated stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time someone can stay on it but has much more limited facilities. Both of these two types of site are designed to accommodate, for a temporary period, Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople whilst they travel. A number of authorities also operate an accepted encampments policy where short-term stopovers are tolerated without enforcement action.

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<sup>8</sup> Whilst it has now been withdrawn, Government Guidance on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites recommended that, as a general guide, an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area.

- 4.5 Further considerations for the Gypsy and Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers or with the approval of the landowner, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential purposes. Unauthorised encampments occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers.

## Sites and Yards in Dacorum

- 4.6 In Dacorum, at the base date for the GTAA, there were two public sites (36 pitches), and three Travelling Showpeople yards (11 plots). There were also 3 households living on the roadside by one of the public sites. See **Appendix E** for further details. Reference was also made to an unauthorised site on land adjacent to the Bobsleigh Hotel in Bovington, but it was confirmed by the Council that the site has now been vacated.

Figure 5 - Total amount of provision in Dacorum (July 2017)

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots
Public sites	2	36
Private with permanent planning permission	0	0
Private with temporary planning permission	0	0
Unauthorised sites	0	0
Roadside <sup>9</sup>	n/a	3
Transit provision	0	0
Travelling Showpeople provision – private	1	5
Travelling Showpeople provision – temporary	1	1
Travelling Showpeople provision – tolerated	1	5

## MHCLG Traveller Caravan Count

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

<sup>9</sup> These were located by the public site at Three Cherry Trees Lane.

## 5. Stakeholder Engagement

### Introduction

- 5.1 To be consistent with the guidance set out in PPTS (2015) and the methodology used in other GTTA studies, ORS undertook a stakeholder engagement programme to complement the information gathered through interviews with members of the Travelling Community. This consultation took the form of telephone interviews which were tailored to the role of the individual.
- 5.2 The aim of these interviews was to provide an understanding of current provision and possible future need; short-term encampments; transit provision; and cross-border issues. ORS interviewed two officers representing Dacorum Borough Council. A representative from the Showmen’s Guild was also interviewed.
- 5.3 As stated in the PPTS (2015), Local Authorities have a duty to cooperate on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries (S.110 Localism Act 2011). In order to explore issues relating to cross boundary working, ORS interviewed a Planning Officer from 8 neighbouring local authorities:
- » Aylesbury Vale
  - » Central Bedfordshire
  - » Luton
  - » South Buckinghamshire and Chiltern
  - » St Albans
  - » Three Rivers
  - » Watford
- 5.4 Due to issues surrounding data protection, and in order to protect the anonymity of those who took part, this section presents a summary of the views expressed by interviewees and verbatim comments have not been used. The views expressed in this section of the report represent a balanced summary of the views expressed by stakeholders, and on the views of the individuals concerned, rather than the official policy of their Council or organisation.

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

- 5.5 Two officers provided information for the study, and a summary of the Officers’ views and input into the project are set out below.
- » An officer representing housing was aware of overcrowding but explained that this is not specific to the Gypsy and Traveller community and is an issue across all accommodation types.
  - » The larger public site at Three Cherry Trees Lane is made up of residents who belong to two main families and there are said to be issues and disputes between family members. One family grouping has been forced into temporary accommodation due to an ongoing dispute.

- » Officers were not aware of or had any information about Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation. In terms of the housing register an officer explained that it is quite common for people not to provide information on their ethnicity (will leave it blank or will 'prefer not to say'). The authority is currently undertaking a formal review of the allocations process – which will shortly go to cabinet for approval. If this goes ahead it will mean the applicant will not be able to proceed with their application if they don't provide this information.
- » Officers were aware that short term encampments do occur during the summer period but were not aware of any significant issues.
- » There are said to be no significant issues in relation to cross boundary issues.
- » All senior housing managers across Hertfordshire meet quarterly to discuss housing issues including homelessness and dealing with strategic challenges across Hertfordshire, and how they can work collaboratively across authorities to address housing needs issues and ensure there is a consistent provision across Hertfordshire. This is a forum for general housing issues, and if anything specific is raised it would be communicated to the Dacorum Gypsy and Traveller Liaison meeting.
- » This meeting occurs quarterly and is attended by a number of department representatives from the Dacorum area, a representative from St Albans, representatives from the Police and Hertfordshire Learning. The meeting is chaired by the Head of the Gypsy and Traveller Section for Hertfordshire County Council and will deal with any issues which are occurring across the two areas. An officer explained that although Dacorum will work with Watford on housing needs issues (in particular rough sleepers and homelessness); there are no cross-border issues in relation to Gypsies and Travellers.

## Response from the Showman's Guild of Great Britain

- <sup>5.6</sup> The representative was aware of around 11 or 12 plots which are either tolerated or with temporary permission. There was last time assessed as a need for three plots for future growth which it was felt was the right amount.
- <sup>5.7</sup> ORS have undertaken GTAA's across the UK and regularly consult with organisations which promote and support Travelling Showpeople. They have told us that, across the country Travelling Showpeople sites are overcrowded with a requirement for small expansions for family growth, and most sites have reached maximum capacity.
- <sup>5.8</sup> The representative agreed that it is difficult to source sites which are both affordable and suitable. Land will tend to go for a high price to developers for residential. The Guild's view is that it is less onerous to look at existing sites and to explore whether surrounding land can be purchased to enable a small expansion. This will have the least impact on local communities and would allow families to remain together.
- <sup>5.9</sup> The representative of the Guild suggested that new yards ideally contain between six to eight plots. Any smaller and this would become unsustainable as people could be left isolated when people are away, any larger and it can be intrusive and puts additional demands on local services.

The average size of each plot is ½ an acre per plot, and the Showmen’s Guild has designed a model design for both a smaller and larger site which is available on its website.

## Neighbouring Authorities

### Aylesbury Vale Council

<sup>5.10</sup> With regard to overall accommodation need in **Aylesbury Vale**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » The District Council carried out a GTAA in 2013, a further update in 2014 and has commissioned a further in response to the revised definition which is due to be published shortly; the research was undertaken by ORS and included all the Buckinghamshire authorities.
- » The 2014 Assessment has been used to inform the Draft version of the emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan which was consulted on in summer 2016. The Study identified a need in Aylesbury Vale of 57 pitches (2013-28) which included 17 unauthorised encampments and 21 sites with temporary planning permission. No additional need was identified for Travelling Showpeople.
- » There are no public sites; there are around 110 private pitches for Gypsy and Travellers and three plots for Travelling Showpeople in the area.
- » The numbers of short-term encampments are small and may be due to the fact that the area is not on a traditional travelling route. There is no transit provision in the area and no need was identified to provide any in the previous GTAA.

<sup>5.11</sup> With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » There are currently considered to be no significant cross-border issues in relation to neighbouring local authorities that affect Aylesbury Vale. There was a proposal to allocate a Gypsy and Traveller site as part of a larger allocation in the Dacorum Borough Site Allocations Local Plan, which Aylesbury Vale District objected to. This allocation was considered unsound by the examiner.
- » In terms of cross border working and meeting the Duty to Cooperate, Aylesbury Vale have worked in partnership with all authorities in Buckinghamshire to prepare a joint GTAA and there have also been discussions around the options of how to take it forward. Aylesbury Vale have regular discussions on any relevant matters, including gypsy and travellers if appropriate, with other surrounding authorities including Dacorum.
- » The priority for the Council in the future is to complete the Gypsy and Traveller Plan process and to identify sites to help meet the needs identified in the updated GTAA.

### Central Bedfordshire

<sup>5.12</sup> With regard to overall accommodation need in **Central Bedfordshire**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » Central Bedfordshire commissioned the GTAA which was completed last summer. The first step was to identify what the need was as per the new definition. The Council is now incorporating the need figures from this into the emerging Local Plan. They consulted on their Regulation 18 local plan this summer and are currently preparing their Regulation 19 draft. This local plan includes a high-level strategic policy that sets out what the overall need is in terms of pitch and plot requirement for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Later in the Plan there are a couple of criteria-based development management policies. The idea being that future planning applications will be tested against those.
- » Moving forward, once the consultation is finished the intention is to undertake a 'call for sites' in the autumn with the aim to identify some possible allocations for the plan. The Council is dedicated to meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers who have not met the planning definition; however, it is felt that this could be best served through the criteria-based policy on an as and when basis, rather than making specific allocations for them.
- » The Council undertook an unsuccessful 'call for sites' in 2014/16, thus it is recognised that it will have to do this again. The Council are considering appointing an independent consultant to undertake the actual site assessment process for them so it can be seen as impartial (although this is still up for discussion).
- » The officer has an understanding that they are building a public site with 10 pitches (however the officer has not been very involved in this process, so his knowledge is limited). The plan timetable is looking at adoption in 2019, however the current GTAA is based on 2015 data. There the Council will be monitoring and keeping under reviews the GTAA throughout the plan process and updating it based on the latest genuine need. Any new commissions that come forward who meet the new planning definition will be subtracted from the need figure identified within the GTAA. The officer was unsure whether they will be commissioning ORS to review the GTAA prior to submission but they will certainly be monitoring the provision to ensure they do not under or over provide.
- » The officer was aware of some illegal encampments popping up near Luton, however the officer was not formally aware of the extent of them and how much of an issue they are.

5.13 With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » Central Bedfordshire has monthly (or 6 weekly) meetings with neighbouring local authorities under the duty to cooperate. The Councils discuss all local plan issues including those relating to Gypsies and Travellers. Central Bedfordshire hasn't been asked by any of these authorities to help out with their need, so they are proceeding on that basis. However, because of the change in definition the dust needs to settle on a number of different issues first.
- » A cross border issue could be transit sites - all authorities can benefit from discussing and agreeing an approach to these. The advice from ORS is that it is too early to take any immediate actions. The change of definition means there will be a lot more 'homeless' Gypsies and Travellers which will add increased need for



transit sites. It is too early to know how the change will affect the transit population. The officer also said that it is helpful that ORS conduct GTAA's across a number of different neighbouring authorities so that there is a consistent approach, therefore the way they count need is the same as others.

- » The officer is also on a Gypsy and Traveller liaison committee with a number of other local authorities from the east of England. Here they discuss cross boundary issues and it is a really useful forum. It acts as a best practise exercise where they discuss what works and what doesn't, etc. If the officer was to suggest something in addition to the other regular standard meetings it would be that Dacorum and other authorities should attend these meetings.

## Luton Borough Council

5.14 With regard to overall accommodation need in **Luton**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » Luton recently undertook a Regulation 18 notification with a 'call for sites' which closed in August 2017 and also commissioned an updated accommodation needs assessment which was carried out by ORS. The Council has now commissioned consultants to examine how this need will be met in the borough.
- » The borough is progressing with its Local Plan and currently includes guiding policies about safeguarding the existing sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and a criteria-based policy to determine any applications which come forward. Overall, the Plan addresses need from a strategic point of view without having specific quantification of the need and allocation of sites as this was taken out of the plan in 2015 with the new DPS and also with the new definition.
- » The new Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan will address the needs and allocations. The Borough has created a Local Plan Working Party which has examined the ORS findings and found that the need has reduced significantly compared to the previous assessment because the government's new planning definition of G&T. However, this has also raised the issue of provision for those who no longer meet the new definition and as such would not be included in the Gypsy and Traveller local plan. Their need would normally be addressed through the SHMA and general housing policies in the main local plan; however, this is now likely to be adopted imminently. One potential way to deal with it is to include the matter as part of the early local plan review.
- » Due to such a small need for the existing households that come under the new planning definition, the scope of the G&T Local Plan will be much simplified only addressing and managing existing sites and opportunities to meet needs in that way. There is a legitimate question whether a separate Gypsy and Traveller plan of this nature would be justified. However, no decisions have been taken to the contrary at this time and the authority is progressing with the G&T plan and how to address the non-traveller need.
- » There are unauthorised encampments from time to time but there appears to be evidence that it is reducing in recent years. However, it is still an issue for the authority in terms of costs of site clearance- evidence suggests that it is one family

generating the encampments 80% of the time. The Council are considering whether there is scope for temporary stopping places but need to do more work on how they would go forward on this. These encampments tend to happen more in the summer months, often families moving around to different events.

5.15 With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » Going forward, it is hoped that any future need will be met within the Borough, however if this is not possible it may be the case that the Council will look to neighbouring areas to meet the need. The officer was aware that in neighbouring Central Bedfordshire, there is a lot of pressure to accommodate Gypsy and Travellers and there are new sites being developed. This would reduce the pressure on Luton from people outside the borough seeking permanent accommodation. Luton's permanent need is quite low in terms of the new definition, so the current issue it is dealing with is unauthorised encampments.
- » The officer felt it would be good to have some cross-border coordination when dealing with unauthorised encampments and to get some agreements on a cross boundary local authority basis. There currently is no forum on Gypsy and Traveller related issues, however there are meetings under the duty to cooperate on meeting Luton's unmet housing needs through sustainable urban extensions. If there is a material relationship between the unauthorised encampments in Luton, Dacorum and elsewhere then it would make sense to have some joined up working across the conurbation. However, the officer wasn't sure if it is just one family in the administrative area or if it is wider than that and this would be the first question to address. Currently Luton does not have any information about those travelling movements.
- » The officer raised the issue around dealing with Gypsy and Traveller households who no longer meet the planning definition and questioned whether this comes under the SHMA or if it is to be addressed through 'park homes' type of provision. The officer felt it would be helpful to understand the approach taken by other surrounding neighbouring authorities on this issue.

## South Buckinghamshire and Chiltern District Councils

5.16 With regard to overall accommodation need in **South Buckinghamshire and Chiltern**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » ORS undertook an update of the Buckinghamshire GTAA in 2014. The need for the time period 2013-2028 for Chiltern was assessed as 12 additional residential pitches and 17 plots for Travelling Showpeople (although Chiltern District Council was of the view that this was an overestimate based on demand not need and 4 Travelling Showpeople plots were needed). The assessed need for South Bucks for the same time period was estimated as 44 pitches and no plots for Travelling Showpeople. The GTAA update assessed no need for transit provision in either area. Following the change in the definition of Gypsies and Travellers in planning terms, the councils in Buckinghamshire have commissioned ORS to undertake an update which is due to be published in the near future.

- » The 2014 GTAA highlighted 2 public sites (13 pitches) in Chiltern although these sites have been sold by Buckinghamshire County Council and would now be classified as private sites. In addition to these now private sites there are 4 other private sites (9 pitches) and 2 Travelling Showpeople yards (17 plots). In South Bucks the 2014 GTAA highlighted 3 public sites in the area (59 pitches) but these sites have also been sold by Buckinghamshire County Council and would now be considered private sites (there are 44 other private pitches), there are no Travelling Showpeople yards in the area. There is no transit provision in either area.
- » Once the update of the GTAA is completed the councils will know whether the sites are meeting the needs of residents and whether there are any particular issues on any of the sites e.g. overcrowding.
- » The 2014 GTAA highlighted 2 private sites with temporary permission and one unauthorised pitch in the Chiltern area. In South Bucks the 2014 GTAA highlighted 2 private sites with temporary planning permission (3 pitches) and 3 unauthorised developments (5 pitches).
- » The councils are experiencing planning applications coming into them for the renewal of the temporary planning permissions and there is some uncertainty as to the effect of the new definition of Gypsies and Travellers in planning terms, given the lack of guidance on Travellers who no longer travel. This is also relevant to an application for the large expansion of an existing permanent site in Chalfont St Peter.
- » There have been relatively few unauthorised encampments in the area over recent years. Due to the low level of encampments there is currently no transit provision or need for such provision in the councils' areas. There have been a few instances of illegal stopping in Chiltern and South Bucks in the spring / summer of 2017 and this is being monitored. It is too early to say whether this is a new trend compared to previous years.

5.17 With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » There are considered to be no significant cross-border issues between Chiltern and South Bucks and the study area. The councils consider that neighbouring authorities are meeting their own accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople as the councils are not being asked to accommodate Traveller communities' needs from elsewhere.
- » The councils work in partnership with other authorities in Buckinghamshire especially in relation to GTAAs. There is also regular Duty to Cooperate meetings in Buckinghamshire and there are regular meetings with neighbouring authorities outside of the County. The councils have consulted the Buckinghamshire Gypsy and Traveller Service about the Needs Assessment and other matters. This service is jointly carried out with Oxfordshire. In Duty to Cooperate meetings with Hertfordshire, LPAs suggestions were made to improve the monitoring of unauthorised encampments and planning applications in order have a consistent evidence base to inform future studies.

- » A key priority in the future for the council is to finalise the Buckinghamshire GTAA update. The councils are also currently working on their Joint Local Plan and are currently considering the response to the Green Belt Preferred Options and five of these sites flag up the potential to accommodate traveller pitches/park homes/Travelling Showpeople plots which will be subject to further work. Other options for meeting need were also referred to in the Council's Regulation 18 consultation and these will be considered further as the Local Plan proceeds.

## St Albans

5.18 With regard to overall accommodation need in **St Albans**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » ORS completed a GTAA in 2015 and St Albans have since received some planning applications from existing sites, and a couple of additional pitches have been permitted. The Council have also been working on developing a new Local Plan which was submitted last year and contained a policy proposal to provide two sites with 15 pitches on each. However, the inspector requested an initial hearing to discuss the duty to cooperate, and it was felt that this had not been met and the Council subsequently applied for a Judicial Review. This was not successful, so the Council are now considering the next steps, and it is possible that housing overall will need to be revisited.
- » Currently, there are two policies in the local plan and includes a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson policy and broad locations. Therefore, they have a set of criteria and requirements for each site to deliver.
- » The GTAA was completed just as the definition had been changed and the officer felt that it is quite possible that they may need fewer pitches. The authority is considering updating the need figure to take into account the new definition.
- » There are the odd short-term encampments in the area, but these are generally resolved over a couple of days and are only temporary. They have had an application at one of their existing sites which was for 26 seasonal caravans. In their assessment there wasn't a need for transit sites, so they rejected this application, this was upheld at appeal and dismissed in January this year.

5.19 With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » The two 15 pitches they are looking at in the strategic local plan is adjacent to Dacorum borough and the Council understands there is a pitch nearby around the border of Dacorum (Three Cherry Trees Lane Site).
- » There have been some issues with this site and the Council have had discussions during meetings around that area, it is understood that they need to be cautious where both pitches are located. They have not made any decisions on exactly where it is going to be, but the councils agree that everyone needs to be mindful that the Three Cherry Trees Lane site is nearby. The former Local Plan looked to locate the two sites in East Hemel Hempstead south, rather than St Albans. Cherry Tree is further north, so it is unlikely that they will be right next to each other.

- » Dacorum are aware that they are looking at the 15 pitch sites in the broad locations; this has been discussed in meetings between the two authorities as part of the Duty to Cooperate, so they have been consulted about this. The officer feels that this cross-border issue is under control and everyone is aware of what is happening. Cross border issues are discussed in their duty to cooperate meetings and they also have separate meetings on the broad locations and planning.

### Three Rivers District Council

5.20 With regard to overall accommodation need in **Three Rivers**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » The 2016 GTAA identified a need from two temporary sites and concluded that these are given permanent permission. The Council has since granted permanent permission for one site and, through the Local Plan, there is an intention to take the other site forward to allocate it to meet the needs. There is room on that site for further pitches, but currently the conditions do not allow this, but once it is allocated those restrictions can be removed.
- » There are two tolerated travelling show people yards, and there is sufficient room on these yards if further pitches are required, but as they do not require planning permission they will not be allocated.
- » The officer explained that the GTAA concluded that the need for transit sites could be affected by the change of planning definition. The officer confirmed that currently there are very few incidents of unauthorised encampments in the area and felt this was probably due to the proximity of London.

5.21 With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » The officer felt that need for transit sites will have to be looked at on a wider basis, across the South West Hertfordshire area, in order to get a better picture of where the transit sites are needed, and explained that although the information is not yet available, in approximately five years they should have enough data to demonstrate the need, and this would tie with the time scale of Watford and Dacorum, and other neighbouring authorities and it was felt that it would be a good opportunity to look at the transit issue in a coordinated way. There is an agreement in place across South West Hertfordshire to put monitoring information in place so that the number of stops and unauthorised encampments across the area can be observed.
- » Watford have a travelling site just outside the border of Three Rivers which they are planning on extending, but that does not cause any issues for Three Rivers. The cross border working across South West Hertfordshire authorities is considered to be sufficient, and although there is less communication with Northern authorities, there is felt to be no need to work with these authorities (although there may be in the future to understand the transit issue fully).

## Watford Borough Council

5.22 With regard to overall accommodation need in **Watford**, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » There are ten pitches available on the public site and these are currently all occupied. There are a total of 16 caravans with 11 families living on the site.
- » The officer was not able to provide any information in relation to unauthorised encampments.

5.23 With regard to the subject of cross border issues and the Duty to Cooperate, the views of the officer interviewed were as follows:

- » There are said to be no significant issues in relation to cross boundary issues.
- » The officer was of the view that ORS have undertaken studies for most of the surrounding authorities, therefore ensuring they are all completed to the same methodology.

## 6. Survey of Travelling Communities

### Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers

- 6.1 One of the major components of this study was a detailed survey of the Gypsy and Traveller population living in the study area, and also efforts to engage with the bricks and mortar community.
- 6.2 Through the desk-based research and stakeholder interviews ORS identified 2 public sites and 3 Travelling Showperson’s yards. The table below sets out the number of pitches/plots, the number of interviews that were completed, and the reasons why interviews were not completed.
- 6.3 A total of 39 interviews were completed on the 2 public sites and a number of pitches were doubled-up. It was not possible to complete any interviews on the 3 Travelling Showpeople yards as all of the plots were occupied by non-Travellers.
- 6.4 During the period between commencing the GTAA and reporting no transient households were identified to interview other than the 3 living on the roadside at one of the public sites.

Figure 6 - Sites and yards visited in Dacorum

Public Sites	Pitches/Plots	Interviews	Reasons for not completing interviews
Three Cherry Trees Lane, Hemel Hempstead	30	31	5 x no contact possible, 5 x refusals, several doubled-up households
Cheddington Lane, Long Marston	6	5	2 x no contact possible, 1 x doubled-up
<b>Roadside</b>			
Three Cherry Trees Lane, Hemel Hempstead	3	3	-
<b>TSP Yards</b>			
Adj Timber Yard (Temporary)	1	0	1 x non-Travellers
Hogpits Bottom (Tolerated)	5	0	5 x non-Travellers
Timber Yard	5	0	5 x non-Travellers
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>39</b>	

### Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers in Bricks and Mortar

- 6.5 Following all of the efforts that were made, it was only possible to interview 1 household living in bricks and mortar. The household did not meet the planning definition but did want to move to a site. There were also 5 teenagers living in this household who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years.

# 7. Current and Future Pitch Provision

## Introduction

- 7.1 This section focuses on the additional pitch provision which is needed in the study area currently and to 2036. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future<sup>10</sup>. This time period allows for robust forecasts of the requirements for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and also secondary data sources. Whilst the difficulty in making accurate assessments beyond 5 years has been highlighted in previous studies, the approach taken in this study to estimate new household formation has been accepted by Planning Inspectors as the most appropriate methodology to use.
- 7.2 We would note that this section is based upon a combination of the on-site surveys, planning records and stakeholder interviews. In many cases, the survey data is not used in isolation, but instead is used to validate information from planning records or other sources.
- 7.3 This section concentrates not only upon the total additional provision, which is required in the area, but also whether there is a need for any transit sites and/or emergency stopping place provision.

## New Household Formation Rates

- 7.4 Nationally, a household formation and growth rate of 3.00% net per annum<sup>11</sup> has been commonly assumed and widely used in local Gypsy and Traveller assessments, even though there is no statistical evidence of households growing so quickly. The result has been to inflate both national and local requirements for additional pitches unrealistically. In this context, ORS has prepared a *Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates (2015)*. The main conclusions are set out here and the full paper is in **Appendix G**.
- 7.5 Those seeking to provide evidence of high annual net household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers have sometimes sought to rely on increases in the number of caravans, as reflected in caravan counts. However, caravan count data is unreliable and erratic – so the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through demographic analysis.
- 7.6 The Technical Note concludes that in fact, the growth in the national Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.25% per annum – much less than the 3.00% per annum often assumed, but still greater than in the settled community. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that net Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth rates are above 2.00% per annum nationally.

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<sup>10</sup> See Paragraphs 3.32 and 3.33 for details of components on current and future need.

<sup>11</sup> Page 25, Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments – Guidance (DCLG – 2007) *Now withdrawn*.



7.7 The often assumed 3.00% per annum net household growth rate is unrealistic and would require clear statistical evidence before being used for planning purposes. In practice, the best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum for Gypsies and Travellers (in addition research by ORS has identified a national growth rate of 1.00% for Travelling Showpeople) and this has also been adjusted locally based on site demographics.

7.8 This view has been supported by Planning Inspectors in a number of Decision Notices. The Inspector for an appeal in Doncaster that was issued in November 2016 (Ref: APP/F4410/W/15/3133490) where the agent acting on behalf of the appellant claimed that a rate closer to 3.00% should be used concluded:

*In assessing need account also needs to be taken of likely household growth over the coming years. In determining an annual household growth rate, the Council relies on the work of Opinions Research Services (ORS), part of Swansea University. ORS's research considers migration, population profiles, births & fertility rates, death rates, household size data and household dissolution rates to determine average household growth rates for gypsies and travellers. The findings indicate that the average annual growth rate is in the order of 1.50% but that a 2.50% figure could be used if local data suggest a relatively youthful population. As the Council has found a strong correlation between Doncaster's gypsy and traveller population age profile and the national picture, a 1.50% annual household growth rate has been used in its 2016 GTANA. Given the rigour of ORS's research and the Council's application of its findings to the local area I accept that a 1.50% figure is justified in the case of Doncaster.*

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

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

7.10 In addition, the Technical Note has recently been accepted as a robust academic evidence base and has been published by the Social Research Association in its journal Social Research Practice in December 2017. The overall purpose of the journal is to encourage and promote high standards of social research for public benefit. It aims to encourage methodological development by giving practitioners the space and the incentive to share their knowledge.

7.11 ORS assessments take full account of the net local household growth rate per annum calculated on the basis of demographic evidence from the site surveys, and the 'baseline' includes all current authorised households, all households identified as in current need (including concealed households, movement from bricks and mortar and those on waiting lists not currently living on a pitch or plot), as well as households living on tolerated unauthorised pitches or plots who are

not included as current need. The assessments of future need also take account of modelling projections based on birth and death rates, and in-/out-migration.

- 7.12 Overall, the household growth rate used for the assessment of future needs has been informed by local evidence. This demographic evidence has been used to adjust the national growth rate of 1.50% up or down based on the proportion of those aged under 18 (by travelling status).
- 7.13 In certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are low it may not be appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement will be made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children. This will be based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in the area. This is based on evidence from other GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales.

## Breakdown by 5 Year Bands

- 7.14 In addition to tables which set out the overall need for Gypsies and Travellers, the overall need has also been broken down by 5-year bands as required by PPTS (2015). The way that this is calculated is by including all current need (from unauthorised pitches, pitches with temporary planning permission, concealed and doubled-up households, 5 year need from teenage children, and net movement from bricks and mortar) in the first 5 years. In addition, the total net new household formation is split across the 19-year GTAA period based on the compound rate of growth that was applied rather than being split equally over time.

## Applying the Planning Definition

- 7.15 The outcomes from the household interviews were used to determine the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). Only need from those households that met the planning definition (in that ORS were able to determine that they travel for work purposes and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so, or have ceased to travel temporarily due to education, ill health or old age) need to be formally considered in the GTAA. Households where an interview was not completed who **may** meet the planning definition have also been included as a potential additional component of need from unknown households. Whilst they do not need to be formally considered in the GTAA need from households that did not meet the planning definition has been assessed to provide the Council with information on levels of need that will have to be addressed through separate Local Plan Policies.
- 7.16 The information used to assess households against the planning definition included information on whether households have ever travelled; why they have stopped travelling; the reasons that they travel; and whether they plan to travel again in the future and for what reasons. The table below sets out the planning status of households living on sites in Dacorum.

Figure 7 – Planning status of households in Dacorum

Status	Meets Planning Definition	Unknown	Does Not Meet Planning Definition
<b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>			
Public Sites	4	12	32
Roadside	0	0	3
Bricks and Mortar	0	0	1
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>

<b>Travelling Showpeople</b>			
All yards <sup>12</sup>	0	0	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>

- 7.17 Figure 7 shows that for Gypsies and Travellers, 4 households met the planning definition of a Traveller in that ORS were able to determine that they travel for work purposes and stay away from their usual place of residence or have ceased to travel temporarily. A total of 36 Gypsy and Traveller households did not meet the planning definition as they were not able to demonstrate that they travel away from their usual place of residence for the purpose of work, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to children in education, ill health or old age. Some did travel for cultural reasons, to visit relatives or friends, and others had ceased to travel permanently – these households did not meet the planning definition.

## Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers in Bricks and Mortar

- 7.18 Following all of the efforts that were made, it was only possible to interview 1 household living in bricks and mortar. The household did not meet the planning definition but did want to move to a site. There were also 5 teenagers living in this household who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years.

## Migration

- 7.19 The study has also sought to address in-migration (households requiring accommodation who move into the study area from outside) and out-migration (households moving away from the study area). Site surveys typically identify only small numbers of in-migrant and out-migrant households and the data is not normally robust enough to extrapolate long-term trends. At the national level, there is nil net migration of Gypsies and Travellers across the UK, but the assessment has taken into account local migration effects on the basis of the best evidence available.
- 7.20 Evidence drawn from stakeholder and household interviews has been considered alongside assessments of need that have been completed in other nearby local authorities. Whilst a number of households living on public sites stated that they wish to move, all wanted to move to another public site in the local area due to over-crowding. None stated that they were planning to move away from Dacorum. ORS have also found no evidence from other local studies that have been completed recently of any households wishing to move to Dacorum. Therefore, net migration to the sum of zero has been assumed for the GTAA – which means that net pitch requirements are driven by locally identifiable need rather than speculative modelling assumptions. Should any households from outside of Dacorum wish to develop a new site the proposal will need to be considered by a criteria-based Local Plan Policy.

<sup>12</sup> There were no Travelling Showpeople, Gypsies or Travellers living on any of the yards.

## Ethnicity of Households

- 7.21 The household interviews asked respondents to state their ethnicity. Of those who responded a total of 31 households were Irish Travellers, 6 were Romany Gypsies, 1 were English Travellers, and 1 were New Travellers.

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

7.22 The 4 households that met the planning definition were found on the public site at Three Cherry Trees Lane. Analysis of the household interviews indicated that there is a current need for 3 pitches for concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 2 pitches for teenage children in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years and 2 as a result new household formation (based on the demographics of the residents). Therefore, the overall level of additional need for those households who met the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller is for **7 additional pitches** over the GTAA period. This is set out in Figure 8 and Figure 9 distributes the need over 5-year periods. Given that this need all comes from households living on public sites it is likely that it will need to be addressed through the provision of additional public pitches. Whilst there are Local Plan Allocations in Hemel Hempstead for 12 pitches<sup>13</sup> these are both on wider strategic allocations and do not yet have planning permission. The Council should continue to monitor these allocations in terms of meeting need as they are expected to be delivered within the first 5 years of the GTAA period.

Figure 8 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum that met the Planning Definition (2017-36)

Gypsies and Travellers - Meeting Planning Definition	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	3
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from teenage children	2
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	2
<i>(Formation from household demographics)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>7</b>

Figure 9 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum that met the Planning Definition by 5-year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2017-22	2022-27	2027-32	2032-2036	
	5	0	0	2	<b>7</b>

<sup>13</sup> LA1 – Marchmont Farm (5 pitches) and LA3 – West Hemel Hempstead (7 pitches).

## Pitch Needs – Unknown Gypsies and Travellers

- 7.23 Whilst it was not possible to determine the planning status of a total of 12 households as they either refused to be interviewed or were not on site at the time of the fieldwork, the needs of these households still need to be recognised by the GTAA as they are believed to be Gypsies and Travellers and may meet the planning definition.
- 7.24 ORS are of the opinion that it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not households where an interview was not completed meet the planning definition based on the outcomes of households in that local authority where an interview was completed.
- 7.25 However, data that has been collected from over 3,500 household interviews that have been completed by ORS since the changes to PPTS in 2015 suggests that nationally approximately 25% of households that have been interviewed meet the planning definition.
- 7.26 This would suggest that it is likely that only a proportion of the potential need identified from these unknown households will need conditioned Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority will need to be addressed through other means.
- 7.27 Should further information be made available to the Council that will allow for the planning definition to be applied to the unknown households, the overall level of need could rise by up to 4 pitches from new household formation (this uses a base of the 12 households and a net growth rate of 1.50%<sup>14</sup>). Therefore, additional need could increase by up to a further 4 pitches, plus any concealed adult households or 5-year need arising from teenagers living in these households (if all 12 unknown pitches are deemed to meet the planning definition). However, as an illustration, if the ORS national average of 25% were to be applied this could be as few as 1 additional pitch. Note that the proportion of households in Dacorum that met the planning definition was lower at 10%.
- 7.28 Tables setting out the components of need for unknown households can be found in **Appendix B**.

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

- 7.29 It is not now a requirement for a GTAA to include an assessment of need for households that did not meet the planning definition. However, this assessment is included for illustrative purposes and to provide the Council with information on levels of need that will have to be addressed through separate Local Plan Policies. On this basis, it is evident that whilst the needs of the 36 households who do not meet the planning definition will represent only a very small proportion of the overall housing need, the Council will still need to ensure that arrangements are in place to properly address these needs – especially as many identified as Irish and Romany Gypsies and may claim that the Council should meet their housing needs through culturally appropriate housing.

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<sup>14</sup>The ORS *Technical Note on Population and Household Growth (2015)* has identified a national growth rate of 1.50% for Gypsies and Travellers which has been applied in the absence of further demographic information about these households.

- 7.30 There is a need for 69 additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition. This is mainly due to significant levels of over-crowding that were found at the public site at Three Cherry Trees Lane. The need is made up of 18 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 1 movement from bricks and mortar, 12 teenagers currently living on the public site who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, 5 teenagers living in bricks and mortar who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years and 33 from new household formation using a rate of 2.20% derived from the demographics of the households that were interviewed.
- 7.31 A summary of this need for households that did not meet the planning definition can be found in **Appendix C**.

## Travelling Showpeople Needs

### Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople

- 7.32 There were 3 Travelling Showpeople yards identified in Dacorum and interviewers visited all of the plots in an attempt to conduct interviews. However, it was not possible to interview any Travelling Showpeople as all of the households who were living on the 3 yards were not Travelling Showpeople or Gypsies and Travellers.
- 7.33 There is therefore no current or future need for additional plots for Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum.

## Transit Requirements

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

## MHCLG Traveller Caravan Count

- 7.35 Whilst it is considered to be a comprehensive national dataset on numbers of authorised and unauthorised caravans across England, it is acknowledged that the Traveller Caravan Count is a count of caravans and not households. It also does not record the reasons for unauthorised caravans. This makes it very difficult to interpret in relation to assessing future need because it does not count pitches or resident households. The count is also only a twice yearly (January and July) 'snapshot in time' conducted by local authorities on a specific day, and any caravans on unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates are not recorded. Likewise, any caravans that are away from sites on the day of the count are not included. As such it is not considered appropriate to use the outcomes from the Traveller Caravan Count in the assessment of future transit provision. It does however provide valuable historic and trend data on whether there are instances of unauthorised caravans in local authority areas.
- 7.36 Data from the Traveller Caravan Count shows that there have been no non-tolerated unauthorised caravans on land not owned by Travellers recorded in the study area in recent years.

## Stakeholder Interviews and Local Data

- 7.37 Information from the stakeholder interviews also identified that there are low levels of unauthorised encampments in Dacorum, that the majority occur during the summer months, and that they were not aware of any significant issues.
- 7.38 There is currently a public transit site with 15 pitches in Hertsmere that can be used to move households on unauthorised encampment to, as it is in another district of Hertfordshire.

## Potential Implications of PPTS (2015)

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

## Transit Recommendations

- 7.40 There is a public transit site in Hertsmere with 15 pitches that could be used to move any unauthorised encampments from Dacorum as it is in another district in Hertfordshire. Whilst at present 9 pitches are not available as they are occupied on a permanent basis, these residents are included as components of current need for a permanent pitch in the most recent GTAA for Hertsmere. This leaves 6 available transit pitches. As such it is not recommended that there is a need for any additional transit provision in Dacorum at this time.
- 7.41 However, the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should be monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop – for example a potential increase in the number of households travelling to seek to meet the current planning definition.
- 7.42 As well as information on the size and duration of the encampments, this monitoring should also seek to gather information from residents on the reasons for their stay in the local area; whether they have a permanent base or where they have travelled from; whether they have any need or preference to settle permanently in the local area; and whether their travelling is a result of changes to PPTS (2015). This information could be collected as part of a Welfare Assessment (or similar).
- 7.43 A review of the evidence base relating to unauthorised encampments, including the monitoring referred to above, should be undertaken once there is a robust evidence base following the changes to PPTS in 2015 – for example an increase in the number of households travelling and setting up encampments. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in any new transit provision or emergency stopping places, or whether a managed approach is preferable. Given that there are potentially 15 transit pitches in Hertsmere it is unlikely that this review will result in a need for additional transit pitches in Dacorum. If such a need is identified work will need to be undertaken on a Hertfordshire-wide basis to identify suitable locations to meet the provision.



- 7.44 In the short-term the Council should continue to use available pitches on the existing transit site for dealing with unauthorised encampments. Management based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments such as negotiated stopping agreements could also be considered.
- 7.45 The term ‘negotiated stopping’ is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent ‘built’ transit sites but negotiated agreements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. Agreements are made between the Council and the (temporary) residents regarding expectations on both sides. See [www.leedsgate.co.uk](http://www.leedsgate.co.uk) for further information.
- 7.46 Temporary stopping places can be made available at times of increased demand due to fairs or cultural celebrations that are attended by Gypsies and Travellers. A charge may be levied as determined by the local authority although they only need to provide basic facilities including: a cold-water supply; portaloos; sewerage disposal point and refuse disposal facilities. Whilst such events are unlikely to occur in Dacorum, the Council should still be aware of temporary arrangements that could be put in place if required.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 This study provides a robust evidence base to enable the Council to assess the housing needs of the Travelling Community as well as complying with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 1985, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, the Housing and Planning Act 2016, and the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019. It also provides the evidence base which can be used to support Local Plan Policies.

### Gypsies and Travellers

8.2 In summary there is a need for:

- » 7 additional pitches in Dacorum over the GTAA period to 2036 for Gypsy and Traveller households that met the planning definition;
- » 4 additional pitches for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households that may meet the planning definition; and
- » 69 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households who did not meet the planning definition.

8.3 It is recommended that the need for households that meet the planning definition is addressed through new pitch allocations. Given that this need all comes from households living on public sites it is likely that it will need to be addressed through the provision of additional public pitches. It is not anticipated that there is scope to intensify or expand the two existing sites. The Three Cherry Trees Lane site is already of a significant size and is experiencing overcrowding of pitches, and there is no adjoining land available to expand into in the case of the Cheddington Lane site.

8.4 As far as the size and type of new sites is concerned, advice was published by the Government in 2008. *Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites: good practice guide* was intended to provide potential developers and existing site owners with an understanding of the design features needed to help ensure a site is successful, easy to manage and maintain, including site location, layout, size and the services and facilities need to make it operate effectively. Whilst this was withdrawn in September 2015, it still provides valid advice. In summary it suggests that sites should ideally consist of up to 15 pitches in capacity unless there is clear evidence to suggest that a larger site is preferred by the local Gypsy or Traveller community.

8.5 More recent guidance was published by the Welsh Government<sup>15</sup>. This states that the recommended number of pitches and layout of residential Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller sites should be closely linked; that smaller sites can be easier to manage and are more likely to attract compatible family units; and that new sites should comprise 20 pitches or less, other than in exceptional circumstances and where consultation and engagement have taken place with all stakeholders.

8.6 As far as the management of new sites is concerned guidance<sup>16</sup> was published by the Government in 2009. This good practice guidance is intended to help new and existing managers maintain

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<sup>15</sup> Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Welsh Government Guidance (2015).

<sup>16</sup> Gypsy and traveller site management - good practice guide DCLG (2009).

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well-run and sustainable sites which provide a safe environment for residents and their families. It also aims to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of management and residents alike, dealing with permanent and transit site accommodation and offering advice on everyday issues. It will also help to ensure sites work well and fulfil their part in promoting good relations with the wider community in the area.

- 8.7 Whilst there are Local Plan Allocations in Hemel Hempstead for 12 pitches<sup>17</sup> these are both on wider strategic allocations and do not yet have planning permission. The Council should continue to monitor these allocations in terms of the pitches contributing towards meeting identified need as they are expected to be delivered within the first 5 years of the GTAA period.
- 8.8 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with unknown Travellers as it is unlikely that all of this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Council should consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.
- 8.9 A local example of a robust criteria-based policy that has recently been through Examination can be found in the East Herts District Plan. This was subject to an Examination in Public between October 2017 and January 2018 followed by a period of public consultation on the Main Modifications agreed through the Examination between February and March 2018. Following this, the Inspector issued her Final Report on the Examination of the East Herts District Plan in July 2018. The policy to refer to is *Policy HOU9 Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*. Given that the GTAA has assumed net migration to the sum of zero, any households from outside of Dacorum that meet the planning definition who wish to develop a new site will also need to be considered by a criteria-based Local Plan Policy.
- 8.10 In general terms, the need for those households who do not meet the planning definition will be addressed as part of general housing need and through separate Local Plan Policies (including any plans that have already been adopted, as all Travellers will have been included as part of the overall Objectively Assessed Need - OAN).
- 8.11 This approach is specifically referenced in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018). Paragraph 60 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Paragraph 61 then states that (emphasis added) *'Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'*. The footnote to this section states that *'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.'*
- 8.12 It is recognised that the Council already have in place an adopted Local Plan that sets out overall housing need. When this plan is reviewed, or new plans prepared, the findings of this report should be considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment

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<sup>17</sup> LA1 – Marchmont Farm (5 pitches) and LA3 – West Hemel Hempstead (7 pitches).

of overall housing need in relation to those households that do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller.

- 8.13 As an example, it is useful to look at the East Hertfordshire Local Plan that was found to be sound in an Inspectors Report that was issued in July 2018. The Local Plan contains *Policy HOU10 New Park Home Sites for Non-Nomadic (i.e. households that do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller) Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*. This sets out that any applications for planning permission for park homes for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople that do not meet the planning definition must be in accordance with the NPPF and PPTS and the criteria set out in Policy HOU10, and not under the criteria set out in *Policy HOU9 Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*.

## Travelling Showpeople

- 8.14 Whilst there were 3 Travelling Showpeople yards identified in Dacorum it was found that they are all occupied by non-Travellers. There is therefore no current or future need for additional plots for Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum.

## Transit Provision

- 8.15 There is evidence to suggest that there have been a very small number of encampments in Dacorum in recent years. However, there is a public transit site in Hertsmere that can be used to move any encampments to as it is another district of Hertfordshire. As such it is not recommended that there is a need for any additional transit provision in Dacorum at this time.
- 8.16 It is also recommended that the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should continue to be monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in more formal transit sites or emergency stopping places. Given that there are potentially 15 transit pitches in Hertsmere it is unlikely that this review will result in a need for additional transit pitches in Dacorum. If such a need is identified work will need to be undertaken on a Hertfordshire-wide basis to identify suitable locations to meet the provision.
- 8.17 In the short-term the Council should continue to use available pitches on the existing transit site for dealing with unauthorised encampments. Management based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments such as negotiated stopping agreements could also be considered.

## Summary of Need to be Addressed

- 8.18 Taking into consideration all of the elements of need that have been assessed, together with the assumptions on the proportion of unknown households that are likely to meet the planning definition, the table below sets out the likely number of pitches that will need to be addressed either as a result of the GTAA, or through the SHMA and through separate Local Plan Policies.
- 8.19 Total need from Gypsy and Traveller households that meet the planning definition, from unknown households, and from households that do not meet the planning definition is for 80 additional pitches. The table below breaks need down by the GTAA and SHMA by taking 25% (the ORS national average for Gypsies and Travellers) of need from unknown households and adding this to the need from households that met the planning definition, and by adding the remaining

75% of need from unknown households to the need from households that did not meet the planning definition.

- 8.20 It should be noted that the need from unknown households should be addressed through a criteria-based policy.

**Figure 10 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households broken down by potential delivery method**

Planning Status	GTAA	SHMA	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 25%) Unknown	8 (7+1)	0	<b>8</b>
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 75% Unknown)	0	72 (69+3)	<b>72</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>80</b>

## Additional Needs – Caravan and Houseboat Dwellers

- 8.21 It is not considered that there is a direct need for any additional residential caravan pitches in Dacorum that is driven by a local demand for additional pitches, but instead that more pitches could help to address the wider housing needs of the area. Therefore, the only evidenced need is for Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller, this figure forms a small part of the existing OAN and is not additional to it.
- 8.22 It is not considered that there is a direct need for any additional permanent residential moorings in Dacorum that is driven by a local demand for additional moorings, but instead that more moorings could help to address the wider housing needs of the area. ORS would suggest the role of additional moorings in meeting current housing needs in Dacorum is likely to be very small and this figure would form part of the existing OAN and is not an additional to it.

## Implications of Changes to Government Guidance

- 8.23 The Draft London Plan (December 2017) is proposing to introduce a different definition of a Traveller for planning purposes. This is very similar to the repealed Housing Definition in that it would also include households that have not travelled for work providing that they live in a caravan. Should this definition be more widely adopted then all households in Dacorum would meet it and total need will be for 80 additional pitches.

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# Appendix A: Glossary of Terms / Acronyms used

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

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

<b>GTAA</b>	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
<b>GTANA</b>	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment
<b>HEDNA</b>	Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment
<b>LPA</b>	Local Planning Authority
<b>MHCLG</b>	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>ORS</b>	Opinion Research Services
<b>PPTS</b>	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015
<b>SHMA</b>	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
<b>TSP</b>	Travelling Showpeople



## Appendix B: Unknown Households

Figure 11 - Additional need for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum (2017-36)

Gypsies and Travellers - Unknown	Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from teenage children	0
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	4
<i>(Household base 12 and formation rate 1.50%)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>4</b>

Figure 12 – Additional need for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum by 5-year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2017-22	2022-27	2027-32	2032-2036	
	1	1	1	1	4

Figure 13 - Additional need for unknown Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum (2017-36)

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

Figure 14 – Additional need for unknown Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum by 5-year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2017-22	2022-27	2027-32	2032-2036	
	0	0	0	0	0

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

Figure 15 - Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum that did not meet the Planning Definition (2017-36)

Gypsies and Travellers - Not Meeting Planning Definition		Pitches
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>		
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches		0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites		0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar		0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area		0
<b>Total Supply</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>		
Households on unauthorised developments		0
Households on unauthorised encampments		0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding		18
Movement from bricks and mortar		1
Households on waiting lists for public sites		0
<b>Total Current Need</b>		<b>19</b>
<b>Future Need</b>		
5 year need from teenage children		12
5 year need for teenage children in bricks and mortar		5
Households on sites with temporary planning permission		0
In-migration		0
New household formation		33
<i>(Household base 65 and formation rate 2.20%)</i>		
<b>Total Future Needs</b>		<b>50</b>
<b>Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>		<b>69</b>

Figure 16 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Dacorum that did not meet the Planning Definition by 5-year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2017-22	2022-27	2027-32	2032-2036	
	43	9	9	8	<b>69</b>

**Figure 17 - Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum that did not meet the planning definition (2017-36)**

<b>Travelling Showpeople - Not Meeting Planning Definition</b>	<b>Plots</b>
<b>Supply of Plots</b>	
Additional supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Additional supply from pitches on new yards	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Current Need</b>	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public yards	0
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Future Need</b>	
5 year need from teenage children	0
Households on yards with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	0
<i>(No Travelling Showpeople)</i>	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)</b>	<b>0</b>

**Figure 18 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Dacorum that did not meet the Planning Definition by 5-year periods**

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-19	Total
	2017-22	2022-27	2027-32	2032-2036	
	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

# Appendix D: Assessment of Need for Caravan and Boat Dwellers



**Dacorum & Watford  
Caravan and Houseboat Dweller  
Accommodation Needs Assessment**

Report

December 2018



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# 1. Executive Summary

## The Study

- 1.1 Provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act (2016) include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. The purpose of this study is to consider these needs for Dacorum Borough Council and Watford Borough Council (the Councils). It should be read alongside the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) that have also been completed for Dacorum and Watford as part of a wider assessment of accommodation need.
- 1.2 The background to the study is set out in Chapter 2 and the outcomes can be found in Chapter 3. A Glossary of Terms can be found in Appendix A.

## Summary of Need for Caravan Dwellers

- 1.3 It is not considered that there is a direct need for any additional residential caravan pitches in Dacorum and Watford that is driven by a local demand for additional pitches, but instead that more pitches could help to address the wider housing needs of the area.
- 1.4 Therefore, the only evidenced need is for Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller, this figure forms a small part of the existing OAN and is not additional to it.

## Summary of Need for Boat Dwellers

- 1.5 It is not considered that there is a direct need for any additional permanent residential moorings in Dacorum and Watford that is driven by a local demand for additional moorings, but instead that more moorings could help to address the wider housing needs of the area. ORS would suggest the role of additional moorings in meeting current housing needs in Dacorum and Watford is likely to be very small and this figure would form part of the existing OAN and is not an additional to it.

## 2. Introduction

### Background

- 2.1 The Dacorum and Watford Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment's (GTAAs) 2018 formally consider the needs of any households in the two local authority areas who meet the planning definition of a Traveller contained within the 2015 update of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). In addition, the GTAAs consider the accommodation needs of Travellers that do not meet the planning definition, and the accommodation needs of unknown households where it was not possible to interview Travellers households.
- 2.2 The GTAAs provides an evidence base to help to enable the Councils to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, and the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- 2.3 However, whilst the GTAAs include an assessment of the accommodation needs of all Travellers living in caravans identified as living in Dacorum and Watford, provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act (2016) include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to also consider the needs of all people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored.
- 2.4 The wider needs of caravan and boat dwellers are now starting to be specifically addressed as part new Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs) or Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments (HEDNAs). However, the South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (January 2016) was published before the requirements of the Housing and Planning Act (2016) came in to force. Therefore, whilst included in the overall OAN, the needs of caravan dwellers and boat dwellers were not specifically identified alongside the housing needs of other groups including older persons, students and households with children.
- 2.5 The South West Hertfordshire authorities are updating their SHMA (now referred to as the Local Housing Needs Assessment) to identify the need for different types of housing and the housing needs of different groups within local communities up to 2036. However, the study was not available at the time of preparing this assessment, particularly to await the potential release of changes to the Government's standard methodology for calculating housing need.
- 2.6 This document therefore provides evidence in relation the needs of wider Caravan and Boat Dwellers for Dacorum and Watford.

### Policy and Guidance

- 2.7 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) sets out Government Policy in relation to planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and the assessment of need for those households that meet the planning definition set out in Annex 1 of the PPTS.
- 2.8 The Housing and Planning Act (2016) includes a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people

residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. It should also be noted that the Housing and Planning Act 2016 also removed the 2 sections in the 2004 Housing Act that placed a statutory requirement on Councils to conduct a specific assessment of need for Travellers. However, PPTS still sets out that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning, but that this only formally relates to households who meet the current planning definition of a Traveller.

- 2.9 Paragraph 61 of the revised NPPF (2018) sets out that the needs of Travellers that do not meet the planning definition should be specifically assessed as part of the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community and sets out that the needs of Travellers that meet the planning definition should be assessed under the PPTS.
- 2.10 The Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book (MHCLG – July 2018) confirms that the assessed needs for Travellers that meet the planning definition are not included in the overall OAN and that *where applicable, the housing requirement for Gypsies and Travellers under the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) will be added to the [latest adopted] housing requirement... and that Plan-making authorities should inform MHCLG of their housing requirement for Gypsies and Travellers under the PPTS through the annual Housing Delivery Test DELTA data collection.*
- 2.11 Section 29 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act (1960) defines a caravan as any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle so designed or adapted (excluding tents or rolling stock).

## 3. Need for Caravan and Boat Dwellers

### Non-Travelling Gypsies and Travellers and other Caravans Dwellers

- 3.1 Whilst Draft Guidance<sup>1</sup> issued by the Government suggests a detailed assessment of need through the collection of primary data (i.e. site and household interviews), ORS feel that this approach is only needed to assess the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community. Indeed, the Guidance continues to set out that the exact approach will need to be adapted to local circumstances. ORS advocate an assessment of need primarily based on the analysis of secondary data for other caravan dwellers.
- 3.2 Aside from the specific needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, ORS are of the view that there are 3 types of potential need associated with those who live permanently in a caravan, or who wish to live permanently in a caravan. This is as a result of intelligence gathered during recent housing need studies that ORS have completed or are working on:
- » Need for additional pitches on traditional mobile home or park home sites.
  - » Need for additional pitches to accommodate workers (often migrant workers and often found living on sites conditioned for Gypsy or Traveller households).
  - » Need for additional pitches as an alternative type of affordable housing.
- 3.3 Additional support for the view that caravans are now being seen as an alternative type of affordable housing is provided in research undertaken by Inside Housing in 2016. As an example, the research identified that Canvey Island's Thorney Bay Village has more Housing Benefit claims registered to it than any other caravan or mobile home site in the UK. In 2016, £1.9m of Housing Benefit was paid to addresses on this site.
- 3.4 The investigation also found that there are thousands of people on low incomes currently living on caravan and mobile home parks across the UK and revealed that the 271 councils that provided information to Inside Housing made more than 12,000 Housing Benefit payments to addresses on caravan and mobile home parks in the UK – with 11,162 of these being made in England.
- 3.5 As another example, in 2014, Folkestone Council found “emerging evidence from around the district that some residents are occupying holiday-let caravans as their main or sole home”. It found 45 occupants in receipt of housing benefit from holiday-let caravans. Denbighshire Council also estimated that “175 individuals in the county were living all year round in ‘holiday’ caravans.”
- 3.6 Whilst it is accepted that some of the Housing benefit claimants are likely to be Gypsies and Travellers, comparison with the Traveller Caravan Count data estimated that some 7,300 of the payments would have been made to non-Gypsies and Travellers.
- 3.7 The GTAA's for Dacorum and Watford<sup>2</sup> have identified very low levels of need for additional caravan pitches for Gypsies and Travellers that meet the current planning definition when compared to the potential overall OAN for market housing (7 additional pitches in Dacorum and 2 additional pitches in Watford).

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<sup>1</sup> “Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats.” (March 2016) DCLG.

<sup>2</sup> *Dacorum and Watford Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments* (October 2018) Opinion Research Services.

- 3.8 The GTAAs also identified a need for 69 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households that do not meet the planning definition in Dacorum, and a need for 7 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households that do not meet the planning definition in Watford. In addition, a small potential need for up to 4 additional pitches was identified in Dacorum from households where it was not possible to complete an interview.
- 3.9 Under provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act (2016) the need from these Gypsy and Traveller households that do not meet the planning definition will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans. Overall this is likely to be only a very small proportion of the total potential OAN in Dacorum and Watford. However, it does represent a potentially important need because Romany, Irish and Scottish Travellers may claim a right to be provided with culturally appropriate housing (caravans) based on their protected ethnic status in the Equality Act (2010). It should also be noted that a separate 5-year land supply for this group is not required as the needs under the Equalities Act are those of a housing requirement rather than a planning requirement under the PPTS.
- 3.10 Beyond the identified need from Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition, there is also a wider role for residential caravan parks to help deliver part of the OAN. Currently, there are believed to be 4 residential caravan parks in Dacorum which are not restricted to Gypsy and Traveller occupancy with approximately 240 residential pitches for static caravans (see Figure 1). All these caravan parks are understood to be occupied on a permanent basis, as opposed to being second homes. There are not believed to be any residential caravan parks in Watford.

**Figure 1 - Residential Caravan Parks in Dacorum**

	Pitches
Beech Park, Wigginton	117
The Limit Mobile Home Park, Northchurch	56
Flaunden Mobile Home Park, Flaunden	40
Scatterdells Caravan Park, Chipperfield	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>243</b>

- 3.11 In addition, at the time of the 2011 Census (excluding Gypsies and Travellers) there were a total of 246 households recorded as being resident in Dacorum living in caravans (consistent with the figures in Table 1) and a total of 10 households recorded as being resident in Watford living in caravans. In Dacorum this represents 0.4% of total housing stock and in Watford it represents just 0.03% of total housing stock.
- 3.12 Putting all of this together in terms of identifying need for any further additional residential caravan pitches for non-Gypsies and Travellers in Dacorum and Watford, there is a situation which requires a careful consideration of the word 'need' as there is no evidence to suggest any specific need for additional pitches in either local authority, but instead an alternative means of meeting a small proportion of general housing need.
- 3.13 Put simply, if more residential caravan pitches were to be made available then there could be a demand for them. However, this is not in response to an evidenced need for additional pitches. If more pitches were to be made available households may choose to live on residential caravan sites due to wider housing market pressures which have made caravans a cheaper option to live in than bricks and mortar housing. In this context, additional residential caravan plots should be seen in the context of providing for a more diverse set of housing options and as part of the wider housing delivery, as opposed to meeting any identified local need.

- 3.14 It is not therefore considered that there is a direct need for any additional residential caravan pitches in Dacorum and Watford that is driven by a local demand for additional pitches, but instead that more pitches could help to address the wider housing needs of the area.
- 3.15 Therefore, the only evidenced need is for Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller, this figure forms a small part of the existing OAN and is not additional to it.
- 3.16 The GTAA identifies a need for **69 additional pitches** for households that do not meet the planning definition in Dacorum. This is made up of 18 concealed or doubled-up households of single adults, 1 movement from bricks and mortar, 12 for teenage children living on sites who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, 5 for teenage children living in the bricks and mortar household who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 33 from new household formation using a rate of 2.20% derived from the household demographics of the households that were interviewed. In addition, meeting a proportion (75%) of need from unknown households also needs to be considered. Figure 2 summarises the identified need.

**Figure 2 – Need for additional pitches in Dacorum**

Planning Status	GTAA	SHMA	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 25% Unknown)	8 (7+1)	0	<b>8</b>
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 75% Unknown)	0	72 (69+3)	<b>72</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>80</b>

- 3.17 The GTAA identified a need for **7 additional pitches** for households that do not meet the planning definition in Watford. This is made up of 1 concealed or doubled-up household of single adult, 3 movement from bricks and mortar, and 3 from new household formation derived from the demographics of the households that were interviewed. There were no unknown households in Watford. Figure 3 summarises the identified need and Figure 3 summarises the identified need.

**Figure 3 – Need for additional pitches in Watford**

Planning Status	GTAA	SHMA	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 25% Unknown)	2 (2+0)	0	<b>2</b>
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 75% Unknown)	0	7 (7+0)	<b>7</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>

## Boat Dwellers

- 3.18 ORS are of the view that there are 3 types of potential need associated with those who live permanently on a boat, or who may wish to live permanently on a boat:
- » Need for additional permanent residential moorings.
  - » Need for additional temporary moorings for boats with Continual Cruiser Licences.
  - » Need for additional waterside facilities.
- 3.19 The Grand Union Canal (GUC) runs the length of Dacorum and passes through each of the main towns and into open countryside, much of which is covered by the Green Belt. It is used by many houseboats and leisure craft. Information from the Council indicates there are over 200 offline moorings along the Grand Union Canal in Dacorum at 3 residential marinas (see Figure 4). It is understood that most of these moorings are leisure moorings as opposed to permanent residential moorings. Planning permission was recently granted (and implemented) for the change of use of 10 of the existing moorings from leisure to residential at the Cow Roast Marina near Tring – taking the total number of permanent residential moorings to 26.

**Figure 4 - Residential Moorings in Dacorum**

	Moorings
Cow Roast Marina, Tring	110
Apsley Marina, Hemel Hempstead	65
Winkwell Marina, Hemel Hempstead	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195</b>

- 3.20 The draft DCLG Guidance provides limited advice on how to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to moorings for houseboats. The Guidance was issued in March 2016 with no consultation attached to it and has yet to be issued as official guidance. However, it is understood to have been criticised by organisations representing Boat Dwellers for concentrating too much on identifying need from Caravan Dwellers.
- 3.21 The National Bargee Travellers Association (NBTA) is a volunteer organisation that campaigns and provides advice for itinerant Boat Dwellers on Britain’s waterways. ORS was anticipating that the NBTA would issue their own advice on undertaking an assessment of need for Boat Dwellers following the release of the national Draft Guidance. However, this has not yet been issued, and ORS has had to rely on its own standard approach to assessing need for Boat Dwellers.
- 3.22 As far as need for Boat Dwellers is concerned, it cannot be assumed that all need can be met through the provision of additional moorings as many Boat Dwellers do not seek permanent moorings and navigate waterways on a permanent basis. As such, other issues that need to be considered may include the availability and distance between facilities such as water taps, rubbish disposal, chemical toilet disposal and fuel pumps; the threat of eviction from moorings seen as inappropriate; restrictions placed on boat dwellers through licence restrictions; and access to ‘off-side’ moorings – i.e. those not on a tow path.

3.23 This view is shared by the NBTA who have stated:

*The primary issue is "access to facilities" for those who do not have permanent moorings. The Borough can intervene in this regard through the provision of facilities where the navigation authority provision is less than optimal. For the avoidance of doubt facilities provided by a private commercial operation is not sufficient as these can elect to decline provision and (for example in the case of taking water and depositing domestic refuse) regularly do where the boater is not wanting to buy anything. There is no shortage of inadequate provision within the jurisdiction of CRT.*

3.24 As with Gypsies and Travellers who do not meet the planning definition of Travellers and wider Caravan Dwellers, permanent Boat Dwellers also form part of the OAN because they are included in the overall population and household projections.

3.25 Data released by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) in June 2016 indicates that there were no households living in boats as their main place of residence paying Council Tax in Watford and less than 5 households in Dacorum. However, it may well be that tenancy agreements at private marinas for permanent residential moorings include a contribution towards local taxes and rates. Given the number of moorings in Dacorum, it is probable that a number of houseboats on leisure moorings will be occupied at any one time in the borough, but not as a permanent residence. Evidence from across the country indicates that most households with leisure moorings are only able to spend part of the year on their boat and would not pay Council Tax as a main place of residence, while others are Continuous Cruisers who move regularly from location to location with stays of no more than 14 days in any one location.

3.26 The Canal and River Trust<sup>3</sup> have reported that the total number of Continuous Cruiser Licences was 4,400 in 2014. Out of those 4,400 boats 23% moved less than 5 kilometres, and 45% moved under 10 kilometres in a year, so a high number of boats are moving around relatively small areas of the canal network. The Canal and River Trust suggest that this is due to affordability as much as preference, with many households moving on to houseboats to find cheaper accommodation.

3.27 The draft Guidance is not particularly relevant or helpful when it comes to assessing need for Boat Dwellers. The first issue to consider is the definition of a houseboat. The Housing and Planning Act defines a "houseboat" as a boat or similar structure designed or adapted for use as a place to live. However, this conflicts with the definition of a houseboat under waterways legislation (for example Section 3 of the British Waterways Act 1971) which suggests that a houseboat is a static vessel and is not used for navigation, as opposed to more mobile Boat Dwellers who do travel either from permanent moorings or as continual cruisers. ORS choose to include all permanent Boat Dwellers in assessments of need as opposed to the more limited definitions of a houseboat.

3.28 In terms of other evidence on the needs of Boat Dwellers, the Canal and River Trust undertook a detailed survey of London's houseboat dwellers<sup>4</sup> between September and October 2016. In total they received responses from 1,323 boat dwellers who had been recorded on London's waterways in the previous year. In summary the survey found that

» 58% of respondents to the survey said that they use their boat as their primary place of residence.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/2305.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/30901-whos-on-londons-boats-survey-summary-report.pdf>



- » 50% of respondents said that affordability/financial reasons were their motivation for living on a boat.
- » 50% of respondents said that they have been living on boats on London's waterways for three years or less.
- » 70% of respondents said that they owned their boats outright, a further 11% said they owned their boat with a loan or mortgage.
- » The top three specific improvement people want to see on the London waterways are (1) more mooring places, (2) more mooring rings, (3) more water points.
- » 45% of respondents said they would have some or definite interest in a mooring if permanent or long-term moorings were more readily available in the London.

3.29 In summary, this suggests that half of all London respondents reported that they lived on a houseboat because of affordability issues; that nearly half of respondents would be interested in a permanent mooring if one was available; and that the main issue raised by Boat Dwellers in London was a lack of permanent moorings.

3.30 Putting all of this together in terms of identifying need for any further additional moorings in Dacorum and Watford, there is again a situation which requires a careful consideration of the word 'need' as there is no evidence to suggest any specific need for additional permanent moorings in either local authority, but instead an alternative means of meeting a small proportion of general housing need. Whilst the Council in Dacorum has been approached by developers enquiring about delivering new marinas and moorings, these are understood to be speculative commercial opportunities, and not in response to identified local need. There are understood to be sufficient temporary moorings along the Grand Union Canal to meet the needs of leisure craft and continuous cruisers.

3.31 If more residential moorings were to be made available on a commercial basis then there could well be a demand for them, as in other parts of the country. However, this is not in response to an evidenced local need for additional moorings to meet local demand. If more moorings were to be made available households may choose to live on houseboats due to wider housing market pressures which have made houseboats a cheaper option to live on than bricks and mortar housing. In this context, additional permanent residential moorings should be seen in the context of providing for a more diverse set of housing options and as part of the wider housing delivery, as opposed to meeting any identified local need.

3.32 It is not therefore considered that there is a direct need for any additional permanent residential moorings in Dacorum and Watford that is driven by a local demand for additional moorings, but instead that more moorings could help to address the wider housing needs of the area. ORS would suggest the role of additional moorings in meeting current housing needs in Dacorum and Watford is likely to be very small and this figure would form part of the existing OAN and is not an additional to it.

## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

<b>Caravan</b>	Mobile living vehicle used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.
<b>Green Belt</b>	A land use designation used to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
<b>Local Plans</b>	Local Authority spatial planning documents that can include specific policies and/or site allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
<b>Pitch/plot</b>	Area of land on a site/development generally home to one household. Can be varying sizes and have varying caravan numbers. Pitches refer to Gypsy and Traveller sites and Plots to Travelling Showpeople yards.
<b>Site</b>	An area of land on which Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are accommodated in caravans/chalets/vehicles. Can contain one or multiple pitches/plots.

<b>DCLG</b>	Department of Communities and Local Government
<b>GTAA</b>	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
<b>GTANA</b>	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment
<b>HEDNA</b>	Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment
<b>LPA</b>	Local Planning Authority
<b>MHCLG</b>	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>OAN</b>	Objectively Assessed Need
<b>ORS</b>	Opinion Research Services
<b>PPTS</b>	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015
<b>SHMA</b>	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
<b>TSP</b>	Travelling Showpeople

# Appendix E: Site and Yard Lists (July 2017)

Site/Yard	Authorised Pitches or Plots	Unauthorised Pitches or Plots
<b>Public Sites</b>		
Three Cherry Trees Lane, Hemel Hempstead	30	-
Cheddington Lane, Long Marston	6	-
<b>Private Sites with Permanent Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Private Sites with Temporary Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Tolerated Sites – Long-term without Planning Permission</b>		
None	-	-
<b>Unauthorised Developments</b>		
Roadside at Three Cherry Trees Lane, Hemel Hempstead	-	3
<b>TOTAL PITCHES</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Travelling Showpeople Yards</b>		
Adj. Timber Yard (temporary)	1	-
Hogpits Bottom (tolerated)	-	5
Timber Yard	5	-
<b>TOTAL PLOTS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>

# Appendix F: Household Interview Questions

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

## GTAA Questionnaire 2017



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

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

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

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

ORS is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998. Your responses will be stored and processed electronically and securely. This paper form will be securely destroyed after processing. Your household will not be identified to the council and only anonymous data and results will be submitted, though verbatim comments may be reported in full, and the data from this survey will only be used to help understand the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households

### A General Information

**A1 Name of planning authority:**  
*INTERVIEWER please write in*

**A2 Date/time of site visit(s):**  
*INTERVIEWER please write in*

DD/MM/YY	TIME
----------	------

**A3 Name of interviewer:**  
*INTERVIEWER please write in*

**A4 Address and pitch number:**  
*INTERVIEWER please write in*

**A5 Type of accommodation:** *INTERVIEWER please cross one box only*

Council	Private rented	Private owned	Unauthorised	Bricks and Mortar
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A6 Name of Family:**  
*INTERVIEWER please write in*

**A7 Ethnicity of Family:**  
*INTERVIEWER please cross one box only*

Romany Gypsy	Irish Traveller	Scots Gypsy or Traveller	Show Person
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Traveller	English Traveller	Welsh Gypsy	Non-Traveller
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)			

**A8 Number of units on the pitch:**  
*INTERVIEWER please write in*

Mobile homes	Touring Caravans	Day Rooms	Other (please specify)

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

**A9 Is this site your main place of residence? If not where is?**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes  No  If not main place of residence where is (please specify)

**A10 How long have you lived here? If you have moved in the past 5 years, where did you move from?** *INTERVIEWER: Please write in below*

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

**A11 Did you live here out of your own choice or because there was no other option? If there was no other option, why?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Choice  No option  If no option, why?

**A12 Is this site suitable for your household? If so why and if not why not?**  
 (For example close to schools, work, healthcare, family and friends etc.)  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes  No  Reasons (please specify)

**A13 How many separate families or unmarried adults live on this pitch?**  
*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

## B Demographics

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

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

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

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

## C Accommodation Needs

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

*INTERVIEWER: AN ADULT IS DEFINED AS 16+*

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

Other *Please specify*

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

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

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

Other Please specify

Details (Please specify)

## D                      Waiting List

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

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

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

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10

Other (Please specify)

Details (Please specify)

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

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

Other (Please specify)

Details (Please specify)

**D4** If they are not on the waiting list, do any of the people living here want to be on the waiting list? (*INTERVIEWER* if they do - please take their contact details) *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10  
 No                                            Other (Please specify)

Details (Please specify) and take contact details)

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

**E** **Future Accommodation Needs**

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

Yes  *If yes* → Continue to E2  
No  *If no* → Go to E5

If so, why? (please specify)

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

Another site in this area <i>(specify where)</i>	A site in another council area <i>(specify where)</i>	Bricks and mortar in this area <i>(specify where)</i>	Bricks and mortar in another council area <i>(specify where)</i>	Other (e.g. land they own elsewhere) <i>(Please specify)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify where they would move to  
If they own land elsewhere - probe for details

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

Private buy <input type="checkbox"/>	Private rent <input type="checkbox"/>	Public rent <input type="checkbox"/>
---	--	---

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

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

**E5 Are you aware of, or do you own any land that could have potential for new pitches?** *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Please ask for details on where land/site is located and who owns the land/site?



# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

F
Travelling

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

0	1	2	3	4	5+
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

↓  
Go to F6a
Continue to F2

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

All the family	Adult males	Other	If other, please specify
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**F3** What were the reasons for travelling? *INTERVIEWER: Please cross all that apply*

Work	Holidays	Visiting family	Fairs	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Details / specify if necessary. If fairs—probe for whether this involves work

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

All year	Summer	Winter
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

And for how long?

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

LA transit sites	Private transit sites	Roadside	Friends/family	Other	If other, please specify
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*INTERVIEWER: Ask F6a — F8 ONLY if F1 = 0. Otherwise, go to F9*

**F6a** Are there any reasons why you don't you travel at the moment?

Details

**F6b** Have you or family members ever travelled? *INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ Continue to F7
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	→ Go to F9

**F7a** When did you or family members last travel? *INTERVIEWER: Please write in*

Details

**F7b** What were the reasons for travelling? *INTERVIEWER: Please cross all that apply*

Work	Holidays	Visiting family	Fairs	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Details / specify if necessary. If fairs—probe for whether this involves work

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

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

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Children<br>in school    | Ill health               | Old age                  | Settled now              | Nowhere<br>to stop       | No work<br>opportunities | Other                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If other, please specify

Details about children in school, types of ill health, or looking after relative with poor health, and specific problems/issues relating to old age

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

*INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only*

- |            |                          |   |                 |
|------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Yes        | <input type="checkbox"/> | → | Continue to F10 |
| No         | <input type="checkbox"/> | → | Go to G1        |
| Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> | → | Go to G1        |

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

Details

**F11 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your travelling patterns?**

Details

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

G Any other information	
<b>G1</b>	<b>Any other information about this site or your accommodation needs? INTERVIEWER:</b> <i>Please write in</i>
<p>Details (e.g. can current and future needs be met by expanding or intensifying the existing site?)</p>	
<b>G2</b>	<b>Site/Pitch plan? Any concerns? INTERVIEWER: Please sketch &amp; write in</b>
<p>Sketch of Site/Pitch — any concerns?</p> <p>Are any adaptations needed?</p> <p>Why does the current accommodation not meet the household's needs; and could their needs could be addressed in situ e.g. extra caravans. This could cover people wanting to live with that household but who cannot currently</p>	

# NOT FOR CIRCULATION

H Bricks & Mortar Contacts	
<b>H1</b> Contacts for Bricks and Mortar interviews? <i>INTERVIEWER: Please write in</i>	
Details	
<b>Council contact?</b>	
<p>Would you like the council to contact you about any of the issues raised in this interview? Please note that although ORS will pass on your contact details to the Council we cannot guarantee when they will contact you?</p> <p><i>INTERVIEWER: Please cross one box only</i></p>	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>INTERVIEWER: Can I confirm your name and telephone number so that we can pass them on to the Council for this purpose only. Your details will only be used for this purpose and will not be passed onto anyone else.</i></p>	
Respondent's Name.....	<input type="text"/>
Respondent's Telephone.....	<input type="text"/>
Respondent's Email.....	<input type="text"/>
<b>Interview log</b>	
<p><i>INTERVIEWER: Please record the date and time that the interview was carried out</i></p>	
Date.....	<input type="text"/>
Time of interview.....	<input type="text"/>

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



## **Technical Note**

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

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

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



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

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

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# Household Growth Rates

## Abstract and conclusions

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

## Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Compound growth

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Caravan counts

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

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

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

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

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

## Modelling population growth

### Introduction

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

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

### Migration effects

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

### Population profile

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

**Table 4**

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

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

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

### Birth and fertility rates

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

### Death rates

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

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

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

#### Modelling outputs

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



## Household growth

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

**Table 5**  
**Age of Head of Household (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Household dissolution rates

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

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

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

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

## Summary conclusions

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

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