

Ashford

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2018

Ashford Borough Council

Final Report

August 2018

Main Contact: Dr Michael Bullock
Email: michael.bullock@arc4.co.uk
Telephone: 0800 612 9133
Website: www.arc4.co.uk

© 2018 arc⁴ Limited (Company No. 06205180)



Please note that in this report some of the tables include rounded figures. This can result in some column or row totals not adding up to 100 or to the anticipated row or column 'total' due to the use of rounded decimal figures. We include this description here as it covers all tables and associated textual commentary included. If tables or figures are to be used in-house then we recommend the addition of a similarly worded statement being included as a note to each table used.

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

arc⁴ Limited accepts no responsibility or liability for, and makes no representation or warranty with respect to, the accuracy or completeness of any third party information (including data) that is contained in this document.

Registered Address: arc4, 41 Clarendon Road, Sale Manchester M33 2DY
Email: contact@arc4.co.uk www.arc4.co.uk
arc4 Limited Registered in England & Wales 6205180 VAT Registration No: 909 9814 77
Directors - Helen Brzozowski – Michael Bullock

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
1. Introduction	7
GTAA 2018 aims	7
Who the study covers	7
Report structure.....	8
2. Policy and local context	10
Government policy and guidance	10
Planning policy context and methodological implications	13
Strategic context	14
Local context	15
3. Methodology.....	16
Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions.....	16
Phase 2: Fieldwork survey and interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	17
Phase 3: Stakeholder survey	18
Phase 4: Needs assessment and production of report.....	19
4. Review of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population and existing provision of pitches and plots.....	22
2011 Census population estimates.....	22
Caravan Count information	23
Local information	26
5. Household survey findings.....	33
Gypsy and Traveller households living in Ashford.....	33
6. Stakeholder consultation	36
Overview	36
General support for Gypsies and Travellers	36
Provision of accommodation	37
Planning policy	43
Cross-boundary issues	44
7. Gypsy and Traveller pitch, Travelling Showperson plot and transit site requirements	46
Introduction	46
Pitch requirement model overview	46
Description of factors in the 5-year need model.....	47
Longer-term pitch requirement modelling.....	50
Planning Policy for Traveller Site definition.....	50
Plan Period pitch need	51

Potential capacity for Gypsy and Traveller pitches on existing sites.....	51
Transit site requirements.....	53
8. Conclusion and strategic response	55
Meeting permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements.....	55
Meeting permanent Travelling Showperson requirements	55
Meeting transit site/stop over requirements.....	55
Good practice in planning for Gypsy and Traveller provision	56
Concluding comments	56
Appendix A: Legislative background	58
Appendix B: Review of policy, guidance and best practice	61
Appendix C: Gypsy and Traveller Fieldwork Questionnaire	73
Appendix D: Glossary of terms	77

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Responses achieved to the Household Survey 2017 by tenure and type of accommodation	18
Table 4.1a Households identifying as Gypsy Traveller by accommodation type.....	22
Table 4.1b People from households identifying as WGoIT by accommodation type	22
Table 4.1c People per Household, Calculation by Accommodation Type	23
Table 4.2 Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures January 2015 to July 2017	25
Table 4.3 Annual Travelling Showpeople caravan count figures January 2014 to January 2017 26	
Table 4.4 Traveller and Travelling Showpeople caravan sites provided by local authorities and registered providers in Ashford, July 2017	26
Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson yards (as at April 2018) 28	
Table 7.1 Summary of demand and supply factors: Gypsies and Travellers – 2017/18 to 2021/22.....	49
Table 7.2 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children form households on reaching 18.....	50
Table 7.3 Remaining plan period Gypsy and Traveller pitch need.....	51
Table 7.4 Addressing Gypsy and Traveller pitch need.....	52
Table 7.5 Addressing Gypsy and Traveller pitch need.....	53
Table 8.1 Overall Plan Period Gypsy and Traveller pitch need	57

List of Maps

Map 4.1	Location of sites in Ashford.....	32
---------	-----------------------------------	----

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Ashford Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) analyses the latest available evidence to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and houseboat dwellers from across the area.

The Ashford GTAA (2018) has comprised the following evidence sources:

- A review of existing (secondary) data,
- An online survey of key stakeholders yielding 49 responses, and
- Interviews with 111 Gypsy and Traveller households.

This data has been analysed to provide a picture of current provision and activity across Ashford Borough and an assessment of future need. The findings of the study provide an up-to-date, robust and defensible evidence base for policy development.

Current provision and activity

The 2011 Census identified a total of 167 households in Ashford with a ‘White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller’ ethnicity. Of these, 47 households lived in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure and 120 households lived in bricks and mortar (house, bungalow, flat, maisonette or apartment).

The bi-annual DCLG Traveller caravan count has identified an average of 200 caravans over the last six counts. Nine-tenths (90.7%) of these caravans were counted on authorised sites. The annual Travelling Showperson caravan count (undertaken each January) found an average of around three Travelling Showpeople caravans in Ashford during the past four counts (2014-2017), although none were counted in 2016 and 2017.

In terms of Gypsy and Traveller site provision within Ashford, there is one permanent local authority site, 42 private permanent sites, seven private temporary sites and three private tolerated sites. There are seven unauthorised sites. There are no Travelling Showpeople sites.

The triangulation of secondary data, Council records and fieldwork survey has identified a total of 163 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Ashford Borough.

Planning policy requirements for needs assessments

Planning policy for traveller sites (PPTS) (first published in March 2012 and updated in August 2015) requires an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and a projection of future needs. The calculation of pitch/plot requirements in the GTAA 2018 is based on established DCLG modelling methodology, as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance* (DCLG, 2007). Although this Guidance was formally withdrawn in December 2016, in the absence of any updated guidance on the

subject it continues to provide a standard approach for needs modelling employed by most local planning authorities and also confirmed by inspectors at public inquiries.

This approach comprises an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and a projection of future needs. The Guidance advocates the use of a fieldwork survey to supplement secondary source information and derive key supply and demand information.

A major change in planning policy, introduced by PPTS 2015, was the amended definition of the group to which the policy applies. The definitions of both ‘Gypsy and Traveller’ and ‘Travelling Showperson’ have been amended to exclude, for planning purposes, anyone who has stopped travelling on a permanent basis. It continues to include those who have ceased to travel temporarily. Essentially, this created a more restricted ‘PPTS 2015’ definition which applies to those who follow a nomadic habit of life.

The Draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2018) requires local planning authorities to identify the size, type and tenure of homes required for different groups in the community, expressly including Travellers who do not fall under the PPTS 2015 definition.

As this study is based on comprehensive interviews with members of the Travelling community living within Ashford, it is possible for arc⁴ to determine through analysis which households meet the PPTS 2015 definition (on the basis of the travelling practices) and those who do not travel but fall under the new, broader ‘NPPF’ definition of Traveller. The study includes this wider group in the needs analysis under a ‘cultural’ definition.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

For the full Local Plan Period (to 2030) the GTAA has identified a cultural need for 82 pitches and, as a subset of this number, a PPTS need for 54 pitches. It is recommended that the Local Plan acknowledges this range of need.

However, there are a range of supply-side factors which suggests that this need could be largely or completely addressed. Taking into account an estimated 13-pitch turnover on the local authority site during the period, the residual pitch requirement becomes 69 (cultural definition) and 41 pitches (PPTS definition). There is also potential to regularise temporary authorised and unauthorised sites that would provide 24 pitches (with the residual pitch requirement reducing to 45 cultural and 16 PPTS). There is also considerable potential to expand/intensify existing sites, and it is estimated a minimum of 38 additional pitches could be delivered to help address need (with the residual pitch requirement reducing to 7 and PPTS need being addressed)

It is therefore recommended that the Council engages with site owners to establish the potential for expansion/intensification and also review the planning status of temporary/unauthorised sites. It is also recommended that the Council continues to consider future applications for small sites to meet the needs of additional families who may emerge over the Plan Period.

Travelling Showperson plot requirements

The GTAA 2018 has not evidenced any need for Travelling Showperson plots in the Borough.

Transit site requirements

It is recommended that the Council considers the development of a transit site to address the short-term accommodation needs of households travelling through the Borough. Based on existing evidence of unauthorised encampment activity, a transit site of 3 to 5 pitches would address the majority of transit need.

1. Introduction

GTAA 2018 aims

- 1.1 In August 2017, arc⁴ was commissioned by Ashford Borough Council to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and houseboat dwellers from across Ashford.
- 1.2 The overall objective of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is to form a clear evidence basis to inform the development of planning policies relating to Gypsy and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and houseboat dwellers.
- 1.3 The aims of the GTAA 2018 are:
 - To identify the current accommodation provision for members of the Travelling community within Ashford;
 - To identify current levels of need for accommodation arising from within the community, including from concealed households and those living in bricks and mortar;
 - To project future accommodation needs for pitches, plots and moorings using a clear and transparent methodology in order to create a robust evidence base for the next five years and the full Plan Period to 2030; and
 - To inform the development of housing and planning policies for the Council and its strategic partners.

Who the study covers

- 1.4 The GTAA 2018 adopts the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' set out within *Planning policy for traveller sites* (PPTS), which was published by the Government in August 2015. This sets out the following definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers':

'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.*¹

- 1.5 In addition, PPTS 2015 provides the following ‘clarification’ for determining whether someone is a Gypsy or Traveller:

‘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.*²

- 1.6 The following definition of ‘Travelling Showpeople’ is set out in PPTS 2015:

‘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.’³

- 1.7 In addition:

‘For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use pitches for “travelling showpeople”, which may/will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.’⁴

- 1.8 For the purposes of this study, therefore, Gypsies and Travellers live on pitches on sites, whilst Travelling Showpeople live on plots on yards.

Report structure

- 1.9 The GTAA 2018 report structure is as follows:

- **Chapter 1 Introduction:** provides an overview of the study;
- **Chapter 2 Policy and local context:** presents a review of the policy context which guides the study, including a consideration of the specific local context of Ashford;
- **Chapter 3 Methodology:** provides details of the study’s research methodology;
- **Chapter 4 Review of current Gypsy and Traveller population and provision of pitches/plots:** reviews estimates of the Gypsy and Traveller and

¹ DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* August 2015 Annex 1, para 1

² DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* August 2015 Annex 1, para 2

³ DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* August 2015 Annex 1, para 3

⁴ DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* August 2015 Annex 1, para 5

- Travelling Showpeople population across Ashford and existing site provision;
- **Chapter 5** **Household survey findings:** presents relevant data obtained from the household survey research;
 - **Chapter 6** **Stakeholder consultation:** summarises views of stakeholders expressed through the online survey;
 - **Chapter 7** **Pitch/plot/transit requirements:** focuses on current and future pitch/plot requirements. This chapter includes a detailed assessment of drivers of demand, supply and current shortfalls across the study area; and
 - **Chapter 8** **Conclusion and strategic response:** concludes the report, bringing together the different strands of the research and identifying headline issues, including recommending ways in which these could be addressed.

1.10 The report is supplemented by the following appendices:

- **Appendix A** which provides details of the legislative background underpinning accommodation issues for the Travelling community;
- **Appendix B** Review of policy, guidance, reports and best practice notes;
- **Appendix C** Fieldwork questionnaires;
- **Appendix D** Glossary of terms.

2. Policy and local context

- 2.1 This study is grounded in an understanding of the national legislative and planning policy context that underpins the assessment and provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and houseboat dwellers.
- 2.2 Appendix A sets out the legislative background that is relevant to accommodation issues and Appendix B provides a review of Government policy and guidance that has been published in recent years, alongside other key reports and best practice advice.
- 2.3 This chapter sets out the policy context within which this GTAA has been prepared, including a consideration of the local context in Ashford.

Government policy and guidance

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance 2007 (withdrawn)

- 2.4 The calculation of pitch/plot requirements in the GTAA 2018 is based on established DCLG modelling methodology, as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance* (DCLG, 2007). Although this Guidance was formally withdrawn in December 2016, in the absence of any updated guidance on the subject it continues to provide a best practice approach for needs modelling and has been employed by neighbouring local planning authorities in Kent where Ashford Borough Council has a Duty to Cooperate under Subsection C of Policy B of PPTS 2015. This methodology therefore provides a convenient and consistent approach to assessing need across the administrative boundaries of the strategic area.
- 2.5 This approach comprises an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and a projection of future needs. The Guidance advocates the use of a fieldwork survey to supplement secondary source information and derive key supply and demand information.

Planning policy for traveller sites, PPTS 2012

- 2.6 In 2012, the Government published both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁵ and its accompanying National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) documents covering a range of topics. They also published some separate planning policy documents, including *Planning policy for traveller sites*⁶ (PPTS 2012). These documents replaced all previous national planning policy in respect of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.7 Previously, local planning authorities had been required to set aside enough land for Gypsy and Traveller sites, with their targets set in regional plans. However, the Coalition Government abolished regional planning under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

⁵ DCLG National Planning Policy Framework March 2012

⁶ DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* March 2012 (now superseded)

The approach set out in PPTS 2012 instead encouraged local planning authorities to form their own evidence base for accommodation needs in their area and use this to set their own pitch and plot targets for their Local Plan.

Written Ministerial Statement, July 2015

- 2.8 Technical adjustments were made to paragraphs 49 and 159 of the NPPF by a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) on 22nd July 2015⁷, following a High Court judgement (Wenman v Secretary of State).
- 2.9 In relation to paragraph 49, the WMS stated that those persons who fall within the definition of ‘traveller’ under the PPTS, cannot rely on the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites under the NPPF to show that relevant policies for the supply of housing are not up to date. Such persons should have the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable traveller sites considered in accordance with Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.
- 2.10 Regarding paragraph 159, the WMS clarified that the PPTS sets out how ‘travellers’ accommodation needs should be assessed. However, those who do not fall under that definition should have their accommodation needs addressed under the provisions of the NPPF.

PPTS 2015

- 2.11 An updated *Planning policy for traveller sites* (PPTS 2015) was published in August 2015⁸. PPTS 2015 introduced some key changes to policy, including by changing the definitions of ‘Gypsy and Traveller’ and ‘Travelling Showperson’ by deleting the word ‘permanently’ in relation to their travelling habits, so that for planning-related purposes the definitions of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have been changed to exclude those who have permanently stopped travelling. In addition, the following ‘clarification’ was added:

‘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.’⁹*

⁷ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2015-07-22/HLWS167/>

⁸ DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* August 2015

⁹ DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* August 2015 Annex 1, para 2

Planning policy statement, August 2015

- 2.12 Alongside the publication of the revised policy document on 31st August 2015, a letter and accompanying planning policy statement were issued by the DCLG Chief Planner (Steve Quartermain)¹⁰ to Chief Planning Officers in England. The letter and planning policy statement dealt specifically with the issue of *Green Belt protection and intentional unauthorised development*. On 17th December 2015, the Minister of State for Housing and Planning (Brandon Lewis) made a Written Statement confirming the changes to national policy set out in the letter and statement.¹¹

Intentional unauthorised development

- 2.13 The planning policy statement issued with PPTS 2015¹² (and confirmed by Ministerial Statement¹³) makes clear that if a site is intentionally occupied without planning permission this would be a material consideration in any retrospective planning application for that site. Whilst this does not mean that retrospective applications will be automatically refused, it does mean that failure to seek permission in advance of occupation will count against the application.
- 2.14 In addition, PPTS 2015 (paragraph 12) makes clear that in exceptional cases where a local authority is burdened by a large-scale unauthorised site that has significantly increased their need, and their area is subject to strict and special planning constraints, then there is no assumption that the local authority will be required to meet their Gypsy and Traveller site needs in full. This is intended to protect local planning authorities with significant land constraints from being required to provide for additional needs arising directly from large sites such as Dale Farm (a large unauthorised site in Essex).

Draft Guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs: caravans and houseboats, March 2016

- 2.15 In March 2016, the DCLG published *Draft guidance on the periodical review of housing needs: Caravans and Houseboats*. The draft Guidance related to Clause 115 of the Housing and Planning Bill, which has become Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (passed in May 2016).
- 2.16 The draft Guidance explains how Government wants local housing authorities to interpret changes to accommodation needs assessments (as required by Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985), specifically in relation to caravans and houseboats.

¹⁰https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457632/Final_Chief_Planning_Officer_letter_and_written_statement.pdf

¹¹<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-12-17/HCWS423/>

¹²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457632/Final_Chief_Planning_Officer_letter_and_written_statement.pdf

¹³<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-12-17/HCWS423/>

- 2.17 In the carrying out of accommodation needs assessments, the draft Guidance stresses the importance of close engagement with the community. The use of existing data along with conducting a specialist survey is recommended.
- 2.18 The draft guidance has been taken into account in the planning, preparation and undertaking of this GTAA for Ashford Borough Council.

Draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2018

- 2.19 In March 2018, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published the Draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for public consultation. Updating the original NPPF which was published in 2012, the Draft Revised NPPF sets out 17 topic-based chapters which reflect the Government's development priorities. As was anticipated, there is a particular focus on delivering solutions to the housing crisis through the plan-led system.
- 2.20 Chapter 5, *'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes'*, sets out the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes including meeting the needs of groups with specific housing requirements (paragraph 60). It states that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment. This should be conducted using the standard method unless there are exceptional circumstances and also taking into account any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas (paragraph 61).
- 2.21 It is then set out in paragraph 62 that:
'Within this context, policies should identify the size, type and tenure of homes required for different groups in the community (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.'
- 2.22 An additional footnote to the word *'travellers'* provides further definition:
'Travellers who do not fall under the definition of "traveller" in Annex 1 of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. The latter sets out how travellers' accommodation needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.'
- 2.23 In other words, the Draft Revised NPPF requires local planning authorities to consider the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households who do not fall under the PPTS 2015 definition by virtue of their travelling habits. It requires a broader, 'cultural' definition. This approach has been adopted in this study, as discussed further below.

Planning policy context and methodological implications

- 2.24 Further to the publication of updated PPTS in August 2015, the 2007 GTAA Guidance was withdrawn and there was considerable confusion regarding what accommodation needs should be assessed and the best methodological approach.

- 2.25 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 deleted Sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004, effectively removing some of local planning authorities' duties in relation to the accommodation needs assessments of Gypsies and Travellers. However, the Housing and Planning Act inserted some additional requirements into Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985, including the duty to consider the provision of sites for caravans and moorings for houseboats when undertaking housing needs assessments. As referred to above, draft Guidance was published in March 2016 to explain the interpretation of these legislative changes. However, this remains in draft form at the present time.
- 2.26 As discussed, the PPTS 2015 definitions of 'Gypsy and Traveller' and 'Travelling Showperson' now exclude those that have stopped travelling on a permanent basis. The 'clarification' in Annex 1 (paragraph 2) of PPTS 2015 refers to a '*nomadic habit of life*' and whether the person in question previously led a nomadic habit of life; the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life; and whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances. This suggests that persons (or households) should be assessed on an individual basis, to determine whether they meet the PPTS 2015 planning definition.
- 2.27 Some people adopted the view that the revised PPTS 2015 definitions (excluding Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who have ceased travelling) allow local planning authorities to manage their needs numbers downwards. This approach has always been treated with caution by arc⁴, however, and our GTAA studies have instead adopted an approach which includes a consideration of PPTS-defined need (pitch numbers to meet the needs of those who travel) and a wider 'cultural' definition of need (pitches to meet the needs of all Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who are identifiable within the relevant study area).
- 2.28 The publication of the Draft Revised NPPF (March 2018) gives a strong policy basis to the approach that we apply, ensuring that the accommodation needs of all of the Travelling community are considered within the GTAA process.
- 2.29 The accommodation needs of the Travelling community forms a strategic issue, which is a consideration under the Duty to Cooperate. It is therefore considered important that the Ashford GTAA 2018 provides a robust and transparent approach regarding the methodology for determining which members of the Travelling community are 'travelling' and which members should be considered 'non-travelling' as well as the subsequent assessment of current and future needs.
- 2.30 Our assessment methodology is set out in Chapter 3 and the outworking of this approach for Ashford Borough is set out in Chapter 7.

Strategic context

- 2.31 Despite the revocation of regional spatial strategies, the need for strategic planning remains, especially to ensure coherent planning beyond local authority boundaries. To this end the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out that public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries (NPPF, paragraph 178).

- 2.32 National planning practice guidance (NPPG) includes a guidance document specific to the *Duty to cooperate* (March 2014). This states that duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree, but local planning authorities should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before they submit their Local Plans for examination (paragraph 1). In addition, it states that the duty to cooperate seeks to ensure that local planning authorities lead strategic planning effectively through their Local Plans, addressing social, environmental and economic issues that can only be addressed effectively by working with other local planning authorities beyond their own administrative boundaries (paragraph 8).
- 2.33 PPTS 2015 sets out that the preparation of Local Plans and setting of pitch and plot targets should be undertaken by local planning authorities working collaboratively with neighbouring planning authorities (paragraphs 8 and 9). It reiterates that local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries (paragraph 10).
- 2.34 The Kent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for the area is led by the Kent Public Health Observatory¹⁴ within Kent County Council. The Kent JSNA is made up of a set of products updated at agreed intervals, led by the Kent public health team. The ‘Gypsy, Roma and Traveller’ chapter of the JSNA reports on national-level research which identifies Gypsies and Travellers as the most disadvantaged ethnic group in the United Kingdom. It states that health and educational outcomes are poor even when compared with other marginalised groups. The JSNA reports on qualitative research carried out in Kent which demonstrates a high level of chronic illness, including high levels of alcohol and drug misuse. It highlights the role of health trainers as a key resource to improve health knowledge and utilisation within this community. It also recommends training for healthcare staff to increase cultural awareness.

Local context

- 2.35 Ashford Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will have a Plan Period of up to 2030. A Draft Local Plan was published and consulted upon in 2016. Proposed Main Changes have been subject to public consultation during summer 2017. Submission to the Secretary of State is expected to take place later in 2017.
- 2.36 The Ashford GTAA 2018 forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.

¹⁴ <http://www.kpho.org.uk/>

3. Methodology

- 3.1 In order to achieve a clear and transparent evidence base and deliver the objectives of the study, the following methodology was developed based on the requirements of current Government policy¹⁵ and following an established and approved approach¹⁶.
- 3.2 Fundamental to the methodological approach adopted by arc⁴ is the priority of collecting up-to-date primary data to inform all aspects of the research base. In particular in relation to GTAA surveys, this includes meaningful engagement with members of the local Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community. Through our links with Traveller representatives and the sensitive approach of our experienced fieldteam, we have a track-record of obtaining a high degree of participation from local households living on pitches, plots or bricks and mortar accommodation within the relevant study area. In addition, we engage with local and strategic stakeholders who have an understanding and experience of Traveller issues, which assists in informing the findings of the study.
- 3.3 The methodology for the Ashford GTAA 2018 has therefore comprised:
- Desktop analysis of existing documents, including data on pitches/sites, plots/yards and unauthorised encampments;
 - The collection of primary data, including a fieldwork survey and household interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
 - An online stakeholder survey; and
 - An assessment of accommodation needs taking into account all available data and information.
- 3.4 The information gathering has been carried out in three phases, as outlined below:
- Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions;
 - Phase 2: Fieldwork survey (including census) and interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
 - Phase 3: Online survey of stakeholders; and
 - Phase 4: Needs assessment and production of the GTAA 2018 report.

Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions

- 3.5 This phase comprised a review of available literature, including legislative background and best practice information; and analysis of available secondary data relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the Ashford Borough area.

¹⁵ DCLG Planning policy for traveller sites (PPTS), August 2015 and planning policy statement of 31st August 2015, as reviewed in Chapter 2.

¹⁶ DCLG Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance, October 2007, cancelled in December 2016, but providing a standard and approved approach, as reviewed in Chapter 2.

- 3.6 Relevant regional, sub-regional and local information has been collected, collated and reviewed, including information on:
- The national policy and legislative context;
 - Current policies towards Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough (drawn from Local Authority policy documents, planning documents, housing strategies and homelessness strategies); and
 - Analysis of existing data sources available from the Council.
- 3.7 This information has helped to shape the development of this report, and in particular the review of the legislative and policy context set out in Chapter 2.
- 3.8 The project steering group was fully consulted regarding the most appropriate methodology for undertaking the assessment work, including site fieldwork, and provided stakeholder contact information for undertaking the stakeholder survey.

Phase 2: Fieldwork survey and interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 3.9 The primary fieldwork for this study comprised survey work with Gypsies and Travellers. The questionnaire (Appendix C) was designed by arc⁴ in consultation with the project steering group and builds upon our standard questionnaire.
- 3.10 The household survey was undertaken by arc⁴. The overarching aim of the fieldwork was to maximise the number of interviews secured from Gypsy and Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and houseboat households living within the Borough. Consulting with the project steering group prior to the fieldwork survey ensured that the fieldwork team had a good understanding of the local issues facing Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and helped to maximise the community's participation in the study.
- 3.11 The cultural needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople differ from those of the rest of the population and consideration of culturally-specific requirements such as the need for additional permanent caravan sites and/or transit sites and/or stopping places (or improvements to existing sites) are key to this study. The research has therefore explicitly sought information from Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople from across the Borough living in different types of accommodation.
- 3.12 The main period of fieldwork Interviews took place during October to December 2017. However, some additional fieldwork was undertaken in early 2018. Responses achieved are presented in Table 3.1.
- 3.13 The site observation and fieldwork survey confirmed that there are 160 Gypsy and Traveller households living on sites across Ashford Borough. Interviews were achieved with 111 households, representing a 60.4% response rate.
- 3.14 The 2011 Census estimates there are 167 Gypsies and Traveller households currently living across Ashford, of whom 120 households live in bricks and mortar accommodation. Despite a number of different approaches (including liaison with Education Teams and engagement with community support groups), no interviews were achieved with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in bricks and

mortar accommodation within the Borough. Instead, the 2011 Census data has been used along with some statistical assumptions regarding the typical proportion of need arising from bricks and mortar households (based on other arc⁴ studies)(see Chapter 7).

Table 3.1 Responses achieved to the Household Survey 2017 by tenure and type of accommodation

Gypsies and Travellers					
Tenure and type of site	Pitch numbers			Household numbers	
	Total pitches	Total vacant	Occupied pitches	Total households	Interviews achieved
Council (permanent) authorised	16	0	16	15	12
Private (permanent) authorised	123	1	116	124	83
Private temporary authorised	11	0	13	9	7
Private Tolerated	0	0	3	0	0
Unauthorised	13	0	14	12	9
Total Gypsy and Traveller	163	1	162	160	111

- 3.15 arc⁴'s methodology includes analysing the household survey findings to determine the self-defined travelling practices of each interviewed household. This includes answers to questions of travelling history (current and year preceding); reasons for travel; travel plans (current year and the next five years); annual duration of travel (recent and planned); destinations and reasons for travel; and reasons for not travelling (now and in the future). By translating this assessment of each household's 'PPTS-compliance' into a proportion of the population in question, it can be determined what percentage of households fall within the 'PPTS 2015' definition. By contrast, all households identifying as part of the Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople community are contained within a broader 'cultural' definition, an approach which is supported by the Draft Revised NPPF (March 2018).
- 3.16 Analysis of the household survey data established that 60% of all respondent households on pitches across Ashford meet the PPTS 2015 definition of being a Gypsy/Traveller household. These households meet the definition by either travelling in the preceding year or within the past 5 years and/or intend to travel in the next year or in any year in the next five years. This is discussed further in the analysis in Chapter 7.

Phase 3: Stakeholder survey

- 3.17 The survey of stakeholders was conducted during January and February 2018, by means of an online questionnaire. The survey was undertaken jointly in partnership with Canterbury, Dover, Shepway, Swale and Thanet Councils as part of their GTAA processes. Contact information for key stakeholders was provided by the six local authorities. Stakeholders were contacted and asked to participate in the online

questionnaire, answering whichever questions they felt were relevant to their knowledge and experience. The questionnaire was initially made available from 30th January to 16th February 2018. Reminder emails were sent out to encourage as many responses as possible, with two further extensions up to 2nd March 2018 to maximise participation. A total of 49 responses to the stakeholder survey were obtained and these have been analysed quantitatively and qualitatively, as appropriate to the relevant data.

- 3.18 The stakeholder consultation invited representatives from all of the neighbouring borough and district local authorities, who were requested to provide information regarding their local situation and provision, including issues such as unauthorised encampment activity. This approach assists the Council in meeting their requirements under the Duty to Cooperate.
- 3.19 The findings of the online stakeholder survey are set out in Chapter 6 of this report.

Phase 4: Needs assessment and production of report

- 3.20 The assessment of pitch requirements has been calculated by utilising information on current supply of pitches and the results from the survey. The overall number of pitches has been calculated using local authority and fieldwork survey information, with likely capacity through turnover assessed through the household survey and discussions with those who manage the council-owned sites.
- 3.21 A detailed explanation of the analysis of pitch requirements is contained in Chapter 7 but briefly comprises analysis of the following elements:
- Current pitch provision, households living in bricks and mortar accommodation; households planning to move in the next five years, and emerging households to give total demand for pitches; and
 - Turnover on existing pitches and total supply.
- 3.22 The approach used then reconciles the demand and supply data to identify overall pitch requirements.
- 3.23 To identify any need for transit provision, findings from the household survey have been analysed alongside other contextual information.

Pitches and households

- 3.24 One of the key challenges faced when assessing Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements is the actual nature of pitches and how this relates to the number of households they can support.
- 3.25 PPTS 2015 refers to the need for Local Planning Authorities to *'identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets'* and *'relate the number of pitches/plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density'* (PPTS 2015, paragraph 10).

- 3.26 Planning decision notices usually refer the number of pitches on a site or the specifics of what can be on a pitch e.g. statics, tourers; or specific individuals and/or households.
- 3.27 As part of the GTAA, it is essential that the characteristics of sites, the number of pitches and how many households these can support is carefully considered. There are a range of issues which need to be considered when reviewing site and pitch characteristics and their potential implications for future pitch and site requirements which are now summarised.

Site and pitch size

- 3.28 There are no definitive parameters for site or pitch sizes. Previous Design Guidance (DCLG, 2008) states in paragraph 4.4 that *'Gypsy and Traveller sites are designed to provide land per household which is suitable for a mobile home, touring caravan and a utility building, together with space for parking. Sites of various sizes, layouts and pitch numbers operate successfully today and work best when they take into account the size of the site and the needs and demographics of the families resident on them'*.
- 3.29 Paragraph 4.47 states that *'to ensure fire safety it is essential that every trailer, caravan or park home must be not less than 6 metres from any other trailer, caravan or park home that is occupied separately'*.
- 3.30 Paragraph 7.12 states that *'as a general guide, it is possible to specify that an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan (or two trailers, drying space for clothes, a lockable shed (for bicycles, wheelchair storage etc.), parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area'*.
- 3.31 Paragraph 4.13 states that *'smaller pitches must be able to accommodate at least an amenity building, a large trailer, drying space for clothes and parking for at least one vehicle'*.

Occupancy

- 3.32 A pitch may accommodate more than one family unit, for instance it could include a family, older children who have formed their own household and other family members. This could lead to potential overcrowding and this is considered as part of the GTAA household survey.
- 3.33 Private sites may restrict occupancy to close family/friends. This limits opportunity for others to move onto the site but this restrictive occupancy may provide for emerging needs within a household, for example as grown-up children (previously living within a parent(s) or grandparent(s) home) form independent households of their own.
- 3.34 Quality, size of pitch and proximity of caravans on pitches vary dramatically.

Response

- 3.35 For each site, a pragmatic and reasonable judgement should be made as part of the GTAA regarding the number of pitches or sub-divisions on sites. This may relate to the

number of families living on sites, and could include a consideration of the potential intensification of sites (for instance through further sub-division, extension or use of vacant areas within the site). Capacity and layout of sites should be identified through site observation (directly or indirectly through Google maps or similar), planning history and local knowledge of planning, enforcement and liaison officers.

- 3.36 Pitches can become intensified or sub-divided once planning applications have been approved. These sub-divisions tend to be tolerated by councils. Often pitches become subdivided to provide space for newly-forming households, particularly from family members.

4. Review of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population and existing provision of pitches and plots

4.1 This chapter looks at the current picture in terms of the current population and demography of Gypsies and Travellers across the study area before going on to explore the extent and nature of provision across the area.

2011 Census population estimates

4.2 Whilst it is recognised that some families may not identify themselves as Gypsies or Travellers in research, the 2011 Census¹⁷ identifies a total of 167 households in the Ashford Borough as having a ‘White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller’ (WGoIT) ethnicity (Table 4.1a). Of these, 71.9% (120 households) live in bricks and mortar accommodation (house or bungalow, or flat, maisonette or apartment) and 28.1% (47 households) live in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure.

Total: Accommodation type	House or bungalow	A flat, maisonette or apartment	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
167	106	14	47

Source: 2011 Census

4.3 The 2011 Census provides further information on actual residents and Table 4.1b provides details of the breakdown of people.

Total: Accommodation type	House or bungalow	A flat, maisonette or apartment	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
531	349	30	152

Source: 2011 Census

4.4 Table 4.1c provides an analysis of people and households and shows that the average household size is 3.2 persons for Gypsies and Travellers in Ashford Borough. This

¹⁷ Tables 5.1a to 5.1e are taken from the Census 2011. Special tables were commissioned by ONS to cover the ethnicity and several data sets were produced and made available on the ONS website on the 21st January 2014. See Tables CT0127 and CT0128. Main article: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/re/census/2011-census-analysis/what-does-the-2011-census-tell-us-about-the-characteristics-of-gypsy-or-irish-travellers-in-england-and-wales-/index.html>

compares with an average household size of 2.3 (down from 2.4 in 2001) for the UK as a whole and looking at all households. There is some variation in the average Gypsy and Traveller household size between accommodation types, however, with an average of 3.3 persons per household in houses/bungalows compared with 2.1 persons per household in flats/maisonettes/apartments and 3.2 persons per household living in caravans/mobiles.

Total: Accommodation type	House or bungalow	A flat, maisonette or apartment	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
3.2	3.3	2.1	3.2

Source: 2011 Census

Caravan Count information

- 4.5 Snapshot counts of the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were requested by the Government in 1979, and have since been undertaken bi-annually by local authorities on a voluntary basis every January and July¹⁸. Their accuracy varies between local authorities and according to how information is included in the process. A major criticism is the non-involvement of Gypsies and Travellers themselves in the counts. However, the counts, conducted on a single day twice a year, are the only systematic source of information on the numbers and distribution of Gypsy and Traveller caravans and trailers. The counts include caravans (or trailers) on and off authorised sites (i.e. those with planning permission) but do not relate necessarily to the actual number of pitches on sites.
- 4.6 The latest Traveller caravan count figures available are from the July 2017 Count of Traveller Caravans (England)¹⁹, which nationally found that:
- The total number of traveller caravans in England in July 2017 was 22,792. This is 1,422 more than the 21,370 reported in July 2016.
 - 6,701 caravans were on authorised socially rented sites. This is an increase of 429 since the July 2016 count, which recorded 6,272.
 - The number of caravans on authorised privately funded sites was 12,370. This was 753 more than the 11,617 recorded in July 2016. The number of caravans on authorised private sites has increased each year since 2007.
 - The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments on land owned by travellers was 2,197. This is a decrease of 19 compared to the July 2016 figure of 2,216.

¹⁸ Historically caravan counts have not included Travelling Showpeople. Since 2010 the Government has requested that January counts include Travelling Showpeople, however, the figures relating to Travelling Showpeople are reported separately and not included in the overall count figures.

¹⁹ DCLG Count of Traveller Caravans July 2017 England, Housing Statistical Release 16 November 2017

- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers was 1,524. This was 259 caravans more than the July 2016 count of 1,265.
- Overall, the July 2017 count indicated that 84 per cent of traveller caravans in England were on authorised land and that 16 per cent were on unauthorised land. This is the same as the 2016 count.

4.7 At the county level, the count found that²⁰:

- In July 2017 there were 1,831 traveller caravans in Kent. This is 10% more than one year ago when there were 1,665 caravans. There were an additional 45 caravans in Medway Unitary Authority.
- Of the 1,831: 300 (16%) were socially rented on authorised sites. 1,148 (63%) were private caravans on authorised sites. 383 (21%) were on 'unauthorised' sites.
- The 21% on 'unauthorised' sites is above the national (England) average of 16%.

4.8 The figures for the last six Traveller caravan counts for Ashford are set out in Table 4.2. This shows that an average of 200 caravans have been recorded on sites across the Borough during the six-count period. Of these, around nine-tenths (90.7%) are on authorised sites with planning permission. The majority are on private sites (77.4%) and 13.4% on social-rented sites. An average of just under one-tenth (9.3%) of recorded caravans are on unauthorised sites, without planning permission. There have typically been around 19 caravans identified on unauthorised land in each count, although this rose to 25 in the latest count.

²⁰ Kent County Council, *Strategic Intelligence Statistical Bulletin*, November 2017

Table 4.2 Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures January 2015 to July 2017				
Ashford Count	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social Rented	Total Private	Total Unauthorised	
Jan 2015	26	139	16	181
Jul 2015	26	152	18	196
Jan 2016	27	162	18	207
Jul 2016	22	148	16	186
Jan 2017	29	152	18	199
Jul 2017	30	173	25	228
Six-Count Average	26.7	154.3	18.5	199.5
Six-Count % Average	13.4%	77.4%	9.3%	100.0%

Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Live Table 1 (July 2017)

4.9 In addition to the bi-annual Traveller Caravan Count, there is an annual snapshot count of the number of Travelling Showpeople caravans, which is undertaken alongside the January count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans (as above). The most recently-available published data is therefore January 2017. Overall findings include²¹:

- In England the number of Travelling showpeople caravans totalled 2,701; down from 2,487 the previous year. Of which: 60 were socially rented 2,432 were private caravans 209 were on 'unauthorised' sites (ie without a planning permission)
- The number of Travelling showpeople caravans in Kent in the January 2017 return was 19 vans; down from 27 in the previous year. These were recorded in three local authorities: Dartford (6), Swale (6) and Tonbridge & Malling (7). In addition, Medway also recorded 19 vans.

4.10 Table 4.3 sets out the data from the last four Travelling Showpeople caravan counts, 2014-2017, for Ashford Borough. This shows that 6 Travelling Showperson caravans were recorded in 2014 and 5 Travelling Showperson caravans were recorded in 2015, both times on private land. No Travelling Showperson caravans were recorded in the last two counts (2016 and 2017), however.

²¹ Kent County Council, *Strategic Intelligence Statistical Bulletin*, November 2017

Table 4.3 Annual Travelling Showpeople caravan count figures January 2014 to January 2017

Ashford Count	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social Rented	Total Private	Total Unauthorised	
2014	0	6	0	6
2015	0	5	0	5
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Four-Count Average	0	2.75	0	2.75
Four-Count % Average	-	100%	-	100%

Source: DCLG Travelling Showpeople Caravan Count, Live Table 3 (July 2017)

- 4.11 The DCLG caravan count data also records Traveller and Travelling Showpeople caravan sites provided by local authorities and private registered providers in England²². The most up-to-date data from July 2017 identifies one public site in Ashford, namely Chilmington.

Table 4.4 Traveller and Travelling Showpeople caravan sites provided by local authorities and registered providers in Ashford, July 2017

Site and address	Date site opened	Date of last site changes	Total no. of pitches	of which		Caravan capacity
				residential	transit	
Chilmington, Chart Road, Ashford	1973	2015	30	30	0	60

Source: DCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Live Table 2 (July 2017)

Local information

- 4.12 Data on the provision of sites considers both authorised and unauthorised sites across Ashford.
- 4.13 Broadly speaking, authorised sites are those with planning permission and can be on either public or privately-owned land. Unauthorised sites are made up of either longer term²³ unauthorised encampments²⁴, that have been in existence for some considerable time and so can be considered to be indicative of a permanent need for accommodation (in some instances local authorities class these as tolerated sites and

²² DCLG Count of Traveller Caravans July 2017 England, Housing Statistical Release 17 November 2017, Live Table 2

²³ Approximately three months or longer

²⁴ Please note that unauthorised encampments also encompass short-term illegal encampments, which are more indicative of transit need, see para 7.10 for more information on these encampments.

do not take enforcement action to remove them); and unauthorised developments, where Travellers are residing upon land that they own and that does not have planning permission (see Appendix D for more detailed definitions).

- 4.14 In terms of Gypsy and Traveller site provision within Ashford, there is one permanent local authority site, 48 private permanent sites, six private temporary sites and six unauthorised sites. Site details are set out in Table 4.5 and site locations are shown by Map 4.1. There are no Travelling Showperson yards in Ashford.

Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson yards (as at April 2018)								
Site/Yard Code	Site/Yard Name	Address	Postcode	Ownership	Type	Pitches	Households	Response
LA1			TN23 3DT	Council	Permanent Authorised	16	15	12
Priv1			CT4 7DG	Private	Permanent Authorised	6	6	4
Priv2			CT4 8AG	Private	Permanent Authorised	4	2	2
Priv3			TN27 0NR	Private	Permanent Authorised	2	1	1
Priv4			TN27 0NS	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv5			TN27 9BY	Private	Permanent Authorised	5	5	1
Priv6			TN27 0SS	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv7			TN26 3EF	Private	Permanent Authorised	6	3	3
Priv8			TN26 3ET	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv9			TN27 8QW	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	3	3
Priv10			TN27 8JU	Private	Permanent Authorised	7	8	8
Priv11			TN27 8LJ	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv12			TN27 8LW	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv13			TN27 8ER	Private	Permanent Authorised	2	2	1
Priv14			TN27 8BU	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	3	3

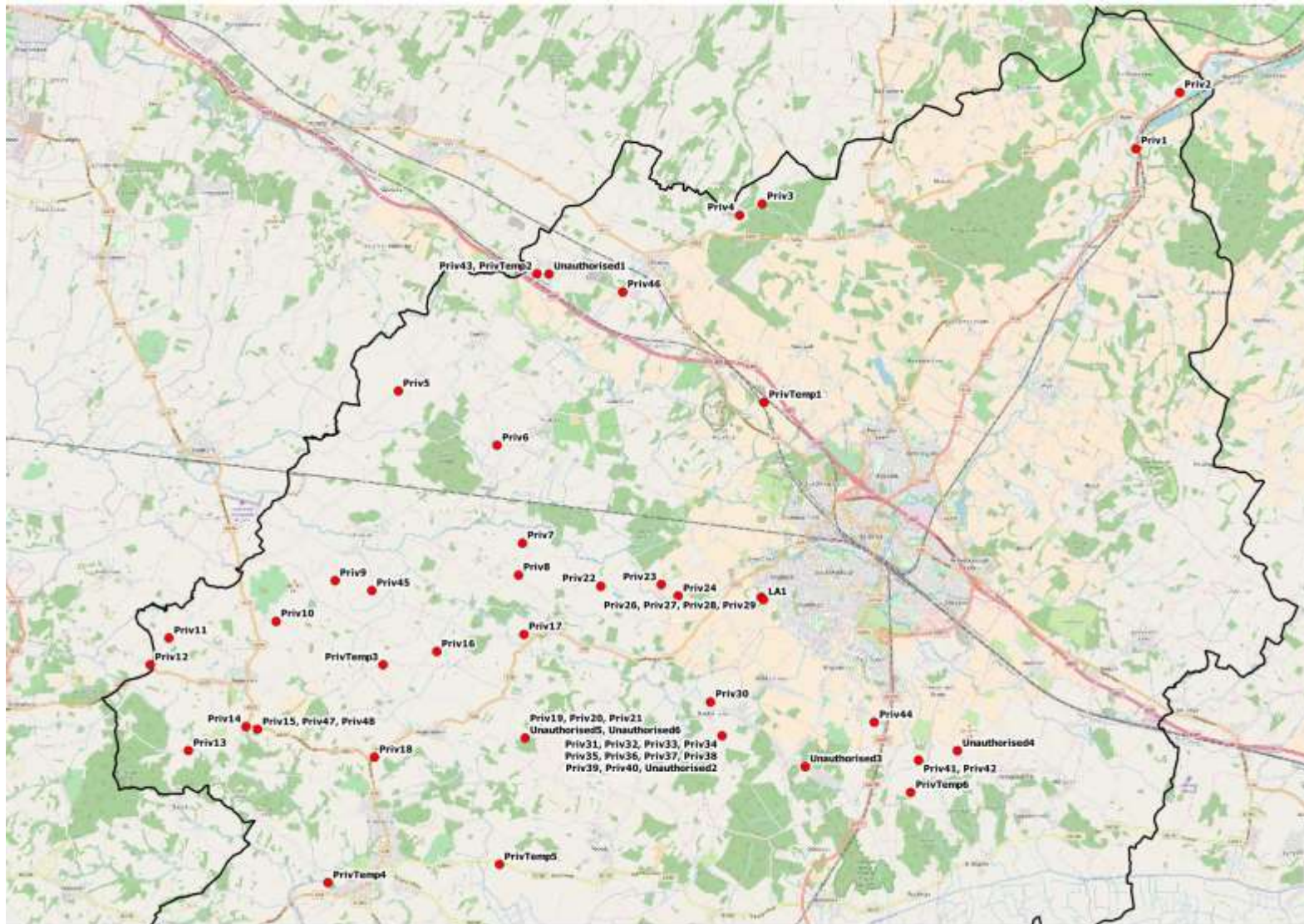
Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson yards (as at April 2018)								
Site/Yard Code	Site/Yard Name	Address	Postcode	Ownership	Type	Pitches	Households	Response
Priv15			TN27 8BH	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv16			TN26 3HJ	Private	Permanent Authorised	4	4	2
Priv17			TN26 3HA	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv18			TN26 3BY	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	3	1
Priv19			TN26 3JN	Private	Permanent Authorised	12	12	0
Priv20			TN26 3JN	Private	Permanent Authorised	5	5	5
Priv21			TN26 3JN	Private	Permanent Authorised	6	4	3
Priv22			TN26 3DS	Private	Permanent Authorised	2	5	5
Priv23			TN26 1JY	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv24			TN26 1JN	Private	Permanent Authorised	5	3	3
Priv26			TN23 3AB	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv27			TN23 3AB	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv28			TN23 3AB	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	0	0
Priv29			TN23 3AB	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv30			TN26 1AQ	Private	Permanent Authorised	2	2	1

Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson yards (as at April 2018)								
Site/Yard Code	Site/Yard Name	Address	Postcode	Ownership	Type	Pitches	Households	Response
Priv31			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv32			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	3	2
Priv33			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	5	1
Priv34			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	4	4
Priv35			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	4	4	1
Priv36			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	2	3	2
Priv37			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	1	0
Priv38			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	4	4	0
Priv39			TN26 1LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	5	5
Priv40			TN26 2LX	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv41			TN25 7JF	Private	Permanent Authorised	3	2	2
Priv42			TN25 7JF	Private	Permanent Authorised	2	3	1
Priv43			TN27 0BT	Private	Permanent Authorised	4	4	2
Priv44			TN26 1NH	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv45			TN27 8QR	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1

Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson yards (as at April 2018)								
Site/Yard Code	Site/Yard Name	Address	Postcode	Ownership	Type	Pitches	Households	Response
Priv46			TN27 0AL	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv47			TN27 8BH	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
Priv48			TN27 8BH	Private	Permanent Authorised	1	1	1
PrivTemp1			TN25 4JJ	Private	Temporary	1	1	1
PrivTemp2			TN27 0BT	Private	Temporary	4	4	2
PrivTemp3			TN26 3HU	Private	Temporary	1	1	1
PrivTemp4			TN30 6UJ	Private	Temporary	1	1	1
PrivTemp5			TN26 3SZ	Private	Temporary	1	1	1
PrivTemp6			TN25 7JL	Private	Temporary	4	2	2
Unauthorised1			TN27 0AX	Private	Unauthorised	1	1	1
Unauthorised2			TN26 1LX	Private	Unauthorised	2	0	0
Unauthorised3			TN26 2EQ	Private	Unauthorised	1	2	2
Unauthorised4			TN25 7HN	Private	Unauthorised	1	1	1
Unauthorised6			TN26 3JN	Private	Unauthorised	3	3	0
Unauthorised7			TN26 3JW	Private	Unauthorised	5	5	5
TOTAL						163	160	111

Source: Ashford Council data 2017, site survey fieldwork 2017-2018

Map 4.1 Location of sites in Ashford



5. Household survey findings

- 5.1 This chapter presents the findings of the household survey, which was carried out to provide primary data to inform this GTAA. The survey aimed to reach as many Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and houseboat dweller households living within Ashford as possible. It was conducted using the questionnaires which are set out in Appendix C.
- 5.2 The methodology is set out in Chapter 3.
- 5.3 There were a total of 111 responses to the household survey. Of these:
- 89 were Gypsies and Traveller households living on permanent authorised pitches;
 - 9 were Gypsy and Traveller household living on temporary authorised pitches;
 - 3 were Gypsy and Traveller households living on tolerated sites; and
 - 10 were Gypsy and Traveller households living on unauthorised sites.
- 5.4 The data collected has been used to establish the extent to which additional pitches and plots are required. This assessment is set out in Chapter 7.
- 5.5 It would not be appropriate to provide a detailed analysis of the survey information as this has the potential to identify individual responses. Broad summaries of the household survey data findings are presented below in order to maintain respondent confidentiality.

Gypsy and Traveller households living in Ashford

- 5.6 A total of 111 Gypsy and Traveller households were interviewed living on pitches. Of the representatives interviewed, 52% identified themselves as English Romany or Romany; 29% identified as Traveller or English Traveller; 16% identified as Irish Traveller, Irish Gypsy or Irish; and 3% identified as Eastern European, Polish or Romanian.
- 5.7 There was significant variation in the size of households. 25% of households were single person; 30% comprised of two people; 21% were three people; and 24% included four or more people (of whom 14% comprised of four people, 5% five people, 4% six people and 2% seven people).
- 5.8 Asked to identify their household form, 64% stated '*family*', '*extended family*' or '*single parent family*'. A further 19% identified as single person households and 17% as couples.
- 5.9 The people interviewed provided information relating to the size of their household and the age of people living within their household. This identified a total of 290 people living within the 111 households, although some age information was withheld. There was a total of 71 children under the age of 13 present in the Gypsy and Traveller households who provided information. In addition, there were a further 35 young people aged 13-19 years and therefore likely to form households in the next 5 years (2017/18 to 2021/22).
- 5.10 Of the population for whom ages were supplied, 26% were aged under 13 years and 13% were aged 13-19 years; 29% were aged 20-39 years, 22% were aged 40-59 years

- and 11% were aged 60 years or older. Whilst those withholding age information may have tended to be older, distorting the trends somewhat, the household survey indicates that the Gypsy and Traveller population is relatively youthful, with a large child and teenage contingent.
- 5.11 Regarding bedspaces, only 96 respondents provided information on how many bedspaces they have available for their household. Of those responding, most Gypsies and Travellers reported that they have either two (41% of respondents) or three (42% of respondents) bedspaces. 5% stated one bedspace, 9% stated four bedspaces, 2% stated six bedspaces and 1% stated 8 bedspaces.
- 5.12 In terms of duration of residence, 32% of respondents answering the question (base of 82) said 2 years or less; 7% stated 3-5 years; 30% stated 6-10 years and 30% stated over ten years or more. The main reason for moving to the area was family or land availability.
- 5.13 When asked about overcrowding, 4 respondents said that their home is overcrowded but none said that their pitch is overcrowded.
- 5.14 56 respondents (or members of their household) stated that they had travelled in the preceding year. 59 respondents had travelled previous to the last year. The most popular reasons for travelling included work-related, cultural, fairs and visiting family and friends. 58 households are planning to travel in the next year, and 58 expect to travel each year for the next five years and beyond. Reasons for not travelling included being too old, not needing to and difficulties of travelling with children.
- 5.15 The household survey asked about their accommodation plans for the future. 11 respondents stated that they are planning to move within the next five years. One specified an intention of moving into bricks and mortar and five specified an intention to live in a caravan/chalet on a pitch.
- 5.16 11 respondents to the household survey said that there are people in their household who want to move to their own pitch in the next five years (i.e. emerging households). Of these 11 emerging households, eight have travelled or plan to travel.
- 5.17 In terms of scope to expand provision at their current site, 28 respondents expressed the view that this is possible. A range of between one and ten pitches was suggested as possible. 14 respondents felt that there was potential to intensify existing pitches, with a range of between two and five pitches proposed.
- 5.18 Gypsies and Travellers were asked whether they feel there is a need for transit pitches in the Borough (for people stopping over temporarily). 29% of those responding to the question (23 from a base of 78) said yes and 71% said no (55 responses). A range of between two and 20 transit pitches was recommended and two respondents stated, '*as many as possible/can fit*'. The strongest preference expressed was for Council management. 73% of those responding (11 from a base of 15) stated a preference for Council management, compared with 27% (4 respondents) who stated a preference for management by members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 5.19 54% of respondents considered that there is a need for additional permanent pitch provision in Ashford (41 respondents from a base of 76), compared with 46% (35

respondents) who did not see a need for more permanent pitches in the Borough. A range of between one and 12 or '*as many as can be*' was mentioned by respondents.

6. Stakeholder consultation

Overview

- 6.1 A joint stakeholder consultation was undertaken in partnership with Canterbury, Dover, Shepway, Swale and Thanet Councils as part of the GTAA process.
- 6.2 Key stakeholders were identified by each of the participating six local authorities. These individuals were invited by arc4 to participate in an online survey to provide their views on a range of issues relating to Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community within the five council areas and the surrounding area.
- 6.3 A total of 49 separate responses (some only partial) to the stakeholder consultation were obtained from representatives from the county, district, borough and parish councils, utility and healthcare providers, natural and historic environment organisations, planning consultants and Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Bargee Traveller representative organisations. Respondents were asked to answer only the questions that they felt were relevant to their knowledge and experience. This is a qualitative summary of the views expressed by stakeholders responding to the online survey.

General support for Gypsies and Travellers

- 6.4 Respondents were asked if they think that there is sufficient understanding and monitoring of the education, employment, health, accommodation and support needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the study area. There was a range of feedback. Some respondents felt that there was sufficient understanding and monitoring; the strategic role of Kent County Council was highlighted. However, there were several respondents who did not feel that there was adequate understanding and support for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. One stakeholder felt that these groups are '*very misunderstood*' generally, and another that '*there has never been sufficient understanding*'. Another commented that '*there is a total lack of support in the areas of education, training and employment, through the lack of knowledge of the GRT community*'. They felt that there is a lack of consultation with NGOs who have full knowledge of the people involved, with local authorities failing to reach the communities themselves.
- 6.5 One respondent expressed their opinion that the community's needs are not considered except within the '*whole population perspective*'. Another noted that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers living in social rented bricks and mortar stock or on public sites are better understood than those in private housing; with those living on private Gypsy and Traveller sites it depends on the family ownership, with some being nervous of Council involvement. It was also noted that understanding of employment can be challenging.
- 6.6 In terms of additional support to assist Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople families, the following were mentioned by stakeholders: more training, raising awareness, building better links between communities (particularly in villages and rural areas), helping the community engage with parish and town councils, making

information more available (in a variety of formats), employing liaison officers and providing education support such as Virtual Schools. A need for direct support to the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community was emphasised by several respondents. The provision of more sites to meet accommodation needs was also mentioned, and the suggestion that there could be more information and assistance regarding site availability. One stakeholder emphasised the need for community trust and partnerships, with a need for change and commitment at the local level. However, another stakeholder highlighted that local services (particularly rural services) are already under pressure, with limited support from the Government and local authorities, so meeting all needs is a challenge.

- 6.7 Several respondents were concerned that there is not adequate awareness of the cultural, support and accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Some respondents mentioned concerns about racism and conflict with the settled community. It was noted by one stakeholder that most knowledge and awareness among settled communities have been formed via the media, and personal experience is often in the context of conflict over either transient encampments or unauthorised development. Suggestions to raise awareness included more training, including training officers to better understand the ways and traditions of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople; *'myth busting'*; establishing better links with existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community groups and seeking proactive solutions; engaging with the settled community and improving the attitudes and awareness of the general public through websites, public meetings and events.
- 6.8 In terms of specific actions that organisations have taken to raise awareness of the cultural, support and accommodation requirements of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and Bargee Travellers, the following were mentioned: training for officers and members; arranging specific events to aid understanding of Gypsy and Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Roma people; and showing respect and understanding for the traditions and cultures of these communities in dealing with and working with them. A lack of funding was highlighted as a problem in restricting opportunities at the present time.
- 6.9 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople organisations reported on a range of activities: fund raising; providing education support, training, employment, youth clubs and sports; putting on shows at the County Showground; building community centres; providing accommodation and a transit site; and providing advice to Government through a DCLG working group and Traveller Law Reform Unit.
- 6.10 Additional comments regarding these issues predominantly focused on concerns regarding stigma, bias and barriers that exist in some cases. The need for equality and inclusivity was highlighted, with organisations and communities working in partnership and consultation. In terms of support for the community, there was a suggestion of creating alternative educational facilities to give children practical skills.

Provision of accommodation

- 6.11 Stakeholders were asked to respond to a series of questions relating to the need for new pitch provision (both permanent and transit), existing pitch provision, households

living in bricks and mortar accommodation, and unauthorised encampment activity. Their responses are summarised below.

New Permanent sites

- 6.12 Stakeholders were asked whether or not they felt that there is sufficient provision of permanent pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the study area. One stakeholder made the general comment that national assessment suggests that there are insufficient permanent pitches/plots available. At the strategic level, across east Kent, several stakeholders raised concerns about a general lack of provision. Two mentioned an awareness of many applications and appeals on small site proposals, indicating a demand for more pitches. One stakeholder felt that there is an issue with being able to find suitable locations for sites in most of the local authority areas involved. Likewise, another noted that the community's birth rate is twice the average, meaning that there is a growing demand and an ongoing shortfall in supply. It was also mentioned that, whilst many existing sites are shown to have the potential to accommodate further pitches/plots, such plots will often be only filled by family members (when children or future children form their own household).
- 6.13 With specific reference to Ashford Borough, two stakeholders reported that they understand that there are not sufficient permanent pitches to meet need within the area. Another stakeholder was not sure.
- 6.14 In terms of locations for new provision, the following points were made by respondents:
- New sites/yards should be located within reasonable reach of services such as schools, shops, health, training and employment;
 - One respondent felt that sites should not too close to residential properties, however another emphasised that they should not be *'pushed out on the periphery of society'*;
 - New sites/yards need adequate transport links, with good quality access to the primary road network. More rural parts of the County were mentioned as being unsuitable for the types of vehicle that are used on a regular basis;
 - Brownfield sites in urban areas were suggested;
 - The challenge of Green Belt was also noted;
 - New sites/yards should not be placed in areas of Flood Zones 2/3 due to the risk to life and property. It was recommended that local planning authorities should carry out a Sequential Test (ST) for any proposed site, even for change of use. It must also pass the Exception Test (ET) at the planning application stage;
 - A partnership working party was proposed, made up of local NGOs and local authorities, this working party could look at areas and consult with the community;
 - One stakeholder noted that Gypsies and Travellers seem to be moving further into east Kent, as it is harder to find sites closer to London. Along with a need arising from families already living in east Kent, new provision in Swale, Ashford and Dover was suggested.

- With specific reference to Ashford, one stakeholder suggested locations within reasonable reach of services, but away from large multi-family sites and conglomerations of existing sites. Another stakeholder recommended the use of isolated, vacant brownfield sites in urban areas such as the old railway works in Newtown.
- 6.15 Stakeholders were asked if there are areas that should be avoided for new permanent pitch/plot provision, and the following suggestions were received as locations to avoid:
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Areas of High Landscape Value;
 - Locations within or immediately adjacent to Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), designated wildlife sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/RAMSAR;
 - Sites adjacent to wastewater treatment works;
 - Other high risk areas, including rubbish dumps;
 - Town centres, village centres and hamlets;
 - Sites that have or require access to the high speed road network;
 - Rural areas served by narrow country roads;
 - Locations near to vulnerable people; and
 - Affluent areas.
- 6.16 It was noted by one stakeholder that site locations should be sensitive to the historic environment and should be assessed for impacts on heritage assets. This does not mean that sites should not be located close to listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservations areas, etc, but that if they are then their design and layout should take into account potential effects on the significance of the historic environment. Another respondent suggested that site selection should *'just follow good planning'*, whilst two expressed the view that locations unfit for general needs housing are equally poor for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 6.17 Respondents identified the following barriers to new site provision:
- Public opposition and an antipathy towards Travelling communities, partly due to a lack of understanding of the culture and partly due to negative experiences. This public pressure against development (NIMBYism) was mentioned by several respondents, although one respondent also noted that *'this works both ways'* in terms of seeking mutual understanding between different community groups;
 - Two stakeholders considered that the main barriers are political, with an unwillingness of local authorities to address the issue and allocate sites. Constantly moving goalposts through policy change was noted as an issue;
 - The availability of suitable sites and land ownership issues;
 - The cost of land and a lack of funding for public/Council-run sites (including maintenance and management, as well as site development);
 - Impacts of new sites on the road network, through traffic generation, were noted. This is particularly relevant where direct access to a trunk road is required;

- One stakeholder noted that many Gypsy families do not want to go onto larger sites and prefer family-related sites – so more small sites are likely to be required;
- Difficulties in assessing need, especially in terms of Government policy and definitions of ‘Traveller’, local connections etc.

Transit sites

- 6.18 When asked whether transit sites are needed, there was a variety of responses. Some stakeholders were unsure, some said no, and others said yes. The change in PPTS definition and the nearness to Channel ports and the Channel Tunnel were given by one stakeholder as reasons for making additional transit provision in the wider east Kent area. Another stakeholder mentioned major transport routes along the A2, M2 and A299, linking the coast with London. They suggested that further work should be done to assist in identifying any work migration patterns linked to agricultural and seasonal work.
- 6.19 One respondent expressed the view that this form of provision should be addressed *‘in a strategic manner across Kent’*. Another raised the possibility of a *‘mid Kent’* transit pitch to help with unauthorised encampments, although they acknowledged that this could be difficult to manage. A further stakeholder suggested that there should be transit site provision in every area, otherwise the principle behind transit sites won’t work.
- 6.20 The importance of consulting with the Travelling communities themselves in planning for transit provision was emphasised by two respondents. They felt that it is important that transit sites are created by the community themselves, and not used to allow Sections 62a to e (Direction Orders) to be implemented against Travellers.
- 6.21 Several respondents identified that barriers to transit provision were similar to those relating to new permanent site provision. In addition, the following barriers were specifically mentioned regarding transit provision:
- Public opposition and lack of political will;
 - The challenge of making strategic transit provision without a strategic planning body;
 - Site maintenance and management;
 - Costs; and
 - Site access issues.
- 6.22 In terms of additional comments, one respondent suggested that transit provision could be encouraged on part of small sites.

Public, affordable and social rented provision

- 6.23 The questionnaire asked stakeholders whether they thought that there is a need for public, affordable or social rented pitches within the study area.

- 6.24 At the general, strategic level, a number of respondents felt that this form of provision is required within Kent. One stated that there will always be a need for public provision, to meet the needs of those who will never be able to provide for themselves. Another commented that there needs to be a range of all types of provision, and that targets should not be so tight that they make extra provision difficult to achieve.
- 6.25 Two stakeholders reported that the County Council has a long waiting list for pitches on the publicly-run sites in east Kent. Another reported that the existing public sites in the wider east Kent area are all old, under-developed and overcrowded and as a result the community is being forced into housing (bricks and mortar) away from their community and support, with a negative impact on lifestyle and wellbeing.
- 6.26 In terms of additional comments, one stakeholder suggested that a public forum should be set up, including local NGOs who work within the community.

Existing permanent sites

- 6.27 There was limited response from stakeholders in relation to survey questions regarding existing sites and their facilities. One stakeholder stated that most sites throughout Kent are under-managed and out-of-date. Another respondent expressed the view that private sites are generally OK, but Council sites are poor.
- 6.28 In terms of the management of existing public sites, three stakeholders made general (strategic-level) comments indicating that public sites are poorly, badly and under-managed. One stakeholder said that few people want to go to the public pitches, but some have no choice. Another was concerned that the sites managers operate '*more like enforcement officers*' with limited knowledge of the community and their real needs. Lack of public funds was highlighted as an issue, although the Gypsy Council/Gypsy Cooperative stated that they are willing to talk to local authorities to create privately-funded pitches.
- 6.29 Regarding the management of existing private sites, one stakeholder noted that there are variable management styles and quality. Another stakeholder expressed the view that private sites are well laid out with more space and amenities, and seem to cater for the future needs of family. They said that local authorities put restrictions on commercial use which can impact employment prospects.
- 6.30 Stakeholders were asked if they were aware of issues or tensions between Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and the settled community. There was some awareness of tensions. Gypsy and Traveller representatives expressed concern that there is inadequate support for the community, especially in terms of education and employment. One stakeholder felt that local councillors need to be more engaged in integrating the local Gypsy and Traveller communities, rather than encouraging negativity within local communities and the local press. Another stakeholder commented on the need for the whole community to understand what behaviour is acceptable.
- 6.31 One of the Ashford stakeholders was aware of negative attitudes and racism towards the Travelling community.

- 6.32 Additional comments from stakeholders on these issues included reiterating the need for more positive aspirations, rather than negative actions from the authorities and service providers. The Gypsy Council/Gypsy Cooperative reported that they have created a forum of local GRTS business men and women who are willing to invest, but stated that this requires the cooperation and support of county and local authorities.

Bricks and mortar

- 6.33 Two strategic-level stakeholders confirmed that they are aware of members of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community living in bricks and mortar accommodation across Kent. One respondent stated that there are '*many GRTS*' living in bricks and mortar, but living there because of the lack of alternative provision. The other respondent stated that '*massive dwelling occupation*' has resulted from the lack of [pitch] provision since the 1970s, with significant negative impacts as people have been separated from their community. Problems specified include anti-social problems, bullying, depression, drug and alcohol dependency. Both of these stakeholders felt that there is a need for additional pitch provision to cater for members of the community living in bricks and mortar who would prefer to live on a site. They also noted that this would free-up bricks and mortar accommodation to help in meeting wider housing needs within the local community. Two further respondents acknowledged that it is '*likely*' that some of those currently living in bricks and mortar would prefer to live on a pitch, but they were uncertain as to the proportion. Another respondent stated that '*consultation is needed*'.
- 6.34 Two of the local stakeholders were aware of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation within Ashford Borough. One reported that there are significant communities in Hothfield and Bethersden.
- 6.35 Asked if there is sufficient support available to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in settled accommodation in the study area to help them manage their housing effectively, there was limited feedback from stakeholders. One representative noted that '*there are those who manage, but a great number who cannot*', with evictions resulting from a lack of knowledge of how to cope. The Gypsy Council/Gypsy Cooperative commented that they are constantly signposting people to organisations who deal with rents, health, training and employment but it is difficult to measure success; this is why the organisation is investing in its own community centre. Another stakeholder noted that some Gypsies and Travellers living in houses prefer not to identify their ethnicity due to fears of discrimination.
- 6.36 Stakeholders were asked if they were aware of whether Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople feel safe in bricks and mortar accommodation in the study area, and if they have specific cultural needs. One strategic stakeholder expressed the view that those in owner-occupied bricks and mortar accommodation are usually happy, having chosen to live in their home. However, many in 'public' accommodation have been '*forced into it*' and are unhappy. With limited choices, they may end up on troubled estates, with negative consequences.

- 6.37 The only additional comment received was that there is a need for a greater understanding of community needs and the suggestion of a county working group to include local NGOs.

Unauthorised encampments

- 6.38 Several of the local authority respondents provided information on unauthorised encampments in their relevant area.
- 6.39 At the strategic level, one stakeholder noted that there are a large number of unauthorised incursions across the County, and the number increases each year.
- 6.40 Another stakeholder stated that *'unauthorised encampments are symptomatic of a lack of provision'* and suggested that the situation could be managed if there was a functioning Transit Site Network, as recommended by the previous SEERA Study.
- 6.41 Several respondents were aware of negative impacts arising from unauthorised encampment activity. This includes litter problems, social nuisance, officer time, police time and upset for local residents. In addition, road safety concerns were raised, particularly in relation to encampments adjacent to the strategic road network or on highway verges.

Planning policy

- 6.42 The survey asked stakeholders whether they felt that there were any areas within planning policy that have restricted the provision of new pitches/plots for the Travelling community. Uncertainty and issues over the definition of 'Traveller' was mentioned, including a lack of understanding within the community themselves and the need to prove regular travel, which isn't possible for older or sick people. In addition, a lack of clarity in the NPPF was noted, leading to *'planning policy by appeal'* (please note this consultation was undertaken prior to the publication of Draft Revised NPPF²⁵). One strategic-level stakeholder expressed the view that current policy is not as positively drafted as previous policy under Circular 1/2006 and does not challenge the failures of local planning authorities. There were also concerns raised regarding pitch numbers, under-counting in the assessment of need and whether or not supply could be demonstrated (for five years or the relevant plan period).
- 6.43 Some representatives mentioned restrictions such as Green Belt, environmental designations and considerations such as transport sustainability. However, they noted that these planning policies are necessary to protect the environment and to ensure that sites are suitable.
- 6.44 The online survey asked stakeholders if they feel that more could be done through planning policies and site allocations in Local Plans to identify and bring forward new sites for the provision of pitches/plots. Of those who responded to this question, the overall feeling was that land is not usually identified, or allocated, for Gypsy and

²⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework, Draft text for consultation*, March 2018

Traveller sites or Travelling Showpeople yards. Instead, provision is made through policies and planning applications/appeals, although one stakeholder stated:

'It's getting harder to gain planning permissions within Kent and the South East, through policy and political will. Along with the media.'

- 6.45 Several stakeholders felt that Local Plans should seek to identify sites to meet local need, rather than putting this off. One stakeholder suggested that *'sites allocations should include details on how the sites would be delivered and highlight any gaps in funding or delivery'*. The use of local authority land for new sites was proposed, along with intensification on existing private sites.
- 6.46 When asked what impact they think the August 2015 changes to PPTS are having on provision, view expressed include:
- Lack of clarity, uncertainty and a variety of interpretations, particularly regarding how to apply changes in definitions;
 - Concern that PPTS 2015 has *'eroded some of the previous rights or status of the Gypsy Traveller community'*;
 - Concern that PPTS 2015 has *'reduced the need for sites'* and that *'some authorities are now producing two sets of figures – for the old and new definitions, with a political decision being made as to which to use'*;
 - Criticism that the *'main impact is to give LPAs excuses for doing nothing'*;
 - Understanding that it should ease the pressure on designated areas such as AONB, for social and environmental long-term benefit and sustainability, but concern that a reduced area of search for sites means competing for housing land.
- 6.47 In terms of additional comments on these issues, the need for partnership working was again stressed by one strategic stakeholder, including the involvement of local representatives within the community.

Cross-boundary issues

- 6.48 In terms of the movement of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within East Kent and to/from neighbouring areas, the vast majority of stakeholders were not aware of any regular movements. One stakeholder said that *'there is no clear pattern, it's wherever you can get a stop'*. One of the Ashford consultations reported that the families living in the local area are settled on their sites, but some travel to and from Ireland.
- 6.49 Stakeholders were also asked if they are aware of any sites or locations close to the boundary of the study area where difficulties have or may arise. Only one respondent said yes; this relates to a concern that the Gypsy Site at Abbey Wood may be closed, which would result in a loss of 40+ pitches. The stakeholder expressed concern about this possible change and the need for this impact to be considered in assessing need. This respondent stated that *'there is already significant inward migration from Greater London'* and *'there has been, and will continue to be inward migration from Ireland'*. By contrast, *'there is zero chance of outward migration to London'*.

- 6.50 In terms of cross-boundary issues, one strategic stakeholder expressed concern regarding repeated applications for planning permission for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople developments within flood zones and adjacent to watercourses, both in terms of the potential risk to life and property and the potential impact on watercourses and biodiversity. As there are a lack of alternative sites, there is concern that Inspectors allow temporary planning permission but in the meantime these are inappropriate locations according to national policy.
- 6.51 Another stakeholder felt that the main cross-boundary issue is ‘the forced movement across boundaries’, as ‘local authorities and police push people back and forth between them’.
- 6.52 Overall, stakeholders considered that the key outcomes of the study should be:
- An accurate and detailed needs assessment, providing objective evidence of the need for provision;
 - More emphasis on provision, public and private;
 - Guidance on what type of locations should be considered for site allocations;
 - The identification of appropriate areas, suitable land and potential locations (either permanent or temporary) for provision;
 - A consideration for how the provision of sites relates to the historic environment, including both the impact of development on heritage assets and an understanding of the cultural heritage and customs of Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers, for example recognising the location of traditional stopping sites where they continue to exist;
 - Constant monitoring of existing facilities;
 - A more informed understanding of the challenges and the development of an inclusive action plan better reflecting community needs;
 - Community involvement in local and county decisions, with joined-up problem solving and cross-party and NGO partnership in seeking solutions; and
 - Raising public awareness.
- 6.53 Stakeholders were asked if they agree that the stakeholder survey contributes to the requirement under the Duty to Cooperate with neighbouring authorities. There was limited response to this question, but the vast majority of responses were positive agreement that the consultation contributes in the Duty to Cooperate. Additionally, one stakeholder stressed the important of better working partnerships to contribute to better outcomes.

7. Gypsy and Traveller pitch, Travelling Showperson plot and transit site requirements

Introduction

- 7.1 This section reviews the overall pitch and plot requirements of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Ashford Borough. It takes into account current supply and need, as well as future need, based on modelling of data, as advocated by the DCLG. This chapter also considers transit pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers. Finally, it presents planning policy recommendations.
- 7.2 The calculation of pitch requirements is based on DCLG modelling as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Guidance* (DCLG, 2007). Although now formally withdrawn, the DCLG Guidance still provides the best-practice approach towards the assessment of pitch and plot needs (see chapter 2 for further discussion).
- 7.3 This approach requires an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and a projection of future needs. It advocates the use of a survey to supplement secondary source information and derive key supply and demand information.
- 7.4 The GTAA has modelled current and future demand and current and future supply separately for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. For this study, the model has assumed a cultural definition of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople but also takes account of the PPTS planning definition as an element of the modelling.

Pitch requirement model overview

- 7.5 Pitch requirements are assessed over an initial five-year period (2017/18 to 2021/22) (the 5-year model) and then longer-term need is based on the expected number of households likely to form over the remainder of the Plan Period (2022/23 to 2030) based on the age profile of children under 13 living in Gypsy and Traveller households on pitches (the longer-term model). The modelling is based on the cultural need for pitches but the impact of the PPTS definition on need is also considered.
- 7.6 In terms of **cultural need**, the 5-year model considers:
- The baseline number of households on all types of site (authorised, unauthorised and temporary authorised sites) as at October 2017;
 - Existing households planning to move in the next five years (currently on sites and also from bricks and mortar and where they are planning to move to; and
 - Emerging households currently on sites and planning to emerge in the next five years and stay within the study area on a pitch; to derive a figure for
 - Total pitch need.
- 7.7 In terms of **supply**, the model considers:
- Total supply of current pitches on authorised sites; and

- Vacant pitches on authorised sites
- 7.8 The model then reconciles total need and existing authorised supply over the next 5 years by summarising:
- Total need for pitches; and
 - Total supply of authorised pitches.
- 7.9 The longer-term element of the model then considers the cultural need over the remainder of the Plan Period (to 2030).

Description of factors in the 5-year need model

- 7.10 Table 7.1 provides a summary of the 5-year pitch need calculation. Each component in the model is now discussed to ensure that the process is transparent and any assumptions clearly stated.

Need

7.11 **Current households living on pitches (1a to 1e)**

These figures are derived from local authority data, site observation and household survey information. Note that no households stated they were doubled up or included concealed households. Site observation data indicates there are 160 households living across 163 pitches. One authorised pitch is currently vacant.

7.12 **Current households in bricks and mortar accommodation (2)**

The 2011 Census suggested there were 120 households living in bricks and mortar accommodation. On the basis of 41 arc⁴ studies, it is estimated that 5.3% of households living in bricks and mortar would prefer to live on a site which would equate to 6 households. During interviews, we identified 3 households currently living in bricks and mortar accommodation and these households are assumed to represent half of the indicative need for 6 pitches. A need from 6 households is therefore included within the modelling at 3e.

7.13 **Existing households planning to move in the next five years (3)**

This was derived from information from the household survey for respondents currently on authorised pitches. To account for non-response, the data in the model has been weighted by a factor of 1.44²⁶.

Overall, there is a need from 15 households planning to move to another pitch within Ashford Borough and one from a pitch to bricks and mortar. The model assumes 9 households planning to move from bricks and mortar to a pitch.

An allowance is also made for in-migration. Analysis of the household survey data indicates that around 20 households have moved into the Borough in the previous 5 years. Of these, 15 moved onto vacant pitches (implying the occupant had moved or

²⁶ 106 responses from 155 G&T households on pitches results in a weighting factor of 155/106= 1.46

died) and 5 either moved onto new pitches or had not specified the occupancy of pitch when they moved on. The model makes an allowance for 5 households moving into the Borough and requiring a pitch which was not previously available (and the weighted figure is 7).

This results in an overall net requirement of +29.5 pitches (weighted) from existing households planning to move in the next 5 years.

7.14 **Emerging households (4)**

This is the number of households expected to emerge in the next 5 years based on household survey information. The total number is +17.3 (weighted).

If children old enough to form their own household were living with family and have not specified that they want to form a new household, this is assumed to be through choice and the model does not assume they want to form a new household.

7.15 **Total need for pitches (5)**

This is a total of current households on authorised pitches, households on pitches planning to move in the next five years and demand from emerging households currently living on pitches. This indicates a total need for 207 pitches.

Supply

7.16 **Current supply of authorised pitches (6)**

This is a summary of the total number of authorised pitches and the number of vacant authorised pitches. This shows a total supply of 133 authorised pitches plus 1 vacant pitch resulting in a total supply of 134 authorised pitches.

Reconciling supply and demand

7.17 There is a total need over the next five years (2017/18 to 2021/22) for 207 pitches in Ashford Borough (Table 7.1) compared with a supply of 134 authorised pitches (including vacant pitches). The result is an overall cultural shortfall of 73 pitches.

Table 7.1 Summary of demand and supply factors: Gypsies and Travellers – 2017/18 to 2021/22

CULTURAL NEED		Ashford Borough		
1	Total households living on pitches	1a. On LA Site	15	
		1b. On Private Site – Authorised	124	
		1c. On Private Site - Temporary Authorised	11	
		1d. On Private Site - Tolerated	0	
		1e. Unauthorised	13	
		1f. Total (1a to 1e)	160	
2A	Estimate of households in bricks and mortar accommodation	2a. TOTAL (2011 Census)	120	
		Weighting applied to stages 3 and 4 = 1.47 to account for G&T household no-response		
3	Existing households planning to move in next 5 years	Currently on sites		
		3a. To another pitch/same site	0	
		3b. To another site in Borough (no net need)	15	
		3c. From site to Bricks and Mortar	1	
		3d. To a site/bricks and mortar outside Borough	0	
		Currently in Bricks and Mortar		
		3e. Planning to move to a site in LA	6	
		3f. Planning to move to another B&M property	0	
		In-migrant households		
		3g. Allowance for in-migration	7	
3h. TOTAL Net impact (3a+3b-3c-3d+3e+3g)		12		
4d. 4	Emerging households (5 years)	4a. Currently on site and planning to live on current site	19	
		4b. Currently on sites and planning to live on another site in LA	0	
		4c. Currently on site and planning to live on site outside the study area	0	
		4d. Currently in B&M planning to move to a site in LA	0	
		4e. Currently in B&M and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0	
		4f. Currently on Site and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0	
		4g. TOTAL Net impact (4a+4b-4c+4d)		19
		5 Total Need		1f+3h+4g
SUPPLY				
6	Current supply of authorised pitches	6a Current occupied authorised pitches	139	
		6b Current unoccupied authorised pitches	1	
		6c. Total current authorised supply (6a+6b)	140	
RECONCILING NEED AND SUPPLY				
7	Total need for pitches	5 years (from 5)	194	
8	Total supply of authorised pitches	5 years (from 6c)	140	
5 YEAR AUTHORISED PITCH SHORTFALL 2017/18 TO 2021/22			54	

Longer-term pitch requirement modelling

- 7.18 Longer-term pitch need modelling has been carried out using known household structure information from the household survey of households living on pitches. On the basis of the age of children in households, it is possible to determine the extent of 'likely emergence', which assumes that a child is likely to form a new household at the age of 18.
- 7.19 The year when a child reaches 18 has been calculated and it is possible to assess how many newly forming households may emerge over the period 2022/23 to 2030. A reasonable assumption is that half of these children will form new households, bearing in mind culturally women tend to move away on marriage and men tend to stay in close proximity to their families on marriage. The model therefore assumes that 50% of children will form households when they reach 18 and that these households remain in Ashford Borough²⁷. Analysis would suggest a total cultural need for 28 additional pitches over the period 2022/23-2030 (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children form households on reaching 18

Time period*	No. children	Expected household formation
2022/23 – 2026/27 (with unweighted figure in brackets)	28.8 (20)	14 (10)
2027/28 to 2030	27.4 (19)	14 (9)
Total (2022/23 to 2030)	56.2 (39)	28 (19)

Note data are usually presented for 5 year periods but as the Local Plan period is to 2030 the second time period in this table relates to a 3 year period.

Planning Policy for Traveller Site definition

- 7.20 Analysis of household survey data establishes that 60% of Gypsies and Travellers living on pitches across Ashford Borough satisfy the PPTS definition of Gypsies and Travellers. The figures vary by type of site, with 53% of households on authorised sites meeting the definition and 86.4% on sites that are not authorised.
- 7.21 When interpreting PPTS need, modelling is generally used to translate the cultural need to a PPTS need. However, it has been considered appropriate to identify those households living on unauthorised and temporary authorised and tolerated sites as an immediate need to be addressed over the next 5 years.
- 7.22 Of the 24 households living on unauthorised sites, 22 were interviewed and of these 19 met the PPTS definition (86.4%). Therefore, there is an immediate PPTS need from 21 households (rounded on non-authorized sites by applying the 86.4% meeting the PPTS definition to the 24 households).

²⁷ This approach has been tested at inquiry including Worcestershire and Shropshire.

- 7.23 As the overall pitch shortfall was 73, there is remaining cultural need for 50 pitches. Across the authorised sites, 53% meet the PPTS definition, which equals 24 households (rounded). Therefore, the PPTS need over the five-year period 2017/18 to 2021/22 is for 47 pitches. Over the longer-term, applying the overall 60% of households meeting the PPTS definition results in a PPTS need for 17 pitches (rounded).

Plan Period pitch need

- 7.24 Table 7.3 summarises the overall need for pitches across Ashford Borough over the Plan Period to 2030. It presents the overall cultural need based on households identifying as Gypsy and Traveller and a PPTS need which is a subset of the cultural need and is based on those households who meet the PPTS definition of need. Assuming a 13-year period (2017/18 to 2030), this results in an overall need for the plan period for 82 pitches (cultural) and 54 (PPTS). This gives an annualised cultural need for 6.3 pitches and an annualised PPTS need for 4.2 pitches.

Table 7.3 Remaining plan period Gypsy and Traveller pitch need		
	Cultural need	Of which: PPTS need
5-year pitch need (2017/18 to 2021/22)	54	37
Longer-term need (2022/23 to 2030)	28	17
TOTAL pitch need to 2030 (Local Plan Period)	82	54

- 7.25 It is recommended that the Borough Local Plan recognises there is a cultural need for 84 pitches over the plan period to 2030 and a need for 54 pitches under the PPTS definition (or a PPTS policy-on position). The main drivers of need are: the existence of non-authorised sites, need from emerging households over the plan period based on the latest demographic evidence and in-migration.

Potential capacity for Gypsy and Traveller pitches on existing sites

Turnover on sites

- 7.26 Turnover relates to the number of pitches that are expected to become available for occupancy. Analysis only includes expected turnover on public sites as this is referenced in (former) CLG guidance and more accurate data on changes in pitch occupancy is likely to be available. Although there is likely to be turnover on private sites, the ability of households to move onto private sites may be more restrictive (for instance the site may be restricted to a particular family) and less likely to be recorded.
- 7.27 Household survey data indicates that 11 out of 12 respondents had lived on their pitch on the local authority site for less than 5 years, implying a high degree of turnover

(18.3% annual turnover rate). An analysis of households planning to move would suggest that 33.3% are planning to move in the next 5 years, resulting in a 6.7% annual turnover of pitches. This translates to a 1 pitch annual turnover which in turn translates to a turnover of 13 pitches over the remainder of the Plan Period.

- 7.28 Site management data for the local authority-owned Chilmington site shows that between January 2015 and June 2018 there have been a total of 13 moves, although we are advised that some of these are tenants moving from one pitch to another pitch on the site. 13 moves during the 3.5-year period indicates an average of 3.7 moves per year.
- 7.29 Taking into account the household survey and site management data, it is expected that turnover is likely to generate a moderate number of pitches for re-occupancy over the Plan Period. Modelling assumes a 1 pitch annual turnover.

Regularisation of sites

- 7.30 There are a total of six temporary authorised (with 11 pitches) and six unauthorised sites (with 13 pitches) currently in the Borough. If these became authorised sites/pitches, this would reduce the pitch need by 24.

Potential capacity for Gypsy and Traveller pitches on existing sites

- 7.31 The household survey asked respondents if there was opportunity to expand or intensify existing sites to accommodate more pitches. Table 7.4 reports there is considerable opportunity to increase the number of pitches on existing sites, with the potential for at least 38 additional pitches (34 on authorised sites and 4 on temporary authorised sites). Developing further pitches on existing sites could significantly reduce the shortfalls identified. Note that the potential expansion of sites was based on the views of respondents and not a technical appraisal of sites. Further work would be necessary to confirm the potential for expansion.

Potential location of pitches	Min	Max
Local Authority Sites	2	6
Private Authorised Sites	32	39
Private Temporary Authorised	4	5
TOTAL	38	50

- 7.32 Table 7.5 illustrates the impact of a 13-pitch turnover over the Plan Period on overall pitch need, the impact of regularising existing sites and the impact of addressing need through the expansion/intensification of sites. The result of including expected turnover is a reduction in cultural need to 69 pitches and PPTS need is reduced to 41 pitches. Factoring in regularisation of existing sites reduces the need further (45 cultural and 16 PPTS). Factoring in the minimum number (38) of potential pitches through

expansion/intensification of existing sites reduces the need further (7 cultural and PPTS need is addressed).

- 7.33 Therefore, although the needs modelling has identified a substantial need for pitches, there are options available which would allow for the need to be largely or completely addressed. This would require the Council to carefully review the planning status of all temporary/unauthorised sites and carry out a technical review of sites which have been identified for expansion/intensification

Table 7.5 Addressing Gypsy and Traveller pitch need		
	Cultural need	Of which: PPTS need
TOTAL pitch need for plan period 2017/18 to 2030	82	54
Pitches expected to become available through turnover on pitches on Council sites 2017/18 to 2030	13	13
<i>Residual pitch requirement after factoring in expected turnover</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>41</i>
Regularisation of unauthorised and temporary authorised sites	24	24
<i>Residual pitch requirement after factoring in regularisation</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>16</i>
Potential additional supply through intensification/expansion of existing sites	38	38
<i>Residual pitch requirement after factoring in expected turnover and potential intensification/expansion</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Addressed</i>

Transit site requirements

- 7.34 The household survey found that 29% of Gypsies and Travellers felt that transit provision should be made in Ashford and the majority of those responding (73%) felt this should be managed by the Council. A transit pitch normally has a hard standing, electric hook up and amenity shed. A good indicator of transit need is unauthorised encampment activity.
- 7.35 The Council reports 42 incidences of unauthorised encampment activity over the four-year period August 2013 to August 2017. Some of the incidences related to the same family moving with the Borough. Over this period:
- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments has ranged between 1 and 23 (with two incidences in 2013 of encampments of 23 caravans, although since then the largest encampment has been 11 vehicles);
 - The median number of caravans on an encampment has been 5 and mode (most frequently reported) has been 3 caravans;

- The number of days of encampment has tended to be low, with both a median and mode of 1 day, but there have been incidences of longer encampments in the Cuckoo Woods area in 2013/14 and 2014/15;
- 7.36 Given the level of unauthorised encampment, the Council should consider the provision of transit pitches either for the Borough specifically or part of a wider Kent-wide response. A transit site of 5 pitches could accommodate up to 10 caravans and this would provide sufficient short-term accommodation to address the needs from 89.4% of encampments. A smaller transit site of 3 pitches would provide sufficient short-term accommodation to address the needs from 71% of encampments.

8. Conclusion and strategic response

- 8.1 This concluding chapter provides a brief summary of key issues emerging from the research; advice on the strategic responses available, including examples of good practice; and recommendations and next steps.

Meeting permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

- 8.2 In terms of Gypsy and Traveller site provision within Ashford, there is one permanent local authority site, 48 private permanent sites, six private temporary sites and six unauthorised sites.
- 8.3 The triangulation of secondary data, Council records and fieldwork survey has identified a total of 163 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Ashford Borough.
- 8.4 For the full Local Plan Period (to 2030) the GTAA has identified a cultural need for 82 pitches and a PPTS need for 54 pitches. It is recommended that the Local Plan acknowledges this range of need.
- 8.5 However, there are a range of supply-side factors which suggests that this need could be largely or completely addressed. Taking into account an estimated 13-pitch turnover on the local authority site during the period, a residual pitch requirement of 69 (cultural definition) or 41 pitches (PPTS definition) is identified. There is also potential to regularise sites that would provide 24 pitches (with the residual pitch requirement reducing to 45 cultural and 16 PPTS). There is also considerable potential to expand/intensify existing sites, and it is estimated a minimum of 38 additional pitches could be delivered to help address need (with the residual pitch requirement reducing to 7 and PPTS need being addressed)
- 8.6 It is therefore recommended that the Council engages with site owners to establish the potential for expansion/intensification and also review the planning status of temporary/unauthorised sites. It is also recommended that the Council considers future applications for small sites to meet the needs of additional families who may emerge over the Plan Period.

Meeting permanent Travelling Showperson requirements

- 8.7 There are currently no authorised plots in the Borough. No Travelling Showpeople households were found living on yards or unauthorised encampments during the fieldwork.
- 8.8 The 2018 GTAA has evidenced no need for Travelling Showpeople plot provision during the Plan Period.

Meeting transit site/stop over requirements

- 8.9 It is recommended that the Council considers the development of a transit site to address the short-term accommodation needs of households travelling through the

Borough. Based on existing evidence of unauthorised encampment activity, a transit site of 3 to 5 pitches would address the majority of transit need.

Good practice in planning for Gypsy and Traveller provision

- 8.10 There are a number of resources available to local planning authorities to assist them in planning for Gypsy and Traveller provision, including resources from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), which are presented in Appendix B. In addition, the Local Government Agency and Local Government Association have resources available for local authorities working with Traveller communities to identify sites for new provision, these include dedicated learning aids for elected members²⁸.
- 8.11 Work undertaken by PAS²⁹ identified ways in which the planning process can increase the supply of authorised Gypsy and Traveller pitches. The RTPI has developed a series of Good Practice Notes for local planning authorities. Both are summarised at Appendix B.

Concluding comments

- 8.12 The overarching purpose of this study has been to identify the accommodation requirements of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Ashford Borough. The study has identified an overall cultural need for 82 pitches and, as a subset of this figure, a PPTS need for 54 pitches (Table 8.1): it is recommended that the Local Plan acknowledges this level of need. The study has also identified potential supply through turnover on the Council site, the regularisation of temporary/unauthorised sites and the intensification/expansion of existing sites. In combination, these supply-side factors have the potential to largely address the needs evidenced.

²⁸ I&DeA (now Local Government Agency) local leadership academy providing Gypsy and Traveller sites

²⁹ PAS spaces and places for gypsies and travellers how planning can help

Table 8.1 Overall Plan Period Gypsy and Traveller pitch need		
	Cultural need	Of which: PPTS need
TOTAL pitch need for plan period 2017/18 to 2030	82	54
Pitches expected to become available through turnover on pitches on Council sites 2017/18 to 2030	13	13
<i>Residual pitch requirement after factoring in expected turnover</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>41</i>
Regularisation of unauthorised and temporary authorised sites	24	24
<i>Residual pitch requirement after factoring in regularisation</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>16</i>
Potential additional supply through intensification/expansion of existing sites	38	38
<i>Residual pitch requirement after factoring in expected turnover and potential intensification/expansion</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Addressed</i>

- 8.13 The GTAA has not evidenced any need for Travelling Showperson plots.
- 8.14 The study would suggest that there is currently a need for 3-5 transit pitches in the Borough which would accommodate between 6 and 10 caravans.
- 8.15 It is recommended that this evidence base is refreshed on a five-yearly basis to ensure that the level of pitch and pitch provision remains appropriate for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population across Ashford.

Appendix A: Legislative background

- A.1 The **1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act** enabled councils to ban the siting of caravans for human occupation on common land, and led to the closure of many sites.
- A.2 The **Caravan Sites Act 1968 (Part II)** required local authorities '*so far as may be necessary to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies residing in or resorting to their area*'. It empowered the Secretary of State to make designation orders for areas where he was satisfied that there was adequate accommodation, or on grounds of expediency. Following the recommendations of the Cripps Commission in 1980, provision began to grow rapidly only after the allocation of 100% grants from central government. By 1994 a third of local authorities had achieved designation, which meant that they were not required to make further provision and were given additional powers to act against unauthorised encampments. The repeal of most of the Caravan Sites Act under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act in 1994 led to a reduction in provision, with some sites being closed over a period in which the Gypsy and Traveller population was increasing.
- A.3 The **1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJ&POA)**:
- Repealed most of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act;
 - Abolished all statutory obligation to provide accommodation;
 - Discontinued government grants for sites; and
 - Under Section 61 made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent.
- A.4 Since the CJ&POA the only places where Gypsies and Travellers can legally park their trailers and vehicles are:
- Council Gypsy caravan sites; by 2000 nearly half of Gypsy caravans were accommodated on council sites, despite the fact that new council site provision stopped following the end of the statutory duty;
 - Privately owned land with appropriate planning permission; usually owned by Gypsies or Travellers. Such provision now accommodates approximately a third of Gypsy caravans in England; and
 - Land with established rights of use, other caravan sites or mobile home parks by agreement or licence, and land required for seasonal farm workers (under site licensing exemptions).
- A.5 By the late 1990s the impact of the 1994 Act was generating pressure for change on both local and national government. There was a major review of law and policy, which included:
- A Parliamentary Committee report (House of Commons 2004).
 - The replacement of Circular 1/94 by Circular 1/2006 (which has since been cancelled and replaced by the *Planning policy for traveller sites* 2012 and updated in 2015).
 - Guidance on accommodation assessments (ODPM 2006).

- The Housing Act 2004 which placed a requirement (s.225) on local authorities to assess Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

A.6 **Section 225: Housing Act 2004** imposed duties on local authorities in relation to the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers:

- Every local housing authority was required as part of the general review of housing needs in their areas under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their Borough;
- Where a local housing authority was required under section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 to prepare a strategy to meet such accommodation needs, they had to take the strategy into account in exercising their functions;
- A local housing authority was required to have regard to section 226 ('Guidance in relation to section 225') in:
 - carrying out such an assessment, and
 - preparing any strategy that they are required to prepare.
- Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 deletes sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004 (see below). Additional requirements have been inserted into Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 to include an assessment of the need for sites for caravans and moorings for houseboats within the periodical review of housing needs.

A.7 The **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004** set out to introduce a simpler and more flexible planning system at regional and local levels. It also introduced new provisions which change the duration of planning permissions and consents, and allow local planning authorities to introduce local permitted development rights using 'local development orders'. It made the compulsory purchase regime simpler, fairer and quicker, to support major infrastructure and regeneration initiatives.

The Act introduced major changes to the way in which the planning system operates. Local planning authorities are required to prepare a Local Development Framework; however, the term Local Plan was reintroduced following the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012.

Part 8 of the Act contains a series of measures to reform the compulsory purchase regime and make it easier for local planning authorities to make a case for compulsory purchase orders where it will be of economic, social or environmental benefit to the area. This Act was subsequently amended to a Local Plan document with the introduction of the NPPF in March 2012. This section also brings in amended procedures for carrying out compulsory purchase orders, including a widening of the category of person with an interest in the land who can object, and deals with ownership issues and compensation.

A.8 **The Localism Act 2011** introduced a number of reforms, including changes to planning enforcement rules, which strengthen the power of local planning authorities to tackle abuses of the planning system. The changes give local planning authorities the ability to take actions against people who deliberately conceal unauthorised development, and

tackle abuses of retrospective planning applications. The Act also introduced the Duty to Co-operate (see Section 3) on all local planning authorities planning sustainable development. The Duty requires *'neighbouring local authorities, or groups of authorities, to work together on planning issues in the interests of all their local residents. ... the Government thinks that local authorities and other public bodies should work together on planning issues in ways that reflect genuine shared interests and opportunities to make common cause. The duty requires local authorities and other public bodies to work together on planning issues.'*³⁰ The provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites falls within the Duty to Co-operate; which aims to ensure that neighbouring authorities work together to address issues such as provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers in a planned and strategic way.

A.9 **Statutory Instrument 2013 No 830 Town and Country planning Act, England (Temporary Stop Notice) (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2013** came into force on 4th May 2013. This Instrument revoked the regulations governing Temporary Stop Notices, which were in place to mitigate against the disproportionate impact of Temporary Stop Notices on Gypsies and Travellers in areas where there was a lack of sufficient pitches to meet the needs of the Travelling community.

A.10 **Section 124: Housing and Planning Act 2016** has two parts:

- 124(1) amends section 8 of the Housing Act 1985, inserting an additional reference to include a duty to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to local authority Boroughs with respect to the provision of sites for caravans and moorings for houseboats when undertaking housing needs assessments.
- 124(2) deletes sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004 (as set out above).

³⁰ DCLG A plain English guide to the Localism Act Nov 2011

Appendix B: Review of policy, guidance and best practice

B.1 As part of this research, we have carried out a review of literature, which is presented in this Appendix. A considerable range of guidance documents has been prepared by Central Government to assist local authorities discharge their strategic housing and planning functions. In addition, there is considerable independent and academic research and guidance on these issues; some of the key documents are summarised here. The documents are reviewed in order of publication date.

B.2 **A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for Implementation Update, DCLG, June 2006**

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

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

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

- It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing;
- It is in a reasonable state of repair;
- It has reasonably modern facilities and services; and
- It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

B.3 **Guide to Effective Use of Enforcement Powers - Parts 1 (Unauthorised Encampments, ODPM, 2006) and 2 (Unauthorised Development of Caravan Sites, DCLG, 2007)**

The Guide (now cancelled) was the Government's response to unauthorised encampments which cause local disruption and conflict.

B.4 **Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers, Commission for Racial Equality, May 2006**

This report was written four years after the introduction of the statutory duty on public authorities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations and to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination. The CRE expressed concerns about relations between Gypsies and Irish Travellers and other members of the public, with widespread public hostility and, in many places, Gypsies and Irish Travellers leading separate, parallel lives. A dual concern about race relations and inequality led the Commission in October 2004 to launch the inquiry on which this report was based.

The Report's recommendations include measures relating to Central Government, local authorities, police forces and the voluntary sector. Among those relating to Central Government are:

- developing a realistic but ambitious timetable to identify land for sites, where necessary establishing them, and making sure it is met;
- developing key performance indicators for public sites which set standards for quality and management that are comparable to those for conventional accommodation;
- requiring local authorities to monitor and provide data on planning applications, outcomes and enforcement, and on housing and homelessness by racial group, using two separate categories for Gypsies and Irish Travellers; and
- requiring police forces to collect information on Gypsies and Irish Travellers as two separate ethnic categories.

Strategic recommendations affecting local authorities include:

- developing a holistic corporate vision for all work on Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
- reviewing all policies on accommodation for Gypsies and Irish Travellers,
- designating a councillor at cabinet (or equivalent) level, and an officer at no less than assistant director level, to coordinate the authority's work on all sites;
- emphasising that the code of conduct for councillors applies to their work in relation to all racial groups, including Gypsies and Irish Travellers;
- giving specific advice to Gypsies and Irish Travellers on the most suitable land for residential use, how to prepare applications, and help them to find the information they need to support their application;
- identifying and reporting on actions by local groups or individuals in response to plans for Gypsy sites that may constitute unlawful pressure on the authority to discriminate against Gypsies and Irish Travellers; and
- monitoring all planning applications and instances of enforcement action at every stage, by type and racial group, including Gypsies and Irish Travellers, in order to assess the effects of policies and practices on different racial groups.

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

- include Gypsies and Irish Travellers in mainstream neighbourhood policing strategies, to promote race equality and good race relations;
- target individual Gypsies and Irish Travellers suspected of anti-social behaviour and crime on public, private and unauthorised sites, and not whole communities;
- treat Gypsies and Irish Travellers as members of the local community, and in ways that strengthen their trust and confidence in the police;
- provide training for all relevant officers on Gypsies' and Irish Travellers' service needs, so that officers are able to do their jobs more effectively;
- review formal and informal procedures for policing unauthorised encampments, to identify and eliminate potentially discriminatory practices, and ensure that the procedures promote race equality and good race relations; and

- review the way policy is put into practice, to make sure organisations and individuals take a consistent approach, resources are used effectively and strategically, all procedures are formalised, and training needs are identified.

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

B.5 **Planning Advisory Service (PAS) *Spaces and places for Gypsies and Travellers: how planning can help* (2006)**

PAS list the following as key to successful delivery of new provision:

- **Involve Gypsy and Traveller communities:** this needs to happen at an early stage, innovative methods of consultation need to be adopted due to low levels of literacy and high levels of social exclusion within Gypsy and Traveller communities and members of the Gypsy and Traveller community should be trained as interviewers on Accommodation Assessments (Cambridgeshire, Surrey, Dorset and Leicestershire). Other good practice examples include distribution of material via CD, so that information can be ‘listened to’ as opposed to read. The development of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller Strategy is also seen to be good practice, helping agencies develop a co-ordinated approach and so prioritise the issue. The report also recommends the use of existing Gypsy and Traveller resources such as the planning guide published in Traveller’s Times, which aims to explain the planning process in an accessible way to members of the Gypsy and Traveller community. As well as consulting early, PAS also flags the need to consult often with communities;
- **Work collaboratively** with neighbouring authorities to address the issues and avoid just ‘moving it on’ to a neighbouring local authority area. With the new Duty to Co-operate established within the NPPF, working collaboratively with neighbouring local authorities has never been more important. Adopting a collaborative approach recognises that local authorities cannot work in isolation to tackle this issue;
- **Be transparent:** trust is highly valued within Gypsy and Traveller communities, and can take a long time to develop. The planning system needs to be transparent, so that members of the Gypsy and Traveller community can understand the decisions that have been taken and the reasoning behind them. PAS states that *‘ideally council work in this area should be led by an officer who is respected both within the Council and also within Gypsy and Traveller communities: trust is vital and can be broken easily.’*³¹ Local planning authorities also need to revisit their approach to development management criteria for applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites *‘to ensure that criteria make it clear what applications are likely to be accepted by the council. Authorities need to ensure that these are reasonable and realistic. Transparent and criteria-based policies help everyone to understand what decisions have been made and why.’*³² Kent and Hertsmere councils are listed as examples of good practice in this regard.

³¹ PAS *Spaces and places for gypsies and travellers how planning can help*, page 8

³² PAS *spaces and places for gypsies and travellers how planning can help* page 8 & 14

- **Integration:** accommodation needs assessments need to be integrated into the Local Plan evidence base, with site locations and requirements set out within specific Development Plan Documents (DPDs); dedicated Gypsy and Traveller DPDs are advocated as a means of ensuring that the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers are fully considered and addressed within the local planning process; and
- **Educate and work with councillors:** members need to be aware of their responsibilities in terms of equality and diversity and *‘understand that there must be sound planning reasons for rejecting applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites’*³³. It is helpful for members to understand the wider benefits of providing suitable accommodation to meet the requirements of the Gypsy and Traveller community, such as:
 - An increase in site provision;
 - Reduced costs of enforcement; and
 - Greater community engagement and understanding of community need.

B.6 RTPI Good Practice Note 4, *Planning for Gypsies and Travellers (2007)*

The RTPI has developed a series of Good Practice notes for local planning authorities ‘Planning for Gypsies and Travellers’; the notes cover four key areas:

- Communication, consultation and participation;
- Needs assessment;
- Accommodation and site delivery; and
- Enforcement.

Whilst the notes were developed prior to the NPPF and the introduction of PPTS 2012 and 2015, some of the key principles remain relevant. and it is worth considering some of the papers’ key recommendations.

In terms of **communication, consultation and participation** the RTPI highlight the following good practice:

- **Define potentially confusing terminology** used by professionals working in the area;
- **Use appropriate methods of consultation:** oral exchanges and face-to-face dealings are essential to effectively engage with Gypsy and Traveller communities, whilst service providers tend to use written exchanges;
- **Consultees and participants need to be involved in the entire plan making process;** this includes in-house participants, external organisations, Gypsy and Traveller communities, and settled communities. The RTPI concludes that:
 - *‘Local authorities should encourage Gypsy and Traveller communities to engage with the planning system at an early stage. However, they may request other agencies that have well-established relationships with members of Gypsy and Traveller communities to undertake this role.’* and

³³ PAS spaces and places for gypsies and travellers how planning can help page 10

- *'In the past, settled communities have often only become aware of the intention to develop Gypsy and Traveller accommodation when the local authority issues a notice or consultation. ... cultivating the support of the settled community for the development of sites should start as soon as possible. ... There is a sound case for front-loading and sharing information with small groups in the [settled] community, rather than trying to manage large public gatherings at the start of the process. Again, it may be beneficial for the local authority to work in partnership with organisations with established links in the community. The settled community is not a homogeneous whole. There will be separate groups with different perceptions and concerns, which the local authority must take account of.'*³⁴
- **Dialogue methods:** the RTPI correctly identify that the experience of many Gypsies and Travellers of liaising with both public sector agencies and the settled community is both frightening and negative. As a result *'there should be no expectation that Gypsies and Travellers will participate in open meetings. Stakeholders should investigate suitable methods of bringing together individuals from the respective communities in an environment that will facilitate a constructive exchange of information and smooth the process of breaking down animosity and hostility.'*³⁵ The use of public meetings is discouraged, and the use of organisations with experience of working within both Gypsy and Traveller, and settled communities encouraged – advice and support groups, assisted by the latter, holding regular local meetings can be an effective means of engaging constructively with both communities. Representatives from these groups can also be included on appropriate forums and advisory groups. The location and timing of meetings needs to be carefully considered to maximise participation, with a neutral venue being preferable.
- **The media** has an important role to play in facilitating the delivery of sites locally, with past reporting being extremely damaging. Positive media liaison is important and requires:
 - A single point of contact with the local authority;
 - A liaison officer responsible for compilation and release of briefings, and for building positive relationships with editors, journalists, radio and television presenters;
 - All stakeholders to provide accurate and timely briefings for the liaison officer;
 - Provision of media briefings on future activities;
 - Officers to anticipate when and where the most sensitive and contentious issues will arise and use of a risk assessment to mitigate any negative impact;
 - Use of the media to facilitate engagement with both settled and Gypsy and Traveller communities; and
 - Stakeholders to provide politicians with clear, accurate and comprehensive briefings.

³⁴ RTPI Planning for Gypsies and Travellers Good Practice Note 4 Part A page 8

³⁵ RTPI Planning for Gypsies and Travellers Good Practice Note 4 Part A page 13

- **On-going communication, participation and consultation** are important. The continued use of the most effective methods of engagement once an initiative is completed ensures the maximum use of resources:
 - *‘The delivery of some services, such as the identification of sites in development plan documents, is the end of one process and the start of another. The various committees and advisory groups established to participate in the process of site identification and the accommodation needs assessment will have considerable background information and expertise embedded in their membership. This will prove useful in the management and monitoring of subsequent work. ... Whilst on-going engagement with all service users is important, it is especially important with regard to Gypsies and Travellers, given their long history of marginalisation.’³⁶*

Whilst the RTPI’s Good Practice Note Planning for Gypsies and Travellers predates the NPPF, the principles that it establishes at Part C remain largely relevant in terms of the role of local plan making. The Note advises that whilst the use of the site specific DPDs to identify sites for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation may seem less divisive, subsequent to identification of sufficient sites to meet identified need, local planning authorities should seek to integrate provision for Gypsies and Travellers within their general housing strategies and policies. Early involvement of stakeholders, the community and special interest groups will help achieve a consensus.

However, the RTPI point out that, due to the contentious nature of Gypsy and Traveller provision, the use of a criteria based approach to the selection of development sites is unlikely to be *successful ‘in instances where considerable public opposition to the development might be anticipated.’* The paper concludes that it is not appropriate to rely solely on criteria as an alternative to site allocations where there is an identified need for the development.³⁷

The RTPI advocate adopting a pragmatic approach, whereby local planning authorities work with the Gypsy and Traveller communities within their areas to identify a range of potentially suitable sites:

‘The local authority and Gypsy and Traveller communities are both able to bring forward their suggested sites during this process, and the distribution and location of transit as well as permanent sites can be covered. The practicable options would then go forward for discussion with the local community, interest groups, and other stakeholders before the selection of preferred sites is finalised. The advantages of this approach are its transparency and the certainty it provides both for Gypsies and Travellers and for settled communities.’³⁸

The RTPI also advocates the use of supplementary planning guidance to provide additional detail on policies contained within a Local Plan; in terms of Gypsies and Travellers this could include:

- Needs assessment evidence base;

³⁶ RTPI Planning for Gypsies and Travellers Good Practice Note 4 Part A page 18

³⁷ RTPI Planning for Gypsies and Travellers Good Practice Note 4 Part C page 11

³⁸ RTPI Planning for Gypsies and Travellers Good Practice Note 4 Part C page 11

- Design principles; and
- A design brief for the layout of sites.

B.7 Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments, DCLG, October 2007

This Guidance (formally cancelled in December 2016) sets out a detailed framework for designing, planning and carrying out Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessments. It includes the needs of Showpeople. It acknowledges that the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers are likely to differ from those of the settled community, and that they have hitherto been excluded from accommodation needs assessments.

The guidance stresses the importance of understanding accommodation needs of the whole Gypsy and Traveller population; and that studies obtain robust data. It recognises the difficulty of surveying this population and recommends the use of:

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

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

B.8 Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites Good Practice Guide, DCLG, May 2008

The Guide (now cancelled) attempted to establish and summarise the key elements needed to design a successful site. In particular, the guidance intended to assist:

- Local authorities or Registered Providers looking to develop new sites or refurbish existing sites;
- Architects or developers looking to develop sites or refurbish existing sites; and
- Site residents looking to participate in the design/refurbishment process.

B.9 The National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect in March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England. It condenses previous guidance and places a strong emphasis on 'sustainable development'. It provides more focussed guidance on plan-making and refers to 'Local Plans' rather than Local Development Frameworks or Development Plan Documents. Despite the difference in terminology it does not affect the provisions of the 2004 Act which remains the legal basis for plan-making.

B.10 DCLG Planning policy for traveller sites, March 2012 (subsequently updated August 2015)

In March 2012 the Government also published *Planning policy for traveller sites*, which together with the NPPF replaced all previous planning policy guidance in respect of Gypsies and Travellers. The policy approach encouraged provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers where there is an identified need, to help maintain an appropriate level

of supply. The policy also encouraged the use of plan making and decision taking to reduce unauthorised developments and encampments. This policy document was replaced by updated PPTS in August 2015 (see below).

B.11 Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers, April 2012

In April 2012 the Government published a Progress Report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers, which summarised progress in terms of meeting 'Government commitments to tackle inequalities and promote fairness for Gypsy and Traveller communities.'³⁹ The report covers 28 measures from across Government aimed at tackling inequalities, these cover:

- Improving education outcomes;
- Improving health outcomes;
- Providing appropriate accommodation;
- Tackling hate crime;
- Improving interaction with the National Offender Management Service;
- Improving access to employment and financial services; and
- Improving engagement with service providers.

B.12 Dealing with illegal and unauthorised encampments: a summary of available powers, DCLG August 2012

This guidance note (now superseded, March 2015) summarised the powers available to local authorities and landowners to remove encampments from both public and private land.

B.13 Statutory Instrument 2013 No.830 Town and Country Planning (Temporary Stop Notice) (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2013: Made on 11th April 2013 and laid before Parliament on 12th April 2013 this Instrument revoking the regulations applying to Temporary Stop Notices (TSNs) in England came into force on 4th May 2013. The regulations were originally introduced to mitigate against the likely disproportionate impact of TSNs on Gypsies and Travellers in areas where there is a lack of sites to meet the needs of the Travelling community. Under the regulations, TSNs were prohibited where a caravan was a person's main residence, unless there was a risk of harm to a serious public interest significant enough to outweigh any benefit to the occupier of the caravan. Under the new arrangements local planning authorities are to determine whether the use of a TSN is a proportionate and necessary response.

B.14 Ministerial Statement 1st July 2013 by Brandon Lewis⁴⁰ highlighted the issue of inappropriate development in the Green Belt and revised the appeals recovery criteria issued on 30th June 2008 to enable an initial six-month period of scrutiny of Traveller site appeals in the Green Belt. This was so that the Secretary of State could assess the

³⁹ www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/2124322

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-and-travellers>

extent to which the national policy, *Planning policy for traveller sites*, was meeting the Government's stated policy intentions. A number of appeals have subsequently been recovered. The Statement also revoked the practice guidance on 'Diversity and equality in planning'⁴¹, deeming it to be outdated; the Government does not intend to replace this guidance.

B.15 Dealing with illegal and unauthorised encampments: a summary of available powers 9th August 2013. This guidance (now superseded, March 2015) replaced that published in August 2012, and updated it in respect of changes to Temporary Stop Notices.

B.16 DCLG Consultation: Planning and Travellers, September 2014. This consultation document sought to:

- Amend the Planning policy for Traveller sites' definition of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to exclude those who have ceased to travel permanently;
- Amend secondary legislation to bring the definition of Gypsies and Travellers, set out in the Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs)(Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers)(England) Regulations 2006 in line with the proposed changed definition set out above for the Planning policy for Traveller sites;
- Make the intentional unauthorised occupation of land be regarded by decision takers as a material consideration that weighs against the granting of planning permission. In other words, failure to seek permission in advance of occupation of land would count against the grant of planning permission;
- Protect 'sensitive areas' including the Green Belt;
- Update guidance on how local authorities should assess future Traveller accommodation requirements, including sources of information that authorities should use. In terms of future needs assessments the consultation suggests that authorities should look at:
 - The change in the number of Traveller households that have or are likely to have accommodation needs to be addressed over the Plan period;
 - Broad locations where there is a demand for additional pitches;
 - The level, quality and types of accommodation and facilities needed (e.g. sites and housing);
 - The demographic profile of the Traveller community obtained from working directly with them;
 - Caravan count data at a local level; and
 - Whether there are needs at different times of the year.
- The consultation closed on 23rd November 2014.

B.17 Dealing with illegal and unauthorised encampments: a summary of available powers, March 2015. This Guidance sets out the robust powers councils, the police and

⁴¹ ODPM Diversity and Equality in Planning: A good practice guide 2005

landowners have to deal quickly with illegal and unauthorised encampments. The Guidance lists a series of questions that local authorities will want to consider including:

- Is the land particularly vulnerable to unlawful occupation/trespass?
- What is the status of that land? Who is the landowner?
- Do any special rules apply to that land (e.g. byelaws, statutory schemes of management, etc.) and, if so, are any of those rules relevant to the occupation/trespass activity?
- Has a process been established for the local authority to be notified about any unauthorised encampments?
- If the police are notified of unauthorised encampments on local authority land, do they know who in the local authority should be notified?
- If the power of persuasion by local authority officers (wardens/park officers/enforcement officers) does not result in people leaving the land/taking down tents, is there a clear decision making process, including liaison between councils and local police forces, on how to approach unauthorised encampments? At what level of the organisation will that decision be made? How will that decision-maker be notified?

The Guidance also states that to plan and respond effectively local agencies should work together to consider:

- Identifying vulnerable sites;
- Working with landowners to physically secure vulnerable sites where possible;
- Preparing any necessary paperwork, such as applications for possession orders or injunctions, in advance;
- Working with private landowners to inform them of their powers in relation to unauthorised encampments, including advance preparation of any necessary paperwork;
- Developing a clear notification and decision-making process to respond to instances of unauthorised encampments;
- The prudence of applying for injunctions where intelligence suggests there may be a planned encampment and the site of the encampment might cause disruption to others;
- Working to ensure that local wardens, park officers or enforcement officers are aware of who they should notify in the event of unauthorised encampments;
- Working to ensure that local wardens or park officers are aware of the locations of authorised campsites or other alternatives; and
- Identifying sites where protests could be directed / permitted.

B.18 **DCLG Planning policy for traveller sites, August 2015**

To be read alongside the NPPF (March 2012), this national planning policy document replaces the original document of the same Ashford (published in March 2012). *Planning*

policy for traveller sites sets out that, “the Government’s overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.”⁴²

The document sets out a series of nine policies (Policy A to Policy I), which address different issues associated with traveller sites:

- Policy A: Using evidence to plan positively and manage development,
- Policy B: Planning for traveller sites,
- Policy C: Sites in rural areas and the countryside,
- Policy D: Rural exception sites,
- Policy E: Travellers sites in Green Belt,
- Policy F: Mixed planning use traveller sites,
- Policy G: Major development projects,
- Policy H: Determining planning applications for traveller sites, and
- Policy I: Implementation.

B.19 DCLG Planning policy statement on Green Belt protection and intentional unauthorised development (31st August 2015)

Issued as a letter to all Chief Planning Officers in England, this planning policy statement sets out changes to make intentional unauthorised development a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and also to provide stronger protection for the Green Belt. The statement explains that the Planning Inspectorate will monitor all appeal decisions involving unauthorised development in the Green Belt, and additionally the DCLG will consider the recovery of a proportion of relevant appeals for the Secretary of State’s decision “*to enable him to illustrate how he would like his policy to apply in practice*”, under the criteria set out in 2008.

In addition, the planning policy statement of 31st August 2015 announced that the Government has cancelled the documents *Guide to the effective use of enforcement powers, Part 1* (2006) and *Part 2* (2007) and *Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Good Practice Guide* (2008).

B.20 DCLG Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs: Caravans and Houseboats, March 2016

This draft guidance was published to explain how the Government wants local housing authorities to interpret changes to accommodation needs assessments (as required by Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985), specifically in relation to caravans and houseboats. It makes reference to Clause 115 of the Housing and Planning Bill, which has subsequently received royal assent and became legislation on 12 May 2016. The relevant clause has become Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

⁴² DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites*, August 2015, paragraph 3

The draft guidance explains how Government wants local housing authorities to interpret changes to accommodation needs assessments (as required by Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985), specifically in relation to caravans and houseboats.

In the carrying out of accommodation needs assessments, the draft guidance stresses the importance of close engagement with the community. The use of existing data along with conducting a specialist survey is recommended.

Appendix C: Gypsy and Traveller Fieldwork Questionnaire

	Date and Time			
	Site Reference			
	Address			
1	Pitch/Property Type			
2	No. Statics/mobiles/bricks and mortar			
3	No. tourers			
4	Description of pitch occupancy			
5	No. households			
6	No. concealed households			
7	No. doubled up households			
8	Does anyone else use this pitch as their home?			
9	Household characteristics			
		Gender	Age	Relationship to respondent
	Respondent			
	Person 2			
	Person 3			
	Person 4			
	Person 5			
	Person 6			
	Person 7			
	Person 8			

10	Ethnicity	
11	How many bedspaces are there on your pitch?	
12	Overcrowding of home	Y / N
13	Overcrowding of pitch	Y / N

Travelling questions

14	In the last year have you or someone in your household travelled	Y / N
15	Previous to the last year, did you or someone in your household travel?	Y / N
16	Reason(s) for travelling	
17	Do you or a member of your household plan to travel next year?	Y / N
18	Do you think you or a member of your household will travel each year for the next five years and/or beyond	Y / N
19	What reasons do you have for not travelling now or in the future?	

Future moving intentions

20	Are you planning to move in the next 5 years?	Y / N
21	Where are you planning to move to? (Same Site , Other Site in District, Outside District (if so where))	
22	What type of dwelling (caravan , trailer , house , flat , bungalow)	

23	Emerging households: Are there any people in your household who want to move to their own pitch in the next 5 yrs?	Y / N			
		HH1	HH2	HH3	HH4
24	Where are you planning to move to? (Same Site, Other Site in District, Outside District (if so where))				
25	What type of dwelling (caravan, trailer, house, flat, bungalow)				
26	Have they travelled / plan to travel	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
27	Scope to expand site	Y / N			
28	No. additional pitches				
29	Scope to intensify pitches	Y / N			
30	No. additional pitches				
31	Is there a need for transit pitches (for people stopping over temporarily) in the district?	Y / N			
32	If so, now many are needed?				
33	Who should manage them (Council, Traveller Community)				
34	Is there a need for more authorised pitches (for people to live on all the time?)	Y / N			
35	If so, now many are needed?				
36	How many years have you lived here?				

If less than 6 years, please ask supplementary questions

Supplementary questions if relevant

37	Where did you move from? (District)	
38	When you moved here, was the pitch vacant, a new pitch or was the pitch sub-divided	
39	What were the reasons for moving here?	
40	Did you already have a connection with the area (e.g. family or friends living here; or you used to live here?)	
41	Do you know anyone in bricks and mortar housing looking to live on a site? If so, can you provide contact details	
42	Are there any vacant pitches on the site which could be used by another family? If so how many pitches	

Appendix D: Glossary of terms

Caravans: Mobile living vehicles used by Gypsies and Travellers; also referred to as trailers.

CJ&POA: Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994; includes powers for local authorities and police to act against unauthorised encampments.

CRE: Commission for Racial Equality.

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

Gypsies and Travellers: Defined by DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (August 2015) as “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”. The planning policy goes on to state that, “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”.

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

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

Pitch: Area of land on a Gypsy/Traveller site occupied by one resident family; sometimes referred to as a plot, especially when referring to Travelling Showpeople. DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (August 2015) states that “For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use plots for “travelling showpeople”, which may / will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment”.

Plot: see pitch

PPTS: Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2012 and 2015 editions)

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

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

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

Showpeople: Defined by DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (August 2015) as “Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their 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”.

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

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

Stopping places: A term used to denote an unauthorised temporary camping area tolerated by local authorities, used by Gypsies and Travellers for short-term encampments, and sometimes with the provision of temporary toilet facilities, water supplies and refuse collection services.

Tolerated site: An unauthorised encampment/site where a local authority has decided not to take enforcement action to seek its removal.

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

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

Unauthorised development: Establishment of Gypsy and Traveller sites without planning permission, usually on land owned by those establishing the site. Unauthorised development may involve ground works for roadways and hard standings. People parking caravans on their own land without planning permission are not Unauthorised Encampments in that they cannot trespass on their own land – they are therefore Unauthorised Developments and enforcement is always dealt with by Local Planning Authorities enforcing planning legislation.

Unauthorised encampment: Land where Gypsies or Travellers reside in vehicles or tents without permission. Unauthorised encampments can occur in a variety of locations (roadside, car parks, parks, fields, etc.) and constitute trespass. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner’s consent. Unauthorised encampments fall into two main categories: those on land owned by local authorities and those on privately owned land. It is up to the land owner to take enforcement action in conjunction with the Police.

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

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